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Transcript

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Interviewees: Dr Craig Emerson, Senator George Brandis

E&OE

Subjects: New Australian Consumer Laws, Wyatt Roy young Liberal candidate, Education Revolution, traditional owners' acknowledgement.

BEGLEY: How often should traditional owners of the land be publicly acknowledged by politicians and the like? Is 19 too young to stand for election as a Member of Parliament? And what do Barack Obama and Kevin Rudd need to discuss during the American President's flying visit to Canberra next week? We're travelling Inside Canberra again and taking us is Senator George Brandis. Good morning, Senator.

BRANDIS: Morning Terri how are you?

BEGLEY: Good thank you. And also your colleague for Inside Canberra, Government Minister Dr Craig Emerson - hello.

EMERSON: Hello Terri from a beautiful day here in Canberra.

BEGLEY: What just a chilly – what, five degrees instead of one?

EMERSON: No we got down to about 10, there's a fair bit of moisture on the ground but it's just a brilliant sunny day.

BEGLEY: Well let's hope it remains ...

EMERSON: Maximum temperature 28 degrees.

BEGLEY: Thank you for the weather forecast Mr Emerson.

EMERSON: [Laughs]

BEGLEY: We'll get ...

BRANDIS: You said that very well, Craig.

BEGLEY: We'll get onto other topics.

EMERSON: There could be a career in this.

BRANDIS: There could be.

BEGLEY: We're not going to let you distract us from what we do want to talk about. And I believe Minister Emerson, you have just come from the House after introducing this Bill on changes to the consumer laws?

EMERSON: Actually it's a big day for consumer protection in Australia. I came to the microphone rather breathless - I've settled down now - because I introduced the second stage of the Australian Consumer Law. If I could thank Senator George Brandis for his role in the passage of the first stage, which has just happened in the last few minutes. So these two stages will make up a single Australian Consumer Law, the biggest reform of the protections for Australian consumers since the Trade Practices Act of 1974 ... some 35 years ago.

BEGLEY: And I just want to talk about it very briefly. We've got a lot of other things to discuss. We were, in the last half hour, talking with the Australian Consumer Law Action people. They were saying they give these changes a tick and a cross. A tick because it does give more powers to the ACCC, to pursue companies that do the wrong thing. It also introduces fines for behaviour that couldn't have been meted out before. But the cross came because the Consumer Law Action people say that there will be more paperwork for the ACCC. Some of the changes that have been brought into the Bill last minute will mean the ACCC will have to work harder to pursue these companies and that consumers, people like you and I, might have to pursue companies through the court system to get some changes made to their warranties ... what do you say to that?

EMERSON: Well some of those criticisms...some of those criticisms are strange. This law collapses 17 Commonwealth, State and Territory laws into one. So I would think that that's a pretty massive simplification. And in terms of consumers having to work harder – for the first time the ACCC will be able to represent a group of consumers in an action so that the consumers don't have to take that action. Look of course people are entitled to criticise a reform they'd like to go further. Others would like it not to have gone as far. But we will have fines of \$1.1 million for businesses engaging in false and misleading representations, you know, leading people up the garden path. For businesses engaged in unconscionable conduct, we'll have for the first time federally, an unfair contracts regime where

you've got standard form contracts between businesses and consumers where the devil is in the detail, buried in the fine print and ...

BEGLEY: But ...

EMERSON: it could be very unfair.

BEGLEY: ... which is what ...

EMERSON: ... and these are new powers that the Commonwealth is getting.

BEGLEY: But will there be instances where it might be up to consumers to have to take companies to court, to actually have to go through that entire process ...

EMERSON: Well this is ...

BEGLEY: ... to see changes?

EMERSON: ... this is why I'm a bit bemused by that criticism. Because that often is the case now and what we are including in this law is a provision that enables the competition watchdog, the ACCC, to take action on behalf of consumers so it goes actually the other way. And there's ...

BEGLEY: But the Consumer Law Action people say the ACCC used to be able to negotiate directly with them. Now, they have to gather more evidence, more red tape, more forms to fill out. And take it through the court process which will cost more time and more money to get changes.

