

To the government, Senate and opposition

The recent disclosure, thanks to some responsible media, of the sale of prime agricultural land to coal seam gas miners, is alarming in more ways than one. It must be stopped. The Queensland, past New South Wales Government and the federal Government have been complicit through action or inaction, in leaving a legacy of environmental vandalism. They have also flouted fundamental democratic rights in the manner in which mining interests have pursued their interests.

All governments advocate sustainability as part of their vision for the future, yet hypocritically, they have given permission for coal seam projects which many scientists fear will contaminate our aquifers and permanently destroy the productivity / health of our soils. Even when there is some well-founded doubts about the viability of such projects, the governments should not even consider issuing permits-especially in areas of known productivity. What insanity is this? I guess you have to have read Catch 22 to appreciate the lack of logic. Sadly, in Australia, our federal Government tries to silence any scientific questioning of its policies or ridicules individuals who dare attack them. Yet they are about to introduce a carbon policy to benefit the future but remain silent on a policy which will lay waste to our beautiful land. We all know they are desperate to fill the coffers because they continue to pillage the coffers on ill-considered policies.

Furthermore, many of the companies purchasing the land are foreign owned and we have allowed them unfettered access to our precious land- to do as they wish. They do not have Australia's interests at heart. Many of these countries are smarter than we are. They do not allow foreigners total ownership. Of course we should encourage foreign capital-but on our terms. What gives these current governments the right to sell off the country's best assets? What gives these governments the right to sell off our valuable agricultural land at a time when a food crisis is looming? This borders on treachery! Whose interests are our Governments representing?

Lastly, the intentional flouting of democratic rights of ordinary citizens is most disturbing. Farmers and communities have had miners enter their properties without their permission, drill their land, and place them in virtually impossible situation. If individuals want to remain in their local towns, they reluctantly realise their health will be jeopardized by the toxic effects of coal dust.

I am currently teaching 1984 by George Orwell to my students. Sadly, the bleak, oppressive world of Oceania has echoes in our society today. Please fight to change this dire situation. Your Governments will be condemned by future generations. This could be the beginning of the end of a rich country's heritage.

Yours sincerely,  
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