




Speech By
Shane Knuth

MEMBER FOR DALRYMPLE

Record of Proceedings, 20 November 2013

**NORTH STRADBROKE ISLAND PROTECTION AND SUSTAINABILITY AND
ANOTHER ACT AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—KAP) (11.52 pm): I rise to speak to the North Stradbroke Island Protection Sustainability and Another Act Amendment Bill. This bill is probably one of the most contentious that this committee has examined relating to a specific issue in a small community, that is, sandmining on North Stradbroke Island. That is reflected in the quality and the tone of the submissions made during the short time—one could say the minuscule time—that the bill was open for public comment. I believe mining is important for the creation of jobs and the flow-on effects in small communities can be hugely beneficial. It is obvious that both Sibelco, which stands to gain the most from this legislation, and the environmental interest groups were heavily involved in gathering community support for their respective positions. That biased campaigning by both parties has only served to cloud the issues and place a greater responsibility on us to provide impartial and objective scrutiny.

However, there are issues with this legislation that potentially compromise the public perception of the integrity of government and, by association, this parliament. The most remarkable is the extensive consultation granted to Sibelco in comparison to zero consultation with the traditional owners. I note that every member here spoke on behalf of the traditional owners, outlining what they have said and what they think, but not one of them was present during the committee hearings to see their tears and to see that they are gutted. Those people are absolutely gutted because there was absolutely no consultation.

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Watts): Order!

Mr KNUTH: Everyone at the public hearing—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Watts): Order! I remind members to direct their comments through the chair.

Mr KNUTH: As I said, the most remarkable thing is the extensive consultation granted to Sibelco in comparison to zero consultation with the traditional owners, the Quandamooka people. Most requests made by Sibelco in their briefing—

Mr Dowling interjected.

Mr KNUTH: I take that interjection from the member for Redlands. I hope that he goes and talks to them, and tells the Quandamooka people—

Mr Dowling: You said no member was here.

Mr KNUTH: No, I said that the members who had spoken here—

Mr Dowling: You said no member was here. You misled the House. I was here. I spoke.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr KNUTH: That is good. I give a full tick to you, Mr Dowling.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr KNUTH: A beautiful tick for Redlands.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Dalrymple, take your seat. The House will come to order. I call the member for Dalrymple.

Mr KNUTH: I will continue. Most requests made by Sibelco in the briefing note of the government in May of this year have been met in this bill, while the Quandamooka people have been gutted and completely stripped of their voice. Other objections to this legislation such as the legal issue relating to Sibelco conducting operations without the appropriate permits, the decreasing contribution that sandmining is making to the economy of the island and the potential long-term effects mining will have on other major contributors to the island's economy, such as tourism, have not been adequately addressed in this report. I am deeply concerned that this bill has not been given appropriate scrutiny. I believe it should be taken back to the relevant stakeholders for further comprehensive negotiations. That is not too much to ask for. I am not saying that I do not support sandmining. I am saying that the process could have been done a lot better.

I have a transcript of an ABC broadcast with reporter Peter McCutcheon, which I will table. It states—

CHRIS UHLMANN, PRESENTER: The Queensland Government bell Newman's election campaign. Two years ago sand miner Sibelco helped propel Mr Newman into Parliament. Now 7.30 has obtained documents that show the Newman Government is proposing to extend the life of a lucrative sand mine run by the company which had been earmarked for closure. The news has angered the local native title holders, who claim the deal was done in secret. From North Stradbroke Island, Peter McCutcheon reports.

It further states—

CAMPBELL NEWMAN, LNP LEADER (Jan. 2012): We will allow the mine to proceed in the way that it was originally allowed to prior to the actions of the last 18 months.

PETER MCCUTCHEON: The mining company followed this up by directly assisting Campbell Newman in what was expected to be a tough fight to win the safe Labor seat of Ashgrove in Western Brisbane. The miner was caught out posting letters to votes from mine supporters without required disclosure urging a vote for Campbell Newman.

Sibelco belatedly obtained authorisation and last year filed a disclosure revealing that it had spent more than \$19,000 on postage and printing.

Mr Davies: Ninety.

Mr KNUTH: I apologise and I take that back. It was not \$19,000; it was \$90,000. It spent \$90,000 on proceeds and printing to support Campbell Newman's campaign. I have to say that there is something very dirty about this. As we saw and as I said to the member for Redlands, the Quandamooka people were almost in tears about that lack of consultation. What did we have? There were six meetings with Sibelco, but none with the Quandamooka people. Of course, had the government got this right from the beginning, we would not be going through this process. The transcript continues—

7.30 has obtained a ministerial briefing paper by Sibelco on how to frame new legislation and a pre-cabinet government circular seeking permission to put this proposal into practice. The documents say mining at Enterprise will extend through to 2035, eight years longer than had been previously announced.

By continuing it to 2035, aren't you going beyond the Premier's election commitment?

I refer to an article in the *Brisbane Times* headed 'Stradbroke Island mining decision dubbed a filthy dirty rotten deal'. It states—

Queensland's mines minister says there is nothing untoward about plans to extend sand mining on North Stradbroke Island.

It continues—

It said on Friday that miners had Mr Cripps's ears and were hatching a "filthy dirty rotten deal".

The government has met with miner Sibelco eight times in two months, and the Quandamooka people only once, a budget estimates hearing was told on Friday.

While Mr Cripps was pressured to reveal more at the hearing, he again failed to detail when mining leases could be extended to.

What we are hearing about here is a deal. This is all about an extension of leases. This is all about proper process. I believe that if there were proper consultation with all stakeholders we could have reached an outcome. We have seen legislation smashed through this House day in and day out

and week in and week out during the parliamentary sittings. I believe this is coming back to bite the LNP.

I believe that sandmining is probably good. Like the member for Cleveland said, it is good for his community. The government should have talked to the stakeholders, the Quandamooka people, the people who are going to be affected and the people who may benefit from this in some way. That is all the people of Stradbroke island were asking for. That is all the Quandamooka people were asking for.

The Premier was on the news tonight doing something simple. We saw him being kissed because he is going to protect an area in Cape York Peninsula. Why is he doing this? Because he had dialogue with people. It is so simple. It is about dialogue and communication. We would not be here debating this legislation at 12.05 if the LNP government and minister communicated with all members of the community. That is what they are after. They could have got it right.

As we saw with the Premier being kissed today, he was working to get the issue right. What he is doing in Cape York Peninsula is going to cost jobs. The mining council came out and said that there is some disappointment. But the Premier got his photograph and it all looked good. All he had to do was to go to the people, communicate with them and get it right.

(Time expired)