

## Feminists too, shoot themselves in the foot

When a person starts screaming about 'closet paedophiles' in the local supermarket, one begins to wonder where and who are the real victims of gender bias.

For so many generations the gender bias has favoured men. But as a victim of verbal sexist abuse for the first time, I reluctantly question the motivation of some women and what their real problem might be.

My education in gender rights was with a peer group contemporary with Germaine Greer and Anne Summers (author of *Damned Whores and God's Police*). I shared beers with, and supported, the women who chained themselves to the bar of the Civic Hotel (the student pub) in Canberra to demand the right of women to drink in the public bars of Australia.

Yes Virginia! Once upon a time, women had to drink their 'shandies' in the backroom of the saloon bar, or the beer garden (where we students drank). The 'public' bar was the domain of men. We got that changed.

This education developed when I briefly met Domitilia Barrios de Chungara in Bolivia. Domitilia was the indigenous Bolivian woman who led the walk-out of Latin American women from the International Women's conference in Mexico in 1975 when the Betty Friedman delegation from the US blocked their efforts to have union labour rights included in the declaration of rights for women. We are seeing the effects of that in the sweatshops and femicides along the US/Mexican border and in Honduras.

While I was in Bolivia I got news cuttings (this was before email) about how my sister had been targeted by police for being part of a women's movement that wanted to participate in the ANZAC day march and place a wreath for WAR – *Women Against Rape in War*. The local Federal member negotiated a deal between the police and the WAR women. He would place the wreath on behalf of the WAR group, and confrontation could be avoided.

For this action, there was an attempt to expel him from the RSL (he was a veteran in New Guinea and Taracan in WWII) and he had to take legal action against defamatory statements against him published in the local press.

Sorry madam, but abusing elderly gentlemen in public with defamatory allegations does not assist your rightful cause. Nor does inventing victim-hood. If you want to change things, do it

NGT welcomes letters and other contributions received by email or post prior to deadline. Letters longer than 300 words may be edited for length, and articles for accuracy. Please include your full name, address and phone number for verification purposes. Opinions expressed remain those of the author, and are not necessarily those of NGT.

intelligently and without malicious intent. Come on all you ladies; be fair, as fine ladies are.

As Sinnead O'Connor said while tearing up a photo of the Pope: "Fight the real enemy".

Warwick Fry  
Nimbin

## The waste makers

In 1960, Vance Packard wrote a book with the title *The Waste Makers*. It dealt with "the rising tide of consumerism" and how much waste it was generating. Since 1960 the tide of waste has reached tsunami proportions and continues to grow.

My concern is with a "wasteful industry" that existed long before 1960 and thrives to this day: the funeral industry. Everything about it is wasteful.

It starts with the absurd presumption that everyone becomes more precious when they die...

Whilst "urban sprawl" is bemoaned, large tracts of incalculably valuable land are set aside for the sole purpose of interring human remains.

Trees are felled for the sole purpose of making expensive coffins and their sole purpose is to rot away in the ground with their contents.

Still unsatisfied with its wastefulness, the funeral industry then seeks to make and sell ornate, expensive, carved marble tombstones in a belated effort to provide some degree of belated immortality.

It is no surprise that Evelyn Waugh's satire on the funeral industry is titled *The Loved One*.

Peter Leith  
Bogangar

## Press freedom

Look on the bright side of the last election result, whoever you are. The enthusiastic anti-Adani convoy in Mullumbimby was used to put survival fears into jobseekers in Qld. They voted Coalition. As always, neither they nor environmentalists will get what they want.

The realisation is growing that we have systemic gridlock of a failing system. Many are prepared to look beyond fear for self, to expanded thinking for the greater good.

A party with a plausible plan for all people and the



environment, supported by independents, might now win hands down. The fact is we've never seen such a concept, thus looking to history for ideas can only bring business as usual, where people and nature are expendable.

The discrepancy between those with wealth, and those with none, is accelerating madly. Participation of younger people such as in Extinction Rebellion is encouraging. It is patently obvious to young future leaders that governments, the tools of big business, are failing to mend a broken system. Indeed they can't.

Severe financial stress permeating all levels, and relentless profit and growth emphasis, is killing the fabric of society. Yet it is not obvious to most that we need a paradigm change, nor that there aren't really any people to blame. All aspects of an evolving civilisation are inter-related. And there aren't any people who have the answers.

The media continually presents us with brilliant academics, experts and authors. But the nature of specialisation and youth means they are still searching for wisdom and the big picture. Vested interests and think tanks influence which ones we hear. So naturally they don't present solutions.

I see possibilities for a second think tank locally, but it must be absolutely non-partisan. The first impulse of most people is that grand solutions will never be found. Participants must embrace a 'can do' attitude, which eliminates 'party' believers immediately.

I envisage practical, intelligent people of wide experience and all-embracing compassion, sitting in a circle, respectfully exchanging ideas.

It won't actually need much of a change in voting patterns to achieve the leverage required for effective change. Then a priority must be radical transparency from party grass roots to heads of governments. Continuous exposure of corruption everywhere strengthens the impetus for change.

The current crop of politicians contains too much bad blood and corruption to be creative. We need a varied,

high quality new generation, who see others with opposing ideas as valuable allies in search of the common good. Whether parties are advantageous, is an open question.

Hayo van der Woude  
Mullumbimby

## European bee threat?

European honey bees are great for honey and for pollinating European plants – many of our food crops, and other plants – but what we might not be aware of yet is the threat that honeybees pose in countries where they are not native – like Australia.

I came across this book, *The Forgotten Pollinators*, written in 1996, going through my Dad's book collection after he passed. It is a fascinating read (thanks Dad) for anyone interested and I couldn't believe I hadn't heard before about the threat that honeybees cause, being a keen environmentalist. I tried to find further information but failed – it seems funding and research in these areas is sparse – but if anyone has any leads please let me know.

The key message is that European honeybees are very efficient at collecting pollen and nectar, and studies have shown that they often outcompete and take the pollen and nectar that other species rely on – in Australia that is bats, many birds and small marsupials such as gliders and pigmy possums, and many species of native bees and other insects.

Depriving them of their food could be causing pressure on these species leading to extinctions, but we don't have the studies to know (as far as I'm aware, but maybe someone out there knows of them, as I said and can add to the conversation).

Honeybees could also be causing plant extinctions because many native Australian plants require a certain kind of pollination which honeybees don't do – meaning that the honeybee takes the pollen/nectar of the plant but leaves it unfertilised and hence sterile. Again this is likely threatening many native plants or causing extinction.

