



Speech by

David Kempton

MEMBER FOR COOK

Hansard Thursday, 15 November 2012

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER LAND HOLDING BILL: MOTION

 **Mr KEMPTON** (Cook—LNP) (5.30 pm): The Leader of Opposition Business should educate the member for Bundamba about the people who live in Cape York and the Torres Strait Islands. They are not villagers. I think the member ought to apologise to my constituents for calling them villagers. They are hardworking and honest people for whom I have a lot of respect. Talk about trivialising the debate! Our minister has been in here for only a few months, but he has got up and had a go. A mess was left as a legacy to the people I represent and he has rolled up his sleeves and is fixing it.

Labor have an appalling record on land tenure in Cape York. They ought to be ashamed of themselves. For 25 years I have been up there trying to help the people sort out this mess. We are going to clean up that mess. Labor has not delivered one square inch to the people in the Cape York or the Torres Strait. They have not helped economic development in any way with its stalled land tenure policies, old land tenure policies, paternalistic land tenure policies.

We are going to get on with the job. We are going to sort out this freehold issue. We are going to get people back into their houses, as they were before we came along. We are going to get freehold. We are going to clean up this leasehold mess. People are dying before their leasehold issues are resolved. For 20 years this mess has been sitting there and nobody has done anything about it. Our minister went to the department and said, 'Get on with the job.' He sent the committee into the Cape York and the Torres Strait, saying, 'Get on with the job.' What is Labor doing now? It is saying, 'Let's hold it up a bit longer,' yet people are dying.

It is time that we got serious about this debate with Indigenous people. They have the right to community growth and economic development, along with the rest of us. We need to get on with the job. This is just delaying rubbish.