Mr KATTER (Kennedy) (12:14): This is the third speech in a series. The federal government has made enormous noise about developing northern Australia. They have the ignominy of going into this election having done absolutely nothing: not one cent of money has been allocated and there is not one single job. They have also spent, as far as we can make out, another $20 million on looking intos. We spent over $200 million on looking intos. In terms of today's money, some of that goes back about 15 years—it is close to $300 million in looking intos. Well, as the famous Joh Bjelke-Petersen said on numerous occasions: 'If you cannot make a decision, get the hell out of the cabinet room.' This place is for decision makers, not for looking intos and mirror men.

The Galilee Basin has half of Australians known coal reserves. It is a treasure trove of massive proportions. For those who see no future in coal fired power stations, let me just correct you and say this on the problem with CO2: BHP; Ergon, the big electricity supplier in Queensland; and the CSIRO have already established that all of your CO2 emissions can be absorbed in ponded areas so that the modern power station will have no CO2 emissions whatsoever. When it goes into the pond, it grows algae, which is of fabulous value to the cattle industry. It is 23 per cent protein, which is extraordinarily high.

What we need in the Galilee is the building of a railway line. The first railway line was built in Queensland in the 1960s, when Australia was a coal importing country. Can you imagine convincing the public that we could go from a coal importing country to being a coal exporting country? Upon that gamble, $1,500 million dollars of public funds was committed from a budget of $3,000 million dollars. I am using today's terms. It probably predated currency in dollars. If the Queensland government then proceeded to lay down 6,000 kilometres of coal line over the next 20 or 30 years.

The coal industry has gone backwards now for about seven or eight years. In 25 years since the Country Party—then calling themselves the National Party; it was knocked over in the 1990s—to my knowledge there has not been a single kilometre of rail line put down. The Adani mining company has said that they are going to produce $3,000, $4,000 or $5,000 million worth of coal annually and they need the railway line. They have now been struggling for three years to overcome 400 hurdles to get the railway line built. If the railway line is built, then the Australian economy benefits the tune of somewhere between $4,000 and $7,000 million a year. That is assuming that only Adani goes on stream.

What in heaven's name are we fooling around with? There are no hurdles for a government initiative—none whatsoever. So build a railway line. It is $2,000 million. Build the Hell's Gates dam. Heaven only knows, the government has done a study on it about every five or six years now, back to 1984 when the giant Bradfield Scheme was announced. This is the major component of that scheme. We are not advocating Bradfield; I would love to, but I am not doing that. I am just saying: build the Hell's Gates dam. That will give your economy an income of $2,000 million a year. There would be $7,000 million from the Galilee and $2,000 million from the Hell's Gates dam.

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Above Hell's Gates, which is just south-west of Townsville—Charters Towers, if you like—and south-west of Cairns—Ravenshoe, if you like—is the giant status proposal on the upper Herbert River, which again will give you another $2,000 million dollars a year in income. Build a canal to get our fertiliser out—$200 million is probably all we require there—and we will give you back $4,000 million dollars a year in fertiliser production. We are already doing nearly $2,000 million dollars worth in Mount Isa now. So we have all these wonderful things, along with the realisation of what we should be achieving in the cattle industry: a quadrupling of our present figures with irrigation. (Time expired)

Question agreed to.