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LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Thursday 27 June 2013

The President (The Hon. Donald Thomas Harwin) took the chair at 9.30 a.m.

The President read the Prayers.

Pursuant to sessional orders Formal Business Notices of Motions proceeded with.

BUNDANOON HIGHLAND GATHERING

Motion by the Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES agreed to:

1. That this House notes that:
 - (a) the thirty-sixth Annual Highland Gathering of Bundanoon is Brigadoon was held on Saturday 6 April 2013 and is the leading Scottish gathering in Australia,
 - (b) the Bundanoon is Brigadoon highland gathering is organised by a non-profit charity organisation and all proceeds from the event are donated to local charities, community groups and volunteer organisations,
 - (c) the highland gathering enhances the profile of the local community as a tourism destination and provides an opportunity for contribution and involvement of local businesses, community groups and volunteers,
 - (d) speeches were given at the Official Opening Ceremony by Chieftain of the Day, the Right Hon. the Lord Sempill, 21st Chief of the Clan Sempill, the Hon. Pru Goward, MP, member for Goulburn, and Councillor Juliet Arkwright, Mayor of Wingecarribee Shire Council,
 - (e) the highland gathering attracts over 15,000 visitors and the day begins with a street parade by over 20 pipe bands, floats, matching clan societies and service and community vehicles,
 - (f) throughout the day there are live performances by hundreds of pipers and drummers, Scottish country and highland dancing demonstrations and highland games,
 - (g) the event concludes with the Ceilidh in the Bundanoon Hall,
 - (h) one of the highlights of the day is the Lifting of the Bundanoon Stones of Manhood, and the competition consists in lifting a series of sandstone balls, carved at the Bundanoon sandstone quarries, of different sizes up to 165 kilograms and placing them on a row of barrels spaced out across the field.
2. That this House congratulates the organiser of thirty-sixth annual highland gathering for a successful event.

TAXI TRANSPORT SUBSIDY SCHEME

Motion by the Hon. JAN BARHAM agreed to:

1. That this House notes that the Taxi Transport Subsidy Scheme's [TTSS] current maximum subsidy level of \$30 has been in place since 1999, meaning that it has gone 14 years without an increase.
2. That this House acknowledges that the 2010 Select Committee Inquiry into the NSW Taxi Industry reported:
 - (a) Recommendation 35: "That NSW Transport and Infrastructure increase the value of the subsidy provided by the Taxi Transport Subsidy Scheme to half the total fare, up to a maximum value of \$50.00 per fare", being a \$20 increase on the current subsidy, and
 - (b) Recommendation 36: "That the Premier request the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal to consider the value of the subsidy provided under the Taxi Transport Subsidy Scheme as part of its annual review of taxi fares."
3. That this House notes the Government responses at the time to the above recommendations were:
 - (a) Recommendation 35: "Transport NSW will review and evaluate the current Taxi Transport Subsidy Scheme subsidy cap," and
 - (b) Recommendation 36: "Transport NSW will review and evaluate options for the future adjustment of the Taxi Transport Subsidy Scheme subsidy cap."

4. That this House also acknowledges that Victoria's Multi Purpose Taxi Program's 2011-12 budget of \$51 million is almost double New South Wales' Taxi Transport Subsidy Scheme 2011-12 budget of \$26 million.
5. That this House notes with concern that a recent survey of Taxi Transport Subsidy Scheme users by the Northern Rivers Social Development Council and supported by the Physical Disability Council of NSW, the National Council of Social Services [NCOSS], and Spinal Cord Injuries Australia showed that:
 - (a) 32 per cent of respondents said that taxis were their only mode of transport,
 - (b) 54.7 per cent of respondents received the Disability Support Pension, 15.1 per cent were in part-time employment and 12.3 per cent were in full-time employment, and
 - (c) of those people receiving the Disability Support Pension, almost half, being 47.5 per cent, spent between 11 and 30 per cent of their income on taxis, and that this percentage was higher for those in part-time employment 50 per cent and slightly lower for those in full-time employment, being 35.7 per cent.
6. That this House notes that:
 - (a) Victoria's Multi Purpose Taxi Program's 2011-12 budget of \$51 million is almost double New South Wales' Taxi Transport Subsidy Scheme 2011-12 budget of \$26 million,
 - (b) in 2008, Victoria increased its Multipurpose Taxi Program subsidy from \$30 to \$60, an amount that it is double the current New South Wales subsidy, and
 - (c) NCOSS's pre-budget submission recommends the New South Wales Government "review the Taxi Transport Subsidy Scheme to ensure affordable access for participants, and increase the subsidy cap from \$30 to \$50."
7. That this House acknowledges that:
 - (a) the \$30 Taxi Transport Subsidy Scheme subsidy is inadequate today and has not kept pace with New South Wales' rising costs of living, and
 - (b) the subsidy does not meet the needs of many people with a disability travelling throughout major metropolitan and regional areas on our taxi networks.
8. That this House calls on the Government to increase the Taxi Transport Subsidy Scheme.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Routine of Business

[During the call over of Formal Business Notices of Motions.]

The Hon. Duncan Gay: Point of order: Mr President, I draw your attention to the Hon. Jeremy Buckingham, who is reading a newspaper on the Opposition benches.

Dr John Kaye: To the point of order: The member was holding a newspaper. I did not see him reading the newspaper. In fact, if one looks carefully, one can see that the member is holding the newspaper upside down. The member is talented but I do not know that that talent extends to an ability to reading a newspaper upside down.

The Hon. Niall Blair: To the point of order: I clearly saw the member reading the newspaper before Dr John Kaye looked at him. He definitely was reading the newspaper.

The PRESIDENT: Order! There is a very long line of precedent to indicate that the reading of newspapers in the Chamber is disorderly. If the Hon. Jeremy Buckingham was reading the newspaper, I advise him that that is against the traditions of this House and it is considered disorderly.

GENERAL PURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE NO. 1

Reference

Motion by Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE agreed to:

1. That this House notes that:
 - (a) on Friday 21 June 2013, the NSW Industrial Relations Commission handed down a finding that WorkCover had systematically bullied a senior employee out of his job,

- (b) the court found that WorkCover's actions in this case had all "the characterisation of institutional bullying", and
 - (c) WorkCover has previously been investigated following complaints of bullying, and the 2011 PricewaterhouseCoopers report into the organisation found that 40 per cent of staff reported being bullied or harassed.
2. That General Purpose Standing Committee No. 1 inquire into and report on allegations of bullying in WorkCover, and in particular:
- (a) the culture of WorkCover,
 - (b) WorkCover's role as the State Regulator of occupational health and safety as it relates to bullying in the workplace,
 - (c) appropriate recommendations to address issues raised; and
 - (d) and any other related matter.

SYDNEY CRICKET GROUND 100TH CRICKET TEST

Motion by the Hon. LUKE FOLEY agreed to:

1. That this House notes that:
- (a) the Sydney Cricket Ground's 100th Cricket Test has won the Sports Event of the Year Award at the global 2013 Stadium Business Awards,
 - (b) the award is for the best sporting event held at a stadium, arena or major sports venue in 2012,
 - (c) the Sydney Cricket Ground's 100th cricket Test, played last year between Australia and India, overcame Super Bowl XLVI, the 2012 NBA All Star game, the 2012 London Olympics "Super Saturday", the opening game of Euro 2012 in Poland, Biathlon WTC in Germany and the Emerald Isle Classic in Dublin to win the award,
 - (d) the past two Sports Event of the Year Award winners were the FIFA World Cup Final in South Africa and the UEFA Champions League Final at Wembley Stadium, and
 - (e) the Sydney Cricket Ground became only the third cricket ground worldwide to have hosted 100 cricket Tests when Australia played India last year.
2. That this House congratulates the staff and the trustees of the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Trust on winning the prestigious Sports Event of the Year Award and resolves that major international cricket matches that take place in New South Wales should always be played at the Sydney Cricket Ground.

PETITIONS

Single Parent Payments

Petition calling on the Government to make representations to the Commonwealth Government to reverse immediately the cuts to single parent payments and to ensure that single parents receive adequate support to care for their children, received from the **Hon. Jan Barham**.

Identity Concealment

Petition opposing any face covering that conceals the identity of a person and prevents Australia from being an open society, and requesting that the House support the private member's bill of Reverend the Hon. Fred Nile that prohibits within all public areas the wearing of any article of clothing that conceals a person's identity, received from **Reverend the Hon. Fred Nile**.

IRREGULAR PETITION

Leave granted for the suspension of standing orders to allow Mr David Shoebridge to present an irregular petition.

Bowraville Murders Royal Commission

Petition requesting that the House support a royal commission into the handling of the Bowraville murders investigation, the failed prosecutions and the manner in which applications for referral to the Court of Criminal Appeal were assessed and rejected, and consider whether the double jeopardy changes introduced in 2007 have had their intended effect, received from **Mr David Shoebridge**.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**Postponement of Business**

Private Members' Business item No. 8 in the Order of Precedence postponed on motion by the Hon. Catherine Cusack.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT**Motion by the Hon. Duncan Gay agreed to:**

That this House at its rising today do adjourn until Tuesday 20 August 2013 at 2.30 p.m. unless the President or if the President is unable to act on account of illness or other causes the Deputy President prior to that date by communication addressed to each member of the House fixes an alternate day or hour of meeting.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**Suspension of Standing and Sessional Orders: Order of Business****Reverend the Hon. FRED NILE [9.44 a.m.]: I move:**

That standing and sessional orders be suspended to allow a motion to be moved forthwith that Private Members' Business item No. 755 outside the Order of Precedence relating to the Crimes Amendment (Zoe's Law) Bill 2013 be called on forthwith.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY (Leader of the Opposition) [9.45 a.m.]: The Labor Opposition will not support urgency for this motion. Reverend the Hon. Fred Nile certainly has the right to have his private member's bill debated in full by this House. The Opposition was under the impression that this bill would not be coming back for debate prior to the spring session. To be frank, the Labor Opposition has not been able to give due consideration to Reverend the Hon. Fred Nile's private member's bill. It has not been fully considered by the shadow cabinet or the State parliamentary Labor Party. As such, if the matter is given urgency in debate today, the Labor Opposition will not be in a position to fully participate in that debate. We would far prefer that what we understood to be the timetable until very recently, that is that the debate would come back on in the spring, be maintained. As such we cannot support urgency for this matter this morning.

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY (Minister for Roads and Ports) [9.47 a.m.]: The Government supports Reverend the Hon. Fred Nile's urgency motion. It is my understanding that the quite proper concerns raised by the Leader of the Opposition will be addressed, in that the matter will be adjourned before members are forced to speak and make a decision on something that has not been to caucus, Cabinet or the party room. The Government acknowledges that some support the motion and that others have made up their mind to speak against it and want the opportunity to debate the matter. The bill will be adjourned before the stage is reached about which the Leader of the Opposition has quite properly expressed concern.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE [9.49 a.m.]: I indicate on behalf of The Greens that we do not support the contingency motion. We support the right of Reverend the Hon. Fred Nile to have this debate and for there to be a frank exchange of views on this issue. The Greens have determined to oppose the bill and its substance but we do not oppose the right of any member to engage in a discussion on a matter of politics that they think their constituency wants raised in the House. The Greens are still engaged in detailed consultation with an array of stakeholders on this very important issue, which goes well beyond the narrow terms of the bill to matters related to reproductive rights, a woman's right to choose and a woman's ability to have control of her body.

Inevitably, the way in which elected members in this House discuss the substance of the bill will be a matter of substantial public interest. It is not appropriate to bring on debate at short notice without members being fully prepared. The Hon. Duncan Gay has said that members unable to make a full contribution today will have an opportunity to do so at a later point, but that leaves the House in a difficult situation. Those members who are fully prepared to make a contribution will get a privileged chance to communicate in this House, whilst those wishing to engage in further consultation with women's groups, civil liberties groups, et cetera, will be playing catch-up at a later point in the day. It is for those reasons that The Greens oppose the contingency motion.

Question—That the motion be agreed to—put.

The House divided.

Ayes, 21

Mr Ajaka	Miss Gardiner	Mrs Mitchell
Mr Blair	Mr Gay	Reverend Nile
Mr Borsak	Mr Green	Mrs Pavey
Mr Brown	Mr Khan	
Mr Clarke	Mr Lynn	
Ms Cusack	Mr MacDonald	<i>Tellers,</i>
Ms Ficarra	Mrs Maclaren-Jones	Mr Colless
Mr Gallacher	Mr Mason-Cox	Dr Phelps

Noes, 18

Ms Barham	Mr Primrose	Mr Whan
Mr Buckingham	Mr Searle	Mr Wong
Ms Cotsis	Mr Secord	
Dr Faruqi	Ms Sharpe	
Mr Foley	Mr Shoebridge	<i>Tellers,</i>
Dr Kaye	Mr Veitch	Ms Fazio
Mr Moselmane	Ms Westwood	Ms Voltz

Pair

Mr Pearce

Mr Donnelly

Question resolved in the affirmative.**Motion agreed to.****Order of Business****Motion by Reverend the Hon. Fred Nile agreed to:**

That standing and sessional orders be suspended to allow a motion to be moved forthwith that Private Members' Business item No. 755 outside the Order of Precedence relating to Crimes Amendment (Zoe's Law) Bill 2013 be called on forthwith.

CRIMES AMENDMENT (ZOE'S LAW) BILL 2013**Second Reading****Debate resumed from 21 February 2013.**

The Hon. PAUL GREEN [9.58 a.m.]: I speak on the Crimes Amendment (Zoe's Law) Bill 2013. Fundamentally this bill is about justice. The loss suffered by those who lose a child not through illness or disease but through negligence, carelessness, malice or actions of others is immense. However, the response of the law to these situations is gravely deficient. In 2001 and 2002 two public incidents drew attention to the deficiency of the law with regard to the protections extended towards women during pregnancy.

In November 2001 Ms Renee Shields suffered a road rage incident that led to the death of her unborn child, Byron. Many members hold differing views on this issue and the terminology "unborn child". When I was a mayor I attended many memorial services in the local area for both unborn and born babies to pay my respects and share in the grieving process with their families. They were significant occasions for those who had suffered this loss. When I attended those memorial services the families involved regarded their unborn child just as much a part of their family as if the child had been born. This bill seeks to embody the spirit of that family bond.

In 2002 Ms Kylie Flick suffered a miscarriage after she was beaten and stood on by her 112 kilogram boyfriend, Mr Phillip Nathan King. In both cases the law failed to directly address the injustice and grief suffered by these women as there was no existing offence for the destruction of a child in utero. In response to community pressure, the then Labor New South Wales Attorney General, John Hatzistergos, commissioned the Hon. Mervyn Finlay, QC, to conduct an inquiry into the matter. In April 2003 the Finlay report recommended:

... that New South Wales legislate to introduce the offence of "killing an unborn child relating to a criminal act causing a child, capable of being born alive, to die before it has an existence independent of the mother"...

This report mirrored the requests of the women concerned. However, in December of the same year, the Court of Criminal Appeal ruled:

The close physical connection between a pregnant woman and her unborn child means that the loss of that child can constitute "grievous bodily harm" to the pregnant woman, even in the absence of other injury to her.

The former New South Wales Government then decided against the adoption of Finlay's recommendation to introduce a new offence, preferring instead to codify the court's ruling and provide for the remedial restitution of justice through the existing provisions of grievous bodily harm found within the Crimes Act 1900. The Crimes Amendment (Grievous Bodily Harm) Bill 2005, otherwise known as Byron's Law, merely added the following to the existing definition of "grievous bodily harm" in section 4 (1):

- (a) the destruction (other than in the course of a medical procedure) of the foetus of a pregnant woman, whether or not the woman suffers any other harm,

The bill was passed in the Legislative Assembly on 22 March 2005 and in the Legislative Council on 4 May 2005 but not without incident. Significant concerns were raised in the Legislative Council with regard to the scope and eventual implementation of the legislation. Amendments were tabled by the Christian Democratic Party and strongly supported by the Coalition but these were ultimately defeated by 17 votes to 22 after the then Labor Government refused to allow their members a conscience vote. Subsequent events highlighted the acute failure of Byron's Law.

On Christmas Day 2009 Ms Brodie Donegan decided to stretch her legs and go for a short walk but had managed only several metres before being run down by a drug-affected driver. The impact not only killed Ms Donegan's unborn daughter, Zoe; it inflicted significant injuries on Ms Donegan herself, including shattering her pelvis, lower spine, hip and right foot. Pursuant to the Crimes Act 1900, the driver was charged with inflicting grievous bodily harm as Ms Donegan had sustained injury, but the death of her child in utero was rendered legally irrelevant.

My colleague Reverend the Hon. Fred Nile felt it was inappropriate to discuss this bill with Ms Donegan. However, I inform the House that this bill is not just about Ms Donegan and her unborn daughter, Zoe. It is for all those unborn victims who do not have a name or are yet to be named; it is for all those parents who are denied the fulfilment of their hopes and dreams and to see their child grow up. Reverend the Hon. Fred Nile thought that it was more appropriate to show courtesy and follow protocol by not engaging directly with Ms Donegan, in view of her grief. It is our belief that Ms Donegan would agree with the spirit of the bill that the unborn child should be protected by law.

The failure of the law to specifically acknowledge Ms Donegan's loss demonstrated that concerns raised in the past eight years had not been adequately addressed. Several other women were to suffer in like circumstances. Mrs Susan Harris had persevered with in vitro fertilisation [IVF] for three years before finally falling pregnant with her son Lars. On 20 January 2010 a reckless driver crossed the road and hit the vehicle in which Mrs Harris was travelling. The impact caused the death of Mrs Harris' child in utero. The driver received a suspended sentence and lost his driver licence for six months. This case in particular highlights the injustice suffered by parents in these situations.

Many members would be aware that in vitro fertilisation is an arduous and emotional process. It takes considerable conviction and encouragement to persevere in the hope of achieving the ultimate goal of falling pregnant. It is expensive and not always successful, which means multiple attempts involving considerable expense and angst for the couple. To finally achieve pregnancy after three years only to have it stolen by a reckless driver must be a shattering experience. To then find that the law does not recognise the death of the child only intensifies the pain and heartache.

This is not like losing one's wallet, job or house. The loss of a child is the loss of a whole lifetime. It is the loss of millions of memories: the first day at school, graduation from university, a wedding, grandchildren and future generations—events that many parents take for granted. Imagine having all of that stolen in a single instant. The consequences of one act of negligence or violence are far-reaching and demand justice. Justice is a keystone of all our political parties, particularly the Labor Party whose original roots are based in justice and equality for individuals, the family and all social units. The Liberal Party statement of fundamental beliefs says that they believe in "a just and humane society in which the importance of the family and the role of law and justice are maintained". The first principle of the Greens Criminal Justice Policy states:

The Greens NSW believe:

1. A just and effective criminal justice system protects the community, reduces the social impacts of crime, addresses the causes of crime, protects the human rights of victims, suspects and perpetrators and offers a range of interventions in addition to loss of liberty.

Many people have differing views on this bill and we will hear those arguments during debate in the coming months. At the end of the day, Zoe's bill is about one word—justice. I commend the bill to the House.

The Hon. MARIE FICARRA (Parliamentary Secretary) [10.09 a.m.]: I support the private member's bill introduced by Reverend the Hon. Fred Nile, the Crimes Amendment (Zoe's Law) Bill 2013. Government members are in a quandary about this bill. In talking to members—Opposition, crossbench and Government members—it is obvious that they want more time to consider this important bill. I believe—this is not a Government view—it is an extraordinarily important bill because it is about the rights of women and the rights of the life of the foetus they are carrying. The bill is about valuing life at all stages. That is my personal viewpoint.

Members did not expect the bill to be debated today. Not only members of this House but also members of the other place are deeply concerned about the bill. The member for The Entrance, Chris Spence, is concerned about this legislation because it is named Zoe's law in honour of the unborn child of Brodie Donegan, a Central Coast constituent in The Entrance electorate. Brodie Donegan was eight months pregnant on Christmas Day in 2009 when a drug-affected driver ran her down; Zoe, her child, was stillborn as a result of the injuries Ms Donegan suffered. However, the driver was not charged with Zoe's death because the law did not recognise her as a person.

I can understand why Reverend the Hon. Fred Nile feels strongly about this matter, as does his constituency and the constituents of many other members. However, the issue is of such importance that it needs to be debated fully. Members need to consider their position and perhaps during the winter break to consult their constituency, their party members and their colleagues. The objectives of the bill, which are to amend the Crimes Act 1900, appear to be reasonable. They are, first, to establish a separate offence for conduct causing serious harm or destruction of a child in utero; and, secondly, to extend the offence of dangerous driving causing death or grievous bodily harm to dangerous driving causing the destruction of or serious harm to a child in utero.

In many discussions with Reverend the Hon. Fred Nile he has always pointed out that there is no hidden agenda in this legislation. It is absolutely not about abortion, nor is it about introducing legislation that would see a woman charged for terminating a pregnancy. No member of this House or of the other place would ever contemplate such an objective. To those who say there is a hidden agenda, I say there is not. It is about valuing the life of a woman and her unborn child and the life of the foetus at all stages. I will move to adjourn this debate to allow for further respectful consultation and discussion amongst all parties—Opposition members, Government members and crossbench members—to occur during the winter break. However, I thank Reverend the Hon. Fred Nile because he has always had a deep respect for the life of a child, a foetus, a human, and a mother carrying her child. I believe that his thoughts are reflected in the mainstream community.

Debated adjourned on motion by the Hon. Marie Ficarra and set down as an order of the day for a future day.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Suspension of Standing and Sessional Orders: Order of Business

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY (Leader of the Opposition) [10.14 a.m.]: I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended to allow a motion to be moved forthwith that Private Members' Business item No. 1333 outside the Order of Precedence relating to the agistment of horses at Yaralla Estate be called on forthwith.

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY (Minister for Roads and Ports) [10.14 a.m.]: The Government opposes the motion.

Dr JOHN KAYE [10.14 a.m.]: The Greens support the motion. The Leader of the Opposition has done substantial work on this issue and has been advocating for constituents who live in the area near Yaralla Estate. The level of concern of those who have used this land, which essentially is administered by the health department, requires that this motion be debated. The matter is urgent because decisions by the health department could close this land to community use.

