

= Knut Arild Hareide =

Knut Arild Hareide (born 23 November 1972) a Norwegian politician who serves as a member of parliament from Hordaland and as the current leader of the Christian Democratic Party . Hareide served as Minister of the Environment from 2004 to 2005 in the second Bondevik cabinet . In 2007 he announced he would step down from the national political scene for the time being , but he returned when he was nominated as the top candidate for the Christian Democratic Party ticket in Akershus in the 2009 election where he won the county 's leveling seat . After Dagfinn Høybråten stepped down as party leader , Hareide was unanimously elected to take his place at the 2011 party convention . In the 2013 election , Hareide was reelected to parliament , this time from his home county of Hordaland .

Before his tenure as government minister , Hareide had sat through one term in the municipal council of his native Bømlo , served as a deputy representative to the national parliament as well as working two years as a State Secretary . He was also second deputy leader of his party from 2003 to 2007 , having come through the ranks of the party 's youth organization .

Outside politics Hareide is an economist by education , and he has worked for the media conglomerate Schibsted .

= = Education = =

Hareide was born in the village Rubbestadneset in Bømlo , Hordaland . He started his higher education in 1992 , the same year he graduated from upper secondary school . Enrolled at the Norwegian School of Economics (NHH) , he graduated in 1997 with a siv.øk. degree . During his time at NHH , he also minored in sociology (1995) at the University of Bergen .

Hareide was active in student politics . His involvement included terms as a member of the student parliament at the University of Bergen , as the leader of the Student Union of the Norwegian School of Economics 1994 ? 1995 , and as a board member of the national student union 1993 ? 1994 . During the period in student politics , Hareide held a Christian democratic middle ground between radical (such as later socialist politician Aslak Sira Myhre) and conservative representatives , an experience he has described as educational .

= = Career = =

Hareide was active in the Youth of the Christian People 's Party , being a member of the national board 1999 ? 2001 before joining the national board of the Christian Democratic Party . He worked as a political advisor in the Ministry of Church Affairs , Education and Research from 1998 to 2000 , during the first cabinet Bondevik . He later became State Secretary in the Ministry of Finance from 2001 to 2003 during the second cabinet Bondevik . In 2003 he became second deputy leader of the Christian Democratic Party nationwide .

He then joined the cabinet during a 2004 reshuffle , serving as the Norwegian Minister of the Environment from summer 2004 to fall 2005 . He was the youngest ever cabinet member from the Christian Democratic Party , and the first Christian Democratic to hold the post . The second cabinet Bondevik did not survive the 2005 elections , and as such Hareide had to step down from office that year . His successor was Helen Bjørnøy . Until 2009 , Hareide had never been elected to the Norwegian Parliament , but served as a deputy representative during the terms 1997 ? 2001 , 2001 ? 2005 and 2005 ? 2009 . On the local level of politics he was a member of Bømlo municipality council from 1991 to 1995 .

In 2007 Hareide announced that he had left politics for the time being to pursue a career in the national media conglomerate Schibsted , as an organizational director . His career in the company started with the position of trainee in 1997 . Outside politics , his only paid full @-@ time appointments have been in Schibsted . He still works behind the scenes for his party , occasionally commenting on issues in the national media . He did not rule out a return to national politics in the future , and in late 2008 he was selected by his party as the top candidate on the party 's ticket in

Akershus county . The Christian Democratic Party formerly held a seat in this county , but lost it in 2005 . Hareide has never lived in Akershus . Party leader Dagfinn Høybråten hails from Akershus , but he runs on the Rogaland ticket to secure a safe seat .

Prior to the 2009 election , Hareide announced that he would leave national politics if he failed to win a parliament seat . Although the Christian Democrats suffered nationwide setbacks in 2009 , Hareide managed to win Akershus ' levelling seat after a close race against Dagfinn Sundsbø of the Centre Party . In parliament , Hareide became the chair of the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications .

