

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, 31 May 2011

ESTIMATES COMMITTEES A AND B ESTIMATES COMMITTEE A

Dr M.D. NAHAN: The last line of the sixth dot point on page 116 refers to “a unique State Agreement with Kimberley Traditional Land Owners to underpin the Browse”. Could the Premier give some description of the magnitude and the character of this agreement?

Mr C.J. BARNETT: Yes, I think on 6 May the traditional owners met and voted by a significant majority—around 160 to around 110, I think—to proceed with relinquishing their native title claim over the 3 500 hectares that constitute the industrial site for James Price Point for the liquefied natural gas precinct.

I think that was a historic decision. It was a very brave decision. It probably is one of the most important acts of self-determination in Indigenous history in this country. As part of that, there will be an overall benefits package of around \$1.5 billion. The state’s contribution to that will be \$250 million in cash, plus land. Obviously, most of the rest of it will come from Woodside.

I note in passing that the commonwealth has not contributed a dollar to that package. I hope that at some stage it does. I hope that it assists the state in the delivery of services, because much of what the state will deliver will be through improved housing, land and training, and the companies will provide employment. It is a very comprehensive package, but it will also last throughout the life of the project. The real work is getting underway. It is making sure that there are tangible, worthy benefits.

The state is currently looking at bringing forward some of those components that the state is funding, particularly in the education area, as well as some housing and land developments and packages for Aboriginal people. I think it is a good outcome. Although the vote has been taken, the final agreement is yet to be signed. I hope that that will happen over the coming weeks.