




Speech by

Hon. Andrew Cripps

MEMBER FOR HINCHINBROOK

Hansard Tuesday, 29 May 2012

MOTION: MUNGKAN KANDJU NATIONAL PARK

 **Hon. AP CRIPPS** (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (6.11 pm): Talk about an own goal! One of the reasons we have the standing order, to which the Speaker just referred, to encourage members not to refer to other members who are not in the House is to protect them. It is to stop members casting aspersions on other members. Do members know where the Premier is tonight? He is at the Reconciliation Awards with the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs and Minister Assisting the Premier. What an own goal!

Ms TRAD: I rise to a point of order. I apologise for referring to the Premier in his absence. What I will not apologise for is referring to the events of last week.

Madam SPEAKER: The member will take her seat. She will not argue a point of order. A point of order is not an opportunity for debate.

Mr CRIPPS: Talk about an own goal! I support the handing back of the Mungkan Kandju National Park in Cape York to its traditional owners. I am proud to say that I had a role in this outcome by signing the Indigenous land use agreement on behalf of the state of Queensland, which facilitated the transfer and approved the issue of the deed to the local land trust.

The Newman LNP government has a strong commitment to addressing the land related needs of Indigenous Queenslanders. That commitment includes involving Indigenous people in the management, conservation and development of their traditional lands. My department is responsible for administering the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander land acts that allow for certain lands to be transferred to Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders. These land transfers are an important recognition of the interests and responsibilities of traditional owners and foster their capacity for self-development, self-reliance and cultural integrity. Access to land provides Indigenous Queenslanders with economic employment and homeownership opportunities as well as opportunities to create partnerships to manage the land with other interested stakeholders.

The past policies of the former Labor government had a fanatical preoccupation with environmental issues on the cape without providing genuine job and income-creation opportunities for Indigenous communities. The Newman LNP government recognises the challenge of balancing the interests of all stakeholders but, most importantly, recognises what is best for those people who live and work in that unique region of the state. We believe that sensible, well-considered development is possible on the cape without diluting its significant environmental and cultural values. In recent years these environmental values have been assessed to death and perhaps the time has come to focus on establishing economic opportunities that will sustain local communities in the longer term. In particular, the Newman LNP government has committed to addressing land tenure issues to ensure that councils can deliver homeownership to Indigenous Queenslanders and remove the bureaucratic roadblocks to give a fair deal for homeownership for Indigenous Queenslanders.

This government will work in partnership with Indigenous Queenslanders to develop pragmatic strategies and mechanisms to assist their communities and meet their homeownership aspirations, like every other Queensland in any other community across the state. The Newman LNP government looks forward to promoting positive partnerships and opportunities for Indigenous people on their traditional lands. In the next six months a further four land transfers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are anticipated in Gladstone, Mission Beach, Magnetic Island and the Murray Island community in the Torres Strait. On community lands such as Murray Island, the LNP government will work with the new owners of the land and other stakeholders to remove the barriers to sustainable homeownership.

Once again, what an own goal from the Labor opposition tonight! Ultimately, it has come a gutser. That is North Queensland slang for they have brought themselves undone. They have sacrificed their principles and the intention of their policies on Cape York in favour of preferences from the extreme Greens. I take the point made so very well by the Deputy Premier in his contribution tonight when he moved the amendment that they use the future of cape communities as currency for political preferences from the extreme Greens. That really is something for which they will forever be condemned.

I want to draw to the attention of the House tonight what it has done for them. They have lost the seat of Cook for the first time since they held it in 1977 after they defeated the first Indigenous member of this parliament, Mr Eric Deeral. So let us learn some history. The first Indigenous member of this parliament was Eric Deeral and he was an LNP member of this parliament. All honourable members should remember what I said before: do not listen to their rhetoric. It is empty.

(Time expired)