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DOORSTOP - MELBOURNE - WEDNESDAY, 26 OCTOBER 2016

E&OE TRANSCRIPT

DOORSTOP

MELBOURNE

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SUBJECTS: Renewable energy; Dreamworld tragedy; Senator Bob Day's 'untenable' position

KIM CARR, SHADOW MINISTER FOR INNOVATION, INDUSTRY, SCIENCE AND RESEARCH: It's a pleasure to be here today with Raygen. Bill and I have had the opportunity to talk directly to the principals of the company. This is a company that ticks all the boxes for the future of Australia. This is a company that has been working on providing clean, cheap power for Australians. It's built partnerships with universities, it's built partnerships with state and federal governments. It's built partnerships with Australian manufacturers. It is able to provide secure, well paid jobs providing answers to big problems in regard to ensuring we have reliable cost effective energy for Australians. It is able to do so by building in Australia. So this is about making jobs for Australians that are able to sustain the prosperity of our nation. So we are very, very pleased to be here today.

BILL SHORTEN, LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION: Thanks Kim and good morning everybody. It's great to be here at Raygen. Raygen is demonstrating that renewable energy is cheap, it's clean and it's reliable. This company is taking risks, it's investing in the future of Australian renewable energy, there's 25 people working here now, but it's got a bright future all things being equal. But the people who work for this company deserve a government in Canberra who is as strong and committed to the future of these businesspeople are. It is now time for Mr Turnbull to drop his war on renewable energy and get behind the future and take real action on climate change. Raygen has technology and possibilities in terms of what it is developing, which means that Australians can hope for in the future cheaper energy bills, more jobs for Australians, greater export opportunities and taking real action on climate change.

This is the third renewable energy facility I've visited this week across Australia. Labor is going to defend renewable energy, Labor is going to defend renewable energy being part of Australia's energy supply in the future. Australians, mums and dads, want to see clean, green, renewable energy as part of the energy mix going forward. There are Australian businesspeople all over Australia backing in new technology, wanting to make sure that Australia is a leading edge economy, winning the competition for jobs in the 21st century and Labor will continue to support renewable energy. As taking real action on climate change, generating real jobs for Australians and of course providing great investment and returns for mum and dad investors.

Happy to take questions on renewable energy.

But before I do, I think it is important that I briefly add my sympathies to all of those who have expressed shock and horror at what happened at Dreamworld. Our sympathies go out to the families of deceased, my sympathies go to the two young girls who were survivors. My sympathies go to all of those witnesses at Dreamworld who saw something horrific. My sympathies also go to the emergency service responders, the scenes they must have seen would be traumatising and we are so lucky to have the sort of emergency responders we do. I think also what makes Dreamworld such a poignant disaster is that like most Australians, we've all been to the show, and we've been to the 'worlds' and we've ridden on the rides. I think that this disaster has touched the lives of every Australian.

Happy to take questions.

JOURNALIST: Mr Shorten, just today, Bob Day has indicated that he is going to sit in the Senate until the end of the year. Do you think that's appropriate?

SHORTEN: What a peculiar set of circumstances this is. Bob Day last week said, in light of the insolvency of his company, Senator Bob Day said last week his position was untenable. But now he seems to have changed his mind. He wants to stay in the Parliament, and back in anti-worker laws of the Turnbull Government. Last week, he said he shouldn't be there; this week, he seems to have had a change of heart.

But in the meantime, hundreds of Australian families have been left high and dry by his company's actions, yet he wants to sit there and pull a \$4000 a week wage until it suits him when to leave the Senate. It's not good enough.

And I have to say, after Labor caught the Turnbull Government negotiating guns for votes with another crossbench Senator, this whole situation is very peculiar.

JOURNALIST: Given you continued to accept Craig Thompson's vote, why should the Government not accept Bob Day's vote if he does stay on in the Senate until the end of the year?

SHORTEN: Seriously, first of all, Senator Day, as he himself said last week, his position is untenable. This wasn't us saying it, it wasn't the media saying it, Senator Bob put his hand up last week in light of the financial problems his company has had, the fact that there are hundreds of families who don't have houses completed. Senator Day set a test for himself that his own position's untenable. Yet this

week he has decided, despite hundreds of families being left high and dry, he has decided he is now indispensable to the Senate and he has to stay until at least the end of this year or early February next year. The South Australian Government's indicated that they can facilitate his replacement.

