

**Community Cabinet Meeting – Newstead College, Launceston, Tasmania
Wednesday 5 November 2008**

Janet Simms, Acting Principal, Newstead College: Good evening and welcome to Newstead College. Thank you for attending this evening. Before I start, I would like to acknowledge our Newstead College students who have been performing tonight. We have Frances Andrew, Anna Booth, Sam Brown, Ebony Best, Jade Fisher, Sam Lancock and Hannah Van Garlin. Thank you very much.

Many of these performers were part of our production of *Cats* earlier in the year and you will have the opportunity to see many of them once again in 2009 in our production in August. It is a privilege to be invited to host the Launceston Community Cabinet meeting and, as we work with our students to become contributors to our community and beyond, what better opportunity is there for them to see how they can have a say and make a difference and in January, 18 of our students and three staff will travel to Cambodia to build houses so I am regularly reminded of how much our young people care and are willing to volunteer to assist others.

Now for a few pieces of housekeeping information, please ensure that your mobile phones are turned off. The college also has a no smoking policy so please refrain from smoking in the building or within the grounds of the college. The public forum will commence at 6.10 or perhaps a little later with an address from the Prime Minister, the Hon. Kevin Rudd. Please feel free to take photos at the beginning of the Prime Minister's speech. However we would ask that you refrain from flash photography after the first few minutes. At the end of the Prime Minister's address there will be an opportunity to ask questions of the Prime Minister and the Cabinet Ministers. Please raise your hand if you wish to ask a question and one of the Community Cabinet team in the blue polo shirts will assist with microphones once directed to do so by the Prime Minister.

After the main session there will be a break of approximately ten minutes, after which the prearranged one on one scheduled meetings will commence. People with a confirmed, prearranged one-on-one scheduled meeting must move to the designated meeting point which is directly in front of me here, and they will get further directions from the Community Cabinet staff members. Also a reminder that we have a post-event enquiry process available at the end of the meeting and if you've not been successful in obtaining a meeting with a Minister and do not get an opportunity to ask a question in today's forum, but would still like to pass your views on to a Minister, you can fill out a post-event enquiry form and you will find these forms in the tent outside. Simply fill them in and the Community Cabinet staff will ensure they get to the relevant Minister.

I would now like to introduce Ebony Best to sing the National Anthem. Please be upstanding.

Thank you, Ebony, that was simply beautiful. Ronnie and Dyan Summers will now provide our welcome to country.

Thank you, Ronnie. It's now my pleasure to welcome our local member, the Hon. Jodie Campbell, Member for Bass, to the stage. Thank you, Jodie.

Jodie Campbell, Member for Bass: Thank you. Good evening, everyone, and to Janet Simms, the Acting Principal of Newstead College, Janet. Thank you very much for allowing

us to use your superb college to host this wonderful evening. I would also like to acknowledge the Newstead College band under the leadership of Roger Francis, as always, simply outstanding. Before I begin I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land upon which we are meeting here this evening and as always I respect elders past and present, Prime Minister, the Hon. Kevin Rudd, members of Cabinet, Ministers, Parliamentary secretaries, can I say first and foremost, welcome to Launceston. Can I also acknowledge my Parliamentary colleagues, both at the Federal, State and local level. Thank you for joining us here this evening.

Thank you, Prime Minister, for accepting my invitation to hold Community Cabinet here in northern Tasmania. Now I know that there are people from all over Tasmania here with us this evening and also people from Victoria as well and I think that is absolutely fantastic, but I am sure that those people who are here from Bass, from northern Tasmania will agree with me when I say that Launceston was the obvious choice if for no other reason than it is simply the best place in the country. We share commonalities with many parts of the country, but there is a distinctiveness about this region which makes me proud to call it home as I'm sure it does to many of you who are here tonight. So once again, Prime Minister, welcome. As I said, I was delighted when you accepted my invitation as I know that this wonderful community has much to offer and much to contribute and what better way than speaking directly with the Federal government.

This opportunity is a unique one and I look forward enormously to hearing the discussion tonight. I know from my own conversations with people out in the community, be it through door knocking, be it through holding street stalls or from people contacting my office, that there is a depth of passion about this country which is, might I say, quite simply amazing. Right across northern Tasmania people are engaged, whether it be about local issues, whether it be about global issues, and everything in between, so I think we are in for a wide ranging and productive discussion tonight. Can I just say how proud I am to be part of a government which is returning the parliamentary process to the people, returning it to each and every one of you who are here this evening. This is your government, we are your representatives and we owe it to you to listen to your views, your concerns and your comments. Before I hand over to the Prime Minister, I would like to add that Tasmania has always punched well above its weight in a whole range of areas and I see no reason why our contribution to Government policy should be any different. So without further ado, everyone please welcome in joining me to the stage the Prime Minister of Australia, the Hon. Kevin Rudd.

Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister: Thanks very much for the very warm Launceston welcome, the very warm Tasmanian welcome and thank you for the welcome to country to Ronnie and Dyan Summers. I appreciate that very much and I begin also by acknowledging the first Australians on whose land we meet and whose cultures we celebrate as the oldest continuing cultures in human history. Thank you, Jodie, for that kind introduction and for that very impartial introduction about Launceston. Launceston, the best place in the country? That's right. I'll say 'yes' to that. We've had similar presentations about Mackay, about Perth, about Penrith, and about Adelaide, and I'll let the historians sort that out later on. Can I also acknowledge the Acting Principal, Janet Simms, and thank you so much for having us here at this great college, the Student Representative Council co-presidents, Clare Pickett and Angus Gibb, Bob and Vic Colinson from The Café for preparing the catering tonight, Newstead Hospitality and Public Relations students for serving the refreshments, Newstead College performers directed by Roger Francis and Jenny MacDonald for the welcoming entry music

and the national anthem, to the Mayor of Launceston, Mayor Albert Van Zetten. Thank you all for coming.

