




Speech By
Robbie Katter

MEMBER FOR TRAEGER

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ADJOURNMENT

Hinchinbrook Electorate, By-Election

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (9.24 pm): I wish to offer some reflections on the Hinchinbrook by-election so far. It is fair to say that the people of regional Queensland tossed out Labor and the LNP won through the regions. Now we have the by-election, all eyes in Queensland are watching to see what the government is going to leverage off. What would they showcase to tell us what we need to vote for? Perhaps they were looking for a change in water allocations or in how we build dams and use our water assets. Maybe they were wondering how we are going to ignite the biofuels industry. Is there going to be an ethanol mandate finally, after 20 years of asking? Are we going to dump net zero to get electricity prices down? We found that out today. Are we going to allow uranium mining? That has been halted for years. It is a latent wealth that is there. Are we going to manage crocodiles? No, we are not going to do that. Are we going to turn around the regressive social policy contagion that has been hammering Australia for so many years? No, we are not doing any of that. Are we going to get CopperString right through to Mount Isa? No, we are just going to give politicians promises on these things.

We did not get any of that. All we got was a descent into bagging and smearing a fine candidate, a war veteran, Mark Molachino. The government actually approached him a week before we did. Ben Riley, LNP state secretary, rang him up. It is on the record, but it had nothing to do with asking him to run for you! You just approached him to run for you. You do not want to admit it now. You are dirty about that. That is all you are offering to the people of regional Queensland. Shame on you. It is pathetic.

We have gone out there and offered some policy. If you do not like it that is fine, but let us argue on that—not these silly posters that you put up or the flying squad you fly up from Brisbane to help because you cannot get enough volunteers on the ground. You get some young people up from Brisbane to hustle everyone at the polling booths. What a disappointment. You are the government of Queensland. Stand up and tell them what you think. Give them something to vote for. We will give them something to vote for—you can vote for castle law. There were 113,000 people who said they want it, that they think it is a good idea to turn crime around—but let's not talk about that!

We have stayed away from any of the mud we could have thrown at your candidate. I know that the member for Cook would hop into that. He is all for that sort of business, but we are not. We stay on policy. We have tried to take the high road, but you keep coming at our candidate, putting him down. It is turning against you. People came up to me at the polling booth and said, 'I was going to vote for the LNP but I'm not because they keep throwing mud.' People in North Queensland do not like that. They do not like you coming up and playing the silly games and the politics you play down here. They want real policy and real answers. You keep parading around that we cannot do anything. We have these announcements now. It would not be happening if you were not trying to take the seat off us.