

TONY JONES: Good evening and welcome to Q&A. Answering your questions tonight, the longest serving Labor premier of New South Wales, Bob Carr; Israeli-born communication consultant Shimrit Nothman; the national director of GetUp, Simon Sheikh; the Shadow Minister for Immigration, Scott Morrison; and the Chief Executive of the Australian Industry Group, Heather Ridout. Please welcome our panel.

Okay, remember Q&A is live from 9.35 Eastern Time, so join the Twitter conversation with your comments and send us your questions by SMS to 197 55 222 or via our website at [abc.net.au/qanda](http://abc.net.au/qanda).

Well, it's been a big day in politics, with state and territory and federal leaders meeting to thrash out a new deal on health and hospitals. Let's get straight to our first question tonight on that subject. It comes from Alex Brown.

ALEX BROWN: Mr Carr, with the Federal Government trying to take over the state healthcare system, do you think there's any merit in that and should it be rolled out to other entities that the state governments control, i.e. abolish the states.

BOB CARR: Well, I think, whether it's good or bad, that federal power always prevails in a federal system. There'll be a continuing drift towards the centre and we've just got to make sure that it's the right mix is the best way of doing it. I've got more radical views on health. I think, first, we've got to slow the drift of people into the hospital system. We've got people turning up at emergency rooms with sore throats and, second, we Australians have got to stop eating our way into hospital. We are eating too much energy rich, nutritionally poor, salt-laden foods, and we've got to get serious about preventative health when it comes to food, as we did 30 years ago when it came to tobacco.

TONY JONES: Bob Carr, what about the last part of the question: abolish the states? Longest serving New South Wales' premier, should we abolish the states?

BOB CARR: Well, they have lost an awful lot of power in the last 20 years. They've lost power over industrial relations. John Howard asserted the right to fund flagpoles in school years. We had the states lose their power of taxation of petrol, alcohol, tobacco. There's been a significant drift of even a national curriculum. I mean, it used to be considered that the states would run the curriculum if they ran nothing else, and I just think that within 10 to 15 years the states are going to have markedly little to do and I would suggest that the next COAG task would be to plan for the day when state governments comprise five ministers - no more than five ministers - when state parliamentarians meet on a part-time basis, they're paid as part-time MPs as in Texas or Alabama and we expect little more of them. I mean, at the present time you've got a New South Wales Minister for Veterans Affairs, you've got a Victorian Minister for Respect. It's not long before the Tasmanians have a Minister for Colonisation of Outer Space, we're so desperate to find work...

TONY JONES: That will certainly be...

BOB CARR: ...for under-employed federal ministers - ah, state ministers.

TONY JONES: That will certainly be one of the Greens, Bob.

BOB CARR: Mm?

TONY JONES: I said that will certainly be one of the Greens.

BOB CARR: Yes, a Minister Moonbeam.

TONY JONES: No, I didn't mean it quite like that but colonising outer space sounds good.

Heather Ridout, what about this idea? I mean, you've just heard a fairly radical proposal to trim down - not abolish but trim down the states, prune them back to five ministers.

HEATHER RIDOUT: Well, Tony, we've had 110 years to create this mess, haven't we? 110 years of Federation and it's very hard when you try to unravel big pieces of it, like health, and make it work better. It's hard because the states spend more than they raise, so they are always going to be challenged by the Federal Government. As Bob said, they'll be the ones funding the gap and the gap is rising. You know, for all of you that don't realise it, 80 per cent of our personal income tax collections is spent on health. It's a huge thing and it's going to get bigger. But, you know, from an industry point of view, competition between the states can actually be a really good thing too. You know, payroll taxes are different in some states. In others, workers' compensation schemes work in better states than others. Bob, one of your better reforms was workers' comp in New South Wales and that competitive federalism can yield really good results and, you know, one of the issues at the moment - John Brumby's run a pretty tight ship in Victoria. He's been a reformist government and he's delivered a lot and he doesn't want to give up that leadership. So you give up the federation, you give up some of those possibilities, but I concede the fact that, you know, I mean having to deal with these issues on a daily basis - seven regulators across everything, eight pieces of regulation on occupational health and safety, which we're now trying to fix and we're making progress on that. The industrial powers, they've just been ceded. But, you know, there's just endless areas that are like trying to cut through treacle. Education is another area that I've been grappling with for, I don't know, 30 years. So it's very hard.

TONY JONES: It sounds like you would like to see a greater concentration of power in one Federal Government.

HEATHER RIDOUT: I do but then I think the Federal Government is not necessarily up to it yet. The Federal Government has had a very strong policy-making focus. It's been good at handing out money through the benefit system, et cetera. But once they start to manage things, it's a whole different set of skills that you require and we've seen some of those examples. The state is not bad at managing things. That's what they do. So if we're going to give power to the federal system, the federal layer of government, we have to make sure they've got the skill sets to be able to actually exercise it effectively, and that is a really big challenge for public policy, especially when the Federal Government is located in Canberra and out of the mainstream.

TONY JONES: All right. Let's go to Scott Morrison and the first part of the question: is there merit in the Federal Government's takeover of the state health system?

SCOTT MORRISON: Well, everybody believes health is important. That's not what the debate is about. What it's about is whether this is a good plan or not and at the moment we've seen a lot of reaction from the states in terms of suggesting that this is not a good plan for them. I'm very wary of centralising power. I'm always very concerned when I see proposals to take decision making further and further away from the coal face and from where people actually deal with services. That worries me about hospitals. If anything, I'd like to see it go the other way, rather than come further and further into Canberra. I'm very suspicious of the ability of federal government agencies' abilities to deliver operational programs, and you only need to look at home insulation to understand that. So I think we have to be very careful about getting caught up in a hype about a health reform plan the Prime Minister sees as politically important and make the mistake of going down a path which could really erode the sovereignty of states and local governments, in fact, further down the track, to make sure we get decision making and services closer to those who use them.

TONY JONES: Let's hear from Simon Sheikh.

SIMON SHEIKH: Sure. Well, to return to your question, Alex, I often ask myself the same question when it comes to the federation. With regard to the health debate, Heather raised the question of funding and the question of the states. The reality here in New South Wales is that

the entirety of our budget will be taken up by health expenditure somewhere between 2030 and 2040. So, clearly, there has to be a role for the Commonwealth. The unfortunate thing about this debate, though, is that we are stuck talking about hospitals, rather than talking about health. Surely we need to move on to talking about the real forms of health that we need to care about beyond hospitals. For example, Australians under the age of 44 die most from mental health, and yet that's not part of the debate. There is a role for the Commonwealth, but what we need is for that role to extend beyond simply funding hospitals.

