



Speech By  
**James Lister**


**MEMBER FOR SOUTHERN DOWNS**

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Record of Proceedings, 16 October 2019

**MOTION**

**Future Drought Fund**

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (11.36 am): I will not sit in this House and be lectured to by a dodgy Palaszczuk-Trad Labor government about drought support for our farmers. They obviously have not been speaking to the farmers in my electorate. The Premier talked in her contribution about Emu Swamp Dam. They had to be dragged kicking and screaming to build Emu Swamp Dam.

**Ms TRAD:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member has used unparliamentary language. I ask him to withdraw.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): The member's language was unparliamentary. I ask that it be withdrawn.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. For one to have a matter withdrawn, one would have to find the matter personally offensive for which the member would have to be personally referenced, and the Deputy Premier, as I understand it, was not.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I will take some advice.

**Mrs D'ATH:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I would like to speak to that point of order on the basis that the Deputy Premier did not rise saying she took personal offence. She said that it was unparliamentary language. On the basis of it being unparliamentary language, you, as the Deputy Speaker, can ask that the member withdraw.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I did not hear the unparliamentary language. We will move on. I will have to ask the Speaker to review the transcript later.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. If it is the word 'dodgy' that the member used, I used that word in questioning the Premier this morning and the Speaker allowed it this morning.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I have made the ruling. We will move on. I call the member for Southern Downs.

**Mr LISTER:** The government had to be dragged kicking and screaming to the table to build Emu Swamp Dam. They provided less money than they should have in the first place and they are going slow now. The minister said there would be a letter of agreement provided to the company by the end of August. We are getting to the middle of October now. The government is already going slow on Emu Swamp Dam.

Despite the disingenuous criticism that they throw at us, this is the side of the House that looks after farmers. We heard about water for the town. That is great, Premier. I appreciate the water for the town. What about the water for the farmers outside of town? I wrote to the Premier asking for support, asking for trucks to deliver water to those who live outside the town. The farmers are on tank water. I got a haughty reply saying no, because she had been listening to the toxic mayor of the Southern Downs Regional Council who said that the farmers did not need it.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr LISTER:** I am prepared to stand by that. Our farmers outside the town need water and the Premier denied them the chance to transport it.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. I remind the member to put his comments through the chair.

**Mr LISTER:** I take the fact that I have been interrupted by the Labor Party as proof that what I am saying is true. How can the government say they are looking at—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, member! Pause the clock. I will take some advice. Member, that was very close to reflecting on the chair.

**Mr LISTER:** How can a government that says it is looking after farmers ignore the comprehensive scientific advice tendered by my constituents to the environment minister? It states that the blue dots that apply to their properties, which prevent them from farming, should be removed. But they have not been. It is not just about the cash; it is about the complexion of the government and the way it treats farmers that is the point here. This state government is in no position to lecture us about support for farmers. The horticulturalists in my electorate, those who grow tomatoes, fruit trees and so forth, have asked time and time again for state government support to get water trucked to their properties and for the state government to match the federal government's contribution of 25 per cent for desilting dams for farmers.

I have spoken to the minister about this. I believe that he wants to do something, but as a government they cannot because there is no money left in the bank because, in contrast to the federal government, they have blown it all. When the Prime Minister talks about \$5 billion in drought relief, that is responsible economic management because that is a fund to contend with future drought situations. It is typical of a Labor government that they want to blow it all now. It gives no lasting response; it is all about a sugar hit right at the moment.

The federal government is pulling its own weight. There is a farm household allowance. They are providing income support to farmers who need support, including up to \$12,000 in a lump sum. The 25 per cent contribution towards desilting is really going to help farmers in my electorate. That is real drought relief. Why will the state government not match it? The federal government has provided \$33 million for drought-affected communities. That is making a real difference in my electorate. We are talking about a federal government that understands and a state government that does not, and never has, pulled its weight when it comes to drought, so do not come into this House and criticise the LNP. This Labor government has no idea how to look after farmers and no idea how to look after agriculture.