



Speech by

Dr DAVID WATSON

MEMBER FOR MOGGILL

Hansard 31 May 2000

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Dr WATSON (Moggill—LP) (Leader of the Liberal Party) (10.26 a.m.): There is a word that describes the position adopted by the Treasurer, the Premier and that group of hypocrites on the other side of the Chamber, especially where the GST is concerned, and that word is duplicitous. Despite the mock protests and crocodile tears of members opposite, when it comes to the GST that is all they are.

When it comes to the levelling of stamp duty on the transactions of ordinary Queenslanders, the Beattie Labor Government has adopted the position of imposing stamp duty on top of the value of the premium, plus—and this is important—the associated GST component. This is a tax on a tax. It is a blatant money grab by a financially inept Government with the intent of blaming it all on the GST. By making the calculations of stamp duties in this way, the Government is in effect introducing stamp duty charges across the State of up to 10%.

But that is the modus operandi of the Beattie Government. One has only to look at the failed attempt last week by the Treasurer and the Minister for Mines and Energy to try to disguise power price rises by attempting to withhold their announcement until nearer 1 July this year in order to blame the rises on the GST.

This supposedly open and accountable Government was going to hide its power price rises from the electricity consumers of Queensland by waiting until the commencement of the GST in order to blame it for the price rises rather than the Government's own money grab.

The Beattie Government did the same thing with payroll tax. It expanded the payroll tax base without giving a corresponding reduction in the payroll tax rate sufficient to ensure that the measure was revenue neutral. Those opposite know that what I am saying is correct. Every business person and every person paying payroll tax is aware of what this Government did.

Let us return to the duplicitous stance adopted by this Government when it comes to stamp duty. In a conscious decision to rip money out of the pockets of ordinary Queenslanders, this Government has chosen to impose stamp duty on top of the premium and the associated GST component. That is the bottom line. It is deceitful and dishonest, but that is what Queenslanders have come to expect from this dishonest Government.

Time expired.
