Speech by

Lawrence Springborg

MEMBER FOR SOUTHERN DOWNS

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ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

Mr SPRINGBORG (Southern Downs—NPA) (Leader of the Opposition) (10.27 a.m.): Queenslanders are becoming more and more subject to a power crisis that has been of Mr Beattie's and his government's own making. The most galling thing about this power crisis is that it was totally predictable—in actual fact, it was predicted—and it was totally avoidable. In 1999 in this place the opposition warned Mr Beattie and warned his Labor Party government that unless he stopping stripping the dividends out of the electricity GOCs in Queensland at the rate at which he was doing so, we would see a meltdown in the power industry in this state. That is precisely what has happened.

This man who sits opposite is not fit to be the Premier of Queensland because he ignored the early warnings that were so obvious of the status of the electricity industry in this state. We warned the Premier in 1999. He has been subsequently warned. In the past few weeks we have seen a whole range of people, including the directors and former board chairmen of the electricity GOCs, coming out and also saying that they warned this government. As Queenslanders last year stumbled up their staircases with candles, as they threw out their spoiled food, as they—

An Opposition member: Even the clocks stopped.

Mr SPRINGBORG: This morning we have also seen the clock stop in this place. As Queenslanders threw out their spoiled food, they had nobody to blame but Mr Beattie, because Mr Beattie knew about this and he was warned about it, as was Minister Lucas in June last year when he was briefed, and he came out again in July and said that there was no problem.

This government has complicity in this crisis. This government and Mr Beattie caused this crisis. They deliberately set about stripping from Ergon and Energex the dividends which were so crucial to ensure that they were able to keep the lights on in Queensland. But they were not able to keep the lights on in Queensland. When Mr Beattie looks for somebody to blame, he should look no further than his—

Time expired.