

**Wednesday 16 May 2012 - Part 1**

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**BAKUN DAM, SARAWAK**

[10.53 a.m.]

**Mr BOOTH** - My question is to the Minister for Energy. Minister, as shareholder minister for Hydro Tasmania you would be aware that their consultancy arm, Entura, affirms on their webpage that they are committed to all aspects of a sustainable future, including environmental and social. Entura states that their 'commitment to sustainability is an extension of Hydro Tasmania's long standing reputation in the field'. Minister, is it not a fact that Entura undertook consultancy work from September-November 2010 in Sarawak providing safety advice on the Bakun Dam? Minister, are you aware that now the Bakun Dam has been flooded it has submerged about 700 square kilometres of land, much of that large tracts of rainforest, and displaced around 9 000 families? Minister, are you further aware that the destruction was so enormous,

**Mr Hidding** - We had better get some facts on this.

**Mr BOOTH** - Did you say you would like to get some facts?

**Mr Hidding** - Yes. You are saying this is the same person you trotted out last time.

**Mr BOOTH** - Well, listen. Minister, are you further aware that the destruction was so enormous that the United Nations - is that a good enough source for you Mr Hidding - quoted these hydro-electric dam projects in Sarawak as an example of human rights abuses on the International Day of World Indigenous People?

You would be aware that the Premier told the house yesterday that the TOTE was sold because of, and I quote, 'the risky nature of this type of business for governments to be involved in'. Minister, do you consider work by Hydro's consultancy arm Entura in Sarawak on a dam that has now flooded and displaced thousands of indigenous people whilst submerging important rainforests as risky, or appropriate for a government business to be associated with? Minister, does Entura apply their own principles to consultancy work that they undertake?

**Mr GREEN** - I thank the member for his question. It is true that Hydro Tasmania, through Entura, is engaged in Sarawak providing services to a company there. As to the debates people have within their own communities about whether projects are sustainable and the right thing to do, I think largely that is up to them. Of course Hydro Tasmania upholds its own position on its views about being sustainable, and I would have thought in a world where we are looking the pressure that burning fossil fuels has on the environment overall that renewable energy projects would be the way to go. I am certainly a supporter of that. I know that you cannot have development without displacing people from time to time but those decisions are made, just as they have been in China in recent times.

**Mr McKim** - Oh, I wouldn't go there.

**Mr GREEN** - Well, I am not going there, but those decisions are made on the basis that they are looking to increase their renewable energy to make their country more sustainable and less reliant on fossil fuels, which I would have thought is a good thing.

Hydro Tasmania's professional service business provides consultancy services to a range of businesses and organisations in Tasmania, nationally and overseas. A relationship with Sarawak Energy Berhad was established in recent years to develop the province's renewable energy resources. SEB is a state-owned electricity generation transmission and distribution business. Entura provided a range of advice and support to SEB valued at around \$3 million a year. This included training, safety, feasibility studies and undertaking technical due diligence. I understand that Entura, through Hydro Tasmania, is highly regarded around the world as to the advice they supply. I have encouraged Hydro Tasmania to continue to work hard to ensure that we utilise the expertise we have here in Tasmania, built up over more than 100 years with the development of our hydro systems in the State. It is very clear that the member who asked the question is saying to the Tasmanian people that under the scenario he presents we would not have been able to develop any hydro opportunities in the state of Tasmania.

There will be opportunities for Hydro to be scrutinised through the GBE process and my advice to the member would be that he do that at that time.