

Central Bulletin

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



THE NATIONALS
for Regional Australia

A large photograph of a man wearing a white hard hat and an orange high-visibility work shirt. He is smiling broadly and looking slightly to his right. The background is a blurred outdoor scene.

SAY NO TO NET ZERO

Why I ran for Nationals leader
Net zero has got to go
Rockhampton rowing in 2032

August 2025

TIME TO CHANGE TACK

We need a policy rethink after the Federal election thrashing

At the start of this year many LNP supporters predicted a Dutton victory. The polls looked good. But everything went bad, and we suffered our worst defeat since the Second World War.

After such a drubbing, business as usual is not an option. I have been saying for years that our approach towards energy and climate will not work for our country nor our party. I am glad that both the Liberal and Nationals leaders have said that our commitment to net zero emissions is up for review.

In three years of net zero, we have lost three industries, energy prices have surged and 1000s of jobs at our smelters and refineries are at risk.

Net zero is just not working.

Notwithstanding our election loss, we did have a Parliamentary victory on misinformation. A year ago it looked for certain that Australia would end up with one of the strictest censorship regimes outside of an actual dictatorship.

After a massive campaign, the laws went down to a stunning defeat with even Labor Senators voting against it.

We also had a stunning state election win which has already paid big dividends in Central Queensland

WHITE SMOKE

The world was transfixed on the Vatican (for weeks during and after the election) after the sad death of Pope Francis.

Pope Francis had lived up to Christ's challenge to be the "salt of the earth". Not all agreed with him, but perhaps it was the reactions he provoked that were most important. For example, despite spurning tradition, the Latin Mass has surged back to popularity under Francis.

World leaders convened at the Vatican to pay their respects to Francis, and then the world's eyes returned as the Papal conclave met to elect a new Pope.

As normal, the cardinals made an unexpected choice, picking the first Pope from the USA. Pope Leo XIV takes the name of a Pope who served at another time of great change during the Industrial Revolution.

I, along with many other Senators, moved a motion wishing the new Pontiff all the best.



Our energy grid should put Australians first

through the stopping of environmentally destructive wind and hydro projects. The state team have also delivered the Olympic rowing to Rockhampton.

The fight continues back in Canberra. Our country is in a difficult state and things could get worse before they get better. We have to fight for Australia!

**Senator Canavan, Senator Cash, Senator Babet,
Senator Kovacic, Senator McDonald, Senator O'Neill,
Senator O'Sullivan, Senator Ruston, Senator D Smith,
Senator Lambie, Senator Tyrrell**

Notice of Motion – General Business
(at the giving of notices)

I give notice that on the next sitting day, I shall move - That the Senate –

- Congratulates His Holiness Pope Leo XIV on his election as the 267th Supreme Pontiff of the Roman Catholic Church and the first American to serve in this sacred role;
- Notes that His Holiness is the first Pope of the Augustinian Order and its charism which prizes Love (caritas), Truth (veritas), Unity (unitas) and the pursuit of wisdom for the common good;
- Acknowledges the profound global significance of the papacy and its role in promoting peace, human dignity, and moral leadership;
- Extends its prayers to His Holiness as he begins his pontificate and shepherds the world's 1.4 billion Catholics with wisdom and grace;
- Commends His Holiness for a lifetime of service, humility, missionary zeal, and commitment to embodying Christ's mercy and pastoral care; and
- Along with the 5 million Australian Catholics, extends to His Holiness goodwill and wishes him a fruitful pontificate.

22 July 2025

Senator Jacqui Lambie



Supporting Barnaby Joyce's bill to repeal net zero at the front of Parliament House

NET ZERO IS NOT WORKING

Three years of net zero has delivered fewer jobs, higher prices and no environmental benefits

In late 2021 I met with a well meaning think-tank trying to convince me to support net zero emissions.

I respectfully heard their case, and once they had finished I simply asked, "Do you trust China?". The question seemed to shock them so I explained. China accounts for a third of the world's emissions. If China does not act, nothing we do will cool the planet, but we would become more dependent on them for basic industrial goods.

I lost the net zero battle in 2021. Scott Morrison signed Australia up to a net zero goal at the Glasgow conference later that year. I do not believe I have yet lost the debate. In fact, we have never had a debate in the Joint Party Room on net zero.

My warnings on China have played out. Since the Glasgow conference - at which China notionally signed up to net zero too - China has increased its emissions by 706 million tonnes, which is more than one and a half times Australia's total annual emissions. China emits more carbon dioxide in 2 weeks than Australia does in a whole year.

Those extra emissions are costing Australian jobs too. As Australia, almost unilaterally, obsesses over renewable energy, we have lost industries to predatory Chinese industrial practices. It is clear China is seeking to monopolise the production of key industrial and defence commodities. And, we are letting them win.

Green dreams dashed

A few years ago a BHP executive, Fiona Wild, told *The Guardian* newspaper that the election of Joe Biden had given her "great hope" that we would be able to "avoid the worst

impacts of climate change."

Ms Wild went on to say that "We've been pretty clear that we don't think energy coal has a role in our portfolio." She said that she "understood" the people saying that BHP had to look at "the managed decline of these fossil fuels."

So BHP sold many of its coal mines and instead adopted a green strategy. As BHP's CEO, Mike Henry, told the *Financial Times* in 2021 he wanted to "progress further in weighting the portfolio towards future-facing commodities like potash, copper and nickel" so that BHP would be "positioned for the next 20, 30 or 40 years".

In a great irony, BHP's nickel dream has been destroyed by a surge in Indonesian nickel production powered by Chinese finance and ... coal. Indonesia has increased its coal fired power generation by 20 per cent in just three years. The International Energy Agency has noted Indonesian "nickel production has become an important driver of coal demand".

Both Australia and Indonesia have large nickel reserves. But Indonesia's reserves come from laterite geologies with lower nickel content than Australia's predominantly sulphide geology. Indonesia's nickel ores require more energy (and more coal power) to improve them to a battery grade.

BHP thought that given nickel was going into "green" vehicles, car manufacturers would prefer Australia's more energy efficient and lower carbon nickel. They were wrong. As BHP executive, Johan van Jaarsveld, told the Melbourne Mining Club two years ago "The market is not really prepared to pay a premium yet for something that is more ESG-friendly

nickel."

BHP's naivety had real-world consequences. Last year BHP shut Australia's last remaining nickel refinery and smelter. With the closure of related mines, Australia lost 10,000 nickel jobs. We once dreamed of an EV-fuelled nickel boom. In the end, we lost an industry that had operated successfully in Australia for 60 years.

Critical minerals in a critical condition

Just before Australia's nickel industry shut, Prime Minister Albanese said "What we know is that nickel will be a critical mineral going forward. It's critical for batteries and for other sources as the global economy shifts, as we are seeing, to clean energy."

The PM's critical mineral dreams for nickel did not work out and it now looks like other critical minerals won't take off for Australia either. This month the Labor Government is convening what can only be described as a "crisis" meeting of Australia's remaining smelters, refineries and steelworks.

At least 10 of these businesses have their hand out desperately seeking government support to stay alive. Across these factories, 6000 Australians directly rely on them for their jobs. If those jobs are lost, towns like Mount Isa, Whyalla, Port Pirie, Townsville and Gladstone will be hit hard and some smaller towns may never recover.

Australia has a proud history leading the world in metallurgy. Almost every copper smelter in the world uses technology that was developed by Mount Isa Mines. When I was a child, Mount Isa Mines was the biggest company in Australia, not because of its copper sales but because it sold intellectual property all around the world.

If we no longer have a metals industry, we will not just lose the commodities, we will lose the creative genius that has solved the complex task of turning worthless rocks into priceless metals. We will not just be a poorer nation without metals manufacturing, we will be a dumber one too.

The Government promises that its meeting this month will help develop a "long term strategy" for metals manufacturing in Australia. More likely it will just involve handing over billions of dollars of taxpayer money in a desperate attempt to keep these industries on life support. Already the Government has allocated \$10 billion to bail out steel, nickel, lead and zinc.

The critical minerals sector that was once touted as a net zero wealth generator for Australia has turned into just another part of the Australian economy dependent on government support.

China is adopting an aggressive strategy to monopolise production of the metals needed for an industrial economy, and they are winning.

China now produces more than 90 per cent of the world's rare earth and graphite refined products. China produces



Net zero is destroying Australian manufacturing

nearly 80 per cent of refined cobalt and over 60 per cent of refined lithium. China is the dominant refiner in 19 of 20 critical minerals recently examined by the International Energy Agency (IEA).

China "only" has a 40 per cent share of copper refining but they are targeting that metal at the moment. As the IEA recently concluded, "the [copper] concentrate deficit was predominantly driven by a surge in new smelter capacity in China, pushing spot treatment and refining charges (TC/RCs) to record lows as smelters competed to secure copper concentrate."

These Chinese investments are risking the future of the copper smelter and refinery at Mount Isa and Townsville. If they shut, unemployment could surge to 17 per cent in North Queensland. It will also probably mean the closure of the phosphate fertiliser plant which relies on the acid by-product of the Mount Isa copper smelter. That would make Australia even more dependent on imported fertilisers.

Curiously, Prime Minister Albanese did not raise the threat to North Queensland jobs from Chinese investments on his 6-day visit there recently.

How can Chinese smelters stay open when treatment and refining charges are low, or even sometimes negative? The McKell Institute, a Labor aligned think-tank, recently found that China spends \$407 billion a year on industrial subsidies, more than it spends on defence.

Perhaps our only response to these Chinese actions is to fight fire with fire and subsidise our own industries. In effect, we are in a race to see who can subsidise their own plants the longest. The problem is that we begin that race with lead in our saddlebags thanks to our high energy prices.

As former Senator Ron Boswell pointed out in the *Australian Financial Review* recently, an energy white paper released 20

years ago noted that then Australia had "some of the lowest stationary energy prices in the developed world". Back then our electricity prices were lower than the United States, Canada and Japan. Today our electricity prices are higher than all of them and China's too.

Making metals requires enormous amounts of energy but if our electricity prices are higher than China's then the subsidies we have to provide to compete with their subsidies will be much greater. Even the Australian Workers' Union recently said that one of the reasons that metals jobs were at risk was because of "skyrocketing energy prices". We risk losing our industry first if we can't compete with them using our natural advantage of access to high-quality and affordable energy resources.