TONY JONES: Shimrit Nothman, do you get the impression Australia is over-governed?

SHIMRIT NOTHMAN: I have to say it's - as a new immigrant, two years now, I find it very hard to still understand the local health system around here and I think that many other Australians, as well, after living here for a lifetime, and part of the reason is because it is a very complex system. I mean, health is not something that you can explain in two or three words. And in the end of the day I think that most Australians don't really care who is going to fund it, don't really care who is going to be responsible. All they want to know is that they're going to receive very good care, very good health care when they go - when they approach their GP, when they go to hospital.

TONY JONES: Bob, just come back to you because you started off this debate. I mean, a 10 to 15 year reform project is what you're talking about there. I mean, can you imagine any of the current crop of state premiers agreeing to give up their ministries, give up their power and trim down to, what, five ministries or whatever you suggested?

BOB CARR: Yeah, but at the current rate of diminution of state power, they're going to be left with little to do. They're going to be shells. I mean when they lose the school curriculum, when they lose industrial relations, when they lose large slabs of health and they have no control over how GST is allocated, you're looking at states that have got to invent work for themselves. They're there to implement federal programs. I'm not saying it's a good thing. I like competitive federalism. We in New South Wales took a risk and we ran a medically supervised injecting room to better deal with heroin dependency. No other state did. What we did was to have an experiment that they could look at. We stuck with a tough curriculum in New South Wales. The other states watered it down. They abandoned rigour. Victoria dumped and end of year examination. We kept our HSC. That's competitive policy. I think that's a good thing. But states are losing. Every year they lose a new power. I just think it's inevitable, you're looking at part-time MPs and a smaller state cabinet. It is now indefensible that the states have got 15 to 20 ministers in each of their cabinets.

SCOTT MORRISON: But, Bob, don't you think - I mean, there are some big issues, though for the states - sorry, Tony...

TONY JONES: Sure.

SCOTT MORRISON: ...to deal with. I mean, they've still got to run a law and order system. They've still got to run a public transport system. They still have an attorney general's portfolio. They have a raft of things that they're charged with doing right now and, frankly...

BOB CARR: Yeah, they're five ministries, Scott. They're five ministries.

SCOTT MORRISON: Well, there's a lot more than that. There's the energy sector. There's the whole range of things that needs to be run at a state level and...

TONY JONES: All right.

SCOTT MORRISON: ...I'd like to see states do it better.

TONY JONES: Okay. This is Q&A, the live and interactive forum where you ask the questions.

Our next question comes from Glen Turner.

GLEN TURNER: Yeah, hi, panel. My question is around leadership and ethics. My parents are elderly. They live in Healesville in Victoria. Black Saturday they were evacuated. While they were evacuated Christine Nixon was having her hair done and dinner. I think that's a pretty bad way for a senior person in the bureaucracy to actually behave. So my question is do you think she did the right thing or not?

TONY JONES: Let's hear from Heather Ridout first?

HEATHER RIDOUT: Look, I'm a real fan of Chris Nixon. I think she's a terrific woman. She's made a marvellous contribution to public service in Australia. She has a lot of enemies in Victoria and, you know, you can make slip-ups. You can make errors of judgment. But the way she's being treated is all out of proportion to the crime that she's committed. And can I also say that she was about to retire as police commissioner, where she'd overseen the most horrifically difficult issues. She then went on - she was going to have a long holiday, you know, and she didn't. She gave that up and went and worked on the bushfire reform, reconstruction service and she's committed herself, as has her husband, to this project and the people on the ground up there, you know, they all think she's done a great job. Now, so I think, okay, she may not have had her hair done but she felt the thing was in good hands. She didn't understand the full extent of the problems, but honestly, give her the benefit of the doubt. Just don't fall for it.

TONY JONES: Let me just go back to - I'll go back to our questioner now, because you sound like you approach this with a kind of passion, because of your parent's situation.

GLEN TURNER: Absolutely. I mean...

TONY JONES: But what's the connection though?

GLEN TURNER: Well, my parents have lived in Healesville for 35 years and they're both in their eighties. On the day of the bushfires, on Black Saturday, they had no warning about what was going on. They lived in a street that was unsealed, five ks from the centre of the city - from the centre of Healesville. There was only one way in and one way out and there was no announcements. And when they rang 000 they got no information from the police.

TONY JONES: Yes, let's go to Bob Carr. Give us your thoughts on this, as a former...

BOB CARR: Yeah, when I see a media campaign against a public servant, my instinct is to see the media campaign fail, and I think with John Brumby saying, "She made a mistake. In retrospect it would have been handled differently, but I'm not going to sack her because overall her performance is good and we all make mistakes," I think that had public support. If John Della Bosca had got into trouble when I'd been premier, I would have treated with contempt the calls for him to resign because of a private peccadillo, not an error of public policy. I enjoy seeing vicious media campaigns against public servants fall on their face and collapse exhausted.

TONY JONES: Bob Carr, I just interrupt you there because on Black Saturday she wasn't just the police commissioner. She was, under the Emergency Management Act, the deputy coordinator in chief of the state's emergency response. She was also the state coordinator for Victoria's disaster plan, and yet she wasn't even there when the disaster was unfolding. Would you accept that from one of your bureaucrats?

BOB CARR: She made an error. She's appointed to a tough job running law and order, running a large part of the justice system in Victoria. She makes one mistake. She concedes the mistake. Events are moving fast. At the time she was determining where she would be, the full extent of this catastrophe wasn't apparent and, all in all, you judge someone on their overall performance.

TONY JONES: Let's hear from Scott Morrison on this?

SCOTT MORRISON: Well, look, I think all of us are in public life and whether you're - a senior public servant these days does live in public life, whether we like it or not, and often the calls that are made and judgments that are made about you in the media sometimes aren't fair, but I think what's most important here gets beyond any one individual, and that is public confidence in how the reconstruction effort is taking place and while the premier may have made his call on Christine, it really is a matter for her to make a judgment whether the controversy surrounding her actions actually, at the end of the day, may well impede the ability of that organisation to get on with the job. At the end of the day, whatever role we're in, the most important thing is about the job, not the individuals and so there's a judgment call for her to make there. The premier is entitled to make the view he has made but, look, that was a very big event. She's clearly made a bad judgment call. That happens to people from time to time, but this was a very serious issue and I think there are very serious concerns in the community about exercising judgment, and it's incumbent on all of us in public life to make decisions following that in the best interests of the ongoing nature of the program.

