Adam Giles
Chief Minister of the Northern Territory

Go back to Canberra Sam Dastyari

15 February 2015

Labor’s cheap political motives in bringing a fly-in fly-out Senate Committee to Darwin have been made plain today with the Chairman choosing name calling over real debate on the future of our Port.

“Sam Dastyari has no business jetting into Darwin on a 24 hour stop-over and telling Territorians what to do with their Port,” Chief Minister Adam Giles said.

“He’s just here to score cheap political points as he proved today with his name calling and abuse. He should go home to Canberra if that’s the best he can do.

“Sam Dastyari and his Labor mates like Michael Gunner, Natasha Fyles and Nicole Manison are tied to the idea that Governments must run everything. Even when we’re talking about a highly specialised field such as running a port, they refuse to concede that the private sector might have the skills and finances to assist in growing the Port. I beg to differ.

“Tomorrow’s committee hearing is a political stunt that Sam Dastyari and his union mates have repeated around the country in a bid to help state Labor oppositions. It’s sham cooked up by one of the NSW Labor Party’s biggest back room hacks. I won’t be part of it.

“The Committee, which also includes Labor ‘captain’s pick’ Nova Peris, is simply not interested in hearing about the need for us to grow and expand our Port – something that will only be possible if we can attract private investment to pay for the necessary infrastructure.

“I understand how important it is for Territorians to have confidence that the model we are proposing for a lease of the Port is the best model available. That’s why I announced last week that the legislation would be reviewed by a Parliamentary Committee.”

The Committee will look at options for enhancing the current model with a focus on variables such as the duration of any lease, mechanisms for an ongoing return to taxpayers, and what kind of partners can best help us to grow this important infrastructure.

Importantly, it will also examine existing Northern Territory public/private partnerships such as the Marine Supply Base (MSB) at the Port and what lessons can be learnt from the way the former Labor Government set up the deal.
“Labor are hypocrites on the issue of public asset ownership and the Marine Supply Base proves it,” Mr Giles said.

The MSB is just one of numerous public assets sold or established as public/private partnerships by Labor Governments around the country.

Other examples include:

- The Commonwealth Bank was privatised by a Federal Labor Government.
- QANTAS was privatised by a Federal Labor Government.
- Queensland Labor Premier Anna Bligh sold off Queensland Rail.
- Victorian Labor Premier Joan Kirner sold off the State Insurance Office.

Media Contact: Danielle Parry 0413 081 801