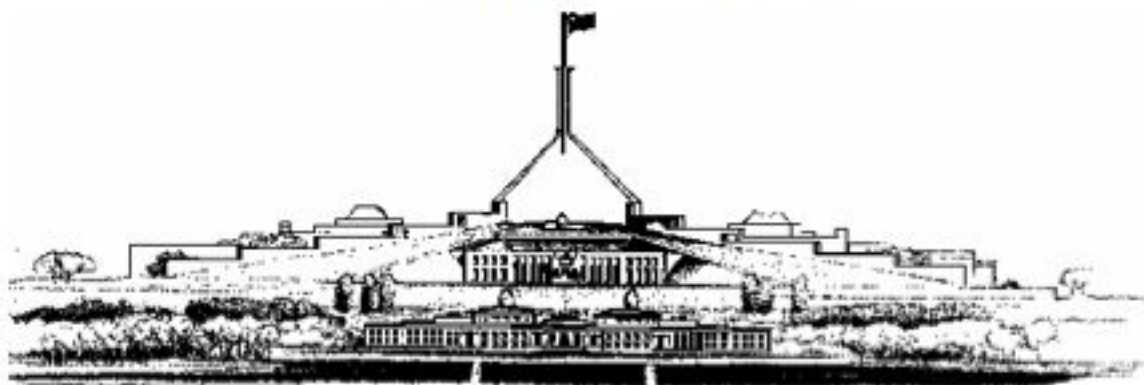




COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
**PROOF**  
**MATTERS OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE**  
**Turnbull Government**  
**SPEECH**

**Thursday, 17 August 2017**

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## SPEECH

**Date** Thursday, 17 August 2017  
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**Questioner**  
**Speaker** O'Brien, Ted, MP

**Source** House  
**Proof** Yes  
**Responder**  
**Question No.**

**Mr TED O'BRIEN** (Fairfax) (16:12): I felt so desperately sorry for the Leader of the Opposition when he tried to present this MPI today. He struggled to characterise what the Labor Party stands for. Finally, he came out with a line suggesting that the Labor Party is focused on the Australian people. So this is a Labor Party who doesn't want the Australian people to have a say. This is the Labor Party who wants to deny the people a say in the plebiscite. The only focus they have on the Australian people is this: it's the money. They want the people's money. They're happy to tax them. They're happy to see income tax go up. They're happy to deny small businesses tax cuts.

**Ms Keay interjecting—**

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Braddon is warned!

**Mr TED O'BRIEN:** They're focused on the people only when it comes to the money. The Leader of the Opposition might struggle to define that which characterises his Labor Party, but it's not that hard to define that which characterises the Leader of the Opposition—words such as 'shifty', 'shady', 'shonky', 'shallow'. They all seem to have a bit of a fit. Nice alliteration.

**Mr Sukkar:** They all fit; they've got a good ring to them.

**Mr TED O'BRIEN:** It has got a very good ring to it. Here we have the Leader of the Opposition, who was shifty enough to look Kevin Rudd in the eye and say, 'I've got your back.' He had his back, all right! And then he did the same with Julia Gillard: 'I've got your back.' And then again with Kevin Rudd: 'I've got your back.' This is the same fellow who said to the Australian people only a few years ago, 'I believe in a plebiscite when it comes to the issue of same-sex marriage.' Now what does he say? 'I don't believe in a plebiscite when it comes to same-sex marriage.' This is a Leader of the Opposition who used to go into bat for reducing company taxes for small businesses. Guess what? He's now against it.

This man is completely shifty, but he's also shonky. This is a fellow who's more than happy to trade away the rights of workers even though his fundamental role previously with the AWU was to protect the rights of workers. He was happy to trade them away and, in return, ensure the companies with whom he was negotiating would tip money into the union movement—in other words, a shift of money from the worker through to Labor Party candidates. Take from the people, give to the Labor politicians. The Leader of the Opposition is shonky. He is also very shady, as we now know, with him facilitating \$100,000 for the GetUp! organisation. Let us not forget that the GetUp! organisation as we speak—right now, today, online—is trying to get rid of our border control. We have had 1,117 days without an illegal boat arrival. Those members opposite, including the Leader of the Opposition, were in government when at least 1,200 people died at sea. Those opposite are more than happy to support GetUp! and more than happy to fund GetUp!, who want to open up the borders and put the lives of innocent people at risk. That is the character of the Leader of the Opposition.

But he's also shallow. We can't forget his shallowness. As we heard over recent days, there is his infamous interview with the ABC, when he was asked what his economic plan was for the country. You would think that an alternative Prime Minister, of all things, just might have an economic plan; he just might have one plan that would create one job. He didn't have an answer. So, alternative Prime Minister, Leader of the Opposition, what is your economic plan for Australia? Pause, silence, and then finally he says he believes in public transport. Woo hoo! Haven't we got a leader in the opposition! I rest my case.