

## **How did our nation, Australia, sink to this?**

By Andrew Clennell, The Australian, 9 May 2019

*Australian NSW State member of parliament, Mark Latham, unleashes in a brilliant maiden speech. First an article in The Australian, then the full speech below.*

New One Nation NSW MP Mark Latham has railed against the Left and political correctness in his maiden speech in the NSW parliament, accusing people of trying to bring down western civilisation through a campaign of “cultural Marxism”.

Mr Latham defended rugby player Israel Folau and said that he would be “moving legislation for the protection of free speech, religious freedom and the privacy rights of workers” in his time in parliament.

He also said he would move legislation allowing nuclear power into NSW and said the federal Opposition spokesman on the environment, Mark Butler, would become the “minister for blackouts” with his pro-renewables approach and compared the push for renewables to a “pagan religion”.

Mr Latham, who with a One Nation colleague and several other crossbenchers will hold the balance of power in the upper house in NSW, said he and others were in the “fight of our lives” to bring back the values of Western civilisation.

“Mr President, I stand with Israel Folau. In his own private time away from his job playing football, he’s a preacher at his community church and naturally, he quotes the Bible,” Mr Latham said.

“I was on Folau’s list of sinners”

“He believes, as millions of people have believed for thousands of years, that sinners go to Hell.

“As per his valid religious faith, he loves the sinner but condemns the sin. Yet for his beliefs, his Christianity, he is not allowed to play rugby, to chase the pigskin around the park.

“How did our State and our nation ever come to this? I was on Folau’s list of sinners, more than once actually.

“But as I don’t believe in Hell, there was no way I could take offence. Those claiming outrage have fabricated their position solely for the purpose of censorship. This is not an argument about diversity.

“The Wallabies have no female players, no disabled, no elderly, no middle aged.

“They are selected from a tiny fraction of the young, fit, athletic male population.

“By excluding a committed Christian, they are making their game less inclusive. And as for Folau being a role model for young gay men, one only needs to state this proposition to understand its absurdity.

“Footballers are not role models for anyone, other than in enjoying their sporting ability.

“I say to any young person: if you are looking for guidance and inspiration in life, study Churchill, Lincoln, Reagan and Roosevelt, not Todd Carney. By the way, that’s Ronald Reagan, not Reg Reagan.

“The new serfdom”

“No Australian should be fearful of proclaiming four of the most glorious words of our civilisation: I Am A Christian.

“No one should be sacked by their employer for statements of genuine belief and faith that have got nothing to do with their job.

“The Folau case exposes the new serfdom in the Australian workplace: how big companies, the corporate PC-elites are wanting to control all aspects of their employees’ lives — their religious and political views, how they speak and think, how they behave, even in their own time away from the workplace.

“This is a stunning intrusion on workers’ rights. Yet far from condemning the new serfdom, Labor and the trade unions have been cheering it on.

“As per our One Nation election commitments, I will be moving legislation for the protection of free speech, religious freedom and the privacy rights of workers.”

Mr Latham also went on to rail against the Left generally.

“For all its pitfalls and failings, the Legislative Council has always redeemed itself in wanting to extend the reach of Western civilisation and advancement in Australia. Until now,” Mr Latham said.

‘A scene from the Life of Brian’

“Like so many parts of our politics that have changed quickly in recent times, there are voices here who do not believe in the virtues of the West, who do not acknowledge the nation-building achievements of our culture and our country.

“It’s like a scene from The Life of Brian, a case of: What has Western civilisation done for us? Only advanced healthcare and education; architecture, engineering, information technology, free speech and the rule of law.

“ In fact: this chamber, this parliament, in this city, all our public institutions and the material comforts we take for granted — none of them could exist without the greatness of the West. Without the advances that began with the Enlightenment and Industrial Revolution and continue to this day.

“Yet still, among the Leftist elites, among the social engineers and cultural dietitians, sneering at our civilisation and its achievements has become their new pastime.

“They preach diversity but practice a suffocating cultural conformity, wanting everyone to be just like them.

“They argue for inclusion but as soon as a Christian, a conservative, a libertarian, a nationalist, a working class larrikin, an outsider from the vast suburbs and regions of our nation disagrees with them, they crank up their PC “outrage machine to exclude them from society. “

They are tolerant of everything except dissenting values and opinions — meaning, of course, they are tolerant of nothing that matters, only themselves.”

Mr Latham said this was a “Leftist curse through the ages: the recurring history of those who so badly crave control over others, they lose control over themselves.”

“Safe Schools garbage”

He said those from the Left were taking away from “battlers” “the right to speak their mind. To say they love their country and want Australia Day to stay”.