Energy prices keep going up

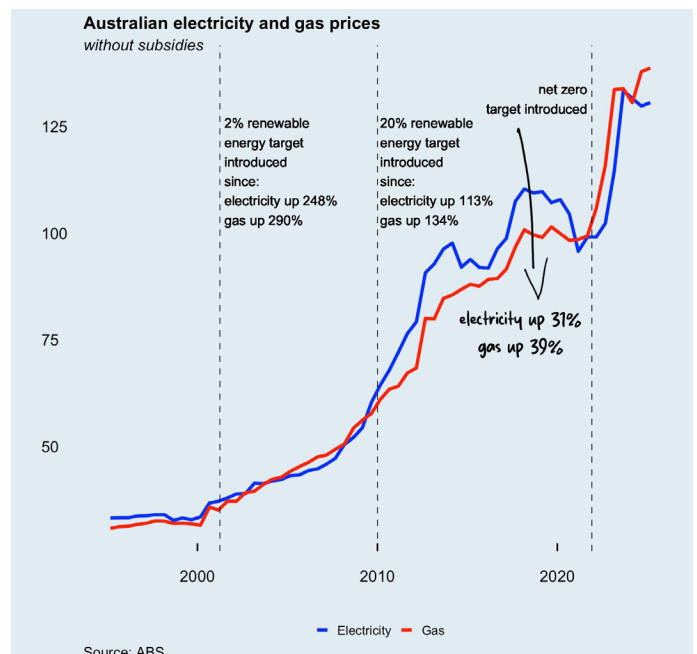
At the height of the net zero hype the Energy Minister Chris Bowen said that "the global shift to net zero emissions will mean lower energy prices as we replace expensive coal and gas with cheaper renewables." Back then Labor were infamously promising that net zero would lower the average Australian household electricity bill by \$275 a year. Today, you never hear them mention the number.

In the three years since we signed up to net zero emissions, electricity prices have increased 31 per cent and gas prices have risen 39 per cent. And since we have mandated renewable energy targets, electricity prices have more than tripled.

This is perplexing given that we are constantly told that renewable energy is the cheapest form of power.

The penny has dropped in recent months though and the CSIRO has finally admitted that coal is in fact cheaper than renewables right now. And, that conclusion came even after the CSIRO loaded the dice against coal. Among other things, the CSIRO only assume coal fired power stations run for 30 years (most run for 50 years or more), they exclude power stations that have access to cheap coal, they only cost a type of coal fired power station that is still in development and they assume that any new power station would need at least 50 kilometres of new rail track, when any new power station could easily use infrastructure at existing coal power station sites.

The CSIRO does suggest that renewable energy will be cheaper by 2030, but absurdly this calculation removes all of the sunk costs associated with the massive transmission lines that must be built to support renewable energy. And, the cost of building just 6 of these lines has blown out by an incredible \$28 billion in recent years. These include VNI West (was \$3.6 billion, now \$7.6 billion), Energy Connect (was \$1.5 billion, now \$4.1 billion), HumeLink (was \$1.35 billion, now \$5 billion), CopperString (was \$1.8 billion, now \$13.9 billion), Marinus Link (was \$3.5 billion, now \$5 billion, and it has halved in size) and the Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone (was \$650 million now \$5.5 billion, although it



Electricity and gas prices have soared under net zero (has grown in size).

It is now going to cost Australian electricity consumers \$41 billion to build just 6 transmission lines that are being built not to deliver cheaper power, but to meet arbitrary renewable energy targets.

Even using the CSIRO's inflated figures, we could have built 6 new coal fired power stations for this amount of money and had change left over!

Green energy ain't green

Apart from the financial burden of these transmission lines, and their related renewable energy projects, they are also putting a massive burden on the Australian environment. The green movement has morphed into a messianic cult that seeks to save the planet by destroying it. As someone once said to me, "We are not going to save the polar bear, by killing the koala bear."

Renewables destroy the environment because they take up so much more of the environment than coal, gas or nuclear energy. Compared to nuclear power, solar takes up 60 times more land and wind around 300 times more land.

A consortium of the University of Melbourne, the University of Queensland and Princeton University have estimated how much land Australia would need to devote to renewable energy to meet its net zero goals. As they conclude:

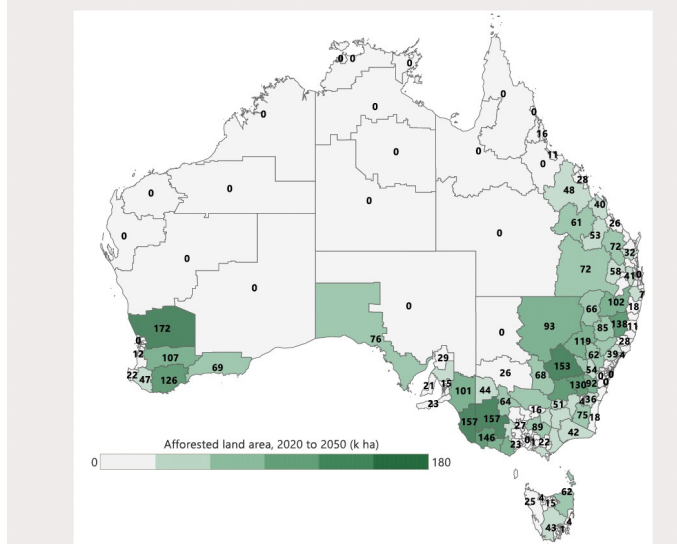
*Land use change will impact communities and habitats across Australia. First Nations, farmers, and biodiversity face significant changes. E+ estimates the area, of land use change at 120,179 km², **equivalent to over half the area of Victoria.** [emphasis added]*

Why would we remove an area half the size of Victoria from our natural environment?

Almost all of these land impacts are occurring in our country areas. Those that live in the inner city may like the

Our modelling sites 5.1 million hectares of new trees on cropland and pasture land. This will be very difficult.

Downscaled farmland afforestation, 5.1 million hectares (thousand ha total).



Net zero will see our farming land locked up

idea of net zero but they would typically oppose a five-storey apartment building in their suburb, let alone a 300-metre-high wind turbine.

And, renewable energy is just the start of the impact on the environment. That same report found that another area (the size of a quarter of Victoria) would be required to have trees planted on as to offset the remaining emissions that those inner city dwellers can't give up. These trees would not be planted deep in our interior (they won't grow there), so the report says that they would need to be planted "on cropland and pasture land."

In the understatement of the report the academics state that "This will be very difficult."

So let's just take stock of the net zero trade offer we are getting. We get higher energy prices, a damaged environment, lose manufacturing jobs and we limit our ability to grow food. Why are we doing this again?

Hydrogen hot air

If you go to your average climate protest, you will likely witness signs saying that "you can't eat oil". Nothing demonstrates the ignorance with which we teach our children about the modern world than such signs.

As Howard Odum once commented that "industrial man no longer eats potatoes made from solar energy, now he eats potatoes partly made of oil."

Plants grow when sunlight (specifically the blue and red parts of the visible spectrum) activates the chlorophylls and carotenoids in plant cells. Nitrogen is a key element in chlorophyll and the key to increasing plant growth is to increase the amount of nitrogen available.

At the turn of the 20th century a German chemist, Fritz Haber, discovered that under high temperatures, high pressures and mixed with hydrogen you could split the

nitrogen bond and create ammonia. His discovery spawned the "green revolution" and has massively increased food production to such an extent that famine is no longer a threat to humanity bar from when political dysfunction disrupts food supply chains.

The hydrogen needed to make nitrogen fertilisers like urea primarily comes from natural gas. Until two years ago Australia produced urea at Incitec Pivot's plant on Gibson Island in Brisbane. That plant shut because of high gas prices which made the production of urea here unviable. Australia now imports its urea from China and the Middle East.

For the first time since the early settlers, Australia can no longer feed itself. If our sea lanes are embargoed, we would struggle to maintain our farming production and our trucking fleet would be stranded because AdBlue is made from urea too.

Following the shutdown of the urea plant, Twiggy Forrest announced that he would look to restart urea production from green hydrogen. In 2021, Twiggy said that "Green hydrogen gives Australia an opportunity to slash our emissions ... It's the practical, implementable solution to decarbonise and lower emissions, particularly in industries like fertiliser production."

Unfortunately like many of Twiggy's hydrogen dreams it has all been hot air. Instead of progressing the green fertiliser plans, Incitec Pivot has announced they are selling the Gibson Island Plant to an Indonesian company. There have been no updates on the green fertiliser plans for three years now.

There have been updates on Twiggy's hydrogen projects, however. All of them have been scrapped but not before billions of taxpayer dollars have been wasted.

Over the past few weeks I visited the aftermath of the hydrogen dreams that are now a public debt nightmare. Just west of Rockhampton a massive pump station has been built to pump freshwater from the Fitzroy River to Gladstone so we could burn it, turn it into hydrogen and send it north to Asia. Fortunately, we won't be exporting our freshwater, but unfortunately we have wasted \$1 billion on a water pipeline trying to.

At the other end of that water pipeline, just west of Gladstone, Federal and State Governments spent \$90 million on a factory, new roads and other infrastructure. More than 90 people worked here once. A security guard we spoke to said that only 2 to 3 people work there now. Maybe the massive shed where the electrolyser factory was to be could be converted into a new Bunnings for Gladstone.

Then there are the massive pylons that carry transmission lines to the solar and wind factories that were meant to provide the energy to create the green energy. These are now massive testaments to the mix of hubris and naivety that led us to waste billions on something that did not even last a year in operation before we worked out that it was all too



Just some of the massive amounts of wasted spending on Fortescue's failed hydrogen plans at Gladstone

expensive.

Even Annastacia Palaszczuk now admits that hydrogen is "too hard" and "doesn't stack up".

You don't win friends with salad

But we can not just blame the Labor party for this mess. The original government funding for Twiggy's Gladstone hydrogen plant was announced by the LNP during the 2022 election. The funding was never about helping Gladstone or Central Queensland. The local LNP candidate did not even know about the funding until he read about it in the news.

The funding was instead announced as a desperate attempt to make the LNP look "green" and hold on to teal seats in Sydney and Melbourne. The plan did not work. We lost those seats anyway and the election.

