

## editorial

### Refugees can offer so much talent

NO AUSTRALIAN political party is focusing pragmatically on the real issues of the asylum seekers, least of all the federal government and certainly not the Opposition's messy "turn the boats back" theory.

The government's scatter-gun approach, wasting millions of dollars on offshore processing detention camps, while tempers flare and immigration officials tear their hair out coping with impracticable solutions, culminated embarrassingly when the High Court threw out the Malaysian solution.

The government's determination to stop refugee smugglers is utopian and isn't the immediate problem. Processing asylum seekers stacking up inside our detention centres is.

They must be processed faster, their children put into schools and mentors provided for adults, so they get to work quickly and precisely what is expected of them in our country. Organisations like TAFE, primary and manufacturing industries as well as service and sports clubs and even the CWA could help provide such practical know-how.

Skills Australia reported in May this year our nation needed another 2.5 million skilled workers by 2015. In the short term this could be helped by urgently processing refugees with such skills. The Nationals have sensibly been talking about getting migrants into regional areas – a good start.

A University of Adelaide report last year that surveyed 438,000 refugees accepted in Australia since 1978 found they had made a "distinct contribution" to society, especially as entrepreneurs.

Most refugees simply want a new start. Immigration authorities need more resources to provide that. It's what our politicians should give urgently and then stay out of its implementation.

## the quiz

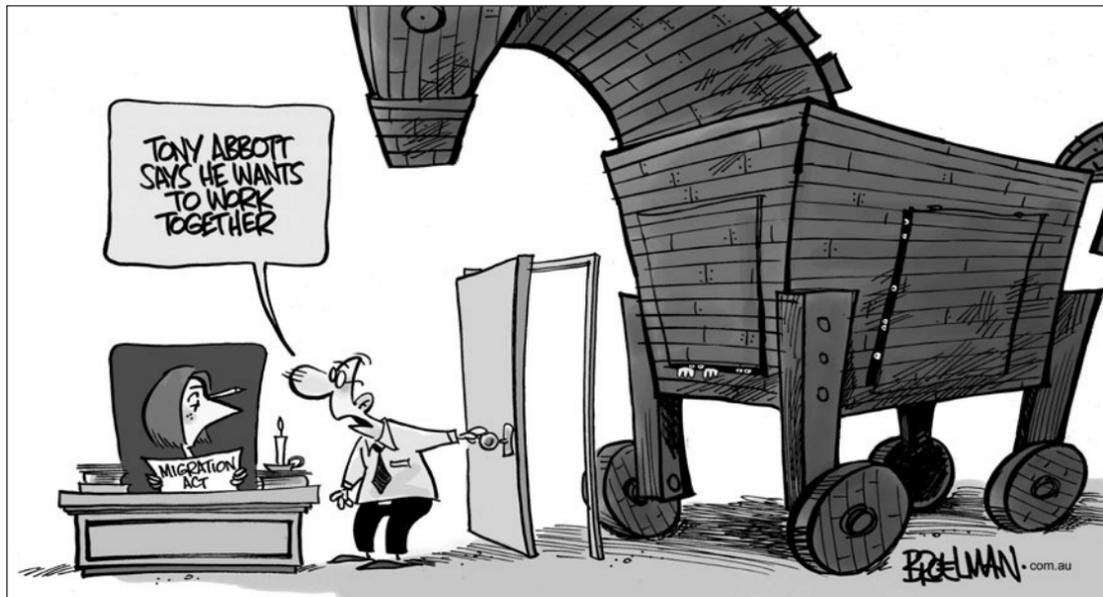
### Questions

1. What is the opposite of nocturnal?
2. Name the deadliest of the spiders native to Australia.
3. What type of creature is a basenji?
4. With which British city is the accent known as Scouse associated?
5. Which television series featured a pre-operative transsexual and six unknowing men vying for her affections?
6. Which letter appears to the left of R on a keyboard?
7. Ho is the chemical symbol for which element?
8. Name the band that has a hit with the song *(Tell Me Why) I Don't Like Mondays*?
9. In which year did Arthur Korn demonstrate the first practical fax machine?
10. What date marked the last performance of The Beatles?

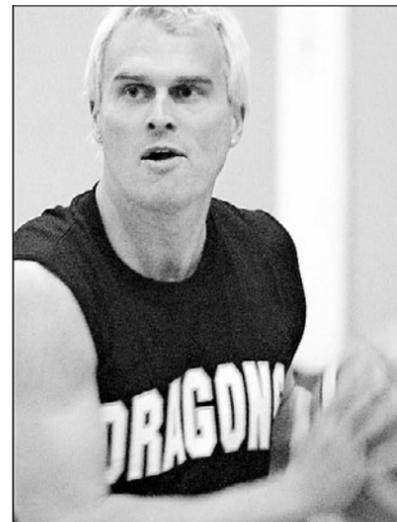
### Answers

1. Diurnal.
2. Sydney funnel web.
3. Dog.
4. Liverpool.
5. *There's Something About Miriam*.
6. E.
7. Holmium.
8. The Boomtown Rats.
9. 1903.
10. August 20, 1969.

## broelman's view



## on this day



Basketball player Shane Heal turns 41 today.

# Carbon tax would do only harm

Opinion by Bob Carter

ON JULY 10, now dubbed Black Sunday, Prime Minister Gillard released firm details about the government's planned climate change policy, which aims to mitigate claimed dangerous global warming.

The intended policy has as its centrepiece the introduction of a new tax on carbon dioxide emissions of \$23/tonne, and was developed and approved by Parliament's Multi-party Committee on Climate Change (MPCCC).

Passing the new legislation depends upon the support of the independents, one of whom, NSW MP Tony Windsor, is a member of the MPCCC. Mr Windsor welcomed the release of the policy with the following statement:

"I believe that this climate change package is an affordable catalyst for this change as it will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, clean up our environment, and move our economy from its dependence on fossil fuels, ensuring the future of our children and their children".

