




Speech By
Michael Berkman

MEMBER FOR MAIWAR

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ADJOURNMENT

Climate Change

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (7.25 pm): Eight days ago everyone in this place got what should have been a wake-up call. We are looking down the barrel of a climate change catastrophe and we got a clear warning in the form of the latest report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, or IPCC.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr BERKMAN: Oh, they scoff! With representatives from around the world, they are the global authority on climate science and when they speak we should listen. They have said categorically that if we are going to keep the world safe from dangerous global warming we need to stop burning coal and fundamentally transform every sector of our economy. If we do not keep global warming below 1.5 degrees the scientific consensus is now stronger than ever that we will face more intense droughts, bushfires, starvation across much of the world, mass migration, more severe wars and conflict and the collapse of entire ecosystems, including the total disappearance of the Great Barrier Reef.

Sometimes it is hard to set aside the rising panic from all these dystopian warnings, but it is my great privilege—or perhaps my solemn duty tonight—to be the only person here willing to speak this truth out loud in Queensland parliament. This is hard to say, but it is important. Right now we are losing. Here in Queensland a people powered campaign to stop the Adani coal mine is on the brink of success and clean energy is expanding apace. Progress is happening, but eight days ago some of the smartest people in the world told us it is not happening fast enough. The IPCC has said that we must stop burning coal for power by 2050. That means Adani and the Galilee Basin mines can never, ever be built. It means phasing out all thermal coal exports and shutting down coal-fired power stations. Our massive exports of fracked coal seam gas will also need to be phased out. If we do not quit coal and gas we are screwed. It really is as simple as that.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Maiwar, I ask you to withdraw. That language is unparliamentary.

Mr BERKMAN: I withdraw that last comment. To everyday Queenslanders worried about your future, I say this: Labor and the LNP are not defending coal because they want to protect jobs. We have known for years that a massive mobilisation to build clean energy, affordable homes and public transport could create millions of secure jobs. They are defending coal and fracking and big polluters because they are working for the other team. They would rather protect the profits of a few big polluters than break with the status quo. This moment of greatest danger is the time for us to plot a more ambitious course than ever before. We are fighting for a future where everyone has access to an affordable home, with more free time and secure meaningful work when they want it, a future where the basic necessities of life are guaranteed and where our state is run on cheap, abundant, 100 per cent clean energy. If we deploy our collective energies of progress and invention and solidarity we can make a cleaner future that is also a fairer one.