





COUNCILLOR PATRICIA LAURIE

SILVER ANNIVERSARY SPEECH

PARLIAMENT HOUSE, NSW

TUESDAY, JUNE 10, 2008

## **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING**

**IT GIVES ME ENORMOUS PLEASURE TO JOIN MADAM CHAIR AND MY FELLOW COUNCILLORS HERE TODAY AT THIS HISTORIC MEETING OF COUNCIL.**

**I'D LIKE TO BEGIN BY ACKNOWLEDGING THE TRADITIONAL OWNERS OF THIS LAND AND WELCOMING, ON BEHALF OF MY CONSTITUENTS, ALL OF YOU WHO HAVE TAKEN THE TIME TO BE WITH US TODAY.**

**A SPECIAL WELCOME TO MY MOB THE YAEGL AND BUNDJALUNG PEOPLE OF THE NORTH COAST.**

**I THANK YOU ALL FOR BEING HERE AND SUPPORTING ME TODAY.**

**I HAVE LISTENED WITH ENORMOUS INTEREST TO THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF MY FELLOW COUNCILLORS.**

**I COMMEND YOU ALL ON YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS AT THIS HISTORIC MEETING.**

**I AM SURE THOSE WHO ARE LISTENING, BOTH HERE IN THE CHAMBER, AND ELSEWHERE, ARE IMPRESSED BY WHAT THEY HAVE HEARD SO FAR ABOUT OUR PAST ACHIEVEMENTS AND OUR ASPIRATIONS FOR THE FUTURE.**

**AS MANY OF YOU WOULD KNOW THE NEW SOUTH WALES ABORIGINAL LAND COUNCIL HAS A SOCIAL AND STATUTORY OBLIGATION TO DEVELOP AND ENHANCE THE CAPACITY OF OUR LOCAL ABORIGINAL LAND COUNCILS.**

**I CAN ASSURE YOU THIS COUNCIL IS FIRMLY COMMITTED TO PROVIDING GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT TO ALL LOCAL ABORIGINAL LAND COUNCILS IN THEIR IDENTIFICATION OF SPECIFIC MANAGEMENT, PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT NEEDS.**

**THIS IS NOT AN EASY TASK.**

**THERE IS A POPULAR MISCONCEPTION THAT ALL LOCAL ABORIGINAL LAND COUNCILS HAVE THE SAME GOALS AND ASPIRATIONS.**

**THIS IS NOT CORRECT.**

**MOST HAVE COMMON GOALS.....BUT THEIR ASPIRATIONS DIFFER IN MANY RESPECTS.**

**THIS PRESENT ENORMOUS CHALLENGES FOR NSWALC.**

**WE RECOGNISE AND RESPECT THE AUTONOMY OF LOCAL ABORIGINAL LAND COUNCILS.**

**BUT, AS THE STATE'S PEAK ABORIGINAL REPRESENTATIVE BODY, NSWALC'S CORPORATE PLAN COMMITS US TO ASSIST ALL OF THEM.**

**OUR GOAL IS TO ENSURE WE ASSIST THEM IN WHATEVER WAY WE CAN TO ENSURE THEY TAKE FULL CONTROL OF, AND ACCEPT FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR, THEIR ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS.**

**WE DO SO BY:**

- **CONDUCTING ANNUAL LOCAL NETWORK TRAINING.**
- **ESTABLISHING COMMUNITY PLANNING AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENTS, INDUSTRY AND BUSINESSES.**
- **ACTIVELY PROMOTION ABORIGINAL HOME OWNERSHIP STRATEGIES.**
- **PROMOTING THE NEED TO DEVELOP AN ABORIGINAL HOUSING LOAN SYSTEM TO PROVIDE AFFORDABLE AND MANAGEABLE HOME LOANS TO INCREASE ABORIGINAL HOME OWNERSHIP.**

**I'M PLEASED TO BE ABLE TO ANNOUNCE TODAY THAT NSWALC IS CURRENTLY NEGOTIATING A PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENT WITH THE NATIONAL AUSTRALIA BANK WHICH WILL SEEK TO DELIVER ON OUR GOALS FOR INCREASED HOME OWNERSHIP.**

**THE PROPOSAL WOULD SEE THE PROVISION OF FINANCE TO ASSIST NSWALC TRANSFER OF SOME OF ITS HOUSING STOCK TO INDIVIDUAL ABORIGINAL OWNERSHIP.**

