

Central Bulletin

A newsletter from Central Queensland's only Senator, Matthew Canavan



OUR BEEF ROADS A NATIONAL DISGRACE

ESG policies killing Aussie productivity

Coal powering nickel's future

Emission standards another green-washed tax

GREEN DREAMS TURN INTO A NIGHTMARE

Expensive green energy is costing jobs

After the Labor party unexpectedly lost the 2019 election on the issue of coal jobs, they came up with a new way to sell their radical climate agenda.

Instead of promising that carbon taxes would change the temperature of the globe, Labor promised that they would create lots of new, green jobs.

First among these were in the so-called "critical minerals" industry - broadly the minerals needed to build renewable energy like lithium and nickel.

These green dreams are fast turning into a nightmare. Ironically, Australia's obsession with expensive green energy, is the very thing costing Australian jobs in "green" minerals, as other countries make solar panels and batteries from coal fired power.

And, in another irony, these green investments are not even good for our local environment. This year I have attended multiple rallies of angry farmers and conservationists who have revolted at the prospect of large swathes of beautiful Australian landscapes being desecrated by wind and solar factories.

Meanwhile, these rural communities are getting left behind by continuing Labor cuts to road funding. The rural roads that our beef industry must use are in a shocking state of disrepair and now the Labor Government has stripped the funding put aside to fix these beef roads.

Ironically, Australia's obsession with expensive green energy, is the very thing costing Australian jobs in "green" minerals, as other countries make solar panels and batteries from coal fired power.

The only way the new government will get inflation under control is by investing in productive industries like our beef sector. Unfortunately, Labor do not seem to be waking up anytime soon. But an election now is not too far away!



TWO LUCKY DECADES!

My wife Andrea and I celebrated 20 years of marriage in January this year.

We have had a wonderful journey together. We have had five children together, and our eldest has already moved out of home to attend university. We are so proud of all our four boys and one girl.

I could not do the job as a Senator without Andrea's undying support, and I am eternally thankful for the sacrifices she has willingly taken on. While it has been a sacrifice, my political career has also allowed us to share many great times together, like the time during the 2022 election when we visited 17 coal mines in 4 days!

I often say that my job as a Senator for Queensland is important but it pales into insignificance compared to the importance of my job as a husband and a father.

We look forward to many more years together.



Senator Matthew Canavan

3 January · 🌐

Celebrated 20 great years married to my beautiful wife Andrea today.

I am the luckiest guy in the world because I get to share so much with a loving, caring, supportive and stunning wife.

Our greatest achievement is our 5 wonderful children. It is such a joy to watch them grow and develop together.



👍❤️ 9.7K

1.6K comments 55 shares

My biggest highlight over the past year!



Helping to open the Burton coal mine

NOTHING GREEN WORKS

Our obsession with green energy is costing Australian jobs

In the 1960s, an Estonian migrant to Australia, Sir Arvi Parbo, achieved a superhuman feat. In just 18 months, Arvi and his team at the Western Mining Corporation built a mine, a refinery, a rail line and a town, and delivered nickel concentrate to Japan. Parbo's team had to work fast because the 1960s boom in nickel prices was short-lived as nickel supplies from around the world competed to meet booming demand for stainless steel.

Under our Byzantine mining regulations we would not have finished counting the trees for the compulsory environmental survey in 18 months. Indeed, in later life Parbo said he would never have built his nickel mine under today's regulatory conditions.

As in the '60s, there has been a boom in nickel prices in the past few years, this time driven by electric vehicles (nickel is used in the batteries). BHP chief executive Mike Henry told the *Financial Times* in 2021 he wanted to weight "the portfolio towards future-facing commodities like potash, copper and nickel".

Unfortunately for us history is not repeating. Instead of winning the race to supply the world the additional nickel required for electric vehicles, we are being thrashed by competitors in Indonesia.

Australia and Indonesia have the largest nickel reserves.

BHP backed Australian nickel because Indonesia's laterite reserves have lower nickel content and hence take more energy to extract. In BHP's imagined brave new green world, climate-conscious customers were going to prefer to drive an EV – filled with Australian clean, green nickel – to their next Extinction Rebellion protest. BHP's assessment looked safe when Indonesia signed up to net-zero emissions at the Glasgow climate conference in late 2021.

Indonesia then increased its use of coal by an astounding 32 per cent the year after Glasgow, enough coal to power five large coal-fired power stations. These power stations fuelled a massive expansion of nickel refining in Indonesia. As the International Energy Agency recently noted Indonesian "nickel production has become an important driver of coal demand".

Indonesia increased nickel production at an annual rate of more than 50 per cent last year. Prabowo Subianto, who claimed victory in Indonesia's presidential election earlier this year, has promised to continue the nickel policies of Joko Widodo's government, and even expand them to bauxite and copper.

It is embarrassing that our corporate leaders could be so hoodwinked by the cheap talk at a climate conference. Already 1000 Australian nickel miners have lost their jobs

and up to 10,000 more will if we lose Australia's nickel industry. That makes our political leaders complicit in this shambles too. Our state and federal governments sit back and let other countries take us for mugs. Other countries go nowhere near meeting their climate commitments while we honour them to the letter. We are losing our manufacturing industry thanks to the net-zero mind virus that deludes people into acting as if Australia alone can change the globe's temperature.

To rub salt into this wound, the Labor government imposed a carbon tax on Australian nickel in July last year (the so-called safeguard mechanism). It may be too late to save Australian nickel jobs but the least Labor could do would be to belatedly exempt the Australian nickel industry from its carbon tax.

Australians will lose their jobs because Indonesia builds coal-fired power stations and we do not.

Earlier this year, Twiggy Forrest came to the Nationals Party room in Parliament House.

He explained to us that he believes the reason we are losing to countries like Indonesia is because they don't have the same environmental standards and high wages that we do.

I believe these high wages and strong environmental standards are a great thing. But we have always had this disadvantage. So why are we falling behind now?

There's only one thing that's really changed, and it's that we signed up to net zero emissions.

And while Indonesia signed up to the very same targets, they have then turned around and increased coal production by 32 per cent!

This leaves us Aussies as absolute mugs being taken for a ride.

In response to the pressure on nickel, the industry came to Canberra to ask for help. I asked them how much are Indonesian nickel refineries paying for power. They said they're paying 5 cents per kilowatt hour.

We can compare that to the CSIRO's predictions for the cost of Australian electricity under a renewables future, they say the firmed cost of renewables will be more than double what Indonesia are paying. We're just not in the game.

Our resources industry should be the breadwinner for our nation but instead our nickel and critical minerals industries have the begging bowl out.

They're currently asking for an annual \$540 million

handout from the taxpayer in production tax credits.

To put this into perspective, in the last year the Federal government subsidised Ford and Holden they received \$520 million from the taxpayer.

While Aussies love cars, it wasn't viable to ask the taxpayer to hand over \$520 million to two international companies, and that's why we stopped it.

I love our mining industry, but even I don't think nickel quite fits the same bucket as our entire car manufacturing industry.

It's a complete mistake for the Australian mining industry to go down this path, to think that it has a sustainable long term future on parliamentary budgetary support.

I appreciate the hard-work of our coal industry, but there is a social contract that largely goes unsaid. The social contract is that large companies come and dig large holes, but they create thousands of jobs, they pay a range of taxes, and they fund our public service. That's part of the deal.

In my opinion, if our mining industry continue down the path of nickel, where it's no longer the breadwinner, and it's just another drain on our limited public resources, that social contract ceases, and public support for mining will fall.

That will make it harder for the industry to fight against the other threats that it faces. One of these is the threat of the ESG agenda.

While ESG stands for Environmental, Social Governance, I see it more as standing for Extreme Shortages Guaranteed.

ESG is the backbone holding this green-obsession together, allowing our largest institutions, our banks, to actually



Sir Arvi Parbo as a coal miner in the Ruhr vallery after WWII

weaponise this ideology against the mining industry itself.

I've become increasingly frustrated about how many stories I'm hearing from people that are not even miners, but family businesses providing services to the mining industry, who are deemed *persona non grata* by the banks.

They're great people who support our communities and they're told, "No. We don't want your business because you're exposed to coal."

At an opening of a coal mine recently, the owner told us that a major Australian bank would not even let him open a transaction account or lease a LandCruiser.

And it's not just the mining industry. Last year Westpac announced it would require its farming customers to implement zero deforestation guidelines before doing business. And so a cattle grazer now, if they want a loan from Westpac, have to sign up to WWF inspired deforestation guidelines.

ANZ is requiring all its customers, including farmer customers, to have carbon reduction targets and plans in place.

In what world do our banks have the right to appoint themselves as the moral Guardians of the Galaxy. These are the same banks who have charged dead people fees and forged the signatures of retirees to increase their commissions. If anyone should be boycotting an industry over ethical conduct, it should be all of us against the banks.

But I actually don't think it's coming from our banks in Australia. I've had lots of senior members of our banks who have complained about these issues as well. I believe the pressure comes from international shareholders like BlackRock, Vanguard, and State Street.

