



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**PROOF**

**STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS**

**PROCEDURAL TEXT**

**Thursday, 15 September 2011**

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

---

## PROCEDURAL TEXT

**Date** Thursday, 15 September 2011  
**Page** 45  
**Questioner**  
**Speaker**

**Source** House  
**Proof** Yes  
**Responder**  
**Question No.**

### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

#### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

##### Dementia Awareness Week

Mr FRYDENBERG (Kooyong) (13:45): I rise to acknowledge Dementia Awareness Week, which starts tomorrow. Dementia is the third major cause of death in Australia after heart disease and stroke. It is estimated that today 269,000 Australians live with dementia, with that number to rise to close to one million by 2050. With 1,500 new cases of dementia every week in Australia, the burden on the families, friends and carers of those involved is escalating rapidly.

I heard the stories firsthand from carers at a meeting at Alzheimer's Australia, whose Victorian headquarters are in my electorate and for whom I am a dementia champion. The carers see the urgent need for more resources to tackle dementia and to meet the shortage of carers available. With an estimate that more than 150,000 paid and unpaid carers will be needed in the next 15 years, the need is critical. For example, in Kooyong, statistics indicate we have over 2,000 people living with dementia, with that number expected to more than double in the next 30 years.

When John Howard was in government he took positive steps to make dementia a health priority, including his \$320 million dementia initiative in 2005, which broke new ground in funding arrangements for high care, counselling and support, and research into the causes of dementia. It is now high time that the Gillard government took John Howard's lead and met their responsibility to support new, real and substantial dementia initiatives to the benefit of all Australians. *(Time expired)*

##### Learn Earn Legend! Program

Ms LIVERMORE (Capricornia) (13:46): It is great to finally get the call on statements by members because I wanted to introduce members to some great young Indigenous people, students from my electorate who were here in Parliament House this week as part of the Learn Earn Legend! work experience in government program. On Monday and Tuesday, Jocelyn Duncan,

Rebecca Whyte, Peter Spanner, Angus Dorante and Jon Mau were here getting to know their way around Parliament House and seeing what life is like working with an MP or senator.

Earlier this week they began a placement within the federal government department of their choice as a way of introducing them to the opportunities that are there if they want to pursue a career in the Public Service. Jocelyn, Peter and Rebecca attend Rockhampton State High School and Jon and Angus, both Torres Strait Islanders, are boarders at St Brendan's College at Yeppoon. I know their schools are very proud to be represented by such fine young people in the work experience program. These five students are among 100 from around Australia who were selected as future Indigenous leaders in their communities, and I know that the week has opened their eyes to the many opportunities that are out there if they continue the hard work and commitment to their studies they have shown so far.

There has been a lot for them to take in, meeting the Prime Minister and stars like Evonne Goolagong, Scott Prince from the Gold Coast Titans as well as fellow participants from around Australia. I look forward to catching up with Jocelyn, Peter, Rebecca, Jon and Angus back in Rockhampton to see how they enjoyed the week and where their educational and career goals might take them next.

##### Rugby World Cup 2011

Mr CRAIG KELLY (Hughes) (13:48): The Rugby World Cup, which began last Friday, is the best showcase of the game they play in heaven. Last Sunday we saw a great start to the Wallabies campaign, with a convincing 32-to-six win against Italy. And here we sit, just six wins away from taking back the William Webb Ellis Trophy. The first time we secured 'Bill' was in 1991, when the Wallabies, under the courageous leadership of Nick Farr-Jones, won the second ever Rugby World Cup. I recall the passion at the time when the Sydney rugby community joined with them in their celebrations.

The quarterfinal of the 1991 cup was the moment that made the 'World Cup winning Wallabies', and is remembered as one of the most nail-biting games in Rugby history. With only minutes remaining, the Irish

led our Wallabies by just three points. An amazing length-of-the-field try culminated in a desperate sprint to the line by open side flanker Gordon Hamilton—a moment still captured on the walls of pubs across the four proud provinces of Ireland. However, in the last phase of play, the Wallabies were awarded a centre field scrum on the 10-metre line. Knowing a try was needed—or else they would be out of the tournament—Michael Lynagh crossed in the corner, and the rest is history.

This Saturday the Wallabies will once again go head-to-head with the Irish in the World Cup. I look forward, with the rest of Australia, to gathering around the television with family and friends to cheer on our team. Go the Wallabies!