We doubled down on the "make LNP green" plan again at the 2025 election, maintaining a commitment to net zero and selling nuclear primarily as a way to generate emission-free electricity. Not only did it not work, it was our worst election result since WWII. The Liberal party has now lost 34 seats since we signed up to net zero.

Still, people maintain that the only way we can win city seats is to remain fully committed to net zero emissions. I am not sure if this will be the case of third time lucky.



Nobody goes to fast food restaurants for salad

The problem is that those seeking climate action (and if you believe the polls there are not many of them) do not associate the LNP as the party to deliver this. You can view that as unfair or wrong but it is the truth.

McDonald's have wasted billions trying to sell health food but no matter how hard they try no one is visiting the golden arches to buy a salad. Similarly, we must realise that we do best when we concentrate on our strengths of arguing for small government, lower taxes, the development and defence of our country and support for families.

The pursuit of net zero must involve the massive expansion of government power to control the type of energy we use, how we grow food, what people eat, how they drive and what we make. The pursuit of net zero effectively requires the construction of a socialist state to plan all forms of production. Such government control and oversight is anathema to the principles of the Liberal and Nationals parties.

You can't trust a government

The question I asked about "do you trust China" was rhetorical. No one should trust what any government says, let alone a communist dictatorship. It makes much more sense to watch what governments do, not what they say.

What governments have done since signing up to net zero emissions is massively expand coal mining. Since agreeing to net zero emissions three years ago, China, India, Indonesia and Mongolia have increased their annual coal mining by 1.2 billion tonnes a year. This is more than double Australia's total annual coal mining output. The increase is the equivalent of these four countries opening 120 Adani Carmichael coal mines.

But more fool us taking on face value their commitments and thus almost unilaterally imposing carbon constraints on our economic potential and our wealth. Since we signed up to net zero emissions, we have lost our nickel, urea and plastics industries, energy prices have gone through the roof, our living standards and productivity have dropped by record amounts and we have lost a historic number of seats.

Net zero has been a failed experiment. The sooner we drop it, the better Australia will be.

HOPES DASHED



Attending the campaign launches for Colin Boyce and Michelle Landry

The task facing the Dutton-Littleproud opposition was formidable. A first-term government had not been beaten since the Great Depression.

Still, they had done an excellent job of convincing the Australian people that the dire state of people's living standards was due to the poor management of the Albanese government. That is why the polls had the LNP in the lead at the start of the year.

However, as the election got into gear, it became clear that just taking down the other side was not enough. Having told everyone that the country is going down the gurgler, we then said that we are not going to make any major changes to fix things. So we got thrashed.

None of this was the fault of the members, volunteers and candidates who worked as hard as ever. It was a great privilege to meet so many great people on the campaign trail. Thanks for your support and help.

I spent most of the campaign in Central and North

Queensland. Notwithstanding the dire national results, we did well here. Michelle Landry won her historic fifth consecutive term, which is due recognition to the infrastructure and services she has delivered to CQ. Colin Boyce got massive swings to him, including winning the Gladstone prepoll booth - an amazing testament to his hard work and ability to connect with anyone. David Batt was elected in Hinkler, having just a few months to campaign, but we were lucky that his local and state experience meant that he took to it easily. And, Llew O'Brien ran another no-fuss, hard-working effort to win Wide Bay again. No doubt another stretch of the Bruce Highway will be duplicated during his next term.

During the campaign, I had the opportunity to visit people impacted by the devastating floods in Western QLD with Senator Perin Davey. These people are so tough, and it was inspiring to see how they are getting on with their lives amidst such devastation. We should always help those doing it tough on the land.



Campaigning with David Batt in Hinkler and visiting flood affected properties in western QLD with Senator Perin Davey



THE AUSTRALIAN

10 May 2025

MAKING A STAND FOR COUNTRY PEOPLE, JOBS

Why I ran for the leader of the Nationals Party

The greatest disappointment of our election loss is that we let down West Australian sheep graziers, truck drivers, fencing contractors and their families. For the first time in history an Australian Government is shutting down an entire industry, the live sheep trade. Thousands will be put out of work at a time of economic crisis.

Our government has stopped a gold mine because of a story about a mythical bee. Water buybacks are killing our nation's foodbowl. And, Labor is conducting an experiment to see if we can power major industry based on weather forecasts. The outlook is not good. So far, we have lost our urea, plastics and nickel industries.

The now Labor-Green Senate means that we may lose much more. Almost of all of the jobs at risk are outside our capital cities.

The Coalition adopted an election strategy that we could save these jobs by not fighting for them. We did not visit the abandoned gold mine. West Australian farmers barely got a mention. And, despite proposing the construction of seven nuclear power stations, we failed to show how this could rekindle an Australian

industrial renaissance.

This hiding our light under a bushel approach failed catastrophically. We were lectured that we should not speak up because "city" voters would be repelled if we fought for farmers, miners and factory workers.

It was hard advice to take given it flew in the face of our successes over the past decade. In 2019, I heard the same arguments from a Liberal Minister, "Matt, we can't approve Adani because it will cost us seats in Melbourne."

Back then, the Nationals party said no, coal mining jobs should not be sacrificed to protect our jobs. We took up the fight to Start Adani, Bob Brown turned up and the Coalition won an unexpected election victory. The feared anti-Adani backlash in Melbourne turned out to be as mythical as stories about the blue-banded bee.

On Monday, I plan to stand for the leadership of the Nationals party to bring back our fighting spirit. Only if we fight, will we have a fighting chance.

David Littleproud can be enormously proud of his role in defeating the Voice, putting nuclear power on the agenda and having divestiture powers adopted as

Coalition policy for the first time.

But this debate is not about protecting his job or mine. This is about fighting for the jobs and livelihoods of the many people we represent. Many of the people that vote for the Nationals party have to shower after work, not before it.

They are being worn down. Their jobs are tiring, demanding and often not financially rewarding. While our banks grow fat on the teat of carbon credits and green subsidies, our workers pay for it every quarter in their power bill and every week in their shopping trolley.

The Nationals party did well at the election but only relative to the disastrous result for the Liberals. We failed in the task to help win government.

The Nationals should return to a more forthright style that helped deliver recent election victories. It was the Nationals that first stood against Rudd's carbon tax, it was the Nationals that pulped Turnbull's lacklustre jobs and growth language (remember the "new economy"), it was the Nationals that started Adani and it was the Nationals that first opposed the Voice to much ridicule from the Canberra press gallery.

We should never take advice from those that want us to lose.

The plan we took to the last election was rejected. We need a new plan. I have been arguing for a different approach ever since we signed up to net zero. So, I believe that I am in a stronger position to prosecute change.

First, we should scrap the futile and unachievable goal of net zero emissions by 2050. Net zero makes everything more expensive and it is not helping the environment given that the US, China and India are no longer even paying lip service to it.

The primary goal of our electricity system should be to reduce power bills not reduce emissions. That means using all of our energy resources, coal, gas, hydro, uranium and renewables. The lot.

The rule should be that if it is ok to export, it is ok for us to use. We should not tolerate other countries (who we export coal and gas to) having cheaper power prices than us. Our aim should be energy abundance which will lower the cost of everything.

Second, we must re-establish the Australian dream of a home with a backyard you can play cricket in. All agree that the only way to make housing more affordable is to increase housing supply. Yet all ignore the obvious place where we can increase supply. In our regional cities, NIMBYs tend to be an endangered species.

That means creating jobs in our regions through new investments in dams, farms, roads, ports and factories. We should expand work from home opportunities so that there are professional careers available in country towns. Most families today need two jobs to make a move so this is key to making regional development a success.

Not everyone will want to move to a country town but those that do will take the pressure off housing, hospitals and roads and that will help those who remain in the big smoke too.

Third, we must have more babies. I love babies, it is just a shame they grow into teenagers. But our country needs more babies.

Our birth rate has collapsed to just 1.5 babies per woman and most do not understand how brutal the maths is. A rough rule of thumb is that the size of your next generation will be your current population multiplied by the birth rate divided by two - although science is moving fast on this, right now, only women can have babies.

Using this calculation, within three generations there will be just 11 million Australians descended from those alive today. In other words, every 100 Australians will have just 40 Great-Grandchildren. That's sad because grandkids are the most joyous thing in the lives of the old people I know.

We need to provide more support to the family unit through income splitting and increased family tax benefits to give people the financial freedom to have the family they want.

Finally, we must restore national pride. Australia is fast losing its trademark as the lucky country. The Mums and Dads forced to work two jobs to pay their mortgage do not feel lucky. The nurses that lost their jobs due to vaccine mandates do not feel lucky. The young people that have no hope to save for a deposit do not feel lucky.

The Labor party applauds the increase in our GDP fuelled by uncontrolled immigration even as it lowers the living standards of those already here. We need to redefine GDP to mean a Good Deal for our People first. Only then will people feel that they are lucky again to be Australian.

Our plan should be based on how we can save the country, not save the party. I am standing for my party's leadership so that I can tell my kids I did everything I could to fight for a better life for them.



**STAND WITH THE
DARK NATS
DEFEND AUSTRALIA**

An online community of "Dark Nats" produced lots of great stuff supporting my campaign

CQToday

LEADERSHIP BID DEFEATED BUT NET ZERO WIN

17 May 2025

I stood for the leadership for the Nationals because I want us to rediscover our fight after a crushing Federal election defeat.

I started with weight in my saddlebags. In over 100 years, the Nationals party had never elected a Senator as its leader, even though there is no Constitutional or Parliamentary bar from doing so.

I ran not so much for leader but to end our crazy and insane obsession of net zero carbon emissions by 2050. In the first term of the Labor Government, we lost our urea industry (the most important fertiliser to grow food), our plastics industry and our nickel industry. All of these sectors were subject to crippling carbon taxes under Labor's net zero by 2050 target.

Also captured by this target are the coal mines, alumina refineries, aluminium smelter and cement and magnesite plants. While these mines and factories have withstood the first few years of Labor's carbon taxes, the taxes increase every year and many tell me that in the next few years they may have to shut if there is not change.

Labor had to give another \$2 billion to the aluminium industry because its plans to run on green energy are more expensive than running on coal.

At the very least the prospect of having to pay to get to net zero in just 25 years means there is little investment in new industrial jobs in Central Queensland. Labor's promised hydrogen jobs are about as detectable as that invisible gas is. Twiggy Forrest cut another 90 hydrogen jobs this week.