"From and ecological and

# Notices

## Old time Nimbin school reunion

A reunion to plan an annual reunion for Nimbin's Golden Oldies will be held on Saturday 9th November for lunch at Nimbin Bowling Club, 10am-noon. Partners included. Main meals \$16-\$25. Please RSVP to Rhonda on 0448-234-254, as approximate numbers are needed for the Club. Old photos, or anything of interest about our school days would be great.

## Casino & District Family History Group

Next monthly meeting Wednesday 13th November, 9.30am in our rooms at the School of Arts building in Walker Street, Casino. Guest speaker will be Sherry Walker from the Community Health Education Groups (CHEGS), which delivers low cost physical activity for older adults in northern NSW. Phone 6662-8114 for further information during our opening hours: Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 10am-2pm and Wednesdays 12-4pm.

## Annual General Meetings

- **Nimbin Independent Media Inc (Nim-FM) AGM**, Thursday 14th November, 5.30pm for 6pm start at the Community School Room, Nimbin Community Centre, all welcome.
- **Nimbin Hemp Embassy AGM**, 11am on Saturday 16th November at Nimbin Town Hall, 45 Cullen Street, Nimbin. Nominations for an elected position must be received by the president at least one week before the meeting.
- **MardiGrass Organising Body AGM**, 12pm on Saturday 16th November at Nimbin Town Hall, 45 Cullen Street, Nimbin. Nominations for an elected position must be received by the president at least one week before the meeting.
- **Australian HEMP Party AGM**, 2pm on Saturday 16th November at Nimbin Town Hall, 45 Cullen Street, Nimbin. Nominations for an elected position must be received by the president at least one week before the meeting.
- **Nimbin Chamber of Commerce AGM**, 6pm Wednesday 20th November at the Community School Room, Nimbin Community Centre.
- **Nimbin Community Centre Inc AGM** Thursday 21st November, 5.30pm at Birth & Beyond. All welcome, refreshments provided. Keynote speaker: Ruth Rosenhek, Lismore-based psychotherapist whose passion for world environmental issues has seen her travelling and speaking all over the world, inspiring activists and facilitating deep ecology workshops. Ruth will be speaking about living with climate emergency.
- **Nimbin Aquarius Foundation Inc AGM**, Friday 22nd November, 4.30pm for a 5pm start at the Community School Room, Nimbin Community Centre. New members welcome. Come and join us. Contact: [aquariusnetworking@gmail.com](mailto:aquariusnetworking@gmail.com)

## Business breakfast

Nimbin Central School invites local businesses to a Thank You Breakfast, to express its gratitude for supporting its students, and making a difference, on Tuesday 26th November, 7.30am in the school staffroom. Plenty of fresh food and pleasant company. Please RSVP by Friday 15th November, phone (02) 6689-1355 or email: [mark.chaseling@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:mark.chaseling@det.nsw.edu.au) or [Anne.Bowden9@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:Anne.Bowden9@det.nsw.edu.au)

## Rock Valley Hall Christmas BBQ and Twilight markets

Saturday 30th November, from 5pm. Market stalls, BBQ dinner and soft drinks available, Santa for the kids, chocolate with great prizes. To book a stall (\$10), call Betty on 6629-3329 or send a message to our facebook page: RockValleyHall

## Firey recruitment poster competition

Design a recruitment poster for Nimbin RFS to go into the running for big prizes! Three age groups: Under 12, Under 18, Over 18. Competition closes: 15th January, 2020. Submit entries by email to: [nimbingoodtimes@gmail.com](mailto:nimbingoodtimes@gmail.com) or post to PO Box 235 Nimbin 2480

evolutionary perspective, honeybees may pose a hitherto unsuspected threat to life in the bush. Not only do they displace native pollinators – both insects and vertebrates – from flowers

the pollination mechanisms of the crop plants or native flowers they visit. A significant portion of the Australian flora requires vibratory pollen harvesting to set fruit – buzz pollination – and honeybees are incapable



About us

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The Nimbin GoodTimes acknowledges the Bundjalung people, the traditional owners of the land and waters on which we work and live, and pay our respects to the Elders both past and present.

Bookkeeper Martha Paitson  
Web [www.nimbingoodtimes.com](http://www.nimbingoodtimes.com)  
And find us on Facebook  
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**NEXT DEADLINE:**  
**Wednesday 27th November**  
Email [nimbin.goodtimes@gmail.com](mailto:nimbin.goodtimes@gmail.com) or put stuff in our pigeonhole at the Nimbin Community Centre.

of this feat.” – Buchmann & Nabhan, *The Forgotten Pollinators*, 1996, p.178.  
The scary thing I noticed was that most of the studies done around native plant, animal and insect extinction due to honeybees was done in the USA – and Australia has four times the number of honeybee hives per square kilometre than the USA. Yowch!  
We tend to think of honeybees as the key/main pollinators but interestingly, I learnt from this book that honeybees contribute to about 15% of all pollination – the rest is done by beetles, ants, butterflies, moths, native bees, birds and critters.  
So basically, honeybees are good for our food crops, and for honey, but could be really causing trouble for our native plants, animals and insects – and hence the stability of whole ecosystems.  
Something to think about folks before you get another hive...

Jarrah Human  
Barkersvale

**Hope for abused families**  
I am half-way through Fiona Barnett’s book *Eyes Wide Open* (available at: [fionabarnett.org](http://fionabarnett.org) for free), and the only good news is that there are abused women who are very brave and highly intelligent.  
A child victim of paedophilia, Fiona provided testimony to the 2013 *Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Abuse*.  
She maintains child sex trafficking within Australian society depends on the clandestine support and involvement of representatives from all aspects of Australian government – legal, health and educational – and says she has received constant threats to her family’s safety, and incessant sabotage of her efforts to participate normally in Australian society.  
Until listening to her radio interviews, I would have suggested that parents who have had particular bad experiences with Tweed schools (and others) go public.  
But Fiona has learned her lessons well and suggests that victims get the kids away

with new identities and try and escape the System. She believes in Jesus, but can recommend no churches.  
She checks out in terms of others, like Cathy O’Brien, Kay Griggs, and the many books etc I have read about the so-called Illuminati.  
Her book is for mature audiences who care and can take it on board without giving up, as Fiona and others have not given up, despite taking up arms against a sea of struggles.

