



Speech by

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MEMBER FOR INALA

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## CLEAN COAL TECHNOLOGY

**Ms PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (12.27 pm): Earlier this month we witnessed claims by Senator Bob Brown from Tasmania in relation to phasing out of coal exports. He said on 9 February, 'Australia should develop a plan in the next three years to reduce and phase out coal exports.' According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Senator Brown quotes that the Australian coal industry employs 28,000 people. Statistics from the Queensland coal industry confirm that 20,000 of those workers are based in Queensland. From June 2005 until June 2006 the number of jobs in the coal industry in Queensland increased by 17.82 per cent. Senator Brown's comments could have been interpreted to put those jobs at risk.

The majority of our power generation in Queensland is from coal-fired power stations, but over the years the Beattie government has been actively pursuing policies that utilise a combination of coal and renewable energy. One area in which Queensland is leading the way is clean coal technology. It is this type of technology that will be the way of the future—technology that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions while at the same time preserving the employment of thousands of workers in the Queensland coal industry.

The Stern report states clearly that 'even with strong expansion of the use of renewable energy and other low carbon energy sources, fossil fuels could still make up over half of the global energy in 2050,' and, further, that a combination of business and financial investment intertwined with policy direction by government is at the core to drive innovation change. Already the Beattie government is committed to driving innovation change through research and development to help better develop new clean coal technology.

The advances in Queensland will then be able to spill over and assist other countries such as China and India; hence, having a direct effect on international cooperation in relation to energy emissions. By exporting this technology to the world, we have the potential to be a leader in the field. Queensland is leading by example. In July last year the Queensland government allocated \$300 million from the Queensland Future Growth Fund to develop further technology. Presentations to the board included the ZeroGen clean coal power project, an oxy-fuel firing project and a zero carbon project at a coal seam gas field.

On 1 November last year the Minister for Mines and Energy stated that Stanwell Corporation had just launched an environmental impact study into the groundbreaking ZeroGen project. I note this morning in ministerial statements that the minister for state development said that the ZeroGen project will be the first in the world to investigate the viability of integrating coal based gasification and carbon capture and storage to produce low-emission electricity. It would have the potential to capture and store up to 420,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide or the equivalent, as the Minister for Mines and Energy said in his ministerial statement this morning, of taking 93,000 cars off the road.

The Beattie government has supported the establishment of world-class research and development facilities to support the mineral resource industry right here in Queensland. I was pleased to note that the minister for state development today announced that the Department of State Development has just

committed \$200,000 to a feasibility study into the establishment of a national low-emission gasification test facility in Queensland.

According to the Australian Coal Association, clean coal technologies are a family of new technological innovations that are environmentally superior to the technologies in common use today. Examples of clean coal technologies currently in operation or under development around the world include stack gas treatment, advanced pulverised fuel combustion, fluidised bed combustion and gasification and integrated coal gasification combined cycle.

It is clearly through partnerships between government and industry that we can make a significant difference to the way in which we clean our coal and help to produce low-emission electricity. The research and development now will contribute to our future. This is not out of step with the Stern report. In the report it says that the investment that takes place in the next 10 to 20 years will have a profound effect on the climate in the second half of this century and the next. It is very clear that a Queensland government and industry partnership is one step that can help achieve further advances in clean coal technology.

Already the Premier has indicated that the pilot scheme of the Stanwell Power Station near Rockhampton could bring clean coal technology online much sooner, indicating that a five-year time line is not out of the question, and further that in discussions with Chinese officials they would welcome Queensland's technology in this field. It is now up to the Howard government to show some clear leadership and put further funding into more research and development to create better technologies whilst at the same time preserving the thousands of jobs in the coal industry.