EMERSON: Well look, frankly, I don't accept the criticism and I wish the Consumer Action Law Centre would actually give credit where credit is due. This is a major reform to consumer protection in this country. Okay, people are entitled to have a whinge because they didn't get everything they want. This is a fantastic modernisation of Australian consumer protection laws offering much, much stronger protection for consumers. And in the second law that I introduced in the Parliament today, we'll have much clearer protections in terms of the warranties that are on products like refrigerators and other whitegoods. So people will know their rights and be able to exercise their rights to a refund or to a repair of defective goods. So I think this a great reform. I do thank the Coalition and the role of Senator Brandis, and also Luke Hartsuyker for the collaborative approach that they've taken in implementing this historic new law.

BEGLEY: Okay we'll move on from there. Just before we do though, just have to let people know. A car has driven into a power pole at the corner of Ridley and Beams Road at Castledine. 1300 homes now without power. We will let you know what's going on with that as soon as the electricity people get that power restored.

Now, back to you, gentlemen and Barack Obama's impending visit. The White House says the US President will be leaving as

planned on Sunday for his trip to Indonesia and Australia. As we all know, it's been cut down quite a way to just a 24 hour fly-in, fly-out to Canberra. Is it, gentlemen, worth the long flight? Should he perhaps not have even bothered? Is it looking a bit like political window dressing here? If he's not going to be here for much longer than a day?

BRANDIS: I don't think it's window dressing. It's always significant when the United States President visits Australia. President Obama will be the fifth American President to have visited Australia. The first one was Lyndon Johnson back in the 1960s. It's a very important relationship. The visit has bipartisan support. The American alliance has strong bipartisan support. It was forged by both parties during the Second World War. The Labor Party was in power under John Curtin. And the ANZUS Treaty itself was negotiated by the Menzies Government and signed in 1951. Now it's not window dressing for the President of the United States to address the Parliament and meet with the Cabinet, and I'm sure he'll find time to meet with the Leader of the Opposition as well. The fact that it's only 24 hours, I don't think is the point. The point is that it is an appropriate affirmation of the centrality of this relationship and you know, I know there are some people on the left, though, not you Craig, not you, who like to be a bit anti-American but I still think that the United States of America is one of the great forces for good in the world and has been for generations.

BEGLEY: Craig Emerson?

EMERSON: President Obama strikes me, in addition to everything George said, as a very decent man and I'd be very keen to meet him and to see ...

BEGLEY: Do you think you'll get the chance?

EMERSON: Well I think so because I'll certainly be in the Parliament when he gives that address. We just had last week President Yudhoyono from Indonesia doing so, and these are really important opportunities for the presidents in both cases to lay out what they see as the future of the relationship between our two countries, on issues such as regional security, on issues such as the global financial crisis and the global recession and how we get better governance arrangements in through this G20, the Group of 20 of which Australia is a member. On issues such as reducing carbon pollution into the atmosphere, these are very important issues and I can't wait for the opportunity. It is a rare opportunity - I can say this to your listeners - as a pretty

humble sort of bloke like me and also for George to be in the chamber when you're being addressed by the president of a nation but particularly the President of the United States of America.

BEGLEY: Maybe the Prime Minister Kevin Rudd will be hoping the US President's visit and his popularity might rub off on him. He hasn't had a great few days. We mentioned earlier this morning how the Prime Minister was booed at a football game here last weekend and a newspaper poll this week has Mr Rudd's approval rating at its lowest level since he became the Federal Labor Leader. Is it his politics or is it his personal style, George Brandis, that's seen him go down so far on the polls?

BRANDIS: Well I think it's, to be honest, I think it's both. I think people have woken up to the fact that Kevin Rudd is an all talk no action Prime Minister, that he is a fake, he says one thing and does the opposite. And basically, to use a familiar Australian expression, he's just not a fair dinkum bloke. Now, I think if you look at the track record of the government, Craig will no doubt be able to point to what he claims are some achievements but I think the legacy of the Rudd Government will be, the government that turned Australia around from being in the best financial position in the world, where we were the only OECD country with no debt, only two and a bit years ago, to a country which spent a \$150 billion dollars in 18 months. And a lot of that money, a lot of that stimulus spending was wasted. It was just splashed up against the wall and there's nothing to show for it, and billions of dollars, as we now know, was spent on a home insulation program which would have to be one of the great public policy fiascos of the modern age. So I don't think it's a government with much to be proud of. I mean all governments do good things, I don't want to be overly partisan here, but if you look and you ask yourself the question, what has the Rudd Government done and compare that with the high hopes that a lot of swinging voters had for Kevin Rudd when they put him into power in 2007, I'm sorry to say the answer is not much.

