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Be strategic

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EDITORIAL

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We need governments to support our sovereign copper processing capability

North Queensland stands at a crossroads. Glencore’s revelation that it’s poised to decide within weeks whether to shutter its Mount Isa copper smelter and Townsville copper refinery, means our region is facing an economic disaster that threatens an estimated 17,000. The stakes couldn’t be higher. The interconnected nature of these facilities means losing one triggers the collapse of both – a

domino effect that would cripple our regional economy. We’ve witnessed this devastation before. The 2016 closure of the Queensland Nickel Refinery left lasting scars on Townsville, destroying livelihoods and shattering community confidence. We cannot afford to repeat this catastrophe on an even larger scale. The solution requires decisive leadership from both state and federal governments. We agree with Minister Dale

Last that this can’t be about writing blank cheques, but it is about recognising the strategic value of maintaining sovereign copper processing capability in an increasingly volatile global market. Townsville Enterprise’s warning is stark but accurate: “Giving up on copper means giving up on the future.” North Queensland’s copper future cannot wait. The decision must be made now.