#### Early Childhood

Dr LEIGH (Fraser) (13:49): Improving the life chances of young Australians is a key priority for this government, and I acknowledge the important work done particularly by the Minister for Employment Participation and Childcare and the Minister for School Education, Early Childhood and Youth. Under this government we have boosted the childcare rebate from 30 to 50 per cent. We have created the mychild.gov.au website. We first rolled out the Australian Early Development Index in 2009, and it will be coming again in 2012.

I would like to acknowledge the work of key peak researchers in this area: Frank Oberklaid, from the Centre for Community Child Health; Matthew Gray, from the Australian Institute of Family Studies; Lance Emerson, from Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth; and Pam Cahir, from Early Childhood Australia.

The Gillard government is committed to evidence based policy making. We know a lot about the importance of early years interventions but we still have much to learn. That is why I would like to pay particular tribute to the team that is running the Early Years Education Research Project: Nichola Coombs, Jeff Borland, Yi-Ping Tseng, Anne Kennedy, Janet Williams-Smith, Dave Glazebrook and Brigid Jordan. This is Australia's first randomised trial of an early childhood program. It has received ethics approval and it is following in the footsteps of the great randomised early childhood evaluations: the Perry Preschool program, the Abecedarian Project and the Early Training Project. It will provide valuable lessons about what works in the early years. It will allow us to improve our policies and it will do it using the most rigorous evaluation methodology available. I wish the team all the best of luck.

#### Small Businesses

Mr O'DOWD (Flynn) (13:51): While Central Queensland is booming in the coal and gas industries, small business and local manufacturing companies are doing it very tough. Mobbs and Co. Steel Fabrication is the latest victim and have announced this week that they will close their operations in Biloela and Rockhampton. This year is shaping up to be a record one for business failures which is on a par with Eurozone countries.

As with Mobbs and Co. our industries must remain competitive on global terms and reduce the amount of government red tape that is hampering small business. The other problem facing small industry in our region is the ability to hold onto staff, with the tempting offers coming from the coal and gas companies, who can offer double or triple the normal wage. This is making it very difficult indeed for small business. If it wasn't for backpackers, 457 visa workers or Pacific Islanders, our meat abattoirs, citrus industries and many other smaller type industries would be left with no workers as we grapple with this two-tier economy that we are working in. I ask the government to seriously consider the plight of these regional communities and invest in regional infrastructure projects to help regional Australia in its time of greatest need. The last round of the RDA funding totally ignored the electorate of Flynn and for that the government should stand condemned.

#### Rahman, Sheikh Mujibur

Ms ROWLAND (Greenway) (13:52): On Saturday, 3 September I had the privilege of attending the Bangladesh National Mourning Day ceremony in Lakemba with the Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities to commemorate the life of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the father of Bangladesh. Rahman, or Bangabandhu as he is known to the Bangladeshi people, was one of the great leaders of the last century, a man of conviction and principle whose beliefs were rooted in the virtues of democracy and equality. Motivated by the tragic plight of his people under colonial rule, Bangabandhu recognised the demand for national independence and he achieved it. Bangladesh's independence represents a people's triumph over an oppressive colonial ruler. It signifies a point in history where the desire for cultural freedom lead to national independence.

Despite continually calling for peaceful protests and using democratic methods to achieve reform, Bangabandhu spent most of his youth behind bars. His defining moment came in March 1971 when addressing a sea of people in Dhaka. Standing inside what was then a racecourse, Bangabandhu declared that the Bengali struggle is one of freedom and

self-determination. His inspirational words motivated people to affect real change and eventually achieve independence.

Bangabandhu and his entire family were tragically assassinated in 1975. The National Mourning Day is a moment of great significance for all Bangladeshis, including some 300 Bangladeshi Australians living in my electorate of Greenway. I thank the Bangabandhu Society of Australia for their contribution to our community, especially Dr Nur and Dr Lovely Rahman, for all their hard work promoting Bangladeshi culture and interests in my local area.

#### Australian Student Prize

Ms O'DWYER (Higgins) (13:54): Today I rise to congratulate the 14 students in my electorate who were awarded the 2010 Australian Student Prize: Marc Bonaventura of Glen Iris, Rosemary Byth of Glen Iris, James Campbell of Malvern East, Edward Cliff of Hawthorn East, Nicholas Fabbri of Malvern East, Luke Frazzetto of Glen Iris, Dean Hayden of Hawthorn East, James Ingram of Hawthorn East, Alice Kennedy of Toorak, Antony Kennett of Toorak, Susan Lee of Glen Iris, Ruby Schwartz of Toorak, Alexandra Theng of Glen Iris and Charlie Wang of Malvern East. It is recognition of the hard work, commitment and dedication that these students have shown to their studies to be awarded the Australian Student Prize. This is awarded to the top 500 students in Australia. It is also recognition of the support and guidance they have received from their families and their teachers.

