## dirrum dirrum

is the sound of red in Ngunnawal language: the colour of blood and earth.

## TIME FOR REFORM

Dirrum Festival <sup>1</sup>, Radford College, Canberra 15 August 2020

- 1. I am honoured to be invited to address you. I come as a person facing possible imprisonment for speaking truth to power. I keep asking myself 'How did this happen?'
- 2. My generation of law students grew up in the shadow of World War II. We understood the values our fathers and mothers fought for. We studied other struggles including the growth of democracy and the rule of law. When our class studied the making of the Australian Constitution we learnt that there had been a heavy emphasis on the values underpinning the Constitution of the United States.<sup>2</sup> Our founders made frequent reference to their American predecessors. Quoted to us were the sayings of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, the Second and Third US Presidents. Adams' sayings about rule of law now resonate in our fragile Australian democracy.

The law in all vicissitudes of government...will preserve a steady undeviating course; it will not bend to the uncertain wishes, imaginations, and wanton tempers of men...

There is danger from all men. The only maxim of free government ought to be to trust no man living with power to endanger the public liberty.

A government of laws, and not of men.

3. Adams, a lawyer and leader of the American Revolution, accepted the unpopular role of defending some British soldiers charged with murder after firing into a mob of protesters in Boston shortly before the American War of Independence. His address to the jury that saved the men from execution became famous for its rejection of popularism. He established that the soldiers were being attacked and threatened and argued that the jury should not be swayed by drummed up popular opinion. In this era of Trump popularism we are witnesses to how far the current US President has strayed from the values of his great predecessor. Leading a government should not be an exercise in sales marketing, diversionary fear mongering and marginalising others. Similar popularism has now gained some hold in our own country.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Radford's Festival says that Dirrum Dirrum is a way of seeing others and ourselves bound in respectful relationship, standing in a wide circle of compassionate engagement. It acknowledges a common ground and is an active choice for life beyond the smallness of self-interest.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> John Quick and Robert Garran, *The Annotated Constitution of the Australian Commonwealth*, (Websdale, Sydney, 1901), at 285-287 explaining the origin from the United States Constitution of the preambular words, in the Australian Constitution, *'Whereas the people...'* meaning the political body which, *'forms the sovereignty, holds the power and conducts the Government through its representatives...every citizen is one of this people and a constitutent member of the sovereignty.'* (286).

4. Writing just before the Covid-19 pandemic, Nobel Prize winning economist and former Chief Economist of the World Bank, Joseph Stiglitz warned,

With this generation of unscrupulous leaders at the helm challenging the ideal of truth, the world and the country are at risk of a much greater disintegration-one in which it will eventually not be safe even to voice the sort of peaceful calls to action found in this book. One shudders to think of what sort of economic contraction, war, or security crisis could nudge us into the abyss.<sup>3</sup>

- 5. For students of history there are important lessons. A great crisis threatened Australia in 1939. In January of that year, Australian Prime Minister Lyons who sought to play down the threat posed by Hitler and Mussolini rebuked H. G. Wells, then visiting Australia, for criticizing the two fascist leaders. Back in England, Wells rounded on, *'all that is most indecisive, disingenuous and dangerous in the present leadership of British communities...Lyons like Chamberlain, manifestly suffers from delusions of sagacity, and thinks that by winks, nods and secret talks, isolationist bargains are to be made.' <sup>4</sup> As war again approached, former Prime Minister William Morris Hughes who had led Australia's delegation at the 1919 Versailles Peace Treaty talks described the Lyons Government's vacillation and weakness as the 'inexcusable blunders of diplomacy.'<sup>5</sup>*
- 6. Like the blinkered Parliamentary leadership of Australia in 1935-39 a failure of political leadership is again a challenge for our future. For a country used to natural disasters it is a sobering thought that Germany had a country-wide testing and tracing capacity in place before the COVID-19 virus struck leading, so far, to a better outcome. Some scientists are saying that the *Covid-19* pandemic is just a dress rehearsal for the future when climate change will repeat the long hot burning summers across the globe, when sea levels rise and vast migratory population movements may become a global issue. Hopefully, the current Inquiry into the *Ruby Princess* fiasco<sup>6</sup> and the Royal Commissions into Aged Care and into National Natural Disaster Arrangements will move our leaders to learn from others, observe the rule of law, listen to youth, and, plan properly for the future.<sup>7</sup>
- 7. Recalling that our Prime Minister derided the notion of a climate change apocalypse until he returned from Hawaii, went to burnt out Cobargo, place of my grandmother and her forebear's birth, and muted his claims, we should remind him that *'apocalypse'* is a Greek word meaning "revelation". Ominously, our climate-change sceptic Prime Minister gave no sign that the terrible summer we recently endured was to him a revelation that he will act on without further delay. His response to Greta Thunberg was to warn young people against 'needless' climate anxiety. We need a change-maker to lead national reform on where we need to go in caring for others in a genuine way, in protecting our environment and restoring rule of law. Why?