BEGLEY: Craig Emerson, what does the Prime Minister need to do to try and turn this around for him now, and the government?

EMERSON: Well I think the fact that he's grinding away on major reforms on this country rather than ...

BRANDIS: We never see any outcomes Craig, the all talk no action ...

EMERSON: ... rather than resorting to political populism as I must say Tony Abbott is doing, can have an impact on a standing in opinion polls. Now, I used to work for Bob Hawke. Bob Hawke was regularly booed at sporting events. It's part of the sport. John Howard was always booed at sporting events. It's part of the sport. I wouldn't take too much notice out of that ...

BEGLEY: Have either of you ...

EMERSON: ... but what I would say ...

BEGLEY: ... been booed at a public event, just out of interest?

EMERSON: I get booed at private events!

BRANDIS: [Laughs]

EMERSON: Around the family table.

BEGLEY: Goodness me. That's not ...

EMERSON: They go 'Oh no, not another Dad joke'.

BRANDIS: [Laughs]

EMERSON: Look just very quickly ...

BEGLEY: George Brandis?

BRANDIS: Every now and again in small gatherings [laughs].

EMERSON: [Laughs] Just very quickly. You know, this idea that the government hasn't done a lot. We've kept the economy out of recession. We've implemented tax cuts, on time, in full. We've implemented an education tax refund. A \$30 increase in the aged pension. School modernisation program. Computers in schools. My School website. 50 per cent increase in health funding and I could go on and on and on.

BRANDIS: Well, can we just stop there? I mean, the strength of the Australian economy at the time the global financial crisis hit, which was the legacy of previous Liberal and Labor Governments, not the work of the Rudd Government, was the reason we sailed through the global financial crisis so well. The tax cuts were tax cuts which in fact had been promised by Peter Costello in his last budget, and which you matched.

EMERSON: No, no, no, no. No no, no they weren't ...

BRANDIS: The \$30, the \$30 increase in the pension ...

EMERSON: They were promised during the election campaign they weren't in the budget. They were not in the budget.

BRANDIS: The 30 ... the \$30 increase in pensions was in response to demands by the then Opposition leader, Brendan Nelson and a

resolution of the Senate which you followed and were shamed into delivering ...

EMERSON: ... and the fact that the Coalition never did it in 12 years, never did it.

BEGLEY: I think though we have ...

BRANDIS: The Education Revolution ... The Education Revolution's a fiasco. Most of these computers are still in boxes.

EMERSON: I'm happy to move on Terri.

BEGLEY: I think we are, I think we should move on. We've been over this a couple of times in different arenas. Getting back to this popularity thing, just one final question. Now Tony Abbott hasn't had an easy couple of days either with ex-politicians ...

EMERSON: After Peter Costello whacked him the other night.

BEGLEY: ... at least. Paul Keating describing him as a quote 'nutter' ...

EMERSON: [Laughs]

BEGLEY: ... Peter Costello savaging his parental leave plan. Gentlemen, should ex-politicians keep out of these things?

EMERSON: Oh well I think it's pretty hard to keep them out even if you wanted to.

BRANDIS: [Laughs]

EMERSON: But remember George has just said 'Oh this is this wonderful legacy of the previous government'. He was just saying that. Peter Costello was the Treasurer. He'd probably bring a bit of authority to a critique of Tony Abbott. And he basically said Tony Abbott has come up with a stunt with his paid parental leave scheme, a very damaging one that would adversely affect our international competitiveness and, more importantly for your listeners, impose a great big new tax on everything. And just yesterday, Barnaby Joyce conceded that it would flow into grocery prices and other prices of everyday products. So, Peter Costello, Barnaby Joyce, Wilson Tuckey and the Member for Tangney have all belled the cat on this one. And as I said in Parliament, they've let the cat out of the bag and what a dirty, smelly creature it is.

BRANDIS: Did they put the bell on the cat before they let it out of the bag Craig?

EMERSON: Well it was running around and then Barnaby Joyce tracked the cat down and ...

BRANDIS: [Laughs]

EMERSON: ... he's brought it in, it's a dead cat ...

BRANDIS: Look, can I ...

EMERSON: ... and it's swinging around, swinging around the top of his head for all to see. This rotten dead cat that Tony Abbott swung around. Just for something to say.

BRANDIS: How did he let it out of the bag if it was dead?