TONY JONES: Okay, we've got a sort of related question. It's from Carolyn Cash.

CAROLYN CASH: Why are the real felons, such as Roberta and Carl Williams, regarded as celebrities while hardworking people like Christine Nixon, according to my source, are treated like criminals, not to mention the nauseating tribute to Carl Williams on A Current Affair tonight.

TONY JONES: Simon Sheikh.

SIMON SHEIKH: Well, I think you're right to suggest - or the premise of your question, I think is right. Christine Nixon shouldn't be getting the treatment she has been. But with regard to Carl Williams, look, there's not really too much to say. I think it's absolutely sad that as a society we spend so much time focussing on criminals like this. Any death is a tragedy. Any death is a tragedy, particularly in custody, but the reality of the situation is that he lived a life of violence and he died a violent death.

TONY JONES: Shimrit?

SHIMRIT NOTHMAN: Well, I think we are very curious people and when we got to see people - villains portrayed on camera, we want to learn more about them and that's why I think we're very, very interested to learn more and more and that's sometimes happens that we get to maybe portray them as heroes, but I don't think people really see them as heroes but, rather, just want to learn more about what brings a person to become such a villain. What brings him to become such a very twisted, sometimes very interesting, different person that what we normally get to see. And I think that's the reason we're drawn to such figures on television or elsewhere.

TONY JONES: Let's hear from Bob Carr and we should bear in mind here the police royal commissioner, James Wood, was scathing of Underbelly for glorifying gangsters and crooked cops, for that matter. What do you think?

BOB CARR: Realistically, you're not going to persuade people not to be interested in the crime world. I mean, it's a staple of fiction and entertainment. I...

HEATHER RIDOUT: Your favourite writer - your favourite writer, James Elroy.

BOB CARR: James Elroy, yes.

HEATHER RIDOUT: Yeah, exactly. Yeah.

BOB CARR: It's...

HEATHER RIDOUT: He'd like Underbelly.

BOB CARR: Yes, so it would be hypocritical of me to attack underbelly, given that I like...

SIMON SHEIKH: Have you watched it, Bob?

BOB CARR: No. No, I haven't, because it just reminds me of my old job.

TONY JONES: He actually lived through it.

BOB CARR: I had to...

SIMON SHEIKH: There's a never a need to tune away from the ABC.

BOB CARR: I had to deal with these things on a day to day basis and having thrown numbers behind the vote for a Royal Commission in the New South Wales Parliament when I was in Opposition and forced the thing, it was part of my life for a few years.

TONY JONES: Yes, let's hear from Heather.

HEATHER RIDOUT: Look, I mean, I agree with what everyone has said. I think it does glorify it. I've never watched the program. I did watch it for about five minutes and I think I then turned onto the ABC. I'm sure there was something better on. But I think...

BOB CARR: And fewer advertisements.

HEATHER RIDOUT: You know, one the things that worries me, there's a lot of violence now out in the street. You know, when your kids go out, it's pretty rough and I'm sure some of these programs can propagate that sort of mentality in societies and I think we do need to draw the line. I think, in terms of jail, I thought I could get locked up with a whole lot of good books to read, but it's the company you have to keep that frightens me and I guess he's learnt that lesson, that there aren't nice people there.

TONY JONES: Scott Morrison?

SCOTT MORRISON: Oh, look, I think the other panellists have pretty much said it. I mean, I don't think we should overreact to this, though. I mean, as Bob said, I mean there's an entertainment factor that goes around these stories. I remember watching the Blue Murder miniseries that was on some time ago. My father was a policeman through a long part of that period of time and, you know, it was of interest, I suppose, to try and get an idea about the sort of world he had to live with over many, many years. I don't think we should get too hung up about it. At the end of the day it's on after 8.30. I think people shall exercise judgment about what they let their kids watch. I wouldn't let my kids watch it but she's only three and one so I don't think that's going to be an issue.

BOB CARR: If Underbelly is as good as Blue Murder, it's very, very good.

SCOTT MORRISON: Well, I'm not sure it is, Bob. That's the problem.

BOB CARR: I haven't seen it.

TONY JONES: All right. You're watching Q&A, not Underbelly. Q&A, the program where you get to ask the questions and if you'd like to join the audience and ask a question yourself, go to our website and register to be part of the debate. Our next question comes from Dikla Blum.

DIKLA BLUM: Hi. My question is for Heather Ridout. You were quoted this morning as saying that for women to get ahead they should socialise with their bosses at the pub. Now, some people would say that this would feed into the so called blokey corporate culture, which some women wouldn't feel comfortable with. So my question is, would you agree with the statement that for women to get ahead in the workplace, they often have to be more blokey than the blokes and, if so, what can we do to change this executive culture?

HEATHER RIDOUT: Well, to get ahead women have to do much more than go to the pub. I mean, women have to get educated. They need to get into organisations. One of the biggest things women have to do is to get into organisations where they actually make decisions and make things happen. Too often women don't get into line positions. They become the HR manager or the legal counsel or some assistant sort of role. They've got to get into places in organisations where they can make the money and make the decisions and then get the credit for them. But the point I was making in that rather, you know, pithy remark was to say that women do also have to network and get on with their workmates and they have to make adjustments, just like the men have to make adjustments. I, having been brought up in this pretty rough and tumble world of industrial relations, I've been to many pubs with my workmates, with union officials, with all sorts of people and I think you do need to learn to get into that sort of world. But women - it's a very tough thing when you're the minority. I was the first woman with a degree that ever joined our organisation. I was the first director. I was the first chief executive and our organisation has been around 138 years, and it was very lonely. But you got to try and that means putting yourself in a position of power and then the men's club have got to open up the doors for you. They've got to give you the opportunity. This initiative with these 10 chief executives that are, you know, going to band together and focus more on women's opportunities, that's a fantastic thing but don't think just getting an education and more women being educated than men is going to solve the problem. It's not. There's a lot more to it than that.

TONY JONES: Heather, very briefly, what happens to the women who say, you know, "Tell hell with this. I'm not going to spend the time at the pub with these blokes. I don't particularly want to."

TONY JONES: "I want to spend more time with my family."