It is very peculiar, and the Government and Malcolm Turnbull have some explaining to do. Why they are accepting the vote of someone who has self-declared his position as untenable.

JOURNALIST: So you don't see any parallels between Craig Thompson and Mr Day?

SHORTEN: No and I don't think the Government do, either. Tony Abbott and Christopher Pyne - remember, they made those famous scenes of them rushing out of Parliament when they had Thompson's vote? So, if they think that having that vote was untenable, why are they taking Bob Day's now? By their own test, they are hypocrites.

JOURNALIST: Have you spoken to Jay Weatherill about holding an early joint sitting of the South Australian Parliament to facilitate a replacement for Bob Day if he does (inaudible) now?

SHORTEN: No, I've had no such conversation.

Let's be clear, Senator Day put his hand up, he drew attention to himself and said, 'my position is untenable'. How is it that one week he thinks his position is untenable, then when he can't manipulate his preferred replacement through his political party, he has now decided to keep taking the \$4000 a week and support the Government's anti-worker legislation? It wasn't Labor who has left these hundreds of families high and dry. It wasn't Labor who said that Senator Day's position was untenable and Labor is certainly saying this whole situation smells, it's peculiar, and I have to say, excuse me for being a little bit cynical about Mr Turnbull's Government, but last week they got caught negotiating guns for votes. It just makes you wonder what has gone on this week between Senator Bob Day and the Government.

JOURNALIST: Mr Shorten - just on renewable energy (inaudible) Labor targets. Does coal have a future in Australia? And would you like to see the mining industry exporting coal (inaudible)?

SHORTEN: Coal has a future in Australia. But what I don't believe is putting all of our eggs in one basket. I don't believe, like Mr Turnbull, that you need to use the position of the Prime Minister of Australia to vilify the reliability of renewable energy. Coal and fossil fuels do have a future in Australia but so does renewable energy and the problem is, that we've got a government where the climate sceptics are writing the policy.

Mr Turnbull, who once upon a time was a champion of climate change policies, has now become a defender of the climate sceptics because he has no authority within his own ranks.

But the good news is for Australians is this: the Labor Party is not beholden to the climate sceptics of Tony Abbott and the right wing of the Liberal and National Party. We are going to back in the mums and dads who want to see good jobs for their kids, who want to see downwards pressure on their power bills. All of the small businesses who are risking their own financial circumstances to invest in a brighter future for Australian industry. We are on the side of renewable energy and taking real action on climate change.

I might take one more question, thank you.

JOURNALIST: Have you factored the loss of jobs in coalmining over time, (inaudible) and other industries into your calculations on the job growth from renewable energy?

SHORTEN: Well, to begin with, you can have jobs created in renewable energy, that's not what is causing the problems in global prices in mining or causing prices in aluminium. The reality is that a lot of carbon intensive industries are being affected by world economic circumstances. The fact of the matter is the car industry didn't shut because of renewable energy. I'm not going to blame renewable energy for every movement in the price of iron ore or the price of aluminium.

Let's be clear, there is a jobs problem in Australia, and Mr Turnbull doesn't have a plan for jobs. We wanted to back in the car industry and the Liberals waved goodbye to it. We are going to back in renewable energy and the engineering and high skilled jobs that go with that. It's not either or for me.

This can be a country who makes things, as well as digs things up out of the ground and sells them overseas. But the way you create a value-add manufacturing industry is by backing in new technologies such as those we see today at Raygen. My money is on the future, my money is on renewable energy, my money is on creating new jobs as well as supporting the existing jobs we have. This government, the only jobs they are interested in is Bob Day's job, George Brandis' job, Malcolm Turnbull's job, tax cuts for big banks and multinationals.

By contrast, Kim Carr and I, and my whole Labor team, we're interested in jobs for working and middle-class people, but we also know that you don't create new jobs by turning our back on world's best technology such as we have been privileged to see here at Raygen today.

Thank you and good morning.

ENDS

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