Can I begin by introducing the team. They are here and the rule of thumb tonight is all easy questions to me, all hard questions to them, and you will see me follow that religiously through the evening and starting with the head rolling, eye rolling Parliamentary Secretary to my left there, who thought I didn't see him, Anthony Byrne, who is Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, Member for Bass, I think you've met her before, Jodie Campbell; the Minister, Brendan O'Connor, who's the Minister for Employment Services. Put your hand up, Brendan, where are you? Good. Representing also Julia Gillard this evening, Tony Burke, Minister for Agriculture; Kim Carr, the Minister for Industry and Innovation; Penny Wong. Put your hand up, Penny. The Minister for Climate Change. You've got extended family here, have you? There's the Penny Wong cheer squad over there. Okay no one feel threatened if you don't get applauded up here. Anyone like Senator Stephen Conroy? Stephen's the Minister for Communications; Minister Lindsay Tanner, the Minister for Finance. Lindsay's job in the Government is to act as Dr No, and he enjoys it; Nicola Roxon, the Minister for Health; John Faulkner, the Special Minister of State; Chris Evans, the Minister for Immigration and leader of the Government in the Senate; Joel FitzGibbon, the Minister for Defence; Jenny Macklin, the Minister for Families and for Indigenous Affairs; Anthony Albanese, known to us as 'Albo'. Albo is the Minister for Infrastructure and Local Government; Peter Garrett, the Minister for the Environment; Joe Ludwig, the Minister for Human Services; Tanya Plibersek, the Minister for Housing; Nick Sherry, the Minister for Superannuations and from Tasmania and also representing Wayne Swan this evening; and Parliamentary Secretary, Bill Shorten, who's known to a number of you down here as well. There you go, that's the team.

This is our eighth Community Cabinet meeting. What's it all about? I am not going to talk for very long. They say I say that every time and then speak for about ten minutes. I'll try to keep it down to about five because the purpose is to hear from you and to answer as many of your questions as possible. You know it's a good thing what we are trying to do here which is to engage the community across the country in a way that hasn't happened with the Federal Cabinet before. In meetings like this we are going to hear lots of views, some of which will agree with Government policy, some of which will violently oppose Government policy. That is part of what democracy is all about, frankly to take all questions and all points of view. That's why we are here.

This is our eighth and I am told today as we assemble the Cabinet for a full meeting in Launceston, this is the first time in the 107 year history, our 108 year history of the federation that the Cabinet of the Commonwealth Government has ever met in Launceston. We've made a first here in Launceston today. But so far in our first twelve months in government, it's less than that, we have been covering the country from east to west, north to south, with these Community Cabinets. We've been in the burbs of Brisbane, we've been in Mackay north Queensland, we've been in the Aboriginal community at Yirrkala in Arnhem Land, we've been in the southern suburbs of Perth, the southern suburbs of Adelaide, we've been in Penrith, we are here, and I am sure I have forgotten somewhere, and we're about to be I think in Geelong. And so we have covered all States of the Commonwealth and the Northern Territory in our first year and because we meet in Canberra on a regular basis, they don't count. Don't tell them that.

But what's interesting about all these meetings is that we as a Cabinet never come out of a Community Cabinet meeting without having learned something new, either a new idea for the nation or a new concern from this local area, something we didn't know before which we then need to act on, and so we're here in order to hear, to listen. Can I say one or two things also about democracy elsewhere. Democracy is at work here today, it's been at work in the United States of America as well. And if I can publicly acknowledge and congratulate the election of Senator Obama as the next President of the United States. The great thing about Senator Obama was so much of his campaign was about hope. It was about what we can do to change the world, what we can do together to tackle the great challenges the world faces together, the great global challenge of climate change, what we can do as a community of States, as a collection of peoples, as an organisation of States, to act together on this great challenge. And also the other great challenges of our age including the global financial crisis.

But there is something more I think in Senator Obama's message. It is so much about the inspiration from this individual himself and that is this is a person who has come from an extraordinary background in American politics and risen to the highest elected office in that great American democracy. I think he speaks as an inspiration in terms of his own personal journey in addition to his message of hope to the world. We wish him well, we wish him God speed. This is a great challenge he faces for us all.

I spoke before just briefly about the global financial crisis. You have seen much and a lot on television about this in recent times. It has taken so much of the collective energies of this Cabinet in wrestling with its implications for Australia in recent months. We are facing tough economic times. This global financial crisis which began in the United States has now caused the worst financial meltdown in our lifetime and since the Great Depression. Having begun in the United States, it has now affected every continent on earth. More than thirty banks around the world have failed or been bailed out. Stock markets have fallen around the world by more than 30 per cent and debt markets have suffered unprecedented dislocation and now this global financial crisis is doing something else. It is delivering a global economic recession, global economic downturn which means declining growth and increasing unemployment. This is a challenge for the world. It is also a challenge for Australia. We are not immune from the impacts of this global economic recession. We are not immune from the impacts of the global financial crisis. That is why the Government has acted and acted decisively. That is why we have acted in order to provide guarantees for people's bank deposits, a basic guarantee at a time of uncertainty. That is why we have also acted with our \$10.4 billion economic security strategy, important to provide support for the Australian economy into the future when we're going to face unprecedented challenges, and the impact of that economic security strategy is to be delivered to local communities like this.

In the economic security strategy of \$10.4 billion, \$4.8 billion is an immediate down payment on long term pension reform, \$3.9 billion in support payments for low and middle income families, \$1½ billion in investment to help first home buyers purchase their first home, \$187 million to create another 56,000 training places in 08-09. This is not just national, it is also local. Let me give you an example of how it flows through. In this community, that is the wider Launceston area, nearly 10,000 families will receive a payment of \$1000 per child. Over 2,200 Veterans and their partners will receive increased payments. All carers in this area, 2300 of them, will receive \$1000 for each eligible person in their care. More than 6000 married aged pensioners will receive \$2100 per couple as will 1700 married disability pensioners and nearly 5000 single aged pensions and 2800 single disability pensioners will receive \$1400 and these payments will also go to the 1000 self-funded retirees eligible for the

Commonwealth seniors health card. These are all members of this community. We have sought to act nationally to support the economy and to support working families, pensioners and carers in dealing with the challenges which we now face, but we've done so in a manner where that assistance comes through to local communities like this one and those payments will proceed as of 8 December.

