



Speech by

**Mr S. ROBERTSON**

**MEMBER FOR SUNNYBANK**

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Hansard 1 December 1999

### **TOWNSVILLE INDUSTRIAL PARK**

**Mr REYNOLDS** (Townsville—ALP) (6.23 p.m.): I take great pleasure in seconding the amendment. Let members make no mistake: the motion of the member for Burdekin is anti-jobs and anti-north Queensland. Despite all the words and conspiracy theories that we have heard from One Nation and from the new Country Party, we have never heard them suggest a sensible proposition to create jobs.

This motion is strongly anti-Townsville. This Government is planning for Townsville's future industrial development. One might as well say that a housing subdivision planned for Townsville should go to Bowen, that a park planned for Townsville should go to Bowen or that a shopping centre planned for Townsville should go to Bowen. That is the sort of grotesque social engineering that One Nation was very big on opposing, but that its members or former members now seem to want to undertake.

I want to knock on the head the notion that somehow we are picking on Woodstock. Are members opposite suggesting that someone woke up one morning and said, as John Batman said of Melbourne, "This is the site for an industrial estate"? The reality is that there has been a long, exhaustive and, above all else, scientific process across the Goss Government, the Borbidge Government and the Beattie Government. We hear members opposite talk about how we need a scientific approach to the regional forestry agreement, yet they are not prepared to do the work and read the reports that have been compiled in this case.

When the Beattie Labor Government came to office, it inherited the mess at Woodstock. The local people had been shut out of any negotiations and the previous Government was attempting to bulldoze through an industrial estate posthaste. When one considers the way that the National Party treated those people—its own people—it is no wonder that One Nation received 51% of the vote at Woodstock.

When we came into office, the Minister for State Development, Jim Elder, met the people from Woodstock and consulted with them on the matter. He then asked for an examination of any other sites in the Townsville area, bearing in mind that an examination had already been undertaken of sites in the Townsville and Thuringowa Shires. For this review, four sites were selected: three on the road and rail corridors immediately east, south and west of the study area, respectively Giru, Calcium and Bluewater/Rollingstone, and one around Stuart that had already been studied.

The study found that available land at Giru was severely fragmented by creeks and lagoons; its existing infrastructure was too small, and it was subject to heavy flooding from the Haughton River. It was not possible to obtain a consolidated 3,500 hectares in an unconstrained cluster. Calcium was much the same. It had fragmented areas of level land intersected by gullies and it was subject to flash floods. The land rose to steep hillsides. It was impossible to obtain 3,500 hectares of suitable land. The same situation existed with Bluewater/Rollingstone, where rail haulage through major urban areas would be necessary. The land was fragmented by several perennial creeks, flash flooding was likely and there was no infrastructure.

It was found that Stuart could have been capable of holding one or two smaller industries, but there was insufficient land to accommodate 3,500 hectares. Sites at Garbutt and the Bohle were also investigated. It was found that the land was suitable for general manufacture, but there was insufficient

land to accommodate heavy industry. On balance, Stuart and the Garbutt/Bohle areas were not suitable alternatives for the establishment of heavy industry.

Other sites were revisited. Yabulu was found to have a high watertable and poor foundation qualities. Several creeks were running through it and it would have required rail access to run through suburban Townsville. The Herveys Range site, situated at the base of the Herveys Range, was looked at. It is located about 25 kilometres west of Townsville. Again, that site had major terrain problems and problems with a lack of infrastructure. The Rocky Springs site was found to be too small. It is situated right beside Mount Elliott National Park and is planned as a strategic urban area for the Townsville region.

What this all comes down to is that, if we do not plan for the future, we are going to be in a worse situation than we are in now. While I think that Bowen has a tremendous future, the effect of this motion will not mean anything at all. Put simply, land for industry is not a problem at Bowen. If Bowen preserves a huge amount of land for industry that is good and prudent management, but that activity itself will not make industry go there. The framers of this motion seem to think that if land is made available, industry will go there. That is like putting an international airport at Mount Isa and expecting jumbos to be there the next day.

This motion is an anti-Townsville motion that tries to limit future growth in Townsville. In Townsville, major future growth will be about blue-collar jobs and industrial development. I am proud to be a member of the Beattie Labor Government that is delivering projects like Korea Zinc and the north-west minerals province. The industrial park will go ahead at Townsville because we have a great export and import port, the transport infrastructure and the technical wherewithal to expand our heavy industries. This is an anti-Townsville, anti-progress motion from One Nation and the new Country Party.

Time expired.

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