

LETTERS

## **Energy muddle is the result of political ineptitude**

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The Prime Minister says he has received a guarantee from gas producers that sufficient gas will be available in future to prevent blackouts and that, under his leadership, the Snowy Mountains scheme will increase production by 50 per cent. But many see these initiatives as mainly designed to lift the Coalition's polling rather than solving the energy crisis the PM says we face.

There is no energy crisis. The crisis is that our political leaders, federal and state, have adopted policies that are resulting in reduced usage of coal-powered energy, reduced investment in gas production for local use, and increased resort to renewable sources that have limits. Yet we have numerous scientists who reject or qualify the thesis that fossil fuels should not be used and who support the use of fracking and drilling for gas.

Australia has plentiful supplies of coal and gas; a change in policies would prevent any energy problems. One would be to reduce the renewable target (it has previously been reduced) to existing usage levels, which are now about half the 23.5 per cent target. That should be accompanied by commissioning a report from representatives of the many scientists who reject or qualify the dangerous warming thesis. A likely outcome would be a change in energy policy.

**Des Moore**, South Yarra, Vic

Your editorial ("Renewable energy target crucial in climate debate", 18/3) calls for a full and frank political debate of the policy options. Yet no climate policy since Paul Keating in October 1990 has any options. Instead every policy, treaty and every renewable energy target focuses only on emissions of greenhouse gases.

In this land of droughts and flooding rains, no policy includes naturally occurring fluctuations of climates, even though rhythmic cycles of variations of temperatures of the Pacific Ocean are accepted by scientists as linked with droughts and floods.

Government policy is blinkered because humans causing emissions of greenhouse gases may be regulated or controlled by governments. Naturally occurring climate changes cannot.

**Brian J. O'Brien**, Floreat, WA

Rather than solving the power puzzle, it might help more to solve the ideology puzzle that seems to get in the way of any sane resolution of the electricity crisis. By any reasonable measure, Australia's experiment with renewable energy is a failure and is contributing to economic losses, job losses and high power prices — and unreliability.

Those who were fortunate enough to live and work in better times and who managed to stash away enough to get a pie and a beer every week, look on with horror and incredulity at the antics of politicians as they get scammed by vested interests who offer battery storage, pumped hydro and other insane ideas to people who know little about the technicalities.

**David Bidstrup**, Plympton Park, SA

As the power crisis deepens and the renewable energy target is exposed, SA Premier Jay Weatherill becomes increasingly irrational and petulant. Few in SA are surprised by his claim that Alinta Energy failed to offer to keep the last remaining coal power station at Port Augusta open.

This, of course, was untrue, but the truth has long disappeared, particularly when he so readily blames anyone or anything for SA's power problems. A prime example is his attributing the September blackout to weather conditions and not his fatuous RET with its reliance on wind and the sun.

It is not an exaggeration to say that Weatherill has become an embarrassment to many in SA.

**Tony Shinkfield**, Adelaide, SA

Coal is the cheapest and most reliable source of energy and we have massive amounts of it. The enemy of coal is the computer-generated climate change scare. The computer models used to create this issue have been shown to be wrong. So why are we enacting policies that will cause enormous economic damage and lower our standard of living based on unvalidated models? No other branch of science or industry would do this.

Japan is building 45 new coal-fired power stations; many are being constructed around the world. China, under the Paris agreement, can continue building them until 2030. We will be supplying coal to many of them. Yet our politicians believe it is up to us to save the world from this computer-generated fantasy. They live in a fantasy world.

**Clive Bond**, Wynnum, Qld