

11 February 2010

# ADJOURNMENT

## Climate Change

**Mr BRADBURY (Lindsay) (4.43PM)**—I rise to draw attention to the dishonesty of the approach to taking action on climate change that has been brought forward by the Leader of the Opposition. The first element of the dishonesty of the Leader of the Opposition's approach is that he wants to send a message to all of those people that are sceptical about the science of climate change that he is a friend, that he is their champion. Yet, on the other hand, he wants to send a parallel message to those people, the majority of Australians, who want action on climate change that he actually does believe that we need to take action. This is the balancing act, the parallel game that is going on, from the opposition leader. It is a game that we will pursue and we will expose—because you cannot walk on both sides of the street.

The Leader of the Opposition has come forward with a policy that accepts a five per cent reduction in emissions. Let us approach the debate on that basis. Let us assume that every person in this place is now signed up to a minimum five per cent reduction in emissions. If we are all agreed, that does not leave the Lord Monckton supporters anyone to support in this place—because no-one here is opposed to science and no-one here is opposed to reducing emissions by a minimum of five per cent.

So let us have a look at the plans that have been brought forward. The plan brought forward by the Rudd Labor government has been enhanced as a result of the cooperation that occurred before the consensus that was achieved between the two parties broke down and Tony Abbott came to the leadership. It is a plan that first and foremost puts a cap on emissions. It says: 'We'll cap emissions—that is the only way we will actually stop emissions from increasing—and, over time, reduce them.' The second point is that it is a scheme that says we will make the big polluters pay, that the biggest 1,000 polluters, those who are responsible for the largest proportion of emissions of carbon into the atmosphere, will bear the cost. Obviously those businesses will seek to recover some of the increased costs by passing on some of those costs to the businesses they do business with and to the consumers who ultimately purchase their product. We have acknowledged that, and we have set up a system that ensures we are providing assistance to the individuals, households and businesses that will be affected so that they can cope with those increased costs and help themselves to become more energy efficient and

make the transition into a low-carbon future. Every cent of revenue that will be collected under the CPRS will be returned to individuals and businesses in the form of increased assistance.

On the other hand we have the opposition proposal, which does not have a cap. The significance of that is that the modelling released by the Department of Climate Change indicates that, under their proposal, the absence of a cap means that, by 2020, emissions will increase by 13 per cent—not only will they not decrease by the five per cent that everybody allegedly agrees to; they will increase. On the first test of any policy measure, this fails. The first test is: will it achieve what it is designed to achieve? The answer to that is no—because it will not reduce emissions.

The second element of deception within this particular proposal is that the Leader of the Opposition says there will be no cost. You cannot take on the great challenge of climate change and transitioning Australia and our economy into a low-carbon future without there being costs. It is dishonest not to acknowledge that. Under the Leader of the Opposition's system, in the first instance the costs will be borne by all taxpayers. That will either be through increased taxes or through reducing and stripping away the services that we rely on. Under the opposition's model, we would end up having a panel which would decide which technology should receive the benefit of government assistance. We have seen what they have done in the past. Let us not talk about the member for Wentworth and his involvement with the rainmaker, which cost \$10 million and did not produce one drop of rain. Such are the phoney approaches that have been brought forward by those on the other side.

The bottom line in this debate is that the only way we can transform our economy into the low-carbon economy that will be needed in the future is to put a price on carbon. Those on the other side know it. That is why they agreed to it. They are walking away for cheap politically opportunistic reasons, but they will be condemned for their failure to stand up and fight on this important issue for the nation.