These firms who own large parts of our biggest companies and have taken it upon themselves to decide what activities should be permitted. In that respect they are acting more like a Parliament than a bank yet no one elected the CEO of BlackRock, Larry Fink, and he is accountable to no elected body.

In effect, the ESG movement undermines the democratic principle that there should be regulation without representation. If Australia makes the decision to ban coal mining that should be made through a democratic process of general elections - where everyone can vote - not the AGMs of major companies - where the wealthier you are, the greater the vote you get.

Now in reaction to all of this, 14 US States have passed anti-ESG laws, including Texas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Wyoming. All States with particularly large mining and agricultural sectors.

Watching your paper straw dissolve as a

PM & Ministers take 2 private jets to 1 press conference



And what those laws do is prohibit any business from discriminating economically on the basis of an ESG policy.

Not long after that was enacted in Texas, BlackRock actually apologised to the Texas governor and reiterated their support for the oil and gas industries, and local Texas businesses. Similarly with JP Morgan and State Street, who have left their climate action lobby groups in response.

The laws seem to have had a real world effect too. Last year, the US produced more oil than any other country in history, ever. In the US, ESG is effectively dead.

ESG is still alive and kicking in other parts of the world though but we should take heart from the approach in the US and do the same here.

It is time to remove the ability of large, foreign shareholders to dictate what goes on in our country. Later this year, I plan to introduce an anti-ESG bill, the working title of which is the *End Economic Discrimination Bill 2024*.

I don't think we should allow companies to discriminate against legal businesses, and I think it's very simple: if you want a banking licence in this country, you can't discriminate in a way that turns you into a quasi-parliament.

The whole intent of this Bill is to restore our national sovereignty, and stop unaccountable investors disrupting our political system. Because Australians deserve a government that is of the people, for the people, and by the people.

That's the system that has allowed us to build a country where the likes of Arvi Parbo are welcomed. And that country gave Arvi the freedom to build our nation and provide so much wealth for subsequent generations. We need to defend those freedoms to maintain control to leave a similar legacy for our children.

1 March 2024

The Courier Mail

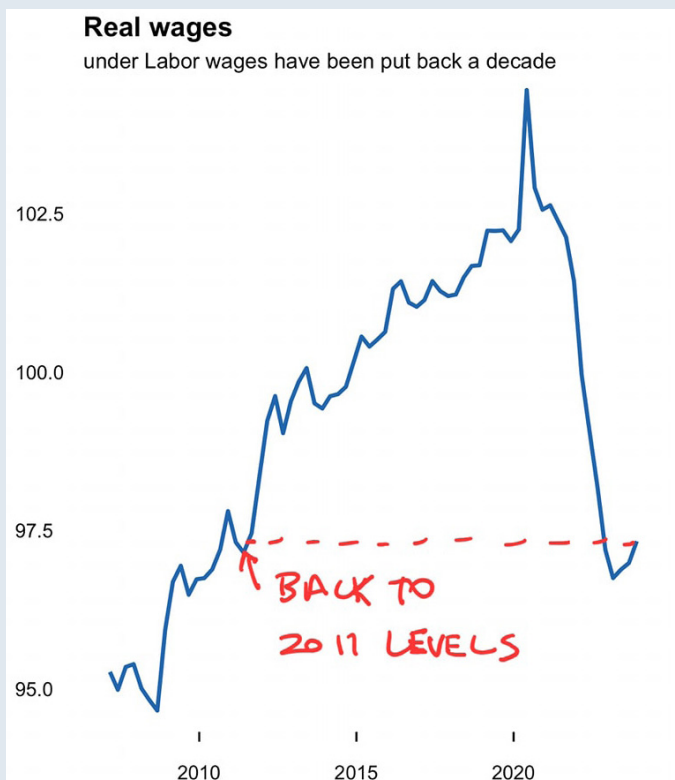
ALBO IS THE DOC BROWN OF AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTERS



Anthony Albanese is the Doc Brown of prime ministers because he has invented a kind of time machine that has taken our wages back more than a decade to 2011 levels.

Last week, real wages finally increased for the first time during Anthony Albanese's term. Real wages increased by the grand total of 0.1 per cent, which caused Mr Albanese to remark that "our plan for you to earn more and keep more of what you earn is working".

Perhaps Mr Albanese has built his own spaceship too because he seems to have tweeted this from a different planet. It is cold comfort for struggling Australians that, thanks to this 0.1 per cent increase, their standard of living has only fallen to the levels of September 2011 not June 2011.



There has been much talk this week about gender pay gaps. The much bigger wage gap that we should talk about is the generational wage gap. Thanks to the runaway inflation that has put living standards back a decade, young Australians face the prospect of being poorer than their parents.

For our young people, it is not just the soaring price of groceries, electricity and petrol, it is also the almost impossible goal of home ownership. To afford just an average home in our major cities you now need an income of almost \$200,000, which puts you in the top tax bracket thanks to Anthony Albanese's broken promise on taxes. Rents have also increased by 30 per cent in Sydney and Melbourne, and 20 per cent in Brisbane.

Even as inflation recedes in coming years, higher mortgage payments and rents will mean that a real wage gap will open between our old and young. Until now, Australia has always offered a more prosperous and better life for the next generation.

However, the older Australians that are in charge of our country today are ripping up that social contract. Instead of more wealth and prosperity, our governments are promising a climate hairshirt in a futile attempt to save the planet.

Just over the last year our Green-Labor Government has introduced a carbon tax on our mines and factories, decided to make new petrol cars more expensive, discouraged the eating of red meat and announced plans to regulate what you can say on the internet. Our Government is on a warpath to tell us what car we can drive, what we can eat and even what we can say.

It makes one nostalgic for the then heated, but now seemingly quaint, debates about economic reform in the 1980s. At least then our governments were trying to make our lives easier by making our economy more productive.

The Anthony Albanese Government has no identifiable productivity agenda and without lifting our productivity we will not lift living standards for young Australians. The solutions are not complex, they are simple, just not easy to do.

We need to build more cities to make first homes more affordable. We need to lower taxes and red tape to unlock the entrepreneurial spirit that our young people so clearly have in spades and we need to give up on our futile efforts to meet net zero emissions while the rest of the world emits at record levels.

But most of all we need to lower energy prices because the cost of energy flows through to the cost of almost everything. When I worked at the Productivity Commission, we estimated the impact of the 1980s economic reforms and we found that the biggest benefit came from the lowering of electricity prices between 1990 to 2005.

We can do that again if we build new power stations, including nuclear ones too.

In that respect, Mr Albanese is not the same as Doc Brown. Doc had no problem using plutonium to power Marty McFly's DeLorean time machine. It is time to go Back to the Future and focus again on the economic reforms that will give young Australians a better life.



CQToday

19 February 2024

ROADS A 'NATIONAL DISGRACE'

A few weeks ago the Labor Government finally committed to build the Rockhampton Ring Road after they had stalled the project for 18 months. The extra \$350 million they announced means that the road will now be finished albeit two years later than planned.

Unfortunately, the Federal Labor Government gives with one hand and takes with the other. This week we learned at Senate Estimates that Labor has cut \$400 million in funding for Beef Roads in Central Queensland. So, the Government announces an extra \$350 million but rips out \$400 million. They then want thanks for spending \$50 million less on Central Queensland roads.

The Rockhampton Ring Road is crucial for the future of our town. I have spent the best part of 18 months campaigning for it but in some respects these Beef Roads are even more important because these roads put our farmers, miners and rural people on unsafe and dangerous roads.

Given the wealth that Central Queensland produces these roads are a national disgrace. There are still large

sections of the roads that transport our cattle that are unsealed. Our coal miners, who generate so much wealth for our nation, have to drive home to their families on dangerous goat tracks.

One of my proudest achievements as a Senator for Queensland was to secure the \$400 million for these roads ahead of the 2022 election. I pushed for this on behalf of the Central Queensland councils, led by the Central Highlands Mayor Kerry Hayes, who presented the Beef Roads idea at Beef Week 2021.

Those councils were representing the ideas of many committed local Central Queenslanders who had campaigned for better and safer roads for years.

There remains 148 kilometres of the Springsure-Tambo Rd unsealed.

As cattle producer Matthew Paine of the Upper Nogoia Community Group said "I wave goodbye to my family, put Bernadette and the kids on the road and know there will be three to four B-doubles

sharing the road with them.”

Matthew will have to worry for longer because the Labor Government has pulled the funds to fix this sandy, bumpy road. Although describing it as a road is a stretch, it is more of a man made strip of beach. In some locations you can stand knee-deep in the sand so imagine driving a B-double loaded with cattle on that.

The May Downs Road is a “shortcut” to get between coastal cities and the Bowen Basin mines, or at least it should be. However, the road is so dangerous that most spend hours longer on the road having to go around it.

A few years ago there were four accidents in five months on the May Downs Road. One driver, Clint Molloy, had his ute flip when he hit a pothole. He was lucky to be alive and called it a death trap.