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Joseph E. Stiglitz, *People, Power, and Profits,* (W.M. Norton & Co. NY, 2020), 236.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> E. M. Andrews, *Isolationism & Appeasement in Australia Reactions to the European Crises, 1935-1939,* (ANU Press, 1970, 161.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> *Ibid*,124.

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Lucy Hugh Jones, 'Commonwealth threatened legal action against Ruby Princess inquiry head over constitutional stouch', Daily Telegraph, 12 August 2020, '...the rule of law is not so simply sidestepped'.
 <sup>7</sup> Katie Burgess 'CSIRO Wants Leadership on Climate Change', Canberra Times, 4 August 2020, reporting on Commission Exhibit CSI.508.001.0027, 'Climate and Disaster Resilience Technical Report'

- 8. A basic rule our elected leaders sometimes stray from is their duty to provide informed and principled leadership reflecting the values embraced as a whole by their electors. The 1975-1999 Timor Sea story illustrates what goes wrong when politicians do things in secret they would be ashamed to be identified with in public. But I don't want to focus just yet on the Timor Sea scandal. There are issues currently of great importance that question whether the Australian community is adequately protected from the risk posed by poor leadership.
- 9. Some question whether economic rationalism is responsible for sucking the moral perspective out of political leadership and policy making? I quote Emeritus Professor Michael Pusey

Economic rationalism reversed Australia's historic nation-building legacy. Free market neoliberal doctrines have captured the central Canberra policy-making apparatus and radically reduced the coordinating role of the state in most areas of public policy. Economic 'reform' is seen primarily as a political project led by international and domestic corporate interest groupings and aimed at the transformation of Australia's institutions. The neoliberal orthodoxy continues to distort the policy process as it has become functionally indispensable for the process of policy making and government, despite its failing intellectual legitimacy.<sup>8</sup>

- 10. You may ask 'Where has truth gone?'. Discussing her recent book<sup>9</sup> and her willingness to be in the Parliamentary 'bear-pit' Australia's first woman Prime Minister Julia Gillard said that 'politics is a clash of ideas and values '.<sup>10</sup> What seems like a pretty uncontroversial statement is, when you analyse her comment against what goes on in our Federal Parliament, a cause for reflection. If she is speaking of core values such values shouldn't clash and nor should they be prioritised. Core values are not open to challenge or choice. One core value is *truth* another is *respect for human life* another is the *tolerance* required in respecting human rights. Down the scale there may be 'values' open to debate such as *compassion*. Perhaps there are degrees of compassion. Without going into lengthy ethical discourse we can say there should be no acceptance that something like *truth* may be manoeuvred around in the bear-pit. But that is what we see too often in our Federal Parliament. Truth in Parliament should not represent a clash of values.
- 11. A never-ending saga of sly policies, 'double-speaks' and scandals, be it, *Sports-rort funding, Robo-debt-recovery* or Defence contracting for electoral gain makes abundantly clear to ordinary Australians that neither truth nor ethical engagement are hallmarks of the way we are now governed. How do we deal with this? Most Australians just shun politics and leave the discredited role to others. This cannot be the answer in a real democracy. All those involved in educating our citizens either by schooling and/or leadership in community affairs need to promote a clearer set of values so politicians may know what is expected of them. Having a lie-free Front Bench is both a moral and public health issue. The constant sight of the so-called bear-pit damages our social fabric and lowers our community spirit.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> From abstract: Pusey, M. (2018). Economic rationalism in Canberra 25 years *on*? Journal of Sociology, *54*(1), 12–17. <u>https://doi.org/10.1177/1440783318759086</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Julia Gillard and Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Women and Leadership, (Random House, Australia, 2020).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Life Matters with Hilary Harper, ABC RN, 18 July 2020.

