



Speech by

Shane Knuth

MEMBER FOR CHARTERS TOWERS

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DUCK AND QUAIL HUNTING

Mr KNUTH (Charters Towers—NPA) (10.26 pm): Duck and quail hunting has long been a recreational tradition in Queensland that has been passed down through the generations. For years, it has been a way of life for bush families who are brought up in this country. It is as traditional as enjoying a beer or boiling the billy. The annual recreational duck and quail hunting season has been managed, is sustainable and does not impact on the long-term survival of those species which are harvested. One must take into consideration the large number of man-made waterways and dams that have increased the number of habitats for wild ducks. In fact, no expert is concerned with a decline in native duck numbers.

This is purely a chance for Mr Beattie to get on his pedestal and try to convince the metropolitan majority what a great bloke he is and, at the same time, pander to the left-wingers. I have grave concerns that the people who have convinced the Premier that duck and quail hunting is cruel and barbaric and should not be practised in the 21st century are the same people who are targeting recreational fishers on the same basis. I have grave concerns that the Premier will target recreational fishing and pig hunting, because the people the Premier has pandered to by banning duck shooting are the same bunch who wanted pig hunting using dogs banned.

Mr Beattie and his south-east corner based government do not understand rural Queensland and they do not understand bush culture. Rural Queenslanders have been brought up with duck shooting. It is an experience that our grandfathers and great-grandfathers have been handing down from generation to generation. It is a way of life. It continues to put food on tables.

There is no reason to ban duck and quail hunting in Queensland. It is already managed under the Nature Conservation (Duck and Quail Conservation) Plan 1995, which outlines the strategies that protect duck and quail species and sets hunting conditions. Hunting ducks and quail in Queensland is strictly regulated to ensure that hunting is ecologically sustainable. Hunting has been confined to defined seasons, and hunting seasons are closely monitored.

A hunter needs to obtain a recreational wildlife harvesting licence. Someone applying for a licence for the first time needs to pass the water fowl identification test. Duck and quail shooters are aware of their responsibilities to observe the laws and regulations that relate to hunting. It is a fact that hunting is not the greatest threat to birds. Rather, it is the loss and degradation of their habitats.

Since I have been a member of this parliament, this government has kicked horse riders and beekeepers out of state forests, cut our race meetings, introduced licences for bow hunters and continued to close down our rural services. What does the Premier want the people of rural Queensland to do? They do not have the sports stadiums, the big car races, the footbridges and the multimillion-dollar parklands that the city people enjoy. Many rural Queenslanders rely on recreational activities, such as fishing, shooting and camping, but this government is slowly destroying the heritage that built this state.

Time expired.