



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ADJOURNMENT

NSW Cruise Development Plan

SPEECH

Tuesday, 11 September 2018

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH

Date Tuesday, 11 September 2018	Source House
Page 8651	Proof No
Questioner	Responder
Speaker Thistlethwaite, Matt, MP	Question No.

Mr THISTLETHWAITE (Kingsford Smith) (19:30): The New South Wales Liberals are planning to build a massive international passenger cruise ship terminal on the shores of Botany Bay. I've seen some crazy proposals in my time, but this one takes the cake. A cruise ship terminal at Yarra Bay or Molineaux Point would do massive environmental damage to Botany Bay. It would completely change the communities in my electorate of Kingsford Smith and of course it would result in even more traffic congestion on the already clogged streets that suffer from inadequate public transport and freight rail links to the nearby Sydney Airport and Port Botany. So why are the New South Wales Liberals contemplating this ridiculous development?

In July, then Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull made a captain's call to rule out the federal government owned Garden Island as the location for Sydney's next international cruise ship terminal. Garden Island was the preferred option of the New South Wales Liberals, who by the way spent \$57 million on a new cruise terminal at White Bay near Balmain in 2013. There was only one problem with that: they didn't do their planning. Most of the modern cruise ships can't fit under the Harbour Bridge and so can't access the terminal that the Liberals spent \$57 million on in 2013, so they needed to come up with a new solution. This means that Sydney simply doesn't have the capacity to deal with the surging demand for mega cruise ships in the harbour during the peak season of summer.

Garden Island was also the preferred option of the Cruise Industry Reference Group, headed by the former leader of the New South Wales Liberals, Peter Collins, who produced a significant report outlining why Garden Island was the most logical, practical location. And it makes sense. Passengers who are visiting Sydney on cruises want to come into the idyllic and historic Sydney Harbour, get off the boat there and visit the magnificent sites around the harbour. They don't want to land at Yarra Bay where, when they get off the boat, the first thing that they're confronted with is the local crematorium and cemetery and the Port Botany container terminal. Welcome to Sydney! That's not what people want from a cruising experience to Sydney. Mr Collins was quite scathing of the former Prime Minister when he said: 'I can guarantee you Malcolm Turnbull didn't even read the report. I don't think he really engaged with this issue.' And now the current Prime Minister, Scott Morrison, is refusing to inform the public about the Liberals' latest plans. The Prime Minister, as the member for Cook, represents an electorate that's on the other side of the bay from the electorate that I represent, so you'd think he'd have an understanding of the looming disaster that a cruise ship terminal nearby represents. Yet the *Southern Courier*, our local newspaper, reports today that it contacted the Prime Minister's office on 29 August and had been chasing a response for over two weeks. It was only on Friday that the Prime Minister's office bothered to respond, saying, 'We won't be making comment on this at this moment.'

This is simply not good enough. Our community can't be left in the dark with such a vital issue as the future of Botany Bay. A cruise ship terminal at Yarra Bay would completely destroy the idyllic little beach that so many in our community enjoy on a daily basis and would definitely put the Yarra Bay Sailing Club at risk. Getting cruise ships into the area would require dredging Botany Bay. Yet again that would do massive environmental damage and pose an unacceptable risk to the pygmy pipehorse and woody sea dragon, which inhabit this part of the bay and are protected species under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act. Whoever cooked up this crazy proposal has never been to Yarra Bay when there's a big swell running. I've seen waves and surf get half the way up the breakwall opposite Yarra Bay in a big swell, and they would easily smash a cruise liner into that breakwall in a big surf. All of this means that this proposal is unrealistic and would be too costly for any government to implement.

On Sunday, 23 September, Michael Daley and I will be holding a community forum at the Yarra Bay Sailing Club. We're encouraging those in our community who are opposed to a cruise ship terminal at Yarra Bay to come along and voice their opposition and let the New South Wales Liberal government know that we are opposed to this cruise ship terminal in Yarra Bay. There's also a petition against this proposal on my website that I encourage people to sign. On behalf of our community, I call on the Prime Minister and the Premier of New South Wales to rule out and reject this ridiculous proposal for a cruise ship terminal at Yarra Bay.