




Speech by

Andrew Cripps

MEMBER FOR HINCHINBROOK

Hansard Wednesday, 6 April 2011

MOTION: CARBON TAX

 **Mr CRIPPS** (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (5.57 pm): The reason the LNP has tonight moved a motion calling on the Bligh Labor government to strongly defend Queensland families and industries against the federal Labor government's destructive carbon tax is because the Bligh Labor government has such an appalling record of defending Queensland families and industries from the malicious and perverse policies of federal Labor governments led by Kevin Rudd and Julia Gillard. For example, when Peter Garrett was the federal environment minister he proposed the closure of the Coral Sea without any concern for recreational or commercial fishers, charter boat operators or tourism operators. The Bligh Labor government did nothing. It rolled over. Peter Garrett was being manipulated by and kowtowing to the Pew Environment Group, a foreign environmental lobby group. Did the Bligh government object to this interference in our affairs or the impact that it would have on our local communities? No. It rolled over. What happened at the subsequent federal election? LNP candidates cleaned up Labor candidates up and down the east coast of Queensland. Notwithstanding that situation, the Gillard Labor government is still in bed with the Greens and now proposes a carbon tax that will burden Queensland households and businesses with higher costs and threaten jobs in many industries. The Bligh Labor government has not learnt its lesson. It is sitting over there mute and absurd, condemning Queenslanders to yet another tax.

We now know that every Australian household will face an annual carbon tax bill of about \$863. What a diabolical proposition for the Gillard government to propose such a massive increase in the tax burden on families and small businesses, who are already struggling with the spiralling cost of living and the cost of doing business. The Gillard government has abandoned families and industry in Australia and is in favour of kowtowing to the Greens that support it in parliament. All the while, the Bligh Labor government collaborates and endorses this diabolical tax by its silence. Desperately hanging on to political power is the Gillard government's first priority. Supporting families with cost of living concerns and supporting jobs in regional and rural areas has gone out of the window in favour of this diabolical new tax. That is a familiar story for Labor governments, particularly in Queensland where the Bligh government has perfected the art of selling out and betraying people, jobs and communities in favour of preference deals with the Greens.

I cannot let this opportunity go by without saying a few words specifically on behalf of north Queenslanders. The costs of electricity, fuel and freight will go up under Labor's carbon tax. North Queenslanders already pay more, use more and rely more on those goods and services than do residents of metropolitan areas, so we stand to be hit harder under Labor's tax. North Queensland is suffering badly under the rule of governments delivered to power by the Labor/Greens alliance, both in Canberra and here in Queensland. I will not stand for it, the LNP will not stand for it and I know that north Queenslanders will not stand for it.

If I was a state Labor member of parliament for North Queensland, sitting over there bound and gagged, I would be polishing my resume. The same thing will happen to such members as happened to their federal colleagues if they do not stand up on behalf of North Queensland jobs and industries. Only the LNP has stood up and strongly and consistently opposed the carbon tax at both the state and federal

levels. Before the last state election, the Premier ruled out a fuel tax and a fire sale of state owned assets. The Premier broke both of those promises. Before the last federal election, the Prime Minister ruled out a carbon tax. The Prime Minister has broken that promise. It is disgraceful, but it is not surprising because it is in Labor's DNA.

This policy is one of the most vague, one of the most speculative and one of the most seriously irresponsible pieces of public policy ever proposed in Australia. The policy objective has not been defined and the impact on Australian families and businesses has not been assessed. However, we do know one thing, which is that it is going to cost Queensland billions and the Labor Party is determined to do absolutely nothing about that. For that abdication of its responsibility and for that indifference to the welfare of Queensland families and industries, the Bligh Labor government should be embarrassed and ashamed of itself.