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# Infrastructure paradise 2019

## True infrastructure III:

## Look on their works and despair

## Of some occurrences in paradise pre-election 2019:

The Shire visited. Dog recites classic. Cost benefit and the pyramids.

Prospect of paradise being lost.

The magnificent 11. An alleged dastardly defamation.

Nothing new in a negotiated settlement of lawsuit reportedly involving $600m + of your money.

Fewer lanes on the road to hell.

Ozy Oval.

Peter Harris, the list, the eyebrow?

Women’s Day attire. On truth.

A rant misunderstanding political motives. JR Ewing and the Oracle.

The ever popular but largely inaccurate biblical non-allegory. Coincidences. The Book of Ron.

Sing along: ‘Behind closed doors’.

Bad.

Drag racing and responsible government. ‘An impressive number’ of sick people.

The silliest road policy. The beagle feels embarrassed. Matthew 4.1-11.

A welcome mat.

Bring on the bear.

Demonic driving. The European canon.

Doublet of Ramses.

STOP PRESS.

For us: Advice from a saint. Cat videos on youtube.

No more.

## Orders from a dog

There were beagle and slave, Oak Park near Shelly. The Shire Of Course even if the Prime Minister is the local member. Not Shelly near Fairy Bower, in former Prime Minister Abbott’s perhaps soon to be former electorate. Nor Central Coast, Port Macquarie or Ballina. But Shelly, The Shire.

Beagle points to the Daily Telegraph:

*‘you keep your non-job pilgrim – the passport[[1]](#footnote-1)\* already provides all the sober, balanced, politically neutral and gimmick free coverage of the State election any voter might want. You can do the opposite! And allow me to ghost write ‘toucheth not the monorail.’*

*‘Take notes slave: Circa 1817, England. Prior to and not where a partisan government decided to divide France by boring tiny tunnels for its Metro. A sort of sonnet competition. Hubby of famed d.i.y corpse re-animation proponent Mary comes up with:*

*And on the pedestal these words appear:
'My name is Ozymandias, king of kings;
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!'[[2]](#endnote-1)*

*Now that’s the type of infrastructure announcement the State election needs.*

*That civilisation wasn’t troubled by cost benefit studies. Or community consultation. You can imagine how narky comments about value for money from the abacas counters were dealt with – let alone due process questions raised by policy institutes from the streets of the Nile. Build first and tell the masses later: ‘look what I have done. Now pay up peons!’. That’s the way. No doubt Pharaoh lived on the right side of Gizeh, where the sand was good – the Maroubra or Willoughby of the Dynasty.’[[3]](#endnote-2)*

## Paradise

Thoughts echoed by mockers of Mr Michael Daley MP, NSW Labor and Opposition leader. Specifically, re his attitude to the knock-down-rebuild eastern Sydney stadium policy. And to amplify the echo, clinching arguments:

1. It’s only $730m dollars out of a $60,000m spend;
2. With that attitude the Opera House and [insert favourite tourist icon] would never have been built.

To which (b) we can now add: nor the Pyramids. Nor the statue of Ozymandias.

What is wrong with Mr Daley’s attitude? For one thing: he’d kill off the infrastructure paradise series, and perhaps paradise itself! Shame. Shame. Shame.

So, in case he gets in, lets have one last look around – for an old timers’ sake.

## Mighty works

Where better to start than a location of bread for the club and circuses for the taxpayers. A stadium in the far east of Big Town. Where mighty works are afoot. Both types: demolition and building.

But before that, some concerned citizens sought court orders to stop demolition of the Sydney Football Stadium, Allianz or whatever it is corporately called, aka the Deathtrap. Injunction to stop major demolition granted until case determined. In the interim….. [[4]](#endnote-3)

Radio 2GB: Mr Jones’ show. Mr Daley saying Mr Jones – whom we have previously met in the context of telling the Premier to sack someone re Big Town’s Biggest Billboard - might not be wanted on the ‘board’ of the SCG Trust. Also not wanted would be some who we have also met. If Labor is elected.[[5]](#endnote-4)

A nice bookend to the Premier’s governing-for-all-of-the-people-type promise: you folk can have your $25m sports centre, but only if your electorate votes for my Government.[[6]](#endnote-5)

The SCG Trust wants to knock-down-rebuild the Deathtrap. For supposed safety grounds identified before several record crowds crammed in during 2018.[[7]](#endnote-6)

Mr Daley’s comment was reported in typically subdued tones in the passport\*. Along with nice photos of the perhaps condemned trustees. ‘Magnificent 11’ if the passport\* editors run out of paeans – and no! battling informant of the battlers, the beagle does not charge for such headline material, which - as we will see - might have saved the Premier a bob or two too.[[8]](#endnote-7)

The ‘not wanted’ comment was reported as if it was a vote loser – even an ‘*own goal*’ in passport\* stablemate The Australian. And, surprise, surprise, the SMH – which oversensitives might regard as an unsavoury acronym, except during mardi gras – said it was masterful vote winning.[[9]](#endnote-8)

Alas, great men allegedly defamed!

While ‘*wiping the floor*’ with Mr Jones, Mr Daley reportedly said trustees had removed fire sprinklers from the stadium under cover of darkness. Lies!!! We are told the stadium had no such sprinklers.[[10]](#endnote-9)

A complaint: Mr Daley’s comments were *‘extraordinary, offensive and defamatory’* of at least one trustee. Said complainant claimed to have ‘*confirmation it is defamatory*’ although to date - like the safety claim - the public is yet to be widely informed about the precise grounds.[[11]](#endnote-10)

Mr Dempster, of ABC fame, said the grounds relate to an inference the case made by the Trust to knock-down and rebuild the stadium was not strong, and he referred to the Hillsborough disaster. Might he want to look – again? - at some recent reports on the latter subject.[[12]](#endnote-11)

Nonetheless, if Mr Dempster is right about grounds, perhaps a lawsuit would turn on the strength of the Trust’s case. A novel approach to independent assessment of projects but not entirely out of line with some recent beagle suggestions – in Urban’s Admonition.[[13]](#endnote-12)

Yet if Mr Dempster is incorrect? Are there other potential inferences? That ‘cover of darkness’ involves unsafe work practices? That tinkling with sprinklers might constitute major demolition and contempt of injunction?