HEATHER RIDOUT: Well, I mean, I have three children and work and family is a hugely problematic thing and bringing up children is a two way thing. You have a husband usually - I mean, not in all cases - so you have to share the responsibility. But, I mean, work intrudes on family, family intrudes on work. It's got to be this sort of two way thing and women have to have the chance to develop their careers. Now, men shouldn't be at the pub every night either. They should be at home with their family, and I think it's a sort of a cliché for something more that I'm trying to get at Tony, and it's really engaging and, you know, working is about commitment and engagement, as well as competence and I guess that's what I'm saying.

TONY JONES: Right. Well, it's time to move on. You're watching Q&A live and interactive. Our next question tonight comes from Gordon Hocking.

GORDON HOCKING: Yes. Yes, Tony. Surveys show that the Australian population, that is the voters, would like to have a stationary population at somewhat lower than the 36 million which is being suggested at the moment. But big business wants growth and the sort of growth that they're speaking about is never really explained what the ramification of that might be. 1.1 percent per annum growth is world growth at the moment, and if we had that in Australia, that would produce a population of 34 million by 2050 and 59 million by 2100. Our growth at the moment is 2.1 per cent, a level that business says it's happy with. But if that was continued, our population would be 50 million by 2050 and by 2100 it would be 143 million. Now, my question is in two parts. What do you think would be an appropriate growth rate for Australia's population? And the other is: what level do you think our population should finally be stationary at?

TONY JONES: Okay, let's go to Scott Morrison.

SCOTT MORRISON: Sure. Look, I've made a few comments about this, and I think the first one is...

TONY JONES: You got into trouble for some of them with your own party, didn't you?

SCOTT MORRISON: Well, I got in trouble with some of the media, Tony, but anyway. All I was saying was simply this point: we are currently growing at a rate of net overseas migration of, on average over the last seven quarters, of 300,000 per year, and all the figures, Gordon, that you've just mentioned bear out that current rate of growth, 2.1 per cent (indistinct). Now, what this debate, I think, is really all about is about strained cities, about water resources, about energy supplies into the future, and all of these types of things. That's what people are feeling the growing pains about our current rate of growth, and they're very uncomfortable about that. And so when we moved from an intergenerational report that said there'd be 29 million people by 2047 and we went out and the Prime Minister signed us up to this 36 million figure, then I think that really made people very uneasy, and this debate has ensued as a result of that. Now, what we're looking at as a coalition is to ensure we get ourselves on a sustainable growth path. Now, what that is, we'll have to determine but it will have to be (indistinct) capacity is. We certainly don't think that it's 300,000, which will give us a population of 42 million. We're very sceptical. Yeah, the sceptic word will come out again. We're very sceptical about a population of 36 million and we don't think that we should sign up to that sort of level of growth until you can ask the questions about, well, the roads. We've got to build three schools every two years to achieve that. We've got to build the equivalent of four times the circumference of the planet in roads by 2050 to achieve that. Now, unless we can answer all of those questions about infrastructure, services, health - we're talking about that today - then I don't see how we can sign up to that level of growth.

TONY JONES: Heather Ridout?

HEATHER RIDOUT: Well, look, we're talking about growing - these projections are based on what's called the intergenerational report, and the third one was out rather recently, and that actually projects a slower rate of population growth over the next 40 years than the last 40 years. So think about that. It projects we'll grown by 60 per cent over the next 40 years compared to 75 per cent in terms of our population over the last 40. So mull over that. By the year 2015 we're going to be short of 240,000 skilled people each year in Australia, even despite the fact that that builds in that we're going to train a lot more people. So we've got a really big problem with skill shortages and I think from a business perspective that's always been a major concern about our immigration program. When we didn't have any demand for skills in the '70s and parts of the '90s, our immigration program went down to almost negligible levels. So it's all a sensitive program. Don't get too hung up about this projection. Can I also say that the world's population...

TONY JONES: Can I just ask you what you think, because the question was very specific about growth rate and what you think the actual population target should be by 2015.

HEATHER RIDOUT: Well, I'm not necessarily advocating a population target. No one is advocating a population target.

TONY JONES: But on the current projections, with the growth rates now, what he's saying is correct, isn't it.

HEATHER RIDOUT: Well, what the intergenerational report suggests is that on current - if we had an average of immigration over the last 40 years and the birth rate calculated similarly, we would end up with a population of 35.9 million by 2050. That's...

TONY JONES: And would that be a good thing or a bad thing?

HEATHER RIDOUT: I think it would be a fine thing. The world's population is going to grow from 6.8 billion to 9.2 billion over that period and we're worried about a miserable 14 million. There are twice as many - in a country the size of Tasmania, Bangladesh has got 150 million people. For goodness sake, guys, we've got to be citizens. But the population debate can't be a substitute for us not having a debate about infrastructure development, about congestion, about climate change, about education and training...

SCOTT MORRISON: But that's what the debate is about.

HEATHER RIDOUT: No, it's not about that debate.

SCOTT MORRISON: No, that's what the debate is about.

HEATHER RIDOUT: It's not about it. See, what you're saying, it's a smokescreen for doing nothing. You guys were in government for a long, long time.

SCOTT MORRISON: Not at all.

HEATHER RIDOUT: You did nothing about infrastructure. You did nothing about education. You did nothing about all these issues, so let's get real.

SCOTT MORRISON: Well, I'm glad to hear your critique of the Howard Government, Heather.

HEATHER RIDOUT: Well, it's a good government but on that....

SCOTT MORRISON: Well, not according to what you just said.

HEATHER RIDOUT: Not on that bit.

SCOTT MORRISON: But, anyway, the point I was trying to make is it is about infrastructure. It is about services.

HEATHER RIDOUT: Yes, it is.

SCOTT MORRISON: It is about sustainability.

HEATHER RIDOUT: It's health, aged care.....

SCOTT MORRISON: And at the present, this government, who is responsible, cannot answer the questions about how they're going to build the roads, manage the water, provide the power for a population of 36 million. Now, we can't...

HEATHER RIDOUT: But we couldn't 40 years ago either.

SCOTT MORRISON: We can't use population growth as a substitute and proxy for productivity.

HEATHER RIDOUT: But we can't...

SCOTT MORRISON: (Indistinct)

TONY JONES: Okay, I'm sorry, I'm going to interrupt. I just want to hear from the rest of the panel.

TONY JONES: We've also got people with their hands up. I want to hear from the rest of the panel. Shimrit, bigger is better or not? What do you think? You're only a new immigrant yourself,

but what do you think?