The Hon. ROBERT BROWN [10.15 a.m.]: The Shooters and Fishers Party will support the motion. Recently horseriders were thrown out of Malabar at the behest of the Commonwealth Government. Talking to those people, one realises how little land is available to them to agist their horses in the Sydney metropolitan

basin and the dislocation that these sorts of manoeuvres cause to the community. We have questions as to why this event has transpired. The trust deed for Yaralla Estate has specific codicils. We believe that a brief inquiry would be perfectly in order. Therefore, we will support the motion.

Question—That the motion be agreed to—put and resolved in the affirmative.

Motion agreed to.

Order of Business

Motion by the Hon. Luke Foley agreed to:

That Private Members' Business item No. 1333 outside the Order of Precedence be called on forthwith.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE AGISTMENT OF HORSES AT YARALLA ESTATE

Establishment

Motion by the HON. LUKE FOLEY agreed to:

1. That a select committee be appointed to inquire into and report on the current and future agistment of horses at the Yaralla Estate, also known as the Dame Eadith Walker and Thomas Walker Estate, and in particular:
 - (a) the actions of the Sydney Local Health District,
 - (b) the eviction of community members whose horses are agisted on the Estate lands,
 - (c) the "independent audit of the site" referred to in a 19 April 2013 media release issued by the Sydney Local Health District, and
 - (d) any other related matter.
2. That, notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the standing orders, the committee consist of seven members comprising:
 - (a) three Government members,
 - (b) two Opposition members, and
 - (c) two crossbench members, one of which will be Mr Robert Borsak.
3. That the Chair of the committee be Mr Robert Borsak.
4. That, notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the standing orders, at any meeting of the committee, any four members of the committee will constitute a quorum.
5. That a committee member who is unable to attend a deliberative meeting in person may participate by electronic communication and may move any motion and be counted for the purpose of any quorum or division, provided that:
 - (a) the Chair is present in the meeting room,
 - (b) all members are able to speak and hear each other at all times, and
 - (c) a member may not participate by electronic communication in a meeting to consider a draft report.
6. That the committee report no later than two months after the passing of this resolution.

CARBON EMISSIONS REDUCTION

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ [10.17 a.m.]: I move:

1. That this House notes that according to the Australian Bureau of Meteorology:
 - (a) January 2013 was Australia's hottest month on record,
 - (b) the summer of 2012-13 was the hottest summer on record and the average Australian maximum temperature for September to December 2012 was the highest on record with average temperatures across the country at 28.6 degrees Celsius, 1.1 degrees Celsius above normal, and exceeding the previous record set in the summer of 1997-98 by more than 0.1 degrees Celsius,

- (c) a new record was set for the number of consecutive days the average maximum daily temperature for Australia exceeded 39 degrees Celsius, being seven days between 2 and 8 January 2013, almost doubling the previous record of four consecutive days in 1973,
 - (d) numerous sites across New South Wales broke long-term records for both daily and monthly maximum temperatures,
 - (e) Australia set a new record for the hottest day for Australia as a whole on 7 January, recording 40.30 degrees Celsius, surpassing the previous record set on 21 December 1972,
 - (f) the area-averaged temperature for Australia as a whole exceeded 39 degrees Celsius on seven consecutive days from 2 to 8 January, the longest such period previously recorded was four days in December 1972, and
 - (g) across New South Wales January temperature records were broken at Sydney, Tibooburra, Nyngan, Sydney Airport, Gunnedah, Williamtown RAAF Base, Moruya Heads, Hay, Newcastle, Katoomba, Mungindi, Murrumbidgee, Prospect, Reservoir, Bathurst, Peak Hill, Quirindi, Bankstown, Dunedoo, Parramatta North, Trangie, Tumbarumba, Wellington, Woolbrook, Gulgong, Paterson, Orange, Camden, Gosford, Oberon, Riverview, Narooma, Batemans Bay, Bathurst, Bombala, Braidwood, Cessnock, Mudgee, Nullo Mountain, Scone, Ulladulla, Young, Bega, Dubbo, Tamworth and Wanaaring.
2. That this House also notes that:
- (a) six of Australia's 10 hottest summers on record have come in the last 11 years, meaning that very hot summers have been occurring at about five times the rate you would expect without a warming trend and only two of the hottest summers on record occurred before 1990,
 - (b) the heat during the 2012-13 summer occurred during a "neutral" period in the El Niño-Southern Oscillation which essentially means that the record was consistent with warming trends, and achieved without an extra push from natural variability associated with El Niño,
 - (c) Australia and the globe are experiencing rapid climate change. Since the middle of the twentieth century, Australian temperatures have, on average, risen by about 1 degrees Celsius with an increase in the frequency of heatwaves and a decrease in the numbers of frosts and cold days,
 - (d) rainfall patterns have also changed, the northwest having seen an increase in rainfall over the last 50 years while much of eastern Australia and the far southwest have experienced a decline,
 - (e) Australia has warmed by nearly a degree Celsius since 1910 which is consistent with warming observed in the global atmosphere and oceans.
3. That this House acknowledges the comments by Opposition Leader Tony Abbott on the 29 July 2009 on Sky News when he stated that:
- If you want to put a price on carbon why not just do it with a simple tax.
4. That this House congratulates the Federal Government for taking action to reduce emissions and transform our economy and note that since the carbon price started, Australia has continued to experience solid economic growth and is now the twelfth biggest economy in the world and will deliver over 750 million tonnes of emissions reductions in the period to 2020 and achieve those emissions reductions at the lowest cost to our economy.

It is worth repeating the figures. According to the Australian Bureau of Meteorology, January 2013 was Australia's hottest month on record. The summer of 2012-13 was the hottest summer on record, and the Australian maximum temperature for September to December 2012 was the highest on record, with average temperatures across the country at 28.6 degrees Celsius, 1.1 degrees Celsius above normal, and exceeding the previous record set in the summer of 1997-98 by more than 0.1 degree Celsius. A new record was set for the number of consecutive days the average maximum daily temperature for Australia exceeded 39 degrees Celsius, being seven days between 2 and 8 January 2013, almost doubling the previous record of four consecutive days in 1973. Numerous sites across New South Wales broke long-term records for both daily and monthly maximum temperatures.

Australia set a new record for the hottest day for Australia as a whole on 7 January, recording 40.3 degrees Celsius, surpassing the previous record set on 21 December 1972. It is a day that is certainly seared in my mind and the minds of the Hon. Niall Blair and the Hon. Paul Green. We were all playing soccer for *The Big Issue* on Sydney Harbour; we had not realised it was going to be the hottest day ever. Certainly by 11 o'clock we were keen for the speeches to finish. The area-averaged temperature for Australia as a whole exceeded 39 degrees Celsius on seven consecutive days from 2 to 8 January. The longest such period previously recorded was four days in December 1972.

DEPUTY-PRESIDENT (The Hon. Paul Green): Order! The Hon. Lynda Voltz said I was present at the soccer match in January this year.

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: You were not at the soccer match?

DEPUTY-PRESIDENT (The Hon. Paul Green): Not this year. The Hon. Lynda Voltz may want to withdraw that comment for the record. I was present the previous year, and it was also hot.

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: The previous year was also hot. It must have been the Hon. Niall Blair and me who played that day. I am sure the Hon. Paul Green meant to play because I know he is a big supporter of *The Big Issue* soccer days.

DEPUTY-PRESIDENT (The Hon. Paul Green): I would have been there in spirit.

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: Across New South Wales January temperature records were broken at Sydney, Tibooburra, Nyngan, Sydney Airport, Gunnedah, Williamtown RAAF Base, Moruya Heads, Hay, Newcastle, Katoomba, Mungindi, Murrumbidgee, Prospect, Reservoir, Bathurst, Peak Hill, Quirindi, Bankstown, Dunedoo, Parramatta north, Trangie, Tumbarumba, Wellington, Woolbrook, Gulgong, Paterson, Orange, Camden, Gosford, Oberon, Riverview, Narooma, Batemans Bay, Bathurst, Bombala, Braidwood, Cessnock, Mudgee, Nullo Mountain, Scone, Ulladulla, Young, Bega, Dubbo, Tamworth and Wanaaring.

The Bureau of Meteorology has now added to these records a prolonged heatwave that affected south-east Australia between 2 and 13 March 2013, breaking numerous records but especially the record for the duration of persistent hot days and nights. Alongside these records the oceans surrounding Australia were similarly exceptionally warm, with sea surface temperatures also posting their hottest month on record in February, and it was the warmest summer on record. Indeed, the six months from September 2012 were characterised by significant heatwaves and record temperatures for the entire Australian region.

The frequency of these extreme high temperatures and the lack of extreme low temperatures in Australia in recent months are consistent with long-term trends towards more extreme high temperatures and fewer extreme low temperatures, which in turn are consistent with an overall warming in Australian mean temperatures of about 0.9 degrees Celsius since 1910. Sea surface temperatures in the Australian region during summer were also 0.5 degrees Celsius above normal—the warmest since records began in 1900. Sea surface temperatures have been particularly warm off the southern coast of Australia in recent weeks. They were generally one to two degrees Celsius above normal for the month of February and were the highest on record for that month over an area extending from western Bass Strait to the central Great Australian Bight.

As the motion states, six of Australia's ten hottest summers on record happened in the last 11 years, meaning that very hot summers have been occurring at about five times the rate one would expect without a warming trend, and only two of the hottest summers on record occurred before 1990. The heat during the 2012-13 summer occurred during a neutral period in the El Niño-Southern Oscillation, which essentially means that the record was consistent with warming trends and was achieved without an extra push from natural variability associated with El Niño.

Australia and the globe are experiencing rapid climate change. Since the middle of the twentieth century, Australia has seen an increase in the frequency of heatwaves and a decrease in the number of frosts and cold days. Rainfall patterns have also changed, the north west having seen an increase in rainfall over the last 50 years while much of eastern Australia and the far south west have experienced a decline. As already noted, Australia has warmed by nearly one degree Celsius since 1910, which is consistent with warming observed in the global atmosphere and oceans. Yet despite these figures, the other side of the Chamber is full of climate sceptics.

The Hon. Dr Peter Phelps: Hear! Hear!

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: I look forward to their explanations of these figures, particularly from the Hon. Dr Peter Phelps, who I know is always keen to regale us with his theories. I note the comments of members such as the Hon. Marie Ficarra, who has stated in this Chamber that "man-made climate change is spin". When challenged on her spurious sources, she informed us that the National Aeronautics and Space Administration [NASA] was the source and that NASA was not a spurious organisation. Indeed, NASA is not a spurious source. Let us take a look at what NASA actually says on the matter. NASA states:

On Earth, human activities are changing the natural greenhouse. Over the last century the burning of fossil fuels like coal and oil has increased the concentration of atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO₂). This happens because the coal or oil burning process combines carbon with oxygen in the air to make CO₂. To a lesser extent, the clearing of land for agriculture, industry, and other human activities have increased concentrations of greenhouse gases.

The consequences of changing the natural atmospheric greenhouse are difficult to predict, but certain effects seem likely:

- On average, Earth will become warmer. Some regions may welcome warmer temperatures, but others may not.
- Warmer conditions will probably lead to more evaporation and precipitation overall, but individual regions will vary, some becoming wetter and others dryer.
- A stronger greenhouse effect will warm the oceans and partially melt glaciers and other ice, increasing sea level. Ocean water also will expand if it warms, contributing further to sea level rise.
- Meanwhile, some crops and other plants may respond favourably to increased atmospheric CO₂, growing more vigorously and using water more efficiently. At the same time, higher temperatures and shifting climate patterns may change the areas where crops grow best and affect the makeup of natural plant communities.

Several lines of evidence show that current global warming cannot be explained by changes in energy from the sun:

- Since 1750, the average amount of energy coming from the Sun either remained constant or increased slightly.
- If the warming were caused by a more active sun, then scientists would expect to see warmer temperatures in all layers of the atmosphere. Instead, they have observed a cooling in the upper atmosphere, and a warming at the surface and in the lower parts of the atmosphere. That's because greenhouse gasses are trapping heat in the lower atmosphere.
- Climate models that include solar irradiance changes can't reproduce the observed temperature trend over the past century or more without including a rise in greenhouse gases.

According to the NASA website, 97 per cent of climate scientists agree that climate-warming trends over the past century are very likely due to human activities. That is, 97 per cent of scientists say the science is right, yet those on the other side of the Chamber still refuse to accept the science on this issue. Indeed, that very page on the NASA website shows a graph of temperature data from four international science institutions and all show rapid warming in the past few decades and that the last decade has been the warmest on record. One of those four institutions is NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies. Although I looked, I could not find any references on the NASA website that man-made climate change is spin. Indeed, what I found was quite the opposite.

Members will note also the previous ramblings of the Hon. Dr Peter Phelps, who I am sure will provide us with more. He stated in this Chamber that higher CO₂ emissions are acceptable because during the Cambrian period carbon dioxide levels were much higher. That may be fine if one is an arthropod with an exo-skeleton and a segmented body—which I have never heard the Hon. Dr Peter Phelps described as—but the mammals on this planet would be pretty well stuffed. I recommend that the member grab a copy of Peter Ward's *Out of Thin Air* for reference—and, for the Hon. Marie Ficarra's information, the book is funded by NASA. It describes a mountaineer who makes it to the top of Mount Everest where he cannot survive without the aid of oxygen; he looks above to see a flock of geese flying high unheeded by the lack of oxygen. The Hon. Dr Peter Phelps may then recall that their ancestors developed respiratory systems during the Cambrian period at a time when oxygen levels at sea level were significantly lower and carbon dioxide levels were higher with higher temperatures.

Our current atmosphere is greatly different from the atmosphere at most times of earth's history. It is currently suited to mammals, but that was not so during the Cambrian period. Two other periods of astrobiological timescales, 250 million years and 200 million years ago, nearly wiped out our furry ancestors, and if it had not been for the survival of a pre-mammal named *Thrinaxodon* the earth would not be dominated by the likes of the Hon. Dr Peter Phelps but by birds. The arguments of the Hon. Dr Peter Phelps about the Cambrian period and his assessment of the history of the atmosphere and the evolution of respiratory systems are nonsense, but it is just the type of nonsense we constantly get from the Hon. Dr Peter Phelps.

The motion then goes on to acknowledge the comments by the Opposition leader, Tony Abbott, on 29 July 2009 on Sky News when he stated, "If you want to put a price on carbon, why not just do it with a simple tax?" In 2009 that was his view. He may have taken that view because he was running a campaign at the time against the then Opposition leader, Malcolm Turnbull, on carbon tax and the emission trading scheme, but because there are a lot of people on the other side of the Chamber who argue about liberalism's role and the role of government in free markets I will quote Malcolm Turnbull's comments on the introduction of the emissions trading scheme:

But, given we have an apparent bipartisan agreement that emissions should be reduced by five per cent of 2000 levels by 2020, is an emission trading scheme ... the best policy to achieve the desired outcome? Believing as I do, as a Liberal, that market forces deliver the lowest cost and most effective solution to economic challenges, the answer must be yes. Because more emissions intensive industries and generators need to buy more permits than less intensive ones, lower emissions activities, whether they are

cleaner fuels or energy efficient buildings, are made more competitive. A brown coal fired power station, for example, pumps out four times as much CO₂ as an efficient gas fired one. Gas is expensive and clean; brown coal is cheap and dirty. If there is no cost charged for emitting carbon, there is simply no incentive to move to the cleaner fuel.

Until 1 December last year, there was a bipartisan commitment in Australia that this carbon price, this exercise in reducing emissions, should be imposed by means of a market-based mechanism—this emissions trading scheme. At their core, therefore, these bills are as much the work of John Howard as of Kevin Rudd. The policy I am supporting here today as an opposition backbencher is the same policy I supported as John Howard's environment minister. And why did we in the Howard government believe an emissions trading scheme was the best approach? It was because we as Liberals believed in the superior efficiency of the free market to set a price on carbon. As the Shergold report observes:

Market-based approaches have the potential to deliver least-cost abatement by providing incentives for firms to reduce emissions where this is cheapest, while allowing the continuation of emissions where they are the most costly to reduce.

Later in the speech he continued:

All of us in this House know that industries and businesses, attended by an army of lobbyists, are particularly persuasive and all too effective at getting their sticky fingers into taxpayers' pockets. Having the government pick projects for subsidy is a recipe for fiscal recklessness on a grand scale—

The Hon. Dr Peter Phelps: Hear! Hear! Who said that?

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: Malcolm Turnbull. He continued:

—and there will always be a temptation for projects to be selected for their political appeal. In short, having the government pay for emissions abatement—

I am glad that the Hon. Dr Peter Phelps agrees with Malcolm Turnbull here and disagrees with his current leader, Tony Abbott—

as opposed to the polluting industries themselves, is a slippery slope which can only result in higher taxes and more costly and less effective abatement of emissions. I say this as a member and former leader of a political party whose core values are a commitment to free markets and free enterprise. The Shergold report went on to say this about this very issue:

Financing subsidies and specific project-based interventions also impose costs on society from their use of taxation. If these approaches were to be used extensively to achieve large-scale abatement, the economy would suffer losses in economic and administrative efficiency. In contrast, market-based approaches to emissions abatement involve the explicit pricing of emissions, allowing the market to determine the cheapest source of emissions reduction.

Malcolm Turnbull went on to say:

The proposed ETS is a balanced, substantive and timely step forward on an issue of immense importance. By relying so heavily on market forces to address this very severe challenging problem, the ETS is far more in the great traditions of modern liberalism than any other available policy response. After all, I have always believed that Liberals reject the idea that government knows best and embrace the idea that government's job is to enable each of us to do our best.

Those are the words of Malcolm Turnbull. I will be interested to hear the Hon. Dr Peter Phelps' views on Malcolm Turnbull's comments.

The Hon. Dr Peter Phelps: Don't worry; you'll get my views.

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: I know we will get your views—at length, I assume. I have set out my reasons for introducing this motion. I have taken into consideration all the figures that have come out, all the scientific evidence and all the evidence about the best way to deal with carbon emissions. I congratulate the Federal Government on taking action to reduce emissions and to transform our economy. I note that since the carbon price began Australia has continued to experience solid economic growth and has now the twelfth biggest economy in the world. Australia will deliver over 750 million tonnes of emissions reductions in the period to 2020 and is set to achieve these emissions reductions at the lowest cost to our economy.

The Hon. Dr PETER PHELPS [10.33 a.m.]: Once again I enter the lists to fight the enemies of freedom, common sense and scientific accuracy, as we have to battle once again against this great anthropogenic global warming swindle. What is the latest evidence we have? It is that this is the coldest spring in France and Britain in the past 50 years. That is right: it is the coldest spring in France and Britain in the last 50 years. This comes on top of 17 years of no statistically significant change in world temperatures. Let me repeat that: for the last 17 years there has been no statistically significant change in world temperatures. And yet, through that period, carbon dioxide percentages in the atmosphere have been rising—and not merely rising but rising exponentially. So if human-produced carbon dioxide is the sole cause of global warming one would have to ask: Where is this global warming? Where is it? Where is it?

We know it does not exist, because the alarmists have even changed their terminology. In the nineties it was all about "global warming this" and "global warming that" but when the global warming failed to eventuate they changed their terms and it then became "climate change". It was not "global warming" anymore; it became "climate change". Why was this so? Because there was no warming to speak of. In fact, as Professor Curry, Chair of the School of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences at the Georgia Institute of Technology, said recently:

The real question now is not whether global warming has paused for the past 15 years, but whether the next 10 years will see a global cooling as well.

Let me repeat that: Recent evidence of 10-year trends implies that we are approaching a period of global cooling. And yet all through this time carbon dioxide output has been rising. And now we have a Climate Commission that says we need to shut down Australia's coal industry—at a cost of \$50 billion a year. Now, aside from the sheer insanity of that in economic terms, consider this: Australia's planned cut to emissions by 2020 would make a difference to the world's temperature, even assuming all these global warming alarmists' models are correct, of just 0.0038 of a degree by 2100—three one-thousandths of a degree. The truth is this: Digging coal is no threat to anyone, except the green ideologues who want to enfeeble our economy and enslave our bodies. These people have more front than Mark Foy's. We have the East Anglia email scandals; the "hide the decline" scandal; the "use the science trick" scandal; the "we cannot explain the slowdown" scandal; and—the greatest hoax of all—the hockey stick graph scandal.

The Hon. Lynda Voltz mentioned warming in the lower troposphere. There is still no explanation from the climate alarmists for the failure to find any significant trace of warming in the lower troposphere, despite the fact that it was predicted by all the alarmist models. It should be there but it is not there. But do they say the models are wrong? No, no, they say, "It must be something else". It is even worse than that. They do not even bother to try to explain away the failure to find warming in the lower troposphere. Similarly, there is no attempt by the climate alarmists to explain why the Vostok ice cores show that CO₂ rises after, and not before, temperature rises. And there is still no explanation as to why, despite exponentially increasing amounts of CO₂ being released into the atmosphere, there has been no warming trend for more than a decade and a half.

The Climate Commission is headed by the same Tim Flannery whose outrageous claims suckered foolish governments into wasting billions of dollars on completely unnecessary desalination plants. The fact is that even this week Warragamba Dam had to open its gates and spill water. Yet only a few years ago Professor Flannery was saying our dams would be empty and that Perth would have to be evacuated because it would run out of water. Yet the water continues to flow down from Lake Burragorang into the river and out to sea. Sea level predictions also have proved to be increasingly inaccurate as time goes by. I am not the one who is saying that; it is the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [IPCC]. The panel's four previous reports have all downgraded the level of sea level rise that is predicted even under the global warming alarmists' models. Even under these alarmist models, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has been forced on each and every occasion to revise downwards its expected sea level rise.

So where is this climate change? Being a sceptic about anthropogenic global warming is not about hating science; it is about loving science more than the zealots and conmen who purport to speak in its name. Instead of science you have glib hucksters and government grant shysters barricaded in the halls of academia simultaneously demanding more money for the new environmental theology while despising the very society that allows wealth to be created. So there are requests for more money for green industries despite the fact that the Spanish experience demonstrates beyond a shadow of a doubt that green industries are woefully inefficient and each job costs hundreds of thousands of dollars. They are the sorts of people who, as I mentioned earlier this week, work on a nice little rotating current where they slide their way out of so-called environmental faculties at universities into non-government organisations and then into government departments, then back to environmental faculties, then to non-government organisations and then to government departments—all of them mutually reinforcing the lie.