Lynise Conaghan, the Secretary of the Clarke Creek Community Reference Group said that “There is a lot of money that comes from this region so it’s a bit hard to take when you see magnificent infrastructure built with money that comes out of regions like us.”

It makes me so angry that these hard working people get ignored by a Canberra based government that wastes so much on so little.

Thanks to the fight of the Central Queensland community we overturned the Government’s broken promise on the Rocky Ring Road. It looks like we will have to fight again just to get what is fair.

With lots of Labor politicians set to visit Rocky for Beef Week within months – no doubt to get Instagram photos – we have the perfect opportunity to fight back, get another back down and get these roads built!



Banana Shire Mayor Nev Ferrier, Livestock Rural Transporters Association Alister Clark talk to us about the need for Beef Roads



BEEF
2024

ROCKHAMPTON
AUSTRALIA
MAY 5-11

BEEF WEEK 2024

Welcoming international visitors for the first time since 2018, Beef Week 2024 is shaping up to be bigger than ever!

Occurring every three years, Beef Week showcases all facets of the beef industry, including exhibitors, scientists, chefs, students, and of course amazing food and entertainment.

With Beef TV ready to broadcast the best Beef24 has to offer, M'Eat Street ready to showcase the heart of our beef culinary cuisines, and icon Australian bands on-show, this world-class event is truly one for every member of the family.



With Beef 21 generating more than \$94 million for the Rockhampton community, bringing in more than 115,000 people, Beef24 is set to be another record-breaking week.

Our beef industry is one that deserves celebrating, and our many cattle graziers, truckies, butchers and more who call Central Queensland home, deserve the spotlight in showcasing the fantastic work they do.

I am so excited to see all the incredible things the Beef Australia team achieve this Beef Week.

For all the updates on Beef 24 scan the QR code below to see their Facebook page.



FIGHTING TO FIX OUR BEEF ROADS

Just under two years ago the Coalition committed \$400 million to seal 450 kilometres of roads through Central Queensland. These are shocking roads that we make our beef producers traverse on a daily basis. Some of these roads, like the Springsure Tambo road, are like a beach. I've seen pictures of kids standing in them up to their knees in sand. Those are the roads that our truck drivers, families, coal miners, and beef producers have to drive on a daily basis, taking their own lives in their hands and, of course, costing their businesses thousands of dollars.

That was going to be fixed, because we were going to put \$400 million to seal these roads; making them safer for many thousands of Queenslanders

But unfortunately the Labor government has stripped away funding for the beef roads just before Beef Week. We found out in Senate estimates a few weeks ago by the spreadsheets that get delivered to us that in the dark of night, the \$50 million that was due to be spent in 2025-26 is gone. It is no longer. The \$50 million to be spent in

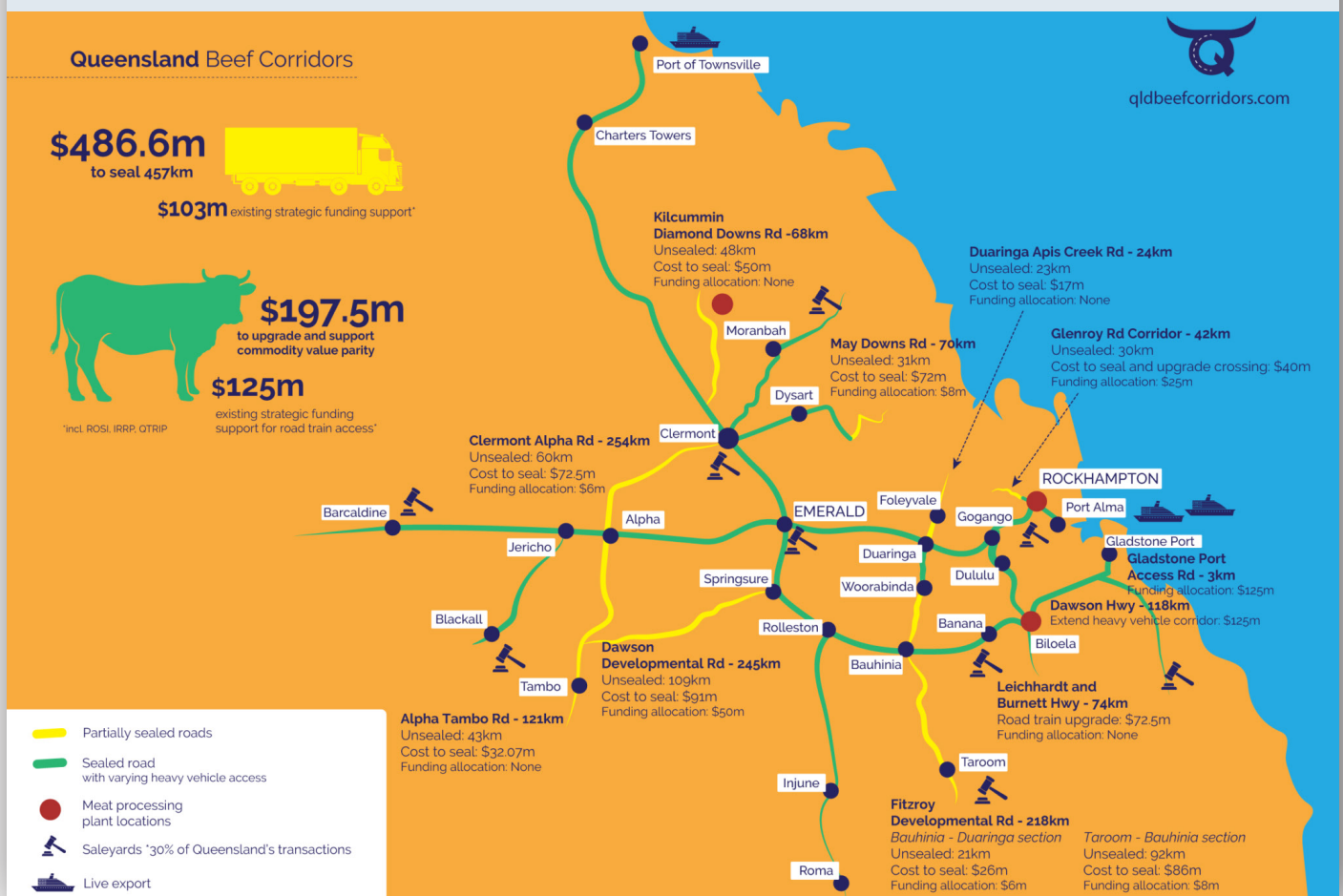
2026-27 is gone. In fact \$100 million is stripped out of the forward estimates from this program.

The government will say, 'It's still there—most of the funding now is in the 2030s.' How can you believe any promise that is now more than five years away? The people of Central Queensland produce so much for this country, including the lovely steaks we all like to enjoy.

Our farmers deserve to have safe roads to drive on. Our coal miners deserve to have safe roads to drive on. Our families deserve to have safe roads to drive on. Our parents who have to send their kids on school buses that traverse these roads deserve to know their kids are safe.

And just before Beef Week, it is an absolute disgrace from the Labor government that they would shake Central Queenslanders with one hand and absolutely rip them off with the other.

The government must reverse their decision and get our beef roads going before Beef Week 24.



Map created by the 'QLD Beef Corridors' campaign, highlighting the network of roads throughout Central Queensland that requires sealing/upgrading. This artwork is owned solely by the 'QLD Beef Corridors' campaign.

BIG BANKS, BIG REGIONS, & NO BRANCHES

On the 8th of February 2023, the Senate referred the developing crisis of regional bank closures to the Senate Committee for Regional and Rural Affairs and Transport.

As the Committee Chair, this issue is one that I am committed to mitigating. Our inquiry has heard from locals right around the country, from Cloncurry in QLD to Launceston in Tasmania and Tom Price in the WA's Pilbara region.

Visiting the Pilbara and hearing from locals just how hard these branch closures are impacting them is heartbreaking. Particularly for a region like the Pilbara, which accounts for almost 2% of our national GDP, it is appalling that there is not a single bank branch in sight.

I'm proud to say we have stopped eleven branches from closing, including in Cloncurry, Ingham and Warwick.

Our nation must follow a better approach to providing Australians with access to finance no matter where they live.

In saying this, I was very disappointed to see that despite commitments from Bankwest, a subsidiary of the Commonwealth Bank, that they would not close any regional bank branches during the ongoing inquiry, they decided to cease operations at 45 branches across WA.

These closures will impact all the communities that they operate in, reducing banking choice and the ability to get an essential service.

Even though the staff are being offered alternate career opportunities, these closures could still see job losses as a result of requirements to move or take on substantially different roles to what they were working in previously.

Our regional communities already struggle with employment opportunities, and removing the jobs that these branches provide impacts smaller communities so much more than metropolitan centres.

It's quite clear that as a country we need to rethink the government's approach to policy to protect regional banking services and ensure that it's available to our communities.

The Committee is currently exploring a range of possible solutions moving forward, from an expanded Bank@Post model to a National State-owned bank.