That trustees, even at age 80, undertook the manual labour? – which may be most offensive of all if they are not members of relevant unions as they would never condone scabbing.

Who knows at this time? Perhaps we could leave it at welcoming the statement of claim, eventually.

Or negotiated settlement. Although the latter might take some time. Time like that of NSW negotiating with Acciona re Sydney light rail to avoid determination of the latter’s suit against the Government. A negotiation supposedly underway late January but web-search unheard of since. Perhaps unsurprisingly as there was ‘nothing new’ and the figure speculated in the press – not confirmed by either party - was a mere $600m. +. And its only your money.[[14]](#endnote-13)

One suggestion. Hear this out, as they say. The complainant is also author of the memorable subsidies paving the road to hell etc. in The Australian, of course. As such, perhaps fruits of any successful defamation action could be devoted to reducing taxpayer outlays on the stadium – limiting the number of lanes on the road to hell - if the Government is returned? Or if Mr Daley becomes Premier, allocated to buying a few sprinklers or upgrade more private suites etc?[[15]](#endnote-14)

And, if that proposition Is not outré, is there merit in maximising quantum of damages by evidence of character / earning potential via references from former Prime Ministers? While they are in reference mood?[[16]](#endnote-15)

And the injunction against demolition? Lifted despite comments from an architect or two.[[17]](#endnote-16)

Go ahead and knock the Deathtrap down says the judiciary.[[18]](#endnote-17)

Pre-election hopefully. So, campaigns can get a literary edge along the lines of:

*Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away*

Now does that not suggest a better name than the ‘Twickenham of the South’ or ‘Phoenix’ for the inevitable replacement of the despised ‘Deathtrap’?

Better even than the more popular suggestions of Hubris Field or Nemesis Park depending on who gets elected.

Ozy – full name Ozymandias - Oval?

An oval opened – indeed ‘launched’ - to the tune of ‘highway to hell’ as previously suggested.

And the beagle isn’t charging for any of these sterling ideas!

## Welcome interlude

A short but welcome interlude before recommencing less serious stuff.

*Beagle: have you read Infrastructure Australia’s latest priority list?*

*Slave: a thousand apologies great one. But no.*

*Beagle: don’t bother. Not until they update the WestConnex assessment – the one which included Kingsford Smith and Port Botany - ‘Gateway’ - which NSW has long said is a different project.*

*Slave: ok. Duck Stick your learnedness?*

*Beagle: Don’t interrupt fn. Now they list Gateway as a new initiative without modifying their WestConnex assessment. And its Fish Tenders this week. Off to Woolies, aisle 7.[[19]](#endnote-18)*

*Slave: ummm*

*Beagle: on your way, consider this. Project W gets the IA green light - and a probably unrelated Commonwealth subsidy and concessional loan etc. Then a crucial bit gets taken out, to become a separate project. IA says that bit needs a business case, but the light stays green. Good work if you can get it.*

*Slave: Aisle 7?*

*Beagle: you don’t need to raise any of that, as surely somebody will notice. But write this down: ‘Welcome back Peter Harris. How about giving the list an eyebrow-raise?’*

Welcome Peter!

## Pants o’ fire

It is shameful and below even our usual unusually low standards to discuss apparel, other than this season’s colour for flannelette shirts. But did you notice the Premier’s garb on International Women’s Day? Friday 8 March 2019? The ‘leaders’ ‘debate’.[[20]](#endnote-19)

A dress / skirt. Whatever. Not slacks/long pants. So much for taking advantage of feminist triumphs.[[21]](#endnote-20)

Planned? Or a clever ambush like the Opposition Leader supposedly put on Mr Jones? So, she could safely say to Mr Daley: tell the truth, be honest? Etc. Twenty-four times in a half hour.

Without risk of a heat of moment exclamation - ‘liar, liar pants on fire’ - being misunderstood and stage hands aiming a fire extinguisher at more than her opponent.

A 6 March 2019 post in Mr Menadue’s blog had commented on her ‘*undoubted honesty*’. A typical political epithet – post Mr Howard aka ‘Honest John’ - which drew the beagle’s attention.[[22]](#endnote-21)

Lest we get too carried away, an example of record about a significant matter. It concerns the now subject of a legal action by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission against NSW Ports. This is the anti-competitive provisions of NSW Government privatisations viz a ‘cap’ which would penalise Newcastle port and benefit its competitor, NSW Ports, were the former to deal with more than a certain small number of shipping containers.

We find ourselves in the NSW Parliament some time ago, before the Commission took action……

*The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: I would like to ask you some questions about the Port of Newcastle and the cap on containers. Last year we asked whether or not a cap was put on the number of containers that could be put through the Port of Newcastle. You were very careful to say there was no legislated container cap.*

*Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Correct.*

*The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: We asked also whether there was any other restriction in the sale or lease documents and you answered, "Not that I am aware of."*

*…..*

*The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: I asked you whether there was a cap. You were very careful to say there was no legislated cap.*

*Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Correct.*

*The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: And I asked you whether there was anything else in the sale or the lease documents.*

*Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: That is why I had to go back.*

*The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: But you did not come back to us. You were dissembling. You said there was no legislated cap. When did you know about the cap and why did you not inform the Committee?*

Ah! To dissemble is to hide or conceal. A novel way of expositing the truth? Novel except in infrastructure paradise?? Where calls for Parliamentary, judicial and public inquiries into infrastructure matters are made because of a feeling the whole truth, which is undoubtedly out there, has yet to find its way to the public.

