

There are four certainties of life in Australia.

The Victorians want to make voluntary assisted dying compulsory. They are still debating Euthanasia down there. We knocked it back last week in our Parliament.

Taxes. Remember the great Rudd and Swan mining tax. So exquisitely executed by Wayne Swan it help destroy a Prime Minister and a government.

Hot Australian summers- bushfires, cricket and Shane Warne flogging hair restoration products

And most certain of all is the professional galas predicting the end of mining or spinning the line that mining doesn't matter much any more in the life and economy of Australia.

We can count on ex Reserve Bank Governors, The Australia Institute, Greens looking for relevancy and the usual talking heads.

The line gets up a head of steam every few years when there is a commodity down turn or technology becomes flavour of the month again.

Basically the argument goes we can become a nation of hipsters, cappuccino makers and consumers; digital disrupters, shoppers, grey nomads and health professionals fixing up grey nomads.

“Agriculture and Mining are old economy; doesn't pay its way and we best move on”

Let's have a quick look at that.

When the Australian economy was hitting the GFC, mining investment stepped up and made a major contribution to avoiding a recession. Not the rollout of pink bats or giving Australians \$950 each to buy Harvey Norman HD TVs. Mining investment as a percentage of GDP went from 2.5% in 2005 to 5% in 2009 and 9% in 2012/13 to keep the wheels of industry turning and employment growing.

Contrary to the what the activists and quasi think tanks would have you believe, mining is a massive contributor to local, state and federal treasuries. The anti mining protagonists never mention payroll tax, rates, licences and a myriad of fees and charges. They may pick on a particular company over a few select years, ignoring the ongoing gross contribution to the coffers.

My plea to you in the audience is get the message out there. Greens propagate their myths through their fronts like The Australia Institute and Get Up. Politicians can do so much. I am one of a handful in NSW Parliament speaking up for mining. Robbo was brilliant in his former role as Minister for Resources and Energy. But we are a few. It needs real life stories from your workers, contractors, and allied industries to tell their stories. When the Australian Institute prattles

on with their disingenuous claims that mining hardly matters in the Hunter, I tell the story of a year 6 girl, school captain of a primary school in Branxton that I met in 2015. Her father was made redundant and had to travel to Central Queensland for work. He was away about 3 weeks in every 4. That was in the middle of the coal downturn when hundreds of mining jobs were lost. I hope he found work back in the Hunter now that prices have recovered. Tell the human story. Talk about communities and families. Pride and well being. Children having parents with good jobs that are mostly home to watch them grow up.

Gina, I was asked to touch on briefly about my Shale Gas trip in the US this time last year.

The motivation for me was to test the Greens assertions that the Shale industry had wreaked havoc. In particular NSW Green MLC Jeremy Buckingham went on what he called a “Frack Tour” a couple of years back. He warned farmers and communities were revolting. There was an environmental disaster in places like Dimock, Pennsylvania.

I thought I had to ground test this. I went to Texas, Pennsylvania, Washington and Canada to see it first hand.

I looked at drill rigs; watched fracking; met Chambers of Commerce in the heart of the Shale gas counties; spoke to farmers and met with the US Department of Energy and Oil and gas operators.

The Greens version of Shale in the US as they try to portray it here in Australia has no relationship with reality. Many aspects of the oil and gas industry over there are different. Most specifically the resource is usually privately owned and royalties accrue in the main to the landholder.

I went to Dimock, Pennsylvania of flaming faucet fame. It is a thriving small town not noticeably impacted by the Gas industry. Its environment is fine. Its rural aspect is unaffected. Now and then you may see some bits of gas infrastructure. Or even a rig doing its short term operational work.

This slide shows a Gas collector point on the grounds of Elk Lake Elementary School not that far from Dimock. It is at the bottom of their sports ground. The School receives 'free' gas for their boilers which is pretty important in that very cold climate. And they get a share of the sale of the gas they don't use. No harm to anyone. School children run and play past this most days. Economically, socially and environmentally everyone wins.

The next slide shows the Proctor and Gamble factory about an hour out of Scranton Pennsylvania. This is what we would call regional USA. Predominantly farming. Not an extensive breadth of economic activity. P&G developed this plant in Mehoopany because it has shale gas wells on site plus access to timber products. It uses its own

gas for feedstock and to generate electricity. Its core business on this site is paper towels, napkins, diapers and pampers.

We could do this. In the US, Manufacturing and jobs have gravitated to energy sources. About five years ago Australia lost the \$1 billion (AUS) Incitec Pivot plant from the Hunter to Louisiana in the main due to gas availability and price. We have as much or more Gas than the US. But our media is in thrall to noisy activists. We have paid a heavy price in Australia through the actions of the Greens, Lock the Gate and fellow travellers. None of their assertions are based on science. The NSW Chief Scientist gave us a road map to safely extract coal seam and shale gas. We parked the issue for a few years, but reality has caught up with us.

Australia has a choice. We can be a resource powerhouse with substantial manufacturing. Or we can govern for the very small minority running their campaigns mostly through social media. We can be spooked or we can ensure Australia continues to be a mining and resources global giant.