After Høybråten announced that he would not seek reelection as party leader of KrF , Hareide quickly emerged as the leading candidate to succeed Høybråten , after the two other apparent candidates , Dagrun Eriksen and Hans Olav Syversen , announced they would not run . Hareide is considered to belong to the socially liberal wing of the party , and conservative members of the party have demanded that at least one of the deputy leaders be from the party 's conservative wing if they are to support Hareide . Hareide supported the efforts to eliminate the rule which requires Christian Democratic party representatives to declare a Christian faith , and a vote gave a clear majority to abolish that rule two years later . Hareide was unanimously voted in as new party leader at the 2011 convention on 30 April 2011 . Hareide declined the nomination as parliamentary leader , and Hans Olav Syversen was elected to this position .

On November 18 , 2011 , Hareide was appointed to lead the parliamentary committee that is investigating the 2011 Norway Attacks . His nomination to that position was proposed by the red @-@ green parties . On January 23 , 2012 , Hareide denounced a speech at KrF 's local chapter in Sarpsborg that had suggested that the terrorist attacks and the Alexander Kielland disaster were divine warnings or punishments for Norway 's policy towards Israel ; Hareide said that this was far beyond normal thinking and completely out of line with the party 's values .

= = = Reception and issues = = =

Following the 11th United Nations Climate Change Convention in Buenos Aires in December 2004 , Hareide spoke out against the United States and China , whom he saw as " problems " in the international work against climate change . Hareide gained a fair level of praise for his role in the convention , from both his own party as well as political opponents .

Hareide received heavy criticism for the policy on large carnivores . A decision in early 2005 , to uphold the ongoing wolf hunt even though a certain alpha she @-@ wolf Gråfjellstispa had mistakenly been shot in January that year , was met with protests from the national World Wildlife Fund chapter and other environment organizations , as well as the Swedish Minister of the Environment Lena Sommestad and representatives from the European Union . Hareide described the event as " regrettable " , but " not against the law " . The case made headlines in BBC and New Scientist . A few weeks before , Hareide had been criticized in a parliamentary hearing session for being too wolf @-@ friendly . The environmental organizations went as far as to press charges against the Ministry of the Environment . The Ministry was acquitted when the case was finally brought up in late 2006 , some time after Hareide left office .

In July the same year , Hareide received further criticism as the number of licenses to kill large carnivores allegedly was not only at a record high (12 brown bears , 10 grey wolves , 22 wolverines and 13 lynx) , but also contradictory to the parliamentary policy on the matter . According to Hareide , the actions were in line with the parliamentary stance on the issue .

In April 2005 he was criticized for an issue connected to monetary support of environmental projects and organizations . The Ministry approved a \$ 90 @,@ 000 project support for the Church of Norway , while the pressure group Bellona faced a cut of the same amount . Hareide , being a devout Christian and a member of the Church of Norway , was accused of putting his own religious interests ahead of environmental considerations . The case became a curiosity in the Norwegian media as some of the money was channelled into the church internet site , which , among other things , contained a set of prayers for earthworms ? described in such odd terms as " the blind subterranean workers " , " small sisters and brothers in the compost " and " members of the

subterranean congregation " . Hareide responded to the criticism by describing the overall project as " exciting " .

One of Hareide 's last actions in office was to approve the construction of a hydroelectric power plant in the Hatteberg watershed in Kvinnherad , a protected natural area . Most of the criticism went to his successor , Helen Bjørnøy , who neglected to roll back the decision when assuming office . She eventually resigned halfway into her term .

During his time as Minister of the Environment , Hareide was parodied in the television comedy program Tre brødre som ikke er brødre . The character Knut Arild Hareide , played by Harald Eia , was portrayed in several sketches as a physically weak person . These parodies were criticized by the authors in a 2005 book about different forms of mobbing ; this stirred a minor debate in the Norwegian media . Nonetheless , Hareide himself showed a video clip of one of the parodies when publicly announcing his stepdown from national politics at the 2007 party congress .

In a poll taken in December 2013 , Hareide received a 99 percent approval rating among Christian Democratic voters .

= = Personal life = =

Hareide comes from a middle @-@ class background , his father being a transportation manager and his mother a consultant .

Although reluctant to comment on the issue , Hareide was likely single during his first tenure in national politics . He has been confronted with rumours of homosexuality by segments of the media , but these have been dismissed . In 2008 he was reported as having a relationship with Solveig Engevik from Kolbotn , which ended in 2010 . In the spring of 2011 he was confirmed in a relationship with school teacher Lisa Marie Larsen . The couple married in Moi on 23 June 2012 , and had a daughter on 6 April 2013 .