Another example, from an official policy of a certain former Transport Minister:

*In the Sydney context an independent metro system would deliver few benefits in terms of service enhancement, capacity improvements or better operating efficiency on the existing rail network. A dedicated metro-style system would not maximise the use of the existing rail assets. It would create a separate system that would divert funding away from service improvements on the existing rail network and only provide benefits to customers who use the new lines.[[23]](#endnote-22)*

Which goes a long way to explaining why Sydney is getting an independent Metro system, which will deliver few benefits in terms of …..?

Or is this other an example of the bureaucracy’s clever use of a JR Ewing maxim, unmentionable these days – especially days like 8 March 2019. Go on, treat yourself, is it at endnote[[24]](#endnote-23)

So, with the potential of back-fire as identified above, why the interest in truth telling?

*‘Recommendations for an incoming government are few but simple:*

1. *Tell the truth;’* [[25]](#endnote-24)

Hmmm. This was also from John Menadue’s blog, 19 February 2019 a bit earlier than that assessment, and the ‘leaders’ ‘debate’. How about some context for the recommendation?

‘NSW faces an election in March.  This note – to help an incoming government – draws on transport matters identified in Pearls etc.  It won’t be in the incoming government’s briefs.  Never mind – people who matter read Pearls!’

Those who matter read Pearls? Prescient? Did that post posit only a single recommendation? Not quite. Here are the others:

*‘2. Stop current ‘initiatives’ until they are reconsidered in detail and in public;*

1. *Never consider a project proposal until it has been subject to a proper public inquiry;*
2. *Keep a very close eye on the Budget; and*
3. *Remove the restriction on Newcastle port.’*

And apart from the Newcastle nautical nasty (5) why?

Given this might be the finale of the paradise series, why not replay the rant:

*‘after decades of careful planning and building on systemic strengths – occasionally marred by poor management – a radical shift occurred in 2012.*

*An infrastructure cult has taken hold.  Big projects are started without adequate assessment or consideration of consequence, and in isolation and at the wrong locations i.e.,*[*to no plan.*](https://johnmenadue.com/john-austen-trouble-in-infrastructure-paradise-nsw/)*Published ‘plans’ – e.g. by the Greater Sydney Commission and Transport for NSW –*[*conflict*](https://johnmenadue.com/john-austen-transport-for-an-incoming-nsw-government/#_top)*.   None make sense, nor does their ’30-minute city’. They look like attempts at excusing stupid projects which preceded them.*

*Sydney will suffer from a ‘tail-wags-dog’ syndrome where costly peripheral projects damage critical systems.  Manifestations will include worsening daily networks performance and social/economic inequity. Not only won’t ‘more projects’ cure this, more of the same will make it worse.*

*The last seven years produced a litany of problems including bad projects in wrong places e.g. Sydney light rail,*[*Metro, WestConnex etc.’*](https://johnmenadue.com/john-austen-transport-for-an-incoming-nsw-government/#_top)*; degradation of core systems e.g. Sydney Trains; lock-ins: attempts to make change irreversible by design e.g. Metro; more projects to undo new messes e.g. motorways to mitigate*[*WestConnex*](https://johnmenadue.com/john-austen-transport-for-an-incoming-nsw-government/#_top)*; and real needs ignored.......*

*It is a fair bet nobody knows what is going on.  Government and advisers have not shown any understanding of what has been done.  The story seen by the public is disturbing – misleading and full of conflicts, dumb ideas and bogus explanations.  Among the questions: was advice to Government stupid too? What else is hidden? Experience elsewhere teaches that such nonsense causes chaos and breeds incompetence.’*

The beagle says the author let self-down - again - by appealing to venal self-interest rather than the noble sentiments that normally motivate the political class. By saying: be honest lest you breach the Oracle’s advice – and fool yourself!

The beagle says the Oracle(s) had plenty of good advice. Especially for politicians and bureaucrats. Those appalled by JR Ewing can calm down by reading this endnote.[[26]](#endnote-25)

And here is some more free advice from the beagle: don’t even think of wearing slacks. And for men: a kilt or kimono, please.

## True infrastructure

Leaving the heathens in Egypt and Greece, onto the ever-popular infrastructure paradise – ‘true infrastructure genre’ - biblical non-allegory.

Those in the know would remember stories about Saul; tax collector, persecutor of the pedestrian westies of the then known world and general apologist for the Romans. Who underwent a light induced soul-saving miraculous conversion on the road to Damascus. After which he became known as Paul, great evangelist of the truth via epistles and fighter of demons. Now a saint. A ‘key’ saint even, to be on the first few slides of the PowerPoint presentation. Patron of journalists.[[27]](#endnote-26)

But first he disowned the horse he rode among the others on foot.

A disownment which not figuratively, partially, emulated the other day by SMH writer Saulwick, Jacob who is city editor.

That is: partial non-disownment of the tax-eating-disadvantage-the westies iron horse of Metro. non-disownment because unlike others say in the passport\* he was never on that horse.[[28]](#endnote-27)

Metro, considered by some – but in our non-allegory, a mirror image where the masses were on the Metro mount rather than on foot, but nonetheless generally conforming with other non-allegories of this season, giving reason to do a bit of entertaining reading of literal and figurative bibles nonetheless, the better – as the Winx of railways. According to them: virtually able to do anything. Which Mr Saulwick corrected via 9 March epistle-equivalent.

With truth revealed thus - reduced by this author a tone or two from SMH prosaic prose to text beagle followers can understand: It ain’t a real Metro, mum, but the product of bumbling confusion. And to assist comprehension of our betters in the eastern suburbs and lower north shore: Ma, thems stations is too fars apart! That’s not how them does it overseas i.e. in Europe.

Mercy. Saints alive! Who would have thought?

