



Speech by

Mr S. ROBERTSON

MEMBER FOR SUNNYBANK

Hansard 23 November 1999

DEPARTMENT OF STATE DEVELOPMENT

Mr ROBERTSON (Sunnybank—ALP) (6.32 p.m.): Tonight I rise in support of the amendment moved by the Premier and seconded by the Deputy Premier. Tonight we have seen a lack of performance by the Opposition, the movers of the original motion. They have an absolute fixation that the only thing that matters when it comes to State development is the major projects. They have their place. However, as important as they are, they are not the whole story. The department we created brings together a range of tools that promotes industry development. It is not just about the big projects, it is also about getting the policy right—a true industry policy that promotes the growth of new innovative industries. That is why I am pleased to rise in the House tonight to speak about the innovation strategy that is being developed—something that was deliberately ignored by the Opposition during its time in Government. They have absolutely no foresight in terms of identifying the tools that Queensland needs in order to compete on the world scene and what we need to invest in. Do we just continue to look at opening new mines or do we look at investing in infrastructure that will promote the growth of new industries, such as the \$10m that we put into the Institute of Molecular Bioscience at the University of Queensland?

Opposition members have a fixation that the only thing that matters in this State are new mines and dams. It is a bit more complex than that. I appreciate the fact that members opposite cannot grasp the complexity of an economy and what it means to develop a true industry policy. That is why we are coming up with an innovation strategy—a strategy that does not just promote growth in the biosciences but also looks at advanced manufacturing and product design, at ramping up our capabilities in light metals, supercomputing, promoting entrepreneurship and giving small start-up companies the impetus they need to create jobs in this new knowledge-based economy. But do we hear one word about those sorts of initiatives from members opposite—from the policy free zone? Tonight we heard about some sort of weird Machiavellian factional plot that the Deputy Premier is allegedly involved in. I would have thought that the Leader of the Liberal Party would be the last person to speak about factions. I hesitate to say this, but to the left of the Leader of the Liberal Party is, of course, his factional opponent. I suspect that the performance of the Leader of the Liberal Party in this debate says much about how distracted he is in terms of the threat that the honourable member for Clayfield poses to his leadership.

Dr Watson: I think he's on my Right, not on my left. I think you've got the wrong bloke.

Mr ROBERTSON: If I had the problems of the Leader of the Liberal Party I would have given it away a long time ago. Unfortunately, his party is in crisis. How on earth will it ever come up with decent policy to promote industry in this State while he continually has to wonder about whether he is being knifed in the back by the member to his left? I say that advisedly.

I have had the honour of working closely with officers of the Department of State Development. Any suggestion of a lack of morale is absolute nonsense. As the Deputy Premier's Parliamentary Secretary, on a daily basis I see a dedicated, intelligent, forward looking group of people committed to industry development in this State. It gives me great pride to hold that position. In that role, I have come to know these people and the work that they put into the development of such things as the innovation technology strategy, which we will be seeing in the community early next year.