




Speech by

Hon. Andrew Cripps

MEMBER FOR HINCHINBROOK

Hansard Tuesday, 10 July 2012

TULLY BANANA REPUBLIC

 **Hon. AP CRIPPS** (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (9.56 pm): As a strong constitutional monarchist, I found myself in a very unusual situation on Saturday, 9 June. Tully was celebrating its annual Golden Gumboot Festival, and I was very pleased, as usual, to attend this wonderful community event. This particular festival was special because it involved another important event, the inauguration of the fearless leader of the newly declared Tully Banana Republic, Fidel Cavendish, and I was asked to preside over the inauguration and swear in our fearless leader.

Members will have heard me speak previously about the terrible hardships suffered by many communities in my electorate in the wake of Cyclone Yasi in February last year. The Tully Banana Republic project has been supported through the Queensland government's Blueprint for the Bush program. The project is all about supporting tourism in the Tully district. It is designed to be a community-building project that promotes the livability of the Tully area.

The Tully Banana Republic project is aimed at lifting the morale of the local community after Cyclone Yasi by engaging visitors in a fun and novel way. It encourages locals and visitors to participate in a number of light-hearted and fun events. A project coordinator has been appointed and a local businessman, Col Batts, has assumed a new identity as our fearless leader, Fidel Cavendish. Activities associated with establishing the Tully Banana Republic include street theatre, the development by renowned chef Peter Russell-Clarke of a signature dish for the republic—the banana flambé—and the composition of the republic's own anthem, the *Banana Republic Song*.

The project aims to attract more tourists to Tully and provide a boost for our struggling retail outlets and tourism operators. Importantly, the project will enable residents and organisations in Tully to feel a sense of involvement and pride in promoting their region after we have struggled for 18 months to put our lives back together.

The organisers of the Tully Banana Republic project are continuing to recruit people to the cause, and they are aiming to involve as many local people as possible to maximise its reach as an ongoing promotional tool for the local area. I commend the organisers of the Banana Republic project for their positive initiative and thank the Golden Gumboot Festival committee for inviting me to be involved in the inauguration of our fearless leader, Fidel Cavendish.

I am pleased to report to the House that this year I was victorious in the celebrity gumboot-throwing competition, defeating the mayor and the deputy mayor and Fidel Cavendish himself. As an avowed constitutional monarchist, I will say something now in support of the Tully Banana Republic which members may never hear me say again: viva la revolucion!