SHIMRIT NOTHMAN: I think we can learn a lot from Israel, actually, because Israel and Australia are very similar in the way that they both have huge immigration waves. Well, Israel had a bigger one. It actually has had a tenfold increase in population within 60 years and I think that's a huge amount of newcomers, and you can see in Israel that this has been the only country, basically to finish this - the last century with more trees than it started. Israel has also managed to grow all its goods in Israel to accommodate every person that lives in Israel and also to export food and it's a leading - it's just a leading culture in agriculture, technology today around the world, so I think that in any case with innovation, with people that are willing to understand that changes will have to be made when we are more people around in Australia, I think it can be done.

TONY JONES: Let's hear from Bob Carr.

BOB CARR: I think business has got to move beyond that old fashioned equation: "more people, bigger economy, we're all wealthier", because it is GDP per head that determines our living standards and we can run a very ambitious immigration program. We will do nothing about skilled labour shortages. The Productivity Commission and Treasury and other sources warn us that simply ramping up immigration adds more to the demand for Labour than it contributes to the supply. A tradesperson comes in to take a job and he or she has with them their family and that adds more to the demand for infrastructure than it contributes to the supply of labour to build additional infrastructure. We've got to focus on productivity and GDP per head. The House of Lords inquiry into immigration in the UK, the productivity commission report, Federal Treasury have all warned against the notion that high immigration helps the aging of the population. The Product Commission and Federal Treasury were quite explicit that it does not and in the meantime we Australians have just been through one of the worst droughts in our history. We've been educated on the need to reduce water consumption per head. We've seen the Murray Darling dry out. Every mainland state has had to build one or two desal plants and we've just absorbed that message. We've just been educated about water, and all of a sudden we learn that at current rates of immigration we're going to have a population, it seems, of over 40 million by 2050. We've been education about water and then we're told, "Fasten your seatbelts. We're going to double the Australian population within 20 years."

TONY JONES: Okay, those people with their hands up, keep your hands up because I will come to you in a moment. But because you've raised the issue of skills shortages and the whole issue of skills and immigration, we've got another question on this topic. It's a video question sent in by a rather well known businessman, in fact, Dick Smith.

DICK SMITH: My question is to Heather Ridout. Heather, you have been a supporter of high immigration levels but you are also on the board of Skills Australia, which recently delivered what I think is a quite disturbing report on the skill level of Australian workers. That report found that four million Australians suffered from a severe lack of literacy and numeracy skills, to the point of being functionally illiterate. It would appear to me that that's a shocking waste of talent. How can you support such a large influx of foreign workers when you know Australian workers are being abandoned when it comes to training?

TONY JONES: Heather Ridout?

HEATHER RIDOUT: Thanks Dick Smith for your question. It's actually seven million Australians between the age of 15 and 64 that don't have the basic literacy and numeracy skills required for a modern workplace. It's a very, very damning statistic and it comes from a major survey and it hasn't improved much in 10 years. So there's no doubt we've got to do something about that issue. 48 per cent of Australians don't have a certificate III or above qualification, and this is what I mean. I'm not suggesting we do immigration as a substitute for that. We have to do both. We have to lift the skills of the Australian workforce. Now, industry has a big role in that. Individuals have a big role in that, but alone it won't be enough and that's the...

TONY JONES: Is Dick Smith right in his...

HEATHER RIDOUT: He's right in saying...

TONY JONES: ...assumption that bringing in skilled immigrants...

HEATHER RIDOUT: Yeah.

TONY JONES: ...actually makes the incentive for skilling up those...

HEATHER RIDOUT: No, it doesn't.

TONY JONES: ...functionally illiterate workers...

HEATHER RIDOUT: It doesn't.

TONY JONES: ...less likely?

HEATHER RIDOUT: No, it doesn't. They're complimentary measures and if you look at all the surveys we've done around our members, they don't see it as a substitute and, you know, we have a company up in Brisbane that's got 52 workers. It's a joinery company. It's training 12 apprentices and it's probably going to have to shift a whole lot of its operations to China because it simply cannot get skilled people, and it's training. And we've reduced our expenditure on vocational education and training over the last 10 years by about 11 per cent on average every year overall in terms of hours - dollars spent per hour of training. The Skills Australia report, and I'm on that board, we've advocated big increases in a resources for the VET sector. We need a national literacy strategy to deal with this problem. Ai Group, at the moment, has got 11 pilot programs in companies around Australia trying to work out how this can best work at the company level, so we're trying to work hard at that, but the other part of it, Tony, is the participation debate. We need to get more people into the workplace and they've got to stay longer and, you know, recently I had a person who is ill, who is over 70, who has been working for us. He's a very important part of our operation, but he doesn't have salary continuance because the insurance runs out if you're over 70. There's a whole lot of stuff out there...

TONY JONES: Okay. All right.

HEATHER RIDOUT: ...that we need to look at.

TONY JONES: (Indistinct)

BOB CARR: Tony, I made a mistake...

TONY JONES: Yeah, no.

BOB CARR: I made a mistake a moment ago. Could I correct it? I said a doubling of the population in 20 years. It's in 40 years. Doubling in 40 years.

HEATHER RIDOUT: Can I also say to the last question...

TONY JONES: Hang on. Well, no, I just want to hear from - you actually made the point that immigration worsens skill shortage issues.

BOB CARR: Yes.

TONY JONES: Just explain, because I mean that's the opposite of what Heather Ridout is

saying.

BOB CARR: Okay. Okay. You've got skills shortage in one sector of the economy because of booming activity. You import a tradesperson to fill that shortage. The tradesperson brings his or her family. So studies have shown that adds more to the demand for schools, hospital, peak hour transport and the rest and we've got to - I mean, the same businesses - I know Heather wouldn't do this but there'd be some businesses that would drive 55 year old workers out of the workforce. That would make no contribution to the training, the up-skilling of people on its payroll and then turn around and support the proposition that the only thing to do about skill shortages is to up immigration. Now, we're going to have to accept at some time in our history, as the world will, a stabilisation of population. You can't - my challenge to the advocates of high population is when will you ever be satisfied: 50 million, 70 million, 100 million? The onus is on them, rather than on us sceptics to nominate the figure.

TONY JONES: All right.

BOB CARR: And if you accept that there is an upward limit, at that point we're accepting population stabilisation. I'd prefer to stabilise more or less where we are now and if that's a mistake in policy, it's very easy to correct.