To stay up to date on the Committee's progress, be sure to follow my Facebook page @SenatorMatthewCanavan. The report with our findings and recommendations is due to the Senate by no later than May 16 2024.



Senator Matthew Canavan
13 March at 10:50 · 🌐

The Shire of Ashburton, in the Pilbara, accounts for almost 2% of Australia's GDP (thanks to iron ore) but does not have a single bank branch! We need to have a much better approach to providing Australians with access to finance no matter where they live.

That is why the Senate Committee on regional bank closures has come to the Pilbara today. It is our 11th hearing of this inquiry and we have stopped 11 branches from closing from the pressure we placed on the banks to pause closures while we hear from communities.



At the Tom Price hearing with Senator Colbeck and Senator Brockman (Pictured L-R)



Listening to residents, small business owners, and local government representatives.



PROTECTING BABIES BORN ALIVE

Australia is often called the 'lucky country'; being a modern democratic nation with abundant resources and wealth, and built on the values of freedom, respect, fairness and equality of opportunity.

A core pillar of our democratic nation is the inalienable rights afforded to each and every Australian; our human rights.

These include the right to a fair trial, freedom of religion, and ... the right to life.

However, in a time with more moral grandstanding than ever before, it's a blight on our nation's record that the latter, the inalienable right to life, is not afforded to all Australians.

Alongside Senator Antic and Senator Babet, our *Human Rights (Children Born Alive Protection) Bill 2022* was introduced into the Senate in late 2022, referred to the Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee at the beginning of 2023.

Our 'Babies Born Alive Bill' seeks to ensure the fundamental right to care is extended to a particular group of Australians often forgotten by our institutions, the unfortunate babies who are born alive during an abortion procedure.

This moral blight was brought to the forefront for everyone at Rockhampton's first-ever March for Life, where more than 300 people came out to celebrate the sacrality of every life.

A huge congratulations to Zipporah McBurney for organising this wonderful event and a huge thank-you to everyone who came out.

Australia has already committed to every child having the right to life, which was formalised in 1990 when we ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Article 6 of that Convention states that "Australia recognised: ... that every child has the inherent right to life." And "Australia: ... shall ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child."

Given that our nation already is fully committed to protecting and defending the inherent right to life held by every child, our Bill should not be controversial.

As it currently stands, the records show that more than 700 babies have been born alive following an abortion over the past decade alone, or more than one a week. And this data is only from Queensland and Victoria.

This Bill simply aims to dispel the myth perpetuated around our country that a child who is born alive as a result of an abortion is not a child, and is not afforded the right to life.

It would place the onus of responsibility on the medical practitioner to provide exactly the same medical care and treatment to a child born alive from an abortion as they would a child born in any other circumstances.

This is not an extreme Bill, with New South Wales and South Australia already using this model.

Scan the QR code to read the full report on my 'Babies Born Alive Bill' Bill and why this piece of common-sense legislation should be supported and adopted.





Michelle Landry and I at a car dealer in Rockhampton concerned about Labor's new tax on cars. Labor's car tax is set to make the most popular Australian cars \$9000 more expensive.

The Courier Mail

16 February 2024

CARS TO GET MORE EXPENSIVE UNDER LABOR

The Labor Government's plans for a carbon tax on the sale of new cars will raise the cost of the most popular Australian car models by \$9000.

The Government claims that its tax is similar to a scheme in the United States and that the US scheme has not increased car prices there. But the devil is in the detail. The impact of the Australian Government's car tax will be determined by the size of the tax, not the type of tax that it is.

So, to the detail. The Government plans to set "new vehicle efficiency standards". Under these standards, car manufacturers will have to make sure their cars fall below a carbon dioxide limit. If they are over that limit they have to pay a fine, or buy credits from car manufacturers that are below the limit.

Obviously, the impact of this will depend on how aggressively the carbon dioxide limits are set and how large the fine is for exceeding the limits. This

is where the Government's blunt comparison to the United States falls down.

Over the last six years the efficiency limits in the US have reduced by a quarter. The Australian Labor Party plans to reduce Australia's efficiency limits by 60 per cent over the five next years. The Government could not explain in Senate Estimates this week how they could use the US experience as a useful comparison when their proposed reductions are more than double the size of that in the US.

It was also revealed in Senate Estimates that the penalty in the US for exceeding limits has been just a third of that which will apply in Australia. Under the Labor Government's plan, a car manufacturer will be fined \$100 for every gram of carbon dioxide that is over the limit. It was only last year the United States increased their penalties to a level about this, but the impact of that is not yet evident.

General Motors has already had to pay over \$500

million in fines. And the US car industry is warning that these fines will increase car prices by around \$45,000 a car if they are kept at this level.

So despite the Government reassuring everyone about the US experience, they are planning a new car tax plan that would double the obligation to increase efficiency and a tax rate triple that of the US.

Some simple calculations show what the impacts of the Australian Government's plans will be. The most popular car sold in Australia last year was the Ford Ranger. According to the Government's figures it produces 182g of carbon dioxide per kilometre driven. In 2029, the Government's emission limit for light commercial vehicles (which is the Ford Ranger's car type) will be 81g of carbon dioxide.

So today's Ford Ranger would be 101g over the limit and at a tax rate of \$100 per gram, Ford will face a tax of \$10,000, which will be passed on to you.

Of course, it is likely that Ford's engines and cars will become more fuel efficient. But even if you use the Government's assumptions of a 1.5 per cent efficiency improvement a year, the Ford Ranger will still be 90g over the limit, and face a tax of \$9000 per year.

The impacts on the cost of other popular cars are similar. Toyota HiLuxes, Mazda CX-5s, Hyundai i30s and Mitsubishi Outlanders will cost about \$9000 extra. Even smaller, popular cars like the Toyota RAV4 and the Toyota Corolla face increased costs of over \$3000. Larger cars like a LandCruiser will cost \$14,000 more.

The Government has refused to release to the Senate its modelling or calculations of the impact of its car tax. So if it disputes my calculations it could simply release its own sums. Instead, the Government is relying on the need to keep "cabinet deliberations" secret to stop you from seeing the impacts of its tax.

Under questioning in the Senate, Government officials revealed what this really is about. They said that car manufacturers could simply "adjust" the cars sold, which, of course, means you will have to adjust the cars you buy. So you will have to buy an electric vehicle even though you won't be getting anything like a Ford Ranger in electric form, at an affordable price, anytime soon.

The world was a lot simpler when governments did not try to tell us what we should drive or eat or even how we should power our homes. Australians are already paying enough for the food, their energy and their home loans. The answer to our cost of living crisis is not to put taxes on our cars too.

GOVERNMENT FIGURES SHOW SHOCKING IMPACT OF ITS NEW CAR TAX

During Senate Estimates earlier this year, the Government refused to release the modelling behind its new tax on new car sales.

So while we went round and round in circles, I just built my own model during the testimony.

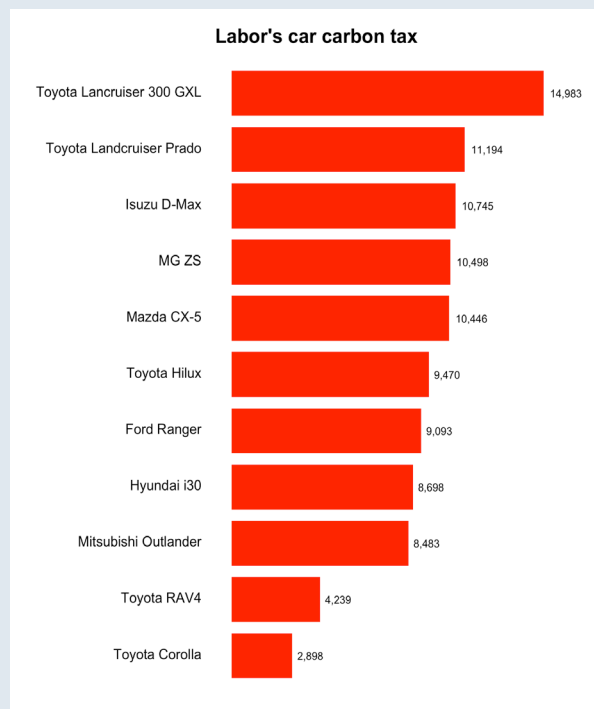
It is not overly difficult. In simple terms the Government plans to charge \$100 for every gram of carbon dioxide a new car is over its set limits.

I have published my figures and modelling in national newspapers. So far the government has not provided any rebuttal to these figures.

The Government's only response is to say you can avoid paying the tax by buying an EV. At Senate estimates, the government officials revealed that they expect car companies to "adjust" the cars they sell because of the tax.

Ms Purvis-Smith: *What we find in overseas jurisdictions is that it is very uncommon for manufacturers to end up paying a fine or a penalty. What they do is they usually comply with the regulations in each country, adjust their fleet and bring in new technology in order to meet the fleet.*

But if car companies change the cars they sell that means you will have less choice in what car you can buy. Once again, the net zero agenda is about forcing you do things you do not want to do.



