


Over the last decade or so, citizens in states across the globe have been faced with increasing and compounding threats which one news headline after another have labelled 'existential'—growing inequalities, financial meltdowns, the loss of secure jobs and impossibly high costs of living, climate change, entrenched forms of race and sex discrimination and, most recently, a global pandemic, a pronounced growth in populism and sectarian divisions within states, and war in Europe.

I am not suggesting that we rise above self only in times of crisis. We all experience a greater sense of existence in countless everyday moments, of dedication in our work, laughter with friends, awe at nature, shared cultural traditions and rituals, love for others.

There is no doubt, though, that global threats that impact each and every one of us do cause us to simultaneously consider our place within the immense sweep of history. They sharpen our collective thoughts about the type of structures needed which can reduce crises and safeguard, maintain and enhance the everyday moments of engagement which form healthy and connected societies. Ultimately, the type of engagements and opportunities which give meaning to our lives within the wonderment and power of existence.

Right now, it seems, the world over is asking the same big questions—who are we? Are the socio-economic and political structures that govern our lives the cause of our current predicaments? And what do we need to do to weather the storms and become the future we want?

Australia—our home, like those in countries abroad—wants the same things, answers and actions to these bold, emerging questions.

 This was evident in the result of the May election when Federal Labor swept into power on a wave of urgent calls for change—their win taking shape within a fascinating 46th Parliament composed of Greens, Teals, women and 11 First Nations parliamentarians—the most we have ever seen in Australia's history.

We should proudly celebrate the election of these diverse voices. They are all movers and shakers, speaking out and putting forward varied positions on how to achieve climate and gender justice, confront and overcome racism, strengthen institutional transparency and integrity, enhance public participation in our democracy and create economic opportunities and empowerment for all. There are, as always, a few voices rallying against these progressive propositions. ] 