I remember well in 1994, three years after this award was first provided, the thrill I got receiving my certificate from my local member of parliament. Sadly, however, this year I was not able to present certificates to the students in my electorate for their achievements. The Minister for School Education, Early Childhood and Youth did not inform coalition members of parliament to share in that honour. We should all be able to put aside partisan politics to join in the achievements of our young Australians.

#### Football Queensland

Mr RIPOLL (Oxley) (13:55): I want to respond to a Football Queensland press release this week as it refers to me. Football Queensland just do not get it. I have decided to make an issue of the Football Queensland team wear program because the program no longer delivers on any of its declared objectives and does not deliver value for money. That is bad for the game, bad for the clubs, bad for the players and bad for the mums and dads who pay too much for gear. I am not alone in this view. Do not worry about my views; go straight to the views and actions of the ACCC.

The ACCC has made it clear in its process now to revoke the special exemption from prosecution granted to Football Queensland to run its licensing scheme for the team wear program.

According to its own charter, Football Queensland's team wear program categorically fails to do the things it is meant to do. It has failed to ensure a minimum standard of quality, it has failed in the timely supply of apparel and equipment and it has failed particularly in keeping costs low. It certainly may have promoted the image of the game and returned revenue to Football Queensland, but it has not done anything else.

Football Queensland should now focus all its energy and resources to meet its charter and responsibilities to football and the players. Football Queensland should provide also to the ACCC the financial data that it has been seeking for about three years. Today I want Football Queensland to do what I am doing, and that is focus on the code, the players and the teams. It should stop focusing on itself and its own importance. With special powers and exemptions from normal business practices of fair play and natural justice comes special responsibilities. To date Football Queensland has failed that test. The ball is now in its court. It is up to Football Queensland to address the concerns of the ACCC, to get its house in order and to do the right thing by the code and the players.

#### Murray-Darling Basin

Mr McCORMACK (Riverina) (13:57): Regional Australians are good, honest, hardworking people. They do their best to grow the food to ensure the nation and our near neighbours get fed. They pay their taxes and expect a fair share for country health, rural roads and infrastructure. They are worried about the economy. They are concerned about the high Australian dollar hurting our export markets and are fearful of a carbon tax which will do nothing for the environment but which will hit their hip pockets hard.

Deliberate leaks from the Murray-Darling Basin Authority two months out from the delayed release of its draft contained more drastic cuts to water entitlements, especially in the Murrumbidgee Valley. The government will use the excuse that the MDBA is an independent body. Drip-feeding any figures is like a soft crash landing. They are easing the numbers into the public, seeing the reaction and going from there. It is unfair. It is unacceptable. It will not be tolerated.

What we need now is transparency. The whole water issue has been mishandled by the federal Labor government. It is a bad process from a bad government and it is getting worse by the day. A triple bottom line

is needed, as is some decency, honesty and openness with any figures.

The Independent member for New England has brought down an inquiry report. It has not been followed by the Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities. It needs to be, particularly recommendation (7), which says that there should be a cessation of non-strategic water buybacks. The Independent member for New England keeps this flimsy government in office. They need to follow his lead, follow the water inquiry and have some decency about the water debate.

#### Indian Myna Bird

Ms BRODTMANN (Canberra) (13:58): I rise today to acknowledge the excellent work being done by the Canberra Indian Myna Action Group to tackle the problem of the Indian myna bird in Canberra. The introduced Indian myna bird has now become a major pest and a threat to Australia's wildlife across the eastern states. It is a particular threat to hollow-nesting birds, such as parrots, and to endangered insects and small lizards. It is also disliked by many people because of its raucous calls, its fouling of backyard porches and its aggressive, in your face manner.

A local team of concerned Canberrans has pioneered a humane backyard trapping program. The group provides traps as well as a plan on the humane treatment of birds to interested members of the public. The program has been a great success. Over the last five years the Indian myna bird has been reduced from the third most common bird in Canberra to the 14th. At least 37,000 birds have been removed from the Canberra environment. This community action approach has also been adopted by other communities. Indeed, 26 other groups have now been formed, inspired by the Canberra group. I encourage members to contact the Canberra Indian Myna Action Group, which can be found online.

The SPEAKER: Order! It being 2 pm, the time for members' statements has concluded.