“To practice their Christianity, openly and freely. To send their children to school without the garbage of Safe Schools, Wear-It-Purple days, ‘HeadRest’ indoctrination and the other crackpot theories making some NSW classrooms more like a Hare Krishna meeting than actual education.

“And when they go to work, the chance to do their job without being bombarded by employment quotas, ‘unconscious bias’ training and a long list of unspeakable, taboo words — scary, scary stuff, like ‘guys’ and ‘mums and dads’.” “The New Left are the new primitives of our time: junking the importance of evidence, of recorded history, of biological science, to pretend that all parts of our lives (especially race, gender and sexuality) can be fluid, that everything we know and feel around us is, in fact, ‘socially constructed’.”

Mr Latham said society “shouldn’t be confusing young people and risking their mental health by pushing gender fluidity upon them”.

“ ... In the last national census, for instance, 13 hundred Australians identified as transgender. But to listen to the political and media coverage of this issue, you would think there were 13 million.

“ Mr President, Everywhere I travel, parents and grandparents, workers and communities, tell me how concerned they are about Australia’s direction. They ask me, ‘What’s happened to our country; where has this nonsense come from?’ The answer is clear. The Leftist project, then and now, is about control. “Having, with the fall of the Berlin Wall, lost the struggle for economic control, the Left got smarter. It shifted from the Cold War to a culture war. It moved from pursuing economic Marxism to pushing cultural Marxism.

“Instead of seeking revolution at the top of government, it has marched instead through our institutions — a tactic that’s harder to combat. The elites have been remarkably successful in this cultural invasion.

“Our abiding national traditions of free speech, merit selection, resilience and love of country are being lost, not just in the public sector — in schools, universities, public broadcasters, major

political parties and government agencies — but also in large parts of corporate Australia and the commercial media. The rest of us are the Resistance to this national takeover.

“If you control someone’s language, you control a big part of their lives: how they interact with others, how they communicate in society, their feeling of belonging.”

“As the great John Cleese has pointed out, telling a joke about someone doesn’t mean we hate them.”

Mr Latham went on to defend former Labor leader Luke Foley’s description of “white flight” from western Sydney but criticised his successor Michael Daley’s comments about “Asians with PhDs” coming in to take jobs.

And he said there was too much immigration.

“Big Australia immigration has flooded the labour market, holding down wages. “It has also flooded the housing market, driving up demand and prices.

“It’s fuelling Sydney’s congestion and overdevelopment crisis. This city cannot continue to grow at 100,000 per annum, at a severe cost to the environment and residential lifestyle.

“For a government struggling to build a couple of tram tracks down the main street, the promise of better planning is a hoax.

He said Premier Gladys Berejiklian’s government was championing an “aerotropolis” near the new Western Sydney Airport.

“The government talks about it like it’s a cross between Silicon Valley and Disneyland.

“But it’s looming as just another excuse for urban sprawl and under-servicing.

“The government says it’s building a new city the size of Adelaide, with 1.3 million people. Yet remarkably, there are no plans for a new public hospital, only a so-called ‘integrated health facility’ servicing less than 20 per cent of the proposed population.

“Mr President, The fightback for freedom is long overdue. As is the fightback for fairness.

“The repair job in education is massive: hours of discussion, hundreds of questions to be asked and answered, scores of policy ideas and reform proposals to be advanced. And that’s what I’ll be doing throughout this term of parliament — my word I will. Mr President, I’m concerned for the future prosperity of our State.”

Priorities: education, energy

He said education and energy policy were his two priorities.

“I’m not a climate denier. I respect all forms of science. But just as much, I don’t believe in running public policy through the work of zealots.

“And that’s what renewables have become — a new pagan religion, whereby the Green-Left wants to hand over human control of our energy grid to the vagaries of the weather, through wind and sun worship.

“We are being asked to change the climate by relying on the weather — a high-risk, paradoxical way of planning for the needs of a modern economy. There is a place for renewables in the system. But it must be supplementary to baseload power, not the other way around.

“Currently the Federal Labor Shadow Minister for Energy, Mark Butler, is promising the Australian people a new era of “dispatchable renewable energy”. “Yet when the wind is not blowing and the sun is not shining, there is nothing to dispatch. Butler will end up being the Minister for Blackouts.

“In longer term planning for the State, lifting the ban on uranium mining and nuclear power, as per the Deputy Premier’s policy. I can advise the House that yesterday I gave notice of a Private Member’s Bill for this purpose.”