If the SMH can get either NSW Government or Opposition to understand this, Mr Saulwick would have performed a bona fide miracle. Two miracles if their Commonwealth counter-parts cotton on. Will he soon be on the way to transport sainthood?

And how is the transport reporter?[[29]](#endnote-28)

## Another interlude

The SMH transport reporter, showed up March 13 alive, well and in fairly good form, thank you.[[30]](#endnote-29)

Allowing Mr Tubman – who we have met before - to put some stick around about the best way to quickly increase Sydney’s rail capacity.[[31]](#endnote-30)

Mr Tubeman’s thoughts: invest in the current network by resignalling.

And before running your internet ‘MRDA’ comment, recall Mr Tubeman’s fame came from running…..the Tube. A real Metro. And by increasing Tube capacity by around 40% from resignalling.

Does this imply the railway spending splurge since 2012 – and the bulk of promises in this election - are misdirected? In my view who cares? That was already proven: wrong projects; wrong locations; wrong sequence; locking-out better options. Can’t do much worse than that.

## Back to the candidate

But back to the main story: only a partial emulation of Saul? As said earlier our candidate was never on the Sydney transport equivalent of that pharisee’s horse – more likely the masses are.

But first, Mr Saulwick’s take on the way to railway light? The long abandoned and ignored good Book – written under the eye of Mr Ron Christie AM – who knows a thing or two about railways. A thing or two more than some recent ‘experts’ judging by this. At the relevant time, ‘the go-to-guy’ for Sydney public transport.[[32]](#endnote-31)

The Book written after Mr Christie led a public inquiry into Sydney transport on behalf of the SMH. Now almost decade old but containing sage advice for the ages.

Yet apparently seldom mentionable during that period except by Mr Saulwick, one or two others and the beagle. Whose most recent, pointed, bay was via letter to the SMH published 5 February.[[33]](#endnote-32)

A coincidence? Like the Premier announcing yet another Metro soon after Mr Saulwick’s revelation? This time to be in far western Sydney, which wouldn’t be such a bad idea if, like Mr Saulwick implies – and everyone out west prays - it isn’t a metro.

Oh, almost forgot: and wouldn’t be such a bad idea if there weren’t far better options, long planned, costing much less and which would help rather than hinder airline passenger travels to the city - or anywhere other than St Marys for that matter.

Options dubiously ignored. Apparently in the belief single-deck and double-deck trains can’t use the same tracks. Confirmed by the then Commonwealth Minister, despite the 6 single deck Canberra trains each weekday using Sydney Trains lines.[[34]](#endnote-33)

Gold star effort about those options, decision makers; keep your notes for an inquiry.

## A ten-word digression

The beagle’s February bay at the SMH, oddly lacking charity, said the studious ignorance of Christie’s report was unforgivable and there would eventually be another public inquiry into relevant matters. All reproduced by the SMH. Except for one phrase about such inquiry:

 *‘- the longer we wait the less kind it will be’.*

Deleted no doubt because otherwise the letter would be ten words too long. Ergo, inclusion here.

The beagle’s bay was in response to a SMH transport reporter telling of a(nother Metro) plan hatched behind closed doors. [[35]](#endnote-34)

Truth be told, the ten-words-too-long email sent to the SMH omitted a ditty from an earlier draft, which we – in passport\* terminology - ‘*can now reveal*’. Sing along, please:

 ‘**And when they plan behind closed doors**

 **That’s when it all goes wrong**

 **And it makes me glad that I’m retired**

 **Because I don’t want to know what goes on behind closed doors**.’

## Saint Paulwick?

Digression over, the conversion of biblical Saul to Paul teaches among other things:

*"no fall so deep that grace cannot descend to it" and "no height so lofty that grace cannot lift the sinner to it.*"[[36]](#endnote-35)

Redemption for souls is always possible. And the penitent should be forgiven.

Yet back in the pre-afterworld there remains a little problem of dealing with damage wrought on Big Town’s transport network by some fairly serious – possibly cardinal - transport transgressions. Fixing that might require something in addition to a bit of penance.

Nonetheless, in the spirit of things, the beagle outstretches a forgiving paw - even if repairing the network and Sydney might require a French- Government-style-60-year-untold-$billions-bailout of Paris since the 1960s – to correct their bout of small-tunnel ego-driven stupidity of the late 1800s.[[37]](#endnote-36)

One word for this episode? Better yet: one letter, not being an epistle?

P. as in Paulwick.

(beagle comment three pages to get to that?)

Another step to sainthood? Not so fast.

(beagle comment: this had better be good….)

Yes, Mr Saulwick’s article, which administered a dose of truth and drew attention to Mr Christie’s report, was reminiscent of glory days of analysis - rather than dreary regurgitation. Days of the SMH editorialising about ‘*the bizarre premise*’ Big Town needs another independent rail system. Criticism of the premise no doubt taken to heart by Ms Berejiklian and forming the well-considered basis of an earlier quote in the pants o’ fire section. Or is ‘*bizarre’* praise in infrastructure paradise?[[38]](#endnote-37)

However, the article wasn’t that big on one or two things a closer reading of the good Book would reveal. To wit the key concerns.[[39]](#endnote-38)

One key concern was break of gauge, said in the Book to be among the last things Sydney needs. Sydney may not need it, but got it anyway – part of ‘having it all’? In the form of Metro tiny tunnels - which at least double-decks and perhaps other normal trains – say higher speed ones - cannot fit.

A re-run of the Paris policy of roughly 140 years ago? Who says history never repeats? As noted above, France has been trying to undo the effects of its tiny tunnels for at least the last 60 years. When will Sydney start to apply the European canon?[[40]](#endnote-39)

The second key concern was an inference the then (circa 2010) Metro idea may have damaged the Sydney Trains network by break of gauge in conjunction with proposal to take an alignment through the CBD and across the harbour that precluded a further Sydney Trains crossing. May, not would.