And then you ask why are we doing all of this? America under Trump is out. Asia was never really in. Coal fired power is booming in Asia. And, even in Europe things are changing. Tony Blair called net zero "irrational" recently and the Spanish blackout is causing a big rethink on renewable energy plans.

Back home, even Peter Beattie says we have "stuffed it" with too much renewable energy. If there is one thing that Peter Beattie is good at, it is identifying when he has stuffed something up.

After their election as leaders, both Sussan Ley (the new Liberal leader) and David Littleproud have said that they would review our commitment to net zero. While I lost the leadership battle, this was a win, and I believe I will win the war to end our support for such a silly policy.

The Liberal and Nationals parties never really believed in net zero. Michael McCormack, the then Deputy Prime Minister, said in the year before we signed up to net zero that he was concerned that net zero would "send factories and industries offshore."

Although I have always maintained my steadfast opposition to the net zero target my colleagues were bullied into signing up with relentless polling showing that we had to because the people supported it. This would be the same polling that sent us shockingly astray in the recent election.

Well, we signed up to net zero and then lost two elections. The last one was the worst defeat for the Liberal and Nationals Coalition since World War II. At the last election, the Coalition explicitly said that it was moving to the "sensible centre". But the centre of the road is where you get run over and we just got made in to political roadkill.

So maybe we should try something different next time.

We would be much better to ignore the protests for us to go left or right. As my colleague Andrew Willcox said, we should not care about left or right, just right or wrong.

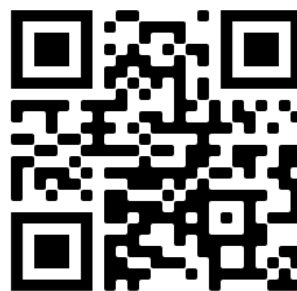
The Liberal and Nationals parties need to reflect on the massive election loss we suffered. I hope that the main lesson we learn is to adopt what we think are the best policies to help Australia.

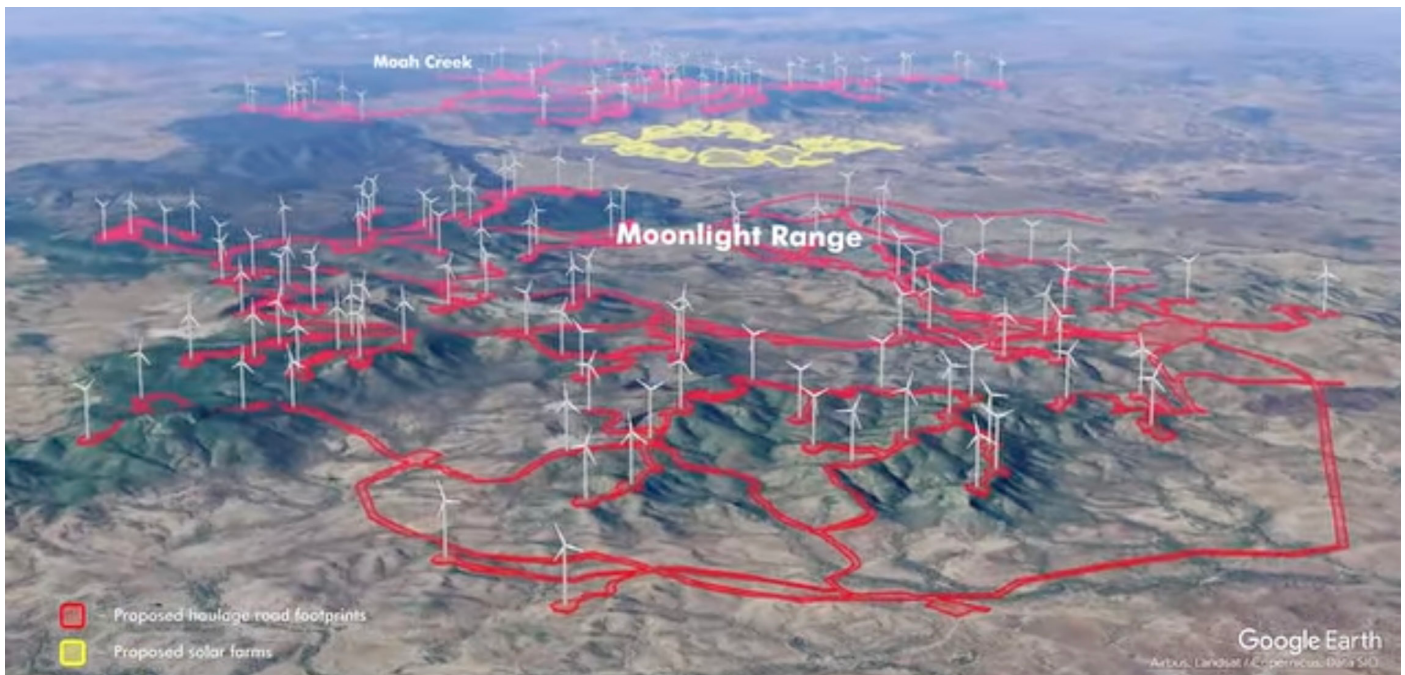
Even if those policies are not currently supported by the majority of Australians, our job is to fight for what we think is right and convince people that our plans are better.

This is not an impossible task. When we took a principled stance against the Voice less than 40 per cent of people agreed with us. Six months later 60 per cent of people agreed with us and the racial divide in our Constitution was resoundingly rejected.

In politics courage is contagious. Now is the time to find our courage and rediscover our fight so that we have a fighting chance at the next election.

Follow my Facebook page to stay up to date with opinion articles





The now cancelled Moonlight Range project would have devastated the CQ bush

The Courier Mail

16 May 2025

WINDMILLS WON'T TURN WITHOUT LOCAL SUPPORT

In 2019 it looked like Bill Shorten would be elected Prime Minister and there was a risk he would cancel the approval for the Adani mine. Bill had said that "I don't support the Adani project."

But local people did support Adani because it would provide 2000 jobs. So locals organised a rally in Clermont (the closest town to the mine) and 800 unionists, businesspeople and farmers showed up to support the proposed mine.

The Clermont rally helped deliver Bill Shorten an unexpected defeat as Queensland delivered a swing against Labor three times that of the rest of the country.

This week the Queensland LNP Government cancelled the approval for a wind factory (the Moonlight Range project) not far from Clermont. But there will be no rally by 800 locals in favour of wind turbines.

As the Queensland Minister, Jarrod Bleijie, said on announcing the cancellation, 88 per cent of local submissions about Moonlight Range were opposed to it. The local Rockhampton Council was opposed too.

People are opposed to these wind projects because they plan to install huge numbers of 280-metre-tall towers in our pristine Australian bush and they provide

no jobs or reliable energy to local people either. The Moonlight Range project would have provided just 10 ongoing jobs to Central Queenslanders.

The project involved the disturbance of over 800 hectares of high-value koala habitat. If a farmer had proposed to do this kind of environmental destruction they would not get past the first door with government agencies.

And all of this for barely any electricity. The Moonlight Range wind factory would produce just a tenth of the electricity of the nearby Stanwell coal fired power station while using 20 times the amount of land to do so.

Environmental activists have been fond in recent years of claiming that new mines or power stations must receive a "social licence" to proceed. The original concept of social licence was to impose an obligation on major projects to receive the support of the people close to the proposed impact.

So that if a mine is going to dig a big hole then the mine owners should work hard to deliver benefits to the surrounding area so that the local people do not feel their community has gone backwards. This is why good mining operators will offer local traineeships

and support buy local programs to support small businesses.

However, in my dealings with most renewable energy investors, they pay almost no attention to the local community. If they do have local discussions they are normally approached as a "tick a box" exercise. Ironically, these "green" investors do not even show much care for the destruction of the local environment that their projects may cause.

The problem is that some renewable energy supporters have convinced themselves that their projects will save planet earth. So if Joe and Nicole's idyllic, rural, family lifestyle is destroyed in the process, that is a small price to pay.

What these self-appointed Captain Planets have forgotten is that all politics is local. When 90 per cent of people oppose your project, no amount of Paris agreements will prevent democratically elected governments from listening to the people.

The situation that the renewable industry is in is very similar to that of the coal seam gas industry a decade ago. They too were riding roughshod over local farmer's interests but were telling everyone that the state needed the gas, so it was too bad if some local farmers felt inconvenienced.

The outcome was fracking bans almost everywhere in Australia. We are still living with gas shortages thanks to the gas industry's mismanagement of the local politics.

Meanwhile in the United States landowners own the gas and therefore the gas industry must treat them with respect. As a result, the US is producing more oil and gas than any country ever has in history.

I am not against all renewable energy. But I am against the senseless destruction of high value koala-habitats. And, I am against projects that do not get support from local people.

My advice to the renewable industry is to learn from the mistakes of our gas industry and to invest in local communities if they are serious about winning political support.

Compensation should not just go to the hosts of turbines, near neighbours are just as impacted. More jobs need to be delivered to local areas. Why aren't your headquarters in the regional towns you operate in?

We just need to restore a sensible energy policy that uses all of our energy resources, coal, gas, uranium, hydro, sun and wind. That way we will not need to destroy our beautiful Australian bush because we are over-reliant on one energy source.

GRASSROOTS EFFORT



Glen Kelly has worked tirelessly to defend property rights

After years of being ignored by the Queensland Labor State Government, it is fantastic to finally have the voices of Central Queenslanders listened to by the new LNP State Government.

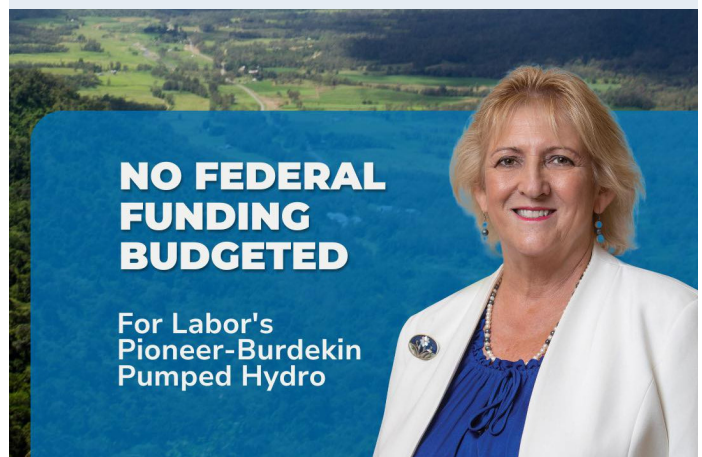
The first decision that the new government made was to cancel the ridiculous \$14 billion Pioneer-Burdekin Hydro Project. This project was selected after only desktop analysis. No investigation was done of the soils or the local wildlife. It would have been an environmental catastrophe.