Mr Latham said that since retiring from federal parliament having served as federal opposition leader in 2005: “The days and years with my children have been the best of my life but now they are so much older and, through them, having seen what the government school system has become, it was time to come here to do something about it.”

He thanked 2GB broadcaster Alan Jones for his support, saying he “at various times gave me a chance when no one else would”.

“ For those of us who believe in the virtues of Western civilisation, who treasure the advances and values of the Enlightenment ... this is the fight of our lives. Our ethos, sir, is simple: No surrender. No surrender in any debate, in any institution, on any front. No surrender in trying to take back our country, That, Mr President, is why I’m here and what I’m fighting for.”

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The full speech:

### **HON MARK LATHAM INAUGURAL SPEECH, NSW PARLIAMENT, 190508**

**The PRESIDENT:** Before I give the Hon. Mark Latham the call, I take this opportunity, on behalf of all honourable members, to welcome into my gallery guests of the Hon. Mark Latham, including Mr Alan Jones, Mr Ross Cameron and Mr Rowan Dean, here in the House today for the member's speech. I take this opportunity also, on behalf of all members, to welcome our former colleague the Hon. Paul Green, who is in the public gallery. The Hon. Mark Latham has the call.

**The Hon. MARK LATHAM (16:33):** Thank you, Mr President, and I congratulate you on your re-elevation to high office. I note that not far from where you sit, some 10 metres from the entrance to this old Chamber, there is a wonderfully imposing canvas. It depicts the decisive moment in Australian history—the landing of the First Fleet at Sydney Cove on 26 January 1788. The great painting by Algernon Talmage is called the Founding of Australia, a founding marked by the arrival of Western civilisation on this continent. It is an appropriate entrance statement for this place, the mother of legislative power and progress in Australia.

Despite attempts by both sides of politics to either abolish it or silence it, for nearly two centuries the Legislative Council has, by and large, been a civilising force in New South Wales.

Over the years the Australian Labor Party has expelled more of its MLCs for failing to vote for the Legislative Council's abolition than are here representing Labor today. Among conservatives, George Reid in 1895 dissolved the Parliament on the single issue of Legislative Council obstruction, pledging—he said—to "clear the fossils" from a rotten and corrupt Chamber. And he had not even met Eddie Obeid.

Crooks and scoundrels aside, this place has been true to Talmage's painting. It has honoured the founding principles of our nation: That progress is possible through parliamentary debate and deliberation; that in a land of hard work and meritocracy every citizen can and should receive a fair go. For all its pitfalls and failings the Legislative Council has always redeemed itself in wanting to extend the reach of Western civilisation and advancement in Australia—until now. Like so many parts of our politics that have changed quickly in recent times, there are voices here who do not believe in the virtues of the West, who do not acknowledge the nation-building achievements of our culture and our country.

It is a bit like a scene from *The Life of Brian*, a case of: What has Western civilisation done for us? Only advanced health care and education, architecture, engineering, information technology, free speech and the rule of law. In fact, this Chamber, this Parliament, this city, all our public institutions and the material comforts we take for granted—none of them could exist without the greatness of the West—without the advances that began with the Enlightenment and Industrial Revolution and continue to this day.

Yet still, among the leftist elites, among the social engineers and cultural dieticians, sneering at our civilisation and its achievements has become their new pastime. They preach diversity but practice a suffocating cultural conformity, wanting everyone to be just like them. They argue for inclusion but as soon as a Christian, a conservative, a libertarian, a nationalist, a working-class larrikin, an outsider from the vast suburbs and regions of our nation disagrees with them, they crank up their PC-outrage machine to exclude them from society. They are tolerant of everything except dissenting values and opinions meaning, of course, they are tolerant of nothing that matters, only themselves.

This is the leftist curse through the ages—the recurring history of those who so badly crave control over others they lose control over themselves. In their lust for authority they lose their respect for the rights of others. It is a bit like a scene from Orwell's *Animal Farm*, the Green-Labor-Left has become the thing it originally opposed—elitist, would-be dictators taking away from working-class communities the things these battlers value: the right to speak their mind; to say they love their country and want Australia Day to stay; to practice their Christianity, openly and freely; to send their children to school without the garbage of Safe Schools, Wear-It-Purple days, "HeadRest" indoctrination and the other crackpot theories making some New South Wales classrooms more like a Hare Krishna meeting than actual education; and when they go to work the chance to do their job without being bombarded by employment quotas, "unconscious bias" training and a long list of unspeakable, taboo words, scary, scary stuff, like "guys" and "mums and dads".