Peter Godden  
Nimbin

**Phone games**  
Dear kids, When you play those games on your phones you should analyse what the real message is.  
Is it trying to turn you into a killer – shooting everyone or everything you see, no questions asked? Is it trying to turn you into a gambler – with the message gamble responsibly, not it is irresponsible to gamble so we feel free to go on destroying the earth, our only home?  
Are you being turned into sheep – easy to herd and manipulate because you are slaves to these games and do not listen and analyse instructions from teachers or those who genuinely care for your future?  
Who controls your mind?

Anne Sutherland  
Robina

**Goonellabah retreat**  
I have almost completed renovating my business at Goonellabah. I have seven guest rooms, full spa, therapy rooms, café (Mojo Espresso Bar soon to open), small seminar/yoga space with interactive whiteboard etc.  
My goal is to do some good with the place, and I am looking for like minded people with suitable skills and attitude to come on board, maybe for retreats or maybe on a regular basis.  
I have a particular interest in “non-mainstream” (leave that to the expensive places), and have an interest in men’s issues and marginal groups.  
Anyone interested can contact me at: [gpcentre@bigpond.net.au](mailto:gpcentre@bigpond.net.au)

Peter Simpson  
Goonellabah

In defence of the Poetry Cup judging

**A tonality of relevance**  
It was intriguing to read the comment on the Nimbin Poetry Cup result (NGT Letters, Oct 19). I felt some pride in the fact that I thought I picked the winner before the judges’ decision on the result.  
I would not opine that perhaps Sarah Whitehall is tone deaf to some nuances of poetry, nor would I say that she may have missed the point of a strongly expressed poem. We all have personal and individual appreciations of poetry, and how it is performed.  
It is my opinion that the judges knew what they were doing, and that it was not easy for them to call the final decision.  
In my review I explained why I thought Liddle had won the prize. A difficult equilibrium between passion, word play, theatre (acting and performance – drama? – to some) and a strong historical tradition of satire that has always been a strong cultural current in Nimbin.  
What I didn’t include in the article – and I was writing it under the just and righteous demands of our editors to meet a last minute deadline – is that *relevance* must also be a critical quality of poetry.  
For me that was what tipped the balance in favour of the winning finalist.  
Shakespeare addressed the issues of his era through his historical plays. John Donne subtly addressed the issues of Church and State in his ‘metaphysical’ love poetry, diverting potential issues of spiritual versus ‘carnal’ love into a synthesis of a more evolved meaning of love. But those poems were relevant and concerning to the political and sociological environment of that era.  
OK. Loki Liddle didn’t win with a love poem. He won (narrowly in my mind) with the tonality of relevance. As I said in my article, the poem brilliantly parodied the God Botherers.  
It was a poem about the perversity of a world riddled with the criminal stupidity of the Donald Trumps, the Abbotts, the climate-denialists who take advantage of self-righteous evangelism to disguise their selfish irresponsibility.  
So yes. He raised his voice. And if you don’t have a tin ear, there was a dance of words in that discourse.

Warwick Fry  
Nimbin

**A fabulous Poetry Cup**  
To Sarah Whitehall (NGT Letters Oct 19), you can’t please all the people all the time, but you can please some of the people some of the time.

To everyone else, a great big thanks. Another absolutely fabulous weekend of sharing, poetry, laughter and community coming together.

Gail M. Clarke  
NPPWC organiser

**A Tragedy of a Rubbish Poetry’s Derision**  
*To compete or not to compete, that is the decision  
Whether ‘tis nobler in the mind of the poet n’ judge to suffer  
The slings and arrows of outrageous misfortune,  
Or to take arms against a scream of trivial troubles  
And by opposing end them until next year when we shall die  
Some more; as the poets yell, or weep, or win two thousand bucks  
The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks  
That their words we endure ‘tis a consummation  
Devoutly to be unwish’d. As they yell and creep;  
To stealthily, perchance to scheme – ay, there’s the rub:  
For in that well of deep thought, what ill-rhymed metaphors may come,  
When we have shuffled off another year’s poetry coil,  
Must give us pause – there’s the respect  
That makes calamity of so long a second heat.  
For who would bear the whips and scorns for all are but critic,  
Th’oppressor’s GoodTimes writ, the proud wombperson’s anticipation,  
The pangs of dispriz’d derision, the competition’s law replay,  
The insolence of office, and the spurns  
That as a judge patiently merit of my unworthy takes,  
When we ourself might our quietus make...  
As on that blackened day fifty fires the forest burn  
The enlightened huddled within a wooden hall awaits...  
With a bare bodkin? Who would fardels bear,  
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,  
But that the dread of something after death,  
The undiscover’d country, from whose bourn  
No traveller returns, puzzles the will,  
And makes us rather bear those ills we have  
Than fly to others that we know not of?  
Thus conscience doth make cowards of us all,  
And thus the native hue of resolution  
Is sicklied o’er with the pale cast of thought,  
And enterprises of great pitch and moment  
With this regard their currents turn awry  
And lose the name of action.*

Hamlet Shakesper  
Stratford-on-Avon



Are you a new resident of Nimbin or has someone new moved in next door perhaps?

## Welcome to Nimbin Kit

A Kit for new residents of Nimbin to help link them into our vibrant community, its history and opportunities and local survival tips & knowledge.

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**Nimbin Hills & Nimbin Lifestyle Real Estate Agents**

The Welcome to Nimbin Kit is a project of the Nimbin Advisory Group (NAG). It was auspiced by Nimbin Neighbourhood and Information Centre (NNIC), in partnership with the Nimbin Community Centre and the Nimbin Chamber of Commerce. Funded by the partners and Lismore City Council, with contributions from Nimbin Hills Real Estate and Lifestyle Real Estate. With thanks to the Nimbin Bush Theatre for its generous contribution towards the printing of the Kit.





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# Libs limp, Nats brain-dead on plastic bags

by Janelle Saffin  
Member for Lismore

The Berejiklian-Barilaro Government is lagging behind public opinion and the rest of Australia by voting down Labor's Bill to ban single-use plastic bags.

This Government has nothing to lose by banning these bags and everything to gain – less plastic killing our birds and aquatic life, and less plastic in landfill.

So many people and organisations are voluntarily getting rid of them, including Rex, the airline I fly to Sydney and back on.

The Electorate of Lismore has the Wilsons and Richmond rivers running through it, and we're not that far from the coastal strip.

I always think of the late Lance Ferris, founder of Australian Seabird Rescue, who campaigned hard for a ban on single-use plastic bags long before it was fashionable.