Dealing however with the global financial crisis, dealing with maintaining the stability of our banking and financial system is core and fundamental. Dealing with the flow through consequences for growth and for jobs is really important as well, hence our economic security strategy. But beyond that there is also an expectation of government that we act in local areas of service need as well. One of those areas is GPs. Let me just look at a few figures which the Health Minister was sharing with us in Cabinet today in Launceston. GPs of course are the front line of the health and hospital system and we know that investing in them is critical for our future. If you look at some of the statistics, this is a problem. We commissioned an audit of regional and rural health workforces earlier this year. This audit has found that the number of fulltime equivalent GPs in Tasmania, 82.3 per 100,000 persons was significantly below the national average of 91.3 per 100,000 persons. Added to this, the 2007 GP census in Tasmania also told us that northern Tasmania has the lowest ratio of full time equivalent GPs to population in the State at 67 per 100,000 compared with the State average of 73.4. In areas surrounding Launceston like Scottsdale and West Tamar, there is a real shortage of GPs. We know that from the figures and I am sure we will hear that from many of your representations to us later this evening or perhaps an open session. That's why the government today, through the Health Minister, announced that it was investing \$148 million immediately for a new national program to establish new General Practice training places. This is a practical step forward which will allow 175 additional new doctors to begin training to become GPs across Australia. It is also a practical step here in Tasmania. Currently in Tasmania there are 16 allocated GP training places a year. This package will add a further five. That is increasing it by effectively a third and our announcement today means that these five suitable applicants will have an opportunity to join the training program from 2009. This is one practical step forward. It does not solve all the problems.

What we have done so far is establish the data, the information. In other words, there is a gap against standards across Tasmania, and Tasmania against the rest of the nation. Part of dealing with that gap is increasing the number of training places for GPs and we've taken one practical step in that direction. Also in Launceston we have honoured a number of other of our election commitments which I would like to refer to briefly this evening. We delivered on our election commitments to increase the rebate for the passenger vehicle equalisation scheme and to extend the freight equalisation scheme interest rate shipments between King and Flinders Island and the main island of Tasmania. These improvements reduce the cost of passenger travel and freight to Tasmania. We've committed \$15 million to the establishment of the Launceston integrated care centre because regional communities should have access to top notch health care and we've committed \$2 million towards the Launceston regional aquatic centre and \$½ million to the Launceston regional tennis centre. Sport is part of community life and these are small practical initiatives which we believe help local communities like this.

Enough from me. Over to you. These are some of the things that we have been doing nationally, some of the things we've been engaged in internationally and some of the service challenges that we have been dealing with locally including health services, but I am fully aware of the fact that you are going to have a whole range of other questions to raise with us

this evening and looking at a room this big with so many people in it I am sure everyone is going to have exactly the same opinion on the pulp mill. Am I right? Probably not, but we will probably have an opportunity to engage in that discussion soon. So can I just say open to questions now. Now the system I am going to adopt basically, just so that you know, is that I am going to move from this aisle to that aisle to that aisle, and I will either take the question myself or refer it to a Minister who will then answer directly to you and we will rip through until the end of our allocated time and then we'll head into the individual appointments that you have already scheduled with individual Ministers.

The gentleman to the right there who is now standing up, yes.

Question 1: Thank you Prime Minister. There seems to be evidence, Prime Minister, that Tasmania's national sea highway is being blocked, denying Tasmanians fair access to the national transport grid. Tasmania is entitled to open and fair interstate transport links as all other States. Federal application of Bass Strait equalisation schemes discriminates against Tasmania. One scheme equalises the cost of a car travel at 70 cents a kilometre and then ignores passengers in the car. The other offers no bus fare equivalent. The other excludes south-bound consumables and north bound international exports. Families and businesses in Tasmania and across Australia are incurring unnecessary separation and financial loss as a result. The people obtained Federal funding for interstate transport equality, but Keating and Howard tried to fulfill this Federal responsibility and national mandate. When will you, Prime Minister, remove the blockage and bring the total cost of crossing Bass Strait to the cost of bitumen travel by just effectively directing and monitoring existing and adequate equalisation funding. This issue is more than tourism, Prime Minister, it's a basic transport and access issue about the entire Tasmanian community and its relationship and access to other States. I thank Martin Ferguson for that last sentence. Thank you, Prime Minister.

Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister: I am pretty worried if Martin has written a question for you. Over to you, Albo. Albo's the Transport Minister.

Anthony Albanese, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government: Thanks very much, Peter, for the question. I've met with Peter before, he's well known to myself, and he's been campaigning on this issue very diligently. Look the fact is that we at the election campaign made some substantial commitments, one of which was to increase the Bass Strait passenger vehicle rebate for all eligible vehicles from 1 July this year, and we did that and will index it annually. The cost is some \$34.4 million in 2008-09 and that was in response to strong representation of Jodie Campbell, Syd Sidebottom and Dick Adams and other Tasmanian representatives so we did that, but we've even gone a bit further, as the Prime Minister said. We've allowed for subsidies as well in terms of in consultation with King and Flinders Island and the changes that we've made there were beyond our election commitments and today I met with the Mayor of Flinders Island and the General Manager of the Council there as well and there were further proposals that the Government is considering about making sure that all Tasmanians can have access.

The fact is though it is important to state that there has been a drop in the number of sea passengers from Victoria essentially and Sydney of course going to Tasmania has dropped some 9.2 per cent in terms of overall passenger numbers. Now Peter would say that's because of the lack of subsidy. The fact is that there is also substantial increase in budget air travel to Tasmania. That has had a substantial impact in terms of tourists coming into Tasmania and that has to be taken into account as well, I think. So as far as the Government's concerned

we've honoured our commitments that we made in the election campaign, point 1, point 2, we've gone further in response to representations from the Tasmanian community and those announcements we've made post the Budget and, thirdly, we're giving strong consideration and we'll be considering that prior to the end of the year was the commitment that we've got of further proposals which were put to us again very strongly today by the Mayor of Flinders Island in which the Member for Bass has made strong representations on. Thanks.

Question 2: Just a quick suggestion, first. I'd like to see Lindsay Tanner's tag changed to the Minister for Finance and Regulation because deregulation's what stuffed the place up at the moment. The other thing you may have noticed when you've flown in is that Tasmania's rapidly being devegetated and I just wanted to ask that in the spending money to boost things up that you don't ... you support MIS schemes any more because we've lost 20 per cent of our farms already. Twenty per cent of our farms have already gone to MIS schemes and we have a very unsustainable forest industry that's logging 2 per cent of our production forests a year so can you not put any subsidies that way in the future please.

Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister: I'm going to ask Tony Burke to answer.