TONY JONES: Okay, let's hear from Simon Sheikh.

SIMON SHEIKH: (Indistinct), Tony. I think it's a very sad place that we've got to with this debate, frankly, about a big Australia. Going back to your original question, Gordon, I mean it's not as if the government have a magic dial that they can use to choose the number.

SCOTT MORRISON: They do.

SIMON SHEIKH: It's simply ridiculous. It's just not true. Now, let's think about this for a second. What Scott was saying about infrastructure, about roads. I mean surely we don't need more roads. One third of our urban land mass is already taken up by roadways.

SCOTT MORRISON: I'll take an F6 to the shire. I'll take an F6.

SIMON SHEIKH: (Indistinct) public transport. Now, here is...

SCOTT MORRISON: I'll take that too.

SIMON SHEIKH: Here is the important part of this debate that we're missing. On the one side we're told that we need more people in this country because of an aging of the population because of a broadening of the tax base that's required. That is true. That is true, in part. But the other part of this debate that gets really missed is that on the sustainability side, people tell us, well, if we lower migration, perhaps our country will be more sustainable. I think that's a distraction - a distraction from the fact that we live in an over-consumption society right now; in a throwaway society. I mean, where once we may have gone and got a tradesperson from down the road to help fix that little gadget, now we buy a new one from overseas. Where once we may have had one car for 25 years, for 10 years, for 15 years, now we have two or three. We replace them every few years. We have got to be talking about consumption and sustainability ourselves right here, not be thinking that migration in the future is the answer to future sustainability issues. We are already the most admitting country per capita in the world. Let's do something about that rather than suggesting that the migration debate is a proxy for that about sustainability.

TONY JONES: Okay. Now, before I bring you in, Scott wants to jump in but we've got a number of people that have their hands up for awhile. What I'll do is I'll go to the three of you, if I can, because there's a gentleman over there, as well. So I'll just hear quickly from the three of you and we'll feed your questions into the mix or your statements. Yes, you first.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Okay, mine is in regard to the balance. There's always a balance in life. There's a balance in everything. Population, you keep talking about growth, but you can't expand population without cutting life in some other area. Human populations cannot continue to grow on this planet without exhausting all other life forms, which we're already doing.

TONY JONES: Okay.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: At what point do we start to bring back the balance?

TONY JONES: Okay, let's hear from the lady behind you, as well.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I just wanted to ask those people on the panel who don't think that we could cope with a bigger population, at the end of the '40s when Arthur Caldwell brought in the people who had never been allowed to come into Australia before, Australian didn't - you know, the country didn't disappear. The country boomed. We prospered as a nation, and why do you not think that that might happen again if we let more and more people in this time?

TONY JONES: Okay. And we've got one more over there.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Well, this debate has mainly been on the side of the government's perspective to immigration. My point is it's the businesses that really want this. Given an increased population, wouldn't the free market start intervening and creating opportunities for, you know, businesses to invest in infrastructure because they know the population is there to sustain it?

TONY JONES: Okay, Scott Morrison, some good thoughts to pick up on.

SCOTT MORRISON: Yeah. No, I appreciate it. First, let me put migration in the context of this issue. At the end of the day migration is the question that you answer right at the end of the process, once you've gone through all the issues of carrying capacity, infrastructure and so on, and at present we don't have that planning process in place, so you can pull the lever at the end to match your migration program to adjust to your population growth target. It is a question of balance and when you are - there are two questions: how much and then what's your composition within? And our view on the composition within is it has to be highly geared towards skills. But on the question you asked about, "Well, what about the '40s?", our margin for error today is significantly different to what it was when I was at primary school and there was about 12 million people here. We get it wrong now in terms of our growth path going forward and the impacts are calamitous for those down the track and I just think we have to get the bigger questions about infrastructure, services, water, the environment right, and as Bob said, get away from this idea that there is this hard and fast correlation between GDP growth per capita and population growth. Statistically it doesn't exist.

TONY JONES: Yes, quickly, Heather.

HEATHER RIDOUT: Well, actually it does exist...

SCOTT MORRISON: Well, it doesn't.

HEATHER RIDOUT: ...because the research shows that...

SCOTT MORRISON: I've done the research.

HEATHER RIDOUT: ...there is a small net positive per capita GDP from immigration and it's shown as proven. But can I say it's not just about numbers. It's about the structure of the population. Currently we have five workers for every dependent person. Five. On the

intergenerational report, which incorporates all this immigration, it will go from five down to 2.7. Big issue. If we take away immigration, it goes to 2. Now, this is what you have to face. Do you want to pay more taxes - there'll only be two of us working for every one person out there. It's a big, big problem. Aging population, pensions, healthcare, you name it. So we're making big choices here. If we go for slower growth, we go for a more dependent population, we're going to have a pretty big bill to pick up as a community.

SCOTT MORRISON: But, Heather, I have to introduce a fact here is...

HEATHER RIDOUT: Yeah, I know.

SCOTT MORRISON: ...the 2007 intergenerational report had a higher per capita GDP growth rate than the 2010 one and it was a lower rate of growth.

HEATHER RIDOUT: Yes, it did, because...

SCOTT MORRISON: So we had a higher rate of GDP growth under a lower population growth scenario on the Treasury's figures than we do under this most recent one.

HEATHER RIDOUT: Yes, we did.

TONY JONES: Okay, can I - just a very quick response from Bob Carr, because you were very passionate about this. But how do you answer that obvious problem. The aging population, who is going to pay for it?

BOB CARR: Well, I answer it. These days I carry cue cards in my coat pocket. Treasury, on Australia's demographic challenges, quote, "Migration cannot stop the aging of our population."

HEATHER RIDOUT: But they've changed...

BOB CARR: That's from Treasury. The Productivity Commission in 2005...

HEATHER RIDOUT: Bob, Ken's changed his mind. He's changed his mind.

BOB CARR: ..."Increased migration cannot do much to avoid population aging."

SCOTT MORRISON: Pass them around, mate.

BOB CARR: Unquote. Now, they're the brainiest bureaucrats in Canberra. Here is my positive proposal...

HEATHER RIDOUT: But they've changed their mind.

BOB CARR: ...for a population policy, and I welcome the fact that the Prime Minister has committed to one and appointed Tony Burke his Minister. 1. Peg immigration back to sensible levels around those it was in the 1990s until we have water efficiency measures that give us water security in a drought like the one we've been through.