- 12. Apart from the absence of exemplary leadership there is also the role of those behind the façade of leadership-those 'advisers' who construct the false spiel. Many seem bemused by the disconnect between reality and platitudes. The 2017 Australian Foreign Policy White Paper is a good example. Platitudes like, 'Our Rules Based Order-Soft Power projecting our democracy-Rule of Law-Getting the frameworks and rules right for business'. If only our foreign policy **is** intended to get the rules right for business! What a sad joke!
- 13. Those who recall the 2002 images of Prime Ministers Howard and Alkatiri signing a Memorandum of Understanding wherein both sides expressly undertook to act in good faith in revenue treaty negotiations remain appalled by the Howard Government's subsequent conduct. In contradiction of the claimed ethic 'of getting the rules right' the Howard-Downer conduct that most Australians appear to reject is now a national secret public acknowledgement of such would prejudice our national security according to Australia's First Law Officer Attorney-General Christian Porter and the findings of a Supreme Court Judge who recently accepted the proposition. <sup>11</sup>
- 14. Surely, the true essence of 'soft power' is to influence for the good by extolling our historical purpose as a new democracy. This is not compatible with the belief within foreign policy corridors that 'soft-power' is engagement with our neighbours without primary emphasis on 'values'. An experienced foreign policy adviser recently put this rationalist outlook succinctly, *'...Australia cannot afford to make values the primary driver of our engagement with Asia.*' <sup>12</sup> In this way awkward topics like imprisonment without trial that should be out front are downplayed in the so-called search for common ground. There are immutable no-negotiation human rights and they cannot be traded away. In my view the next generation of senior policy advisers need to carve out a more exemplary image of Australia in our Region by not subordinating our core values to trade and commerce.
- 15. Following the shame of the Lyons Government in offering no sanctuary to those fleeing Nazi persecution, Menzies <sup>13</sup>, Curtin and Chifley so famously, and Menzies again, adopted Roosevelt's and Churchill's 1941 Atlantic Charter of freedoms and the beacon it provided to the world. But sly leadership now dims that light. Those who follow no beacon other than a narrow short-term self-serving prism now govern us, and, ominously, have narrowed the constitutional separation of powers in an attempt to secure endorsement for closed hearings by the judiciary.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> https://courts.act.gov.au/supreme/judgments/r-v-collaery-no-7

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Richard Maude, *Charting a Course for Australia in a Changing Asia*,

https://asiasociety.org/australia/charting-course-australia-changing-asia

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Robert Menzies, *Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives,* 20 August 1941.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> National Security Information (Criminal and Civil Proceedings) Act 2004

S31(7)(a) The Court must, in deciding what order to make under this section, consider the following matters:

<sup>(</sup>a) whether, having regard to the Attorney-General's certificate, there would be a risk of prejudice to national security ...

S31(8) In making its decision, the Court must give greatest weight to the matter mentioned in paragraph (7)(a).

- 16. Even in wartime, after the Nankin massacre, as we faced a ruthless enemy the Federal Parliament did not resort to requiring a judge to follow, no matter how subtly worded, a political dictate. Our wartime Parliament rightly left our judges to make any decision to close a court on security grounds.<sup>15</sup> In intellect, integrity and values the leaders in the 1939 Parliament including Menzies, Beazley, Curtin, Evatt left a legacy for others to follow.
- 17. Our leaders have failed to learn from mistakes in foreign policy. A tragic example was acceptance of Washington spun rhetoric about Communist China being on a domino march to Australia. This led Australia into the Vietnam War. Ironically, despite warnings, another generation of foreign policy advisers has failed to offset modern Chinese economic imperialism in our Region with high level support to Regional leaders and structured generous foreign aid programs. Nowhere is this failure more apparent than increasing reliance now by Pacific Atoll States on China to undertake atoll reinforcement engineering schemes to offset rising sea levels. We have known for more than a decade that China was perfecting its engineering skills in the South China Sea and was likely to offer strings-attached schemes to our Pacific neighbours. This work was well within the capacity of Australian enterprise.
- 18. The often China obsequious trade oriented foreign policy cliques in Canberra have a dangerous synchronicity claiming that they alone, being on the inside, have a currency on Australia's foreign policy challenges. Add the general apathy of comfortable Australians and the error of this claim becomes apparent. Those Canberra elites, unchallenged by bipartisan Parliamentary Committees, often spawn and fund cohorts into back-scratching university and buddy think-tank roles. My past experience with the work of the then Fairfax funded St James Ethics Centre in convoking leadership groups in our Region in Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam and Cambodia is just one example of how well-connected foreign State actors will participate in candid non-State dialogue with non-State actor Australians. Recently, the same Court in Canberra accorded lesser weight to the value of non-State dialogue within informed but 'retired' strategic policy advisers. The Court preferred 'current', implicitly political views that many see as ephemeral and open to challenge, to the collective acquired wisdom of eminent witnesses.<sup>16</sup>
- 19. How confident can we be of 'current' wisdom? In 2004-2005, while successfully challenging Foreign Minister Downer on behalf of *Falun Gong* practitioners who