The New Left are the new primitives of our time, junking the importance of evidence, of recorded history, of biological science, to pretend that all parts of our lives, especially race, gender and sexuality can be fluid, that everything we know and feel around us is, in fact, "socially constructed", that is what they say, "socially constructed". They are peddling fake news. We have not been brainwashed by capitalist hegemony as the post-modernists argue. People know and understand the things they see and feel in their lives. It is called evidence. Our personal characteristics and identities are fixed, not fluid. With few exceptions people are born either male or female.

We should not be confusing young people and risking their mental health by pushing gender fluidity upon them. We should not be taking away from parents their essential role as the primary carers of their children in matters personal and sexual. We should not be changing the purpose of our education system, transforming schools from places of skill and academic attainment into gender fluidity factories. Most of all, we should not be losing sight of the interests of mainstream, majority Australia. In the last national census, for instance, 1,300 Australians identified as transgender. But to listen to the political and media coverage of this issue you would think there were 13 million.

Everywhere I travel parents and grandparents, workers and communities, tell me how concerned they are about Australia's direction. They ask me, "What's happened to our country? Where has this nonsense come from?" The answer is clear. The leftist project, then and now, is about control. Having with the fall of the Berlin Wall lost the struggle for economic control, the Left got smarter. It shifted from the cold war to a culture war. It moved from pursuing economic Marxism to pushing cultural Marxism. Instead of trying to socialise the means of production, it is now trying to socialise the means of individual expression and belief—our language, our values, our behaviour. Instead of seeking revolution at the top of government, it has marched instead through our institutions—a tactic that is harder to combat.

The elites have been remarkably successful in this cultural invasion. Our abiding national traditions of free speech, merit selection, resilience and love of country are being lost, not just in the public sector—in schools, universities, public broadcasters, major political parties and government agencies—but also in large parts of corporate Australia and the commercial media. The rest of us are the Resistance to this national takeover. Our chief ally is evidence—evidence and human nature. Through the power of reason and enlightenment people want to have a say about the things that are important to them. They want free speech. They want freedom of religion and belief. Australians are also a tough yet fair-minded people. It comes from our origins in colonial times, the things depicted in Talmage's painting.

The Australian story in settling a harsh and sometimes hostile continent on the other side of the world is one of the most remarkable in human history. Leaders such as Arthur Phillip and Lachlan Macquarie, in little more than a generation, turned a penal colony into a civilisation—building what has now become the best nation on earth. It was achieved through resilience and mateship—the Australian habit of toughing it out and treating others as equals. Jack is as good as his master. It is in our nature to treat people as we find them—to judge them on their individual merit, their work ethic, their community contribution. This is what makes identity politics—subdividing our people on the basis of race, gender and sexuality—so foreign to the Australian way. Just as the old Soviet Union fell over because human nature wanted economic competition and individual wealth and excellence, I believe these new mutant strains of social control—post-modernism and identity politics—will also fail. They run contrary to the nature and evidence of our lives.

I ran for parliament to be part of the fightback for freedom and fairness. In New South Wales One Nation took 34 detailed policies to the election, including a detailed package for human rights reform. We believe New South Wales needs new laws protecting freedom of speech, especially on university campuses where so much of academic and student freedom has been lost. Sometimes we laugh at the absurdity of political correctness but at its core it is an insidious movement, a handbrake on liberty. If you control someone's language, you control a big part of their lives: how they interact with others, how they communicate in society, their feeling of belonging.

Like every other Australian, I own my own words; I know what I mean by them. Like so many Australians, I refuse to allow my words to be controlled by strangers—by the elites with their confected outrage and PC censorship. In truth in society, offence is taken, not given. It is a personal choice, based on assumptions about what someone meant by their words. Yet only the person speaking those words truly knows what was meant. As the great John Cleese has pointed out, telling a joke about someone does not mean we hate them. We love the people we joke about. We love the Irish, the blondes, the gays, everyone—as they have helped to bring humour and joy into our lives.

The other problem with political correctness is in knowing what is genuine and what is not. So much of the offenderati, the outrage industry, involves the fabrication of offence—saying that their feelings have been hurt solely for the reason of closing down their political opponents. PC is riddled with these internal contradictions. Let me give an example from this parliament. Labor members of Parliament [MPs] are not allowed to say two words—"white flight"—even though they are a truthful expression of what is happening in western Sydney, having been identified by Luke Foley. It is a sad day for democracy when MPs cannot talk about the evidence in their electorates. Then last year in the Blue Mountains, when Michael Daley launched a wrong-headed attack on Asians with PhDs, the two Labor MPs in the room stood mute. So the Labor leader who had it right, Luke Foley, cannot have his words repeated; while the one who had it wrong went unchecked, for months on end. Go figure the logic of that. New South Wales needs freedom of speech laws, even for its own MPs, and also new laws for the protection of religious freedom.

