

viewpoint

**QUOTE
UNQUOTE**

You can never cross the ocean until you have the courage to lose sight of the shore.

Christopher Columbus

FROM MY DESK

with Claire Campbell

Action overdue

Three years of talk in State Parliament and still no action. That would be a pretty funny joke if it wasn't putting lives and livelihoods on the line.

Just what will it take for governments and decision makers to realise how seriously the long nosed fur seals are affecting the Coorong and Lower Lakes, and do something about it?

It's not just fishers crying foul of the animal, the local community is distressed and economically struggling, the Ngarrindjeri people are funning as they helplessly watch their totems and spirits of their ancestors attacked while volunteers are clearing dead pelican carcasses from roads and highways so visitors aren't deterred.

Both The Greens and Family First say they do not support a cull of long nosed fur seals as that would ruin tourism for the State.

That may very well be true but I can tell you that tourism is already being ruined, to some extent, in Meningie and the Lower Lakes - a crucial industry for the Coorong.

Birds and native wildlife are being attacked and left for dead, migratory birds are at risk and if seals continue to increase in Lake Albert, swimmers will be forced out of the water.

Goodbye summer holiday makers!

Yes, the seals are so gorgeously cute, the way they frolic around in shallow waters.

Ask the fishers and they will agree - but they'll also tell you how they turn into "greenhins" come night time, rip the fish out of their nets and attack fishermen on their boats.

Speaking to fishers about their future is heart-breaking. Tears are rolling down the faces of some, others are silent - there are no words.

But you have to admire the spirit and determination of our primary producers.

Fishers are trying to see the humour in a dire situation, with the award-winning Coorong Wild Seafood changing their name to Coorong Wild Seafood.

But it really is no laughing matter.

We know all too well, the effect drought has on farmers and the toll it takes emotionally and financially.

Well, this is a drought of the sea but somehow that doesn't seem to count.

Changing the name from New Zealand to long nosed fur seals does nothing to help the environment or fishing industry and commissioning yet another South Australian Research and Development Institute report into the effect on the environment and industry is wasting critical time.

Time that fishers and the environment simply do not have. Maybe culling isn't the answer, but doing nothing isn't either.

Mental health is emerging as a major concern in the region, and another area that urgently needs tackling as fishers and the community stand helpless.

I urge you, the State Government, to take action before it's too late and a community is left grieving.

And I urge you, the Coorong community, to stay strong and support each other through.

As your local paper, together we will find answers and we will see action.

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Who would have thought?

Who would ever have thought Australia would be up for sale.

Well, it is.

Thanks to our politicians who have sold us out big time.

Foreign investment, or should I say foreign take over is alive and well.

Why would anyone with half a brain sell off our biggest money earner.

Mining has declined and we need to pay off our massive debt, but our brainless politicians who obviously don't care about we, the people, have decided to sell off our most profitable asset, our food bowl.

This is nothing short of treason.

China is only one of many. They will own the farm, the transport, processing plant and the port, and that's what Government calls foreign investment.

I went to the wrong school.

We should have listened to Pauline Hanson all those years ago.

Mr Tony Abbott, please stop this madness as soon as possible.

You will leave a legacy of destruction.

Peter Manuel, Executive director, Flag Australian

Mobile phone tower shenanigans

Member for Barker Tony Pasin appears to be blame shifting over South Australia's abysmal allocation of 11 mobile phone towers out of a national total of 499 in the latest round of funding in the Federal Government's Mobile Blackspot Program.

It is disingenuous for the Federal Government to run a Blackspot program that requires a co-contribution from state governments when telecommunications is a Federal responsibility.

It appears to be nothing more than a cost shifting exercise.

There are other issues at play here and they need to be looked at.

Firstly, in the latest GST allocations to the states, Western Australia strongly objected to its allocation.

This is despite a consistent formula being used.

As a result, the Federal government gave WA an extra \$600 million above its normal allocation.

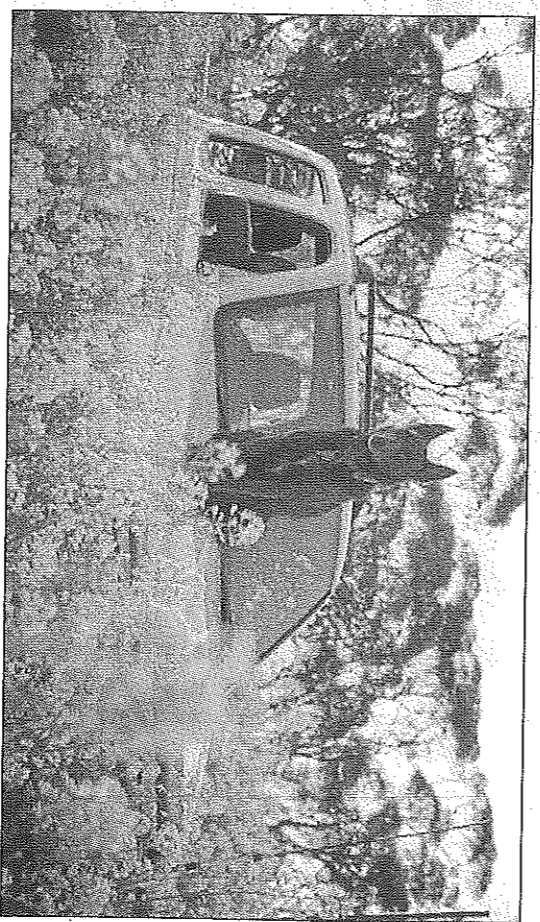
It would have been great if SA too had received a commensurate increase, which would have then allowed a greater opportunity for additional spending.

Secondly, Mr Pasin gave a number of figures but failed to provide a particularly interesting one.

Victoria received a total of 110 towers with one seat, Indi, alone receiving 30 towers - over a quarter of the state's allocation.

This begs the question as to what is so special about Indi given the seat is less than half the size of Barker and has fewer electors as well.

Up until the last election, Mark Jones, Mt Gambier



A photo's worth a thousand words...

Have you taken an incredible photo lately?

Email it to The Standard: editor.mvstandard@fairfaxmedia.com.au

Sittin' pretty: Steven Schache, of Younghusband, took this photo of his dog, Wurt, sitting on the bonnet of a ute. Mr Schache titled the photo "Remembering last harvest".

THE MURRAY VALLEY STANDARD

Standard

YOUR NEWSPAPER - ESTABLISHED 1934



COUNTRY PRESS SA
Best Newspaper
Circulation between 2500 and 6000
2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008,
2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013



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