I had joined Michelle Landry from the get-go in opposing this project with the local community. The election of Glen Kelly helped to deliver a great outcome.

Now Glen is delivering for his broader community against these reckless renewables. The Moonlight Range project has been cancelled. And new laws will put greater obligations on renewable investors to listen to locals and act in their interests.

I met Glen at his property a few years ago, where he showed me what a disaster these wind projects would be. It is great to see such a fighter succeed.

Well done mate!



Michelle opposed the destruction of Eungella from the start



The Europeans wanted to tell Australians how they must farm their land

The Courier Mail

6 September 2024

EUROPEAN COLONIALISM LIVES

An interesting social phenomenon has emerged in recent years where the more an organisation breaks the law, the more they immediately turn around and start lecturing the rest of us about how we should live.

You can see examples of this from governments, unions and all types of corporate organisations. But perhaps the starkest example is the banks.

The banks were exposed at a royal commission charging fees to dead people. In response, they appoint themselves the moral finance guardians of the galaxy, denying banking services to industries they deem evil, like coal or cattle farming.

The banks have fancy words to dress their edicts up in a veneer of sophistication. Their practices are known as ESG. ESG is meant to stand for environment, social and governance standards. In practice, what ESG really means is Exempting our Selves from Guilt.

The latest example of this modern-day right of penance comes in an arcane set of new rules passed by the European Parliament. Europeans through history have invaded and ruled more countries than any other.

They have done many good things, but there was also a lot of bad things about European imperialism.

Long after almost all colonial regimes have ended, however, Europeans still seem to be living under the illusion that they can tell the rest of the world what to do.

In just four months time the European Union's Deforestation Regulation will come into effect. Under this new regulation, any cattle grazier that does not comply with European land use regulations will not be able to export beef to Europe. According to the Europeans, this law intends to reduce carbon emissions by at least 32 million metric tonnes a year and address all deforestation driven by agricultural expansion.

I am not sure how the European Parliament came to the view that they had the right to regulate how Australian land is used. Their politicians are not elected by Australians or accountable to Australians. If nothing else, the EU's regulations are anti-democratic.

And like most times when democracy is sidelined, the autocratic outcomes will be worse because Brussels

(where the European Parliament is based) has almost no understanding of Australian farm practices or the harsh Australian environment. For example, under the current interpretation of the regulations, farmers will not be able to clear basic weeds like lantana. Not only would that cripple our cattle industry it would be terrible for the local environment.

The European regulations restrict the conversion of forest land to agricultural land in the future. This regulation most impacts Indigenous Australians who have native title rights in parts of the country that have remained largely undeveloped, including in Cape York. Europeans already colonised the land of Aboriginals once before and now they are trying to do it again.

The Europeans have released maps of Australia designating how much of our country is covered by the forest they want protected. They have identified 143.3 million hectares of forest land, which is curiously 8 per cent more than Australia's official definition of forest. And, our definition includes all areas with more than a 2m height canopy whereas the European definition covers only areas with more than a 5m canopy. So the European numbers seem way out of whack.

Of even more concern, 44 per cent of the land that Europe designates as forest in Australia has actually been grazed for generations. This error means that even the clearing of "regrowth" may not be allowed. If applied broadly most of Central Queensland's grazing areas would be put out of action within decades.

I do not expect European bureaucrats to understand the harshness of the Australian bush or the unique economic challenges facing Indigenous Australians. But this is why the regulation of Australia's environment should be left to democratically elected Australian governments.

The Australian Government has raised these concerns with European regulators. The US Government raised similar concerns recently too. But nothing seems to be getting resolved just months from the regulations coming into force.

The impact of the regulations will not hurt the overall strength of our beef industry, less than 1 per cent of our beef exports would be affected.

But, Europe's clumsy regulations will have a big impact on global beef markets. Every time new ESG restrictions are imposed on farming, energy or manufacturing they cut supply and that pushes up the price of almost everything. A big part of our inability to get inflation down is because of the ESG-inspired green and red tape that stops production increasing.

And that gives another interpretation to what ESG stands for: extreme shortages guaranteed.

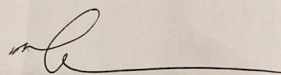
RARE WIN FOR FARMERS

Dear President

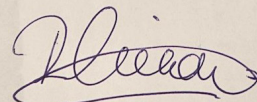
Pursuant to standing order 75, I give notice that today I propose to move "That, in the opinion of the Senate, the following is a matter of urgency:

The significant impact that the European Union Deforestation Regulation will likely have on Australian beef producers because of the EU's definition of forest and uncertainty about its implementation; and hence the consequent need to delay the implementation of the Regulation until these matters can be resolved."

Yours sincerely



Senator the Hon Matthew Canavan
Senator for Queensland



Senator Raff Ciccone
Senator for Victoria

A rare bipartisan Senate motion under standing order 75

Late last year, the European Commission announced that it would be proposing to defer the implementation of the EU Deforestation Regulation by 12 months.

This is a win for Australian farmers, something that is becoming rarer and rarer for the people who produce our food.

It followed an urgency motion I moved in the Senate with Labor Senator Raff Ciccone seeking the EU defer the regulation's implementation. It was only the second urgency motion to be jointly sponsored by both the government and opposition parties of the day. A similar call had been made in the US Congress.

We should not let other nations dictate what we can and can't do in our nation. These regulations risk setting a precedent of nations being dictated to about how they run their country by people who have no idea about them.

The European Parliament should take on board the Commission's recommendations to delay the implementation of these regulations, because despite their good intentions they had the potential to create even more harm and disadvantage by dictating to other countries how they do business rather than working with them to ensure that our natural environment is protected without causing undue harm to another country's industry.

The European Union wouldn't let Australia dictate how they operate their countries, just as we shouldn't let them dictate to us, and they should take on board their own Commission's recommendation and delay these regulations for another year to give them time to ensure that these regulations are implemented in a way that won't harm relationships with nations like Australia and the US that want to see a positive outcome without our producers being negatively impacted.



We must never let governments and bureaucracies determine what we can and cannot say

5 October 2024

FREE SPEECH UNDER ATTACK

This is an edited version of my speech to the 2024 CPAC Australia conference in Brisbane

This year I racked up 10 years in the Senate and my main lesson from a decade in Canberra is that the thing they hate the most in Canberra is a debate. They hate you having a different opinion.

It is the defining feature of our age. There is so much peer pressure to say and think certain things. So many super intelligent people tell us that you are completely stupid unless you believe that climate change is real, that diversity is our greatest strength, that science can answer every question or that renewable energy is the cheapest form of power.

All of these movements are like modern art. There is a lot of people, who think they are super intelligent, telling you that modern art is really good. You sort of think that I better say I like it because I want to be considered super intelligent too.

But you know when you go to a modern art gallery, and you see it up close, we are all thinking the same thing. This is really kind of rubbish isn't it? I mean my 7 year old could do this. And, I reckon my 7 year old could argue like your average climate scientist. They are not very sophisticated and you never hear them talk much beyond slogans.

So, in this peer-pressure age, it is no surprise that our government, our politicians, think the duty falls to them to decide what is true and what is false because apparently, it is up to them to define what is cool and not cool, like in a schoolground.

We have been here before many times. A Greek in ancient times once asked the Delphic oracle if there was a wiser man than Socrates. The oracle replied no. Socrates could not believe this because he had a friend who was a politician who was "thought wise by many, and", in the words of Socrates, "wiser still by himself". So Socrates went and spoke to this politician and he soon realised that the problem with the politician is that he thinks that he knows but he really knows nothing.

Not much has changed has it?

Socrates then went to poets and artisans and he encountered the same misplaced overconfidence in their abilities. After all of his investigations, Socrates concluded that "the men most in repute were all but the most foolish; and that some inferior men were really wiser and better." Don't you think this is still true? I meet way more wise people on the streets of Rockhampton, where I am from, than I do in Parliament House.

Australian society (at least traditionally) has been a worthy successor to this free and democratic Athens. We have always been a country that has thumbed its nose at the arrogance of authority. We celebrate bushrangers and irreverent ANZAC diggers making fun of their pompous British officers. We even have a word for it - "tall poppy" syndrome.

There are lots of problems with the Government's proposed misinformation laws, but its greatest sin is that it is fundamentally un-Australian. It is un-Australian to self-appoint a bureaucratic class of betters who get to decide for the rest of us what is true or false, what is acceptable or unacceptable and what is a correct opinion or not.

And, lets be very clear. These laws do not outlaw lies, they outlaw opinions. The government makes this very clear in its own explanatory documents to the law. The government says that some of the views that could be censored is "misleading or deceptive information about ... referendum proposals". Exactly which "referendum proposals" might the government be referring to here?

Misinformation laws are not about silencing lies, they are about silencing your opinions. Misinformation laws do not protect you from lies, they are there to help the powerful to continue to lie. Misinformation laws do not protect you, they protect them.

This two-class society, when it comes to the truth, is inherent in the design of the bill. The bill does not outlaw all misinformation, just those views that the bill defines as "serious harm".

But serious harm is defined to protect against damage to our banking system. Why do our banks, who have regularly been found defrauding their customers in recent years, deserve special protection?

The bill defines as serious harm anything that harms "the efficacy of preventative health measures". After the fiasco of keeping children separate from their parents across state lines and arresting mums in their pyjamas for a facebook post, on what basis does the government think our public health overlords deserve protection from criticism?

The opposite needs to happen. There should be a proper and thorough Royal Commission into the misinformation spread by our health authorities that is still costing the Australian public to this day.

All of this would be bad enough if the laws gave Australian officials the power to censor speech but it is actually worse than that. This law doesn't empower Australians to censor your speech, it empowers foreigners to censor your speech.