Tony Burke, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry: Thanks very much. Around the country there's very strong views in both directions on MIS schemes and you'd be aware there was a change in the tax ruling last year which is to be appealed, which is the High Court decision, is coming down in the next month or so on that. Part of the trouble hasn't been MIS itself. It's been that you've had different rules for forestry and different rules for non-forestry and there's been some even playing field arguments that have been raised as well. On the non-forestry MIS there's a review being conducted by Treasury now and they're working their way through those issues on forestry itself as well. The issues are currently before the High Court, but the issues that you have raised, there are very strong opinions in both directions and we will be in a better position to work our way through that subsequent to the High Court decision.

Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister: Sir, with the orange shirt there.

Question 3: Mr Prime Minister, my name's Gavin. I have got a question about the ESS and utilities allowance and telephone allowance. Why has the single rate pensioner group been overlooked in this. They don't get utility allowance, they don't get a high rate of telephone allowance, they are bona fide pensioners, yet there's been no announcement about this particular group receiving payment.

Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister: Thanks for your question. I might ask Jenny Macklin, the Family Services Minister, to answer you directly.

Jenny Macklin, Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs: Thanks very much. You're talking about Disability Support pensioners, is that right? Or parenting payments? Right. Just to let you know. The people who are going to receive the increases as a result of the economic security package will be single and couple rate aged pensioners, single and couple rates Disability Support pensioners, people on the carer payment, those who are of working age, our whole approach is to assist them as much as we possibly can into the work force and of course if you are on parenting payment if you are somebody who has a child you'll also be receiving family tax benefit A and you will be entitled to \$1000 for each and every child that you have.

Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister: There is a lady, I am just trying to get there, yes. She's got her hand up a bit. Yes, that's correct. The lady who's got the microphone, I'm sorry.

Question 4: Mr Rudd, my question ...

Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister: I'm sorry, you're all in line there, but it's the lady with the microphone. Fire away.

Question 4: My question has relevance to the global economic crisis which you mentioned, I'd like to know what is the possibility of your Government going back to the banking policy that we had 100 years ago when Sir Dennison Miller ran the Commonwealth Bank. He created vast sums of money by simply creating the credit because we had the resources to back the credit with. We didn't need the IMF, we didn't need the World Bank, we didn't need international money to finance the development of our nation and under those policies if there was a financial crisis in America or Europe, it wouldn't hurt Australia one bit because we can be independent.

Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister: Thank you. My experience in discussions right across the country is people are deeply concerned about the global financial system and how it operates in the future. The problem so far and in recent times has been that regulation of the global financial system has not been strong enough. That's the problem. We have seen for example in major financial institutions around the world remuneration, that is pay packages for senior executives within major financial institutions skewed towards risk, that is, often the higher the risk the higher the payment package which has been designed for the executive concerned and I heard the other day an expression as to how that could be and what I was told was there is a principle which has been at play in the past in some of the negotiations between executives in some international financial institutions which goes along these lines 'don't worry, when the chicken comes home to roost, two principles will apply – YBG and IBG – I'll be gone and you'll be gone'. Now is that true and apply in all cases? Of course not. But there is a principle at stake here which is if you've got a major financial institution, you've got to have a responsible and reasonable remuneration package which doesn't reward high levels of risk because when it all goes wrong, guess who gets left with the consequences? Working families across the world as well as the governments who are then asked to come in and step in on behalf of the taxpayer. That's one general comment. I might ask Lindsay, the Finance Minister, to add.

Lindsay Tanner, Minister for Finance and Deregulation: Thanks Kevin. I think one of the things that's very important to emphasise is that since European settlement, Australia's economic development has always depended to a degree on foreign capital, particularly initially from the UK, but in more recent times from a whole variety of other countries, not just the US, but all around the world and if you took it away, the end result would be less economic activity, lower growth and fewer jobs so we have always had foreign investment in this country in a variety of ways and in overall terms it's been a very good thing for Australia. The issue that we are dealing with here is in a sense the terms on which that investment, in this case through lending that comes to Australia and the dynamics of the world financial system and there is no question that there are big issues about regulation, particularly in the United States and it's not because they have deregulated. It's a myth that the United States economy is a deregulated economy. In fact in most places they've got four levels of government for goodness sake.

It is bad regulation that is a bit of a shemozzle, it is bad regulation that's the issue in the United States. The difficulty we have is that even though we are in much better shape, we are affected by the consequences. The answer though is not to shut ourselves away from international markets and international capital because that would simply mean less growth, less jobs. The answer is to pursue a reform agenda internationally which is what Kevin has referred to and what the Government is pursuing and there are lots of other countries that will be pursuing serious reform for precisely the same reason because they are going to cop far more significant negative consequences from this than Australia is likely to.

Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister: Just to finish on that. One of the reasons why the President of the United States has convened a meeting of the G20 heads of government, those 20 major economies from around the world including Finance Ministers in Washington at the end of next week, where Australia will be represented by myself and by the Treasurer, is because we are looking at the rules for the future, that is, the transparency arrangements in financial markets, the liquidity arrangements, that is, what is called capital adequacy, how much money should banks and financial institutions have to retain against the bad times, the remuneration and payment systems which are referred to in my earlier remarks and the consistency of these regulations across all economies, not just a few. It's redesigning the system along those transparency principles for all economies, which is the challenge which lies ahead of us and which we, the Australian Government, are actively engaged now with other governments around the world.

The lady in purple here.

Question 5: Thank you. I keep expecting Tony Jones to pop out, but he's not here.

Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister: Tony Jones?

Question 5: Q and A.

Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister: All right. Okay.

Question 5: Excuse me. I will need to read my question. For me, one of the most disappointing and this may be addressed by the Prime Minister, perhaps Peter Garrett might be interested in this as well. For me, one of the most disappointing aspects of the Labor Government so far has been the relentless focus and obsession with growing the economy. It is as if every member is sworn to repeat this mantra as often and as loudly as possible on every occasion as we've heard already tonight. Isn't it about time that we stopped pretending that mindlessly chasing uneconomic growth is even remotely compatible with sustainability because underlying this whole issue is the unspeakable and forbidden 'P' word, 'population'. The Australian Bureau of Statistics recently projected that Australia's population could increase to 42 million people in a little over 40 years, with Melbourne and Sydney both reaching nearly 7 million people each. Is that sensible, desirable or sustainable? Aren't we as a country already seriously struggling with water supply, energy independence, food production, depleted fisheries, overloaded infrastructure and serious environmental degradation. When will the government show real leadership on this issue and start to address the elephant in the living room that is population. When will the government take the brave step of articulating a national population policy, one that recognises reality and dispenses with the cosy fantasy that is the economic mirage of never ending population growth. Will

this government have the courage to articulate a policy as recommended in a recent CSIRO publication that aims to stabilise the population of Australia to 25-27 million people by 2050, and if not why not?

Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister: I think it's fair to say we have a difference of view and let me explain why and then I'll flick to some of the other Ministers to add. You know something? I make no apology whatsoever for fighting as hard as I can and doing everything I can to support jobs in Australia, never will do, never will apologise for that because for most people, able-bodied people, it is fundamental to their ability to sustain a level of living, a standard of living, a quality of life that they have access to a job and you know something? Part of the responsibility of government is to create the conditions where that is possible and we're going to face a huge challenge in the months ahead and in the year ahead, given the global financial crisis, on making our economy as strong as possible to continue to support jobs growth when unemployment is going up around the world. There is nothing dignified about unemployment. It is really hard. It is really awful. Our job as a community is to support people who lose their jobs through appropriate support through the welfare system and our job as national government is to create the best conditions possible to continue to provide employment. That is the first principle where we disagree.

The second, where we probably don't disagree, is on the whole question of sustainable development. We believe in sustainable development. The challenge here is what do you do about all the factors pushing against the natural growth in the population. The big one is climate change. What has this government done in its first eleven months in office? (1) It has ratified the Kyoto protocol. Our predecessors refused for 12 years to lift their finger on that question. (2) The Minister for Climate Change has been busy all year developing a carbon pollution reduction scheme for this country because unless we act on the question of global Greenhouse gas emissions, both and internationally, well frankly we are not being serious about long term sustainability at all and we create irreparable damage to the planet long term. This government is acting on that. Our predecessors did not. Let's be very clear about this.

Also on the question of water. Let's look at the Murray-Darling system which currently supports in one form or another 3 million or so Australians, if you put it all together, and is the largest part of this nation's food bowl. Under the previous government, in dealing with the pressures on that system, how much was bought back by way of water entitlements, how many gigolitres were bought back to take pressure off the system. After 12 years, do you know how many gigolitres we bought back? Zero. In our short time in government, less than a year, the Minister for Climate Change and Water, Penny Wong, has already provided funding to buy back in excess of 100 gigolitres and I believe, Penny, it's now a number somewhat in excess of that, and we're continuing to do more. Until you take pressure off the system by making a decision that there is only a certain level of pull off the system which is sustainable, given that we are having less rainfall because of climate change, then you are not being serious about sustainability. We are acting on climate change, internationally and nationally, we are acting on the pressures on our major inland water system, the Murray-Darling system. Are these actions complete? No. Do they represent substantial progress on where we were? Yes. Sorry, I am just answering your question.

Sustainable development, we actually have a different view then. On the question of long term population, you know we believe also in a strong migration policy. We've supported one and done so on a bipartisan basis, one which is always tailored to the economic circumstances of Australia at the time, has been in the past, will be in the future. Also I will

just make this point that when migrants come to the country they also support jobs because new migrants means more housing needs and a whole lot of other things which need to be built which helps create employment in the construction industry. What I am saying overall to you is that we actually believe in a balanced approach to this. Our predecessors, I don't believe, on the two critical questions of sustainability, climate change and water, were ever fair dinkum, and I gave you evidence of why they weren't fair dinkum before. We are and we intend to pursue a policy of sustainable development long term, it's right for the country, also investing in jobs for the future is right for the Australian people as well. Over this way. The gentleman in the green shirt up the back there. That's you, sir, yes.

Question 6: My question is both to you, Prime Minister, and also to the Minister for the Environment, Mr Garrett.

Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister: I need you to speak up a bit, mate.

Question 6: The assessment process for the Gunns pulp mill has been a huge disappointment, both to me and to a lot of people that I know personally. I've seen a huge change in Tasmania over the last fifteen years and I have five children and I try to justify to them the change and the reasons behind it, the assessment process in Tasmania by the Tasmanian government, you would have heard a lot about. I would then assume that the Federal Minister for the Environment would pick up some of the gaps left by the Tasmanian process and my question is could you justify please why the assessment has been so narrow, only just the effluent into Bass Strait, what about all the trees that are going to be cut down. From memory, it's 400 million tonnes of trees every year are going to feed this mill for the next decades. How can you, as Minister for the Environment, not consider all the ramifications for the trees getting cut down, feeding this mill, that there's other multiple other problems associated with it, for its smoke generation in the forestry industry. I'd like to see a proper assessment done on the State and the Federal level.

I'd like to see the assessment process widened out to include all of those other areas. The gentleman with the first question or the second question tonight talked about the tax incentives scheme, I'd like to see all of those issues addressed before we say 'yes' to this pulp mill. One further point, if Gunns is now going to have a 50 per cent partner from overseas, my simple and naïve understanding would be that the assessment process so far has been for a Tasmanian company to build a mill. If that now becomes half a Tasmanian company and half an overseas company building the mill, I'd like to see the whole thing re-looked at because that puts a whole new light on the thing.

Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister: So by popular acclaim, I give you the Minister for the Environment.

Peter Garrett, Minister for Environment, Heritage and the Arts: Thanks Prime Minister. And look I appreciate that there is a very, very strong community feeling, not only here, but around Tasmania and nationally around the issue of a Gunns proposal and it is a good opportunity for me to provide some real clarity to you about the Commonwealth responsibilities and the other responsibilities. Remember, let's go back to the start and remember that the original proposal was considered by the former government and by Minister Turnbull. Minister Turnbull approved the mill, he approved the mill on the basis of 48 conditions and the Environment Act is very clear about what the powers of the Commonwealth Minister are and are not, and the powers of the Commonwealth Minister

under the Act go to what is called matters of national environment significance. It is simply not legally possible under the Act for the Minister to consider other matters other than those any ES matters which he or she must consider and consider diligently. I inherited those decisions from Minister Turnbull and my first task was to make sure that I diligently observed the conditions and made sure that any approvals process met those conditions as outlined. There are 16 modules as some of you know and there's an independent experts group which is set up which provides advice to the Department and then advice comes forward to me. On that matter I will make sure that each and every module that comes to me is assessed scrupulously. I will do it on the basis of the information that's provided to me by the Department and also by the independent experts group as I am required to do under the decisions that were laid down by Minister Turnbull and I will do that, wanting to protect those matters of national and environment significance.

