



Guy Barnett MP

LIBERAL MEMBER FOR LYONS

PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA – HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY – ADJOURNMENT SPEECH

HODGMAN LIBERAL GOVERNMENT – ACHIEVEMENTS

CHRISTMAS – CHARITY SERVICES

WEDNESDAY 29 NOVEMBER 2017 [6.07p.m.]

Mr BARNETT (Lyons - Minister for Resources) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to give what is likely to be my last adjournment speech in this current parliament. Since 2014 I have been honoured to be a member of this House and proud to be part of the Hodgman Liberal Government. We came into government inheriting an economy in reverse, with budget black holes, job losses and cumulative deficits of \$1.1 billion. Confidence was at rock-bottom, families were leaving the state and Tasmanians trailed the nation on almost every economic and social indicator. What a difference a little over three and a half years can make with a strong, stable majority Hodgman Liberal Government.

Since coming into government our Budget is back in the balance and the economy is strong, with more than 10 000 new jobs having been created, and we are investing more in improving our health system, education, putting police back on the streets and helping the vulnerable. Over nearly four years in government we have also achieved major legislative successes, including tearing up the jobs-destroying forestry deal, implementing a single statewide planning scheme which is still progressing, better protecting our frontline police from assault and strengthening laws to help tackle the scourge of family violence.

On top of these successes, and in contrast to the policy-free vacuum we see from Labor, we have outlined a 43-point plan to build Tasmania's future. Tasmanians have a clear choice at the next election - more jobs, more opportunity and more support for essential services under the Liberals, or a return to the dark days of chaos and crisis of 10 000 jobs lost, cost of living increases and broken services under Labor and Greens. I am looking forward to continuing to put this choice before Tasmanians over the coming months as I am out and about in the electorate.

As we leave this place and enter the Christmas season, I wanted to reflect briefly on the importance of the festive season. For many, Christmas is a time of family, friends, food and gifts, and so it should be. But for Christians, Christmas is also this and a whole lot more.

It is a time to celebrate the birth of a child in a manger in an out-of-the-way Roman province over 2000 years ago. It was a life that would revolutionise the world as it then was. It was the centre of a new faith, a fresh way of thinking and a teaching that would transform society. The child was of course Jesus, the most influential person in history based on research and the views of many, including myself. Even after 2000 years, Jesus' life and teaching continues to have a great deal of influence in our daily lives.

Nearly three-quarters of our welfare services are provided by Christian and faith-based organisations such as Anglicare, CatholicCare, Bapcare, the Salvation Army, Red Cross, City Mission and World Vision, to name a few. It is a fantastic contribution of organisations, of people putting the words of Jesus' *'love thy neighbour'* into action.

Former British PM, David Cameron, once said in his Easter message, *'The Christian message is the bedrock of a good society'* and *'Faith is a massive inspiration for millions of people to go out and make a positive difference.'* Research confirms that most Australians believe in God, identify as Christian and pray at least sometimes. According to McCrindle research, around 3.5 million Australians attend church at least once a month, twice as many as attend AFL, NRL, A League and Super Rugby games combined per month: 1.684 million.

It is undeniable that Jesus' teachings have had a great deal of influence in Australia in every aspect of our society and for our good. Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. Love your neighbour. That spirit of volunteerism, service and sacrifice. Our Christmas and all its wonderful carols remind us of the life that was the seed to these values. Together with many other Tasmanians, I am looking forward to singing these carols, a part of the season's heartbeat and rhythm. I hope these Christmas carols, loved by many generations of Tasmanians, are not put at risk in these days of increasing political correctness. I hope the handing out of Christmas cards and the sharing of the story of Jesus is not banned. I hope the display of nativity scenes is not banned. These are reminders of the true roots of Christmas and there are many out there who will continue to resist attempts by the politically-correct elite to remove them from the public square.

It would be remiss of me, particularly at the end of this current parliamentary year, to continue without thanking the many people who have supported my colleagues and me in and around the place and during the months and years I have been here. In particular, I thank members of my office for their unstinting supporting over the past years. Politics is a team game and I am privileged to have such a professional and disciplined group working with me.

Lastly and by no means least, I thank my family for their unstinting love and support over the past year. My darling Kate, my wife, and my son Ben in particular at home, and my daughters, Nina and Alice, Nina's husband, PJ, and Alice's fiancé, Josh.

There is a Christ in Christmas and I hope it stays that way. May you all have a very refreshing and blessed time with your family and loved ones during the Christmas season.