As I am sure the President will appreciate, many migrants came to Australia to escape religious persecution. Now they are saying the problems in their home country have followed them here. I am not a Christian but I recognise the vital contribution of Christianity to our civilisation: its vast social and charitable work; its teaching of right and wrong in civil society. I stand with Israel Folau. In his own private time away from his job playing football he is a preacher at his community church and naturally he quotes the *Bible*. Why would he not? He believes, as millions of people have believed for thousands of years, that sinners go to hell. As per his valid religious faith, he loves the sinner but condemns the sin. Yet for his beliefs, his Christianity, he is not allowed to play rugby, to chase the pigskin around the park. How did our State and our nation ever come to this? I was on Folau's list of sinners, more than once actually. I dread to look at how many times I was listed by his social media postings. But as I do not believe in hell there was no way I could take offence.

Those claiming outrage have fabricated their position solely for the purpose of censorship. This is not an argument about diversity. The Wallabies have no female players, no disabled, no elderly, no middle aged. They are selected from a tiny fraction of the young, fit, athletic male population. By excluding a committed Christian, they are making their game less inclusive. And as for Folau being a role model for young gay men, one only needs to state this proposition to understand its absurdity. Footballers are not role models for anyone, other than in enjoying their sporting ability. I say to any young person: if you are looking for guidance and inspiration in life, study Churchill, Lincoln, Reagan and Roosevelt, not Todd Carney. By the way, that is Ronald Reagan, not Reg Reagan.

I believe that no Australian should live in fear of the words they utter. No Australian should be fearful of proclaiming four of the most glorious words of our civilisation: I am a Christian. No-one should be sacked by their employer for statements of genuine belief and faith that have got nothing to do with their job. The Folau case exposes the new serfdom in the Australian workplace. Who ever would have thought it would come to this, how big companies, the corporate PC-elites are wanting to control all aspects of their employees' lives—their

religious and political views, how they speak and think, how they behave, even in their own time well away from the workplace? This is a stunning intrusion on workers' rights. Yet far from condemning the new serfdom, Labor and the trade unions have been cheering it on.

As per our One Nation election commitments, I will be moving legislation for the protection of free speech, religious freedom and the privacy rights of workers. The fightback for freedom is long overdue, as is the fight for fairness. I mentioned earlier that for most people identities of race, gender and sexuality are fixed. People are born a certain way and should not be judged by the things in life they cannot change. To do so is to practice the poison of identity politics. It has become the great obsession of leftists everywhere; even though for normal people it is not the way in which they live their lives. No-one wakes up in the morning and thinks, "I'm male or female. I'm black or white. I'm straight or gay." They start their day as workers, as parents, as family members, as community contributors. Not only is identity politics irrelevant to most people, it is a betrayal of social justice and social democracy.

In the 1980s and 1990s we were told to look through a person's race, gender and sexuality. These things were said to be irrelevant to a person's character, their work ethic, the way in which they care about others. There was no need to lump them into broad and unrepresentative categories based on the primitive notion of how they look. When I was first elected to the Federal Parliament in 1994, if you had asked me, "Who typically is the neediest person in your electorate?"—the one I was trying to help as a Labor member of Parliament—I would have said, "A white working-class man living in one of Campbelltown's public housing estates, who had been restructured out of manufacturing work in the eighties and now faced the indignity of long-term unemployment and welfare dependency." How silly of me. How little did I know. I am now told he was an example of white male privilege and that the bum out of his pants was actually a rainbow shot up his backside.

International studies have shown that Australia is one of the most racially tolerant and fairest nations on earth. Through equal pay and employment opportunity laws, we also have achieved large slabs of gender equality. Australia now has more female than male university graduates, lawyers, GP doctors, vets, teachers, office managers and public servants. When the Prime Minister's department tested for evidence of unconscious bias in its 2017 Behavioural Economics Team Australia [BETA] study of workforce recruitment practices, it found that the only type of bias was against white men: Women, ethnic groups and Aborigines enjoyed favouritism in the workplace. This is the truth about Australia and the fair-mindedness of our people.

Identity politics is a zero-sum game. It uses employment quotas and other forms of institutionalised bias to favour one hand-picked identity grouping over another, regardless of personal need. This causes enormous resentment among those who miss out because they have the wrong skin colour, the wrong gender, the wrong sexuality—things they can do nothing about. Divisive identity politics subdivides our society, destroying its sense of common good and it leaves the rainbow Left impotent. They have no solution for the white welfare-dependent man living in a public housing estate. In fact, far from helping him, perversely and tragically they define him as part of the problem. Imagine how he feels. I have spoken to these men. Imagine how they feel when they see other identity characteristics gaining special treatment.