The government departments support this with taxpayers' funds and the non-government organisations and academics increase their own power as bureaucrats. The academics rely on non-government organisations to provide them with support, and on the government to provide them with money to allow them to continue their own little fiefdoms. The non-government organisations are, of course, just as mercenary, relying on the patronage of government to give them a status far in advance of what any normal rational person would give them and using the academy as its training ground, breeding ground and holding area for environmental

activists. These, quite frankly, are the sorts of people who should be unceremoniously defenestrated from their ivory towers and made to apologise to the people of Australia. But it will not happen. Why will it not happen? Because eco-guilt is the new original sin. As Pascal Bruckner wrote in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*:

For the past half-century we have, in fact, been witnessing a slide from one scapegoat to another: Marxism designated capitalism as responsible for human misery. Third-worldism, upset by the bourgeoisification of the working classes, substituted the West for capitalism as the great criminal in history and the "inventor" of slavery, colonialism, and imperialism.

With ecologism, we move up a notch: The guilty party is humanity itself, in its will to dominate the planet. Here there is a return to the fundamentals of Christianity: Evil is the pride of the creatures who are in revolt against their Creator and who exceed their prerogatives.

Let us be under no illusion: it is a theology, not a science. The global warming alarmists have purported to create a science but they have created the Scientology of science. They have created the ability for the hucksters, the shysters and the swindlers to make money out of the guilt of others. There is little doubt that the damage being done by climate change policies currently exceeds the damage actually being done by climate change, and would for several decades to come even if the alarmist models were correct. Hunger, rainforest destruction, excess cold weather deaths and reduced economic growth are all exacerbated by a rush to biomass, wind and solar. These dwarf any possible effects of worse weather, for which there is actually no evidence anyway, and the harm done falls disproportionately on the poor. Climate worriers claim that at some point this will reverse and the disease will become worse than the cure. An acceleration in temperature rise, they say, is long overdue. The snag is, of course, the best science says otherwise.

A couple of months ago saw the publication of a paper in the prestigious journal *Nature Geoscience* from a high-profile international team led by Oxford scientists. The contributors include 14 lead authors of the scientific report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which is coming up, and the study is about as authoritative as you can get. It uses the most robust method of analysing the earth's heat budget over the past hundred years or so to estimate a transient climate response—the amount of warming that, with rising emissions, the world is likely to experience by the time carbon dioxide levels have doubled since pre-industrial times. The most likely estimate, even in this instance, is only 1.3 degrees Celsius. Even if we reach doubled carbon dioxide in just 50 years we can expect the world to be about two-thirds of a degree warmer than it is now, and maybe a bit more if other greenhouse gases are included. As the economist Bjorn Lomborg recently summarised:

Economic models show that the overall impact of a moderate warming (1-2C) will be beneficial [so] global warming is a net benefit now ...

Contrast this new result with the flagship climate model used by climate alarmists. The climate alarmists' model predicts a response of 2.5 degrees Celsius, or almost double the best estimate that the Oxford team has published. Indeed, the Oxford study concludes that it is more than 95 per cent certain that the response is below 2 degrees Celsius, considerably short of what is predicted by the climate alarmists' model. The new paper also fits the known physics of the greenhouse effect, which predicts a warming of 1.1 degrees Celsius for a doubling of carbon dioxide. Only unverified assumptions by modellers about the added effects of water vapour and clouds have allowed politicians and activists to claim that a much higher number fits the laws of physics. Only now-disproven claims about how much the sulphur pollution in the air was masking the warming enabled them to reconcile their claims with observed actual data.

In an insightful new book, *The Age of Global Warming*, Rupert Darwall makes the point that "in believing scientists and politicians can solve the problems of a far distant future, the tangible needs of the present are neglected". The strong possibility that climate change, if it does exist, will be slow and harmless must be taken seriously before we damage more lives, landscapes and livelihoods of people in its name. The Greens love the idea of a theocratic serfdom for all humanity in which they are the high priests sent to redeem us from the sins of growth, development and civilisation. But the time of reckoning for the swindlers, the fakirs and the fellow travellers is at hand. That time of reckoning is coming, and it is coming soon.

Mr SCOT MacDONALD [10.48 a.m.]: Thank you, Deputy-President.

Dr John Kaye: The voice of the gas industry.

Mr SCOT MacDONALD: I acknowledge that interjection: the voice of industry.

Dr John Kaye: Point of order: The member has deliberately misled the House. I said, "The voice of the gas industry", not, "The voice of industry."

DEPUTY-PRESIDENT (The Hon. Paul Green): Order! There is no point of order. The member acknowledged the interjection. Whether the member heard that in its full context is subjective, not objective. Mr Scot MacDonald has the call.

Mr SCOT MacDONALD: I will correct the record. Dr John Kaye did say "the gas industry". I was a little bit selective.

Dr John Kaye: Thanks, Scot. You're not a bad bloke.

Mr SCOT MacDONALD: Members on this side of the House have always understood that The Greens are prepared for and looking forward to the phasing out of the coal industry. I talked about this topic last week. What is shameful to this House is that the Australian Labor Party is turning its back on one of the foundations of that party—the coal industry. I mentioned last week that Ben Chifley, in his maiden speech, was very forthright about the value and the importance of the coal industry to this State. It is a great shame that the Australian Labor Party has fallen for the shenanigans and extremism of The Greens and other groups such as 350.org. It is no longer a proponent of the coal industry. That has been played out in the Independent Commission Against Corruption over the past few weeks.

This debate is about extremism, practicalities and who stands up for the economic wellbeing of the State of New South Wales. The Coalition Government stands up for the economic wellbeing of our primary industries—mining and agriculture. A rigorous environmental regulatory regime is in place, although I am sure it could be improved in various ways. My view, which is shared by other members on my side, is that shutting down the New South Wales coal industry or putting a burden on it such as the Hon. Lynda Voltz has talked about achieves nothing. As I and the Hon. Dr Peter Phelps have pointed out in other debates, Australia represents about 5 per cent, and New South Wales less than 2 per cent, of world coal production. I am sure Dr John Kaye will bring his facts to bear on it. If we shut this industry down tomorrow the world coal industry would have a shortfall of eight days of production to make up.

With less than 1 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions, New South Wales has about 2 per cent of global coal production. That coal production and its exports would be replaced in eight days. I will be fascinated to hear from members opposite. If coal production in New South Wales is abolished 17,000 jobs in the Hunter Valley, 5,000 direct jobs in the north north-west, 9,500 jobs around the Illawarra and Sydney region and many more flow-on jobs will go. The shortfall of eight days would be replaced with coal production from places such as Indonesia and South Africa that have lower calorific coal. The impact on places such as China and India would be more greenhouse gas production. There is no sustainable argument to say that if we shut down coal production in New South Wales today or tomorrow then solar, wind, gas or nuclear energy would replace it.

There is an evolving energy mix and things are changing. For instance, India's renewable energy production is about 1 per cent. India is investing \$13 billion to increase that to 8 per cent, but that will take decades and decades. In the meantime members opposite want to cripple our economic wellbeing in New South Wales for a negative environmental impact. As the previous speaker articulated far better than I can, these are thought bubbles that are not rooted in practical, pragmatic economic realities. It startles me that although New South Wales and Australia built their standard of living and division of wealth across all societies based on cheap energy, cheap electricity—it is our industrial strength—little by little we are being crippled. It starts with a tax and then becomes broader. Other countries, particularly in Europe, have moved away from emissions trading schemes. The price in Europe is down to €3 or €4 a tonne, which is a factor five or six times less than we are experiencing in Australia.

The point I am trying to make is that Australia is a small country with a population of 23 million. It is difficult, because of high costs as a result of our distance from the market, for us to produce and export goods that are sought overseas. Australia has the highest labour costs in the world and the highest environmental inputs on all production, whether it is agriculture or mining. And the Opposition wants to cripple us even more. It does not make sense at either an environmental level or an economic level. I reinforce the point that, unless markets are intervened in in a completely efficient way, this will occur at great cost to the poorest people in our community and overseas. The poorest people in our communities are disproportionately affected by higher energy costs, higher electricity costs. For example, renters do not get the opportunity to take advantage of solar energy. Their electricity costs are far higher than those of wealthy people. The wonderful concepts promoted by those opposite are completely at odds with the view of the world of Ben Chifley and the people who came after him: to look after the poorest people in our communities, not to impoverish the least wealthy in communities here and overseas.

When this country exports coal it assists 1.2 billion people who do not currently have access to electricity, or 2.8 billion people who are still cooking and heating with peat and wood. As I said in the House last week, 3.5 million women and children die every year from respiratory diseases because they have no alternative to cooking indoors with wood and peat. There is this wonderful idea that we are going to fix the world's problems and we may change the energy mix over the years. However, in the meantime more than three and half million more people will die every year. This is more than die of malaria and AIDS. I look forward to members presenting figures disproving that. In addition, 1.2 billion people are not on the grid. They are impoverished, they have a lower standard of living and they die earlier than we do.

However, that is okay because New South Wales will fix it with a small carbon tax. We will feel better and it will not change our energy mix substantially. Of course, it makes no economic or environmental sense. This House needs to be reminded that the Government stands up for the agricultural and mining industries and members opposite are walking away from them as quickly as possible. Their forefathers would be bemused by this motion. They are turning their backs on 17,000 people in the Hunter, 9,500 people in the north and north-west and 5,000 people in the Sydney region who are directly employed in mining, primarily in the coalmining industry. I condemn the motion and look forward to the House rejecting it.

Dr JOHN KAYE [11.00 a.m.]: On behalf of The Greens I support the motion moved by the Hon. Lynda Voltz. I thank her for creating the opportunity for members of the Coalition to put on the record their attitude to what is clearly the greatest moral challenge of the twenty-first century—climate change. So far we have heard two different approaches to the problem. Approach number one, which was presented by the Hon. Dr Peter Phelps, could be largely categorised as climate change denial; that is, the science is wrong. Climate change deniers say that it is all a conspiracy and that tens of thousands of scientists around the world have cooked up this theory to create a conveyor belt from non-government organisations to academia and industry. The Hon. Scot MacDonald—

Mr Scot MacDonald: I no longer use "the honourable".

Dr JOHN KAYE: It is good to know that a fourth member has rejected that title. Mr Scot MacDonald's view is that we should not even talk about climate change. He did not address climate change once during his contribution. One approach is to deny that it exists and the other is to pretend it does not exist. I suspect that Mr Scot MacDonald probably accepts the science because he has worked in industries in which science is paramount. However, I also suspect that like many people in the fossil fuel industry he is taking a she'll-be-right attitude to the 23 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent that our global economy pumps into the atmosphere each year.

People of his ilk take a she'll-be-right attitude to the warnings issued by 97 per cent of scientists; they take a she'll-be-right attitude to the appalling weather patterns descending on North America and Europe—both extremely hot and extremely cold; they take a she'll-be-right attitude to the pleas of Pacific Island nations such as Tuvalu, who are calling out to the world to do something about the increasing saltwater inundation of their homes; and they take a she'll-be-right attitude to growing concerns about the health, economic, social and safety aspects of the warnings issued by climate scientists. That is their right, but would they take the same attitude to smoking cigarettes and the spread of infectious diseases?

The situation is entirely analogous. The tobacco industry was a big employer of both industrial workers in cigarette factories and farm workers. Indeed, in the 1940s and 1950s when the health warnings were first issued about the connection between head, neck and respiratory cancers and cigarettes there were people who waved the flag for the tobacco industry just as Mr Scot MacDonald waves the flag for extractive industries. Some were like the Hon. Dr Peter Phelps and said that it was not true and that it was a conspiracy perpetrated by the Communists. They were the crude end of the tobacco industry's assault on science. Others said that it might be true and it might not be, but we do not want to destroy jobs. That line was trotted out until their loved ones started to die from throat cancer, neck cancer, lung cancer and emphysema. Of course, by then it was too late.

This motion implores the House not to leave it until it is too late and to acknowledge the science. I am a climate change sceptic, but I am also a quantum mechanics and evolution sceptic. That does not mean that I do not use a telephone or a television or that I refuse to board an aeroplane, all of which rely on quantum mechanics. If our understanding of quantum mechanics were grotesquely wrong, none of those technological advances would work. I believe that the science of quantum mechanics has a long way to go. My reading of it is that the fundamental understandings continue to evolve, but I accept its outcomes. It allows us to do things with semi-conductors, light beams and lasers, and so on.

Similarly, we are making constant advances in our understanding of evolution. However, we still use it to explain our planet and a large number of phenomena in medical science that are crucial to the development of vaccines and cures. Being a sceptic is good; it is about challenging science and perceived wisdom, which is a healthy thing to do. Every good scientist is a sceptic. What is deeply wrong with what the Hon. Dr Peter Phelps said is that it indicates that his scepticism has become denialism. Advances in science are explained away by saying that the previous understandings were wrong so all understandings are wrong. The honourable member—who should know better because he was trained in the science of thought—has turned the complexity of science into an alarm bell, a clarion call or a dog whistle for everything loose in our society.

Denialism is now the new politics of the far right, not only in Australia but also in the United States. It is very clever politics and it smothers our natural spirit of rebellion and scepticism. They are good characteristics because they reflect our capacity to challenge perceived wisdom and to shuck off people who tell us what we should believe. That rebelliousness and scepticism is the heartbeat of a modern democracy and freedom. Climate change deniers pervert those characteristics. They do so using the hundreds of millions of dollars that flow out of the extractive industry into organisations such as the Heartland Institute in the United States and, I suspect, its equivalents in Australia, including the Institute of Public Affairs. That money is fed into the debate to give a political and media voice to some of the craziest and most dangerous ideas we have heard this century.

Climate change alarmists create their own language and their own dynamic of the debate about climate change. One only has to listen to the bullying by Alan Jones, who browbeats his audience into submission over his bizarre beliefs on climate change. Such people are deeply misleading the community over what is one of the most complex and challenging debates that we should have for the twenty-first century—that is, how we respond to the warnings of 97 per cent of scientists who look at this issue. I suspect that if those who are funded directly by the fossil fuel industry are removed, the figure would be far higher. That 97 per cent of scientists say that our current mode of economy, based on dumping billions of tonnes of carbon dioxide and carbon dioxide equivalent greenhouse gases into the atmosphere every year, will do damage to the climate system of our planet. That damage will translate into real and palpable damage for individuals, economies, agriculture, water supply and human health.

To ignore the warnings of those 97 per cent of scientists is to ignore the canary in the coalmine. To ignore the warnings from scientists about the consumption of tobacco, hygiene, control of disease, their challenge about the way we run our economy and about the hole in the ozone layer from chlorofluorocarbons in each case would have led to massive human misery. When 97 per cent of scientists say there is a real and present danger that we are destroying our life support system, as civilised, intelligent sceptical human beings we have no choice but to ask questions about how we should respond. Instead of spending our money, time and effort on debating the science we should be debating how to respond to that science and what to do.

I foreshadow that I will introduce a bill on behalf of The Greens in relation to how we should respond to that warning, I am sure that the Australian Labor Party will have a different view. I am sure that members of the Government will have a range of views on how we should deal with that warning. It is not a debate about the science; it is a debate about how we should respond to the science. What is appalling is this debate has been taken back whether the science is to be believed. We do not have an option whether to believe the science. We can hold beliefs about the science if we want to, but if we are to be rational and to define a set of policies that work for the future we have to accept the warnings of scientists and of the planet.

One aspect of denialism that I find most alarming is the idea that scientists are wrong because Europe had a very cold winter and therefore global warming is not occurring. Nothing is simple in relation to a climate system. Perhaps scientists were wrong to name it "global warming" because global warming in one part of the planet will inevitably move air flows. What happened in Europe this winter was the direct result of a jet stream moving south bringing cold air, carrying a large amount of frozen water on to Europe. There is good argument that that was a direct result of climate change; of the melting of ice, the change of the ice cover on the Arctic as a result of which the jet stream moved further south and brought cold air into the central sections of Europe that would normally go to only the northern section of Europe. It is ridiculous, absurd, simplistic and deeply misleading to say there is no problem with the planet because Europe had one of the coldest winters, and it belittles those who say it.

Members will recall that in 2006 and 2007 the community had a far stronger belief with respect to climate change because we were in the middle of a drought. Now that we have La Niña effect the community has a weakened belief in climate change. The reality is that we cannot rely on individual climatic episodes to say whether there is climate change; we must rely on the science.

The Hon. Trevor Khan: I hope people apply that on both sides of the debate.

Dr JOHN KAYE: There is no debate on the science; there is only debate on how to respond to it. I find it alarming when politicians say they can have policies that ignore the science. I will put one statistic on the record in relation to jobs. If we build a new coal-fired power station in New South Wales, 80 per cent of the capital value will be spent overseas—that is, 80 per cent of the employment value of those jobs will go overseas. If we build the equivalent capacity of wind turbines, 80 per cent of that construction and capital value can be had in New South Wales. Mr Scot MacDonald talked about 32,500 jobs in extractive industries, only a part of which is coal. I trump him with 73,800 new jobs in renewable energy. The Greens support the motion.

The Hon. STEVE WHAN [11.16 a.m.]: I support this important motion. Climate change sceptics often state their point of view in this place. I believe that climate change is a real challenge for New South Wales and for the world. There is overwhelming scientific endorsement of climate change. Of course, there are deniers in our society, but the overwhelming scientific opinion supports the need for us to act on climate change. I am a member of Clean Energy for Eternity, the south-east region's body, which for some years has been working on a target of 50:50 for clean energy in the south-east. Many local councils in the Monaro and South Coast regions have signed up to it. We have seen grassroots community action taken to try to address climate change.

The problem in rural New South Wales is that a head-in-the-sand attitude will hurt the economy and agriculture in New South Wales. The south-east has a real challenge in the ski industry, to which I will refer in a moment, and in agriculture. The CSIRO, which has been a reputable source of information on many aspects of agriculture for many years, has made an assessment of the impact of climate change in the south-east region on agriculture and has made some quite concerning findings. The CSIRO looked particularly at the impacts on water supply in the Murray-Darling Basin. In its October 2008 report the CSIRO referred to the impact of climate change by 2030. It said that surface water availability across the entire Murray-Darling Basin is more likely to decline than increase. A decline in the south of the Murray-Darling Basin is more likely than in the north and a very substantial decline is possible.

The CSIRO median figures for the entire Murray-Darling Basin is 11 per cent decline in water, 9 per cent in the north and 13 per cent in the south of the Murray-Darling Basin which would have a very significant effect on agriculture as well as on the health of the river systems. According to the CSIRO, median water availability would reduce the total surface water use by 4 per cent under current water sharing arrangements but would further reduce the flow at the Murray mouth by 24 per cent, to be 30 per cent of the total, without development outflow.

In volumetric terms, the majority of the impact on climate change would be borne by the environment rather than consumptive water users which would be a concern to environmentalists but it would also have an impact on agriculture in the Murray-Darling Basin. Over many years the water users, with less security in their licences, would see declines in the amount that was allocated to them. In Australia's alpine areas a series of studies have shown significant impacts on snow cover.

A study conducted by Rachel Slatyer on climate change impacts on Australia's alpine ecosystems predicts a decline in the area of snow cover in Australia of between 22 per cent and 85 per cent by 2050. Environmental impacts on endangered species such as the mountain pigmy possum are highlighted in a number of climate change reports. The Garnaut report suggests that the impacts in the ski industry will be particularly significant. I have previously spoken in this place about the impact of climate change on alpine resorts in south-east New South Wales, in particular. For example, the report on the economic significance of Australian alpine resorts showed that the gross regional product generated by alpine resorts in the Snowy River Shire was \$561.6 million, or 57 per cent of the local government area total.

The Garnaut report and many others, including the CSIRO's predictions which some were based on, show a severe potential impact on the Snowy region, including decreased snow season duration, decreased snow depth and coverage, an increased artificial snow-making requirement, deteriorating conditions for artificial snow production, increased peak energy demand, infrastructure damage and business interruption, reduced stability of soil and infrastructure foundations, and loss of alpine habitat. The implications for the industry include increased expenditure to maintain ski infrastructure, reduced visitor numbers, reduced employment opportunities, reduced integrity of structural foundations, increased catastrophic events—for example, the Thredbo landslide—and increased demand and utilities costs, particularly water and power as more snow is being made.

The Garnaut report looked at a number of scenarios, including the "business as usual scenarios"—that is, the view taken by many of those opposite that we should not take action on climate change. Those scenarios show the impact on the alpine climate, and therefore the ski industry, to be nothing less than high to extreme. The scenarios in which we make sensible attempts to mitigate climate change over a period of time—and I will return to this if time permits—range from low to moderate. This is worrying. That is why we see a large number of messages when we visit alpine areas about climate change and acting responsibly for the environment.

There is much debate about how to respond to climate change. The sensible response is to start pricing emissions, as the Federal Labor Government has done. Even those economic rationalists on the other side of the House would have to agree that when a price signal is put on something people will change their behaviour and shift to options with different pricing structures. That is why, as well as the clean energy and renewable targets, we have already seen a strong shift towards other sorts of power usage in New South Wales. For example, because of the price of electricity in New South Wales I now have solar panels on my roof with no feed in tariff. It is more economically viable and logical for me to do so with a 19-year-old and 20-year-old living in my house.

Carbon pricing is critical in responding to climate change. It is of real concern that if the Federal Coalition is elected at the upcoming election it might ditch carbon pricing. Indeed to any economic rationalist the Federal Coalition's proposed policy of paying people to do things rather using market mechanisms must seem quite illogical. I never cease to be amazed at how those who claim to be supporters of the market can support an approach that moves from a market to an incentive mechanism. However, the move away from fossil fuel will be gradual. As I have said before, we will need to increase our reliance on cleaner energy as we go forward over a period of time—the Garnaut report talks about periods of time ranging up to 2100. The Garnaut report strongly endorses the need for more gas use in New South Wales and that is why I consistently talk about the need for a gas supply in this State. The report states:

In an effective global approach to mitigation, Australia would move quickly to replace high-emissions coal generation with increased output from currently operating gas plants. It would also concentrate new investments on gas and renewables, and over time would replace established coal generation capacity with new gas and renewable energy.