But this Government has missed a great opportunity to do the right thing by showing bipartisan support for good policy from Labor.

Last month, I welcomed the passing of Labor's Bill to ban single-use plastic bags in the NSW Upper House and



Kate Washington MP and Janelle Saffin MP with Esabel Henry, Louise Somerville and Jenni Law from Lismore Boomerang Bags.

called on the Government to support a state-wide ban.

The Bill came back to the Lower House, and in a shameful display of hypocrisy, a majority of Coalition MPs voted against it (I can only think to spite Labor).

This Government is just so out of step, because it is only prepared to release a discussion paper on 'Tackling plastic waste'.

Local groups, including the Lismore Boomerang Bags, have long advocated for this long-overdue policy reform and must feel betrayed.

The fact that NSW is the only state in this country that has not banned single-use plastic bags reflects shamefully on this Government.

My office is doing our bit to support this initiative by

gradually phasing out using plastic folders, sleeves and other plastic stationeries.

When it comes to anything to do with sensible environmental policy, the Liberal/National Government is always dragging the chain.

Shadow Minister for the Environment Kate Washington, who I hosted for a visit recently, said Labor had introduced the Bill three times.

"Labor will be campaigning around the clock with environmental groups across the State to make this happen," Kate said at the time.

"Most people are already on board when it comes to single-use plastic bags. This Government needs to catch up."

Ms Washington said:

"Australians use more than four billion plastic bags every year – 10 million or so each day – and an estimated 50 million of these end up in our waterways and ocean.

"Thirty per cent of the world's turtles and 90 per cent of seabird species have now ingested plastic debris.

"By 2050, it is predicted there will be more plastic in the ocean, by weight, than fish.

"Globally this issue has gained momentum, yet this Government has been disgracefully slow to act."

A legislative ban on single use plastic bags is supported by the National Retailers Association as well as NGOs, including the Boomerang Alliance.

Kate and I met with Jenni Law, Louise Somerville and Esabel Henry from Lismore Boomerang Bags to discuss the need to ban single-use plastic bags.

We also met with other local environmental groups including the North East Forest Alliance (NEFA), NSW Conservation Council, representatives of the Githabul, the Knitting Nannas, Lock the Gate Alliance, Rous County Council, Richmond River Rescue and Friends of the Koala.

## Alstonville aquifer safe, for now

by Tamara Smith, MP

The devastating effects of the current drought can be felt far and wide. One can scarcely look at the news or pick up a paper without feeling for the plight of the 98% of communities across the state who are affected.

Coupled with the predictions that this will be one of the hottest summers on record, and the continued denial of State and Federal governments to acknowledge that we are in a climate emergency, it is difficult to see a way out of this situation.

The blame-shifting within the government is dizzying, and the proposed solutions are short-sighted.

We are fortunate in our area to have side-stepped some of the devastation currently being experienced by our inland neighbours. But now is not the time to become complacent. On a warming planet, water is the new gold.

This week saw a huge win on water in our community – a proponent who had lodged a development application to mine vast quantities of water from an aquifer on the Alstonville Plateau formally withdrew their application.

A development of this type could have seen water extraction from the aquifer for agricultural use sold to retail companies for industrial use and then sold back to us as bottled water or soft-drink!

I am proud to have supported our farmers and community on this issue. This week their tireless efforts finally come to fruition. It was a great win for our community, as there is no social license to export food growing water and drinking water for commercial exports like soft drink.

But it was also a good reminder that we cannot become complacent when it



Tamara Smith with Alstonville farmers last month

comes to conserving our most precious resource.

Every day it becomes more and more evident that we are in a climate emergency. The government's continued denial of this does not make it any less true. We know that global warming is the defining challenge of our time and water security is crucial.

We are at a critical crossroads, where people across NSW, not just those experiencing critical water supply, but increasingly those from metropolitan and coastal areas are focused on drought and water security.

Now is the time to press ahead with ensuring our water security. So many towns are on critical water shortages, we shouldn't wait for that to happen. We need to conserve water and be water smart now.

Throughout the years of opposition to water mining in Alstonville, we were told that the Alstonville aquifer basically contained an unlimited supply of water. As though that somehow justified using it for industrial extraction!

There is simply no social or environmental licence to use

underground aquifer water in food growing land for industrial extraction. In a climate emergency, water for food growing and drinking is the absolute priority and we have to protect it.

Moving forward, Ballina Council have unanimously agreed to amend the Ballina Local Environment Plan (LEP) to prevent future development applications that seek to extract agricultural water for industrial use.

Tweed and Byron Shires have already done this, but Lismore shire has not. This is a cautionary tale for our region, and now is the time to continue to put pressure on local governments to ensure our water security for the years to come.

Rous County Council has recently urged residents that we are one dry summer away from imposed water restrictions. Water is a precious resource in our area, not an infinite one. Now is the time to look at adapting our lifestyles to make long-term changes. We all have a responsibility to act responsibly with water.

I am proud to stand with a community who says no to misuse of our precious resources.





by Darlene Cook, Deputy Mayor, Lismore City Council

# Climate emergency

communities across NSW and sought solutions to water supply and management in a drying environment into the future.

While our rivers are dying and towns and farms struggle to survive and truck in water, and while there are trains full of water travelling to keep coal mines out west operating, the only offering we saw from the politicians was the "build more dams" slogan.

The conference highlighted the work of our local Councils and water authorities who are exploring many other options: covering the overland irrigation and town water channels to reduce evaporation; ground water exploration; recycled water use; underground aquifer recharge; subsidised water tanks for households; demand management strategies and water use reduction education campaigns.

In our region, Rous County Council recently challenged people to come up with innovative ideas to reduce household consumption to 160 litres per person per day.

Some great ideas came out of this, especially from the schools. Simple things like shorter showers, using the water from the sink and laundry to water your garden, fixing leaking taps and installing water tanks are all things we can easily do.

Although our regional water storage dam is still at a good level, we are only one hot dry summer away from tough water restrictions. The Nimbin water supply is even more critical to the village, as it doesn't have back-up to the Rous supply. So every bit we all do to reduce our consumption will help keep that Nimbin water supply going.

In our region, we don't usually think about fire when we think about natural disasters. We tend to think that rainforest doesn't burn,

but the fires at Binna Burra in QLD and Angourie Rainforest Reserve near Yamba start to bring home the thought that fire could happen here in our villages or on farms and rural communities.