I have studied these things all my adult life. I come to this Chamber convinced that there is only one way of running a fair society and that is through merit. The best person for the job must get the job, regardless of race, gender and sexuality. This is why One Nation proposes to abolish employment quotas and other identity-based forms of discrimination. Let me say something about identity politics at the other end of the political spectrum. When Pauline

Hanson approached me to run for One Nation, I insisted on all discriminatory clauses and policies being purged from the party's platform. When that happened, we were able to campaign as a pro-merit, anti-discrimination party in the New South Wales election.

I am particularly pleased that the party ran its first Islamic candidate, Emma Eros, for the seat of Hornsby. Emma is present in the public gallery. In the social media storm that followed, some anti-Islamic fundamentalists told me they could not vote for us as long as a Muslim was representing One Nation. Privately I thought, "So be it." I oppose discrimination in all its forms whether it is the new anti-white racism of the Left, or the flawed belief of some that all Muslims are evil and inspired by the *Koran* to cut our throats when the caliphate is called. Islam, like all religions, is diverse in its range and intensity of belief. It gains more public attention because at one extreme when it is bad, it is barbaric with the horror of radical Islamic terrorism.

At the other extreme, it has some great people, such as the Indian Fijian community in south-west Sydney. Kicked out of India for being Muslim and then kicked out of Fiji for working too hard, they have come to Australia and set up businesses with a strong work and study ethic. I know several of those families and I am proud to call them friends—as I am proud of Emma Eros. As a party, One Nation cannot go around calling on migrants to integrate yet not support someone like Emma, but Emma has. A licensed plumber and businesswoman, she talks western, dresses western and works hard in western style, yet also practices a moderate and conservative strand of Islam. She is a wonderful example of what multiculturalism should be: a seamless blend of the best of our country and her traditional beliefs.

Whether we are talking about the extreme Left or extreme Right of politics, the challenge—indeed, a work in perpetuity—is to overcome ignorance to enable people to cross racial and religious boundaries and get to know each other, building a more trusting and cohesive society. The rise of identity politics has coincided with Australia losing control of the scale of its immigration program. Governments seem to think we owe the rest of the world easy entry into our country when in fact immigration policy should be framed for the benefit of the people who live here now. Big Australia immigration has flooded the labour market, holding down wages. It has also flooded the housing market, driving up demand and prices. It is fuelling Sydney's congestion and over-development crisis. This city cannot continue to grow at 100,000 people per annum at a severe cost to the environment and residential lifestyle.

Whether someone is a longstanding resident or they recently came to Australia and Sydney, we are all in the same circumstances: crawling along car park roads, standing on crowded trains, trying to combat congestion and urban sprawl. I have to say that the promise of better planning is a hoax from a government that is struggling to build a couple of tram tracks down the main street. We in western Sydney know this problem well. For 40 years in different capacities I have been arguing that jobs and services need to come to our region before the people do. That is the reason I got into politics in the first place. If anything, in this era of high immigration, the problem is getting worse. None of the lessons of the seventies and eighties have been learned.

Take for example the proposed aerotropolis surrounding the Badgerys Creek Airport site. The Government talks about it as though it is a cross between Silicon Valley and Disneyland, but it is looming as just another excuse for urban sprawl and under-servicing. The Government says it is building a new city the size of Adelaide, with 1.3 million people. Yet, remarkably, there are no plans for a new public hospital at the aerotropolis—only a so-called integrated health facility servicing less than 20 per cent of the proposed population. Adelaide has four public hospitals. The aerotropolis? None.

I say to the Government, "Fix this problem. It is a huge priority for One Nation. You're creating the youth capital of Australia between Penrith and Camden. It needs not only a new public hospital but also a specialist children's hospital to cope with rapid population growth." Earlier I asked where the attacks on our country and our civilisation are coming from. And here is the problem: I am not just talking about the usual suspects from the Greens-Labor Left. I am talking about Liberal and The Nationals parties that have been paralysed on these issues, that have not stood up for freedom of speech, freedom of religion and meritocracy.

Specifically in this place, I am talking about a Coalition Government that tried to abolish greyhound racing in New South Wales, having surrendered to a belief that animal rights are more important than human rights. I am talking about a National party that under Minister Adrian Piccoli allowed the monstrosity of post-modernism fluidity theory to run through the New South Wales school curriculum. The Nationals used to believe in the basics of school education. Sure, they are still committed to young people learning the alphabet, but it is the LGBTQI-WTF version. The rot set in under Piccoli, who amazingly became a mouthpiece for the Teachers Federation. He broke the golden rule of sound education policy in this State, which is: When the Teachers Federation says something needs to be done, do the opposite.