16 June 2023

The Daily Telegraph

ACCIDENTAL BAN COSTING US

“

**ELECTRICITY FROM THE
LONG-TERM OPERATION OF
NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS
CONSTITUTES THE LEAST COST
OPTION FOR LOW-CARBON GENERATION.**

INTERNATIONAL ENERGY AGENCY

On 10 December 1998, less than fifteen minutes of debate changed Australia's energy policy for a generation. In that debate, the then Howard Government was seeking approval to rebuild the nuclear reactor at Lucas Heights in Sydney. A NSW Greens Senator moved an amendment to ban nuclear energy in Australia.

The Government was facing defeat in the Senate if it did not agree to the nuclear energy ban amendment. Given Australia's abundant coal fired power stations at the time, there was no need for a nuclear power station. The Howard Government reluctantly let the amendment pass so that Australia could continue to produce nuclear medicines.

Few people even know that Sydney is home to Australia's only nuclear reactor (it is about 30 kilometres from the Sydney CBD). It is banned from producing energy but it produces world class medicines used in cancer treatment and CT scans. On average, around 1 in every 2 Australians will need the use of nuclear medicines during their lifetime.

Australia's "accidental" prohibitions on nuclear energy have never made much sense in a country that is the world's largest exporter of uranium. The nuclear ban remains even though we are now shutting down our coal fired power stations. A rushed, tawdry, fifteen-minute Senate deal now restricts Australia's energy options during a worsening energy crisis.

That same prohibition also stops us from buying nuclear submarines. So the Labor party (who supported the

Greens nuclear ban in 1998) has now had to introduce legislation to change the law. They propose to remove the nuclear prohibition but only insofar as it relates to nuclear submarines. The Government's plan is "half-pregnant" and puts at risk the proper servicing of an Australian nuclear powered submarine fleet.

There remain residual legal risks. What happens if an anti-nuclear group launches legal action? For example, if a submarine's nuclear reactor is transferred to land for maintenance is that allowed under the new limited exceptions to the ban? We can never predict how a court would interpret these things.

How do we support a nuclear submarine fleet without a domestic nuclear energy industry? We should not minimise the challenge we face to successfully develop nuclear submarines. If we are successful, Australia will become just the 7th country in the world to have nuclear submarines.

Every other country with nuclear submarines has a large domestic nuclear energy industry for good reasons. Submarining is a tough life. How will we attract enough young people to train in nuclear energy if the only job prospect they have for their entire working career is to work on a submarine that takes them away from home and their families for many months of the year?

In countries with a domestic nuclear energy industry, navy submariners can find successful work on land after their navy careers. Without such a pathway in Australia, studying nuclear energy will be much less attractive.

We are glossing over such practical realities because it is too politically inconvenient to deal with them. Our debate remains stuck at a Simpsons level debate on nuclear issues. Witness the Energy Minister's embarrassing use of AI generated images of nuclear waste recently which was fact-checked by twitter.

How is it logical for us to decide that it is safe for nuclear reactors to travel around our coastlines and dock in our ports, yet apparently unsafe for the same type of nuclear reactors to be housed on land? The nuclear reactors in a Virginia class submarine have a capacity of 260 megawatts, equivalent to the size of many gas power stations in Australia. Five of them together are equivalent to a coal fired power station.

Perhaps that could be the plan. Once we legalise nuclear energy on submarines we could park them in Sydney Harbour and run an extension cord to keep the lights on. This absurdity would be funny if we were not all paying through the roof for power. It is time we got rid of our illogical ban on nuclear energy before we have to pay even more.



Addressing the Reckless Renewables rally in Canberra in February 2024

THE AUSTRALIAN FINANCIAL REVIEW

6 March 2024

CATTLE AND COAL ARE GREENER

Farmers are opposed to renewable developments because they care about the bushland they live in

Just west of Rockhampton are rolling hills of subtropical bushland. Pioneers named the area “Kalapa”, the Aboriginal word for the local wasps and hornets.

The area is now dominated by cattle and a coal-fired power station. The cattle industry did not clear the hills, so they remain in a pristine state full of koalas and sugar gliders, and probably the wasps and hornets too.

Kalapa is about to be transformed into a huge industrial park through the planned installation of more than 50 wind turbines. These will stand on the top of the mountains at a height of 275 metres to their blade tip, three times the height of the flag on top of Parliament House.

The turbines require a 200x200 metre level pad. Kalapa’s beautiful rolling hills will lose about 20 metres off their tops, creating huge amounts of sediment that will be pushed into the Great Barrier Reef catchment area. A grazier would go to jail for trying something like that these days.

Conservationists say that after this destruction, the pockmarked bushland will decimate the migratory patterns of the koala and sugar glider populations.

Despite some loud claims to the contrary, farmers are opposed to renewable developments because they care about the bushland they live in. The independent Energy Infrastructure Commissioner found that 90 per cent of farmers were dissatisfied with the way renewable energy was being rolled out. They don’t want to see forests destroyed, especially for the pursuit of an inefficient, intermittent and unreliable energy source.

There are probably now more supporters of the NSW State of Origin team around Kalapa than there are of renewable energy.

I once had a cup of tea on the deck of a concerned farmer in the area. We could see the Stanwell coal-fired power station clearly. It was only about 8 kilometres away. I asked him, “what do you think of that?”

He said he had never had an issue with the station. Indeed, during lean times on the farm, he worked there.



The Kalapa wind factory won't provide many jobs for the locals. After construction, there will be just a handful of people employed and not in highly paid, skilled positions.

Much worse, at 10,900 hectares, the wind factory will have six times the environmental footprint of the coal-fired power station, and produce just a tenth of the power. Why would so-called environmentalists support such an inefficient form of power generation requiring so much land to be destroyed compared with the alternatives?

As someone remarked to me, we are not going to save the polar bear by killing the koala bear.

If this was just one isolated example, perhaps it wouldn't deserve national attention. But hundreds of communities are equally concerned about the destruction of their local environment by wind and solar factories.

A report by Net Zero Australia, a group that supports the net zero goal, says that an area half the size of Victoria must be converted to wind and solar infrastructure. This is environmental destruction on an industrial scale.

After all this environmental devastation, renewable

energy is not even delivering the cheaper power it promised. The pending and tragic demise of Australia's nickel industry is a clear real-world test of the claims of the renewable energy industry.

The Australian nickel industry pursued a green, ESG strategy, believing that because nickel went into Teslas, the world's customers would demand a renewable energy-powered mining process.

Meanwhile, Indonesia built coal-fired power stations like they were going out of fashion. In 2022, Indonesia increased its coal use by an astounding 32 per cent.

In what should be a national embarrassment, Indonesia is now stealing our once proud nickel industry because it can produce nickel cheaper, even though that country has relatively poorer laterite nickel geologies. More than 10,000 Australians face job losses and already 1000 have been sacked.

Some of those workers were at a nickel mine shut by Andrew Forrest. He claims Indonesia is beating us only because of their poorer labour and environmental standards. But Australia has always had higher labour and regulation costs. That didn't stop us from competing with Indonesia or others until we became obsessed with renewable energy.

Critical minerals processing is very energy-intensive and Indonesia's coal-fired power is clearly cheaper than the renewable energy we are pursuing.

In the past, Australia could sustain high wages and world-leading environmental and labour standards because we had cheaper energy.

Life is about choices and if we choose the more unreliable and costly renewable energy option we will destroy our environment, become poorer and lose many of the industries that have made us a wealthy nation.



Image 2. Survey results indicate that landholders and community members were generally dissatisfied with the engagement that they received from project developers.



The First Reckless Renewables Rally in Canberra in February 2024 was a big success

Over the past year many local residents have risen up to fight back against the destruction of the natural wilderness by the rampant rollout of renewable energy.

I have attended rallies in support of these locals in Rockhampton, Brisbane and Canberra. The rallies are fighting against what has become known as "Reckless Renewables".

People are not against all forms of renewable energy but they are against the wanton destruction of the beautiful Australian wilderness in the pursuit of government subsidies.

In addition, many of these renewable energy projects do not abide by the same rules that apply to our farmers and miners. There should be one rule for all!

Senator Matthew Canavan • 6 February •

Labor's push for renewables is destroying livelihoods and the natural environment in regional Australia.

Hundreds of people travelled to Canberra because they're concerned about the impact that these renewable projects will have on our environment, and Labor don't even have the decency to come out and listen to their stories.

It's time to stop this unnecessary push to net zero, put a pause on the rollout and stop killing the koala bear to save the polar bear.



Senator Matthew Canavan • 18 August 2023 •

Reckless Renewables are destroying our environment, causing sleepless nights for our farmers and pushing up our power bills. Apart from that they're great!

I joined frustrated farmers at the [Courier Mail Bush Summit](#) in Rocky with [Michelle Landry MP](#) and [Colin Boyce MP](#). Our farmers are sick and tired of foreign renewable companies getting a blank cheque to knock down every tree in sight.

We need a moratorium on big solar and wind projects until we get some proper regulations in place to protect our environment and our farming land.



