




Speech By  
**Shane Knuth**

**MEMBER FOR DALRYMPLE**

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Record of Proceedings, 15 September 2016

**MOTION: NORTH QUEENSLAND, SECESSION**

 **Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—KAP) (6.16 pm): I rise to speak in support of the motion to separate Queensland into two states and for the boundary of the two states to be recommended by the Queensland Redistribution Commission or other commission. This is not a new argument. In 1896—120 years ago—the Queensland Labor member for Rockhampton, William Kidston, moved a motion for a referendum for the separation of northern and central Queensland colonies. It was passed by the Speaker's vote after a 20-20 split in the vote. However, the movement was blocked because a number of members who were absent when the vote took place managed to have their votes recorded.

In 1948 another new state movement was inaugurated in North Queensland following which the Governor's speech at the opening of the Queensland parliament in 1948 contained suggestions that a new state might be formed in Queensland when they had a reasonable degree of economic stability. I quote—

The North Queensland Movement received additional impetus following a representative popular convention held at Mareeba in August 1955 when the 'New State for the North Queensland Movement' was officially launched. Agitation for a North Queensland State has persisted through the 1970's and 80's, with continual demands for a referendum. The driving force at this time was the North Queensland Self-Government League which had the aim of having 'a separate self-governing sovereign state by 1988'. In 1994 the North Queensland Party was formed with Frank Rossiter of Townsville as a leading figure. The new North Queensland flag was proposed and approved at a meeting on the 16 October, 1994. In attendance were Frank Rossiter, Max Keating, Alex Caldwell and other leading figures supporting a separate state. The blue and white North Queensland State Flag consisted of the Southern Cross and Tropical Sun with Marlin.

In April this year the KAP set up a working group to help drive the push for a separate state. While we have been through local and federal elections, we have committed to progressing strongly with this push.

There are many factors behind our decision, the top one being that people in North Queensland believe that the highly populated southern regions and electorates determine what is in the best interests for the north. By becoming autonomous North Queensland can develop to its full potential, and decisions about North Queensland should be made by North Queenslanders. The area has not had a major infrastructure project for up to 30 years and it is continually short-changed. Out of the \$3.6 billion for the Royalties for the Regions, rural and regional Queensland only received \$100 million. On top of that, Townsville was short-changed \$500 million according to the *Townsville Bulletin* through the State Infrastructure Fund, and I table that document.

*Tabled paper:* Article from the *Townsville Bulletin* online, dated 17 March 2016, titled 'Townsville's 2.6 per cent share of \$35 billion plan' [[1551](#)].

It was southern politicians who made the decision to sell off the coal infrastructure that delivered \$1.7 billion to the Queensland economy each year that provided services in health and education. That money is now in the hands of multinationals. Out of 89 MPs, only 13 belong to North Queensland and yet the decision was made to sell off assets, including the above rail from Townsville to Mount Isa which produced \$500 million—

**Mr Rickuss:** Which government did that, Shane?

**Mr KNUTH:** The member is right: the Labor government, but his government also had a big assets sell-off planned too, didn't it? Yes, and that is why that government was booted out. I notice that there are 30 fewer LNP members. The LNP used to occupy all of these seats, and there are roughly 30 of them left but 30 of them gone as a result of asset sales. Do not be hypocritical and point the finger. North Queensland has one senator. Tasmania has 12 and yet North Queensland is double the size of Tasmania. Some \$1.6 million of GST revenue goes to Tasmania. Southerners say, 'Where are we going to get the funds from?' They got \$6 billion from the Bowen Basin and \$1 billion comes from the western minerals province.

*(Time expired)*