



Speech By  
**Christopher Whiting**

**MEMBER FOR BANCROFT**

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## ADJOURNMENT

### Tieri, Oaky North Lockout

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (7.21 pm): I want to talk tonight about a small, beautiful Queensland town and appeal for an end to the dispute that has split it. That town is Tieri. It is a place I have visited firsthand to see the effects of the Oaky North lockout. It is a beautifully laid out town and it used to be a very active community. Everyone pitched in to help out at the sports club and the social club was busy every Friday. All who live there tell me it was the perfect place to bring up children. There was Monday to Friday work and shifts started and finished at the same time. The phrase I kept hearing was how good the town was ‘back in the day’.

Now that town is divided. There are two workforces who are set in conflict. These workforces live next door to each other, share the same work camps in town and eat in the same mess, but they are still bitterly opposed. There is intimidation of locked-out workers. Some were followed by cars and they were filmed at one stage. School staff were approached about why locked-out miners were doing voluntary work at the school. I was told that some locked-out staff received warning letters about comments they had made in conversations. There is intense surveillance. I saw a sophisticated camera at the miners’ bush camp that would track you as you move. I was informed that ‘trail cams’ were found in the bush opposite the camp and some reported seeing drones. The mess in the camp had cameras too.

The question is: how did Tieri get to this? The mine workers started negotiating a new EBA in 2015. After years of negotiation union members took protected action. The response of Glencore was to lock them out. It is the longest lockout in Australia history—over 200 days of being camped by the road. Meanwhile contract staff, once a small part of the workforce, are increasingly used to cut the coal. The result is division. Every miner living in Tieri is either inside or outside. I want to say that the locked-out workers are not after more money. They want to roll over their existing agreement. They want to keep their conditions as permanent staff with holiday leave, parental leave and sick leave. They previously lost pay and conditions when they agreed to 10-hour shifts instead of 12-hour shifts. It meant they lost about \$35,000 a year.

These workers only want what many other Queenslanders want. They want to live in a great town that offers so much for their kids. This small Queensland town has changed and Glencore can fix it. This lockout has divided this town, families and neighbours. I say to the mine owner: find common ground with all of your workforce and help end this dispute. Your workers just want to preserve their jobs and go to work. That is the same thing that all workers throughout Queensland aspire to. I appeal to all of Queensland today to help us find and create the common ground that will help recreate this town as great place to bring up children.