



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
MATTERS OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Carbon Pricing

SPEECH

Thursday, 7 July 2011

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Questioner
Speaker Ciobo, Steven, MP

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Mr CIOBO (Moncrieff) (15:54): It is fascinating to sit in the chamber and listen to the Assistant Treasurer talk about how the Labor Party is the party of hope. It is fascinating to stay in the chamber and hear about how the Labor Party espouses a policy that looks to the future with confidence, that recognises that our best days lay ahead of us. If you actually took on board what the Assistant Treasurer had to say, you would think that maybe the Labor Party offered the people of Australia some real alternatives. But the reality is that, consistent with Labor Party policy, every step of every day when it comes to swapping their positions on policy, what we heard from the Assistant Treasurer today was yet another example of saying one thing but doing something completely opposite.

I turn my mind to an article that was published in the *Australian* on 26 March 2011 which contained the most recent speaking points from the Labor Party organisation and which went to every backbencher and every frontbencher on the Labor Party side. These were some of their talking points—let us call them the talking points of hope; let us call them the talking points of not making sure the Australian people are fearful but, rather, that the Australian people are inspired. Let us look at some of the gems they had that inspired the Australian people. There were talking points like:

Without action on climate change average temperatures across Australia could increase by between 2.2C and 5C by 2080. People in northern NSW will feel like they live in Cairns.

Without action on climate change the average snow season in Australia is expected to contract by between 85 and 96 per cent by 2050, and disappear by the end of the century.

No more snow in Australia. But these are not the politics of fear; these are the politics of hope and inspiration!

Without action, climate change is expected to reduce the value of irrigated agricultural production in the Murray-Darling Basin by 12 per cent in 2030 and 49 per cent by 2050.

And:

Temperature rises and population growth mean the number of heat-related deaths in our capital cities is expected to more than triple to between 4300 and 6300 a year by 2050.

What a great message of hope! What a great message of inspiration for the Australian people! The Assistant Treasurer is right: the Labor Party are not in a scare campaign; they are about a vision for the future. What absolute rubbish. That is the reason why the Australian people look upon the Labor Party and the Assistant Treasurer as complete and utter frauds. They are frauds in the same way that the Assistant Treasurer comes into this chamber and dares to lecture the coalition about engaging in the politics of hope but then voices and condones talking points like those I have mentioned. That is the reason why we will stand up to the Labor Party. That is the reason why we will reject every step of the way their ridiculous policy to make this country less competitive—a policy that, importantly, will do nothing to change the global environment and the global temperature.

But, importantly as well, this is a government that, entirely consistently, every day since it was first elected in 2007, has chopped and changed when it comes to policy. Let us cast our minds back to the 2007 election. Does everyone remember the hype about the Kevin 07 campaign? There were videos and YouTube advertisements, and there were television advertisements in which we saw a very earnest looking member for Griffith put his hands together and say: 'Are you concerned about the cost of living? So am I.' As part of that campaign what we saw from the member for Griffith on behalf of everyone in the Labor Party was a resolute promise to do something about the cost of living. The tag line that the Labor Party used—it is on YouTube; I would encourage people to have a look at it if you want to kill a minute of your life—was, 'If the economy is doing so well, why aren't we?'

That was four years ago that the Labor Party campaigned on doing something about the cost of living. Who can remember the centrepiece of their policies? Fuelwatch—to bring down the price of fuel. GroceryWatch—

to bring down the price of groceries. What have we found over the last four years? We have seen that the Labor Party have forgotten all about the cost of living. They have completely forgotten about it in the same way that they have forgotten about the member for Griffith. They turned their back on GroceryWatch and they turned their back on Fuelwatch. Instead, we had a Deputy Prime Minister who, after promising that it was more likely that she would be a full forward for the Western Bulldogs, rose up only a matter of hours later and actually slit the throat of the member for Griffith and took over the leadership of the Australian Labor Party.

Opposition members interjecting—

Mr CIOBO: There was no stunning beforehand. It was a very savage killing, perhaps even worse than some of the worst examples that we have seen over the past couple of months. But, that notwithstanding, once again we saw the resolute earnestness of this new Prime Minister as she stood there and wrung her hands and said: 'I've got a great idea for the future. We'll have a people's congress on climate change. We'll get the best and the brightest in the country'—with visions of 2020 haunting us still. 'We'll get the best people in the country together and we'll develop a people's congress on how to deal with climate change.' But, oops, we have heard nothing about it since the election. This Prime Minister said, 'There will be no carbon tax under a government I lead' six days out from the federal election. Oops! The Labor Party have turned their backs on that as well. The Prime Minister also said, 'I can stop the boats, and I'll do it by getting a regional solution in East Timor.' That then became a regional solution in Papua New Guinea, which has now become the regional solution in Malaysia.

The Labor Party have turned their backs every step of the way, every single day, on the policies that they put forward. That is the reason the Australian people look at the Prime Minister and the Australian Labor Party and say: 'We have no confidence in your ability to lead. We have no confidence in what you say. We have no confidence in the direction in which you are going because, frankly, you are going around in circles. And we have no confidence whatsoever in your ability to take Australia forward with confidence into the future.' That is the reason there is crisis of confidence in this country when it comes to the direction and the policies of the Australian Labor Party.

This is the worst Labor government that this country has seen since before Whitlam. This is the worst Labor Party, in conjunction with the Greens, that has been inflicted on the Australian people, because this is a government that stands for nothing and believes in nothing. This is a government whose policies on the one hand claim to be full of promise but on the other—when we see leaked copies of their talking points—are actually all about neglect, fear, scare mongering and doing what they can to make sure that they berate the Australian people into backing their policies.

But the reality is that the Australian people know all about this government. They have got their measure; they have got their mark. They know that this Prime Minister is a complete fraud when it comes to policies and the words that she utters. That is the reason why, when it comes to this policy, the Australian people also know that Labor's great big new carbon tax will do nothing to make our environment better. When questions have been put to the Labor Party such as, 'If the parliament were to roll over and accept every single policy proposal that the Labor Party put forward, what impact would that have on Australia's environment and how quickly would that make a difference to saving the reef or the rainforests?' of course we get no answers. We get no answers because we only contribute 1.5 per cent of global emissions. So, even if we were to jeopardise our economic future by adopting this ridiculous new carbon tax that the Labor Party is implementing, it will do nothing to change the global climate and that in turn will do nothing to make sure that, like Labor's talking points, there are fewer bushfires, fewer droughts, fewer floods and better and more fertile land. That is precisely the reason that people laugh now when the Australian Labor Party claim to be sincere.

Less than 24 hours ago we saw the Treasurer of this country claim that, through the carbon tax, Australia would be taxing 'up to 1,000 companies' and then try to justify the inclusion of those words 'up to' as though that somehow demonstrated that it was okay that that figure had now been halved. In the same way, we could say that Australia's debt level under the Labor Party is now up to \$200 billion. Sure, it might actually be \$107 billion but \$200 billion is near enough! The reality is that this Treasurer has no idea in which policy direction this country is going, and the reason for that is that the Prime Minister herself has no idea about the policy direction of this government.

Although there might be a little bit of money splashing around, it has very little to do with the economic management of this government—rather, it is because of China. Although there might be a little bit of money splashing around in the Australian economy than there is elsewhere, there is no confidence in this government,

no confidence in the policies of this government, no confidence in the direction of this Prime Minister and fundamentally no confidence in the Australian Labor Party to do anything to help lead this country into a better future. *(Time expired)*