What the law does is to force social media companies



US free speech activist Michael Shellenberger joined us at Parliament House to help

to setup their own internal Ministries of Truth. Most of these companies, facebook, google and X, are based in the United States. Now we are great friends with the US, I love Americans, but I do not think we should give them the power to decide what can be said or not said in this country.

Why should tech billionaires based in San Francisco get to decide what is said in Sydney?

Keep in mind, there is one other company I missed. TikTok. This bill would authorise TikTok to maintain a censorship regime on Australians. The Bill's provisions are so broad that there is no doubt that TikTok's Ministry of Truth could easily maintain the position of the Chinese Communist Party in what is true and what is false. Indeed, if these misinformation laws pass, the Chinese Communist Party won't just be permitted to regulate the speech of Australians they will be authorised, indeed required, to do so.

Labor's misinformation laws don't just silence Australians, they give away our sovereignty by empowering foreign companies to design the gag.

This should be a warning to our fellow Australians on the left side of politics too. The Australian Conservation Foundation recently was cancelled on X because of some claims it made about nuclear energy. I do not think its claims were right but I still object to Elon Musk, or any foreigner, having the right to silence Australians, including Australians I disagree with.

The same powers that today have been crafted to silence anti-vax or anti-voice opinions can be weaponised to silence anti-war and anti-big business sentiments in the future. The left should be very careful about what they wish for.

We must never forget one of the most important reasons to allow and encourage free speech. When we

silence someone from speaking we do not just restrict the rights of the speaker, we restrict the rights of the thousands of other potential listeners to hear their views. I, as an Australian, have a right to listen to my fellow Australians, even the ones I disagree with.

A healthy society encourages the airing of different opinions. That is how we test and strengthen our own ideas. That is how we correct our mistakes.

Take a real world example. A few years ago Bob Brown decided he would come to visit us here in Queensland to tell us all about the evils of coal. We listened to Bob, many of us went along, admittedly to counter protest.

We heard him out and then we promptly re-elected a Prime Minister that had proudly held up coal in the Parliament. Bob has never been back. But I want him back. Please come back Bob.

I never want to silence the stupidity of the greens and the left. It is our best asset in educating the Australian people about how stupid the ideas of the left are. In fact, I have got a crazy idea. Maybe we should spend \$1 billion a year on a public broadcaster that just exclusively broadcasts crazy leftwing opinions to the public 24 hours a day.

Take another real world example. In the early days of the coronavirus vaccine rollout, I called for the AstraZeneca vaccine to be paused due to reports of it causing blood clots and deaths. Mark Butler accused me of being "deeply irresponsible" and Anthony Albanese said that I had "inflicted damage on public confidence" - clear grounds for me to be hauled off for misinformation.

Just two years after I aired my concerns, Health Minister Mark Butler's government cancelled AstraZeneca's approval.

I do not always get everything right but neither does anyone else, whether they are granted the title of "expert" or not. I do not blame people for making mistakes. I do blame people who refuse to believe that they can never be wrong.

When such people deny the right of others to disagree with them, mistakes - even excusable ones - will persist for longer and do more damage than necessary.

The duration of a lie depends on how quickly someone is allowed to point it out.

The aim should not be to get every decision right (which is impossible) but to reduce the time between a mistake being made and its correction.

We should never be afraid to let others criticise our ideas. The fact that the Government seems so afraid of the views of its own people is a sign of their weakness

not their strength.

Before social media companies took it upon themselves to silence different views, "right wing" blogs were getting more views than the New York Times. Right wing politicians were regularly reaching more views than any of those on the left.

When twitter started, the left thought it was its playground to rule. After all, the platform was largely dominated by young people and young people typically were more left-wing. But early twitter (like X now) was a real battleground of ideas. And the left kept losing.

That is why we have ended up with this resort to censorship. The left lost to Trump, they lost to Brexit and they lost the Voice. Instead of listening to the views of their people, they have resorted to silencing them.

So do not feel downcast about these censorship efforts. They are only a reflection of the fact that we are winning the battle of ideas. Even if this misinformation bill does pass, if we remain committed we will find ways to communicate.

Every cancellation will confirm how we were right. Indeed, almost every time someone is cancelled their viewership increases, and the power of their message grows.

So let's look for the positives. If we do end up with a misinformation tsar, my prediction is that he or she will be the greatest barometer of truth since the days of the Delphic oracle. It will work a little bit different this time. The opposite if you like.

Because every time that the misinformation overlord designates something as misinformation that is a sure sign that thing is in fact true. It works like a charm!

So we will stay a free country as long as we are true to our Australian heritage and thumb our nose at the farce of unearned authority.

Thank you again for all of your support, and keep fighting for freedom. God bless.

FREE SPEECH WINS!

When the government introduced its misinformation bill last year, almost all of the crossbench Senators were in principle supportive. It looked like an uphill battle to defeat the legislation.

But thanks to the pressure of everyday Australians, and the Government's woeful job of selling their laws, in the end, every crossbench and Greens Senator opposed the bill with the LNP.

Embarassingly for the Government, they ended up voting to withdraw their own bill. Free speech won!

15 November 2024

The Daily Telegraph

TRUMP ATE OUR HOMEWORK!



Celebrating Trump's victory

The last week has seen the creation of a new Australian cottage industry in making predictions about how Donald Trump would hurt the Australian economy: tariffs, inflation, war, the death of democracy, you name it.

Our Treasurer even got his “dog ate my homework” excuse out early, saying that Donald Trump would cause “a small reduction in our output and additional price pressures, particularly in the short term”.

This Chicken Little act brings to mind the wisdom of Matthew 7:3: “Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?”

The speculation is that Donald Trump may impose a 10 per cent tariff on Australian goods exported to the US. This would not be a good thing for Australia.

But the impact of such a small tariff is minuscule compared to the economic self-harm we have done in recent years.

We have stopped using our abundant natural energy resources causing our energy prices to more than double. We now have electricity and gas prices two to three times higher than the United States. This “energy tariff” makes everything more expensive in Australia, and it is a much greater impost on the Australian economy than anything Trump will do.

Even under Joe Biden the United States last year produced more oil, than any country, in any year, ever. Donald Trump plans to take the US out of the Paris agreement and take this energy gap between Australia and the US to another level.

The global climate change agenda is more dead than disco

and Australia should get out of it as soon as possible so we can use our coal, gas and uranium to bring down energy prices.

Donald Trump has appointed Elon Musk to slash red tape while we impose more and more hurdles on anyone with the temerity to want to invest in Australia. The Albanese government stopped a new gold mine from being built because of concerns over a mythical bee. This “investment tariff” is a much bigger deal for us than the US election results.

Anthony Albanese botched the opening up of Australia's borders post-Covid-19. More than 1 million people in net terms have arrived in Australia, double the normal rate of migration. Working Australian families now must live in tents in our major cities. This “housing tariff” should be of much greater concern to Australians than the vagaries of the Electoral College.

The Labor government has hired an extra 26,000 public servants at a cost of \$5 billion a year. In just two years, the federal government's payroll bill has increased by a shocking 23 per cent. Labor's lack of discipline on their spending of your money has led to an “inflation tariff”, with Australia having the highest inflation in the developed world.

The Australian government returned our industrial relations laws to the 1970s. They seem to believe that wages in a complex, modern economy should be set by central planners in a one size fits all approach for entire industries. It is no surprise that Australia's productivity performance has been the worst on record in the two years since Labor came to office.

If Australia's productivity rate had just been at the long term average over the past two years, then our average income would have been \$8000 a year higher.

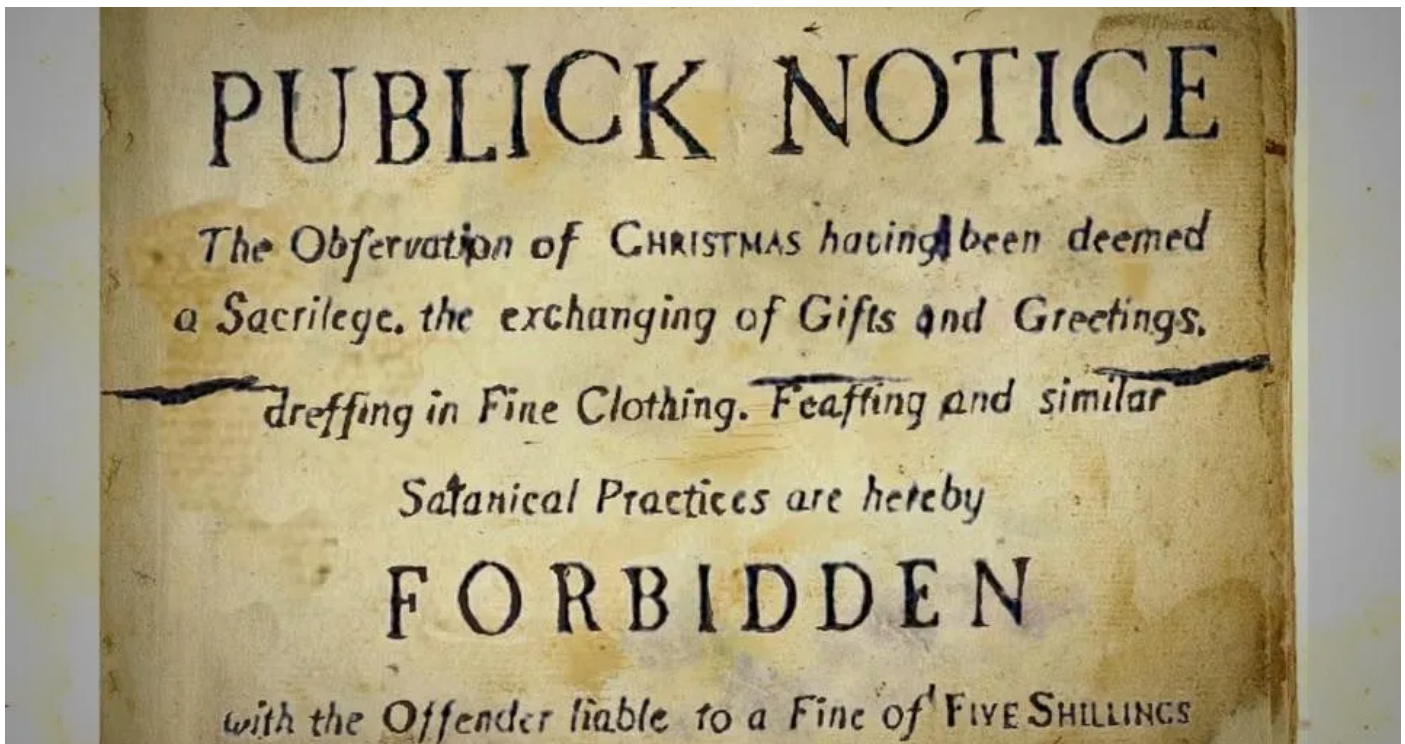
Australia's living standards have dropped by more than any other developed country since the end of Covid-19. This has nothing to do with Donald Trump but the listlessness of our own governments.