The whole North Coast has had an extended period of warmer than average daytime temperatures which, combined with very low humidity conditions and long term below average rainfall, means that the region also has low soil moisture. Low soil moisture means high stress in the vegetation, and some vegetation types that would not ordinarily burn will be highly flammable. All of this means that people who live in areas of dense vegetation are highly vulnerable to these very dangerous fire weather conditions.

If you and your family live in a high bushfire hazard location you need to ensure that your bushfire survival plan is up-to-date and that everyone knows what to do if you need to evacuate. Bushfire survival plans can be found at: <https://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/plan-and-prepare/bush-fire-survival-plan>

If you haven't reviewed your bushfire management plan recently then please go to the RFS website for the latest bushfire protection measures: [https://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/\\_\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0011/86519/DPP1007-Planning-for-Bushfire-Protection-2018-280818-D22.pdf](https://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/___data/assets/pdf_file/0011/86519/DPP1007-Planning-for-Bushfire-Protection-2018-280818-D22.pdf)

If you need any assistance to update your plan, then please do not hesitate to get in touch with your local RFS brigade. Be prepared, don't take any risks and by taking 20 minutes with your family to discuss what you'll do during a fire, you could save their lives, as well as your home.

I can be contacted at: [darlene.cook@lismore.nsw.gov.au](mailto:darlene.cook@lismore.nsw.gov.au) or on 0427-895-316.



by Kevin Hogan MP  
Member for Page

I took the Prime Minister to Rappville and the Northern Rivers Fire Control Centre in Casino recently. He got to see first-hand the devastation and speak to our families and friends affected.

This community has been through what can only be described as a nightmare.

Thank you to our wonderful RFS volunteers and other first responders who are doing a great job.

We have made cheaper medicine available for over 500,000 patients through the PBS.

- Tecentriq® and Avastin® helps patients with stage IV metastatic non-squamous non-small cell lung cancer.
- Besponsa® and Blincyto® is a medicine used to treat relapsed or refractory Philadelphia chromosome positive B-ALL
- Aprepitant Apotex® helps the treatment of patients with nausea and vomiting associated with chemotherapy.

Since 2013, the Government has listed over 2,100 new or amended items on the PBS. This represents an average of around 30 listings per month – or one each day – at an overall cost of around \$10.6 billion.

We have already committed over \$7 billion worth of assistance to help support our drought-affected farmers and communities.

Our national drought strategy has three important components:

- Supporting farmers in the here and now with immediate assistance, such as Farm Household Allowance, mental health and wellbeing support, tax cuts and cash payments to help households pay their bills;
- Supporting rural communities and businesses doing it tough in the drought with stimulus through funds such as the Drought Communities Programme; and
- Preparing for future droughts through measures such as the Future Drought Fund and funding to build dams, weirs and pipelines.

## Revenge of the Loon

by Laurie Axtens

We are being sold a false dichotomy.

We are either led to believe we must find ways to ameliorate the effects of climate change, because it is an expression of an unstoppable economic system; or we must bring the whole ice cap melting, great extinction, amazon burning horror-economy to a halt.

Neither is credible or do-able – our work must be on every level. Political, legal and direct action.

At the moment on both a legal and political level creating positive change is virtually impossible. The federal and NSW governments are all but minority governments reliant on right wing extremists to stay in power.

And legally, both governments are hiding all their deliberations under the lamest excuses you can imagine – cabinet confidentiality, corporate in confidence or due to some other random confidentiality agreement.



These are dark days where misinformation is running rough-shod over reasoned arguments and scientific evidence.

And I honestly feel a great deal of sympathy for the people at the coal face committed to change – they're doing great direct actions, but without the political and legal support it won't work.

They could all end up suffering from depression from the unresolved anger, and collapse back into the false dichotomy of amelioration.



## Council to treat Paper Mulberry plants around Nimbin



Paper Mulberry (*Broussonetia papyrifera*) is a fast growing and highly invasive tree that was first recorded in Australia near Brisbane in 1980.

For 20 years it was sold in nurseries and at markets both in Queensland and NSW for a variety of purposes: as a shade tree in home gardens, and more popularly to produce traditional 'tapa' cloth from the bark.

Today, Paper Mulberry has spread along the east coast of Queensland with wild populations detected in northern NSW. It is recognised as highly invasive in NSW.

Overseas, it is a significant invasive plant on the Pampas of Argentina and in the forests of Ghana and Uganda. In Islamabad, Pakistan, it is a very common urban weed and causes serious allergies that result in deaths every year.

A hardy plant, it has colonised, disturbed and neglected ecosystems such as abandoned farmland on steep terrain, areas of deforestation with large canopy gaps, and along roadsides.

This deciduous tree is very fast growing, reaching 3m in height in less than 12 months, and grows up to 15m tall.

The leaves are extremely variable in shape on an individual plant. They can be unlobed or ovate to deeply lobed (see picture).

Rous County Council will be conducting a treatment of any emerging plants around Nimbin to try and eradicate them from the region. All landowners receiving treatment have been given prior notification.

For more details of this plant visit [weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au](https://weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au)  
For more information contact Doug Langdon at 0427 335 526



# The inconvenient truth about society and global warming

by Bernadine Schwartz

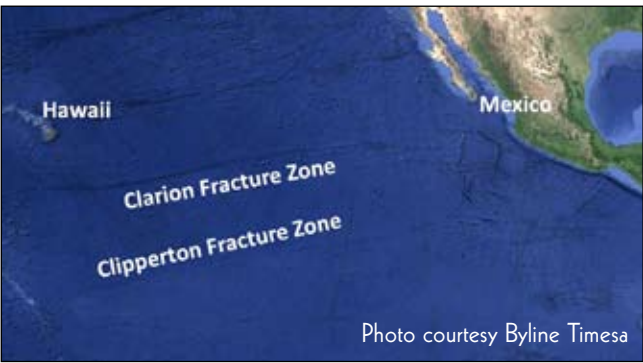
Today we live in a world where everything revolves around convenience as well as instant gratification and it's always been said that we are creatures of habit but if society can't manage to give them up, even when facing extinction, then they are more than habits, they're addictions or maybe they don't care less.

There is much we do in our lives that is difficult, if not impossible to change, however there's an endless list of things we can do to help our planet and individuals need to be reminded that what they deem trivial, is being multiplied daily by billions of others. Here is a sample of this negligent, if not dangerous behaviour.