A harbour crossing that may be necessary for additional Western Sydney services. And an alignment that looks like the one now being tunnelled.

If remotely true, these two are stuff from which judicial grade inquiries are woven. So, until cleared-up, we might wait before proposing a Saint Paulwick, miracles in the offing and journalism mostly worthy of emulation notwithstanding.

And if he wants to be a saint, that idea of the perfect possibly being the enemy of the good will have to be dumped. The perfect is the real enemy of the: substandard, poor, inferior, second-rate, second-class, unsatisfactory, inadequate, unacceptable, not up to scratch, not up to par, deficient, imperfect, defective, faulty, shoddy, amateurish, careless, negligent; dreadful, awful, terrible, abominable, frightfulatrocious, disgraceful, deplorable, hopeless,worthless, laughable, lamentable, miserable, sorry, third-rate, diabolical, execrable; incompetent, inept, inexpert, ineffectual;crummy, rotten, pathetic, useless, woeful, bum, lousy, ropy, appalling, abysmal, pitiful, godawful, dire, poxy, not up to snuff, the pits; duff, chronic, rubbish, pants, a load of pants; crap, shit, chickenshit; egregious, unpleasant, disagreeable, unwelcome, unfortunate, unfavourable, unlucky, adverse, nasty; terrible, dreadful, awful, grim, distressing, regrettable. Etc. And the parlous. In summary, the bad.

Which, with many more possibilities, presents more problems for the good than does the perfect.

In any case the idea has been contradicted by a real saint – see the end of this article.

(beagle comment: that was ok. But really the three pages prior?)

## Miscilly

Just a bit of a tidy up before we go. A miscilly of silly billy if you like.

There was Mr Albanese on 2HD Newcastle who, being a respectable and good bloke, would have been embarrassed if he knew what he was doing – talking up the prospects of high-speed rail to Newcastle on the basis of a report that went out of its way to shaft it. A proposed station 25 km from the city being the start. Duped is the word – by the bureaucracy.[[41]](#endnote-40)

Like many a federal Minister reliant on a Department whose ideas of Commonwealth (i.e. Constitutional) purpose are – ahem - different. And a Department whose dedication to truth has been somewhat less than Mr Saulwick’s. Maldon-Dombarton and the single decks not on double deck lines among more recent rail efforts. What might be late changes to the Badgery’s Creek EIS are worth a look too.[[42]](#endnote-41)

Back to NSW where the election has become a competition as to who could have the sillier road charge rebate policy. Details are too embarrassing to put here. But Labor seems to be in front.[[43]](#endnote-42)

Then onto the Princes Highway between Nowra and Moruya, rather than the scene of *that* accident.[[44]](#endnote-43)

Now to be route of $960m of ‘investment’ if the Government is returned. But will it be enough? Worry not, sparrow. The ABC says this paltry sum is but part of $15billion to be spent over 20 years. According to the report the same amount spent on the Pacific Highway over the last 23 years.[[45]](#endnote-44)

Confirming three things and suggesting one more.

First confirming: like drag racing, responsible government is not what you think.[[46]](#endnote-45)

Second confirming: the amount spent rather than what the public gets is the highlight in infrastructure paradise.

Third confirming an observation the Audit Office was too polite to make - in infrastructure paradise it’s decide first: try to justify later and pretend to consult last of – if at – all. Plan? Never.[[47]](#endnote-46)

Finally suggesting: a degree of existential desperation. Aka: here for a good time not a long time?

Moving on to causes of the 2nd last train meltdown, on cue around New Year. This time lightning – like what hit Saul? And according to one report ‘*an impressive number of drivers who were sick*’.[[48]](#endnote-47)

(Beagle comment: deadset. Who comes up with this stuff?)

Highly plausible, until one remembers the Glenbrook incident was initiated by storms, and presumably there was some effort at lightning protection of infrastructure in the 19 years since. Better explanation needed folks?[[49]](#endnote-48)

Still, in Big Town strange things happen. Like toy balloons shutting down the system. Who knows?[[50]](#endnote-49)

There is more but we have to go. Walkies waits for no man! So, let’s say farewells.

## Farewell to Mondo esoterica

Concluding, perhaps forever, our tours of paradise - if despite the best-most-desperate-efforts of the passport\*, the latest poll is right - is a last car chase through the forests of Mondo esoterica.[[51]](#endnote-50)

Inspired, by Premier and Opposition bus tours and ‘policy’ ‘launches’. And promises of infrastructure works to emulate Ozymandias – before the inevitable.

The Premier was variously reported saying NSW can/should/deserves to (or just:) ‘*have it all*’ (see bring on the bear section below). Diabolically inadvertent and unfortunate terminology not merely for a nod to one of the beagle’s least favourite bands. You should know why – as should the reporters. Shame on them!

(Beagle comment: -------- I wish I had an extra paw to further shield my eyes ).[[52]](#endnote-51)

And ‘*have it all*’ while supporting jobs in Queensland via contracts for prints on the election bus.[[53]](#endnote-52)

The Government’s policy launch was in Penrith, actual western Sydney – not just the outskirts say Parramatta. Who cares? Little of interest there. Boring? Yep.

Labor’s launch was in media-misspelt Reve(r)sby. Promising a west Metro – of course. Reverentially described as some quasi-sacred ceremony. As if it was at Uluru - the Bankstown Sports Club. Nothing of transport interest there. Boring or what? [[54]](#endnote-53)

They stayed away in droves. And who could blame them until……

## Bring on the bear

A day or so later when the Prime Minister arrived in part of paradise – the Badlands of Big Town to show NSW: you have no monopoly on Metro madness explained by bogus bullshit.