Senator Matthew Canavan • 22 August 2023 •

Farmers are sick of being ridden roughshod over by wind and solar companies.

Community groups from across Queensland went down to Brisbane today to make their voice heard against a state government that just isn't listening to the destruction and heartache these projects are causing those that produce our food.

Labor needs to listen to groups like [Kalapa & Wycarbah Local Action Committee](#), [Save Eungella](#), [Stop Chalumbin Wind Farm](#), and the [Killkivan Action Group](#) and hold a senate inquiry and actually represent the people they're meant to represent not foreign renewables companies.



22 December 2023

The Courier Mail

A TALE OF TWO CONFERENCES

This year 70,000 people descended on two major conferences in the desert. One was the latest climate change talkfest (the so-called COP28) held in Dubai. The other was the annual Burning Man festival in the Nevada wilderness.

Burning Man 2023 ended with thousands trapped as heavy rains turned their camp to mud. Despite all that, Burning Man was the more successful and productive of the two conferences.

I will concede that the climate partygoers are better at spin and promotion. In the aftermath of COP28 the news was awash with headlines like that from The Guardian about the "COP28 landmark deal to 'transition away' from fossil fuels".

Very few of these articles revealed the fine print. China, India and Indonesia had not agreed to the deal to move away from coal. These three countries only account for 70 per cent of the world's carbon emissions! COP28's so-called agreement to end coal will do no such thing.

The one useful outcome of this is at least the actions of these three countries are now aligning with what they say. In the same week that the climate mogul's were jetting off from the Arabian desert in their private planes, the International Energy Agency announced that coal use had hit a record high for 2023, beating the previous record set just last year.

We have now had 28 climate conferences and they have produced more hot air than actual cuts to carbon emissions.

Burning Man attendees are known for copious drug taking but the psychedelic effects of whatever is eaten at COP28 (bugs?) seem to produce wilder effects.

On returning from the conference John Kerry, the US envoy on climate change, who owns multiple homes, cars, a private jet and a yacht, told the media that the one thing that worries him is greed.

Our Climate Change Minister, Chris Bowen told the conference that "we need the use of fossil fuels". Australia's biggest export is coal. Our third biggest is gas. And, there is record demand for both from our customers.

Despite many climate activists imploring us to eat bugs, because doing so apparently lowers the temperature, I can find no evidence that bugs were actually served at COP28. Instead the climate summit's own website advertised the availability of "juicy beef," "slabs of succulent meat," smoked wagyu burgers, Philly cheesesteaks and "melt-in-your-mouth BBQ".

The United Nations demand that we limit ourselves to just 14g of red meat a day to save the planet but that edict is obviously meant for those of us who cannot afford to attend a climate conference.

With 70,000 people attending the latest climate conference, it was statistically likely that some sanity would break out and it came from an unlikely source. The President of France, Emmanuel Macron, told a young Australian pro-nuclear activist, Will Shackel that "I hope that you will manage to lift the ban (on nuclear energy in Australia)."

There are some similarities between Burning Man and your average climate conference. At Burning Man you listen to music around a campfire. The plans of climate activists are destroying our electricity networks, forcing us back to campfires.

This year's Burning Man festival had to enforce a lockdown to stop people driving through the mud and making things worse. Towns in the UK taken over by radical activists are stopping people from driving every day.

The Burning Man festivals were begun by former members of the Suicide Club of San Francisco. Climate activists want us to commit economic suicide by shutting down our factories and sending them to China and India.

The Burning Man festival ends with the burning of a 23m wooden effigy known as "The Man". Despite this massive conflagration, the annual climate conference generates much more carbon emissions just from the hundreds of private jets that ferry billionaires to and from the conference.

Figures for this year's conference are not out yet, but the Glasgow climate conference a few years ago created a whopping 130,000 tonnes of carbon emissions.

Which raises the interesting prospect of a carbon emission saving. Why don't we combine the two conferences? In 2024, let's hold a joint Burning Man/climate change conference in the Nevada desert. Not only will that save carbon emissions, when all the climate billionaires get stuck in the Nevada mud they will get the useful experience of what life is like without fossil fuels.



Crossing to Sky News from the inaugural Alliance for Responsible Citizenship Conference in London

SPECTATOR

18 November 2023

CLIMATE CHANGE ON NET ZERO

Two years of war is waking Europe up to the folly of net zero

Against common perceptions most political functions are drably catered affairs. Cheap wine, nuts, chips, maybe of the gourmet Red Rock Deli kind if you are lucky. So, while recently in London, it felt familiar to see the same fare dished up in Westminster.

The mood was different though. An MP made an impromptu speech which culminated with the missive to 'take down net zero'. This being an event attended by mostly British politicians, loud 'huzzahs' went up in response.

Boris Johnson and the UK adopted net zero first and now they are leading the backlash. Almost two years of war has caused climate change in Europe.

Before Ukraine, Europe had grown comfortable on affordable Russian gas. After Ukraine, Europe has been shaken from its slumber. Higher energy prices have crushed family budgets, done the same to the balance sheets of governments as they rush to subsidise them and caused a decimation of major industry. While I was

in London another 2,000 jobs were lost when British Steel announced that it had to shut a blast furnace because its plant could not produce 'net zero steel'.

I drove past what looked like a coal-fired power station but found upon investigation it burned 'biomass' to create electricity. Or to say it more clearly, this power station's owners used petrol-powered chainsaws to clear North American forests, made them into wood chips in a gas-powered factory and then shipped them in diesel-powered ships all the way to the British Isles. Making 'green' electricity is dirty work.

Welcome to the home of net zero. The industrial revolution started here and now the deindustrialisation of the West has begun here too.

We could not get into Westminster proper because preparations were underway for the King to reopen parliament. When he did this week, Charles III announced that his government would begin rolling back net zero

commitments.

The King, through his Rishi Sunak-led government, showered his subjects with largesse and will let them buy petrol cars and gas boilers for five years longer than he previously permitted. Our World Economic Forum overlords really do treat us as peasants sometimes. It is like we are all playing the role of Oliver Twist, dolefully asking, 'Please sir, can I have some more internal combustion engine cars?'

The rush away from net zero is no less manic on the Continent. European governments have forgotten their commitment to end fossil fuels. Less than two years after their grand statements at Glasgow, they are now madly rushing to sign new gas deals with more frenzy than your average Taylor Swift fan hunting a concert ticket. Over the past month Dutch, French and Italian companies have all signed 30-year gas deals with Qatar.

The more observant among you will recognise that 30 years from now is three years later than the target date they set for net-zero emissions. Europe's math does not add up. How are they going to be at net zero in 2050 when three European countries will be receiving at least 8 million tonnes of gas from the Middle East?

The basic problem is that while many countries are talking net zero no country is actually doing it. This month the UN released a report that investigated what twenty of the world's biggest fossil-fuel producers are doing, rather than what they are saying. The UN concluded that not one of these countries is reducing fossil-fuel production in line with Paris Agreement commitments.

Instead, these countries plan to produce more than double the amount of fossil fuels that net-zero plans require. Net zero is dead bar the shouting.

Europeans are realising net zero's flaws earlier than most because they are on the frontlines of its impact. European families can see the power bills stuck to their fridges and are wondering how to pay them. Europeans see once-proud families built on factory jobs left with no income and an uncertain future. Europeans can see how their dangerous dependence on authoritarian Russia for their basic energy needs sent a message of weakness and invited aggression in response.

The same trends are underway here in Australia, albeit at a less mature stage. We have the benefit of witnessing the net zero catastrophe unfolding in Europe and doing an immediate U-turn before things get as bad.

Doing that will require political courage. If the Liberal-National parties ever were to rediscover their foundations

and reject net-zero socialism, we would be as popular in Canberra as Alan Joyce would be at a shareholder meeting. We would be called all sorts of names; dinosaurs and planet wreckers. We would be blamed for the death of children.

In fact it would all be a bit like what happened when we came out against the Voice. We were called bigots and racists and out of touch with the 60 per cent of Australians who told the pollsters they supported the Voice at the time.

The rest is history. We won the Voice debate because we had a clear, authentic message. We were outspent, out-bullied and (even) outmanned in the major cities. Still we won because our argument was better. Our constitution should unite us not divide us. Simple but effective.

We have another opportunity to take a clear, principled and authentic message to the next election. Cut the cost of living, drop net zero. Why should you pay more just so China can build coal-fired power stations?

Our chances at the next election will rise in proportion to the courage we show. Australians generally do not toss out first-term governments. To overcome that history we need a distinctive message that will resonate with Australians that want a real solution to their cost of living problems and want to regain Australia's economic strength.

Restoring our energy independence may even let more Australians afford those Red Rock Deli chips when next at the shops.



20 January 2024

CQToday

CROCODILE MAN

Tiwi Islanders share a story about a man who is disliked by his tribe because he does not share his land. So some people spear him in the back, he crawls out to sea and when he surfaces he is called "Crocodile Man".

