




Speech By
Joseph Kelly

MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES

Record of Proceedings, 29 November 2022

MOTION

Voice to Parliament

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (11.57 am): I proudly support this motion. I support it because it supports a statement that was put together by First Nations people, telling us what they want and what their vision is for Australia. We heard from the members for Algester, Cook and Bundamba—their views and their vision of where things should go.

During the mental health inquiry earlier this year we heard very clear feedback from many First Nations people about the need for our nation to heal the very significant scar and damage at the core of its founding and that this was one of the most important things we need to do to address intergenerational trauma. That is why we made recommendations in relation to the Uluru Statement from the Heart. This is not window-dressing or a black armband view of history; this is something that will help our nation to move forward.

I grew up in a small town in North Queensland. I think it was pretty typical of a lot of towns across Australia: a school for the Catholics, a school for the Protestants and a school for the Indigenous First Nations people. I can tell you which school had the worst facilities. Where you went to school would have determined how you moved forward in life. We have changed a lot since then, and we need to change a hell of a lot more.

Every single Australian will have an opportunity to make a choice at some point in the next 12 months. The choice will be: will we continue as a nation of ‘them and us’ and ‘us and them’, or will we become a nation just of ‘us’? Will we become a nation that is united, honest about our past and optimistic about our future? That is the real choice we have to make. I support this motion because the people of Greenslopes support it. It is why they formed the Greenslopes Reconciliation Group: they want to see reconciliation, in all its forms, moving forward.

It is so disappointing that we do not know the choices of the state LNP in relation to this. The people of Queensland certainly want to know the choices their political leaders are making. I am certainly making my views here clear, as is our entire party. I want to refer to Senator Gerard Rennick—another great Queenslander—who opposes this on principle because, as he says—

... Labor have done it with every other thing they have done. They introduce it. It starts off little and then it gets more and more and more.

I hope we get more and more and more. I hope we have more and more empowerment for First Nations people. I hope we have more and more empowerment, health care, educational outcomes, housing and everything else for First Nations people. That is exactly what I hope we achieve as a Labor Party.