On the question of additional matters that you've raised, some of those matters don't fall within the Commonwealth purview and do not fall under the Act. The matters that do, the matters of national environment significance, the one that is of real interest to you here is the question of effluent and discharge. Once all the approvals, if they are approved by me, are in place, there is still a requirement for additional matters under the environmental parameters of the management plan to be considered. One of those matters is the question of hydrodynamic modelling for the effluent discharge. If a comprehensive evaluation of the hydrodynamic modelling shows that there is the potential for a significant impact on matters of national environment significance in the case of the effluent discharge, Commonwealth waters, then there may be the requirement for additional conditions to be placed on the mill, but my responsibility as an Environment Minister is almost to be the lawyer to scrupulously observe the conditions that are being laid down by Minister Turnbull when he first brought that proposal to bear and approved the mill in that form and to make sure that each and every one of those modules does not have any impact on matters of national environment significance and I will do that.

Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister: Now there's a gentleman here who asked a question. Yes, that's him. No, the other chap behind there. Yes, he had his hand up first, this one, that's you, sir, yes, snowy hair, 50 in the shade, that's you.

Question 7: Prime Minister, welcome. I was transported here in 1950.

Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister: Transported?

Question 7: Yes transported, not a first Australian, and I have been in Australia ever since. As a young man growing up at Georgetown in my very early teens I made a commitment to myself, and I explained it then and it was most confusing for people that I talked to, that there was a need for a new world order. I spoke to my church, they were partially confused and I spoke to the world and they were indeed most ... that the notion was quite ridiculous. Tonight we witnessed Senator Obama, you spoke of him and he said we can do it, we can do it. My question to you is in the areas that I've worked in all these years as a lay person is human rights and social justice areas as a lay person. It is very disappointing still for me as one who some years ago now was able to influence, along with many other people, the government of the day here in Australia to in fact recognise these 0.07 commitment to foreign aid.

If I can just briefly go on. I've brought this up in *The Examiner* recently and it was most disappointing some of the reaction, one being from person whose comment was that charity begins at home, but I am quite prepared to admit that we ought to give something away, providing it's surplus, it's superfluous to our requirements. May I have your comment? And finally, your sorry to Australia to me was perhaps the beginning of a new world order, certainly here in Australia, and I don't think you've been commended enough for it. A new world order for me will be when my fellow first Australian descendants will come and sit with us here next time you come down, in my lifetime I'd like to see that happen that together, black and white, we can move on and do what is necessary.

Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister: Let me just say a few things in response to that. Firstly, in terms of the great cause of reconciliation. Can I just say that for us as a community, an Australian community, this has been a first order of business for the nation. When I say first order of business for the government. In February on behalf of the Parliament, I delivered an apology to indigenous Australians, the Stolen Generations. That was simply the beginning, the beginning of what I describe as a long term program of closing the gap between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians and that can only be achieved on the basis of a partnership built on respect, mutual respect and mutual responsibility between ourselves and indigenous Australians and we've made some small progress on that in the period that we've been in office, but that is just the first step.

The second point you talk about is getting our house in order around the world, not just at home. I listen carefully again to what Senator Obama spoke of tonight. There was a phrase he used in his speech tonight where he talked to people listening to his address around the world. He spoke of people in parliaments and he spoke of people in palaces around the world listening to his remarks, then he used another very interesting phrase and 'people huddled in corners listening to radios in parts of the world that we have all forgotten' or words to that effect. Now that is a challenge to our common humanity which brings me to your essential point about millennium development goals. The millennium development goals are one of the major frameworks for the way in which we deal with the continuing scourge of global poverty. That scourge does not disappear because of the global financial crisis. It continues. The practical question for us all is what do we do about it? As the point at which we took over government, Australia's official development assistance as a proportion of gross national income, the measure you referred to before, as you probably know is 0.29 per cent. We went to the people saying that we will raise that to 0.5. In the history of this nation, I don't believe we've ever been at 0.5 at any time in our past history and that is a significant achievement for us to realise in the period ahead and how we are putting that to work for the enormous challenges of development here in our own region, our own neighbourhood, our own back yard. There are 13 other States who are Pacific Island countries and the Pacific Island forum, many of them against the millennium development goals about poverty, about women dying in childbirth, about infant education opportunity, the classic measures.

Many of our near neighbours are failing against the millennium development goal measures. We've sat around for a decade and just ignored it was happening. We can't do that any more. It's one of the reasons in February I went to Papua New Guinea and with the Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea announced what I described as a new Pacific development partnership framework for the future anchored in the millennium development goals, but implemented in each of our partner countries here in our own neighbourhood. That's just the beginning. It's almost analogous to what I described as the practical steps we need to take in closing the gap between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians. So as part of what you described as a

new approach to international governance, taking the millennium development goals from the margins to the centre of what the world community does, secondly, ensuring that we're also reforming the other international financial institutions like the World Bank to make sure they do more of the global heavy lifting in assisting developing economies and the poorest economies out of poverty. This we must achieve practical action on and it is close to the central priorities of this government.

The gentleman with the tie up the back there, yes, sir.

Question 8: Thank you, Prime Minister. Prime Minister, may I congratulate your government in accepting the regional forest agreement as bipartisan support and which applies exactly the same for Tasmania. Both major parties in Australia in the State and the Federal scene accept that situation as an agreement that we should honour. But my question really is about what is the situation with diesel fuel in Australia. Not so very long ago, diesel was about two-thirds of the cost of petrol. The simple reason it is the cost it is today is because there's just simply a dearth of diesel. We cannot supply enough diesel for the world. Australia has vast quantities of gas and coal. I believe coal can be converted to diesel, we can add things to it by making ethanol to extend diesel, but what we need is the diesel itself. Can you see a way clear that we can get incentives into Australia to produce more diesel which eventually will bring down the cost of production of whether it's farming or forestry or fishing or simple transfer agriculture in Australia.

Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister: Let me just put it in these terms. Step back from the immediate question on diesel and put it into the broader question of what is a future national energy strategy for Australia, all sources, all forms, including renewables and how is that meshed against the challenges put to us before about sustainable development for Australia. These two things have to be considered in tandem. What the Minister, who's absent from here tonight, Martin Ferguson, is working on is a long-term energy security strategy for Australia which incorporates the role of all fuel sources, renewable and non-renewable. That's never been effectively done in this country up until now and it's never been done within the framework of long terms sustainability as well. Obviously, diesel and synthetic diesel will be part and parcel of the Minister's paper on that which will then after Government consideration become an agreed strategy for the nation for the future, but we've also got to consider all the other alternative energy sources as well and that goes to the entire raft of renewables, it goes to biofuels, it goes to what we do with wind, it goes to what we do with geothermal, it goes to what we do with solar and how are these energy sources also best promoted and encouraged for the future.

Part of our response to that on renewables is to boost the renewable energy target to 20 per cent by 2020. This is a big step for the nation. We are committed to it. We think it is necessary to provide enough critical mass for our renewable energy sources to become part and parcel of the mainstream energy generation of the country. At present they have too small a role. We need to make it larger, but that together with what you have spoken about, sir, on diesel will form part of an overall energy security strategy for Australia for the future which the Minister and his Cabinet colleagues is working on at present. Over here, sir, yes you sir.

Question 9: I'd like to congratulate both you and all your Cabinet for the hard work you've done so far in your term. I really thank you.

Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister: I don't know this guy, but if you think it's a set-up ...

Question 9: No, it's not set up. I am an American, but I am also an Australian, if you care, but I just love this country and I think you're doing a great job so far. We are just waiting for more of your promises, that's what we are waiting for, more of your promises and it's fantastic. Okay. I have a lot to do with youth in the area in the north west as a lot of volunteers do up in the north west. Actually there's lots of volunteers all over Tasmania, heaps, thousands of volunteers in the community. I work with youth and I am very concerned right now about young children needing to grow up to be strong parents and I want to know what your government has in mind for early childhood and parental care and really an education so that they have that support, okay, so that we can grow up really strong adults. I am worried about our youth. You've seen it in the newspapers with the drug and alcohol abuse. I will leave that with you. Thank you.

Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister: Okay. Thank you. Look the whole spectrum of early childhood education is critical for us and that's why we have major reform proposal out there for the nation to provide over time, 15 hours a week, 40 weeks a year for every 4 year old in the country of supervised pre-literacy and pre-numeracy so that the littlies get the best start in life as possible because if you start early with a kid's education development the advice we've received and accepted as a government, the earlier you start, the more effectively you start, with a kid's pre-literacy and pre-numeracy, the better the long-term education outcomes. Why do most governments in the past Federally not do this? Because you don't see the yield of it for about a dozen years until those kids have gone from preschool and popped out the other end of the secondary school system. That's called long-term planning. What's Australia need? Long-term planning. Unless we do that effectively and look beyond the three-year electoral horizon we'll never get anywhere.

On the question of parent and child centres, could I just ask Jenny to add what we are trying to do in that space.

Jenny Macklin, Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs: Thanks very much and you're dead right. We really need to do two things I think. One is to make sure that children are born healthy so parents need to make sure that they understand that while Mum's pregnant, that she gets the sort of care and advice that she needs so that when the baby comes along, the baby's healthy and then the health system kicks in and Nicola Roxon's doing some great work on maternal and child health services, make sure they're available. The next bit really is making sure that parents have got the support they need to know how to be good parents. I think a lot of us have traditionally relied on our own parents to teach us. Unfortunately, one of the things that's happening in modern society is that we're often separated from our parents. We need to have some support in the community and one of the things that we're very keen to do is really to provide those sorts of parenting programs for new parents to support them when a new baby comes into the family so that they're more confident and they know what to do.

The Prime Minister's also outlined our very clear understanding of just how important it is to invest in children when they're little before they get to school. All that brain development happens when they are little children and that's why we're determined to become the best in the world at providing early childhood education, not to be where we are at the moment to actually have the wooden spoon in the developed world when it comes to early childhood education. So we're very determined to make the sort of changes you're interested in.

Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister: We are running about 15 minutes later than we said that we'd have questions so giving people fair warning. I'll take another three, one from each block. This lady at the front here. You will have to get a microphone, Patricia.

Question 10: My name is Patricia O'Donnell. I'm from St Marys. I'm a member of the Break O'Day catchment risk group. This letter has been prepared by Dr Alison Bleaney who is an OBE. Called to protect human health from pesticide exposures, protecting human health from pesticides exposures needs a whole of the government approach due to the increasing complexity of the issues involved which cross many jurisdictions and disciplines. We have jointly written this letter and included the statement from the Collegium Ramazzini 2008 to state our concerns regarding the current regulatory regime for managing toxic chemicals such as pesticides in Australia and in particular, Tasmania, where pesticides are used extensively in water catchments for forestry and agriculture. Tasmania, along with other State and Territory regulators, as well as Commonwealth regulators, must urgently reassess their approach to these issues in light of the increasing use of pesticides because of the threats, low dose pesticide mixtures pose to water catchments from pesticide spray drift and run-off.

In Tasmania, pesticide analysis of river waters has shown increasing numbers of detections of an increasing number of pesticides over the previous three years. Climate change and drought will only accentuate problems associated with predicting impacts from pesticide use and exposures. As modelling and risk assessment became difficult with more unpredictable rainfall patterns, often with heavier sudden falls of rain and increased surface run-off and increased surface evaporation with increasing reliance on ground-water sources and greater unpredictability of rainfall, we can no longer rely on the dilution being the solution to chemical pollution. Proactive communications within Government departments, such as those described in the accompanying articles regarding the reduction of disease-inducing and modifying chemicals is not occurring here in Tasmania. This goes against all arguments for preventative approaches to protect human and environmental health.

Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister: Thank you for the question and the point of view. We've got the drift and therefore I might ask the Health Minister to respond.

Nicola Roxon, Minister for Health and Ageing: Thank you very much for that. Actually as you were going through that letter, you had a bit of haggling going on between the Agriculture Minister, the Climate Change Minister and myself and, I suspect, the Minister for the Environment too. You're right that it does need a whole of government approach because each of us deals with a separate aspect of the issues you've raised. What I might suggest, given that we're all here, the Secretaries of our Departments are all here, and our staff are here, I might ask Ruth or Mark from my office to make sure they catch up with you as soon as we finish so that we can get your letter and we can deal with it across government to provide you with a proper response.

Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister: There's a little person up there, no, littler than you, sir, same coloured top, behind you and we'll hear the voice of youth. My experience in the past is this will be the killer question which none of us will know how to answer.

Question 11: Well now obviously I and a lot of people have been to lots of pulp mill rallies, but the thing is, what is Gunns doing to help. I mean I know you said that you're going to make all jobs be promoted, but why have the jobs, but no forests, no places to go to make this place good because we don't want to kill our planet.

Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister: I told you it'd be a good question. Let me just try and answer it in these terms because you've heard an explanation of the decision making process from the Minister and here is the key point. This country is a nation of laws and laws are enacted by the Parliaments. I would hate to see us argue that we should not be a country of laws. I assume that's not the purpose of the interventions. And what the Minister was now describing, this is the answer to the young man who asked the question, is that what Peter was saying before is this. Under the laws of Australia, the Minister at the time, Mr Turnbull, approved this project. Then – let me answer the question for the young man without everyone interjecting until I've tried to answer specifically his question about the planet – what we've got here is a decision by a Minister which says here are a list of 20 – 30 – 40 conditions attached. Peter's job as the new Minister is to do this. Fairly and impartially make sure that each of those 30 or 40 conditions is actually being honoured or not. That's what the law provides. His job as the Minister is to make sure the law works. The alternative is no laws at all. This Minister is a very good man and a very honest man and he will work through each of those conditions with full conscience, with great diligence and make sure that each of those conditions has been thoroughly examined. That's where it is up to now because this Minister, like you, young man, believes in the future of the planet. Over here. This is a gentleman who stood up very quickly.

Question 12: Thank you very much Prime Minister and Jodie. My question is about water, perhaps the greatest issue because it provides a necessary element for our future. Now Tasmania has a very good record and with the help of Federal funds is destined to make this State drought free within a relatively short time, perhaps two years from now and, as I say, you are helping in that respect. Now I wonder why you on the mainland aren't doing the same because you are not directing water from the north where it falls in great amounts is the vast interior of Australia and particularly the Murray-Darling basin. There have been schemes put afoot over time, over decades, for water to be transferred from the coastal side of the Great Divide to the inland and I wonder why Ms Penny Wong and yourself, who I've seen on television at the mouth of the Murray which is a disgrace. I've seen it on television, yes, looking at those two lakes there. Now I just want to know why aren't you on the mainland doing what we are doing in Tasmania.

Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister: Okay, thanks very much. I'll ask Penny Wong, who's Minister for Water, to answer. Can I just say one thing though. In our eleven months or so in office on the country's single largest inland river system, the Murray-Darling, and your point goes to waters in the north, which I am sure Penny will come to in her answer. The Murray-Darling, one, we have brought about an intergovernment agreement to establish for the first time a Murray-Darling basin authority, with responsibility for the entire system and, two, for the development for the first time in this country's settled history a plan for the entire basin, that is, the water used and the water which comes in, and that's never been done before. We've got that by way of agreement so far.

The third thing we've done in a practical sense is for the first time, and I can't emphasise this enough, this government has actually commenced the large scale buying back of water entitlements from those who currently take water out of the system. Those are three practical steps in terms of the Murray-Darling itself. It's the beginning, it's the beginning after a long, long time, a decade or more of absolute neglect. On the rest of the water planning for the nation, I might ask the Minister to add.

Penny Wong, Minister for Climate Change and Water: Thank you for the question and one of the things about being Water Minister is you do get a lot of people putting forward different projects to resolve the very substantial challenges we face in water, particularly in the southern part of Australia, the mainland, and as the prime Minister said, particularly in the Murray-Darling basin, we are up against it. We are facing a very difficult position because of climate change and the reduction in availability of water as a result of climate change. We have on top of that a drought and on top of that we have many years of over-allocation and a failure to manage this system properly so we're trying to remedy that.

Your question about pipelines essentially, I suppose the thing that we do have to remember is that part of what we have to do is to adjust to using water more efficiently and typically many projects which pipe water from one part of Australia to another are very expensive, expensive not just to establish, to build, but expensive to operate because there's a physical issue that water is actually quite heavy and the energy involved in pumping it from one part to another, particularly across very long distances, is very substantial. So in part, my answer is there's not a quick fix technical solution to the water issue. We have a process we have to go through where we become more efficient and more sustainable. Your very reasonable proposition about the north of Australia is one the Government is certainly mindful of and one of the things we did when we came to government was establish not only the Office of Northern Australia, but the taskforce is looking at the economic opportunities including a relation to water which is now actually Minister Albanese's portfolio is under way to consider what are the economic opportunities that can be derived in northern Australia.

Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister: Can I just say to everyone thank you for your questions. We've run now a half hour longer than was advertised. We need to allow time for all those people who have booked individual appointments with individual Ministers. As was said at the beginning, if you've not been successful in obtaining a meeting with a Minister or you have wanted to ask a question and haven't been able to please fill out what is called a post-event enquiry form, that is, put your question on paper, it'll be got to the Minister and you'll get the answer back. Where do you get such a form? You go to the people in the blue polo shirts. Where are they? Wearing the blue polo shirts, running around the room there, so please find one, get your form, hand it to them and the undertaking from us is that we get the answer back. You know so far in this whole process of Community Cabinets around the country, I mentioned before that we'd done eight around the country, we've already had a process where literally thousands of people have come to these meetings. In our undertaking to each person who asks a question is we get back to you.

As you can see from the discussion we've had tonight, we won't always agree with the person putting the point of view, but our job in being here is to hear what you've got to say. If we can't do that through everyone getting a chance to put a question to the forum, we do have an opportunity through the meetings with Ministers and we have a further opportunity through you filling out one of those forms and us getting back to you and that's what we'd like to do. Thanks so much for making us feel welcome here in Launceston. We look forward to catching up with you in individual meetings, one on one, and I appreciate very much your attendance this evening.

Janet Simms, Acting Principal, Newstead College: Thank you, Prime Minister. We will now have a short break. Just a reminder for those people with the one on one scheduled meetings, please come to the seats at the front. For everyone else, thank you for attending and we hope you have enjoyed the meeting.