



Speech by

Hon. R. E. BORBIDGE

MEMBER FOR SURFERS PARADISE

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STATE GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE

Hon. R. E. BORBIDGE (Surfers Paradise—NPA) (Leader of the Opposition) (5.10 p.m.): In seconding the motion moved by the member for Moggill, I wish to detail to the House the jobs, jobs, jobs record of this Government. The reality is that the member for Brisbane Central is failing in his mission. He has become preoccupied with Labor's social agenda and he has taken his eyes off the ball. In respect of employment growth and generation, Queensland has gone from pacesetter to the middle of the pack.

Let us look at the record of the coalition in office. We created 87,000 jobs. Those are official figures from the ABS. In February 1996, when the coalition took over, there were 1,514,300 full-time jobs in Queensland. When the coalition left office, there were 1,601,300 full-time jobs. In 28 months under the coalition some 87,000 full-time jobs were created. During its term in office, on average the coalition created 3,000 new jobs per month. What is the record of the jobs, jobs, jobs Premier? Labor has let that figure slip to 2,000. But worse still, this is against the national trend. Under Labor Queensland has failed to catch the wave. When the coalition left Government, employment growth was running at 4%. As at October this year, employment growth was wobbling, stumbling and staggering around—just like this Government—at less than 1.5%. During the term of the coalition Government, Queensland created almost 40% of Australia's new jobs—37.3%. Under Labor that figure has plummeted to only 16.3%. We have now reached a situation where, among the mainland States, only South Australia has a higher unemployment rate than Queensland's.

We have Government by "stuntsmanship". We continually see public relations charades from the Premier: "Beattie works through the weekend to make Expo work"—and we know what happened there; "Premier leaves immediately to meet Expo chiefs"; and perhaps the doozey of the whole lot, "Premier to be supersalesman for smart state and Technomart". The Beattie doctrine rules supreme: when something goes wrong, it is always someone else's fault. What did the Government say after it bungled the Baywatch negotiations and then suddenly realised that it might have to go back to those negotiations? The Chairman of the Queensland Events Corporation, Des Power, said, "No, we don't want them. We don't want their grubby program here, thanks." That was only topped off by Minister Gibbs, who said, "This is the worst stabbing group I have ever been involved with in my life. It's like lying down with a blistered dog in a gutter." That is the way this Government treats people when it does not get its own way. It is little wonder we lost Baywatch, if that was the attitude of the Government going into the supposedly rejuvenated and revitalised negotiations. No wonder Baywatch went to Hawaii.

The fact is that Queensland's unemployment rate is creeping back up for a number of reasons. We all know that there is a lead time for major private infrastructure projects of about two years. We know that the big projects which were under way during the Goss Government and which were negotiated and under way during the time of my Government have now come on stream.

Mr Elder: Not one.

Mr BORBIDGE: The dud without grunt opposite cannot deliver any major new infrastructure projects to the State of Queensland despite a 60% increase in his budget. The Minister is the biggest political dud ever to set foot in this Parliament. The Premier continues with his jobs, jobs, jobs rhetoric. Where are the jobs?