

THE WEEKEND AUSTRALIAN

MAY 2

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MAGAZINE

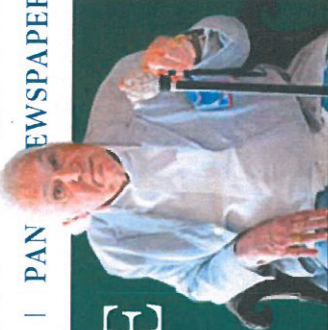
LOVE ME TENDER

A message to modern men



REGRETS, HE HAS A FEW

The world of John Laws



WEEKEND A PLUS

MIND YOUR MANORS

What does a cool £18m get you?



A PLUS Best car songs of all time • REVIEW/INQUIRER David Stratton & Peter Craven review *The Great Gatsby* • INQUIRER Is it time to privatise the ABC? DIS

Moment of peace as Bob sang for Hazel, but first lady had last w

EXCLUSIVE

KATE LEGGE

candlelit room where she lay surrounded by the children and grandchildren who'd gathered for a traditional love — and gave it in return — came in part from a surprise visitor, long absent from her life.

On Saturday, May 11, Bob Hawke received a call from his daughter, Rosslyn Dillon, informing the former prime minister his first wife had had a stroke, signalling that her surrender to a candlelit room where she lay surrounded by the children and grandchildren who'd gathered for a traditional love — and gave it in return — came in part from a surprise visitor, long absent from her life.

decade-long struggle with Alzheimer's was close. He wanted to say things left unsaid and give thanks for years well spent and graciously lived, he should hurry. "Come and have some time with her before she goes," Rosslyn pleaded.

Bob told her he'd think about it. Ten minutes later he called back. "I'll be there," he said.

They drove together to the southwest Sydney dementia unit where Hazel had moved four years ago when she could no longer stay in her Castle Cove home, next door to daughter Sue.



Hazel



Bob

Bob used to visit her there after she was diagnosed in 2003. He lived nearby with his second wife, biographer Blanche D'Almeida, in the Northbridge house the Hawkes had built before their 1994 divorce ended Hazel's plans for retirement in the harbourside villa.

Rarely bitter or self-pitying, Hazel lay dying. "It was hard for him at the start. Mum encouraged social and cultural projects before illness presented a new cause to champion. As the disease took hold her life shrank. Once confined to full-time care she relied on her children, her grandchildren and her closest friends for companionship.

Bob's very proud of his voice. So Bob sang her this ballad as best he could. "Nan responded," David said. "She looked at him. It just blew Mum away."

He struggles with emotion. "To open his heart to her was so beautiful," David said. "I know it would have given him amazing closure to be there with someone who committed a significant portion of her life to him with such unwavering support."

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ELECTRICITY INDUSTRY 'DEATH SPIRAL'

Price rise for solar to end power divide

EXCLUSIVE

GRAHAM LLOYD ENVIRONMENT EDITOR

AUSTRALIA'S one million rooftop solar households could be forced to pay new fixed charges to help recover billions of dollars in taxpayer subsidies and make electricity prices fairer for all consumers.

A series of electricity industry reports has highlighted the inequity in existing power pricing where customers without solar panels are unfairly subsidising those with them.

Queensland Energy Minister Mark McArdle has warned that existing rooftop solar contracts will cost the state more than \$28 billion over the next 15 years and is preparing a major submission to cabinet within a month recommending more user-pays charges. Electricity tariffs could be changed to include a higher network access charge and lower unit prices per kilowatt hour, a move that would increase the cost for rooftop solar users.

A national meeting of electricity executives in Sydney this week discussed a potential "death spiral" for the industry as high



tricity from rooftop solar when there was no demand for electricity from customers. And baseload power generators were forced to run inefficiently to be ready for when "intermittent" solar power was unavailable.

Renewable industry lobby groups have rejected calls for a new fixed charge.

Clean Energy Council deputy chief executive Kane Thornton said: "It would be like telling early adopters of email that they need to chip in to pay for stamps."

The Greens said yesterday they would spend \$405 million a year on new federal government agency to cut spending on electricity infrastructure, improve energy efficiency, and set higher prices for renewable energy produced by households which generate solar power.

Leader Christine Milne said the Greens were the only party with innovative ideas to help Australians live a fairer, cheaper and cleaner future.

The cost of the new agency would not include the higher charges paid by electricity companies from rooftop solar under

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MORE REPORTS P6 INQUIRER P18

Gillard's tears too late for those who cared

EXCLUSIVE

DENNIS SHANAHAN POLITICAL EDITOR

When Julia Gillard was moved to tears last week as she introduced the increase in the Medicare levy to raise funds for the Disability Care scheme, some of her colleagues warmly embraced her and kissed her cheek.

Other Labor MPs were cynical, because the Prime Minister had

rejections in cabinet to *The Weekend Australian* yesterday: "Anyone who suggested a levy was shot down in flames."

Another said the proposal for a levy "was fought every inch of the way."

"There was no political instinct involved in this and no attempt to build on the legacy of great Labor reforms," the MP said.

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PAUL KELLY P13 JUDITH SUDAN P20

EDITORIAL P21



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Luke McNevin is supposed to look after the cattle that roam Cowwell station in Queensland's north-west. Instead he is faced with the heartbreaking task of to rescue — and in many cases having to kill — stock left emaciated on the drought-ravaged property. FULL REPORT P4-5

Cruel truth hits home as cattle export ban bushfires and drought wreak devastating

Wary Mossad won't replace top spy

EXCLUSIVE

CAMERON STEWART PAUL MALEY

ISRAEL has refused to replace its top spy in Australia because of lingering mistrust of the federal government, after its Mossad chief was expelled and his name leaked and published during the false passport scandal in 2010.

The *Weekend Australian* understands that the Israeli gov-

ernment and Mossad blame the Australian government for the name disclosure, believing it was a further political act of retribution for the controversy that arose after forged Australian passports were used by Mossad agents in an operation to assassinate a senior Hamas official in Dubai.

Sources say there is no prospect that the Mossad position will be filled under the current Labor government because Israel does not want to risk the position being compromised again for political purposes. The decision is understood to have been taken by Mossad itself rather than the Israeli government.

The 2010 passport controversy and the Mossad agent's expulsion from Canberra coincided with the detention of Australian Mossad agent Ben Zygier, who was arrested by Israel's internal security authorities on January 31, 2010. It is not clear if the expulsion of Mossad's Australian station chief disrupted the flow of information between Israel and

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