**THERE HAVE BEEN ATTEMPTS AT HOME OWNERSHIP IN THE PAST.**

**THEY HAVE NOT BEEN SUCCESSFUL.**

**THEIR LACK OF SUCCESS HAS BEEN BECAUSE OF RANGE OF FACTORS.**

**BUT WE ARE COMMITTED TO THE GOAL OF PROMOTING FURTHER INDIVIDUAL HOME OWNERSHIP AMONGST OUR PEOPLE.**

**WE ARE DETERMINED TO ENSURE ANY NEW SCHEME, WHICH WOULD BE DELIVERED UNDER THE COMMUNITY BENEFITS REGIME OF THE LEGISLATION, WILL BE AFFORDABLE AND SUSTAINABLE.**

**WE ARE ALSO CURRENTLY INVESTIGATING PROPOSALS THROUGH THE NATIONAL AUSTRALIA BANK TO OFFER MICRO FINANCE LOANS FOR ABORIGINAL SMALL BUSINESS.**

**WE HAVE A LOT OF DETAILED NEGOTIATION STILL TO TAKE PLACE BUT WE ARE DETERMINED TO SUCCEED IN THIS REGARD AND BE IN A POSITION IN THE NEAR FUTURE TO ANNOUNCE THE DETAILS.**

**I SHOULD MAKE AN IMPORTANT POINT HERE.**

**WHATEVER ARRANGEMENTS ARE EVENTUALLY PUT IN PLACE IN OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH THE BANK IT WILL NOT BE GIVEN, AND HAS NOT SOUGHT, ANY EXCLUSIVITY IN ITS DEALINGS WITH NSWALC OR LALCS.**

**ONE OF THE MAJOR BARRIERS TO HOME OWNERSHIP ON ABORIGINAL RESERVES IN NEW SOUTH WALES HAS BEEN THE FACT THAT THEY ARE COMMUNAL LANDS THAT HAVE NEVER BEEN SUBDIVIDED.**

**WE ARE CURRENTLY NEGOTIATING OPTIONS IN THIS REGARD WITH THE FEDERALLY FUNDED INDIGENOUS BUSINESS AUSTRALIA.**

**WE HAVE PROPOSED AN INVESTIGATION OF PROPOSED SUB DIVISIONS IN ALL DISCRETE ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES IN NEW SOUTH WALES.**

**WE ARE TALKING ABOUT MORE THAN SIXTY COMMUNITIES.**

**NSWALC HAS ESTIMATED THE COST OF SUCH A PROJECT AT ABOUT SIX MILLION DOLLARS.**

**THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN ADVISED NSWALC WOULD MEET HALF OF THE COST IF THEY CONTRIBUTE THE OTHER HALF.**

**NSWALC HAVE AGREED THAT IF FUNDING FOR THIS PROPOSAL IS APPROVED AT THE COMMONWEALTH LEVEL THE STARTING POINT FOR THIS PROGRAM WOULD BE THE NAMOI AND GINGIE RESERVES OUTSIDE OF WALGETT.**

**WORK THERE WOULD BEGIN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.**

**NSWALC HAS ALSO SUGGESTED WE EXPLORE FUTHER SUBDIVISION OPTIONS FOR THE COMMUNITY OF LA PEROUSE IN SYDNEY.**

**LA PEROUSE IS ONLY PARTY SUBDIVIDED AT THIS POINT IN TIME.**

**THIS INITIATIVE WILL ALSO CLARIFY AND PROVIDE CERTAINTY TO FACILITATE PROPER MUNICIPAL SERVICES, THE POWER, THE WATER AND THE SEWERAGE.**

**IN ADDITION THE BOUNDARIES FOR EACH TENANT WILL BE IDENTIFIED.**

**THIS INITIATIVE WILL ALSO PROVIDE THE BASIS FOR RESOLVING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE LOCAL ABORIGINAL LAND COUNCIL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT.**

**ONCE A SUBDIVISION TAKES PLACE THE ISSUE OF HOME OWNERSHIP IS A MATTER FOR LOCAL ABORIGINAL LAND COUNCILS AND THEIR MEMBERS.**

**UNDER THE LAND RIGHTS LEGISLATION EIGHTY PER CENT OF MEMBERS OF A LOCAL ABORIGINAL LAND COUNCIL MUST SUPPORT THE OPTIONS FOR LEASING AND TRANSFER OF THE TITLE INTO INDIVIDUAL OWNERSHIP.**

**THIS WOULD NOT HAPPEN IN SOME COMMUNITIES BUT DISCUSSIONS INDICATE THAT SOME WOULD BE SUPPORTIVE OF SUCH AN APPROACH....EG. NAMOI AND GINGIE RESERVES.**

**THIS INITIATIVE WOULD PROVIDE ONE MORE BUILDING BLOCK TO ASSURING OUR PEOPLE, IF THEY WISH, CAN TAKE THE OPPORTUNITIES BEING OFFERED TO MOST OF THEIR FELLOW AUSTRALIANS.**

**I COMMEND THESE INITIATIVES TO THE NETWORK AND TO THIS PARLIAMENT.**

**THANK YOU.**