As amazing as that story is, it is nothing compared to the role Crocodile Man has played in holding up a \$5.8 billion gas project in the Northern Territory.

Tiwi Islanders believe that the Crocodile Man entered the sea at a beach near the modern day Cape Fourcroy, which is on the western tip of Bathurst Island, north of Darwin. The Crocodile Man is believed to patrol the waters around this point.

The gas pipeline would run six kilometres from Bathurst Island. Some Tiwi Islanders claim that the Crocodile Man travelled to an ancient lake about 10 kilometres west of Bathurst Island and hence Crocodile Man's route would intersect with that of a pipeline.

On the basis of these views, and some other stories relating to rainbow serpents and sacred sites, a court ruling had held up the gas project.

This week a different court ruling allowed the project to proceed and dramatically called into question the integrity of the evidence relating to the Crocodile Man.

On 19 June last year, a meeting was held between eight Tiwi

Islanders, two lawyers from the Environmental Defenders Office (EDO) and an expert, Dr O'Leary, engaged by the EDO to look into the Aboriginal cultural heritage issues.

The EDO receives government funding to provide legal assistance to groups seeking to protect the environment.

A Federal Court Judge was scathing about how this meeting was conducted.

At the beginning of the meeting Dr O'Leary told the attendees about how he had done work in Arnhem Land which stopped a different gas development through the identification of songlines. Dr O'Leary admitted under oath that this story was "incorrect".

The Judge concluded that "he did lie to the Tiwi Islanders" and that "the untrue statement ... could only have been deployed ... to coach the attendees about what they might say ... so as to achieve their objective of stopping the pipeline."

At the meeting Dr O'Leary presented the Tiwi Islanders with maps purporting to show the ancient lake to the west of modern day Bathurst Island. Dr O'Leary admitted that at the time the ancient lake existed (approximately 20,000 years ago), Bathurst Island did not exist.

Dr O'Leary encouraged them to provide "memories".

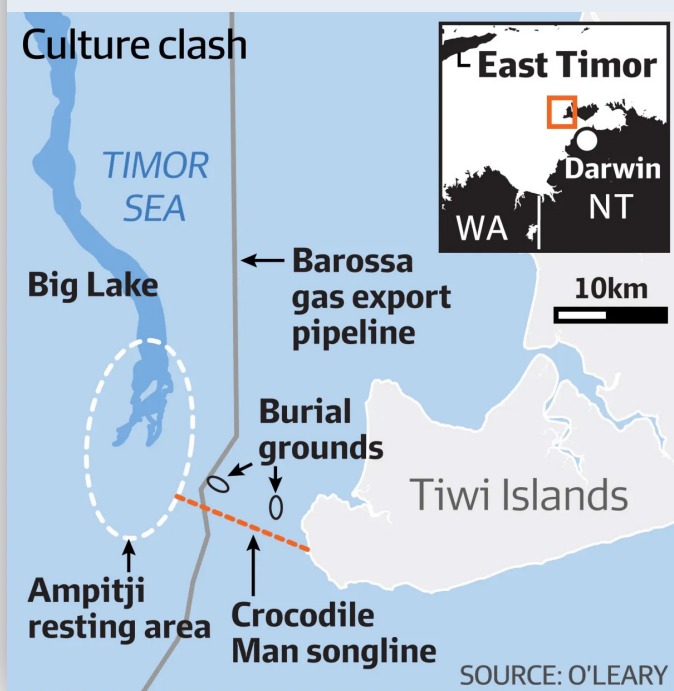
Dr O'Leary would conclude that Crocodile Man had travelled from the beach near Cape Fourcroy to the ancient lake although this seems impossible given that beach did not exist at the same time as the lake.

The Judge found that an EDO lawyer created her own marking on the map "in a way that could not on any reasonable view truthfully reflect what the Tiwi informant had said."

The Judge found that "the acrobatics concerning the Crocodile Man story are suggestive of an expert who is seeking to present a case that he perceives might assist the applicants to succeed in stopping the pipeline, rather than to present a case founded in scientific truth and careful analysis."

The EDO gets funding from both state and federal Labor governments to stop mining projects creating jobs, including here in Central Queensland. Given the findings of the court that EDO contractors have lied to Indigenous people and distorted what those people told them, that government funding should end.

If Labor does not end the EDO's funding after this scandal, you can only conclude that Labor cares more about the votes it needs from the Greens than the jobs of those who work in the regional industries.





The Rookwood weir has been spilling for four months continuously from just after its opening

The Courier Mail

30 November 2023

ABOUT DAM TIME

A gaggle of Labor politicians has taken credit for building our biggest post-war weir, but the reality is different

Last week the biggest weir built since World War II was officially opened. The Rookwood Weir west of Rockhampton is the culmination of almost two decades of efforts to capture and use more of the water in eastern Australia's second largest water catchment, the Fitzroy basin. The Murray-Darling basin is the biggest.

The weir will deliver, on average, 86,000MW of water annually. The use of this water will help double agricultural production in Central Queensland and protect Rockhampton's water supply. There is also the potential to grow industry in Gladstone, but more on that later.

It is a fantastic demonstration that despite all the opposition from green activists, we can still build things in Australia. Unfortunately, however, the future plans for dams in Australia are about as dry as a

drought stricken billabong.

This week a gaggle of Labor politicians came to Central Queensland to take credit for building the weir. It was quite the display of chutzpah.

The Labor Party had dragged their heels on the Rookwood project for years. The Coalition's Malcolm Turnbull and Barnaby Joyce announced funding for the project in 2016. The Queensland Labor government demanded yet another study, which the federal Coalition government funded. By 2018 the study came back positive and still the Queensland government found ways to stall by claiming cement prices had increased and the need for design changes to accommodate turtle ladders. It was not until after the LNP unexpectedly won the 2019 election (partly by thrashing Labor in Central Queensland) that construction started.

Last year the newly elected Labor government slashed \$7 billion in dam funding across Australia. I am convinced that if Rookwood had not already started construction it would have been scrapped too. So, it was quite surprising to see Labor politicians like Cameron Dick claim this week that the Rookwood weir “will diversify Central Queensland’s economy, provide water security, create good long term local jobs and increase the prosperity of the entire region.”

This all raises the question that if this dam is so good for Central Queensland, why are we not building other dams across Australia? There are no shortage of options.

The former Coalition government had funded the proposed Urannah and Hells Gate dams in Queensland and the Dungowan and Wyangala dams in NSW. These have all been scrapped by the incoming Labor government. This is a massive missed opportunity to expand Australian farming. There is enormous demand for high quality Australian agricultural produce demonstrated by the 40 per cent growth in our agricultural exports over the past decade.

Labor seems to want to build desalination plants rather than dams. The Queensland Government has proposed building a desal plant on the Sunshine Coast. Desalination uses enormous amounts of electricity putting more stress on our already creaky grid.

The other crazy idea which requires enormous quantities of electricity that Labor has is to export our scarce water resources to other countries. Some of the water from Rookwood weir will be used to make hydrogen in Gladstone. This involves sending freshwater down to Gladstone, using lots of electricity to burn the water (a process called electrolysis) and then sending the resulting hydrogen molecules to Japan and Korea.

The water is not destroyed. When it is used as a fuel, most likely in a car or truck overseas, water vapour will be exhausted. But then our water has been sent to countries that have abundant water supplies.

It makes zero sense to export water from the driest continent on earth. Australia’s water should be used to grow food, support our industry and supply our towns and cities.

Notwithstanding this net-zero madness, the final completion of the Rookwood Weir is positive but it is a shame that its opening has coincided with what looks like a dry, El-Nino-ravaged summer.

So while Rookwood may not fill this year, it’s a demonstration of why we need to build more dams

across Australia. Our variable climate makes dams absolutely essential to store water in wet times so that we can get through dry times. Australia has failed to build many dams for a generation. A generation ago we could store 4.5Ml per person. Now we can store just 3.5Ml per person. We are on track for that to fall to 2.5Ml per person unless we build more dams.

As our population grows at record pace, we desperately need to rediscover our ability to build dams. Perhaps the visit of Labor politicians to Australia’s newest dam can inspire them to change course, and fund dams again.



More water storages are being built on-farm



Millions of dollars worth of irrigation is being installed ...



... as well as 100,000s of trees



9 May 2023

STILL WAITING

Despite a promise by the PM, we are still waiting for a proper inquiry into COVID

This is a transcript of a speech I gave in the Senate on 9 May 2023

I rise to support Senator Roberts' motion on the need for a royal commission into Australia's COVID response. And I hope the government can too, because right now the Labor Party are on the verge of breaking another promise that they made to the Australian people in regard to having an inquiry into COVID.

I welcome the comments earlier by Senator Marielle Smith, who said they did still support an inquiry, but we are now two weeks away from a year since the election, since Mr Albanese made this promise to the Australian people, and people are still desperately waiting for this inquiry.