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> National Security Act 1939 Hearing of proceedings in camera.

**<sup>8.</sup>** (1.) If, with respect to any proceedings (whether instituted before or after the commencement of this Act), the court (not being a court of summary jurisdiction) before which the proceedings are taken is satisfied that it is necessary in the interests of the public safety or the defence of the Commonwealth or any Territory of the Commonwealth so to do, the court—

<sup>(</sup>a) may give directions that throughout or during any part of the proceedings such persons or classes of persons as the court determines shall be excluded; and

<sup>(</sup>b) may give directions prohibiting or restricting the disclosure of information with respect to the proceedings.

<sup>(2.)</sup> The powers conferred by sub-section (1.) of this section shall be in addition to and not in derogation of any other powers of the court.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> <u>https://courts.act.gov.au/supreme/judgments/r-v-collaery-no-7</u> at [68].

sought the right to peaceful protest outside the Chinese Embassy my law office negotiated safety for two defectors from the Chinese Public Security Bureau. Both spoke of the close relationship in Beijing between the Bureau and Australian authorities. Neither felt secure with the provision of their narrative to the Australian Foreign Ministry.<sup>17</sup> There may be reason for this. I conclude elsewhere that in 1999-2004 our Foreign Ministry accommodated China's foreign policy initiatives affecting Timor-Leste<sup>18</sup> One defector brought extensive irrefutable evidence of widespread Chinese intelligence activity in the West. This included massive data banks of those in Australia who, *sui juris*, might be identified as Chinese. Australian citizens and permanent and temporary residents were recorded by name, family composition with personal details including mortgages, employment especially including government agencies.

- 20. No public steps were taken by the authorities to warn Australians particularly the university, scientific and commercial communities. Fifteen years elapsed and only under public pressure arising from their own Chinese funding scandals have those politicians gone into a belated chest-pumping media campaign about China. With gross hypocrisy, the very politicians who had early warning by courageous whistle-blowers of foreign interference, now introduce foreign interference laws that go soft on politicians and infringe on our civil liberties particularly within the media. Unsurprisingly, the new laws create no specific offence for any politician aware of the current confidences of Government moving seamlessly into employment by Chinese Government affiliates. Surely, this was a significant risk to counter.
- 21. What all Australians have seen since December 2013 when Federal Attorney-General George Brandis simultaneously sent his lawyers to The Hague and raided my chambers to seize Timor-Leste's Brief is the Coalition using powers granted ostensibly to combat terrorism as the fig leaf to cover its shame. While trying to hide this shame from public gaze our political leaders hypocritically criticize China for the very same conduct the Australian Coalition Government not only practised but seeks to defend under a veil of secrecy. What China is accused of using its economic power to achieve in developing countries certain Australian politicians did to our impoverished neighbour-the same peoples who came to the aid of our embattled young soldiers during WWII.
- 22. In other working democracies with an independent police and prosecution process improper conduct at the top is investigated but not in Canberra as legendary AFP watcher Jack Waterford has frequently observed. The unfair 2004 treaty negotiations marked by the transfer of a multi-billion helium windfall not to Australia or Timor-Leste but to predominantly foreign owned corporations is a scandal of mammoth proportion the Coalition seeks to keep out of the news. At great personal cost and with great integrity K set out to get a finding of unlawful conduct and everyone one of us lets him down if we remain silent as he is shuffled off in secret to a Canberra Gulag.

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup>https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5b283d0ffcf7fd4e0101bd20/t/5b852d9b4ae23726e2de5673/153545
 4669786/submissions-to-the-senate-inquiry-into-asylum-and-protection-visas-for-consular-officials.pdf
 <sup>18</sup> Bernard Collaery, *Oil Under Troubled Water*, (MUP, 2020), 388.

