



Speech by

David Gibson

MEMBER FOR GYMPIE

Hansard Tuesday, 13 November 2012

MINERAL RESOURCES (MARY RIVER DAM SITE) AMENDMENT BILL: ORDER DISCHARGED

Mr GIBSON (Gympie—LNP) (11.08 am): I rise to support this motion put forward by the member for Nicklin and I support the comments made by the minister. As those who have followed Queensland's political history in the last few years would be aware, the debacle that was forced upon the community of the Mary Valley by the inept Labor government was nothing short of criminal. The way in which the community was treated, the way in which the former Premier Peter Beattie flew into that valley, announced a dam, then jumped onto a chopper and flew out which actually then devastated the social fabric of a community—ripping the guts out of it by what occurred—was nothing short of a disgrace in public administration, and all those who were involved in any way should hang their heads in shame.

In this place what we see occurring from time to time is that we have two roles. We have a role as legislators and of course we have a role as politicians. It is when those roles are blurred that we find unintended consequences occurring. I believe fundamentally that the private member's bill introduced by the member for Nicklin was a blurring of those two roles. We saw the role of a legislator crossing into politics to achieve an outcome which, let me be frank, was a stunt designed to attract attention. Unfortunately, as was outlined by the minister, had that bill been passed, the member for Nicklin would have been responsible for allowing mining into the Mary Valley. I do not believe that was his intention. I do not believe it is the intention of any member. However, it would have been the consequence if that flawed piece of legislation had been passed in the House.

That sends a message to all of us: when we are looking at legislation, whether it be the government's or a private member's, we have an obligation to do our homework, not to rush ahead with a stunt looking for a headline but, rather, to understand the full consequences of what we are trying to achieve. As the minister has quite rightly said, it is understood what the member for Nicklin wants to achieve, but as we have heard he had not approached the minister. In my role as chair of the Mary Valley Economic Development Advisory Group, he had not approached us as a committee to raise his concerns. There are ways in which we as members of this House can go about our business. There are ways in which we are able to literally grease the wheels of government and lobby for the changes that we want to make.

The change the member for Nicklin wishes to achieve is an administrative one. It is in a description box that sits upon interactive maps. It is not a legislative one, because Traveston Dam does not exist within the Mineral Resources Act, nor does it exist within the *Government Gazette* that his private member's bill referred to. What does exist, very clearly, is protection against mining in those areas.

I was at the Mary River Festival on the weekend, as I know the member for Nicklin was, where many people raised concerns with me about why mining would be brought into the Mary Valley. I assured them that I did not believe for a moment that was the intention of the member for Nicklin, but it is what happens from unintended consequences when we have poorly drafted legislation or when we are seeking to achieve a political outcome and use legislative means to do so. There is a lesson for all of us when looking at legislation in this House to ensure that there are no unintended consequences and to be diligent in the committee process. I commend the member for Nicklin for listening to the calls to have this bill withdrawn. He has acted honourably, and for that I support this motion.