

Letters Ed
The Australian
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6/112 Millswyn St
South Yarra 3141
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Dear Sir

Important issues are raised by the report that a Chinese conglomerate is a prospective buyer of the large supplier of electric power in NSW and that owner AGL currently plans, not to sell Liddell, but to replace it with renewable or other low CO2 emitters ("Grand Old Lady need a New Life ",29/3). Leaving aside policy on foreign investment by state-owned bodies, the Australian consultant to the Chinese has pointed out that renewable energy requires subsidies to make power economical "on these horrifically increasing electricity prices and the impact it has on families in Australia". Yet Turnbull has not raised this issue publicly.

The Turnbull government claims that, through policy intervention, its national energy guarantee will solve the problem of high prices and the unreliability of renewable. But we voters are yet to see the details promised many months ago and policy intervention would mean numerous regulations applied by a government-run body. According to Environment and Energy Minister Frydenberg, this will avert the threat of closures and blackouts by including more dispatchable power ("Liddell is a loss but energy guarantee would light the way forward" 23/3).

But does this mean the national energy guarantee will include a guarantee that specifies a certain amount of coal fired power? If not, how can there be the critical investment certainty to which the minister refers. And how will we get the promised reductions in electricity prices unless the government imposes them and incurs additional budget expenditure?

It is time the Minister examines the expert scientific analyses recently published in the US which suggest that coal usage is not only desirable economically but poses no serious threat of dangerous warming.

Yours faithfully

Des Moore
South Yarra Vic