EMERSON: No, no. It died. It died ...

BRANDIS: [Laughs]

BEGLEY: I think ...

EMERSON: Barnaby chased it and he ... whacked it with a stick.

BEGLEY: All right I think we're a bit confused on that. But ...

BRANDIS: [Laughs] Yes I'm not sure.

BEGLEY: Yeah I'm not quite sure what the answer to that was ...

BRANDIS: Oh but, can I just quickly say ...

BEGLEY: ... whether ex-politicians should be you know, publicly commenting about policy.

BRANDIS: Can I just quickly say about Peter Costello. Peter Costello did great service to Australia and now he's a private citizen. He's entitled to his views. I think though, most people of both political persuasions would be inclined to think that the years we spend here in Parliament, those of us who seek to and are lucky enough to be elected to Parliament, and have a role. We have the opportunity to set the national agenda. I think when people have finished their term of political service, although as private citizens of course they're entitled to their views, I think it is appropriate to stand back and say 'Well it's - another generation of politicians now have their opportunity to set the national agenda' and perhaps be a little circumspect before they editorialise too much about what those who have followed them might be trying to achieve.

EMERSON: George used to be a Costello supporter and now he's just told him to shut up.

BRANDIS: Peter Costello, Peter Costello's a friend of mine.

BEGLEY: Okay.

BRANDIS: And you know, he, Peter Costello used to get annoyed when Malcolm Fraser criticised him. And I can understand why. I think, you know, we're very privileged here. We have our time in the sun, we have influence to shape the nation. It's one of the greatest privileges you can have and I think once, you know, you've served your time here, probably is appropriate to step back and let other people have a go.

BEGLEY: Okay. We're going to talk about, you mentioned there the generations of politicians and when it is time to have your sun and time to bow out. I want to talk about a younger generation trying to enter politics shortly ...

EMERSON: Bowing in ...

BRANDIS: [Laughs]

BEGLEY: That's exactly right. Just wait for a moment if you don't mind. We'll just quickly take some news headlines I believe. Just for a minute or so. And we'll come back with your opinion on someone who's quite young who wants to be a Federal Member. Gail Burke, good morning.

NEWS

BEGLEY: It's Inside Canberra time with Senator George Brandis and Small Business Minister Craig Emerson. Gentlemen, 19 year old Wyatt Roy is a name we've heard in the week or so, just passed. He's been preselected as the Liberal candidate for the marginal Labor-held seat of Longman. George Brandis have you ever met young Wyatt?

BRANDIS: Well if I can chip you Terri, I don't think you should be in a patronising way referring to him as 'young Wyatt'. He is an adult. And he's a parliamentary candidate. Now I have met Wyatt Roy. He's an impressive, serious bloke. And ...

BEGLEY: But he is young, I guess it's just a ...

BRANDIS: Well he is relatively ... he's ...

BEGLEY: ... statement of fact. He's ... well let's say relative to you two. Now I don't ...

BRANDIS: Sure, sure.

BEGLEY: ... want to be chipped again for that.

EMERSON: Well he's an infant relative to me [laughs].

BRANDIS: Well, I mean, you know. A Parliament I think ought to reflect the nation. And we have people in Parliament in their 70s. We have people in Parliament who are quite young. Now he, Wyatt Roy is younger than most preselected candidates. But good luck to him. I mean, he won his preselection fair and square. He's a local, he's respected by local people. I'm told, I wasn't there myself, but I'm told that he won very handsomely, that he had a very large majority. So the people who knew him best in his local community, most of whom, incidentally – or many of whom are older and retired people – have a lot of confidence in him. And good luck to him. And can I remind you that there have been a lot of stellar political careers that have begun at a very young age. Lawrence Springborg, when he was first elected to Parliament, was 21. He was the youngest person ever to be elected to the Queensland Parliament. And yet he went on to lead his party. If you go back in history, William Pitt the Younger became Prime Minister at 24 and was able to steer Britain

through the Napoleonic Wars very successfully. And Paul Keating and Malcolm Fraser, both of whom served as Prime Minister, when they were elected at the age of 25 they were at their respective times, the youngest person in the House of Representatives. In fact, very frequently you find, that the people who arrive here at a relatively young age in the long run, do better than people who arrive later.

BEGLEY: Craig Emerson, do you agree, has a 19 year old got enough life experience behind them to represent people of all ages and life stages in Federal Parliament in Canberra?