- 23. This is the image Australia now projects to the world and more injuriously to countries in the Region where our children and grandchildren must find a place. It was of deep concern in Court recently to witness 'diplomatic pragmatism' in contest with 'values'. 'Pragmatism' won endorsement from a Supreme Court Judge in Australia's national capital. Promoting a cross-dressed *Neither Confirm Nor Deny 'plausible denialability'* response to calls for the Coalition to fess up and remedy Australia's reputation in the Region brings us right back to H G Wells's ever so apt warning of 'all that is most indecisive, disingenuous and dangerous in the present leadership.'
- 24. Firstly, in a moral and legal context, just what place does such a NCND response have in our courts of law? In the Permanent Court of Arbitration at The Hague where parties are treaty bound to arbitrate in good faith such a response was tantamount to a contempt of all that Australia stood for. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, there are practical consequences when our intelligence agencies are misused to further illiberalism and economic imperialism or worse. Above all there is the effect on morale. Good servants of our country are placed in a moral dilemma. When they turn to the law for support they are set upon by those who conflate illegitimate orders with national security.
- 25. The public should be allowed to hear whether certain matters were beyond the three heads of empowerment in the *Intelligence Services Act 2001 (ISA)*.<sup>19</sup> While ASIS may, for a necessary and proper purpose, break the law the public should hear why conduct it was directed to undertake was, and I think most Australian agree, improper and far from necessary. It was certainly not to the *economic well-being* of Australia and by squeezing the Timorese further in their dissatisfaction with Australia, contrary to effective *foreign relations*. Worse still, it flew in the face of successive Defence White Papers that emphasised our *national security* need for a friendly stable ally, an unsinkable aircraft carrier, in a forward position in our Region. In short, it was contrary to the three statutory rubrics set by Parliament.
- 26. The explanation given by the Hon. Margaret Stone, Inspector General of Intelligence and Security as to why she would not investigate the Dili matter illustrates why we need a National Integrity Commission,
  - In addition to issues of legality, I am also required to consider the propriety of the intelligence agencies activities assessed in the context of the statutory function they are performing. For instance, under the ISA, ASIS is tasked to collect foreign intelligence *in accordance with the Government's requirements;* issues of propriety concern the manner in which ASIS goes about that task. My power to consider propriety does not extend to whether it should ask ASIS to collect foreign intelligence on a particular subject. So, for example, the question of whether the Australian Government, as a matter of policy, *should*, or *should not*, task an intelligence agency like ASIS with collecting information relevant to the negotiation of an international agreement is not within my jurisdiction.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> S11(1) The functions of the agencies are to be performed only in the interests of Australia's national security, Australia's foreign relations or Australia's national economic well-being and only to the extent that those matters are affected by the capabilities, intentions or activities of people or organisations outside Australia.
<sup>20</sup> Letter dated 27 November 2018 by the Hon. Margaret Stone, IGIS, to Senators Patrick, McKim and Storer, and, to Andrew Wilkie MP.