TONY JONES: Okay. Bob - Bob - Bob ...

BOB CARR: And second...

TONY JONES: Bob, if this is a 10 point plan, we're in trouble.

BOB CARR: No. No. There's only one other point.

TONY JONES: Okay, one other point. That's all right.

BOB CARR: The second point is this - the second point is this, until, and this takes up Simon's point and it's a perfectly valid point that Simon made: until we achieve that transition from an economy that powers itself by burning coal - we're 80 per cent coal dependent. It's the worst level of coal dependency in the world, and get onto renewables...

TONY JONES: Okay.

BOB CARR: ...or cleaner power sources.

TONY JONES: Okay, let's move the discussion along. Our next question comes from in the audience. It's from Joy Goodsell.

JOY GOODSSELL: My question is to Scott Morrison. I'm live in the shire, too and I was wondering why you can't behave like Bruce Baird did when he was acting for refugees, instead of stirring the racist pot that you've been doing over the past few weeks? It would be far more constructive, and if you've ever been to a refugee camp...

SCOTT MORRISON: I didn't hear the last part.

JOY GOODSSELL: ...and if you've ever met or had any refugee friends who have come from war torn Afghanistan or Iraq, you would know that they are going to be wonderful citizens of this country, given a chance.

SCOTT MORRISON: Thanks for the question. There's no debate about the quality and value of Australia having a refugee and a humanitarian program and accepting 13 and a half thousand refugees to Australia each year. I strongly support that. That has bipartisan support. The need for a strong settlement program, which ensures that people who come from very distressed circumstances can be calm and be part of the community, learn the language, get a job, get a house, be part of our community, is all accepted. There's no debate here. All that the coalition has been saying and all that I have been saying is that we need to run a program that ensures that we are in a position to extend that hand that we do through our program to those we wish to help. Now, I believe that I want to stand up for people who are sitting in camps all around the world whose places are denied by those who choose come by an illegal method.

JOY GOODSSELL: That's a really old argument and it doesn't really work.

SCOTT MORRISON: That is the truth. It is the truth.

TONY JONES: Okay.

SCOTT MORRISON: It is the absolute truth. Now...

JOY GOODSSELL: It's not.

TONY JONES: I'm going to interrupt you, because we actually have a web question. A web question has come in from Sivanantham Kugananthan and he's actually in the Villawood Detention Centre in Sydney. Hang on, I've got to read it out. "I am a Sri Lankan Tamil asylum seeker in Villawood Detention Centre, sent here from Christmas Island. In 2009 the UNHCR granted me refugee status but now the Australian Government calls me a 'failed asylum seeker' and wants to send me back to Sri Lanka, where I know I will be tortured or killed." Now, do you want to respond to that, first of all? I know it's hard, because we don't know the full details.

SCOTT MORRISON: Well, it's impossible to know the circumstances of this person's case. I am aware of another case which sounds similar to this, where the individual has no documentation.

And one of the challenges that our...

AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Indistinct)

SCOTT MORRISON: Look, if I can finish, one of the challenges that our assessors have on Christmas Island and all around the various places we do these assessments, is those who have wilfully gotten rid of their documentation. Now, we don't know - it's very difficult to make assessments about who people are and where they have come from. Now, I acknowledge, as does everyone else, that there is people who lose their documentation through no fault of their own. It's taken from them, it's stolen from them, it's destroyed, and that is a situation we have to deal with. But it is often the case that people who are secondary movers coming through other countries before they come here dispense with their documentation.

TONY JONES: Okay. All right. Let's hear from...

SCOTT MORRISON: It makes it very hard to make these decisions.

TONY JONES: Let's hear from Simon Sheikh. We obviously don't know the details of this (indistinct).

SIMON SHEIKH: (Indistinct).

TONY JONES: We do know the government has suspended all asylum claims to Sri Lanka or from Sri Lankans and Afghanis.

SIMON SHEIKH: That's right. And the sad reality here is that in Sri Lanka, even independent journalists are escaping. Even independent journalists are wanting to get out of that country. So the suggestion on the web question about torture, the suggestion about trauma in Sri Lanka, I think, is one that we should be taking very seriously. Now, when it comes to this debate, I've been speaking with people both in Afghanistan on a very interesting phone lines, as well as people connected very closely to the Sri Lankan - in particular the Tamil community. It is embarrassing for the government that they have completely messed this policy up. Afghanis - let's look at Afghanistan. The minister suggested that we were not the only country in the world to limit - to limit these refugees, but the reality is that the minister can't name one.

SCOTT MORRISON: That's true, he can't.

SIMON SHEIKH: He can't name one. The other thing that is really sad in this debate is that the Prime Minister talks about Afghanistan being a safer place perhaps, because the US Government have said that. Well, that's not true as well.

SCOTT MORRISON: That's right.

SIMON SHEIKH: This is a really disgusting situation that we find ourselves in. We know that, as a country, we must be extending our hand to those in need, and what we've seen from the government is a deeply political solution. Now, frankly - frankly, I understand why they're going for the political solution, because the opposition has not at all been helpful in this debate. The reality...

SCOTT MORRISON: Hang on. What would you like us to do, Simon? There are 10 and a half million refugees in the world today. Ten and a half million. Less than one per cent of those will get resettlement outcomes around the world. Now, where do we draw the line: 13 and a half, 20,000, 50,000, 75,000, 100,000? Where do we stop.

SIMON SHEIKH: You know, this is...

SCOTT MORRISON: What your (indistinct). Where did stop.

SIMON SHEIKH: Sure. Sure. This isn't actually a debate about that number. You, yourself, said there is bipartisan agreement on that number.

SCOTT MORRISON: Yeah, on 13 and a half thousand.

SIMON SHEIKH: But the truth of what you said there earlier tonight is that you don't support people who come by boat. Now, fair enough. We don't like...

SCOTT MORRISON: No, I don't.

SIMON SHEIKH: ...supporting people smugglers, but the reality is that the numbers of refugees who are entering this country via boat, refugees who are desperate for our assistance...

SCOTT MORRISON: There are 10 and a half million of them.

SIMON SHEIKH: ...is so small. But here's the second reality...

TONY JONES: Okay. All right. Both of you, I'm going - I actually want to hear from Shimrit. What do you make of this debate? You've come in from another country. You're settling here. You're watching this debate closely. What do you make of it?