This statement contains 10 misunderstandings and errors.

First, the issue is one of science not belief.

Second, the package is far from affordable. At \$23/tonne of carbon dioxide emitted, the cumulative cost by 2020 will be more than \$100 billion, and it is sheer fantasy to claim that this cost will be paid by 500 mythical "big polluters". On the contrary, the costs will cascade right down to the average Australian, such that a family of four persons will incur new distributed costs of more than \$2000/family/year.

Third, the package is unlikely to be a catalyst for lower emissions because petrol and energy are notoriously inelastic commodities, which is to say that a moderate increase in their price results in little reduction in consumption (in contrast to the projections of idealised and unrealistic Treasury computer models). For example, Norway has had a carbon dioxide tax of \$20-

30/tonne in place since the early 1990s, in response to which by 2008 national emissions had risen by 15 per cent.

Fourth, even were the result of the tax to be the targeted 5 per cent reduction in emissions by 2020, that indicates only that in 2020 global carbon dioxide would attain 411.987 ppm rather than the 412 ppm projected by the IPCC, notionally preventing less than a thousandth of a degree of global warming. Such a tiny reduction will, of course, have no measurable effect on climate.

Fifth, the intended MPCCC policies will extend even more cost favours to impractical sources of baseload power such as wind and solar energy. The result will not be the claimed positive but rather a net negative for the environment, littering the landscape with uneconomic behemoths, and (as a recent *Four Corners* program outlined) causing sharp social conflict in country communities.

Sixth, there is no urgent necessity to move away from using fossil fuels as the industrial basis for our economy. Abundant hydrocarbon energy sources exist to fuel the world for at least many decades, together with fast-improving ways of harnessing nuclear and other energy sources.

Seventh, even if such a necessity existed the MPCCC package will do virtually nothing to meet it. For, as already pointed out, at any feasible tax rate usage will be scarcely affected.

Eighth and ninth, the opportunity cost of squandering \$100 billion on ineffectual environmental policy is enormous. The policy will act to diminish the wealth available to our children and grandchildren. It will also prevent Australia having the spare money to contribute generously to such urgent humanitarian disasters as the current drought and food supply shortage in Somalia: millions of third world people will die as a result.

Tenth, the policy package is therefore immoral.

The misunderstandings and errors in Mr Windsor's statement reflect the fact that the

MPCCC has received unbalanced scientific advice. Amazingly, in view of the importance of an issue that is first and foremost a scientific one, the committee includes only one scientist.

That person, ANU's Professor Will Steffen, is both a senior Australian representative on the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and also the chief adviser to the federal Department of Climate Change. The IPCC is an unelected, unaccountable, overseas political body, and that its advice is political, and not rigorously scientific, has been widely known for at least 10 years.

Comprehensive and scientific audits by independent senior Australian scientists have pointed out many flaws in IPCC advice\*, and were provided to the MPCCC – which appears to have taken the view that if criticism is ignored, then it will go away.

Alas, science isn't like that. Instead, the operation of science is based upon the steady discarding of flawed ideas, such as those of the IPCC, and their replacement with more accurate versions of reality.

Given how badly he has been misadvised, Mr Windsor's solecisms regarding climate policy are perhaps understandable. However, accurate analysis is now available in the public domain, and this shows that the climate policy package that Mr Windsor and other independents support is fundamentally flawed and will grossly damage their constituents' interests, not to mention the interests of their grandchildren.

Mr Windsor, and others who are propagating the same mistaken arguments, need to rethink, regroup and withdraw their support for the government's misbegotten carbon dioxide policy package.

■ **Bob Carter is a geologist, Fellow of the Institute of Public Affairs and author of the book *Climate: the Counter Consensus*.**

\*Comprehensive, independent scientific audits of IPCC climate policy advice are available here: <http://www.quadrant.org.au/blogs/doomed-planet/2011/04/due-diligence-reports>.

## star signs



**ARIES (March 21 to April 19)** : You're full of good ideas about how to make improvements to your health today. Similarly, you're full of equally good ideas about how to improve your job, if you have one.



**TAURUS (April 20 to May 20)** : Parents might tackle a new approach to dealing with children today. This is also a classic day to recycle or downsize toys, clothing and items either you or your children own.



**GEMINI (May 21 to June 20)** : Tackle home repairs. In particular, work on anything that can be improved related to garbage, plumbing and bathrooms or laundry areas.



**CANCER (June 21 to July 22)** : You're extremely persuasive today! This means today is a wonderful day to sell, teach, act, market or convince anyone of anything. Yes!



**LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22)** : Respect your moneymaking ideas today. You might well come up with a new source of income or a new way to make money on the side. You also might see new uses for something you already own.



**VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22)** : Take a realistic look in the mirror to see how you can improve your image in the world. After all, you never get a second chance to make a first impression. (And you like to make a good impression.)



**LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22)** : Your research abilities are excellent today! If you're looking for answers, you will find them. This is a good day for any kind of study.



**SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21)** : Conversations with others, especially in group situations, will be forceful and intense. People who are phonies will be found out or exposed. Ah ha!



**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21)** : You might be obsessed about something in your discussions with bosses, parents and VIPs today. Don't let your enthusiasm override your respect for their authority.



**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19)** : You will love to study anything new today. You're keen to penetrate matters in order to find out the truth of something, especially in politics or religion.



**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18)** : This is quite a passionate, sexual day for some of you! Others will use this same driving passion to settle issues about shared property and inheritances.



**PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20)** : Whatever you talk about to partners and close friends will be approached with intensity today. You're not casual about anything. Be careful about obsessive thinking. (Oops.)