- 27. The IGIS and the public should know if the events in Dili in 2004 were motivated, wholly or partly, to check whether the Timorese had woken up to a plan to pass helium gas off on the high seas worth billions of dollars as 'waste' to certain foreign corporations.<sup>21</sup> This plan had not been approved by the Parliament and there is no evidence that the plan had Cabinet, Treasury or other involved Ministers' endorsement. So who approved the plan and how could such a plan be *a Government requirement* that would satisfy the test then set by Parliament for the Foreign Minister? The IGIS had the power to find out and a duty to report. Such an inquiry is long overdue.
- 28. The helium issue is clouded with other concerns related to national security. Helium was and is in this nuclear age a defence listed 'critical commodity' long sought after by our strategic defence advisers. Apart from Australia's own needs the nuclear power industry in countries to Australia's north requires massive quantities of helium. It is no secret that shortly after the liberation of East Timor China was in dialogue with the Chairman of Woodside Petroleum and our Ambassador in Beijing. Another contractor, Phillips Petroleum was already in three-way discussions in Canberra, Moscow and Beijing to provide technological support for two planned helium plants. One at Wickham Point near Darwin then secretly proposed without Timorese knowledge to be linked to the Timor Sea Bayu-Undan LNG Plant and another near the Chinese-Russian border in Eastern Siberia.<sup>22</sup>
- 29. Why was all the Bayu-Undan and the future Sunrise High helium production given away in long-term Production Sharing Contracts oversighted by the Foreign Ministry to, respectively, the predominantly foreign owned ConocoPhillips led contractors, and Woodside which at all relevant times was no less than 83% foreign owned? The giveaway was never discussed at official level by Australian and Timorese negotiators. So where was the plan conceived and implemented? Although Foreign Minister Alexander Downer has said that he actively assisted 'Australian companies' in the Timor Sea negotiations the helium give-away was never brought to the negotiation table so at whose table was the plan devised?
- 30. We should recall that as Timor-Leste began to investigate the helium issue the Coalition raided my Chambers, seized Timor-Leste's Brief and sought to prevent an affidavit that risked no one from being read in camera before an eminent Tribunal Australia was treaty bound to appear before. The proceeding before that Tribunal were confidential. On advice, Timor-Leste had appointed an eminent retired UK Judge. Australia had appointed an equally distinguished United States international lawyer and the two appointees had elected the Chair-another eminent jurist.
- 31. The Coalition does not want the Australian people to hear further details of this affair in open court. In support, some willingly, others somewhat reluctantly, defend conduct the vast majority of Australians regard as improper. Arguing that an open admission would harm Australia's foreign standing is to reward deceit and defend an

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Bernard Collaery, *Oil Under Troubled Water*, (MUP, 2020), 333-335.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup>https://www.researchgate.net/publication/329684204\_On\_the\_opportunities\_of\_the\_shift\_of\_helium\_indu stry\_world\_center\_to\_eastern\_Siberia\_Russia

unrepentant Coalition. Some may argue that a candid and apologetic admission may improve international respect for Australia. The suggestion that our Five Eyes Intelligence partnership would suffer 'reputational harm' if Australia without a closed court cannot effectively punish persons who reveal secret operations takes no account of whether the revelations were of improper and/or unlawful conduct in which case the reputational harm may be, both in not punishing the improper/unlawful conduct and the abuse of court process.<sup>23</sup>

- 32. What are the Australian people to make of our justice system if after the next Federal Election a new Government issues an apology for past maverick behaviour and instructs the Australian Federal Police to do their job? As matters stand weaving, ducking and stalling by or on behalf of persons anxious to avoid open scrutiny in Court debases the social fabric of Australian society. It makes us no better than those we criticize, and it tells the world that Australia might do it again. And worse still-**in our name.**
- 33. The reason why Attorney-General Christian Porter has employed NSI Act powers that defeat the constitutional right of Australians to hear evidence of Coalition misconduct requires the closest scrutiny.
- 34. If Australia wants to show leadership within the Region the Australian people may need to consider at the next ballot that having a good reputation is not a tradeable commodity to be cast off when it suits corporate mates. Australia should be governed in the public interest and not according to the glib utterances of those who mislead and cause disharmony within Government and the community.
- 35. I look forward to the day when Australians, including those educating and bringing up our new generation, may cast an informed vote on the moral and principled behaviour they may expect of our political leaders. As matters stand, so called democratic governance has lost its way. Only by reform at home will we be able to mount a credible push back in our Region against State actor corruption and the totalitarianism employed to hide it.
- 36. Few Australians believe that the current political leadership in Australia has anything like the skillset required to deal with the multiple challenges facing us. This is not a doomsday or apocalyptic outlook. It is reality. What hope can we give your generation of future leaders? I believe that hope is not some pipedream. Hope becomes a discipline when ethical engagement can deal with uncertainty. Hope itself becomes the roadmap. George Orwell's prescient *1984* gave us a clue to why we should have had a roadmap showing where we shouldn't go. Orwell predicted the *technofascism* that our Government has launched upon us in invasive data mining, facial recognition and the like.
- 37. How do we deal with this? There seems only one way. My hope is that a new breed of parliamentarians emerge who will reform the Australian Public Service, repeal

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> <u>https://courts.act.gov.au/supreme/judgments/r-v-collaery-no-7</u> at [106].

repressive legislation and govern robustly in an informed, compassionate and ethical way. Over history youth has often spearheaded change so it is over to you here to decide what is required. Hopefully, in doing that you may reinvigorate older generations of Australian to join you in change for the better. Thank you.