



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
**MATTERS OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE**

**Prime Minister**

**SPEECH**

**Wednesday, 14 September 2016**

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## SPEECH

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| <b>Questioner</b> |                              | <b>Responder</b>    |       |
| <b>Speaker</b>    | Kelly, Craig, MP             | <b>Question No.</b> |       |

**Mr CRAIG KELLY** (Hughes) (15:58): I was very interested to read that the subject of today's MPI was the failure of leadership. As the Speaker has said many times, these debates give us the opportunity to compare and contrast, so I wondered who had put up this opportunity for us to compare and contrast the result for the Prime Minister with that for the opposition leader. Then I worked it out: the opposition leader is away; it was the member for Sydney. It is the most Machiavellian MPI, I think, that we have ever seen. It reminds me of that old quote: 'When the cat's away, the mice will play.'

There were some very serious comments made today by the outgoing US ambassador, John Berry. These are unprecedented comments following the affair of the junior senator for New South Wales. The ambassador said:

We have been surprised, quite frankly, at the extent of the involvement of the Chinese government in Australian politics.

Paul Kelly said the implication in this:

... points to US concerns about China's ability to deploy finances to build influence and even manipulate outcomes ...

This brings us to leadership. What we saw was the junior senator for New South Wales making comments on the South China Sea that were contrary to our national interests and so dangerous, so irresponsible and so reckless that a true leader would have stood up and removed that person from the shadow cabinet.

What did we have? Absolutely nothing. And when it was found that cash had been paid from those associated with the Chinese communist party to that same senator, it should have been a clear-cut, black-and-white decision that that man had to be removed from the shadow cabinet. But what leadership did we see? We saw a Leader of the Opposition who is simply controlled by the factions of the Labor Party—a complete and utter failure.

On the same-sex marriage debate, a true Leader of the Opposition would admit that they lost the election and would say: 'Let's have the plebiscite, and I'm going to lead the case for yes. I'm going to stand up and I'm going to debate in every corner of the nation and stand-up for the yes case.' That is what a true leader would do, but what did we see yesterday? The most disgraceful and shameful comments—I will not even repeat them because they are beyond contempt.

When it comes to tackling the debt problem of this nation, a true opposition leader would stand up and admit that we have a big problem in this nation, that we have to do everything that we possibly can to get the budget back into balance, but we hear none of this from the opposition. We just hear whingeing and whining about cuts that do not exist. What would have happened earlier this year if we had had a true opposition leader when the Road Service Remuneration Tribunal handed down its decision that put small independent truck drivers—guys that are the salt of the earth—at a competitive disadvantage that is going to drive them out of business. What did we see from the opposition leader? He sat down and rolled over and took instructions from the bosses of the TWU. That is lack of leadership.

What do we have on this side? Let us compare and contrast. We have business confidence up eight per cent from last year. We have GDP at 3.3 per cent. Now let us look at how that compares. The USA is currently 1.2 per cent, the whole Euro area is 1.6 per cent, Japan is 0.8 per cent and even the UK, the standout performer of Europe is just at 2.2 per cent. We in this nation are leading the world in GDP growth, and what does that mean? That means an extra 200,000 jobs have been created in this economy in the last 12 months. That GDP growth of 3.3 per cent equates to an extra \$34 billion worth of wealth created in this economy in the last 12 months than if it had been somewhere around the 1.2 per cent growth that the USA had. That \$34 billion worth of extra

wealth means more is paid in taxes, more revenue flows into the Treasury and we get to do more of the things that count for this country.

True leadership is understanding. It is understanding about delegating, it is understanding that jobs in this economy are created by the private sector and it is giving them the opportunity to create wealth. *(Time expired)*