By offering Commonwealth support for the State Government’s rail ‘vision’ for Badgerys Creek. A vision outlined earlier by a recoiling-in-disbelief beagle, who noted – among other things – the vision was based on a rail vision concocted when NSW opposed a vision of an airport at Badgerys Creek.[[55]](#endnote-54)

Unlike, say Fatima, there is a video of this next stage of delivery of the current vision.

In it, to kick-off, the Prime Minister put the cost of the St Marys to Badgerys Creek line at $7bn, at least $3bn more than the better options. Of which the Commonwealth is to pay $3.5bn.

Next, he indicated some of this sum is to go to ‘feasibility’ work. The beagle wants to know: what is to happen if this work determines something is infeasible?

The beagle also asks what is the point of feasibility work. Given Federal adoption of the paradise approach to infrastructure projects, surely just submitting a proposal to Infrastructure Australia and ignoring whatever they say would be as good enough as ever?

Or was the Prime Minister’s money-for-feasibility gesture some sort of special welcome for new Infrastructure Australia ‘board’ member Peter Harris? Hardly necessary given the welcome mat already put out for Mr Harris - who undoubtedly will insist on rigorous independent assessments of projects – by Premier Berejiklian via communication with her people:

"*As Premier, I will never ask you to choose between having world-class schools, hospitals, transport, roads, stadiums or cultural facilities’*

Not because the Premier will choose on behalf of her people but:

*‘because ……. NSW can have it all"[[56]](#endnote-55)*

Realism at its infrastructure paradise finest. At least while she is Premier – again raising a good time, long time question etc. as in the Miscilly section earlier.

Finally, the Prime Minister, among admiring entourage and Premier, probably at St Mary’s station, mid-Badlands found his voice was almost drowned-out by a passing train for a short time.

Almost, but not quite. He audibly quipped:

‘*that’s what we are going to see more of*’.

It was a double-deck train, which his $3.5bn – matched by the State – is designed to prevent (more of). A design so painstakingly undertaken by well overdue ‘studies’, irrationality etc. All now in jeopardy by a little comment implying a proper, fit for purpose, functioning transport conveyance might be a good thing rather than the outdated relic from an inglorious socialistic industrial past dominated by union bully-boys that prevents single-decks from fulfilling their God appointed role?[[57]](#endnote-56)

Jeopardy? Probably not. And if not, given the quantum, and reality, of your money his ‘performance’ arguably edges out Mr Albanese’s Newcastle ‘effort’ (above) in the cringe stakes.

Watch the video, wince. Not just for that but for opportunity lost by the Prime Minister to make the bold call – the big call, the one we’ve all been waiting for - before the curtain falls on the election, this series and maybe even paradise itself! Perhaps the first and only time in infrastructure paradise a Prime Minister has had the opportunity to call:

***‘bring on the bear’.***

It was not to be. An oversight particularly heartfelt given his familiarity with muppet calls.[[58]](#endnote-57)

Yet confirming commentary on St Paul by antonym: policy disgrace makes no silliness impossible.[[59]](#endnote-58)

## Kether to Malkuth

As Mr Saulwick informs us, stations on Sydney Metro lines are likely to be very far – abnormally far - apart. Meaning political buses – the Berejiklian burb bus and the comrades’ conveyance - would need to move furiously between actual or putative stopping points to harvest the votes sowed by election promises, watered by streams of (your) money and fed by…..

Buses driving like demons from station to station even. Yet, unlike Mr Bowie, author of same named album and song, presumably they can’t excuse their behaviour on cocaine side-effects.

Bringing us to the heading. And the song’s meaning. A spiritual journey too few undertake.[[60]](#endnote-59)

In his case, a return to European standards – the European canon.

Which for transport, as Mr Saulwick observes, means Metros being metros with stations close together and slow, frequently stopping trains, confined to inner cities. Not masquerades. Rail systems that complement rather than divide cities.

## Next track

The next track on the album is Golden Years.

May you have plenty.

Even despite efforts of many NSW ‘leaders’ to create paradise for infrastructure’s elite.

If in doubt, have a look at the election TV ads. A great big scare campaign.

Better still, given what (to plagiarise the passport\*) ‘*can be revealed*’ from the above, don’t look. Or listen. But read.

The general lesson from this series being: *‘Think before you speak. Read before you think.*’ More accurately: read before you think you think.

(Beagle comment: and put away that f..king mobile phone you w..ker).[[61]](#endnote-60)

For scaremongers threatening that most direst of doomsies - projects might be stopped: a doublet of Ramses.[[62]](#endnote-61)

For us:

## STOP PRESS!

Just before posting, the beagle dragged in something of interest. It wasn’t a promise of $xbn for some Metro in woop woop, or an Opposition criticism it’s just at the planning stage. Rather it was the following from The Conversation:

*‘In 2012, the city’s first transport priority was another north-south harbour crossing. However, it was decided instead to build the Sydney Metro under the harbour and then take both of the CBD’s north-south heavy-rail corridors….’[[63]](#endnote-62)*

Seemingly answering one of the judicial grade questions Mr Saulwick didn’t raise. That is: both (i.e. all) CBD heavy rail corridors have been eliminated by Metro and there can be no additional commuter rail lines through the city. Decided in 2012?

The beagle has posted a comment on the article and awaits, rather than expects, a relevant response.

If it is true there follows some grave questions e.g. Who knows of this? Why was it done? Who advised on it? And best of all: Is it strictly necessary?

## For us

For us, advice from a saint: ‘*Do not be afraid. Do not be satisfied with mediocrity’*.[[64]](#endnote-63)

No doubt there will be more before to E day 2019. But enough is enough. Let’s get back to cats v. cucumbers e.g https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=agi4geKb8v8. More edifying.