EMERSON: Well if I can say this first. He's running against the sitting member John Sullivan who wouldn't profess to be 19 years of age but ...

BRANDIS: No he's 50.

EMERSON: ... but he has the energy of a 19 year old. He is a very very good local member and has lived and worked in the area for a very long time, has been a State Member of Parliament. Having said that, and I think John will do well in that electorate, young Wyatt, if we like – or I suppose I'm not allowed to call him that – but, he must have done something right in order to get preselected against a couple of other rivals. He obviously has impressed his Liberal Party preselectors. The question now will be whether he is able to impress the people of Longman at the election some time this year. But good luck to him, and I think that – I don't mean good luck in that I hope he wins ...

BRANDIS: [Laughs]

BEGLEY: [Laughs]

EMERSON: ... I hope he loses. But ...

BRANDIS: I think he's going to win by the way ...

BEGLEY: It's a good ...

EMERSON: Good luck to him ...

BRANDIS: ... I do think he's going to win.

EMERSON: ... for the experience and having a go. I think George is right. The Parliament probably works best when it's got a full array. Men, women of all ages. I think a few of the Liberals probably should pull the plug. Like Wilson Tuckey in his 70s, not because he's 70 but because he's mad. But you know, let's see how young Wyatt goes. But John Sullivan is a fantastic local member.

BEGLEY: What about you two. When you were 19. Cast your mind back if you will. Would either have you have felt that you had the capacity to be Federal Members of Parliament at that age? What sort of jobs were you both doing then?

BRANDIS: I think we were probably both ...

EMERSON: We were both at university.

BRANDIS: University students, yeah.

EMERSON: Yeah. We were both avoiding a job.

BEGLEY: [Laughs]

EMERSON: No, we were training ourselves up for a future life in the law and in economics ... at that time.

BEGLEY: Do you think either of you would've, if you had the opportunity, had a tilt at politics at 19?

EMERSON: No, I wouldn't have. I was finding my way. I wasn't even sure what I was going to do professionally. And I certainly thought it'd be economics but I didn't know where or whether it was Australia or overseas. I didn't have a burning ambition to enter politics at that stage. I'd decided to vote Labor in my first election and that was the election of the Whitlam Labor Government which was a great time. But look, I was finding my feet and finding direction and it would never have occurred to me ...

BEGLEY: George Brandis ...

EMERSON: ... to seek pre-selection for a political party.

BRANDIS: I was a member of the Young Liberals when I was 19 and I was very interested in politics. But at that stage of my life my plans were to become a lawyer which is what I did. And think about politics later.

BEGLEY: Well moving onto something else that's made a stir in politics this week. Tony Abbott says overuse can smack of tokenism. He was talking about acknowledging traditional owners this week at official functions. Traditional respect or tokenism? Should you acknowledge traditional owners at every function? George Brandis?

BRANDIS: No you shouldn't acknowledge traditional owners at every function. And I agree completely with Tony, what Tony Abbott had to say. I think that the idea of acknowledging traditional owners or custodians is appropriate and seemly on some occasions where there is a particular association with the Aboriginal people or Aboriginal culture but I don't think it ought to be a standard practice so that you can't have a public or even private event in Australia in which this isn't done. And let me give you an example. Last Friday morning I was at the Federal Court in Sydney for a ceremony to farewell the retiring Chief Justice of the Federal Court. Now, this was a ceremony that was being held by the way on the 17th floor of an inner city building. And the Commonwealth Solicitor-General stood up to begin the tributes or valedictories to the retiring Chief Justice. And he started off by acknowledging the traditional owners of the land on which we meet. And went through this formula. He obviously

was acting on instructions of the government that they wanted this done.

EMERSON: Not obviously at all.

BRANDIS: Well no, the Commonwealth Solicitor-General only ever acts on the instructions the government has.

EMERSON: He has no independent mind?

BRANDIS: And, I thought to myself well, this has, this ceremony at this particular venue, has no relationship to anything to do with Aboriginal culture at all and it seemed quite strikingly inappropriate. Now, the point Tony Abbott was making is these are good practices, where appropriate. But if they get forced down people's throats, so that they are used whether they are appropriate to the occasion or not, they become formulaic, and insincere and tokenistic. I agree with that completely.

BEGLEY: Craig Emerson?

EMERSON: The false impression ...

BEGLEY: Do you think people think they are insincere if they hear these often enough?