Through a loss of academic standards, testing and grading, New South Wales school results are going backwards compared to other States and other countries. There is no one thing that has gone wrong in the education system. What we are experiencing is system failure—multiple problems feeding off each other, a downward spiral in standards and outcomes. Teacher quality has collapsed in many government schools to the point where it now resembles social work more than academic instruction. The curriculum has been infested with ideological content, with high school English becoming a tutorial in identity politics. Student resilience is being lost and replaced by snowflake schooling where only half an excuse is needed to avoid testing and grading.

Useless fads, like "growth mindset", "soft skills" and "progression points", are also clogging up the classroom. The "All Must Have Prizes" mentality is levelling out notions of excellence and effort—like the old Soviet Union where, no matter how students performed, they all got the same result and the same recognition. In disadvantaged communities, a welfare school model has emerged whereby teachers pursue pastoral care and student happiness as their primary goals rather than results and career paths.

I must say, these developments break my heart. One of the best parts of my life was attending Hurlstone Agricultural High School at Glenfield—by far the best school in south-west Sydney until Piccoli ripped it off us with his harebrained scheme of moving it to Richmond. The tragedy of declining school results is that they hit disadvantaged students hardest. A good school is a poor kid's passport to a better life. There is a mountain of work to do to restore those opportunities and uplift the standards of New South Wales education. It is all there in the One Nation policy platform. Measurement is the key. The old adage in public sector management applies: what gets measured gets done. In New South Wales schools we measure very little. The repair job in education is massive: hours of discussion, hundreds of questions to be asked and answered, and scores of policy ideas and reform proposals to be advanced. That is what I will be doing throughout this term of Parliament—my word, I will. It is a top priority to try to fix our schools and restore the quality of opportunity in our society.

I am concerned for the future prosperity of our State. There are two clear and present dangers to the New South Wales economy: the first, as I mentioned, is education; the second is energy policy. The issue around energy involves a basic question of responsibility. The Government and the Parliament has no greater duty of care to the people of New South Wales

than to keep the lights on so our essential services can continue to save lives, our households can continue to function and our businesses can continue to grow. History shows and common sense confirms the best way to do this is through reliable, dispatchable base load power. We need to build the system on a strong foundation of full-time, 24/7 power generation, on top of which intermittent, part-time sources can play a role.

When the peak demand hits, invariably in summer, and accidents hit the system, again invariably in summer, around-the-clock base load power is our best insurance policy against blackouts. The two ways of achieving this are nuclear power and coal-fired stations. Yet across the country nuclear is banned and coal is being run out of the market through the subsidies, targets and special deals being offered to renewable energy providers. The Australian Energy Market Operator has stated that—this is an amazing statistic—in the decade to 2015 the equivalent of 30 percent of New South Wales peak electricity demand was lost in power generation.

It is being replaced by a patchwork system—a series of part-time power sources, the effectiveness of which rely heavily on weather and environmental conditions. When the sun is not shining, there is no solar power. When the wind is not blowing, there is no wind power. When the water supply runs short, there is no hydro. Even gas power is limited, due to access and pricing issues in New South Wales, meaning it is best suited to peaking plants, rather than the 24/7 baseload. These are part-time sources of power. Yes, it may be possible to cobble them together in a way that meets full-time electricity demands, but the risks are high. We are talking about a privatised, vertically integrated market where normal pricing signals do not apply. There are perverse incentives to short the market, as we have seen with AGL Energy. In terms of green technology, there is another leap of faith: a reliance on the rapid development of battery storage—all I can say is, "Good luck with that."

For all the public relations hoopla about Elon Musk's battery farm in South Australia, it has a capacity for meeting the needs of the Tomago Aluminium smelter in the Hunter Valley for just eight minutes. In truth the projections for energy production and peak energy consumption in New South Wales are beginning to separate in the wrong direction. The State is losing its energy self-sufficiency. The likely tipping point—a heightened risk of blackouts—will occur in the summer of 2022-23, following the closure of Liddell Power Station. As a Parliament and as representatives of the community our responsibility and duty of care to the people of New South Wales is to make provision now—right now—for this contingency. We have to stop sleepwalking into disaster.

