




Speech By
Robbie Katter

MEMBER FOR TRAEGER

Record of Proceedings, 1 May 2024

MOTION

Path to Treaty

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (4.39 pm): I rise to support the motion moved by the member for Mirani—a brave motion introduced into this parliament. It seems that every time someone speaks against this there are cries of outrage from the public, and surprisingly it seems to be louder in Brisbane and not so loud at home. I am not going to stand here and say that no-one talks about it at home. There will be the occasional person who will raise it because it has been in the media a lot and perhaps they have an interest, but I will tell members what they do talk about at home. They talk about issues like those contained in the text I got at Christmas time from Andrew Colton saying, 'How come this bike I've got at the shop in Doomadgee is \$250 and the same bike in Mount Isa at Kmart is \$99?', or 'How come I'm buying a loaf of bread for \$13 in the government store at Doomadgee when it's one of the most disadvantaged communities in Queensland?', or 'How come no-one can get a job because of the blue card system?', changes to which all members in this place voted against when we were trying to get people into work in these communities. Of the 10 most disadvantaged communities in Australia, seven of them are in Queensland and those are all Aboriginal communities.

Ms Enoch interjected.

Mr KATTER: I will tell you what we are doing: we are trying to get action on blue cards. We are trying to make groceries cheaper. We are trying to—

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Traeger, you will direct your comments through the chair, not at other members.

Mr KATTER: I take your advice, Mr Speaker. We are about action. If there is a problem in Doomadgee or Mornington, let us get some action for it. We come down here and say, 'Doomadgee has been shut off for the last three months. There's \$100 million for bridges to get up there,' and the government says, 'No, we'll do a treaty to help them.' We do not want a treaty; we want the bridges to Doomadgee so that people can get in and out and the groceries and the fuel can get in. They did not have diesel for two weeks there last month, so kids were not going to school. That town could not get diesel in, but the government has money to put all of these footbridges on the Brisbane River down here. It has money for Cross River Rail, but it does not have money to get bridges into Doomadgee to help people and yet it says, 'Let's talk about a treaty to help them.'

We would just like some bridges thanks. We would just like the blue card system amended so that people can get jobs. We would like title deeds on the housing so people can buy a house in Doomadgee like anywhere else in Australia. However, the government says, 'Let's not act on that. Let's talk about this stuff instead.' That is what makes us riled up. When the government talks about these issues, it does not connect with what we are seeing on the ground. We see real problems such as terrible health problems. Those on the government side talk about them. We all know about them, so let us act on them. Let us get cheaper grocery prices. It will cost the government money, and it has

worked out that the transport issue has not worked. It has worked that out now. We need some affirmative action in these areas. We are all good at talking about it and feeling all sympathetic, but put it into action. Every time we say, 'Let's do title deeds up there,' the government says, 'No, we can't do that.' When we say, 'Let's change the blue card system,' the government says, 'No, we can't do that,' and then we are back talking about all of these slogans and sayings. Maybe they have a place down the track—maybe they do—but let us have some action now. That is what we feel so strongly about and that is the frustrating thing.

The government comes out with words and policy statements. Let us forget about treaty at the moment because we are just hearing policy statements. Let us get the minerals out of the ground, but Mount Isa copper has been shut down. The government says that it has a new policy on manufacturing. Where is the manufacturing? It says, 'Let's do a policy on this. Let's do a treaty to help Aboriginal people.' How is that helping with their health? How is that helping to reform those kids from recidivist youth crime and getting them back to being functional members of society? How is that helping them? There are a lot of people in those Aboriginal communities who would share those same sentiments with me in terms of their frustration. There are some real issues that we want to talk about. We want them front and centre, not just talking about the word 'treaty' but saying exactly what the government is going to do in affirmative action.

Sadly, this becomes a smokescreen that politicians can use to not act and do the things that are needed. It becomes a smokescreen—a word that they can say so that it looks like they are doing something when in reality they are not getting down on the ground and doing the things that are desperately needed. We pay a cost for that. As I said, seven of the 10 most disadvantaged communities are in Queensland. Doomadgee has one of the lowest incomes with the highest grocery prices. Let us talk about that more in this parliament—that is, getting those grocery prices down, building some bridges in order to get access to the gulf, getting the education standards up and getting some funding that is even close to the funding that the Northern Territory is getting for education. Let us talk about that more. KAP want to see fewer slogans, sayings and aspirational ideas that are nebulous and do not have application on the ground. That is what the KAP wants to see. Well done, member for Mirani.