"Over time" being a key point. It continues:

Eventually, with deeper reductions in emissions and a higher carbon price, gas itself would become uneconomic in the absence of low-cost biological or geological sequestration of emissions. Economically efficient sequestration would, of course, give coal a new economic lease on life, and prolong the economic life of gas. It seems likely that sequestration from gas combustion will be cheaper and easier from coal.

It is clear that gas should be part of the fossil fuel transition process. We should not lose focus on the potential for clean coal—as appears to have happened in recent years—or take a nimby approach to these things. I have now seen protests against every source of energy in New South Wales. This Government gives lip-service to those who oppose wind farms. Wind farms are like any industrial development—namely, there are right and wrong places for them. They should not be found in areas of highly dense development or highly dense rural residential development; as long as we talk with local communities they are perfectly appropriate in broadacre rural areas. I have even seen a protest about a solar farm bizarrely supported by Mr John Barilaro, the member for Monaro. He backed people protesting about a solar farm in the Australian Capital Territory. We all recognise the need for energy and that means we will have new energy developments in various locations.

The Hon. Dr Peter Phelps: I am not sure The Greens recognise that.

The Hon. STEVE WHAN: I acknowledge the interjection of the Hon. Dr Peter Phelps. And in the longer term, when it can be proven that gas can be safely extracted, gas will be included in those developments. One of the biggest threats to our progress towards reducing reliance on fossil fuels is the prospect of losing carbon pricing under an Abbott government. I also blame The Greens for that. Had The Greens not blocked the first Rudd Government's attempt to have an emissions trading scheme we would now have a scheme that could not be reversed. It is possible that by next year there will be no carbon pricing in Australia and The Greens will share in the blame for that. It may not have been the perfect scheme but in politics, and in life, we have to try and come up with something which will survive in the long term.

I am always outraged to hear Government members in this place say that Australia should not be on its own in taking action on this. Yesterday President Obama said his focus over the next few years will be on climate change. He described those opposing his measures again as "flat earthers". When I visited China I saw massive wind farm developments being built as part of an attempt to not just rely on coal—

The Hon. Dr Peter Phelps: What about China's coal developments?

The Hon. STEVE WHAN: China's coal developments are big but it is trying to not just rely on coal. I have spoken before in this place about coal being a key ingredient in moving many people out of poverty in China, and that is absolutely critical. We should not lose sight of the fact that energy, electricity, is a critical factor in people coming out of poverty. Shenzhen in China is about to introduce a carbon pricing mechanism. Two Chinese provinces will be involved in a carbon pricing trial to help determine a national mechanism.

For Government members to say that Australia is operating on its own in this area is completely wrong. The world's biggest country, based on population, is moving in that direction. The United States of America is moving in that direction. The world's first and second biggest economies are taking strong action on climate change. It is interesting that recently the American Environmental Protection Authority noted that carbon emissions are falling in the United States for the first time, largely because of the move to gas, and that is an important part of that mix.

I strongly support this motion. As I said, I am a member of Clean Energy for Eternity in the local area. I have swum the 7½ kilometres of Lake Jindabyne several times, mostly in February, to raise money for that organisation and for solar panels. I will continue to support grassroots action on climate change, as well as national and State level action on climate change. It is critical for Australia to act on climate change because the cost to our agricultural sector of not acting is devastating. The cost to our economy is critical, particularly in the Snowy Mountains. Indeed, all the projections show that a move to cleaner energy will generate jobs in south-eastern New South Wales. Climate change needs to be treated seriously by governments at all levels in Australia. I commend the Hon. Lynda Voltz for moving this motion.

The Hon. RICK COLLESS [11.30 a.m.]: I express my concern about and opposition to this motion and in so doing I will bring members up to speed with a few scientific facts about something I know a fair bit about, that is, carbon. One aspect of this debate that has concerned me greatly over the years is that carbon and carbon dioxide have been identified as pollutants.

The Hon. Dr Peter Phelps: Demonised. Unfairly demonised.

The Hon. RICK COLLESS: Carbon and carbon dioxide have been demonised. I will argue that carbon and carbon dioxide are not foes or demons; they are very much our friends. Members who studied science at school would have learned about the carbon cycle. I am sure Hon. Steve Whan did because he is not interested in my comments. Members who learned about the carbon cycle at school would know that the carbon cycle is also termed "the cycle of life". Carbon is a friend. The carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is taken up by green plants; photosynthesis occurs—

The Hon. Steve Whan: Why don't you advocate increasing emissions?

The Hon. RICK COLLESS: If the Hon. Steve Whan listens he will learn. That carbon dioxide is turned into sugars and energy, which other animals need in order to go about their daily business. If I hold up this glass of water, what is the energy source that is stopping the glass from falling to the ground? It is the oxidation of carbon. It is the carbon that is being oxidised from the sugars in my body, my food, my blood that is holding up the glass. In so doing I am emitting carbon dioxide, which is then taken up by plants and the cycle starts again. It is the cycle of life. Let us talk about the various amounts of carbon dioxide in different parts of the countryside.

In the atmosphere there are about 730 gigatonnes of carbon dioxide. In the ocean there are about 38,000 gigatonnes of carbon dioxide. In vegetation and soils there are about 2,000 gigatonnes of carbon stored in that process. There is a flux; it moves between each one of those storages every day. Photosynthesis takes carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere and combines it with water and light and energy from the sun to produce sugars, which we then use for food. And it releases oxygen, which we need to breathe. Carbon is the basis of all our food. That food plus oxygen give off water, carbon dioxide and energy. As I said, when I was holding up the glass, the oxidation of that carbon gives off energy, which allows us to go about our daily work.

DEPUTY-PRESIDENT (The Hon. Sarah Mitchell): I welcome to the public gallery members of the Moss Vale Probus Club, guests of the member for Goulburn, the Hon. Pru Goward.

The Hon. RICK COLLESS: The people in the public gallery have come at an opportune time as we are talking about global warming and the role of carbon dioxide in our food supply. In the atmosphere there is

78 per cent nitrogen, 21 per cent oxygen, a trace of a gas called argon and a smaller trace of a gas called carbon dioxide, which is currently between 380 and 400 parts per million. Over the past 140,000 years the carbon dioxide level in the atmosphere has varied from 150 to 380 parts per million. Over the past 600 million years it has varied from 150 to 7,000 parts per million. That is 20 times higher than it is currently. Carbon dioxide is not a pollutant.

DEPUTY-PRESIDENT (The Hon. Sarah Mitchell): Order! If the Hon. Lynda Voltz and the Hon. Dr Peter Phelps wish to conduct a conversation they should do so outside the Chamber.

The Hon. RICK COLLESS: The Hon. Lynda Voltz should be listening to this. Carbon dioxide is a colourless, odourless, non-toxic gas that is heavier than air. Over millions of years, as I said, it has varied from more than 7,000 parts per million down to 150 parts per million. I do not follow the argument that, for example, the Barrier Reef will be destroyed if the carbon dioxide gets above a certain level. In the Devonian period, which was 350 million or 400 million years ago, the carbon dioxide levels were about 3,000 parts per million. Members who have been to Western Australia and visited the Napier range would know that it is an ancient barrier reef. It is a calcium carbonate barrier reef that formed at a time when the earth's carbon dioxide levels were 3,000 parts per million. I note the silly giggle coming from the Hon. Lynda Voltz. Obviously she does not understand the true science of the story of carbon.

Over the last 2,000 years the earth's temperature has varied dramatically. In the period prior to 900, which was known as the Dark Ages, the earth's temperature was about one degree cooler than it is now. That period was called the Dark Ages because it was cold, it was uncomfortable for people to live and people did it tough. Then came a period called the Mediaeval Warm Period, which existed from about 900 to 1300. During that period the earth's temperature was about two degrees warmer than it is now. That was the time of a big human expansion in the world, and it is the time when many major cathedrals and other buildings were constructed in Europe. It was a period of expansion. What caused that warming during that time?

From 1300 to about 1800 or 1850 we went through a period that is known as the Little Ice Age, when the earth again was about two degrees cooler than it is now. I suspect that no-one in this House can remember this, but many of us have read the history books and heard about the ice fairs that were held on the Thames River in the 1600s. The Thames River froze over because the earth's atmosphere was about two degrees cooler than it is now. From 1900 the earth has entered a period called the Modern Warm Period. During that time, the carbon dioxide level has not varied by much. What caused the increase from two degrees lower than it is now? It is the first 100 parts per million of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere that has the greatest impact on the temperature. If one looks at the carbon dioxide curve, as the carbon dioxide level increases the temperature decreases. The increase in temperature becomes less as the carbon dioxide level—

The Hon. Dr Peter Phelps: It is a logarithmic scale.

The Hon. RICK COLLESS: It is a logarithmic curve, as the Government Whip points out. Doubling the current level of carbon dioxide will cause only a minor increase in global temperature. I have a graph of that here; if members would like to have a look at it, I am more than happy to share it with them. That experiment has been repeated many times. There are many other impacts on temperature. The rotation of the earth impacts on the temperature; the path of the earth around the sun impacts on the temperature; the inclination of the earth's axis impacts on the temperature; the influence of other planets, such as Saturn and Jupiter, impacts on the temperature; and the procession of the earth's axis impacts on the temperature. If those opposite do not know what I am talking about, I suggest they do some research because these facts are well known and well understood. The oceanic water turnover can affect the carbon dioxide level. Cloud albedo—which is the amount of cloud cover—has a much greater impact on the earth's temperature than carbon dioxide. Volcanic activity has an effect.

Finally, I want to talk about sunspots and solar activity. I am sure the people in the public gallery from Moss Vale understand that on a cold winter's night when one puts a log on the fire the fire flares up and gets warmer and one moves away from the fire a little bit. As the fire cools down, one has to get closer to keep warm. That is exactly what happens with the sun. The sun flares up and cools down, and when there is more energy coming out of the sun the earth gets warmer. It is as simple as that. We are now in a period of solar activity that is decreasing. Solar cycles 24 and 25 have been well researched and it is known that the sun is emitting less energy now than it did during the last 30 or 40 years. That is a very powerful driver of the earth's temperature. I note the Hon. Lynda Voltz and the Hon. Jeremy Buckingham giggling about this. They do not understand it.

The Hon. Dr Peter Phelps: They don't understand it.

The Hon. RICK COLLESS: They have never bothered to research it. They have never bothered to study it and to try to understand it. The point is that there are many factors that impact on the global temperature of the earth, not just carbon dioxide. Carbon dioxide affects the earth's temperature for the first 100 parts per million and after that the effect diminishes. Are we so arrogant that we believe that we can control the temperature of this planet?

The Hon. Dr Peter Phelps: We're not.

The Hon. RICK COLLESS: We are not, but some are. There was a famous king a few generations ago who thought he could push back the tides.

The Hon. Dr Peter Phelps: Canute. They've been canuted by your arguments.

The Hon. RICK COLLESS: King Canute. Now we have Queen Canjulia or King Canrudd who arrogantly think they can control the temperature of this planet. In fact, they have very little impact on it. I would love to continue to talk about how we can deal with this so-called carbon dioxide level in the atmosphere if we needed to. It can easily be done through agricultural science by sequestering carbon dioxide into the soil.

The Hon. Jeremy Buckingham: Why would you bother if it's not a problem?

The Hon. RICK COLLESS: Because it is good for the soil. The Hon. Jeremy Buckingham does not understand that either. That is another failing: he does not understand how good carbon is for the soil. If he does, I invite him to tell us how carbon works in the soil. It looks as though he has a speech ready to go. I oppose the motion.

The Hon. JEREMY BUCKINGHAM [11.43 a.m.]: I commend the Hon. Lynda Voltz for bringing this important motion before the House. I begin by pointing out that humans did not move on from the Stone Age because we ran out of stones; it was because we developed new technology. Humans have used knowledge and innovation to adapt and develop new technologies.

Mr Scot MacDonald: Point of order: If members directly quote from a source during debate, in order to avoid plagiarism they should acknowledge the author. The Hon. Jeremy Buckingham's words are directly from Bill McKibben. The member should acknowledge that.

DEPUTY-PRESIDENT (The Hon. Sarah Mitchell): Order! There is no point of order.

The Hon. JEREMY BUCKINGHAM: I would rather take my cues from Bill McKibben than from Tony Haggarty, King Coal.

Mr Scot MacDonald: Are you going to acknowledge it or not?

The Hon. JEREMY BUCKINGHAM: It is not plagiarising, it is called paraphrasing.

The Hon. Dr Peter Phelps: Parroting.

The Hon. JEREMY BUCKINGHAM: The Hon. Dr Peter Phelps is the parrot. It is important to note in this time of climate change—

The Hon. Dr Peter Phelps: There has not been a ruling.

The Hon. JEREMY BUCKINGHAM: There has been a ruling. It is important to note that there has been consensus in the scientific community that the globe is warming. In New South Wales we have a Coalition Government building a State-owned coalmine and selling subsidised coal to electricity generators. The Hon. Dr Peter Phelps is always lambasting The Greens, saying we support the North Koreans, but here he is—

The Hon. Lynda Voltz: Point of order: I have previously raised the constant interjections by the Hon. Dr Peter Phelps during debate in this Chamber. He should remain silent and not interject. Members should remain silent during debate.

The Hon. Rick Colless: To the point of order: It is hypocritical of the Hon. Lynda Voltz to take that point of order when she constantly interjected during my speech.

DEPUTY-PRESIDENT (The Hon. Sarah Mitchell): Order! I uphold the point of order. I remind members that interjections are disorderly at all times. Members who continue to interject will be called to order.

The Hon. JEREMY BUCKINGHAM: So here we are in New South Wales in 2013 with the Coalition Government forging ahead with a State-owned coalmine. Treasury official Kerry Schott, in an analysis on the sale of State-owned electricity assets, stated:

Taxpayers will be hit with about \$450 million in penalties relating to the privatisation, which sold trading rights for electricity produced by state-owned power stations for a profit of about \$1.2 billion.

That is a huge liability for the people of New South Wales: a \$1.4 billion cost to develop a State-owned coalmine in the age of climate change and the sale of subsidised, poor-quality coal, which no-one wants, extracted from mines that the communities of Cobbora, Dubbo and Dunedoo oppose. This crazy plan is outrageous. I call on the Government to drop its plan for a State-owned coalmine, which will destroy the local environment, exacerbate the problem of climate change and diminish our contribution to carbon reduction. Climate change is real.

The Hon. Dr Peter Phelps: Is global warming real?

The Hon. JEREMY BUCKINGHAM: There is a consensus in the rational, peer-reviewed, scientific community that the globe is warming. I refer to the latest figures from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration [NOAA] in the United States, which provides statistics on recent temperatures. In May 2013 global temperatures were the third highest on record. From March to May this year temperatures were the eighth warmest on record. The globally averaged temperature for May 2013 tied with 1998 and 2005 as the third warmest May since record keeping began in 1880.

May 2013 also marks the thirty-seventh consecutive May and the 339th consecutive month with a global temperature above the twentieth century average. You guys opposite just do not do maths; you do not do statistics; you do not do science. You cherrypick what was happening in 1642 when someone used to go ice skating on the Thames as evidence that all these scientists are wrong. It is ridiculous; it is a joke. I reiterate: May 2013 marks the thirty-seventh consecutive May and the 339th consecutive month with a global temperature above the twentieth century average.

Many areas of the world experienced higher than average monthly temperatures, including most of northern Siberia, western Russia, northern and eastern Europe, and central Australia. Meanwhile, western Siberia, north-eastern Kazakhstan, western Europe, south-western Greenland, parts of the central and south-eastern United States, and Australia were above average. This data is building on a massive amount of information the scientific community has that we are warming the planet through the contribution of greenhouse gases.

The Hon. Lynda Voltz's motion speaks for itself. Australia set a new record for the hottest day for Australia as a whole on 7 January, recording 40.3 degrees, surpassing the previous record set on 21 December 1972. There is consensus among the people of Australia: we acknowledge and accept the science that underpins global warming. The people want action to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions because the community understands what is at risk. I believe there is a growing consensus in the farming community that acknowledges the devastating impact increased temperatures will have on our capacity to farm and grow crops and be resilient into the future.

There is no doubt climate change will make our cyclones worse; there is no doubt climate change will make our floods worse; and there is no doubt climate change will make our droughts worse. That is the most devastating thing I think we will see in the future. The Hon. Rick Colless will reap the whirlwind when the next El Niño comes and there are record temperatures on top of that. He will look back at all he has said in this House, which has been recorded by Hansard, and he will have to hang his head in shame.

I turn now to a very important issue, which is the contribution of shale and coal seam gas to global warming and climate change as a result of fugitive emissions from this huge and emerging industry. A study was done recently and a report issued by the Centre for Climate Energy Solutions, which said America's shift from coal to gas had produced important climate gains. That is what they said initially. Carbon dioxide

emissions fell last year to their lowest point since 1994. The United States made a massive reduction in CO₂ emissions. So despite the howls from members opposite, the rest of the world is moving to adopt renewables and the United States—

The Hon. Dr Peter Phelps: No they're not. It's nuclear and gas.

The Hon. JEREMY BUCKINGHAM: They have moved and there is a massive increase in investment in renewable energy. Last year, CO₂ emissions in the United States fell to their lowest level since 1994. Energy-related carbon dioxide emissions were 12 per cent below 2005 levels. But, concerningly, the report said that those reductions were not enough on their own to escape the most catastrophic consequences of climate change. Also, they were being offset by a sharp rise in methane emissions, the most powerful greenhouse gas, on a human time scale, that was being released into the atmosphere at well sites, compressor stations and pipelines. Methane is up to 105 times more potent than carbon dioxide as a greenhouse gas on a 20-year time scale. Dr Eileen Claussen, President of the Center for Climate and Energy Solutions [C2ES], said, "We have to deal with the methane emissions, whether they are large, which I think is unlikely, or whether they are small. Natural gas is growing and we need to deal with the emissions because last year some 29 per cent of America's electricity came from natural gas."

The United States has made this transition to gas and now, after the fact, people are assessing the methane emissions. Studies are being done in Tara, Queensland, and in other areas by Southern Cross University that are giving indications of considerable fugitive emissions from coal seam gas and unconventional gas development. If that is the case, it completely undermines the case for natural gas, as it is called—coal seam gas—being a clean alternative to coal. We need to roll out renewable energy on a massive scale. My colleague Dr John Kaye has launched a fantastic initiative, "100% renewable NSW", which sets out the pathway to a renewable future for New South Wales. In this State we have billions of dollars' worth of wind farms on the books ready to go to generate clean energy, regional jobs and investment. The Government is getting in the way of that development.

I note Mr Scot MacDonald is not in the Chamber, but many areas, especially in the north of the State, are absolutely champing at the bit to get renewable energy going in their districts. Recently I was in Moree talking to the mayor, councillors and farmers and they would love the opportunity to build base load solar thermal power generation in their district. They see it as a win-win for them—local jobs, local power generation, and clean energy being produced in their region as an alternative to coal seam gas development and coalmining, which undermine their capacity to grow the food and fibre that feeds and clothes us. Those communities are saying they want renewable energy. They cannot understand why this Government would put roadblocks in the path of that development, which are purely ideologically based. They are based on cherry-picked, flawed science when the overwhelming consensus in the scientific community continues to be that we have to deal with climate change and that the world is warming.

Nothing in the record shows a cooling trend. Everything points to a long-term warming trend and an increase in greenhouse gases in the atmosphere as we go past 400 parts per million. The honourable member talked about there being 7,000 parts per million in the atmosphere in times when humans did not exist on Earth. At no time in our history have humans experienced this level of greenhouse gas in the atmosphere. It is a massive risk. It is a huge experiment and an entirely unnecessary one because we have the capacity, as I said earlier, to embrace new technologies. The world is doing it. Expenditure and investment in renewables is now outstripping other forms of fossil fuels. It is the future. We need to address climate change. Our country cannot risk—*[Time expired.]*

Reverend the Hon. FRED NILE [11.59 a.m.]: The first paragraph of the motion moved by the Hon. Lynda Voltz concerning temperature changes in Australia commences, "That this House notes that according to the Australian Bureau of Meteorology", and then goes on to cite a number of matters without giving a reference as to where the report came from. I have found a report issued by the Bureau of Meteorology entitled, "Special Climate Statement 43—extreme Heat in January 2013." I urge the Hon. Lynda Voltz to study that report, which describes the meteorological situation in detail, commencing with the rainfall being below average in southern Australia. The climate statement goes on to describe multiple instances of winds drawing very warm air from Central Australia onto south-western Australia, South Australia, Victoria, Tasmania and New South Wales. This is confirmed by the bureau's various monthly weather reviews, which add further detail. For example, the review for the Northern Territory says:

Throughout the month several high pressure centres moved along the sub-tropical ridge. These slow-moving, dry and very stable air masses allowed for high temperatures to persist across the central NT.

It went on to say:

Beginning on the 15th, a surface based low-pressure system formed over Central Queensland and began moving to the northwest in the ensuing days. At the middle levels of the atmosphere the monsoon trough began shifting south to meet the surface low. This caused the onset of the North Australian Monsoon on the 17th of January. This came about three weeks later than usual, but still within the standard deviation of the monsoon timing.

In other words, the heatwaves were caused by warm conditions in Central Australia, a monsoon running late and winds distributing the warm air. This explains why we had those heatwaves during January. It had nothing to do with humans, nothing to do with anything else at all. They are just the climatic conditions in Australia. The Hon. Lynda Voltz built her whole case on what she has interpreted as a report, without looking at the entire report to get it in context, which I have just done. The Greens and others debate global warming and, when that does not look to be popular, they swing over to climate change. We cannot lose a debate on climate change, because the climate changes. We all acknowledge that it changes. The question is what causes those changes.

The latest figures on carbon dioxide emissions as a percentage of world totals—for the benefit of those who are panicking about Australia—show that China contributes 19 per cent and the United States 18 per cent. How much does Australia contribute? It is 1.5 per cent. In other words, if we stopped driving all the cars in Australia, closed all the coalmines, removed all the cattle and shut down all the factories it would have no impact on the world's carbon emissions. Obviously we would go back to primitive times when people were living in caves. We need to get things in context. People like to mislead the community by saying we should look at emissions per person because Australia's large geographical area and small population distort those figures.