SHIMRIT NOTHMAN: It's very interesting because I'm a new immigrant. True, I did not escape persecution. It's a very nice country, Israel, and I did follow my heart here, my husband, but in any case when you come from another country into a new country you have to face so many problems. I don't know how many of the people sitting out here today have actually done it. You know, to move a country means to leave all your support system behind you: your family, your friends, and sometimes get to a country that does not speak your language. Sometimes they have different values. So to add to that the fact that these asylum seekers are also fleeing persecution and obviously willing to risk their life going on boats in the middle of the sea, I think that we should, all of us as Australians, be very compassionate to these people.

TONY JONES: Let's hear from Bob Carr, specifically on the decision made by the Federal Government to suspend asylum claims.

BOB CARR: I strongly support it. I strongly support it. I just ask you to consider this. I favour a generous and humane approach to refugees but there are two million Tamils in Sri Lanka and if we accept the proposition that that makes anyone a claimant on refugee status in Australia, there will be no end to the activity of people smugglers. You've got to consider that. You've got to consider that. We've got to make - we cannot take everyone who is brought to the doorstep of Australia by money-seeking people smugglers. There is a restraint on this and I speak - I speak having met Afghan families and being hugely impressed by the contribution they've made to Australia. I speak with admiration for the Vietnamese boat people and their children who made such an outstanding contribution. If they want to cross the seas, as they did in the '70s and '80s to come to this country, I want those people as my neighbour. I admire them. I admire them.

TONY JONES: Bob...

BOB CARR: But there is...

TONY JONES: Bob, can I just interrupt? Why drawn the line at one form of boat people and not the other?

BOB CARR: Well, because we have got to send a signal to people who put lives at risk to enrich themselves that there is limit to what they can get away with.

SIMON SHEIKH: Can I respond to this?

TONY JONES: Yes.

BOB CARR: And what the Federal Government did - what the Federal Government did is an attempt to keep our refugee policy defensible by hitting hard the people smugglers and I don't think there was any alternative to that.

TONY JONES: Simon.

SIMON SHEIKH: You talk about sending a signal, Bob, to those who are going through very terrible circumstances. I, myself, spoke last week, as I mentioned, to somebody in Afghanistan and they know - they absolutely do know about the Federal Government's policy. But here's the response - this is from a human rights expert over there - people will still flee Afghanistan. They will flee these terrible and traumatic situations that they are in because Christmas Island is frankly far better - even Christmas Island and its terrible circumstance there is far better than the situation that these people find themselves in. So it's ridiculous. I mean, it's frankly completely ridiculous to suggest that there will be any impact on the numbers of refugees or of asylum seekers (indistinct).

TONY JONES: Okay. All right.

SCOTT MORRISON: (Indistinct).

TONY JONES: Now, once again - once again - once again we've got a number of people with their hands up. We'll take this gentleman, second row there.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I just wanted to ask Heather about that she said that immigration - to support the older generation she had to bring immigration more. Okay. Now, these people will be getting old again and is that mean that we have to bring more immigration, more people into the country? And that's my question. And the second thing is Australians and Australian politicians, I like Scott Morrison and Bob Carr, what they said. Really, do they really want to see Australia (indistinct) and wealthy like countries like Sweden and Switzerland or like something like US or UK who has got 50 million plus people where the living standards - some of them are very high and some of them are very low.

TONY JONES: Okay. All right. Heather, well, you can pick up that but if you can, I know you're trying to respond to the other questions, as well.

HEATHER RIDOUT: Well, on the immigration, the boat people issue, and I know Scott said there is bipartisan support for the 13 and a half thousand, I'd like bipartisan policy on the whole issue of boat people. So we stop playing to the political side of this issue and let's have a - let's Tony and Kevin sit down and say, "We're going to have a bipartisan approach, whether we like the policy or not." At least we know it's not set to appeal to the base political instincts of an election cycle. So I'd say that about that. I think that's a fundamentally - it's a flaw of the system that we have at the present time and it really worries me.

SCOTT MORRISON: Can I just say, Tony, we would not be having this debate if Kevin Rudd's policy hadn't failed. If the boats had not arrived.

HEATHER RIDOUT: Oh, that's not right.

SCOTT MORRISON: It's true.

HEATHER RIDOUT: That is not right.

SCOTT MORRISON: That's the reason we're having the debate.

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS TALK AT ONCE

SCOTT MORRISON: The policy has failed. The policy has failed.

HEATHER RIDOUT: The reason we're having the debate is that we're dog whistling to people's worse instincts and I don't like it.

SCOTT MORRISON: That's your view, Heather...

HEATHER RIDOUT: I don't like it.

SCOTT MORRISON: ...and you've expressed a few views about the Coalition tonight.

HEATHER RIDOUT: No, it's not the Coalition. It's not only the Coalition. The government is responding to it, as well, and I'd rather take it right out of that space and, you know...

SCOTT MORRISON: Well, we have to get policies that work, Heather. And last time we were in government it worked. We reduced the boats to zero and they stopped coming. We make no apology for it.

HEATHER RIDOUT: We didn't feel too good about it, did we.

TONY JONES: Simon?

SIMON SHEIKH: Well, that's another part of this debate that's simply not fact. When it comes to...

SCOTT MORRISON: Well, it's true. (Indistinct) and no boats. It's a fact.

SIMON SHEIKH: And it had nothing to do with your policy at all.

SCOTT MORRISON: No, it did actually, a lot. But you speak.

SIMON SHEIKH: Let's move on from the backwards and forwards that we're doing here. I do support Heather's idea about politicians getting together but I worry at the moment with Kevin Rudd and Tony Abbott going on a downward spiral here whether their policies would be any good. The reality is that it is an election year and we see political posturing and that's - for me, I really can't see that stopping any time soon, and that's incredibly sad.

TONY JONES: Okay, I'm sorry to those people who have still got their hands up, because we have run out of time. We've done it again. Please thank our panellists: Bob Carr, Shimrit Nothman, Simon Sheikh, Scott Morrison and Heather Ridout. Okay, next week we have a special ANZAC Q&A discussing the meaning of the ANZAC tradition. Join a politician-free panel. Some of you will applaud, some of you won't, with Australia's most famous iconoclast Germaine Greer; our best known soldier, Peter Cosgrove; myth-breaking historian Henry Reynolds; and the author of Kokoda and Tobruk Peter FitzSimons; and Australia's most decorated female soldier, Brigadier Alison Creagh. Until next Monday's ANZAC Day special, good night.