



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Main Committee

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Queensland: Cape York Peninsula

SPEECH

Wednesday, 12 February 2003

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH

Date Wednesday, 12 February 2003	Source House
Page 11707	Proof No
Questioner	Responder
Speaker Entsch, Warren, MP	Question No.

Mr ENTSCHE (Leichhardt—Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Industry, Tourism and Resources) (9.48 am)—I would like to bring to the House's attention yet another attempt by the Beattie Labor government in Queensland to drive a stake into the economic heart of the Cape York Peninsula, with the recent announcement that the state government has signed a contract to purchase some 14 mainly freehold blocks of land at Archer's Point, near Cooktown, to convert into a national park. Interestingly enough—as would be the case with a state government that is obviously having economic problems—the contract was conditional upon the Commonwealth providing the money. There is always an 'out' clause! Nevertheless such a proposal has created a huge amount of outrage within the community. I congratulate Bob Sullivan, the Mayor of Cook Shire Council, for raising concerns. Interestingly enough, Phillip Deemal, the Chairman of the Hopevale Community Council has also written to me raising very serious concerns about this proposal.

The Labor state government in Queensland have interesting form in relation to national parks: to date they have shut off about 25 per cent of Cape York, choking many opportunities for economic development. They have no management plans whatsoever and, as a consequence, the areas the national parks have taken over are generally in an appalling state. Any development at Archer Point, though, will be particularly damaging—and there is a long-term proposal for a wind farm to be built there. It is the only deepwater access left on the eastern Cape York coast and, as such, it is vital to economic development of lower Cape York for the export of agricultural and horticultural products. There will also be an impact on the rate base. The state government do not pay any rates. They have no management plans whatsoever. Basically, they are just pandering to radical greenies.

I congratulate Bob Sullivan and Phillip Deemal for taking a stand. I urge the federal Minister for the Environment and Heritage to keep his hands in his pockets and not hand anything over to the state government. If they want to get on with their dirty deeds, I would suggest that they find their own money to pay for this, rather than us going in there and supporting them in locking up these very valuable tracts of freehold land and, in doing so, stifling any chance of any sort of economic future for our Cape York community.