We should compare the figures for each nation, and Australia's contribution is only 1.5 per cent. If we stopped that 1.5 per cent it would have no effect on the total emissions and no effect on the world's temperature, except that it would destroy our economy and our jobs. It should be noted that the earth's climate constantly goes through periods of warming and cooling. Scientists are now able to extract ice core samples from the Antarctic dating back 650,000 years. Using these samples, they have been able to estimate what temperatures were in the past. The recent warming trend is not outside the range of natural variability. The latest scientific data suggests that we may be entering a period of global cooling, not global warming.

Another matter that members should note is that carbon dioxide is likely not the major cause of global warming, if it does occur. The same Antarctic ice core shows a relationship between carbon dioxide levels and temperature that is the opposite of what environmentalists would expect: Temperature changes precede increases in carbon dioxide by 100 to 1,000 years. Even if carbon dioxide was the cause, there is not much we could do about it. Man-made carbon dioxide accounts for a very small percentage of atmospheric carbon dioxide. There is a much stronger correlation between solar output and global temperatures.

Solar output is influenced by radiant heat energy and solar winds, both of which appear to have natural cycles. As human beings on planet Earth we have no impact on the sun. We also should know that in spite of claims that all scientists are totally in support of the theory as presented by the Hon. Lynda Voltz in her motion, there is not a scientific consensus that man is the primary cause of global warming. A group of scientists and researchers have already signed a declaration that there is no convincing evidence to suggest that carbon dioxide emissions from modern industrial activity cause climate change, and called upon world leaders to abandon all efforts to reduce emissions. That petition was signed by 31,000 scientists.

Debate adjourned on motion by Reverend the Hon. Fred Nile and set down as an order of the day for a future day.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Suspension of Standing and Sessional Orders

Motion by the Hon. Lynda Voltz agreed to:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended to allow a motion to be moved forthwith that Private Members' Business item No. 1403 outside the Order of Precedence relating to a reference to the Independent Commission Against Corruption be called on forthwith.

Order of Business

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ [12.07 p.m.]: I move:

That Private Members' Business item No. 1403 outside the Order of Precedence be called on forthwith.

Question put.

The House divided.

Ayes, 17

Mr Buckingham	Mr Searle	Mr Whan
Mr Donnelly	Mr Secord	Mr Wong
Dr Faruqi	Ms Sharpe	<i>Tellers,</i>
Mr Foley	Mr Shoebridge	Ms Barham
Dr Kaye	Mr Veitch	Ms Fazio
Mr Primrose	Ms Westwood	Ms Voltz

Noes, 20

Mr Ajaka	Miss Gardiner	Mr Mason-Cox
Mr Blair	Mr Gay	Mrs Mitchell
Mr Borsak	Mr Green	Reverend Nile
Mr Brown	Mr Khan	Mrs Pavey
Ms Cusack	Mr Lynn	<i>Tellers,</i>
Ms Ficarra	Mr MacDonald	Dr Phelps
Mr Gallacher	Mrs Maclaren-Jones	Mr Colless

Pairs

Ms Cotsis	Mr Clarke
Mr Moselmane	Mr Pearce

Question resolved in the negative.

Motion negatived.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Postponement of Business

Private Members' Business item No. 10 in the Order of Precedence postponed on motion by the Hon. Dr Peter Phelps, on behalf of the Hon. Paul Green.

BATTLE OF THE CORAL SEA

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN (Parliamentary Secretary) [12.15 p.m.]: I move:

1. That this House notes that:
 - (a) this House acknowledges the 71st Anniversary of the Battle of Coral Sea that occurred from 4 to 8 May in 1942,
 - (b) Australia was involved in the battle from the very first when locally-based signals intelligence units made a significant contribution to the early detection of the Japanese thrust,
 - (c) on 25 April 1942, the Combined Operational Intelligence Centre in Melbourne issued an assessment that a Japanese operation to occupy Port Moresby was imminent,
 - (d) aerial reconnaissance flights were flown from Australia and Port Moresby by USAAF and RAAF aircraft, and 11 United States submarines based in Brisbane were deployed to the Papua area,

- (e) on 1 May 1942, two carrier task forces, Task Force 17, built around USS *Yorktown*, under the command of Rear Admiral Frank Jack Fletcher, and Task Force 11 consisting of USS *Lexington*, under the command of Rear Admiral Aubrey B. Fitch, rendezvoused off Espiritu Santo,
 - (f) from Sydney, Task Force 44, consisting of the heavy cruiser HMAS *Australia* and the light cruiser HMAS *Hobart*, under the command of Rear Admiral J. G. Crace, RN, departed Sydney, eventually to join the carriers on 4 May 1942, and
 - (g) on 7 May 1942, combined with bombing attacks from shore-based aircraft, helped influenced the decision by the Japanese Commander-in-Chief to turn back the landing force early, thereby achieving the Allies' strategic objective for the battle.
2. That this House pays tribute to the servicemen and women involved in this historic battle that removed the threat of a Japanese invasion of Port Moresby and the Australian mainland.

At the time we were not aware that this action had, in fact, moved the threat, because the threat to the Australian mainland was real. It was the first time in our history that we feared invasion of our homeland. It was a time of great angst for our political leader, the great Prime Minister John Curtin. At the time Curtin was unaware whether the Japanese would attempt an invasion of Australia and, if so, whether that would be via the west, north or east. He had many sleepless nights as he pondered the likely outcome. Curtin was seriously concerned because we were not prepared for an invasion. At that time we had based our military strategy on defending Britain, based on the fact that Britain would come to our aid if Japan entered the war. As we now know, Churchill had an agreement with President Roosevelt that if Japan did enter the war America's priority would go to Britain. Churchill misled the Australian political leadership at that time into believing that we would be protected. Of course, that myth was shattered with the invasion of Malaysia and the sinking of HMS *Repulse* and HMS *Prince of Wales* in the battle for Singapore.

Our regular forces were overseas; we were left to defend ourselves with young militia forces. At that time Japanese bombers had bombed Darwin on numerous occasions—more than Pearl Harbour. The Japanese bombed our northern cities, such as Broome and others, sank ships off the east and west coasts, and put submarines into Sydney Harbour. The threat was real, not imagined. The Japanese were coming our way. They had defeated the Americans in the Philippines, the British in Singapore and Malaysia, the Dutch in the East Indies, and they landed in Rabaul and on the northern beaches of Papua New Guinea. The threat was real. The Japanese decided to try a seaborne invasion of Port Moresby, but on 4 May met the task force about which I just spoke. This was the first time two navies fought without being able to see each other. Basically, it was a campaign of fighter aircraft from carriers. Whilst no decisive winner of the Battle of the Coral Sea was declared, for the first time the Japanese turned back.

Higher intelligence realised that a seaborne invasion of Australia or Port Moresby was not realistic for the Japanese. However, the Japanese army high command also realised that an invasion of Australia was out of the question because of the number of divisions needed. The naval commander also realised they did not have the resources to succeed. A month later the more decisive Battle of Midway resulting in a Japanese defeat turned the tide of the war. The Battle of the Coral Sea was significant to Australia historically and should be forever commemorated because it was the battle that turned the war and prevented Japan from invading the Australian mainland. Of course, we know now the war continued for another three years before Japan surrendered. The Battle of the Coral Sea probably was one of the most significant contributions to stemming the tide of the Japanese advance and to the ultimate victory of the war in 1945.

Dr JOHN KAYE [12.24 p.m.]: On behalf of The Greens I support the motion moved by the Hon. Charlie Lynn and thank him for putting it on the *Notice Paper*. I am a member of a party that has non-violence as one of its core principles. I am a great believer in non-violence, but I also acknowledge the courage of the young men, in those days, including my father, who went to sea to defend this nation of ours. They went with incredible courage. Often I think of my father as a young man, but I would never describe him as adventurous. He had many qualities and skills. He was a truly spectacular young man and, certainly, a spectacular older man, but adventurism was not one of his skills. I know this from having dragged him out on boats throughout my life. As I got older I observed the stress he experienced when he was on boats. Because of his commitment to his country and to defeat fascism he signed up to the Royal Australian Navy volunteers and was on a corvette.

I mention my father because he represents the tens of thousands of young men who signed up to join the Australian navy and put their lives on the line to protect their country, their families and their communities. Having not done that myself, I cannot imagine what well of commitment, courage and strength those young men drew upon. In our current time we see young men go off to Afghanistan—not a war that I think is sensible or

that I support, but that does not take away my admiration for and gratitude to the young men and women in Afghanistan doing what their country, rightly or wrongly, asked them to do. The service men and women of Australia often are out of sight. Last night I listened to Julia Gillard's valedictory speech. She said that one of the great honours in her time as Prime Minister was to get to know the Defence Force personnel, to understand what they do and their contribution to Australia.

The Battle of the Coral Sea is one of the finest examples of our people throwing themselves into defending their country, finding something within themselves and putting their lives on the line. It was an incredibly dangerous battle in ships that today would be perceived as completely flimsy against an enemy that was truly terrifying. Anyone who reads about the Japanese navy and air force and the ferocity with which they fought cannot help sharing the terror that must have been in the hearts of those young men as they went into the Battle of the Coral Sea. It was not just the enemy those young men had to contend with; the ship that sank suffered horrendous loss of life also from the sharks that inhabit the Coral Sea. We never heard that the men complained. We never heard of them before, during or after saying, "This is too much." They did what they did because they believed that what they were doing was right—that is, for the best of humanity.

It is our honour as a Parliament to remember just after the seventy-first anniversary of the Battle of the Coral Sea what those young men and the women who supported them did to turn back the tide of ferocious and vicious invaders of the South Pacific and, putatively, almost certainly of Australia if they had not been turned back at the Coral Sea. We say, "Lest we forget". I fear that sometimes we do forget, but it is the better of us we are remembering. It is those committed to all of us, not just to ourselves individually: those who stand up and say, "There is a great notion of democracy, of fairness and of Australia and we will not let that be invaded or destroyed."

All of us here today are committed to remembering not just what those men and women did at the Coral Sea but what they did at every battle. Regardless of the right or wrong of our engagement in those battles, every man or woman in the Australian Defence Force who puts their life on the line for what they believe to be right has done a remarkable job. I commend the Hon. Charlie Lynn for his work not only in moving this motion but also in ensuring that we remember veterans and the contributions they have made. On behalf The Greens, I commend the motion to the House.

Reverend the Hon. FRED NILE [12.30 p.m.]: On behalf the Christian Democratic Party I support the motion moved by the Hon. Charlie Lynn. It deals with the seventy-first anniversary of the Battle of the Coral Sea, which occurred from 4 to 8 May 1942. I commend the member for moving this and similar motions during his time in this place and drawing these anniversaries to our attention. If he did not do so we may not acknowledge these important events in our history. Australia was involved in the Battle of the Coral Sea from the beginning because locally based signals intelligence units were detecting Japanese naval movements. Those movements were confirmed in April 1942 by the Combined Operational Intelligence Centre in Melbourne, which issued an assessment that a Japanese operation to invade and occupy Port Moresby could occur at any time. As a result of that report, aerial reconnaissance flights were conducted from Australia and Port Moresby by the United States Air Force and the Royal Australian Air Force.

The Japanese naval force approaching Port Moresby included battleships and escort vessels. On 1 May 1942 the United States deployed two carrier task forces. Task Force 17 was led by USS *Yorktown*—one of the most famous carriers in the United States Navy—under the command of Rear Admiral Frank Jack Fletcher. Task Force 11 was led by the USS *Lexington*—another famous carrier that was involved in a number of important battles in the Pacific Ocean—under the command of Rear Admiral Aubrey B. Fitch. They rendezvoused near Espirito Santo before intercepting the Japanese fleet. Australian Task Force 44, comprising heavy cruiser HMAS *Australia* and light cruiser HMAS *Hobart*, was under the command of Rear Admiral J. G. Grace of the Royal Navy. The Australian task force joined the American carriers on 4 May 1942 and proceeded to engage in a battle with the Japanese. The battle involved bombing attacks by shore-based and carrier-based aircraft.

The destruction of the Japanese fleet forced the Japanese commander to cancel plans to invade and occupy Port Moresby. If the Japanese had been successful it would have been extremely difficult to regain control of Port Moresby and Australia's safety would have been compromised because Port Moresby could have been used as a launch pad for an invasion. Some historians claim that there was no threat of invasion. However, a great deal of evidence indicates that important sections of the Japanese Government and military were keen to invade and had plans to do so. Currency had already been printed for use in Australia after the invasion.

Historians who question that threat are wrong. We should appreciate the efforts of the men and women who fought in the Battle of the Coral Sea because it secured our future as a democratic and free country. I am pleased to support the motion.

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ [12.34 p.m.]: I also thank the Hon. Charlie Lynn for moving this motion. I was thinking only yesterday about my grandparents, who were children during World War I, became adults during the Depression and went off to World War II. They were truly tough times. The Battle of the Coral Sea is one of the most significant battles fought in the Pacific theatre. It followed the 1941 Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the fall of Malaya and the Japanese occupation of the Philippines, Thailand, Singapore, the Netherlands East Indies, Wake Island, New Britain, the Gilbert Islands and Guam, which caused heavy Allied losses. The Battle of the Coral Sea was a major naval battle involving four different groups of warships in the Pacific off the north-east coast of Australia between 4 and 8 May 1942. It is the largest naval clash to have occurred in close proximity to Australia. Jack Langrell, a crewman aboard HMAS *Australia*, recalled the events of the battle:

All of a sudden all hell broke loose so I quite realised then this was definitely the Japs coming in. I turned around to go down the hatch I'd come up, only to find it was securely locked. I was caught on the upper deck, so I just stood behind the turret. One of the Japanese torpedo bombers would have been 100 feet from the ship's side and level with the upper deck as it passed down the port side. Unbeknown to me they were spraying the ship with machine-gun bullets.

As a battle carried on principally by American and Japanese squadrons of carrier-borne aircraft, it was the first naval engagement in history in which the opposing forces of surface ships involved at no stage sighted or directly engaged with each other. Some of the aircraft involved were land based, but most were from the opposing aircraft carriers. Mervyn Johnston, also a crewman aboard HMAS *Australia*, recollected a brief and distressing memory:

We could hear...the comments of various pilots...[who] in some cases were running out of fuel or could not land on the 'Lexington' or the 'Yorktown' as they were either damaged or on fire. Many messages were goodbyes to friends or loved ones. Hundreds of men died that day.

For the first time in six months, the Japanese had been stopped in their tracks and where they least expected it—at sea. The virtual loss of the two big carriers critically weakened Japanese naval power. More importantly, the Japanese fleet carriers *Shōkaku* and *Zuikaku*—one damaged and the other with a depleted aircraft complement—were unable to participate in the Battle of Midway, which took place the following month, ensuring a rough parity in aircraft between the two adversaries and contributing significantly to the United States victory in that battle. Stanley Johnston, a crewman aboard USS *Lexington*, recalled:

The forward...battery has the range on that first Jap. I see their shells, bright crimson tracers, tearing through the wings and fuselage. This plane wavers, begins a slow roll to its left and veers off just enough to pass in an inverted position just under our bow. As it glides by I see flames coming from the tail, and the machine smashes itself into the water 50 feet off our starboard bow. The port forward ... battery ... concentrates its fire on the second Jap. As this plane zooms to cross almost directly over these guns, they hit it squarely with a shell.

The explosion blows it to bits, its engine plunging into the water almost at the foot of the battery. Shreds of its wings and tail surfaces slither along the carrier's deck like sheets of paper swept in front of a gale.

The severe loss of carriers at Midway prevented the Japanese from attempting to invade Port Moresby once again from the ocean. Two months later the Allies took advantage of Japan's resulting strategic vulnerability in the South Pacific and launched the Guadalcanal Campaign that, along with the New Guinea campaign, broke Japanese defences in the South Pacific and was a significant contributing factor to Japan's ultimate defeat in World War II. The Battle of the Coral Sea was significant. It represented the first occasion on which Japanese naval forces, enjoying an unbroken string of military successes in the Pacific, experienced the failure of a major operation in its southward thrust through Asia and the Pacific after Pearl Harbour.

The Hon. AMANDA FAZIO [12.40 p.m.]: I speak in support of the motion moved by the Hon. Charlie Lynn that calls on the House to acknowledge the seventy-first anniversary of the Battle of the Coral Sea, which occurred from 4 to 8 May 1942. I am very fortunate in two ways. The Hon. Charlie Lynn mentioned the Japanese submarines that came into Sydney Harbour. My grandfather was based on HMAS *Kuttabul*. Then it was not the land base it is now but a ship, almost decommissioned, that was being used to accommodate naval personnel. My grandfather had the good grace to have gone out about an hour before *Kuttabul* was scuttled by one of the Japanese midget submarines. I am grateful that he escaped otherwise I would not be here to provide such great pleasure to my colleagues in this place!

I believe I am also fortunate because I come from a family with a naval background and my father had many books about World War II that I looked at as a child. I have a good understanding of exactly what

happened in all the different theatres of World War II and the horror confronting Australia in the form of attacks by the Japanese. Japanese tenacity and single-minded purpose made Japan a vicious and dangerous opponent in war time and it could not be underestimated. The extent to which the Battle of the Coral Sea was a turning point in the war is well documented. I have also had the good fortune to visit Kiribati, formerly known as the Gilbert Islands. It is an amazing place. Betio is a major township on a main island of Kiribati, and from there you can go to Red Beach. It was called Red Beach because of the Battle of the Coral Sea. So many Allied service personnel, particularly Americans, were killed in the battle that the cove was literally blood red.

To this day, whenever they do building work or move soil or sand around Red Beach they uncover the remains of Allied service personnel. In the cove there is a number of rusting landing craft covered in barnacles. Depending on the tide, they can be seen above the waterline. There is an amazing number of embattlements on the main island of Kiribati. They are there because, even though it is a small sandy atoll, it was pivotal to the Battle of the Coral Sea. The local people are mindful of the battles that took place there. I had the opportunity to meet a group of Australian nuns who are based on the main island and who have in their possession a number of very significant war artefacts, including a declaration signed by the Japanese that the islands were Japanese territory.

We need to be mindful of the sacrifices made by the Allied Forces during the Battle of the Coral Sea and in other battles in the Pacific. I have been to Bougainville, and the wrecked Japanese aircraft and other wreckage in the ocean—whether boats or aeroplanes—is astounding. As well as the military might of the Allies, the native population—who were often unarmed—worked against the Japanese because they were so worried about Japanese occupation. We must be mindful of the sacrifices made not only by the service personnel who engaged in battles against the Japanese but also by local people who supported the Allies, often at great risk to themselves. The amount of World War II wreckage that remains in the Coral Sea and across the Pacific is a graphic reminder of the firepower that was used by the Japanese in their attempt to take control of this region. It is quite amazing.

It is also amazing that we were able to defeat Japan, and we should place on the record our respect for the service personnel who fought and returned and for those who paid the ultimate sacrifice in battles such as the Battle of the Coral Sea. Our freedom, our way of life, the way we go about our business today and the fact that we can stand here as members of Parliament are the result of the sacrifice that our service personnel made during the Second World War, particularly in those battles close to our homeland such as the Battle of the Coral Sea. I thank the Hon. Charlie Lynn for putting this motion on the *Notice Paper* and for giving members a chance to pay their respects.

The Hon. Dr PETER PHELPS [12.45 p.m.]: In the course of history it is often surprising the number of minor or second-rate battles that take on a decisive significance only with the hindsight of history. Next week marks the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg, which at the time was considered to be a nice victory for the Union but did not, in contemporary media reports, have any great significance in terms of a major or decisive battle. Now we know exactly what it was: arguably the turning point of the American Civil War in the eastern theatre.

The same could be said of the Battle of the Coral Sea. At the time it was, at best—if we look purely at losses—a tactical draw. The United States lost one fleet carrier and the Americans had a fleet carrier damaged. The Japanese lost an escort carrier and had another fleet carrier damaged. On purely a matériel basis, it could be seen as a draw or maybe a slight victory for the Americans. But, importantly, it was a strategic victory—and a strategic victory of great magnitude. But it has to be viewed within the context of the war to that date. For the six months prior to the Battle of the Coral Sea, the Japanese had run rampant. They had been successful everywhere they had gone. The battleships at Pearl Harbour had been destroyed—fortunately the fleet carriers were out of port at the time of the attack. They had victories in Malaya, Singapore and Indochina. The Philippines had fallen and Borneo, the Dutch East Indies, the northern part of Papua New Guinea and all of Micronesia came under Japanese influence. Wherever they went, the Japanese were unstoppable—and especially, as the Hon. Amanda Fazio said, on sea.

The Japanese had, however, reached something of an impasse in Papua New Guinea. As the Hon. Charlie Lynn mentioned, young troops—in many cases, conscripts often derided for their military ability—had been able to stop what could be considered the elite units of the Japanese as they attempted to cross beyond the Owen Stanley Range in Papua New Guinea. Further afield in the Solomon Islands, the Japanese had established a seaplane base on Tulaghi Island in anticipation of building a naval airfield on Guadalcanal—a name that had no significance at the time to any but a small group of British colonial administrators. The

Japanese had come to an impasse in Papua New Guinea so they sought to do an end run: take a seaborne invasion force literally around the eastern coast of Papua New Guinea, past Milne Bay, and attempt to outflank the Australians by landing on the beaches around Port Moresby, take Port Moresby and thereby cut off the line of retreat or, if the forces were able to retreat, then at least take the facilities of Moresby, which would leave them with something of a shield for their activities.

The issue of whether an invasion of Australia would happen is pretty much by the by when one considers that they would have had naval air supremacy being launched from Moresby, from Guadalcanal and ultimately from the Melanesian Islands. It would not matter; Australia still would have been cut off. The importance of stopping that force from taking Papua and New Guinea cannot be underestimated. Dr John Kaye commented on the role of the men, but I would also like to pay tribute to the work of a large number of women who served as decryption analysts both in Australia and in the United States Navy who are often forgotten. Now that the secrets of Bletchley Park have been made available to the world we know the role that women played in Britain in relation to their decryption efforts. It was certainly true that in the United States and Australia women played a comparable role.