Worldwide, 391 billion litres of water is siphoned from the world's lakes and aquifers every year, with most now depleted or approaching depletion, to cater for the one million bottles sold every minute, that also contributes eight million metric tons of plastic into our oceans yearly. Honestly, how hard is it to

fill up a bottle at home? People have selective memories and have no trouble remembering their daily coffee but buying a reusable cup seems to be too difficult for most and this so called forgetfulness, is the cause of 2,700,000 disposable cups being thrown out daily around the world. In Australia we dispose of 1 billion every year and you might think, it's only a paper cup, but globally those cups required the unnecessary death of 20 million trees. To make matters worse, they are lined with polyethylene so they can't be recycled but become landfill releasing CO<sub>2</sub> and methane, with 1.1 metric tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> for every 2,000 cups, and that's not taking into account the emissions during manufacturing.

You would have thought with global warming on our heels that the number of passengers taking to the air would be declining but the answer is no. They've increased by 130% since 2004 with predictions for 2019 at 4.6 billion. Correct me if I'm wrong, but isn't it public knowledge that flying contributes greatly to global



warming? Everyone likes to look their best when out, however appearance has become paramount and what you wear has become who you are. This is why over 80 billion garments are sold annually around the world, that are worn one day and out the next and Australians are guilty of discarding six tonnes of textiles and clothing every 10 minutes! They can't even take the time to donate them, more convenient to just throw them in the bin. The cotton industry uses vast amounts of water to supply all this disposable clothing, with one pair of jeans and a T-shirt requiring 20,000 litres and it's an underlying reason why India is facing a severe water crisis. It also happens to be one of the world's largest

producers of cotton. Society's greatest obsession is their smartphones and computers and for corporations such as Apple (who are worth over a trillion dollars) to satisfy consumer demand requires a constant supply of rare earth metals and minerals, especially cobalt that's vital for much of our green technology. This is why mining companies are about to embark on plundering the very depths of the Pacific Ocean in an area called the Clipperton, Clarion fracture zones, that together cover a massive 1.7 million square miles, roughly the size of India, and it's being hailed a modern day Eldorado. Vehicles weighing 300 tonnes, will literally vacuum up small nodules of REMs

that will not only cause extinction to local species but will disturb carbon that has been stored in deep sea sediment for millions of years and according to scientists, will eventually reach our atmosphere. Back in 1989, a field test was conducted to simulate deep sea mining and it had a devastating impact on marine life, so much that the site has never recovered and despite all this, it's full steam ahead. You can draw your own conclusions, as for me these statistics prove how people are exceeding themselves more every year and certainly not the kind of behaviour you would expect when living on a dying planet, with 2.2 billion of the population being children. Now, I was recently told, that pointing out people's shameful behaviour isn't ethical and it's a policy of most NGOs. What am I expected to do? Turn the other cheek and endorse their reckless behaviour? The stakes couldn't be any higher and what they do is my business because they tend to forget, that this is my home too, as well as 7.6 billion others and all I want is my

old home back. For those who purchase carbon offsets or donate to environmental causes to compensate, no matter how substantial, it only serves to ease your conscience. Why can't you simply commit to reducing your carbon footprint? Everyone is entitled to their beliefs when discussing politics, religion and many other issues but there is no room for interpretation when discussing global warming and why I'm not prepared to make excuses for the human race, when not only is the scientific evidence concrete but it's occurring everywhere for all to see. I'm fearful of what the future will bring our children and if there is a future, society's behaviour today, will be considered a crime. If ever there was a time for you to be aware of the ground you walk upon, the air you breathe and the bounty Mother Earth has given you, it's now because this is what you'll miss, not those glitzy shop windows. And that old saying, you don't know what you've got 'til it's gone, is going to repeatedly haunt every one of us from here on in.

## Solar house batteries: current state of play

by the staff of the Rainbow Power Company

Batteries have been seen as both the saviour and Achilles heel of renewable energy. Turning night into day! Battery technology isn't new either. The oldest known battery-like object is from 2000 years ago, made with a ceramic pot with a tube of copper and a rod of iron. It's called the Baghdad battery, as it was found in Iraq, though there are lots of guesses as to its real function.

The word battery was coined in 1748 by Benjamin Franklin who was working on a system of charged glass plates, probably while sitting bored in meetings about the foundation of the United States. The first true practical battery was invented by Alessandro Volta in 1800, and rechargeable Lead Acid batteries came along in 1859. Given the importance of energy to the whole of human civilisation and the universe, we have been working pretty hard on improving them ever since. There were all sorts of innovations in structure, additives, and processes, but ultimately the fundamental chemistry was identical for the next 150 years.

For the vast majority of Rainbow Power's history, the dominant battery technology/chemistry was Lead and Acid. First as flooded wet cells, then later as sealed gel cells.

That's all changing now, at least we think it is. Some of the society-wide transformations we have seen from the mobile phone revolution are now making their way to home energy storage.

Enter lithium batteries, with their higher energy density, significantly larger depth of discharge, but unfortunately also a significantly higher price. Or at least that's how it



would appear at first glance.

The Australian-made Powerplus lithium battery comes with a \$3990 price tag for a 3.3kWh 48V block, which is \$1,209 per kWh. In comparison, a Trojan flooded lead acid battery retails for \$650 for a 255Ah 12V set (3.06kWh). This makes their \$/kWh figure \$650/3.06kWh = \$212/kWh.

So with lithium at \$1209/kWh and flooded lead acid at \$212/kWh, the choice seems obvious for many people. However, that is not accounting for possibly the most important factors when choosing a battery, that being recommended depth of discharge and cycle life.

With lithium, you can fully discharge the battery, which means when you buy 3.3kWh, you can use 3.3kWh. With flooded lead acid, the recommended depth of discharge is 50%, although less than this is better, so when you buy 3.06kWh in our example, you're only getting 1.53kWh usable.

