



Speech by

**Hon. T. McGRADY**

**MEMBER FOR MOUNT ISA**

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Hansard 10 March 1999

### **BEATTIE LABOR GOVERNMENT**

**Hon. T. McGRADY** (Mount Isa—ALP) (Minister for Mines and Energy) (6.51 p.m.): This debate is about the Government putting its financial credentials on the table and the Opposition trying to put its credentials on the table. We beat the Opposition hands down.

Labor is the party that is regarded in this State as the job creators and the party with a record of getting things done. The coalition left this State, particularly the electricity industry, in turmoil. If it had not been for the election, between 2,500 and 3,000 of our fellow Queenslanders who work in the electricity industry would now be on the unemployment scrap heap. During the past decade there has been unprecedented growth in mining development, particularly in north-west Queensland. This was not achieved by the coalition; it was achieved by Labor Governments.

I will repeat what the Labor Government did with regard to the north-west of this State. We set up the Carpentaria/Mount Isa minerals province. For the first time ever we had brought together the Federal Government, the Queensland Government, the Northern Territory Government and all of those companies that had interests in the north-west. We worked as a team and today the Ernest Henry mine and Cannington mines are in production. Jobs and wealth are coming out of this part of the State.

What did those opposite do when they were in Government? The only thing they did for the north-west was organise the signing of the documents for the gas to come into the north-west. We all remember what happened then. We sat there and for five hours the coffee and tea was made, the cakes and scones were on the table, and what happened? They could not even organise a signing ceremony, because the document was not ready to be signed. They all had to march back to their offices and their homes and a few weeks later the ceremony took place.

The Carpentaria/Mount Isa minerals province has been one of the great success stories of this State. I have news for the Opposition. We are not content with chapter 1; we are about to embark on chapter 2. Very soon we will be announcing the team of people who will work on trying to get more development in the north-west of this State. Soon we will be announcing the team that will lead chapter 2. That means more jobs, more development and more prosperity for the people of this State.

I refer to the coalmining industry. Prior to the Goss Labor Government coming to power, Cabinet Ministers would sit around the table and decide which land would be available for exploration. One of the first things the Goss Government did was release large tracts of land, known as the RA55. As a direct result of the actions the Government took at that time, we opened up almost 10 new coalmines in this State—each one of them creating jobs and creating prosperity for our State.

As I said in my opening remarks, this debate is about the contrast between the conservatives and the Labor Party in this House. We beat those opposite hands down on every single issue. We are the job creators. We are the ones recognised by the business community as the can-do Government.

Those in this Parliament who understand the mining industry know that it has its peaks and troughs. It is fair to say that at present things are not 100% for the mining industry, but it knows it has a Government which is prepared to help it plan for the future. This Government is all about trying to assist the mining industry and the people who work in the mining industry. That is the challenge we face. That is the challenge we as a Government will rise to.

Time expired.