There appears no hope of waking our Prime Minister up to become interested in economics. His major agenda now is to ban kids from social media, including apparently YouTube.

Australia needs to stop blaming others for our economic woes. We are the luckiest country in the world. We have the greatest reserves of coal, gas, uranium and water per person than anywhere in the world outside Antarctica.

But our natural resources do not provide us wealth automatically. Whining about Donald Trump might be good therapy for some, but it won't create a self-sustaining economy.

We must stop worrying about other countries and return to making our own luck. We have all the resources to create our own sovereignty and independence from what other countries do. We simply must use our natural resources, make sensible decisions on spending and regulation and unleash the massive potential and opportunity that exists among Australians.



In 1645 the Long Parliament tried to ban Christmas ... it didn't work

THE SPECTATOR AUSTRALIA

18 November 2024

THE GREATEST GIFT OF ALL

Attempts to ban free speech will fail just as Puritans have failed in the past

According to lore, Santa's elves live to be hundreds of years old. In theory, Santa should have no problem communicating with his trusty workers via his iPhone despite Australia's social media ban for children under 16. In practice, however, that ban is set to be enforced through draconian face-matching technology which may struggle to correctly age the baby faces of Santa's little helpers.

Notwithstanding these technical issues, there was a mad rush, worthy of last-minute Christmas shoppers, during the last Australian parliamentary week to pass the 'world-leading' ban on social media. The Bill was released on a Thursday. Australians were given 24 hours to make a submission by Friday – and despite the tight deadline an astounding 15,000 people did so. On the following Monday, a Senate hearing was held. On the Tuesday, the Senate report was released. On the Wednesday, the House of Representatives passed the Bill. And, on the Thursday, the Senate rushed the Bill through with just a few hours of debate.

It remains a mystery why politicians can't seem to act with such alacrity to approve major, job-creating investments or cut government spending. If we can establish a social media ban in a week, why does it take more than ten years to approve the average mine?

Some even suggested this urgency was needed so that kids could not abuse the dreaded devices they may receive from Santa's elves in a few weeks' time. These people were fortunate that they were not subject to the misinformation laws – which were comprehensively defeated earlier in the week – as the social media ban would not take effect for another year. Little Johnny will be free to jump straight on Snapchat with his new iPhone, for this year at least.

But Christmas Day may be cancelled next year. It would not be the first time that a parliament has sought to restrict or cancel Christmas tidings.

In 1645, the English Long Parliament banned Christmas because it was seen as a Catholic plot to

encourage sin and sensual delights. The ban was more observed in its breach as people flouted the law and continued to serve mince pies and sing carols. By 1656, parliamentarians were complaining that they were being kept awake by the sounds of Christmas parties next to their lodgings!

Something similar will no doubt happen with the social media ban. Over the next ten years we will hear from our modern-day puritans bemoaning that children and parents are simply ignoring the diktat of their parliamentarian betters and that something more draconian must be done to enforce the will of parliament.

Our current panic over 'misinformation' and new forms of media is not that dissimilar from the 'pamphlet wars' of the 1600s. That century saw the rise of the printing press to enable distribution of controversial and blasphemous materials to the masses.

Two years before the Long Parliament banned Christmas, they passed 'An Ordinance for the Regulating of Printing'. That law ruled that 'Nor other Book, Pamphlet, paper... shall from henceforth be printed, bound, stitched or put to sale by any person or persons whatsoever, unless the same be first approved of and licensed under the hands of such person or persons as both, or either of the said Houses shall appoint for the licensing of the same.'

They did so because they wanted to suppress 'the great late abuses and frequent disorders in Printing many false, forged, scandalous, seditious, libellous, and unlicensed Papers, Pamphlets, and Books to the great defamation of Religion and Government.'

In other words, the Long Parliament wanted to control 'misinformation'. History today is repeating as our modern day nobility panic over their loss of control. In the 1600s dangerous ideas such as freedom and individual liberty were virally spread through pamphlets. Thomas Paine's Common Sense was printed as a pamphlet and one section of it reads like a report of Kim Williams' address to the National Press Club last week:

'Men who look upon themselves born to reign, and others to obey, soon grow insolent; selected from the rest of mankind their minds are early poisoned by importance; and the world they act in differs so materially from the world at large, that they have but little opportunity of knowing its true interests, and when they succeed to the government are frequently the most ignorant and unfit of any throughout the dominions.'

Despite all of the concerns of the establishment of



The hypocrisy of the censorship complex is not lost on anyone

the evils of the printing press revolution, the printing press led to a boon in human development through the spread of ideas for liberty and democracy. Likewise today establishment conservatives remain perturbed by a worldwide web they have little understanding of.

The truth is that conservative voices are winning online and winning handsomely. Conservative governments have tried unsuccessfully for a generation to temper the left-wing propaganda fed to our children at schools. Finally, we have an antidote through the rise of YouTube, TikTok and X, where kids often learn that the Crusades may have actually been an understandable response to Muslim imperialism, that Franco's monarchist forces were responding to the rape of nuns by criminal communist gangs and that Greta Thunberg's Malthusian poverty prescription is a far less attractive ideology than Elon Musk's mission to colonise Mars.

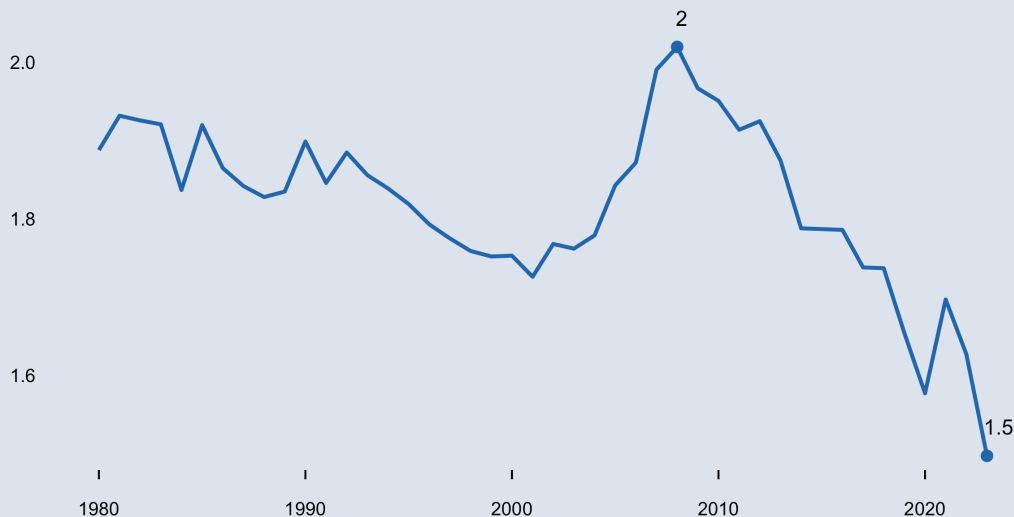
And what do we do?! We join the left-wing mob and ban children from accessing such seditious content. 'Johnny, I have told you a thousand times, turn off Joe Rogan and practice your acknowledgement of country again!'

The social media ban may prove to be as ineffective as a prohibition of Christmas. Yet you can see that the state may resort to ever more draconian measures before they admit defeat. Fortunately, we managed to get an amendment into the social media ban that rules out you being compelled to use a digital ID to verify your age.

However, that is something that may easily be overturned in a desperate attempt to enforce the unenforceable. To my knowledge our elves remain safe, as the North Pole is yet to roll out a widespread digital-ID system. But one is beginning here and we must remain vigilant against the threat of further state control of what we can say, read and listen to.

Fertility rate in Australia

Average no. of children born per woman over a lifetime



Source: OECD Family Database

18 October 2024

The Courier Mail**WE NEED MORE BABIES**

Everyone loves babies. Creating, having and bringing up a new baby is the most rewarding, frustrating and life-enriching thing most people will ever do. Everyone wants to see a new baby. Politicians want to be next to them.

So it is very sad to hear that Australians are having fewer babies. We recently found out that Australia's birthrate has fallen to just 1.5 per woman. Our birthrate is now at western European levels, and we would soon be experiencing population decline if not for the record number of migrants we are taking in.

Not everyone can have a child and not everyone wants to have children. And that is fine. It is sad, though, when people who can and want to have children cannot because of economic constraints.

Economics seems to be behind the rapid drop in our birthrate over the past generation. When the Howard government left office in 2007, Australia's birthrate was above 2.0 per woman. We had one of the highest birthrates in the developed world.

Famously, this baby boom came after Peter Costello told everyone to have one for mum, one for dad and one for the country.

I do not think Peter Costello's words were much of an aphrodisiac, but his budgets may have been. In the mid-1990s, Australia put aside about 2 per cent of our GDP to support families. After Howard and Costello created a new family benefits system, 3.3 per cent of GDP went to helping families.

Following the global financial crisis hangover, family benefits were cut and we now devote only 2.3 per cent of GDP to family benefits. No wonder then that young Australians are finding it harder to find the financial resources to start families.

A decade ago, Hungary's birthrate had plummeted to 1.2

births per woman. The Hungarian government went on a family support blitz. It gave tax rebates for having children. It provided interest-free loans to buy your first home. If you had two children, 30 per cent of the loan would be forgiven, and if you had three children the whole loan was wiped off. If a mum had four or more children, she would never pay income tax again.

Hungary's policies worked. Hungary's birthrate has boomed to 1.6 per woman (now higher than Australia's). And that was not all the positive news. The number of divorces and abortions halved, and female employment participation increased. Paying no tax after having four children probably helped!

One of the big barriers for young people to having babies is that our tax system treats people as individuals not families.

So, when a mum or dad leaves the workforce to help care for a young baby, you lose access to two tax-free thresholds and lower tax rates. This is a massive cost.