14 March 2019

1. Daily Telegraph, due to the non-apocryphal story of conductors on western Sydney trains asking for ‘tickets please’ and ‘passport’ – the latter being Telegraph forebear tabloid Daily Mirror known in the trade as TTT - to ensure heathens from the east – Sydney Morning Herald broadsheet readers - didn’t stray into the heartlands. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/ozymandias> [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
3. Maroubra being the electorate of the Opposition leader. Willoughby being electorate of the Premier. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
4. <https://www.news.com.au/sport/nrl/judge-issues-temporary-injunction-over-demolition-work-at-allianz-stadium/news-story/d5fc52c9ac233cfb084fd0c213f3e0fa> [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
5. Previously met Mr Jones in <https://www.thejadebeagle.com/infrastructure-paradise---little-turtle.html>

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-03-06/mad-or-smart-michael-daley-row-with-alan-jones/10872962> [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
6. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-02-07/gladys-berejiklian-orange-stadium-election-promise-backlash/10790530> [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
7. <https://www.thejadebeagle.com/little-turtle-2---picnic.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
8. Typically subdued tones such as: <https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/national/daleys-jones-fued-crazy-brave/video/22bd9a1c285cfc853b87c14065bd3d21> [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
9. <https://www.huffingtonpost.com.au/2017/02/10/former-liberal-mp-ross-cameron-defends-derogatory-homosexuality_a_21711156/> [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
10. <https://www.smh.com.au/sport/daley-wipes-the-floor-with-jones-in-stadium-debate-20190306-p5128o.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
11. <https://www.fairfieldchampion.com.au/story/5940636/daley-stands-by-scg-trust-sacking-threat/?cs=9397> [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
12. The Hillsborough disaster was raised in <https://www.thejadebeagle.com/infrastructure-paradise---little-turtle.html> which has one or two references which readers may wish to explore. Or update. Mr Dempster’s views are at: <https://johnmenadue.com/quentin-dempster-berejiklian-government-in-danger-in-nsw-election/> [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
13. <https://www.thejadebeagle.com/urbans-admonition.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
14. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-01-31/nsw-government-in-negotiations-with-sydney-light-rail-contractor/10765608>

<https://www.westernadvocate.com.au/story/5880056/nsw-may-settle-with-acciona-on-light-rail/> [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
15. <https://www.thejadebeagle.com/little-turtle-2---picnic.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
16. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-02-27/archbishop-reviews-pells-melbourne-response-victims-come-forward/10852672> [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
17. <https://www.smh.com.au/national/why-can-t-we-be-friendly-agreeing-to-disagree-with-tony-abbott-20190308-p512qz.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
18. <https://www.themercury.com.au/news/national/demolition-can-begin-on-allianz-stadium-after-injunction-lifted/video/103f260ce8986a916dea252cc674be22> [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
19. <https://infrastructureaustralia.gov.au/policy-publications/publications/files/IA18-4005_Priority_List_2019_ACC_L.pdf> [↑](#endnote-ref-18)
20. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-03-08/nsw-election-fiery-leaders-debate-between-berejiklian-and-daley/10885108> [↑](#endnote-ref-19)
21. <https://www.facebook.com/781913492161262/photos/pcb.814367958915815/814366542249290/?type=3&theater> [↑](#endnote-ref-20)
22. <https://www.smh.com.au/opinion/trust-honest-john-hes-a-politician-20040116-gdi60h.html>

<https://www.crikey.com.au/2004/08/20/honest-john-a-history/>

<https://johnmenadue.com/alex-mitchell-a-deeply-divided-nsw-is-heading-for-a-deadlocked-state-election/> [↑](#endnote-ref-21)
23. <https://mysydneycbd.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/user-files/uploads/rail-future-web.pdf> [↑](#endnote-ref-22)
24. In the best Dallas tradition: to be continued……. Meanwhile: <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/tvandradio/9519844/JR-Ewings-best-Dallas-insults.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-23)
25. <https://johnmenadue.com/john-austen-transport-for-an-incoming-nsw-government/> [↑](#endnote-ref-24)
26. <https://theconversation.com/friday-essay-secrets-of-the-delphic-oracle-and-how-it-speaks-to-us-today-61738> [↑](#endnote-ref-25)
27. <https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=91> [↑](#endnote-ref-26)
28. <https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/railroads-parading-as-metros-the-long-and-short-of-sydney-rail-maze-20190307-p512h3.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-27)
29. <https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/quickest-cheapest-way-to-boost-sydney-s-train-services-20190305-p511y5.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-28)
30. <https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/quickest-cheapest-way-to-boost-sydney-s-train-services-20190305-p511y5.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-29)
31. <https://www.thejadebeagle.com/dogs-breakfast-for-all.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-30)
32. <https://www.railpage.com.au/news/article-11521/> and for ‘go to guy’ see note xxxiii. [↑](#endnote-ref-31)
33. <https://www.smh.com.au/politics/nsw/hard-to-believe-premier-s-election-promise-on-space-20190204-p50vhc.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-32)
34. <https://www.thejadebeagle.com/infrastructure-paradise---little-turtle.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-33)
35. <https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/new-metro-rail-line-to-sydney-s-south-east-in-the-pipeline-20181218-p50myx.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-34)
36. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conversion_of_Paul_the_Apostle> [↑](#endnote-ref-35)
37. <https://www.thejadebeagle.com/dogs-breakfast-for-all.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-36)
38. <https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/its-sensible-to-build-on-cityrails-good-bones-20100212-nxms.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-37)
39. Given the beagle’s repeated references to the good Book over the years, it is time readers find the Book themselves. [↑](#endnote-ref-38)
40. <https://bowiesongs.wordpress.com/2010/12/23/station-to-station/> [↑](#endnote-ref-39)
41. <https://johnmenadue.com/john-austen-high-speed-rail-bite-the-bullet-please/> [↑](#endnote-ref-40)
42. <https://www.thejadebeagle.com/dogs-breakfast-for-all.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-41)
43. <https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/shockingly-bad-is-this-the-state-s-worst-election-policy-20190221-p50zbf.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-42)
44. <https://www.thejadebeagle.com/little-turtle-2---picnic.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-43)
45. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-03-06/billion-dollars-announced-for-princes-highway-upgrade/10875718> [↑](#endnote-ref-44)
46. <https://www.google.com/search?rlz=1C1CHBF_enAU754AU754&q=drag+racing+is+not+what+you+think&tbm=isch&source=univ&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjChdiulvzgAhVUXCsKHRJvDQIQsAR6BAgCEAE&biw=1286&bih=648> [↑](#endnote-ref-45)
47. <https://johnmenadue.com/john-austen-transport-for-an-incoming-nsw-government/> [↑](#endnote-ref-46)
48. <https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/.../nsw/sydney-train...lightning-strikes/.../32ea3a853a>... <https://www.pedestrian.tv/news/sydney-train-delays-nightmare/> [↑](#endnote-ref-47)
49. <https://books.google.com.au/books?id=LEBjCwAAQBAJ&pg=PT43&lpg=PT43&dq=glenbrook+crash+lightning&source=bl&ots=i1993pDc5M&sig=ACfU3U26EAoKMaRwQPZixyiRgcQ5xexIrw&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwi-rKiYmPzgAhXDR30KHdlgAGEQ6AEwA3oECAQQAQ#v=onepage&q=glenbrook%20crash%20lightning&f=false> [↑](#endnote-ref-48)
50. <https://www.thejadebeagle.com/sydney-impediimenta-deo-contraria.html>