At this time there was a seemingly unstoppable Imperial Japanese Navy sweeping around the eastern edge of New Guinea, with a previously unstoppable Japanese Special Naval Landing Forces. But they were stopped. It is not as if it was like El Alamein, where the Allies had overwhelming numbers of troops, guns, tanks and men. It was, if I can put it this way, pretty much a fair fight. If anything, the Japanese were probably slightly advantaged by having a number of escort carriers with them in their force. But what they did not have was what I like to call the triumph of the west. What did the Allies have? It is not true to say that they were any braver or any more skilled necessarily than the Japanese, but they had a free thought, a capacity for improvisation that far transcended anything the Japanese had. It is just as much a glory to the Western civilisation that produced those young men and women as it is to the machinery itself.

What the Battle of Coral Sea showed would later be amplified at the Battle of Midway—that is, the Allies had a better anti-aircraft capability, better fighter coordination, a much better damage control model and they made much better use of their pilots. They did not needlessly burn out their pilots in mission after mission. When a certain level of veterancy had been achieved, the pilots would be sent back to the United States to train up a new generation. This was to have dramatic consequences later in the war for the Japanese, who believed—like the other Axis powers—that they should just keep using people time and again. Eventually someone's luck runs out, irrespective of how skilful they are.

The other great event which arose out of the Battle of the Coral Sea and which paved the way for the subsequent victory at Midway was, it is true, the significant damage to the *Shōkaku* and the significant reduction of the air complement of the *Zuikaku* but also, ironically enough, the damage to the *Yorktown*. The damage to the *Yorktown* convinced the Japanese, who saw it on fire and drifting, that it, like the *Lexington*, had been sunk. For Japanese naval planners, that could mean only one thing: that only two American fleet carriers were left between Pearl Harbour and the United States, the *Enterprise* and the *Hornet*. Of course, at that time the Japanese had an overwhelming majority, even excluding the *Shōkaku* and the *Zuikaku*, because at least six Japanese naval fleet carriers remained in service. Two of them, arguably, were wasted on a side campaign in the Aleutian Islands, but the remaining four—the *Akagi*, *Kaga*, *Hiryu* and *Soryu*—all made an appearance at Midway.

If the additional two fleet carriers from the Coral Sea had not been intercepted and damaged to a significant degree there would have been six carriers against two of the United States, which would have been an overwhelming preponderance of power. Although there were not two American carriers, because the Japanese did not realise that the *Yorktown* had not been sunk. Yes, it had been damaged but it made its way back to Pearl Harbour and, in a remarkable feat of shipbuilding and repairs, was made ready to sail, albeit with a reduced complement of aeroplanes before Midway. I will not go into too many details, but at Midway the Japanese could not understand where all these extra aircraft were coming from because they worked on the assumption that the *Yorktown* had been sunk. Thus the damage to *Yorktown* in this battle, in effect, gave the Americans a massive strategic advantage in relation to Midway.

I will say a few brief words about Australia's involvement in the Battle of the Coral Sea. Yes, it is true that it is the first battle in history where neither fleet sighted each other before engaging, and in that regard it deserves recognition for that if nothing else, but as I said there are many other things. Rear Admiral John Crace—who I like to call a New South Welshman because although Gungahlin is now in the Australian Capital Territory at the time of his birth it was in New South Wales—was in command of the cruiser squadron at this time. It was not simply an Australian Cruiser Squadron; it was an American and Australian Cruiser Squadron

operating together, but under the command of an Australian. Crace had a long and illustrious career, and eventually finished his days, unfortunately, on a land-based posting in the United Kingdom. The suburb of Crace in the Australian Capital Territory is named in his honour and it is located in the Gungahlin area, presumably where he and his family would have been chasing sheep in the 1890s.

The submarine contingent in the Pacific war cannot be underestimated. While we talk about surface and air battles in this time, the decisive element during this whole period was to prove to be the sub-surface component—specifically the Dutch, the Australian, the United States and the British navies unrestricted sub-marine warfare against Japanese merchant shipping. During this time they were operating out of two locations in Australia: Brisbane and Fremantle. Fremantle was the surrogate after Surabaya had fallen, which was the surrogate after Cavite had fallen in the Philippines. Australia's role and its coordination with the United States Navy transcended not only this conflict; it was also a key component in delivering bases, localities, infrastructure, resources and personnel that could feed into the United States sub-surface of the undersea campaign against Japan and ultimately prove to be decisive in the war in the Pacific.

The Hon. RICK COLLESS [1.00 p.m.]: I make a brief contribution in debate on this battle, but before I do so I congratulate the Hon. Charlie Lynn on moving the motion. The importance of the Battle of the Coral Sea is something that Australians should remain aware of, particularly our younger generation, because it is certainly this battle that prevented the invasion of the Japanese forces from entering both New Guinea and Australia. As the Hon. Charlie Lynn pointed out, there were Japanese attacks on Australia, in northern Australia. There were about 19 or 20 individual attacks on Australian soil, ranging from Broome to Darwin to Townsville. Indeed, many northern Australian towns were attacked by the Japanese forces.

Debate adjourned on motion by the Hon. Rick Colless and set down as an order of the day for a future day.

[Deputy-President (The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones) left the chair at 1.01 p.m. The House resumed at 2.30 p.m.]

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS

The PRESIDENT: Order! I draw the attention of members to the presence in my gallery of the Hon. Andrew Miriki, Speaker of the Autonomous Region of Bougainville House of Representatives, together with Mr Robert Tapi, Clerk of that House, and Ms Taeasi Sanga, Clerk of the National Parliament of Solomon Islands. These esteemed friends and visitors are here as part of the twinning arrangements between the parliaments of the Solomon Islands, the Autonomous Region of Bougainville and New South Wales.

ATTENDANCE OF THE HON. ANDREW MIRIKI, SPEAKER OF THE AUTONOMOUS REGION OF BOUGAINVILLE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Motion, by leave, by the Hon. Duncan Gay agreed to:

That the Hon. Andrew Miriki, Speaker of the Autonomous Region of Bougainville House of Representatives, be invited to take a chair on the dais.

The PRESIDENT: According to the resolution of the House, I invite the Hon. Andrew Miriki to take a chair on the dais and I welcome the honourable Speaker to the House.

The Hon. Andrew Miriki, MP, Speaker of the Autonomous Region of Bougainville House of Representatives, took a chair on the dais.

Pursuant to sessional orders business interrupted at 2.30 p.m. for questions.

Item of business set down as an order of the day for a later hour.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

SYDNEY HARBOUR FLOATING HELIPORT

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: I direct my question to the Minister for Roads and Ports. Yesterday in answer to a question from the Hon. Catherine Cusack relating to the Sydney Harbour heliport the Minister told

the House that "the review found that a combination of poor judgement, confusion around responsibilities and a lack of communication" contributed to the aquatic licence being approved. Given that the Deputy Premier was the Minister who announced this approval, does the Deputy Premier maintain the Minister's confidence?

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: One always assumes when the Leader of the Opposition asks the first question that it will be the biggest and best question asked by those opposite. I can assure the people sitting in the public gallery that they are in for a poor day if that is as good as those opposite can do. Of course the Deputy Premier has my full confidence. Had the member taken up my offer of reading the report on the Roads and Maritime Services website he would have seen that the report vindicates the Deputy Premier of all allegations made against him by the Opposition.

NSW POLICE FORCE IPROWD PROGRAM

The Hon. MARIE FICARRA: I address my question to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services. Will the Minister update the House on recent successes in Indigenous recruitment by the NSW Police Force?

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: In order for New South Wales police officers to be successful at their jobs they need to connect with local communities. They need to be part of their community, not separate from it, in order to understand the issues that people are facing. It is therefore important that the NSW Police Force makes an effort to attract recruits from a range of ages, cultures and backgrounds. Diversity in recruitment is nowhere more important than in the case of Indigenous communities, both urban and regional. As members may be aware, since 2008 the key recruitment tool of the NSW Police Force in this regard has been the Indigenous Police Recruitment Our Way Delivery Program, more commonly known as IPROWD.

IPROWD was developed in partnership between the Commonwealth Government, NSW TAFE and the NSW Police Force. IPROWD is a six-month bridging course designed to give young Aboriginal people the skills and knowledge necessary to apply for a place at the NSW Police Academy in Goulburn. Graduates are intellectually and physically developed throughout the program and receive a great deal of one-on-one support. In 2012 the program was delivered at Redfern, Mount Druitt, Nowra, Maitland, Tamworth, Broken Hill and Dubbo, with 75 students graduating across all campuses. This year the program is continuing to be delivered with great success. In fact, I am looking forward to attending tomorrow's graduation at Kurri Kurri TAFE.

Joining the ranks of the NSW Police Force is not the only goal we have for our IPROWD graduates. It is also hoped that in whatever they choose to do in the future they will see themselves as role models for their communities and help inspire others to follow their career dreams. Often at these ceremonies in addition to acknowledging the traditional owners of the land and elders past and present I pay respect to the elders of the future: the IPROWD graduates to whom future generations of Indigenous youth will look for leadership and guidance and, importantly, the bond between the community and the NSW Police Force. IPROWD is important to all members of Parliament who support the ongoing work in reconciliation and the building of relationships with the NSW Police Force.

Since 2008 some 27 IPROWD graduates have been employed by the NSW Police Force—24 as police officers, one as a liaison officer and two as administrative personnel officers. Currently 18 IPROWD graduates are working towards an associate degree in policing practice at the NSW Police Academy. The first graduation ceremony I attended was at Dubbo when I was in opposition. Troy Grant, the now outstanding member for Dubbo, was also there. Back in those days Troy was a member of the NSW Police Force. Troy, who served as a police officer in country New South Wales, was one of the architects of this program. It was the most moving ceremony I had attended for a long time. These outstanding representatives of the Aboriginal community stood before their peers with tears rolling down their faces, unable to talk because of the raw emotion of what they had achieved in passing this course. As I said before, I look forward to taking part in another graduation ceremony at Kurri Kurri TAFE tomorrow.

PORTS PRIVATISATION

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: My question is directed to the Minister for Roads and Ports. On 28 May this year the Minister told the Parliament regarding privatisation, "Do I have a plan to do anything like that with the Newcastle Port Corporation? I would have to answer no". Given that three weeks later the Government announced the sale of the Port of Newcastle, why did the Minister mislead the House?

The Hon. Dr Peter Phelps: Point of order: The question clearly contains argument in the last sentence where it implies directly that the Minister misled the House. The question should be ruled out of order.

The PRESIDENT: Order! There is no point of order.

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: I thank the member for his question as it gives me an opportunity to tell the House what a good project it is, how wrong he is in his allegations and how wrong the Labor Party was in trying to stop that important project. The Labor Party tried to stop what it calls privatisation but what, in fact, is a long-term lease to allow infrastructure to be built in Newcastle. Even in front of people from Wallsend the Labor Party shows that it has not learnt its lesson after losing its members in that area. Here is the Labor Party at it again. I have nothing to answer for regarding my comments in this House. I am always very careful and very honourable in my comments and when I said that I had no plan before me I had no plan before me. But others had a plan—and wasn't it a great plan?

CARBON TAX

Reverend the Hon. FRED NILE: I ask the Minister for Roads and Ports, representing the Minister for Resources and Energy: Is it a fact that Australia's only contribution to the world's total carbon emissions is 1.5 per cent? What will be the future impact of the carbon tax—if it continues—the mining tax and the closure of New South Wales power plants on the New South Wales economy and jobs?

The Hon. Steve Whan: You should have done this this morning in the debate on climate change.

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: I thank the Hon. Steve Whan, the former member for Monaro—who is now reclining on the losers lounge because the people in his electorate threw him out at the last election—because his comments are absolutely correct. It is not usual but it is good to see that he is listening. He has not learned a lot yet but he is listening.

The Hon. Walt Secord: Stop attacking Reverend the Hon. Fred Nile.

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: Reverend the Hon. Fred Nile is not on the losers lounge; he is in the Christians lounge.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Minister should ignore the interjections and continue with his answer.

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: It is more like the Christians lobby. The Hon. Steve Whan is correct: there was a debate this morning on climate change. I heard the Deputy Opposition Whip, the Hon. Lynda Voltz, limp into it and then I heard the Government Whip, the Hon. Dr Peter Phelps, deliver what I think was one of the finest contributions I have heard from him, and we know he delivers some absolute crackers.

The Hon. Steve Whan: Point of order: There is a standing order against Ministers reflecting on members of the House. I suggest that the Minister's reflections are not helping the Government Whip.

The PRESIDENT: Order! There is no point of order.

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: I think it is obvious to members that some of the silly comments that have been made by the Leader of the Opposition in the other place and by The Greens on this issue are not helping our State. There are important issues of employment in this State and the Leader of the Opposition in the other place, John Robertson, says they want to stop coal production—

The Hon. Steve Whan: Point of order: The Minister is reflecting on the Leader of the Opposition by suggesting that he said something he did not say.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Hon. Steve Whan has been frequently cautioned about making debating points under the guise of a point of order. It is out of order and disorderly for him to do so. I call the Hon. Steve Whan to order for the first time.

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: The Opposition loves to try to change history. The Opposition is ignoring the fact that the Leader of the Opposition in the other place not only said what I said: he said that Luke was

developing a plan—"We have a plan coming and Luke is developing that plan". Reverend the Hon. Fred Nile should be asking when Luke's plan is coming, when he will have this plan to close down the coalmine, which will mean that the power stations will close and the whole industry will stop.

WESTCONNEX MOTORWAY

The Hon. JOHN AJAKA: My question without notice is addressed to the Minister for Roads and Ports. Will the Minister update the House on funding for the WestConnex project?

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: Like many others in this State and around this country, I sat up last night switching channels to see which Queenslander was going to win—

The Hon. Amanda Fazio: Point of order: My point of order relates to relevance. The Hon. John Ajaka asked the Minister to give us some information, which we are waiting for—because we have none to date—on WestConnex.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Hon. Amanda Fazio will resume her seat. She should know that some generality is permitted when a Minister gives an answer. Her point of order was, in effect, to take up the Minister's time. If she does so again she will be called to order.

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: The Opposition hates good news and there was, maybe, a sliver of good news in the changes that happened in Canberra.

The Hon. Steve Whan: You'll have to get new photos.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I call the Hon. Steve Whan to order for the second time.

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: I have done my best: I have promoted Albo the sometimes good to Deputy Prime Minister; I cannot do much more than that. He was never going to the top, especially after the dud deal he gave us on the Pacific Highway and on WestConnex.

The Hon. Michael Gallacher: He's a survivor.

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: He is a survivor.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Minister will answer the question and not be diverted by interjections.

The Hon. Michael Gallacher: A wise man once told me that he will end up in the Abbott Cabinet.

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: I doubt whether he will end up in the Abbott Cabinet but he is a great survivor. But the key to the question on WestConnex is that the former Prime Minister, in her comments—

The Hon. Michael Gallacher: Julia.

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: Yes, the former Prime Minister—who I thought was not too bad, I have to say. I spent some time with her last weekend and I found her to be charming and very good with the people at Holbrook. But back to WestConnex: She and that muppet Bradbury have added between \$6 million and \$8 million—

The Hon. Penny Sharpe: Point of order: My point of order relates to relevance. The best Parliamentary Secretary the Minister has ever had has asked a question about WestConnex. The Minister could at least deign to answer the question within a bull's roar of relevance.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Ministers are required to be generally relevant and to do their best to ignore interjections. The Minister has the call.

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: The key to it is that her announcements were adding between \$6 billion and \$8 billion to the cost of WestConnex. The Federal Government also extended the funding out until 2019, 2020 and 2021. That means that there is a good chance that this project would not happen if the Labor Government stays in Canberra. There is a chance for the new Prime Minister and the reinvigorated Albo the

sometimes good to fix this problem and help us deliver WestConnex. Tony Abbott and his team will bring the right amount of money at the right time. There are clear areas of difference. There are differences on the Pacific Highway and WestConnex projects. This is an important message to the new Prime Minister of Australia: Try to help Sydney on the WestConnex project.

POLICE CRITICAL INCIDENT INVESTIGATIONS

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: My question without notice is addressed to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services. Will the Minister advise the House how many critical incidents involving New South Wales police were investigated by police and how many were investigated by the Police Integrity Commission in each of the last two financial years?

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: In relation to the police aspect, obviously I will request information from the Commissioner of Police

The Hon. Trevor Khan: It is an operational matter.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: It is an operational matter. The question relating to the Police Integrity Commission should be directed to the Premier.

PORTS PRIVATISATION

The Hon. STEVE WHAN: My question is directed to the Minister for Roads and Ports. On 4 August 2011 the Minister told the Parliament, "I have no plans to privatise New South Wales ports." Given that a month later the Government announced the sale of Port Botany, why did the Minister mislead the Parliament?

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: Once again, I did not mislead the Parliament. At that stage I had no plans to privatise the ports. It is a good lesson, even for former Ministers, to understand how portfolios work. The Hon. Steve Whan may have been in the Labor Cabinet but I suspect he was asleep most of the time, because he does not remember what happened.

The PRESIDENT: Order! It has been a long session and members are anticipating its conclusion. However, members should try to maintain some order during question time.

The Hon. Michael Gallacher: Julia was anticipating the end of the session, too.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I call the Leader of the Government to order for the first time.

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: For the benefit of the Hon. Steve Whan and others, including those in the public gallery, management within the State-owned corporations, or SOCs, is different. There is a portfolio Minister and in the case of ports I am the portfolio Minister. There are also shareholder Ministers. In the case of ports, the Treasurer and the Minister for Finance and Services are the shareholder Ministers.

The Hon. Walt Secord: You are completely out of the loop.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I call the Hon. Walt Secord to order for the first time. I call the Hon. Mick Veitch to order for the first time.

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: That particular area is the responsibility of the shareholder Ministers. The Hon. Mick Veitch would not know that because the Labor Party has been silly and not promoted him. Had the Labor Party promoted the Hon. Mick Veitch he would have been one of Labor's best Ministers ever, because people understand that he is a decent person. The problem is that he never got there. It is a great shame because the Labor Party may have done some good with him there.

The Hon. Dr Peter Phelps: It's like Clive Palmer and Tony Jones.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I call the Hon. Dr Peter Phelps to order for the first time.

The Hon. STEVE WHAN: I ask a supplementary question. Will the Minister elucidate his answer by enlightening the House about the role of the ports Minister as he sees it when it comes to the sale of the most significant parts of his portfolio?

The Hon. Rick Colless: Point of order: That is an entirely new question and should be ruled out of order.

The Hon. Penny Sharpe: To the point of order: The Minister in his response clearly described the various roles of different Ministers. It is perfectly in order to ask the Minister to elucidate his role if he does not know anything about the ports privatisation.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Hon. Steve Whan was seeking elucidation of an aspect of the answer. The Minister has the call.

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: As I said earlier, the shareholder Ministers are the Treasurer and the Minister for Finance and Services, and the portfolio Minister—

The Hon. John Ajaka: Point of order: It is impossible to hear the Minister because of the continuous interjections from members opposite.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Minister has the call.

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: The portfolio Minister manages the day-to-day briefs within the purview allowed, given that it is a State-owned corporation. Issues of budget consideration are very much the area of the Treasurer and the Minister for Finance and Services. The portfolio Minister is not initially involved in that process. Certainly, portfolio Ministers are involved later, as I said in my original answer. The problem is that sometimes the members opposite are too late in asking questions and sometimes they are a couple of days too early.

KITCHEN FIRE SAFETY

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL: My question is directed to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services. Will the Minister update the House about the dangers of kitchen fires, especially during the winter period?

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: One of the main objectives of Fire and Rescue NSW is building community capacity and resilience so that people can be better prepared to deal with and recover from emergencies. This translates to simple but important information about preventing fires, particularly in the kitchen. Many families gather in and around the kitchen—around the kitchen cabinet, one might say. One must be careful when putting down the knitting needles and gathering the family around the kitchen cabinet table because it can be dangerous—apart from the sharp implements.

The PRESIDENT: Order! There is too much chatter. I cannot hear the Minister.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: One must keep an eye on fire safety measures. The Commissioner of Fire and Rescue NSW, Greg Mullins, has advised me that almost half of all house fires start in the kitchen.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I warn the Hon. Steve Whan for the last time.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: Fire and Rescue NSW firefighters are warning New South Wales residents to be careful when cooking after new figures showed that crews have attended more than 200 kitchen fires since 1 May.

The Hon. Penny Sharpe: Do you cook?

The Hon. Lynda Voltz: Yes, he has a barbecue.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: I thought the Hon. Lynda Voltz might have gone down to Canberra as part of the Women for Gillard.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Minister will cease responding to interjections.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: More than 90 per cent of kitchen fires over the past six weeks were the result of cooking catching alight, both on the stove and in the oven, and more than 30 people have been

injured as a result of these fires, with most suffering smoke inhalation. On 28 May a man suffered severe burns to his hands after a fire on a stove in a unit at Coogee got out of control. On 11 May another man suffered burns to his hands and feet after a kitchen fire in his Bellbird house reached a significant stage. On 7 June a woman in her thirties suffered severe smoke inhalation after a stove fire in her unit at Waitara. The day before an elderly man was taken to hospital with smoke inhalation after a stove fire at his Kempsey unit. On 22 June a quick-thinking mother and her baby were lucky to escape when fire broke out in her Lithgow home. Both were taking a nap when a fire broke out in the kitchen. That shows that kitchen fires are not limited to the metropolitan area. Fires are not limited to homes or units; they can be in caravans or other forms of accommodation.

The Hon. Catherine Cusack: It's a men's issue.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: No, the woman—

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Minister has been warned.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: We know that most of these fires happen when cooking is left unattended while residents juggle other tasks.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I call the Hon. Trevor Khan to order for the first time.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: It is pretty clear that—

The Hon. Lynda Voltz: It is dangerous.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: It is incredibly dangerous. As we have learned in the past 24 hours, things can turn very dangerous very quickly—especially near Canberra. Things can get out of control down there, but a little smoke can turn quickly into a serious fire no matter where it is. The message is to turn off the stove or the microwave when stepping away from the kitchen cabinet to help with homework or watch television—

The Hon. Dr Peter Phelps: Or to do some knitting.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: People should keep a watchful eye on their cooking and their knitting at all times.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I call the Hon. Greg Donnelly to order for the first time.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: I urge households to be fire ready. People can take some simple steps to be fire safe in the kitchen this winter. If anyone would like further information I am more than happy to provide it.