I am not a climate denier; I respect all forms of science. But I do not believe in running public policy through the work of zealots. That is what renewables have become—a new pagan religion. The green left wants to hand over human control of our energy grid to the vagaries of the weather through wind and sun worship. We are being asked to change the climate by relying on the weather. That is a high-risk, contradictory way of planning for the needs of a modern economy. There is a place for renewables in the system, but they must be supplementary to base load power; not the other way around. Currently the Federal Labor shadow Minister for Energy, Mark Butler, is promising the Australian people a new era of "dispatchable renewable energy"—remember those three words: dispatchable renewable energy. Yet when the wind is not blowing and the sun is not shining, there is nothing to dispatch. Butler will end up being the "Minister for Blackouts".

Our Asian economic competitors must be laughing their heads off. Australia is the world's most resource-rich nation, yet we have some of the world's highest electricity prices and we are shedding generation capacity that would otherwise meet 30 per cent of public

demand during the hot summers of the nation's largest State. New South Wales should be a global energy super power with abundant nuclear, coal-fired, gas and renewable energy. How can this goal be achieved? I have confidence in the new Minister for Energy and Environment, Matt Kean. Under his policy leadership it would be wise for the Government to pivot away from the renewables fetish and emphasise the importance of energy security and affordability.

One Nation offers its cooperation in implementing six vital changes: first, upgrading the capacity of our inter-State connectors, especially into coal-rich Queensland. Second, bundling up the State Government's electricity consumption and putting out to tender a supply contract exclusively for additional coal-fired power. Third, abolishing all targets, subsidies and special deals for renewables, levelling the playing field on the production side of the market. Fourth, abolishing the Government's Climate Change Fund, which has become a slush fund for projects unrelated to climate change. This would cut electricity prices for households and businesses. Fifth, immediate approval of the Santos project at Narrabri to overcome the State's chronic deficiency in gas supply. This is no longer an environmental or local-land-use issue, but a question of keeping the lights on. Sixth, planning for the State in the longer term, lifting the ban on uranium mining and nuclear power, as per the Deputy Premier's policy. I can advise the House that yesterday I gave notice of a private member's bill for this purpose. I am delighted to be doing the Deputy Premier's policy work for him in lifting the ban on uranium mining and nuclear power.

I have had a fortunate life. As a child my parents told me to study hard at school and I did. As a young man I had the honour of being Labor mayor of my home town, Liverpool, building facilities that should have been built 30 years earlier. Then I had the opportunity to serve in the Australian House of Representatives, doing what very few Australians ever have a chance to do: running to run the country at a general election. For the past 14 years I have lived the greatest joy and responsibility of my life as a home dad and primary carer, giving support and all my love to my wife, Janine, and our three children, Oliver, Isaac and Siena. When I left the Federal Parliament in 2005 the words of the former member for Bass, Warwick Smith, echoed in my ears, "Every day you spend away from your children is a day you never get back." The days and years with my children have been the best of my life, but now they are so much older and—as they keep telling me during household discussions on politics—wiser. Through them I have seen what the government school system has become. It was time to come here and do something about those issues and others.

On 23 March three members of the minor parties on my side of politics—two from One Nation—were elected to the Legislative Council. I congratulate my friend and colleague Rod Roberts on his election. I thank all who made it possible: our party leader, Senator Pauline Hanson, a committed patriot who would do anything for her country; our highly dedicated New South Wales One Nation officials, particularly Mick Jackson and Amit Batish; and our candidates, party workers and volunteers. I thank my campaign manager, Corrine Barraclough, who was magnificent in every respect. I also thank Alan Jones, who at various times gave me a chance when others would not. I am delighted to see Alan in the President's gallery, along with two outsiders: Ross Cameron, whose dad served here with great distinction, and Rowan Dean. Rowan and Ross were supposed to have a long-running television show, but I have brought them here instead. Hopefully that will make a good difference to someone along the way. Parliamentary privilege is a beautiful thing—how did I ever let it go? He is a great broadcaster and, of course, a great fighter for Australia.

Most of all, I thank the people of New South Wales, who have given me a second go at parliamentary service. The personal vote below the line at the recent election confers a special responsibility. Our supporters are a long way from the centre of political power, but they hold

a powerful belief in what politics should be. They are salt-of-the-earth people without a parliamentary or media megaphone of their own. Therefore, they rely on parties like Pauline Hanson's One Nation to fight for the things they love about their country. For those of us who believe in the virtues of western civilisation, who treasure the advances and values of the Enlightenment, who look at Talmage's painting and marvel at its meaning, this is the fight of our lives. Our ethos, sir, is simple: No surrender—no surrender in any debate, in any institution, on any front; no surrender in trying to take back our country. That is why I am here and it is what I am fighting for. I thank the House for its courtesies and for listening to my maiden address.