EMERSON: The false impression that George has just given to your listeners – I think – and Tony Abbott has sought to, is that there's some sort of protocol obliging people to do this. And that the Solicitor-General hasn't got an independent thought in his head and he was told to do this by the government. It is not the case that when I have a local function or where people have functions all around Australia that there's any law or regulation or obligation on people to do this. I do it, others do it, because it does some good and I can't see how it does any harm. It takes about 20 seconds to do it. If there are indigenous people there, they are very grateful for the acknowledgement and I also acknowledge other people ...

BRANDIS: Hmm.

EMERSON: ...who are in the audience, so what's wrong with this? And surely, Tony Abbott just saw an opportunity here to maybe harvest a few votes ...

BRANDIS: No, no, no ...

EMERSON: Well I hope not. I hope not.

BRANDIS: You don't, Craig...

EMERSON: But look. Well let me finish ...

BRANDIS: ... you don't understand, if you say that – can I ... all right well can I come back ...

EMERSON ... let me finish with this. There is no law, there is no obligation on people to do this. If people want to do it, well good on them. It does a fair bit of good and no harm at all.

BRANDIS: Look, I – we’re not as far away as you might think Craig. I think it’s a good practice. I – as I said before, I think it’s a seemingly practice. But if it becomes almost a fetish, so that it’s you know, it’s almost a badge of being politically correct, then it will in fact lose its value through overuse ...

EMERSON: Who’s ramming it down people’s throats?

BRANDIS: ... because, because people will think it’s merely a formula to be incanted rather than a tribute to be sincerely paid. Can I just come back to you though about Tony Abbott. You get Tony Abbott completely wrong if you think he’s being insincere about that or anything. Tony Abbott, whether you like him or not, is one of the most genuine and sincere people in Australian politics. For heaven’s sake, I mean any bloke who when he was a young man decided to devote his life to the priesthood and trained in a seminary to be a priest for two or three years in his 20s, is a person with a very deep and sincere sense and motivation for community service. And you know, one thing that I do not think could ever be said against Tony Abbott is insincerity.

BEGLEY: All right.

EMERSON: Well ...

BRANDIS: Unlike, I might say, the current Prime Minister.

EMERSON: Why did you give a lecture last year saying that Tony Abbott was following in the very conservative mode of John Howard and that by doing that they were not representing the true values of the Liberal Party?

BRANDIS: No, well, again you’re missing the ...

EMERSON: I read it.

BEGLEY: Just quickly ...

BRANDIS: You’re completely ...

BEGLEY: Just quickly in response.

BRANDIS: You’re completely missing the point. I gave a lecture last year, the Deakin Lecture in which I made some observations and contrasts between the conservative and the liberal strains of the Liberal Party because the Liberal Party is the custodian ...

EMERSON: And Tony Abbott represents the conservatives.

BRANDIS: ... of both traditions. He does, of course he does.

EMERSON: Yeah, that’s right. Yeah.

BRANDIS: I mean in our party, Craig, people can actually have a civilised and respectful difference of philosophical opinion and continue to like each other and continue to work together to produce good policy ...

BEGLEY: Okay.

BRANDIS: ... that's not possible, I know in the Labor Party.

BEGLEY: I think you've both answered that one. Thank you for that gentlemen. I just have to quickly ask you, St. Pat's Day today. Either of you have Irish ancestry?

BRANDIS: I do.

BEGLEY: And are you wearing a bit of green there, Senator Brandis?

BRANDIS: To my shame, I'm not, because I left my green tie at home.

BEGLEY: [Laughs]

EMERSON: Oh dear.

BEGLEY: Well must ...

EMERSON: I don't think I've got any and I've got a purple shirt and purple tie on.

BRANDIS: No you're wearing penitential purple which is seemly for Lent.

EMERSON: Yeah, a bit of abstinence.

BRANDIS: [Laughs]

BEGLEY: You got it a bit wrong today gentlemen. Never mind. And good luck with both of you being able to shake the hand of the US President. We'll wait with bated breath to see what happens on that.

EMERSON: Thanks Terri. Good on you.

BRANDIS: Thanks a lot Terri. See you next time.

BEGLEY: Okay. Catch you next time. Senator George Brandis and Small Business Minister Craig Emerson joining us there, Inside Canberra for this week. It is 17 minutes to 10 here on 612 ABC Brisbane.