To make matters worse, the cycle life of the flooded battery is significantly lower than for lithium. When you discharge a Powerplus lithium battery to a realistic 75% every time, you can expect the battery

to last 5000 cycles, or 13.7 years if you assume one cycle per day. Discharging the Trojan flooded battery to the same 75% every day means you can expect it to last around 1000 cycles, or 2.7 years at a cycle per day. So for the same size and same depth of discharge, a lithium battery will last around five times longer than a flooded lead acid. Consequently, the heavier price tag makes a lot of sense. In addition to the much deeper depth of discharge and cycle life, lithium batteries are also a lot easier to store and to maintain. Due to their higher energy density, they are about three times lighter than lead acid and take about half the space. You also won't need to refill any fluid or equalise them, which makes them a good hassle-free solution for most people. Whether lithium batteries will cripple the industry or pave the way for more cost effective storage is pretty much a moot point; if ever there were a time to turn our weakness and vulnerability into strength and security, the time is now. Let RPC help you take the bull by the horns and invest in solar and renewables. Phone (02) 6689-1430 or visit: [www.rpc.com.au](http://www.rpc.com.au)

## Isn't it time the Rural Fire Service got paid?



by Louise Mehta

Of all the jobs in the world, this must be one of the bravest and most dangerous – standing face-to-face with a wall of flames. Why is it then, that our Rural Fire Service members are not paid for the excellent service they provide? I can speak first-hand of their skill and protection, and pay them ultimate respect. It was only a few months ago on Blue Springs community that a car exploded (yes, another fire up there). An unsavoury character had driven his old banger onto the community, but the car was on its last legs and wouldn't go up the hill. So very unwisely, he pushed the car into the bushes at the roadside. The car exploded and caused a substantial fire that spread up the trees. The man ran away to get his insurance papers! The nearest houses were only 100 metres away. Upon calling the fire brigade, two fire stations responded and came within five minutes. The

firemen told us residents, "Car fires are toxic – stand back." They handed us bottles of water and ushered us further away, taking particular care of the kids, and walked towards the toxic inferno. The other firemen had got the truck hoses ready and were facing the fire up close. They had to use the precious little water we had left in our shared community dam to put the blaze out. (Underground/covered water chambers needed in future?) It's incredible that these heroes are willing to risk their lives and their health for their communities. Their protection of people is outstanding. Luckily this time no-one was hurt, and the car owner was escorted from the premises. It's a long-established tradition to have the RFS as a voluntary service, but it's high time some of our tax money that the government distributes on our behalf goes directly into these heroes' pockets for their service, instead of the government's mad focus on war-mongering. I spoke to a fire chief recently. The uniform they receive is great, but they don't receive anything else, just the accolade of knowing they are saving human lives, animal lives, forests and homes. Bushfires keep them in an almost full-time job, and it's time the government showed their appreciation by paying them all. Thank you Rural Fire Service, you are real-life superheroes.



# Have your say on family law reforms

The Prime Minister has launched a Joint Parliamentary Committee to conduct a wide-ranging inquiry into the family law system to look at whether the current system, which is intended to support parents and children during the end of a relationship, is fit for purpose.

Coalition backbenchers and the crossbench, including One Nation leader Pauline Hanson, have been calling for an inquiry for some time, arguing the system is too expensive and slow.

“We want to ensure families can resolve issues as quickly and fairly as possible, so everyone can move on with their lives,” the Prime Minister said.

“This inquiry will allow the Parliament to hear directly from families and listen to them as they give their accounts of how the family law system has been impacting them and how it interacts with the child support system,” he said.

The Attorney-General, Christian Porter said, “Amongst other issues, this inquiry will address important operational issues of enforcement of court orders and legal costs to families of family law proceedings, with a particular focus on instances where legal fees are disproportionate to the total asset pool or issues in dispute.”

It will also look at how the family law system, state and territory child protection



Separating families currently face long waits for hearings and judgments and exorbitant legal costs under the current adversarial family law system

systems and family and domestic violence jurisdictions can communicate better.

In 2017, the Federal Government ordered the Australian Law Reform Commission (ALRC) to conduct a wide-ranging review of the system. That report was released earlier this year, and recommended sweeping changes including scrapping the current Family Court and giving the states the power to judge such cases. It found that under the current system, children fall through the gaps between the family law courts, the child protection systems and the state and territory responses to family violence.

While waiting for that review to be released, Christian Porter announced controversial plans to merge the Family Court and Federal Circuit Court in a bid to ease crippling delays in the system.

That proposal was widely canned by lawyers, arguing it was a policy developed by

spreadsheet rather than with the best interests of families at heart.

Rosie Batty and a number of women’s legal and domestic violence services have raised concerns and lobbied against the inquiry in general, describing it as “unnecessary and dangerous” and Senator Hanson’s involvement specifically, citing the One Nation leader’s comments that women are lying about domestic violence to stop fathers getting custody of their children, based on the alleged experience of her son.

“We have a leading politician who has openly stated that women lie and exaggerate in custody issues,” Ms Batty said, concerned that the inquiry was “already tainted”. Ms Batty wants immediate government action to prioritise the safety of women and children.

Greens Senator Larissa Waters tried to dissolve the “toxic” inquiry, citing that

more than 1400 domestic violence survivors have also contacted federal MPs, pleading for the inquiry not to go ahead because of a perceived “biased and damaging agenda”, but the motion was voted down, despite support from Labor.

“A lot of people are verifying what I’m saying, so don’t shut me down, I’m just putting the truth out there,” Senator Hanson said. “If these people are so afraid of what evidence may be given in that hearing, don’t blame me, this is what’s happening in our system.”

Senator Hanson said she had first-hand experience with the family courts as a wife, mother and grandmother.

While it is rare for Family Court judges to speak publicly about their views, retiring Justice David Collier told SMH in 2013 that “allegations of child sexual abuse are being increasingly invented by mothers to stop fathers from seeing their children.”

“When you have heard the evidence, you realise that this is a person who’s so determined to win that he or she will say anything.

“I’m satisfied that a number of people who have appeared before me have known that it is one of the ways of completely shutting husbands out of the child’s life. It’s a horrible weapon,” he said.

The 10 committee members sitting on the inquiry comprise of six women and four men – with the political make up being five Liberals, three ALP, with One Nation

Subject of complaint	No. of complaints
Court system and procedures	504
Lawyers	239
Judges	236
Substantive law	193
Family report writers/family consultants	106
Independent children’s lawyers	84
Child Support Agency	64
Police	48
Psychologists/psychiatric professionals	38
Child protection	37
Family dispute resolution practitioners	33
Registrars	21
Other court staff	14
Child contact services	12
Medical professional	4
Accountant	1

As part of their Family Law Inquiry, the ALRC established the ‘Tell Us Your Story’ project — an online submission portal where individuals were encouraged to anonymously share personal stories of their experiences with the family law system.

A number of the 732 responses relayed dissatisfaction with lawyers, judges and report writers

leader Pauline Hanson and Independent Zali Steggall, who was a family law barrister before entering parliament.