I want to put on record exactly when Mr Albanese made this promise, so it's not just me saying that. On 25 January last year, a few months before the election, Mr Albanese spoke at the National Press Club. A report of that speech in the Australian Financial Review said that, when Mr Albanese was asked whether he would have an inquiry—I think the question was a royal commission—into coronavirus, Mr Albanese said it was 'beyond doubt that you will need an assessment'. He went on to say, 'Whether that would be a royal

commission or some form of an inquiry, that will need to happen.'

That promise was made a year and two months ago, and we haven't had any detail since. There has not been a single reference about what that inquiry would look like. Will it be a royal commission? What will its terms of reference or powers be? Will it be able to inspect the decisions of state governments and state bureaucrats? There's been nothing, absolute radio silence from the government until Senator Roberts—and I give him credit for moving this motion—and through this motion we've heard a statement from a government senator saying they do still support an inquiry.

Well, where is it?

At the time, Mr Albanese gave the excuse that we couldn't have it right now because we were in the heat of the pandemic. This was early last year. Clearly, we're not in the heat of the pandemic anymore. All of the restrictions have gone. No-one, effectively, is wearing masks anymore. It is time to have a proper inquiry into what went on.

In a few hours time, we're going to have a government budget delivered, and that budget will show Australia with crushing levels of debt, largely or significantly

accumulated because of the response to the coronavirus pandemic.

There was over \$300 billion of government spending to support the decisions that were made to lock down, to close borders, to roll out a vaccine in record time—all of this spending added up. The fact that we now have seven or eight per cent inflation in Australia is largely because of that government expenditure and that government spending. This has been the largest single level of government expenditure outside of war, and we are still waiting for a proper inquiry into what the hell happened.

Other senators have raised that people who have lost loved ones during the pandemic deserve this inquiry, that people who have been injured by vaccines deserve this inquiry, that people who have suffered through lockdowns deserve this inquiry. But every Australian family suffering to pay their bills right now deserves this inquiry, because the reason we have this inflation is the somewhat, in the end, misguided policy responses to this pandemic.

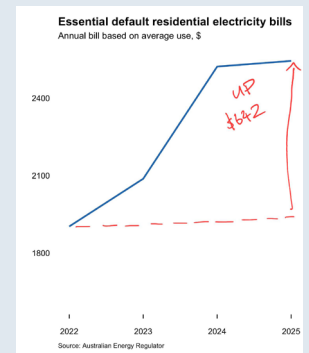
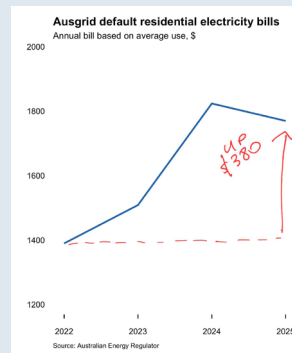
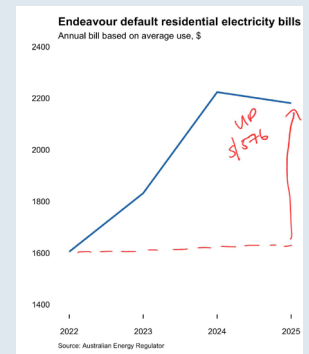
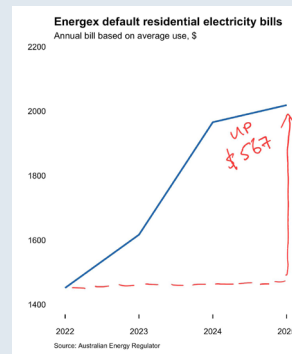


I will soon introduce a Bill to establish a Commission of Inquiry into COVID. It will have the same powers as a Royal Commission

\$275 PROMISE DEAD AND BURIED

At the last election Anthony Albanese promised almost 100 times that he would cut your energy bills by \$275 by 2024-25. That promise is just months away but the most recent report from the Australian Energy Regulator, shows that Labor is not going to keep its energy bill promise.

Instead power prices are going to end up higher on average by around \$500 more expensive than when Labor came to power.



Labor constantly says that renewable energy is the cheapest form of power. If that is true why do power prices keep going up the more renewable energy that we install.

Scan the QR code to see more on what I have said about Labor's \$275 energy reduction promise.





Former Senator Ron Boswell launching his autobiography in the Nationals Party Room at Parliament House

The Courier Mail

5 April 2024

NOT PRETTY, BUT PRETTY EFFECTIVE

Ron Boswell has written the book on how to be a good Senator

Ron Boswell left the Australian Senate a decade ago, but his new autobiography diagnoses our current political malaise perfectly when he writes that: “Today, focus groups lead us into the tyranny of small ideas.”

In recent years we have seen many major decisions made by the feral abacus of the focus group.

The core problem with focus groups is that they say nothing about how each individual is affected by a decision. When a government changes policy that will shut an industry, for example, the people in that industry deserve to have their views given greater weight.

This is not just because these people bear the brunt of the decision. They almost always understand the issues much better than any other person. They have skin in the game.

The focus group instead elevates ignorance and remoteness to a platform they do not deserve.

Inevitably, this causes frustration with our political

process as a misguided energy policy causes power prices to skyrocket, or a panicked Covid response destroys small businesses.

Ron Boswell’s political career was centred on giving these victims a voice, often so that mistakes were not made, jobs were not lost and our nation did not fracture more into competing factions.

There are 59 chapters in Ron’s book and they have titles like: “Wool and Wheat”, “Indigenous title”, “Pharmacies”, “Sugar Seats”, “Have I Mentioned Fishing?”, “Bananarama” and “Ginger Groupie”.

Ron spent his career responding to the concerns of small businesses, farmers and the downtrodden. Some of these concerns appear small to the overall national political agenda but, for those involved, the political fight can mean life or death.

It is not a coincidence that the more our political system has struggled to respond to these “minority” concerns, the less popular our “majority” parties become.

Every time we make a decision solely based on the majority support of a focus group, there is the minority that become disillusioned with the lack of common sense. When we alienate such “minorities” time and time again, they soon add up to the “majority”.

Hence, the massive trust deficit that now exists between the people and their political institutions.

One response to this problem is the rise of protest parties on both the Left (the Teals) and the Right (One Nation, Palmer, etc). This gives people the satisfaction of letting off steam without providing a real solution.

Ron Boswell’s book shows another, admittedly more tiring and dogged, solution.

Ron didn’t get angry, he got even. He took up the causes of fishers, farmers, miners and small business people. He knocked on doors, harassed ministers and even travelled overseas to take up their cause.

Ron got into a heated argument with Joh to ensure the Fish Board was not sold to corporate interests.

He stopped the foreclosure of a grazier’s property by calling the bank’s general manager to point out that the bank’s caretaker had racked up a huge bill phoning 1800 numbers. And he even travelled to Africa to help get a young Australian released from a Mozambique jail.

And, when Ron’s seat was at risk from a resurgent Pauline Hanson, he didn’t run focus groups on how to defeat her. He just worked hard and came up with a cracking slogan: “He’s Not Pretty, But Pretty Effective” –

which is also the apt title of his book.

Remarkably for a political autobiography Ron barely discusses his own career or appointments. He spends just one paragraph detailing the experience of losing his ministry to the backroom intrigue of Canberra politics.



Ron’s book is about the hardworking men and women of Australia who struggle to get heard in our political system.

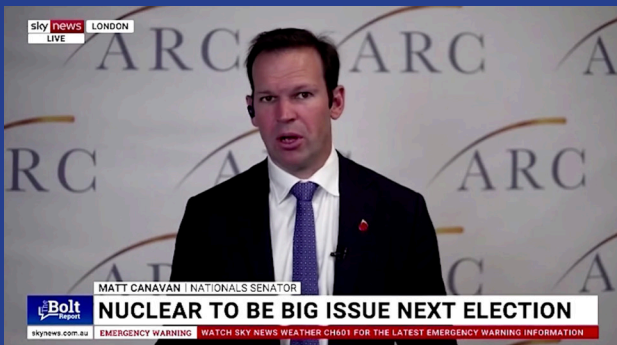
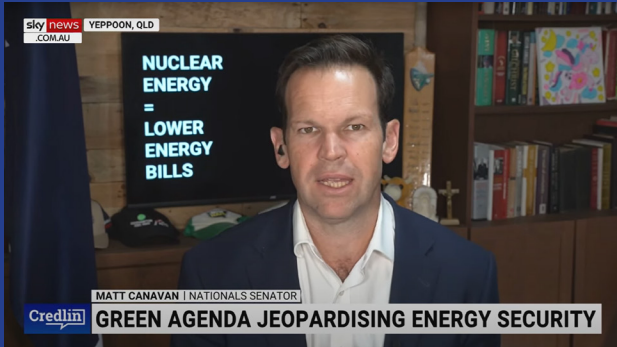
When I had the great honour of filling Ron’s very large boots in the Senate 10 years ago, I said that Ron’s performance as a Senator had “written the book on how to be a good Senator”.

I am glad that he actually has written a book so that future generations of politicians have a how-to guide.

The secret about how Ron, a paintbrush salesman from Brisbane, became Australia’s sixth-longest serving senator is all in there.



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