PUBLIC HOUSING BED TAX

The Hon. JAN BARHAM: My question without notice is directed to the Minister for Roads and Ports, representing the Minister for Family and Community Services. Regarding the Minister's announcement that public housing tenants with unoccupied bedrooms will be required to move or to pay a bedroom tax, will the Minister allow tenants who wish to remain in their existing home and community to arrange for additional occupants of their choosing to reside in their home? Will the Minister postpone the introduction of the bedroom tax and take the time to develop appropriate procedures so that tenants can remain in their homes and maintain their established social and community connections?

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: I thank the member for that question. It is an appropriate question and I understand her concern.

The Hon. Sophie Cotsis: You should have come to our meeting today.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I call the Hon. Sophie Cotsis to order for the first time.

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: Sometimes I have more important things to do at lunchtime than meet with you, Sophie.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Minister is well advised not to respond to interjections.

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: Mr President, before the rude interjection I was answering the question.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I call the Hon. Amanda Fazio to order for the first time.

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: This is a serious and important subject that should not be treated lightly by Opposition members. The Hon. Jan Barham has raised appropriate concerns. My understanding is that a large number of those concerns have been addressed in the changes that the Minister will put forward, but I do not think all of them are addressed. Bearing in mind that it is not my portfolio, I listen to all issues raised in Cabinet meetings—unlike some members opposite. It is my understanding that many of the issues raised in the question have been covered appropriately, but as it is not my portfolio I am not across all the detail. Because of the importance of the question I want to get the answer right. Therefore, I will take the question on notice and ask the Minister for a response.

SPEED CAMERAS

The Hon. AMANDA FAZIO: My question is directed to the Minister for Roads and Ports. On 4 May 2011 the Minister promised this House that he would remove "cash cow" speed cameras from New South Wales roads. Given that the Minister has increased the number of cameras on our roads and increased fines by 12.5 per cent, why does the Minister continue to mislead the House?

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: I said we would, and we did. We removed the cameras that were not fulfilling a proper road safety role. And we did not stop in 2011-12. In fact, just a month ago I was seen in the rain helping the great staff from Roads and Maritime Services to remove a camera. It is important that we continue to do that, because these cameras should fulfil a road safety role. Extra cameras have been rolled out. The large proportion of them came from the contract entered into whilst Labor was in government, but we have made changes to that contract and to the deployment of the cameras. We installed them because we believe cameras provide a deterrent, but we do not want them to be cash cows.

The Hon. Walt Secord: One thing in opposition, another in government.

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: Listen and you might learn something that you did not learn while you were in government. We have increased the size of the signs leading up to the cameras and we have taken one beyond what we call the "ping point", which is the spot where the radar can catch a driver. A person who is watching the road and driving carefully but inadvertently going a little quickly will have a chance to slow down and mend their ways. We have also put a sign beyond the camera so that as they pass it the driver will know they have been fined if they have been speeding. Over a long weekend the driver will know that they have received double demerit points and will stop speeding. We have also removed an ambiguous sign that set a trap at lights and intersections. It was called a safety camera, but we have renamed it to be what it is. It is now signposted as a speed camera and a red light camera, and we have doubled the size of the sign.

More importantly, we have hypothecated the funds from speed cameras entirely to road safety. With that money we are providing high-visibility cars to the highway patrol. Nothing is more effective at making people slow down than a copper in a marked cop car. Minister Gallacher has told me that I am the only person in the State who is allowed to call them "coppers", because I mean it in the very best way. We have also used the funds to install school zone flashing lights, which is a great use of the money. Even better, we are also using the funds to help train our young drivers to be better drivers. The rubbish that members opposite carry on about, that we are somehow ripping off motorists, is a farce. We have been strong, honest and honourable in this area.

The Hon. AMANDA FAZIO: I ask a supplementary question. Will the Minister elucidate his answer by giving a guarantee that the speed cameras and red light safety cameras he referred to in his answer that have been installed by the Government are there purely for road safety reasons?

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: That is an attempt to be sneaky. It is not a good question, but I will answer it because it is important that I do. We have implemented a yearly audit process for the cameras so that we can ensure they are meeting our aim. I cannot guarantee that one camera has not slipped away from providing a road safety function: that is why we have the audit process in place. When we are alerted to a camera that is merely raising money and not fulfilling a road safety role we pull it out. I indicated earlier that we have pulled out some this year, including the one that I worked on with the Roads and Maritime Services team. That happened because of the audit process.

ELECTRICITY INFRASTRUCTURE

The Hon. RICK COLLESS: My question is directed to the Minister for Roads and Ports, representing the Minister for Energy and Resources. Will the Minister explain what the impact on jobs and electricity prices would be if all New South Wales power plants were shut down?

The Hon. Amanda Fazio: Point of order: That is a hypothetical question that asks the Minister for an opinion. I ask that you rule it out of order.

The Hon. Dr Peter Phelps: To the point of order: The question did not ask for an opinion; it asked the Minister to explain the facts.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I am afraid the question was a hypothetical question.

COAL SEAM GAS

The Hon. ROBERT BORSAK: My question without notice is directed to the Minister for Roads and Ports, representing the Minister for Resources and Energy. Is the Minister aware of comments made by Santos Chief Executive David Knox that The Greens and other environmental groups in Australia were originally supportive of coal seam gas as a transitional fuel to wean the country's energy grid off coal and eventually onto renewable resources, but were now opposed because of its success? With more than 60 per cent of Australia's homes now connected to gas, will the Government consider legislation to ensure that at least 15 per cent of any gas mined in this State—as outlined in the recent General Purpose Standing Committee No. 5 inquiry—is hypothecated for use in this State, given that such gas being mined is going overseas? Will this lead to price increases domestically?

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: I thank the honourable member for his question.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I call the Hon. Walt Secord to order for the second time.

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: At least within this question there is a degree of common sense on issues that need to be examined when we are looking at the future of our energy requirements in New South Wales. I do not think anyone, except perhaps The Greens—and I have not seen what is in Luke's plan—is in denial that we are facing a crisis with gas. Even some of the staunchest critics have indicated that one of their concerns is that, if we open up mining, the bulk of that gas will go overseas. That is the crux of the honourable member's question: Will a proportion of that gas be retained for use in New South Wales? I think that is a sensible question and a matter that should be looked at when considering the future of our gas reserves. We need that gas. New South Wales is facing a crisis and we have to be careful how we approach the development of gas resources. We must maintain a common-sense approach to this important matter. From conversations I have had with the Minister for Mining and Energy I know that it is certainly a thought that he has. He is a guy who certainly understands his portfolio.

PACIFIC HIGHWAY UPGRADE

The Hon. GREG DONNELLY: My question without notice is directed to the Minister for Roads and Ports. On 8 March 2011 the current Premier said:

Only New South Wales Liberals and Nationals are committed to completing the upgrade of the Pacific Highway by 2016.

Given that the Government has departed from this commitment, why did the Minister and his Government mislead the Parliament again?

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: The honourable member can put away that dorothy dixer. We have one coming in from the other side of the House from the nodding clown. What the Government said was correct. There certainly was no misleading of the House. We were absolutely determined to fulfil the Prime Minister's commitment of 2016. Why have we moved away from that? Because the Labor Party absolutely duded New South Wales. Albanese—the not so good in this situation—went from the 80:20 agreement he had with the New South Wales Labor Party to 50:50. However, his 50:50 ended up dropping to 20:20 because, when it was 80:20 we put in 20 per cent and they put in 80 per cent. Then when Albanese said 50:50, we put our 20 per cent in and under his rules of 50:50, it became 20:20.

The Hon. Penny Sharpe: That made sense.

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: Well, it should make sense because it is the epitome of dudding people. It is the friends of those opposite in the Labor Party who have done this.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I call the Hon. Penny Sharpe to order for the first time.

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: They have gone from 80 to 50 to 20 per cent of the funding for the Pacific Highway, yet they ask us about misleading the House.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I call the Hon. Steve Whan to order for the third time. I direct the Usher of the Black Rod to remove the Hon. Steve Whan. The member is excluded from the Chamber until the conclusion of question time.

[Pursuant to standing order the Hon. Steve Whan left the Chamber, accompanied by the Usher of the Black Rod.]

The PRESIDENT: Order! I call the Hon. Mick Veitch to order for the second time.

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: Members opposite accuse us of misleading the House, but when it comes to honouring agreements, they do not do so. The percentage dropped from 80 to 50 to 20. The only reason that the Pacific Highway will not make 2016 is that the Labor Party has walked away from its agreement. The Liberal-Nationals had to be honest with the people about the Pacific Highway. We told them that the former Prime Minister's agreement of completion by 2016 was not possible because the Hon. Anthony Albanese and the Hon. Julia Gillard had walked away from the agreement that was in place with the former Labor Government.

COAL INDUSTRY

The Hon. RICK COLLESS: My question without notice is addressed to the Minister for Roads and Ports, representing the Minister for Energy and Resources. Will the Minister update the House on the importance of the coal industry in New South Wales?

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: I thank the member for his question and I thank him for the extra time to be able to get the answer right. As I indicated earlier in answer to a question from Reverend the Hon. Fred Nile, it appears that the Opposition leader in the other place was caught red-handed, saying he wanted to shut down the State's coal industry—

The Hon. Jeremy Buckingham: And The Greens.

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: And The Greens, of course. I am sorry; I have not mentioned them yet. The Opposition leader in the other place wanted to shut down the State's coal industry, axing tens of thousands of jobs and raising power prices in the process. It was telling yesterday, the glee with which the member from The Greens asked a question about the loss of jobs in the Hunter. There seemed to be a degree of relish that was unhealthy.

The coal industry is one of the most significant pillars of our economy, with more than 125,000 families dependent on mining for employment. Coal remains the State's single biggest export, worth \$13.9 million in 2012. It is at the heart of the economies of the Hunter, Illawarra, Central West and New England. By any measure, this was an irresponsible and reckless comment from a man who seeks to lead the Labor Party and to lead the State. Indeed, one might have expected these sorts of irresponsible comments—in fact, we have seen them—to have come from The Greens. True to form, as if on cue this week, Dr John Kaye announced a bill that would effectively put into action the Hon. John Robertson's secret plan.

Unlike The Greens and the Leader of the Opposition, this Government governs in the best interests of the people of New South Wales and that includes energy customers. There is not one policy decision that would have a more devastating effect on the cost of living of households than completely removing coal from the energy mix. The bill is typical of The Greens: All ideology with no consideration of the impact on families across New South Wales. The Victorian Government recently commissioned a report that found that the cost of converting to 100 per cent renewable energy by 2030 would be as high as \$1 trillion.

The PRESIDENT: Order! If the Hon. Jeremy Buckingham and Dr John Kaye wish to have a private conversation, they should do so outside the Chamber.

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: That would amount to approximately \$500,000 per household in Victoria. What a nonsensical approach.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I call the Hon. Jeremy Buckingham to order for the first time.

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: Together with Robbo, The Greens want to impose a half-million-dollar cost on every household and to claim that it solves the problems of the world. For context, 100,000 wind turbines would be needed if wind was used to meet all of Victoria's energy needs. That is the same number of wind turbines that exist in the whole world. Even that will not ensure a 24/7 supply: The wind is not always blowing, nor is the sun always shining. The New South Wales Government will continue to maximise the use of our existing networks, while recognising the role that renewable energy will continue to play in the State's energy mix. A soon-to-be-released Renewable Energy Action Plan explores further positive actions for developing alternative fuels in New South Wales. *[Time expired.]*

ROYAL NATIONAL PARK PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

The Hon. ROBERT BROWN: My question without notice is directed to the Minister for Roads and Ports, representing the Minister for the Environment. Is it a fact that the Plan of Management for Royal National Park requires the preparation of a deer management plan for the reserve, and that a plan was approved in 2002 to cover a three-year period and a second plan was approved for the period 2005-08? Does the deer management plan require an annual report to be prepared, and when was the last annual report published?

The PRESIDENT: Order! I call the Hon. Jeremy Buckingham to order for the second time.

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: I do not have the information the member is seeking, although I suspect he guessed that. It is an important question and I will take it on notice and seek an answer.

M2 WIDENING PROJECT

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: My question without notice is directed to the Minister for Roads and Ports. On 5 August 2011 the Minister promised this House that the M2 widening project would be completed by early 2013. Given that the project is nowhere near completion, why did the Minister mislead the Parliament again?

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: First, I do not accept that I have misled the Parliament in the past, let alone misled the Parliament again. As the member said, I did say that I expected the M2 widening project to be completed then; that is correct. A couple of things have happened since then. One is that we have allowed a new access ramp to the M2, which is extending the time for the widening. The second is that there was a landslip on work that was done during the time of the former Labor Government and we had to fix it. Inadvertently, things of which we were not aware at the time have happened subsequently. They are working as quickly as they possibly can to ensure it is finished, but it will take slightly longer with the new access ramp, which will be a great help to many people in the Epping area.

EMERGENCY SERVICES QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS RECIPIENTS

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: My question without notice is addressed to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services. Will the Minister inform the House about the recent recipients of the Emergency Services Medal?

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: Last week I was able to congratulate in this place some outstanding men and women from this State who received meritorious service awards as part of the Queen's Birthday Honours. Eight police officers were awarded the Australian Police Medal. Six members of the Rural Fire Service and five members of Fire and Rescue NSW were awarded the Australian Fire Service Medal. Today I am pleased to have the opportunity to congratulate the four recipients of the Emergency Services Medal—three from Marine Rescue NSW and one from the NSW State Emergency Service.

Mr Leslie Milne has been a volunteer with the NSW State Emergency Service for 26 years, and the Fairfield local controller for the past 12 years. He is a leader who embodies the values of the NSW State

Emergency Service: positive energy, inclusivity, and a passion for helping the community. The positive environment he has cultivated, underpinned with sound training and good management, has taken the Fairfield unit from strength to strength. Through Mr Milne's leadership, more than 60 per cent of the Fairfield unit's members come from an ethnic background. This has proven invaluable when responding to the local community, where 86 languages are spoken. Mr Milne has actively nurtured and built strong working relationships in the area, while his practical experience comes from responding to devastating disasters such as the Newcastle earthquake, the Canberra bushfires and the Thredbo landslide.

The recipients from Marine Rescue NSW were Ms Aileen (Joan) Noble, Ms Patricia Fayers and Mr James Glissan, QC. Marine Rescue NSW was established in 2009, integrating three marine rescue organisations into one—the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Association, the Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol and the Volunteer Rescue Association. Mr James Glissan is Chair of the Marine Rescue board of directors and a volunteer member with Marine Rescue Botany Bay. Mr Glissan was integral to the establishment of Marine Rescue NSW, with his professional expertise assisting the new organisation to establish a secure legal, governance and financial foundation. His leadership has helped set a strategic direction for Marine Rescue NSW, and has helped steer the organisation through the challenges arising from the unification of three separate services.

Ms Aileen (Joan) Noble has been a volunteer at Kioloa on the South Coast since 2001. She is fully qualified for marine rescue duties and has served in a number of roles including deputy unit commander. She has been central to obtaining grants to refurbish and extend the Kioloa base, and in conducting fundraising activities. She is dedicated and committed and motivates others to make the unit not just a working service but an outstanding unit.

Ms Patricia Fayers has been a volunteer on the Central Coast since 1998. In 2006 she became divisional commander, a position held during the transition to Marine Rescue NSW. This was a period of uncertainty and new arrangements, but Ms Fayers made the transition smooth and successful for members. She has been the Central Coast Unit Commander since 2012, which has more than 130 active members. She has fostered and maintained morale and camaraderie. Ms Fayers also has been integral to the acquisition and construction of four lifeboats for the unit, and has been central to fundraising events and securing grants. All four volunteers have served their communities passionately and unwaveringly, and remind us of the time and effort given every day by our emergency service members. They are highly deserving of these honours.

LAND ACCESS AGREEMENTS

The Hon. JEREMY BUCKINGHAM: My question without notice is directed to the Minister for Roads and Ports, representing the Minister for Primary Industries. In light of the template access agreement for minerals exploration being withdrawn, the Land and Water Commissioner has stated that rather than using an actual template to guide access agreements for the coal seam gas industry, an "information sheet and list of questions landholders should ask during negotiations were now being drafted". How will an information sheet and questions protect landholders from better resourced mining companies, and will the Government commit to allowing landholders to be legally represented during arbitration?

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: I thank the member for his question, which is a follow-up to the question asked yesterday about the template. I have to say, frankly, that I thought the NSW Farmers' action was a tad premature. It appears that one company had done the wrong thing. This template was developed with goodwill between NSW Farmers, the miners and the Government over a long time. There was 12 months work. We started a couple of years ago—

The Hon. Rick Colless: In opposition.

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: —in opposition to develop this template. We had something that we thought was a pretty good template. It is important that templates like this are treated properly and with goodwill. I am taking as true, and I do not know whether it is true, that one mining company changed it and acted inappropriately. I would have preferred NSW Farmers, rather than walking right away from it, to come back to it and say, "Something has gone wrong here. How did it go wrong and how do we fix it?" and not throw the whole thing out.

The Hon. Jeremy Buckingham: Point of order: My point of order is relevance. The question related to the new information sheet and questions that the Government is drafting to protect landholders. The Minister has not addressed that element of the question so far in his answer.

The PRESIDENT: Order! There is no point of order.

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: Had the member not attacked me prematurely—he is a little premature this boy—

The Hon. Michael Gallacher: He has a reputation for that.

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: Yes. Had he not attacked me he would have realised I was indicating that I felt the existing template may have been a better way to go rather than throwing everything out. He is asking why the new one will not work. He is telling the House that in his view the new one will not work. I am saying it may have been better to have persevered a little longer with the old template before we went rash with a new one. Like the member, I am not there at the coalface. Given that he supports no mining in the State, I would have thought he had a jaundiced view in this area. I am disappointed that they have walked away but I hope that through that great third party, Jock Lawrie—

The Hon. Trevor Khan: Great bloke.

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: He is a great bloke. I hope that through Jock Lawrie they have a chance to come back together. He will be working hard to try to fix the situation.

SOCIAL HOUSING

The Hon. SOPHIE COTSIS: My question is directed to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, representing the Minister for Finance and Services. Given the shortages of available Housing NSW properties, why has the Government cut the number of new social housing dwellings from 852 last year to only 276 this year?

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: In view of the time that question probably would have been better placed on notice. Be that as it may, I was hoping to finish question time today on a high note with more information.

The Hon. Sophie Cotsis: It is in your budget.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: It is a budget question. Clearly, if it is in New South Wales it is in the budget. I am more than happy to refer that question to the responsible Minister.

Pursuant to sessional orders business interrupted to permit a motion to adjourn the House if desired.

The House continued to sit.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Has the Minister concluded his answer?

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: Yes. Sadly, the time for questions has expired. If members have further questions they should place them on notice.

SYDNEY HARBOUR FLOATING HELIPORT

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: Earlier today I was asked a question by the Leader of the Opposition about heliports. My diligent staff tell me that in part of my answer I indicated—

The Hon. Mick Veitch: That you supported the Deputy Premier.

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: I said I supported the Deputy Premier, but I also said that the report vindicates the comments of the Opposition. Of course, it does not. What I should have said is that it vindicates as proper the actions of the Deputy Premier.

PROBLEM GAMBLING ASSESSMENT REVIEW

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: On 23 May 2013 Dr John Kaye asked me, representing the Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Hospitality and Racing, and Minister for the Arts, whether the Office of Liquor, Gaming and Racing commissioned a needs assessment review of problem gambling from Schottler Consulting Services. The Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Hospitality and Racing has provided the following response:

Yes

The report identifies respondents who divulged information about themselves and other persons and entities to the researcher on a confidential basis.

ELECTRICITY ASSETS SALE

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: On 22 May 2013 Dr John Kaye asked the Minister for Finance and Services a question about the sale of the State's generation State-owned corporations. The Treasurer has provided the following response:

- (1) The sale process as outlined in November 2012 is on schedule. In accordance with the agreed schedule, bilateral negotiations in relation to the GenTrader assets are taking place. These negotiations are confidential, however, an announcement will be made at an appropriate time.
- (2) The Generator Transaction Steering Committee consists of:
 - Project Director (NSW Treasury);
 - Project Manager (NSW Treasury);
 - Deputy Secretary of Commercial Policy and Financing (NSW Treasury);
 - Executive Director, Energy Division of Resources and Energy (Trade and Investment NSW);
 - Executive Director, Office of Finance (Department of Finance and Services); and
 - Deputy Director General, Strategic Policy and Co-ordination group (Department of Premier and Cabinet).

At present the Steering Committee meets on a weekly basis. The Committee is responsible to me, as Treasurer, and reports to me on a regular basis.

OUT-OF-HOME CARE ADOPTION

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: On 23 May 2013 Reverend the Hon. Fred Nile asked the Minister for Finance and Services a question about the number of assessors for out-of-home care adoptions in New South Wales. The Minister for Family and Community Services has provided the following response:

There are currently seven Contracted Adoption Assessors actively working in rural NSW. This is in addition to 12 Regional Adoption Caseworkers across the seven regions who are also delegated under the *Adoption Act 2000* to undertake this work. The Department of Family and Community Services is currently reviewing the Out-of-Home Care Open Adoption system to streamline the adoption process.

The NSW Government has proposed 29 wide ranging legislative reforms to improve services and lives. These include reforms to improve open adoption process in NSW. Proposed reforms include:

- introducing permanency into the principles of the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998, where open adoption is the preferred placement option after family preservation and long term guardianship to relative or kin has been ruled out.
- Requiring the consideration of adoption as a suitable option in preparing a permanency plan and require that the Children's Court have regard to the permanency hierarchy before making an order allocating parental responsibility to the Minister.
- Introducing concurrent planning and merging the out of home care and adoption standards.

Questions without notice concluded.