<https://www.thejadebeagle.com/purgatory.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-49)
51. <https://www.canberratimes.com.au/politics/nsw/labor-leads-coalition-in-poll-two-weeks-before-nsw-election-20190308-p512w7.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-50)
52. Reports:

Illawarra Mercury: *NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian says her state deserves to have it all* <https://www.illawarramercury.com.au/story/5945528/nsw-libs-job-far-from-done-berejiklian/?cs=7>

The Australian: ‘***NSW state election: big-spending Berejiklian says 'have it all'’***https://www.theaustralian.com.au › national-affairs › state-politics

Sydney Morning Herald: ‘*Gladys Berejiklian has declared “***NSW***can***have it all***” as she promised billions more for schools and hospitals in a campaign launch aimed at ..*’.<https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/nsw-should-have-it-all-berejiklian-launches-re-election-campaign-20190310-p5132t.html>

Australian Financial Review: *‘Premier Gladys Berejiklian promises the state can have it all’* "*As Premier, I will never ask you to choose between having world-class schools, hospitals, transport, roads, stadiums or cultural facilities - because the hard work we've done means that today, NSW can have it all," she said.* <https://www.afr.com/news/politics/election/nsw-election-premier-gladys-berejikilian-promises-the-state-can-have-it-all-20190310-h1c7hs>

Queen: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/I\_Want\_It\_All\_(Queen\_song)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/I_Want_It_All_%28Queen_song%29)

Other e.g. Matthew 4.1-11; <https://www.biblestudytools.com/bible-stories/temptation-of-jesus-bible-story.html>. [↑](#endnote-ref-51)
53. <https://print21.com.au/queensland-firm-prints-bus-for-nsw-liberals/168391> [↑](#endnote-ref-52)
54. <https://www.thejadebeagle.com/is-nothing-sacred.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-53)
55. <https://www.thejadebeagle.com/toucheth-not-the-monorail-western-sydney-rail.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-54)
56. <https://www.afr.com/news/politics/election/nsw-election-premier-gladys-berejikilian-promises-the-state-can-have-it-all-20190310-h1c7hs> [↑](#endnote-ref-55)
57. <https://johnmenadue.com/john-austen-sydneys-transport-mess-will-now-envelop-badgerys-creek-airport/> [↑](#endnote-ref-56)
58. <https://www.sbs.com.au/news/curtains-down-on-muppet-show-pm-morrison>

<https://www.themercury.com.au/news/national/pm-joins-nsw-premier-to-announce-badgerys-creek-rail-plan/video/ccc2fa0a4896899f88c4f4636e078a25> [↑](#endnote-ref-57)
59. <https://www.facebook.com/scottmorrison4cook/posts/2324658987578491> [↑](#endnote-ref-58)
60. This one was for note skippers. The reference is at xxxix. [↑](#endnote-ref-59)
61. <https://www.pinterest.com.au/pin/409335053604431181/> [↑](#endnote-ref-60)
62. [**Percy Bysshe Shelley**](https://www.poets.org/node/45726), **1792**-**1822**

“I met a traveller from an antique land

Who said: “Two vast and trunkless legs of stone

Stand in the desert . . . Near them, on the sand,

Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,

And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,

Tell that its sculptor well those passions read

Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,

The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed:

And on the pedestal these words appear:

‘My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:

Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!'

Nothing beside remains. Round the decay

Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare

The lone and level sands stretch far away.”

**Horace Smith, 1779-1849**

“IN Egypt's sandy silence, all alone,
Stands a gigantic Leg, which far off throws
The only shadow that the Desart knows:—
"I am great OZYMANDIAS," saith the stone,
"The King of Kings; this mighty City shows
"The wonders of my hand."— The City's gone,—
Nought but the Leg remaining to disclose
The site of this forgotten Babylon.

We wonder,—and some Hunter may express
Wonder like ours, when thro' the wilderness
Where London stood, holding the Wolf in chace,
He meets some fragment huge, and stops to guess
What powerful but unrecorded race
Once dwelt in that annihilated place.”

  [↑](#endnote-ref-61)
63. <https://theconversation.com/which-lines-are-priorities-for-sydney-metro-conversion-hint-its-not-bankstown-111844#_=_> [↑](#endnote-ref-62)
64. <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/176389-do-not-be-afraid-do-not-be-satisfied-with-mediocrity>

<https://www.biography.com/people/john-paul-ii-9355652>

 [↑](#endnote-ref-63)