

Scott Morrison is the ad-Lib PM

By John Passant

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Cartoon by Mark David / @MDavidCartoons

Australians [support the New Zealand offer](#). It makes electoral, as well as some sort of warped moral sense, to pursue this and deliver an outcome the majority support. Morrison backing away from that solution shows how out of touch he is — and what a liar he is.

#HumanRights

Almost 6000 Doctors Have Signed A Letter Calling On The PM To Get [#KidsOffNauru](#)
<https://t.co/6UoEIQGU5s>

— Human Rights Post
 (@HumanRightsPost) [October 15, 2018](#)

Failed advertising executive and current Liberal Party Leader, Scott Morrison, is the "ad-Lib" Prime Minister.

Before the Wentworth by-election, he ad-Libbed about [accepting New Zealand's offer](#) to take some of the asylum seekers and refugees on Nauru, with a ban on any of them, then, ever coming to Australia. Labor was [prepared to agree to it](#).

After the by-election, with the defeat of the Liberals in their blue-ribbon seat, [Morrison rejected doing anything about the potential deal](#). He prefers, instead, to leave the children on the [concentration camp](#) that is Nauru, despite calls from [6,000 doctors to get them off the island](#) for their own health and safety.

Morrison was ad-Libbing about the children on Nauru, because he thought it might help his candidate in the Wentworth by-election. Interestingly, the overwhelming majority of

For the same reason, the Prime Minister also ad-Libbed about the Government [considering moving the Australian Embassy in Israel](#) from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. [Few in his Government or the bureaucracy](#) knew of the proposed change in Government policy on Jerusalem. My guess is it will quietly die now that the by-election is over.

After the by-election, Morrison has indulged in more thought bubbles. He wants to "[repurpose](#)" [National Disability Insurance Scheme \(NDIS\) funding](#) to the [Drought Future Fund](#) to help farmers with the drought. In English, this means he wants to shift \$3.9 billion from the already underfunded NDIS to the drought fund, worth \$5 billion, but only starting in 2020. The results will be [disastrous for disabled people](#).

It is not as if farmers don't need assistance now, caught as they are in [the worst drought in Australia in 100 years](#). And it is not as if disabled people don't need more funding to help all of them – not just some as currently happens under the NDIS – to lead fulfilling lives. It says much about the Morrison Government that they are prepared to sacrifice disabled people for farmers.

Morrison promised this money to people with disability. [#NDIS](#)
At the first political opportunity he reneged and gave it to someone else.
Farmers are kidding themselves if they think they'll see all that money. [#droughtrelief](#) [#auspol](#)
<https://t.co/uhV83osBKx>

— Jim Pembroke
(@Jim_Pembroke) [October 27, 2018](#)

Meanwhile, defence spending rises inexorably year in year out to meet an [artificial goal of two per cent of GDP](#). On top of that, this Government is spending [\\$17 billion on dud jet fighters](#) and [\\$50 billion](#) (over time) on submarines. That could alleviate poverty, improve the health and public education systems and help disabled people. With the money left over, we could even think about implementing a plan to turn Australian into a totally renewable energy society in ten years.

The Prime Minister has consistently [refused to discuss the cause of the drought](#) — climate change. He did not ad-lib during the by-election about climate change, despite this being, along with [refugees, a major issue for voters in Wentworth](#). This is because capitalism is built on

greenhouse gas emissions and the mining industry has major sway within the Coalition and sections of the population. That is why Morrison's mantra is about lower prices and reliability — both of which are achievable, not with coal, but [renewable energy](#), batteries and spending to modernise electricity supply networks.

After all, five years ago the Coalition came to power arguing they would lower electricity prices. In the ten years to 2017, according to the ACCC, [electricity prices have risen 44 per cent](#) in real terms. Neither of the major parties is going to address the systemic issues which have caused this — issues such as privatisation, network costs, the increase in wholesale (generation) prices and the super profits retail power companies make.

Well said [@PaulBongiorno](#). This is up there with the L/NP's pre-election night "no cuts to education, health, pensions, ABC or SBS" promise. [#AusPol](#)
pic.twitter.com/15PxPnttmN

— Kiera (@KieraGorden)
[October 25, 2018](#)

When Morrison and the rest of his Government tell us they are going to drive prices down, be very sceptical. Interestingly, the Coalition is proposing to reduce retail electricity prices by [heavy-handed Government intervention](#). For example, there will be a price safety net, including a

default price set by the [Australian Energy Regulator](#). Is this price simply control by another name? The Government will also force energy companies to sign contracts to guarantee supply.

These measures seem to contradict everything the Liberals stand for. But if we are going down that route, why not nationalise the power supply industry or, given the constitutional impediments to doing that, set up a state-owned corporation in competition with the others and return the profits to the people at the same time as delivering lower prices?

The reality is that the ad-Libbers think they have found a popular target — namely, electricity producers and retailers. They hope that giving the impression of doing something to reduce power prices will be popular with voters.

Again, the elephant in the room remains climate change. One of the proposals includes establishing the [Underwriting New Generation Investments](#) program, designed, I suspect, to prop up or encourage coal-fired power stations. Giving government money to support inefficient industries for ideological reasons is sure to be a winner! It is yet another

example of the Coalition abandoning its long-held opposition to market interference, driven by the panic now that it realises it will in all likelihood lose the next election.

Assuming the Morrison Government doesn't fall apart completely or lose a major vote in the House, it looks as if the next election will be in May 2019. This will ensure synchronicity between the House and the Senate. So, basically, we have six months until the election is called in April.

Imagine what this Government will do in that six months. It will be Wentworth writ large with promises and thought bubbles galore. Of course, once the election is over and if (a big "if") they are re-elected, does anyone seriously think they will deliver on their electoral bribes? If Wentworth isn't a guide, then Tony Abbott's words on the eve of the election in 2013 should be: [no cuts to the ABC, SBS, health or education, the soon to be PM told us](#). And after the election? Cuts to the ABC, SBS, health and education. You cannot trust the ad-Libbers. They will say anything to get elected.

Meanwhile, there are over 100,000 homeless people in Australia, 3 million Australians live in poverty

(including almost 700,000 kids), many Aboriginal people live in third world conditions with third world diseases, kids are imprisoned on Nauru, wages have stalled and underemployment is growing. On top of all that, climate change poses an existential threat to the planet.

And what do the ad-Libbers do? They ignore these issues and promise us trinkets. It is time for some serious political debate and discussion in Australia — just don't imagine we will get that from the ad-Libbers.

Scott Morrison lies about Australia's ability to meet Paris Agreement targets
pic.twitter.com/aMEa3EjUuh

— GetUp!
(@GetUp)
[September 17, 2018](#)

You can follow Canberra correspondent John Passant on Twitter @JohnPassant. Signed copies of John's first book of poetry, [Songs for the Band Unformed](#) (Ginninderra Press 2016), are available for

purchase from the IA store [HERE](#).

Last 5 yrs
[@LiberalAus](#)
:
[?] 3 Prime Ministers
[?] Tripled the Budget deficit
[?] A weaker economy
[?] Unstable govt
[?] Record cuts to health, education, ABC/SBS
[?] More casualisation of workforce, underemployment, labour hire
[?] No policy on energy, climate change, anything
[#auspol](#)
<https://t.co/HkzHz96HD8>

— Bee (@BelindaJones68)
[September 7, 2018](#)