ATTENDANCE OF THE HON. ANDREW MIRIKI, SPEAKER OF THE AUTONOMOUS REGION OF BOUGAINVILLE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The PRESIDENT: Order! I thank the Hon. Andrew Miriki, Speaker of the Autonomous Region of Bougainville House of Representatives, for attending what I think was a more than unusually robust question time. I put that down to the fact that it is the last day this sitting period. I hope the Speaker has enjoyed his visit to question time today. As always, it is a pleasure working with you on our twinning arrangements.

The Hon. Andrew Miriki, MP, Speaker of the Autonomous Region of Bougainville House of Representatives, left the dais.

ASSENT TO BILLS

Assent to the following bills reported:

Appropriation Bill 2013
Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2013
State Revenue and Other Legislation Amendment (Budget Measures) Bill 2013

SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE AGISTMENT OF HORSES AT YARALLA ESTATE

Membership

The PRESIDENT: I inform the House that the Clerk has received the following nominations from the Leader of the Opposition for membership of the committee:

Opposition members: The Hon. Luke Foley
 The Hon. Ernest Wong

Message forwarded to the Legislative Assembly advising it of the nominations.

ABSENCE OF MEMBERS

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY (Minister for Roads and Ports) [3.35 p.m.]: I acknowledge that today the Hon. Sarah Mitchell leaves us for a short time, and the Hon. Melinda Pavey and the Hon. Charlie Lynn may or may not return from Kokoda Trail.

ADJOURNMENT

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY (Minister for Roads and Ports) [3.35 p.m.]: I move:

That this House do now adjourn.

ANIMAL WELFARE

The Hon. ROBERT BROWN [3.35 p.m.]: Last week my colleague the Hon. Robert Borsak spoke about the outrageous actions of animal welfare activists, who are not averse to breaking and entering private property to hide cameras and sound equipment in and around intensive farming activities in the hope of obtaining evidence of wrongdoing. However, their recent efforts did not uncover any wrongdoing, because there was no wrongdoing. I want to talk about another aspect of these green-leaning groups, because that is what they are. It all stems from the Australian Greens and then flows into each State. Can members believe that despite everything that has been happening recently federally in Canberra the Greens sought to bring in a bill in the House of Representatives to set up an independent Office of Animal Welfare? They call it the Voice for Animals (Independent Office of Animal Welfare) Bill:

"... to establish an animal welfare champion to promote animal rights that is independent of Government and the Department of Agriculture".

The Greens brought in the bill in the hope that it embarrasses the Labor Party, which 2½ years ago at its national conference decided to make such an office Labor Party policy. I would have thought that The Greens and Labor would be working closely together on this in the interests of Australia, but with friends and political partners like The Greens Labor might just be learning the folly of dealing too closely with them. Perhaps at the time of their conference two years ago Labor Party members were trying to out-green The Greens. With the benefit of hindsight, perhaps they are now beginning to see that most of The Greens' ideas are not from this planet, or even the next one.

Shooters and Fishers Party champion advocate Senator Lee Rhiannon will have carriage of the bill if it reaches the Senate, which is unlikely before the Federal election, but that does not stop her spruiking how good it will be for everyone. Truth has never stood in the way of The Greens' political pontificating, particularly in relation to either firearms or animal welfare. Senator Rhiannon says the bill will create an independent animal rights champion—animal rights, not animal welfare—and is an important step towards changing the culture within government and the factory farming industry. Why is it that The Greens think they have all the answers to what they mostly alone perceive as problems? Senator Rhiannon then went on to say:

Australia is dragging the chain internationally on animal welfare motivated regulatory reform.

May I ask: Compared with whom, and which countries have better animal welfare regulations than Australia? The answer is none. Not one country has stronger animal welfare regulations than this fine country, Australia. The real thrust of The Greens' bill is shown by the fact that she then said:

To assist the Office to perform its duties it will be guided by the advice of an Animal Welfare Advisory Committee—

we have one of those in New South Wales, an absolute disgrace—

including experts from the animal welfare movement, consumer groups, scientists and ethicists.

I wonder who Ms Rhiannon refers to as ethicists. I wonder which of these groups will be the ones that are prepared to break into farming operations and place cameras, because the Greens always like to "stack" these advisory committees with their own brand of "truth tellers". Notwithstanding their unrealistic expectations about this new office, they have the gall to say:

Setting up the office would be virtually cost neutral at \$500,000 in the next 12 months.

That is a good one. What would the loopy Greens expect to get for half a million dollars? I imagine setting up the office would cost that much, let alone providing staff and then getting them to do something. This is just another example of green tape. The Greens love putting extra layers of bureaucracy wherever they can and yet they pretend they stand for deregulation. Is that not a joke?

NELSON MANDELA

The Hon. TREVOR KHAN [3.39 p.m.]: The news is not good: Former South African President and anti-apartheid hero Nelson Mandela is on life support. South African President Jacob Zuma has cancelled a visit to Mozambique, saying Mr Mandela was still in a critical condition. Nelson Mandela, the hero of South Africa's fight for freedom, was rushed to hospital on 8 June with a recurring lung infection. Nelson Mandela became South Africa's first black president in 1994, having been released in 1990 after 27 years of imprisonment. Nelson Mandela's imprisonment was first on Robben Island, then Pollsmoor Prison and, finally, Victor Verster Prison. During his early time at Robben Island Mandela was held in a damp concrete cell measuring eight feet by seven feet, with a straw mat on which to sleep. He spent days breaking rocks into gravel until he was reassigned in January 1965 to work in a line quarry. The turning point for Mandela's release came in July 1989 when former President Botha was replaced by Mr F. W. de Klerk, who recognised that apartheid was unsustainable and unconditionally released all African National Congress prisoners, except Mandela.

In December 1989 de Klerk met with Mandela to discuss the situation before releasing Mandela unconditionally on 2 February 1990 and legalising all formerly banned political parties. In 1994, following his release, Nelson Mandela led negotiations with de Klerk to abolish apartheid and establish multiracial elections. At the 1994 election Nelson Mandela led the African National Congress to victory. He was elected President and formed a Government of National Unity in a largely successful attempt to defuse ethnic tensions. Nelson Mandela attempted to create the broadest possible coalition in his Cabinet, with de Klerk as his first Deputy President and with other National Party members becoming Ministers for agriculture, energy, the environment and minerals. Additionally, he established a new constitution and initiated the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to investigate past human rights abuses. In establishing the commission he held firm to his stated view that courageous people do not fear forgiving for the sake of peace. In June 1999 he retired from office, refusing to run for a second term as President.

Although Nelson Mandela left the political stage long ago, he remains a towering symbol in the fight for equality not just in South Africa but throughout the world. In 1995, shortly after he became President, Nelson Mandela met with the captain of the South African rugby union team, Francois Pienaar, prior to the World Cup that was to be held in South Africa. During that meeting Nelson Mandela gave him some prose written by Teddy Roosevelt. The piece is called *The Man in the Arena* and is quite applicable to the life of Nelson Mandela. It reads:

It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.

All here know that I am not a religious man, but as Nelson Mandela's life enters its autumn days I am drawn to a prayer by a South African Archbishop:

Grant Madiba eternal healing and relief from pain and suffering. Grant him ... a quiet night and a peaceful, perfect end.

OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE CORPORATE PLAN

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY (Leader of the Opposition) [3.44 p.m.]: The Office of Environment and Heritage Interim Corporate Plan 2012-13 is a masterful example of the strings of weasel words and bureaucratic clichés favoured by despots, management consultants and modern politics. Don Watson has done our society a great service, drawing attention to "this dead, depleted verbless jargon" that effectively strips language of meaning while simultaneously robbing important and real things of content, ideas and heart. The task of protecting our vast and gorgeous State is one of these real and important things. The document I refer to promises a shiny, new Office of Environment and Heritage that has "shifted the way we organise our business" to demonstrate "a clear return on investment". We are told that this is a "customer-focused organisation" facilitating business transactions, with nature its product. The document has a vision: to support the delivery of a "healthy, productive environment and economy"—four words attempting to describe the task of the New South Wales Government's champions of planetary health, of which two are from the arid domain of economic rationalism.

The Office of Environment and Heritage has five key strategies, only one of which relates to the environment—namely, healthy and protected landscapes. The other four key strategies deal with shared heritage, tourism, thriving local communities, and excellence in customer service and business reform. The people of New South Wales expect the Office of Environment and Heritage to ensure that national parks are clean, picnic areas are well maintained, and that the website tells them how to book a camping ground—the things of service to customers. More importantly, the people of New South Wales expect the Office of Environment and Heritage to focus on looking after the environment, not the economy, customers or the tourism industry. People want a civilised society where nature is defended, not commodified; where our unique animals do not face the crunch of extinction; and where the beauty of the place in which we live is valued intrinsically for its own sake, and looked after accordingly.

Pity our children as the planet warms. Climate change gets no mention in the corporate plan of those charged with mitigating the threat. This is a world where the ice caps are not melting and freak weather events cause no alarm. Biodiversity gets one mention—on the last page of the Office of Environment and Heritage corporate plan. The koalas, bilbies and sugar gliders do not figure in the oft-repeated lists of "service customers". This document is a sad artefact of two truths. First, managerialism has gone mad in the governance of modern Australia. This is not confined to the current New South Wales Government. It can account for much of the loss of faith by Australians in governments of all persuasions. Politics should be about ideas, based in the idealism of belief in a better country and articulated with heart. The second truth is that the O'Farrell Government and its environment Minister have no intention of creating an environment department that puts protection of nature as its primary aim—an organisation that acts with lion-like ferocity to defend the earth against the more technocratic and destructive impulses of other arms of government. This lame document is no accident of bureaucrats gone insane; it is a true, albeit unreadable, reflection of how this Government sees nature and the environment: simply as a backdrop for economic activity and a consumable for customers.

THE GREENS

The Hon. ROBERT BORSAK [3.49 p.m.]: Last week in this place Ms Cate Faehrmann delivered her valedictory speech. I did not believe what I was hearing so I read the transcript to make sure what I heard was correct. She said that she "despaired at the politicisation of protecting the environment". They are prophetic words. With all due respect, she has got to be joking. Who was responsible for the politicisation of the environment? It was The Greens. It seems that while they could jerk a compliant Labor Government into line to do their bidding everything was fine. However, when they were confronted with a few reversals and realities, all of a sudden something was wrong. In a very thinly veiled attack on the Shooters and Fishers Party, she went on to say:

... there appears to be an anti-science, anti-intellectual and anti-environment motivation driving too many agendas in this place and in the Government more broadly.

I do not know who gave The Greens the right to be correct in their stance on any and every issue. If anyone disagrees with them, they must be wrong. The people of this State and across Australia have woken up to this

duplicitous mantra from The Greens, but that is what The Greens think. Ms Cate Faehrmann then referred to deals being done. That is a bit rich coming from a Greens member. How could anyone forget about the river red gums national parks deal done in the dying days of the previous Labor Government, when the then Minister for the Environment dudded his own party into supporting the declaration in the hope of securing The Greens preferences at the 2011 election only to be dudded by The Greens themselves? Apparently that does not count.

However, according to Ms Cate Faehrmann, if the Shooters and Fishers Party strikes a deal it makes a mockery of the role of the Legislative Council as a house of review and the people of New South Wales are being held to ransom by the Shooters and Fishers Party. The Shooters and Fishers Party's list of demands—the conditions of its support for the Government—is proudly displayed on its website for all to see. I feel as though I am on the set of a movie about a hostage situation. However, in this script there is no Dirty Harry or Bruce Willis among our leaders ready to save the day. The member stated that duck hunting, hunting in national parks, logging in national parks, de-gazetting national parks, a return to broadscale land clearing and a relaxation of gun control laws are all on the cards. Having said that, I thought she might feel better and return to reality. That did not happen. She went on to say:

The Shooters and Fishers Party claims that there is a battle of cultures and that they are standing up for their culture. But there is no hunting culture in this State. This is not North America. That idea has been manufactured by the taxpayer-funded Game Council. Instead, the culture war that does now exist is one that the Government ignores at its peril. New South Wales has a proud history and culture of protecting its native animals, plants and special places. The people of New South Wales are justifiably proud of this State's track record of creating national parks and more recently marine parks. Little did I know when I delivered my inaugural speech on 21 September 2010, in which I described the beauty and significance of the State's national parks, that I would then spend so much of my time here defending them.

Goodness me! Once again, The Greens fail maths 101. Apparently, if she was not able to protect national parks it means that democracy has broken out and the will of the majority holds sway. Most people do not find that difficult to comprehend. We were then subjected to the old climate change chestnut. However, this time Ms Cate Faehrmann decided that Government members were luddites because once again not everyone shares her view. She stated:

It is damning that elected members of the Government refuse to even acknowledge the reality of climate change or that humans contribute to making it worse. My earlier comments about an anti-science agenda in this place are particularly relevant in this case. Some of the most respected and also the most conservative science and policy organisations in Australia and across the world have raised the alarm about the ramifications of rising temperatures and sea levels for human life as a result of human-induced climate.

Dare I ask: Is it human induced? Probably the most realistic comment Ms Cate Faehrmann made was that her "election to the Senate is by no means guaranteed". I suggest that The Greens have a look at themselves and stop pontificating. They should recognise what is happening to their vote. No-one is right all the time, but they are right almost none of the time.

MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY

The Hon. HELEN WESTWOOD [3.54 p.m.]: Manufacturing contributed \$32.8 billion to the New South Wales economy in 2010. This figure is forecast to grow by 19 per cent by 2020, reaching \$38.9 billion. Manufacturing is New South Wales's third largest employer, accounting for more than 300,000 New South Wales jobs. Our manufacturing exports were valued at \$11.7 billion in 2008-09, representing 19.4 per cent of total New South Wales merchandise and services exports. As Australia's leading business State, New South Wales should provide a natural first choice location for advanced manufacturing. However, despite all the infrastructure projects announced in this week's budget there is no commitment to New South Wales manufacturing or New South Wales jobs.

At a time when New South Wales manufacturers are doing it tough and the jobs of local workers are under threat it makes sense to commit such a major spend on local businesses. Yet there is no commitment in this budget to local content. There is no plan to support New South Wales jobs and New South Wales business by building buses, trains and ferries in New South Wales for the New South Wales public transport system. In the past six months I have seen how this Coalition Government has sent thousands of New South Wales manufacturing jobs interstate and overseas. I watched this Government send New South Wales jobs to Queensland when it gave a Queensland company the tender to build double-decker buses, even though there were two New South Wales companies with the capacity to complete the job. One of those companies has now closed and more than 150 skilled New South Wales jobs have gone.

This Government has an opportunity to make a difference by making a commitment to support this State's dynamic and diverse manufacturing sector. As we have seen, both interstate and overseas, this is the very

best way to drive prosperity for the whole economy. Let me give just one example of how this Government is squandering the opportunities available to it: the North West Rail Link. The Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union May 2013 report entitled, "10 ways to drive NSW manufacturing jobs", states that the proposed North West Rail Link will use more steel than the Sydney Harbour Bridge. However, there is no commitment to use Australian-made goods or services. What a wasted opportunity.

If this major project made a commitment to local content it would be one of the most significant contributions to the creation and retention of jobs and apprenticeships in New South Wales for a generation and it would sustain and promote new and critical manufacturing capability in local businesses for decades into the future. The Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union has told me that the North West Rail Link project will require 70,000 tonnes of steel, 400,000 cubic metres of concrete, 15 train sets, materials for eight new train stations and 23 kilometres of double track. It is not hard to see how it can state:

The components of the North West Rail Link are a recipe for turbo-charging critical manufacturing sectors in New South Wales.

The Government has a once-in-a-generation opportunity to make a real difference by supporting local business, and thousands of existing skilled manufacturing jobs while also creating thousands more by committing to local content provisions in the tendering process for the North West Rail Link and the South West Rail Link. Now is the time to make a commitment to support the rolling stock industry and the jobs, skills, innovation and investment that it brings to the New South Wales economy and regional communities. Professor Roy Green, Dean of the Business School at the University of Technology Sydney, said:

Manufacturing can and should be a future source of growth in Australia (it) is more knowledge-intensive and more interdependent with the integration of value-adding services, such as design, engineering, computing and marketing.

I congratulate the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union on its report. The road map set out by the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union report makes it only too clear that this Government has an opportunity to reinvigorate the manufacturing industry in New South Wales. I urge all members to read the report. For the benefit of the House, and anyone who may not have yet read the document, it recommends:

1. Target 75 per cent local content on the North West Rail Link.
2. New South Wales Government to secure 40 per cent of Clean Energy Future funds for New South Wales businesses to lower their emissions and develop new carbon-reduction technologies.
3. Apprenticeship targets on major infrastructure projects to include skills training targets for women.
4. Establish a New South Wales Government Mining Industry Advocate to promote local industry engagement with the mining sector.
5. Aim to win a minimum of 40 per cent of new contracts to build naval vessels.
6. A parliamentary inquiry into New South Wales food processing capability, threats to existing suppliers and imported content in our supermarkets.
7. Restore TAFE funding, maintain a quality, comprehensive, public vocational training system and support employers' investment in training.
8. A serious discussion about a Western Sydney Airport
9. New South Wales manufacturers to be given the opportunity to tender for bus fleet purchases
10. Reintroduce the Jobs First Policy, providing a price preference for New South Wales businesses as a baseline for all New South Wales Government procurement.

I am an optimist, despite the evidence I have seen of this Government's neglect of New South Wales business and New South Wales jobs. I hope that this Coalition Government will contact the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union leadership to discuss how it can work together to use this important document as the basis for recharging the New South Wales economy.

ASBESTOS AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

The Hon. MARIE FICARRA (Parliamentary Secretary) [3.59 p.m.]: I draw the attention of the House to the Asbestos Awareness Think Smart Campaign, a national health education campaign and an initiative of the Asbestos Education Committee, working in partnership with the internationally recognised Asbestos Diseases Research Institute. Australia has one of the highest rates of asbestos-related diseases in the world, due to it being

one of the highest gross consumers of asbestos cement products per capita. The Asbestos Education Committee was established to deliver education campaigns for homeowners enabling the Australian public to learn about the dangers of asbestos and how to manage it safely in and around the home, specifically when renovating. With confirmed cases of asbestos-related cancers or mesothelioma continuing to increase as a result of home maintenance and renovation, exposure to asbestos fibres is considered a major threat to the health of most Australian families, as is its deleterious effect on the Australian bush and our communities.

Currently in Australia, every home built or renovated before the mid-1980s is highly likely to contain asbestos. If left undisturbed it is considered not to be a major risk to health. However, when disturbed during renovations and home maintenance asbestos fibres can be released into the air and when inhaled can cause life-threatening diseases including lung cancer, pleural disease, asbestosis and mesothelioma, an incurable, terminal asbestos-related cancer. Home renovations, particularly do-it-yourself renovations, are continuing to increase nationally. With a median gap of 40 years between exposure and diagnosis, and with the majority of people diagnosed with mesothelioma living for approximately 100 days after diagnosis, I cannot overstate the importance of education about the dangers of asbestos to homeowners.

Prior to asbestos being banned in Australia in 2003, those most affected by asbestos in the first wave were asbestos miners and their families, followed in the second wave by tradesman such as builders, plumbers, electricians and their families who were exposed to fibres brought home on workers clothing. With scientific studies demonstrating that current asbestos exposure is directly linked to do-it-yourself renovations, the acknowledged third wave of victims of asbestos-related diseases will be homeowners and families exposed during home renovations or maintenance.

My father, who was in the Navy, died of mesothelioma after exposure to asbestos fibres during World War II. What also needs to be researched is the exposure of fruiterers—indeed, my father worked in a fruit shop—to potato sacks that were recycled and that were used to carry asbestos in the mines and then given to potato farmers. The insidious asbestos fibres found their way into so many products that Australians have used. As almost every home built or renovated before 1987 is likely to contain asbestos in one form or another, this third wave of people affected by mesothelioma will continue to rise unless all Australians start taking seriously the dangers of asbestos when renovating or maintaining their homes.

I pay tribute to Karen Banton and the Bernie Banton Foundation and all their work with the Asbestos Diseases Research Institute. I also acknowledge the great efforts of Clare Collins and her daughter, Alice Collins, from Insight Communications for running the awareness campaign on behalf of the Asbestos Diseases Research Institute. I also acknowledge that it will provide information packages for all members to distribute to their constituents to alert them to the dangers of asbestosis in the do-it-yourself home renovation projects.

RETIREMENT OF MARK FAULKNER, EDITOR OF DEBATES

The Hon. RICK COLLESS [4.04 p.m.]: It is appropriate on this, the last sitting day of this session of Parliament, to state that it is also the last sitting day on which the Editor of Debates, Mr Mark Faulkner, will be presiding over the House. It is entirely fitting that we take this opportunity to say farewell to Mark and to thank him very much for all the work that he has done over the years in this Chamber and the other Chamber. I am sure that all members of the House wish Mark well in his long, happy and golfing retirement. We thank him very much for all his work for the Parliament.

SUCCESSION TO THE CROWN LEGISLATION

The Hon. AMANDA FAZIO [4.04 p.m.]: As members are aware, earlier this week I was away sick and I had been looking forward to speaking in debate on the Succession to the Crown (Request) Bill 2013. I am not going to cavil with the decision of the House to support the bill because I, too, support the bill. I think it is a good idea to get rid of discrimination. The firstborn should, of course, become the next monarch. However, I do have a problem with clause 7 of the bill as I believe it is completely wrong that a Roman Catholic can marry the head of the Church of England. In my view this is a backdoor attempt to undo the Reformation and all the good that was involved in the Reformation. It is entirely unwarranted. Indeed, on behalf of my late grandmother, I would go so far as to say that this is a Papistic conspiracy and I cannot work out why this clause was kept in the bill.

[Time for debate expired.]

[Business interrupted.]

SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE AGISTMENT OF HORSES AT YARALLA ESTATE**Membership**

The DEPUTY-PRESIDENT (The Hon. Jennifer Gardiner): I inform the House that the Clerk has received the following nominations for membership of the Select Committee on the Agistment of Horses at Yaralla Estate:

Government members: The Hon. Trevor Khan
 The Hon. Dr Peter Phelps
 Mr Scot MacDonald

Crossbench member: Dr John Kaye

ADJOURNMENT

[Business resumed.]

Question—That this House do now adjourn—put and resolved in the affirmative.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 4.05 p.m. until Tuesday 13 August 2013 at 2.30 p.m.
