



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
MATTERS OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Budget

SPEECH

Thursday, 18 June 2015

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Questioner
Speaker Perrett, Graham, MP

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Mr PERRETT (Moreton) (16:06): The matter of public importance before the chamber about the government hitting the household budgets of Middle Australia is a great opportunity to explore what is at the heart of the coalition government, because we have seen, with their last two demonstrations of what they think about the Australian people—budget 2014 and budget 2015—that they are hollow at their core. If we look at the curve of Australian history, a movement from colonies to Federation to cooperative federalism, we suddenly see that progression of history stop on 8 September 2013, and we move from cooperative federalism to this uncooperative Tonyism, where suddenly we see the middle class attacked, we see the poorest of Australia attacked and we see the tradition of looking after our pensioners attacked. We saw for a year—

Mrs Sudmalis: Rubbish!

Mr PERRETT: I have an interjection of 'Rubbish!' from the member opposite. We remember last year's pension changes, where she voted to decrease the payment to pensioners. For a year she defended that, and then finally, when the political pressure got so much and the pensioners were lining up to tell the member for Bass, 'We're going to kick you to billyo,' and the members in these marginal seats lined up to say, 'You will be gone at the next election,' they suddenly changed. So we had a 2015 budget that was less cruel. That is the best you could say about it: less cruel. That is about the biggest praise I could put on it: '2015, coming at you less cruel than the year before.' But it is still on that bedrock of cruelty, with \$50 billion cut from hospitals and \$30 billion cut from schools, and freezing the super of 8.4 million workers and then cutting the pension for families.

And who is impacted most when you cut funds for education and schools? Middle-class families and the poor, because education is the opportunity to get a job. That is if you have an industry, and I heard the member for Wakefield's brilliant exposition about the government forgetting the jobs in Adelaide.

Mr Nikolic interjecting—

Mr PERRETT: We had laughter from the member for Bass about 10,000 people losing their work. Go to the streets of Salisbury and tell them about how good it is to lose their job. We saw—

Honourable members interjecting—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Whiteley): Order! Is there a point of order, Member for Bass?

Mr Nikolic: Mr Deputy Speaker, I am being appallingly misrepresented. My comment was that the speech from the member for Wakefield was not brilliant.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I give the call back to the member for Moreton.

Mr PERRETT: We see where their intentions are with the fair and sustainable pensions bill. Remember, if you are watching politics, whenever you hear a piece of legislation called 'fair and sustainable', you know you are in trouble. George Orwell comes to town. That is the intention of Winston Smith reading 'doubleplusgood' into the atmosphere, because you know that with fair and sustainable pensions it is a problem.

Look at the speaking list on this piece of legislation—the list of coalition government members. They will be going out to Bass and saying, 'Guess what we're doing to you, pensioners!' They will be going out to Hindmarsh and saying, 'Hey, guess what I'm going to do to you, pensioners, part pensioners and 50-year-olds who have started to prepare for your retirement!' They will not be telling them that. I do not see a great list of speakers lining up to tell them that. Do not worry—we will be doing it. We will make sure we tell your constituents.

Mr Nikolic interjecting—

Mr PERRETT: I would not waste your time yelling in here, Member for Bass. You should enjoy the limited time you have left in this chamber. You have a chance to reinvent your character, because at the moment the Australian people see you as a very unsavoury member of the House—very unsavoury.

Mr Nikolic interjecting—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, both members!

Mr PERRETT: He stands up at every opportunity to intervene.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr PERRETT: Sorry, Deputy Speaker. I did not hear you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I would ask all members to take their seats. Those sorts of comments are not acceptable when you are referring to a person's character, and I would ask you to stay on subject. It is your MPI, and I urge you to continue on where you should be.

Mr PERRETT: I withdraw.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! There is a point of order still from the member for Bass.

Mr Nikolic: Mr Deputy Speaker, I want that withdrawn.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Bass has asked the member for Moreton to withdraw the comments, which were, I think, of a really delicate character.

Mr PERRETT: I withdrew, Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. We will move on with the debate. The member for Moreton can move on with the debate.

Mr PERRETT: I did say that he was one to object, and he objected to me withdrawing when I had already withdrawn.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I do not think anyone heard you.

Mr PERRETT: All right. So we return to this budget—this 2015 budget based on a platform of unfairness. The people of Australia will condemn them. *(Time expired)*