

viewpoint

QUOTE
UNQUOTE

In the long run, men hit only what they aim at. Therefore, they had better aim at something high.

Henry David Thoreau

YOUR LETTERS

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All letters must include name and address for publication. A telephone number must be included for verification and preference will be given to letters no more than 250 words. The editor reserves the right to edit letters where necessary.

Ag paper doesn't stack up

It's been a tough couple of weeks for Barnaby Joyce.

The Agriculture Minister has failed to take account of one of the most important guiding principles in politics: expectations management.

It's no wonder because his Prime Minister has been masterful at doing whatever it takes in the present for political advantage while worrying about the consequences later.

As Opposition Leader he deliberately ignored the impact the Global Financial Crisis and collapsing coal and iron ore prices were having on our economy.

He refused to recognise the then Labor Government's competent management of those challenges.

Further, he sought to demomise every Labor Government achievement; the new funding arrangements with cash-strapped state governments in health and education (which he has since unravelled), action to address environmental issues (unravelling), historic pension increases (which he tried to unravel) a new disability scheme, the removal of discrimination from our domestic laws, the apology to Australia's indigenous people, and the modernisation of our industrial awards.

And there are many more examples. Tony Abbott's key objective was to have the electorate believe that everything that was wrong in our economy was the fault of the Labor party; that the election of Tony Abbott would herald a new era of wealth and prosperity.

Of course, he now tells us it is all about the global situation and tries to distract by attempting to have everyone thinking not about the economy or costs of living pressure, but their personal safety and security.

The now Prime Minister's style became infectious and Barnaby Joyce was not immune.

The Agriculture White Paper - finally delivered just over a week ago - was supposed to lay the foundations for an economy built around the opportunities that the growing global food demand has on offer.

However, the longer the delivery of the White Paper was delayed, the more Barnaby Joyce fuelled expectations; "better to be late and get it right," he regularly declared. But he didn't get it right.

We were all hoping for a big picture document; one which provided high level strategic assessment and guidance.

A White Paper which offered both a narrative and clearly defined goals and objectives.

One which presented analysis of Australian agriculture's strengths weaknesses, threats and opportunities; new and innovative ideas about how we might set market-based price signals to attract investment where it is most needed and where the mobilisation of our nat-

ural resources in the most profitable and sustainable way.

Maybe, some modelling quantifying potential supply-chain efficiencies.

Instead, the White Paper told us what we already knew and offered not much more than a collection of initiatives - some good, some bad and others which will do no harm.

Some welcomed, but initiatives that could have easily been announced 18 months ago.

By the time the White Paper was released, I thought Barnaby Joyce may have learned the 'expectations management' lesson but sadly it wasn't to be.

Indeed the announcement came with a \$4 billion price tag.

This is surely the biggest con-job ever presented to the Australian electorate.

I've challenged Barnaby Joyce to authenticate this figure.

He won't, because he can't.

To massively inflate what it was offering, the Government has relied on many tricks: counting the total value of repayable loans over 10 years; including economy-wide, non-ag-specific and previously announced (mostly by the former Labor government) projects; offering money which the government knows will never be spent, and counting on money which is contingent upon unlikely contributions from cash-strapped state governments. Further, many offerings are years beyond the Budget's forward estimates while others only off-set cuts imposed in Tony Abbott's first budget.

It's for Barnaby Joyce now to manage the disappointment of so many in the agriculture and agri-business sectors.

But sadly, it will fall on others to pick up the pieces following an opportunity missed.

Joel Fitzgibbon,
Member for Hunter,
Opposition Spokesman for Agriculture.

FACEBOOK COMMENT

Opinion: Long-nosed fur seals need immediate action - MV Standard, July 10.

Something definitely needs to be done. As a local Ngarrindjeri woman it is very distressing to see the pelicans (my totem) being attacked and dying from their injuries.

Posted by Rachael Nulty

Opinion: Long-nosed fur seals need immediate action - MV Standard, July 10.

There is no historical evidence of seals ever being abundant in the lower lakes and coorong even prior 2 man made interference and if you

were to do some research you'd actually find this is having an adverse effect on tourism as watersport creates half a million dollars to the local economy of just murray bridge and are having a negative affect on tourism and the population on the three major species of tourist attractions

Posted by Tyson Turtle Bradley

near seals. So there's the dilemma it's ok if you're a land creature but unfortunately places like milang and Meningie rely on swimmers etc for their tourism. So do we take tourism out of the equation to support a migration of fur seals in places where they've never been before?

Posted by Olaf Stroh

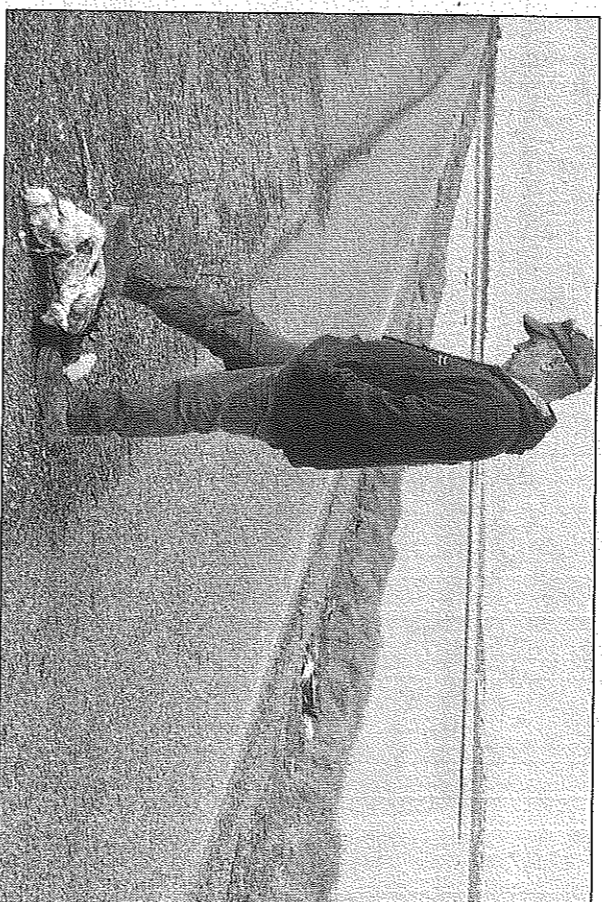
Opinion: Long-nosed fur seals need immediate action - MV Standard, July 10.

Whilst I despise speed boats and enjoy my kayaking I wouldn't like to get in a seals way. Swimming well no way should swimmers be

Posted by Kasey Ebdon

Opinion: Long-nosed fur seals need immediate action - MV Standard, July 10.

I just noticed 2 dead pelicans floating next to the Jervois ferry.



Marianne Cunneen, of Meningie, took this picture of Shane Cunneen with a dead pelican at the barrages. Mrs Cunneen says people are starting to find dead pelicans in the river and on the banks that look like they had been attacked by seals.

Ag paper doesn't stack up

Why is the State Government protecting the New Zealand or so called long-nosed fur seals?

These creatures are attacking the pelicans, native birdlife, migratory birds and consuming the swan eggs of the Coorong. They have almost reached the pelican rookery at Jacks Point in the Coorong and we are very concerned.

They have now entered both Lake Albert and Alexandrina and the river as far as Murray Bridge.

This is a very serious matter for all nature lovers and environmentalists.

The Coorong is now in deep, deep trouble and so will the lakes and river if nothing is done.

Marianne Cunneen,
Meningie.

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