Public submissions to the inquiry are now open until 18th December. Follow the link below to a simple template you can use to make your submission, which can be provided via email to:

[familylaw.sen@aph.gov.au](mailto:familylaw.sen@aph.gov.au) or via the committee’s online portal by using the ‘upload submission’ button on the committee’s website: [www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_](http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_)

and expressed frustration that their complaints about these parties had not been heard or acted upon.

Many reported that their engagement with the family law system ‘ruined their life’, leaving them financially destitute and alienated from their children.

One commented that having terminal cancer is less “distressing” than going through the family court and there were broad perceptions that the system is biased, with strong views on both sides that the system reflects gender bias – favouring mothers, according to some, or favouring fathers, according to others.

There is also a perception that the court system exacerbates conflicts and hostility between parents, that relationships and agreements would be more amicable if resolved out of court, eg: “The system encourages parents to lie and creates conflict where none previously existed”.

*Business/Committees/Joint/Family\_Law\_System/FamilyLaw*

The committee will invite a cross section of witnesses to appear at public hearings to speak further to the issues that correspond to the committee’s terms of reference. Information about public hearings will be available on the committee’s website once the committee has finalised a public hearing program.

The inquiry will report back on 7th October 2020.

# The race to the bottom in Australian politics

by Aidan Ricketts

Politics in Australia really has become a dismal tide. The last federal election saw a disunited LNP, with no plan for climate change and almost no policies, re-elected with a slim parliamentary majority. Anyone on the progressive side of politics was in shock for weeks afterwards.

The election result was a shock, but the continuing tragedy is the ongoing failure of the Labor party to stump up and provide any meaningful opposition in the new term of parliament.

Labor had some good policies heading into the election, so it is an insult to the 49% of voters who voted for or preferred Labor to see so many policies thrown overboard in the immediate wake of an election. Labor supporters often strut around on social media, dismissing minor parties with the retort “but Labor is a party of government”. That is all well and good if you happen to get into government, but if not your job is to be the actual parliamentary opposition and at this Labor are failing tragically.

The election was actually very close, and so the obvious implication is that Australia remains very divided on important issues, like the climate emergency, tax reform, social justice, human rights and environmental sustainability. Over the past several decades we have seen the Liberal and National parties lurch ever further to

the loony right.

Climate denial is all but entrenched as government policy, offshore detention centres are functioning concentration camps for the stateless, and totalitarian surveillance powers, restrictions on freedom of the press and anti-protests laws are heralding a serious decline into populist fascism.

There is a concept in politics known as the Overton window. It is the popularly perceived spectrum on which the general public assesses whether ideas are mainstream and ‘centrist’ or whether they are outlier or extreme. Once we understand the idea of the Overton window we can start to see how badly Labor has and continues to let down progressive politics in Australia, by capitulating to the government’s legislative agenda.

Right wing firebrands like Hanson, Abbott and Dutton deliberately take on the role of pushing the window to the right by persistently normalising extreme reactionary and fear fuelled extremism. Activists, and minor parties like the Greens do their bit day in and day out to re-centre politics from those extremes by pushing new ideas from the progressive side of politics.

Sometimes good policy can take several election cycles to break through. The Greens, for example have persisted with policies like marriage equality, phasing out coal, euthanasia, medicinal cannabis, political donations reform, federal ICAC and drug

decriminalisation, and bit by bit these ideas shift the Overton window and gain traction.

This is where Labor’s obsession with gaining power at the expense of providing principled opposition has become part of the problem. Chasing swinging voters through focus groups doesn’t help hold or shift the Overton window. Every time Labor votes with the government in contradiction to its own previously held policies, they allow the concept of the ‘middle ground’ to shift to the right. The result is an endless cycle of compromises and the dismal state of Australian politics.

Throughout the 1950’s and 1960’s Labor was in opposition federally but they maintained their principles and worked as an opposition and it was often said that they led policy from opposition as the government borrowed their policies to stay in power. They didn’t just give up on opposing the Vietnam war because they lost the election in 1966 and 1969.

Opposition is an important function and as it stands now only the cross bench in the lower house and the Greens in the Senate are providing meaningful opposition on a raft of important issues.

Just in a few short months we have seen Labor vote with the government to approve unjust and regressive tax cuts for the rich, anti-protests laws, and to approve the use of taxpayers’ money and legislation to keep coal fired power stations open even if the companies

that own them want them closed.

Labor is failing to provide opposition to the cash ban which threatens everyone’s personal and financial freedom, and provides no meaningful opposition to internet surveillance, or restrictions on press freedom. All of these issues have been left to the tiny crossbench to fight.

The problem with Labor’s approach is that if they keep doing it, they start each new electoral cycle from further behind. By supporting Scom’s tax cuts, they have given the public the idea that regressive taxation enjoys bi-partisan support.

Should we believe that Labor would behave better in government than in opposition? Maybe not, just look to Queensland where they are passing their own anti-protest laws from the government benches

I’m sorry, I don’t hate Labor, I grew up within the Labor party, I joined when I turned 18, and even up to a few elections ago made donations equally to Greens and Labor at election time. I am a proud unionist as well. Something is deeply wrong, and I don’t mean to criticise the supporters and members, I am simply criticising what passes for political strategy.

Just last week I spoke at a rally against the Queensland government’s anti-protest laws, surrounded by trade union supporters from Brisbane. What does it mean for Labor when the CFMMEU, ETU, AMWU and NTEU are all lined up outside

parliament with climate activists protesting against Labor anti-protest laws.

The only member of Queensland parliament to vote against the anti-protest laws was the one Greens MP, Michael Berkman. The only MPs to vote against the tax cuts for the rich or the federal anti-protest laws were the Greens and cross bench.

It is tragic, but Labor itself is becoming an impediment to progressive politics in this country by enabling the slide into right wing populism. In the state election last year, Labor seemed more determined to fight the Greens, with negative mail-outs in Lismore and Ballina, than unite to fight against the Nationals.

There’s more to politics than gaining government, it’s also about defending good policy between elections, and holding your ground. Unless and until Labor becomes a real opposition, we will continue to see the slide to the right, resisted only by our brave activists, the Greens and cross bench politicians.

This is why the social movements that fight between elections need your support, from climate strikes to climate emergency, extinction rebellion, NEFA and more. We can’t rely on any of the big political parties, we need to be active in our communities. And we need to put Labor to the test.

Simply being ‘not as bad as the LNP’ is not enough; there is a need to stand up for good policy, between elections.