For example, a single-income family with two kids who earns \$150,000 a year pays \$36,838 a year in tax. A double-income family with two incomes of \$75,000 each, with two kids, pays \$26,576 in tax. These two families have the same income and the same number of kids but the single-income family pays over \$10,000 a year more in tax.

More than half of developed countries allow parents to share some or all of their income for tax purposes.

This would help reduce tax for families, especially when their babies are young and they want to look after them at home.

If we do not lift our birthrate back to Howard government levels we would need to take in 100,000 more migrants a year to reach our projected levels of population over the next few decades.

And that is likely to worsen our crippling housing shortage, making it hard for young Australians to have babies.

We should have a tax system that is good for babies because babies are good. It is time we taxed people as families because strong families make for a stronger nation.



Celebrating 10 years in the Senate with my family

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS

Last year, I celebrated 10 years as a Senator for Queensland, and it was wonderful to have a small event in Yeppoon to say thanks to all of those who have been part of my career.

The biggest thanks go to my wife and family because I could not do this without their wonderful support. They sacrifice too, given how much I am away.

I have to thank those who supported me early in my career, like Barnaby Joyce and Ron Boswell. I would not even have thought of trying to become a Senator without their encouragement.



I owe a huge thanks to Barnaby for my career

I have been blessed with excellent staff throughout my career. Some have been with me since the start, and it has been quite the journey.



I could not do what I do without the support from my wife



I have been blessed with amazing staff (many more not in this photo)

We would not have achieved what we have without the support of our LNP members, so many of whom were able to attend this evening.

But the most important part of the night was recognising what we have done for people. Building the Rocky Ring Rd and Rookwood Weir, getting Adani started, delivering a hospital car park for Rocky, are the reasons why we fight. And there is a lot more to fight for yet!



The Fitzroy will provide a spectacular backdrop for the Olympics

CQ*Today*

29 March 2025

DELIVERING OLYMPICS GOLD

When the LNP came to Government in Queensland last year they inherited an Olympics plan from the Labor Government that had just two cities (Townsville and Cairns) outside of south-east Queensland hosting just one sport (football).

So, the involvement with the Games for most of us in regional Queensland would be limited to having to pay for it through our taxes, royalties and the like.

That Games was also a mess for other reasons. The former Government had swapped between the Gabba and the old QEII stadium as the major venue and there were major cost blowouts on the athletes' villages.

So, the new LNP Government established a 100-day review to work out a better plan.

Here in Central Queensland, we had elected three new Members of Parliament, Donna Kirkland, Nigel Hutton and Glen Kelly. All of them were keen to deliver for our region.

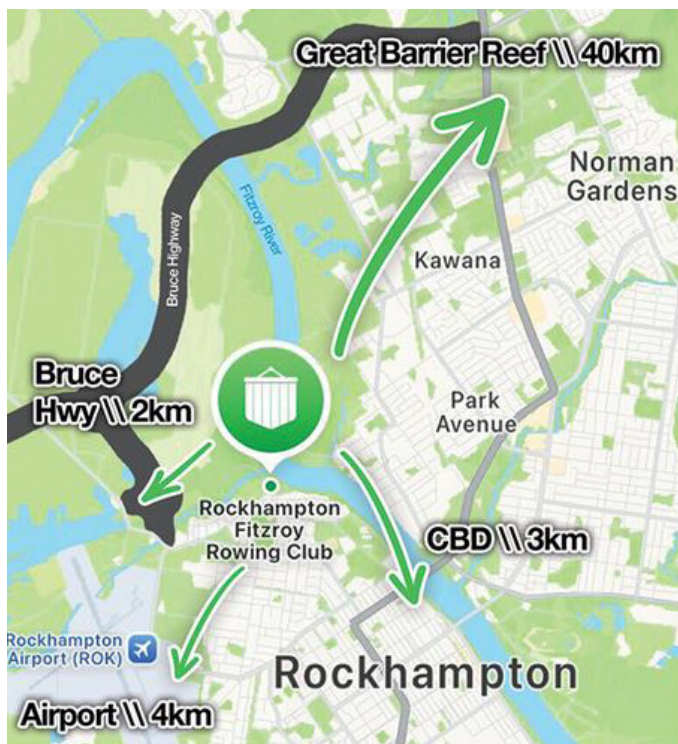
So, we all got together, with the Council and the regional development bodies too, to get behind a plan to pitch for the Olympic rowing for Rockhampton. Many thought we were mad at first and thought we

had no chance. The southern media mocked Rocky as "croc-infested", even though the state school rowing championships are held here every year.

You are best not to die wondering and the LNP CQ team fought hard for our region. Donna Kirkland, as the Member for Rockhampton, stalked the halls of the Queensland Parliament putting Rocky's case about why we were the best.

We never asked for a handout. We had a better case than the Labor party's choice of Wyaralong Dam which was 2 hours southwest of Brisbane in traffic. Wyaralong is a great place for rowing but not so good to host a high-profile event. It is so remote that it is not even on the power or water grid. The course had to be moved to accommodate an event as large as the Olympics, so a new road was needed. And a specific athletes' village would need to be built in a remote area which would not have provided much long-term legacy.

All up, these costs would have amounted to at least \$130 million for a five-day event. In contrast, the Rockhampton rowing course is a just few kilometres from an airport, the national highway and accommodation in a major city. We believed that we



The Fitzroy rowing course is at the centre of everything

could save at least \$100 million by moving the event to a regional city.

This week David Crisafulli announced a new Games plan for all Queenslanders.

The CQ LNP team's efforts have paid off and we have delivered gold for Rocky. The rowing and canoeing will now be in Rockhampton. This is an amazing opportunity for Rockhampton to showcase to the world the beauty of Central Queensland from our reef, to our bushland, to our farming and mining industries and our wonderful relaxed lifestyle.

We will also have a world class rowing facility that can host state, national and international rowing events in the future, bringing business to our region, and amazing sporting opportunities for our young people.

The LNP has also announced that the athletes' village will be built at the old, disused railway yards in Rockhampton. While the details of this will be worked out, it is likely that about 1000 beds will be built that can be converted to housing after the Games. This will help deal with our housing shortages as well as revitalising the centre of our city.

And the Games plan includes holding events right throughout regional Queensland from Toowoomba to Cairns.

The LNP have delivered a Games for all of Queensland, and we can now all get behind them to take advantage of this opportunity that has been given to us in Central Queensland.

WHAT A CROC!



A billboard in Rocky saying what we think of detractors

As soon as Rocky was announced as the Olympics and Paralympics venue for the rowing and canoeing, the naysayers started.

The headlines screamed of "man-eating" crocodiles - even though there has never been someone killed by a crocodile in the Fitzroy. To us locals, it was all a joke. Our children row on the river all the time, and there are state school championships held on the river. If the risk of crocs were so great, why would we allow so many kids to row in the same river?

Then others claimed that our river was impacted by "tidal flows". Again, laughable to locals because the rowing course is upstream of a set of barrages that prevent the tides from impacting events.

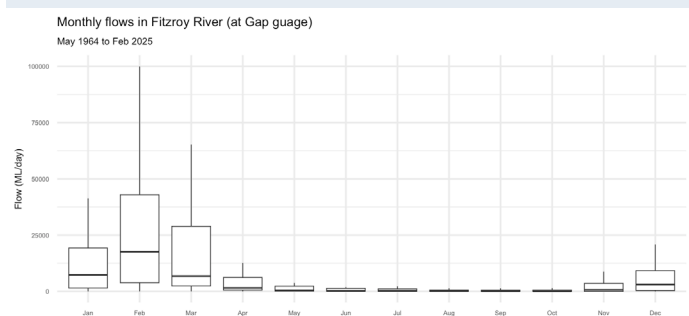
The more serious question is about streamflow. All rivers are impacted by flows, but the Games are due to be held in winter, and we get barely any rain then. A recent hydrological study concluded that the Fitzroy has "almost zero flow in the winter months".

The gauge data shows the same - see the chart below.

At least the Rocky course can accommodate a full 2000m Olympics rowing event. The IOC has approved just a 1500m course for LA, so it can be at Long Beach. And, its course is impacted by tidal flows!

Labor left us a plan that had just a few football games outside the southeast corner. Even Paris held six sports (across 10 cities) at least 200km from Paris.

Now we have events from Toowoomba to Cairns involving all Queenslanders. Now we have a Games that all Queenslanders can get behind.



Streamflow will be no issue at the Olympics

BLUE WAVE



Campaigning in CQ with Nigel Dalton, Glen Kelly, Nigel Hutton and Donna Kirkland

After almost a decade of Labor, Queensland ended up with skyrocketing debt, out-of-control crime, hospital delays and potholed roads. Thankfully, there is hope now that the LNP were elected at the State election last October.

There is a lot to fix, but David Crisafulli ran a focused and disciplined campaign, and he is now taking that approach to Government, too.

Central Queensland created history by helping to deliver an LNP Government for Queensland.

Nigel Hutton and Glen Kelly flipped Keppel and Mirani blue, together with Donna Kirkland in Rockhampton, for the first time in a century.

Nigel Dalton in Mackay, the first ever LNP Member for Mackay, delivered the biggest swing to the LNP anywhere in Queensland. And Sean Dillon in Gregory helped increase the LNP margin to over 20%.

It has been great to have a team dedicated to CQ across

State and Federal Governments. At the Federal level, Michelle and I (along with George and Ken, and now Andrew and Colin) work together for the interests of CQ. The state team have fitted into our team like a glove.

Together, we have already established a local advisory group for the Olympics Games. And, we are working together to stop the reckless renewables projects that are damaging our environment and dividing communities.

It was also great during the campaign to visit so many parts of our great state, including in south east Queensland. Special recognition is deserved for Kerri-Anne Dooley, whom I have been campaigning with for over a decade. She finally won the seat of Redcliffe after her 6th go!

And, Ariana Doolan has been elected the youngest member of the Queensland Parliament. She showed incredible courage on the trail.

Queensland now has a government that everyone can be proud of.



Campaigning in SEQ with Kerri-Anne Dooley and Ariana Doolan

FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT ON AIR



To watch more interviews make sure you follow me on Facebook by scanning the QR code



Get in touch

As always, if there is anything that I or my office can assist you with, please get in touch:

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