




Speech By
Dale Last

MEMBER FOR BURDEKIN

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ADJOURNMENT

Burdekin Electorate, Burton Coalmine

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (7.12 pm): Last Thursday I had the privilege of attending the reopening of the Burton coalmine in the Burdekin electorate, and what a great event that was. Some 280 people were in attendance. This is a reopening that has created in excess of 500 jobs, and hasn't it hit the ground running? It has a target of five million tonnes next year. Congratulations to Nick Jorss, the Executive Chairman, and his team for the work that they have done in reopening that mine and creating all of those employment opportunities in that neck of the woods.

Nick was the founding managing director of Stanwell Coal, leading it from an exploration company to a profitable mid-tier producer. He has worked as an engineer and he has worked in investment banking where he advised corporate, private equity and government clients across industry sectors ranging from resources to infrastructure. His passion was clearly evident on the day. During his contribution he quite rightly said that there is no substitute for metallurgical coal, particularly when it comes to the making of steel. They have tried a lot of alternatives, but at the end of the day it is metallurgical coal.

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr LAST: I take that interjection from the minister. We do have the best metallurgical coal in the world and most of those coalmines of course are located in the mighty Burdekin electorate.

When talking about the new coal royalty regime, Nick said that it was like something that you expect from Argentina, but then he said, 'No, that didn't go far enough,' and it was more like something from Venezuela or another dictatorship. He does not mince his words because, as he rightly says, it is those coalmines in Queensland which are contributing significant royalties to this government. I never miss a chance when I get up in this place, whether it be in Brisbane or here in Cairns, to highlight that all we want in those areas—in the Isaac region and the Bowen Basin—is our fair share of the royalties. I know that Mayor Anne Baker and I have a regular discussion about those royalties coming back to the area that produced them—royalties which could be used for roads, royalties which could be used for health, royalties which could be used for schools.

The minister knows my passion and my interest for the schools in my electorate and my commitment to get that blue block at Moranbah State High School reopened. I look forward to the day when the minister gives me a manual arts teacher so that we can reopen that particular building to give our students there the opportunities that they deserve.