



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
MATTERS OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Education

SPEECH

Thursday, 3 March 2016

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH

Date Thursday, 3 March 2016
Page 3032
Questioner
Speaker Kelly, Craig, MP

Source House
Proof No
Responder
Question No.

Mr CRAIG KELLY (Hughes) (15:58): One of the obligations that we all have here in this parliament is that when we speak, either from our places as backbenchers or as frontbenchers from the dispatch box, we should tell the truth. Therefore it is very disappointing, and does our profession no good whatsoever, for members of the Labor Party to stand up in this debate one after the other and claim that the coalition is cutting funds to education.

There are no cuts to Commonwealth spending now or in the future. Let us go through the facts. These are the budget papers. Let us look at Commonwealth funding over four years, from MYEFO. From 2013-14 to 2014-15—the last financial year—there is an 11.1 per cent increase. In the current financial year, there is a 7.9 per cent increase. For those of you who do not know, 'increase' means you spend more money! From 2015-16 to 2016-17 there is an 8.6 per cent increase—another one. In the following year, there is a further 6.5 per cent increase. So over those four years there is an increase of 27.3 per cent. As someone who proudly comes from a public school background, I am proud to say that the majority of that increase is actually weighted towards our public schools. The public schools' increase over that four-year period is 36.1 per cent. We are spending record amounts on education.

As for Labor's claim that there are cuts, I rely on no greater source to finalise this issue than the good old ABC Fact Check. The member for Charlton loves to quote ABC Fact Check, so I will read to him what it says about Labor's claim of so-called cuts to education. It says: 'The verdict is that the government did not cut \$30 billion from schools in the May budget.' It says that Ms Ellis, the member for Adelaide, is sprouting 'rubbery figures'—very generous words. I know that the word 'lie' is unparliamentary. If I look through the dictionary to find another word, I come up with 'fraudulent', 'hoodwink', 'untruthful', 'misleading', 'deception', 'mendacity' and 'falsehood'. All those words fit Labor's claim that this government has cut spending, when we have increased it to record levels.

What was very frightening in this parliament over the last few hours was what we saw during question time and in the member for Adelaide's speech on this MPI. When asked where the money was coming from she said we were told in question time. Labor's plans to try and fund this extra spending will come from abolishing negative gearing across all asset classes and increasing capital gains tax. What they do not understand is that the taxation revenue they gain from that will actually decrease the economy, destroy opportunity and send government revenue backwards.

If we are to look at what we need to be doing on education, we need to look at what is being taught in our schools. We need to be teaching our kids that wealth is created—that it does not come out of thin air—and how it is created. In history, we need to teach them the failures of central planning and socialism. We should have Venezuela as a case study—the economic policies that members of Labor and the Greens thought so wonderful they wanted to lecture to us about them. We should teach our kids about the importance of market prices and property rights—the importance of having an economic system with incentives in it. Most of all, we need to encourage an entrepreneurial spirit among our schoolkids. Labor's policies will crush that entrepreneurial spirit and they are the complete opposite of what we need to be doing for our children's future.