

23.11.2010

The Secretary,
The House of Representatives
Standing Committee on Regional Australia,
P.O. Box 6021,
Canberra, A.C.T. 2600

Submission No: 119
Date Received: 29/11/2010
Secretary: SL

Dear Secretary,

I write as one the hundreds of seriously concerned people regarding the Murray Darling Basin Authority's current obnoxious and disastrous plan, which if adopted, will completely destroy the irrigation system "across the board" and likewise the lives and income of those who are involved with irrigation – also all the wider communities/businesses – to say nothing of the loss of top grade food we all like to eat. This is not "rocket science" – it is just **common sense and fact, an attribute that bureaucrats these days do not possess.** We don't need this computer modelling rubbish or the "best available science" to know this will happen. **Some factual knowledge and common sense is all that is needed!**

Shame of the Federal Government for appointing such an inept and incompetent lot to undertake this project; this is indicated by the fact that the plan was developed with any consideration whatsoever of the social and economic impact on the farming and the much wider communities. If this aspect was NOT part of the "Terms of Reference" more shame on the Government – it just shows how out of touch they are with the real world!

If the Act was the problem it seemed to be when listening to the Authority clowns at their community meetings; it appears "weighted" in favour of the environment. If this is so, change the damned thing. Governments have no problem doing this if it suits their Agenda! Of course the Gillard Government is beholden to those looney Greens, so that is a "stumbling block" and change to the Act would not be expected to eventuate!..

What real credentials, factual knowledge and experience in actual irrigation do these MDBA clowns have? Not too much if their "performances" at the community meetings were any guide! Or are they just some Labour "hacks" appointed to do as they were told and arrive at the end result the Labour and Greens require? According to media claims this Group will not solicit any factual information from those people at "the coal face" – the irrigators themselves, if that is fact, it does not auger well for the future. I, and many others to whom I have spoken, see no sensible and factual outcome – only bureaucratic bungling and ignorant and bogus decisions. I – and I am certain many other people, would like to know the reaction of the MDBA group if their wages were threatened with a reduction of 20, 30, 40 or 50 per cent. That would **not** have the "magnifying, damaging and ongoing effect" on communities and Businesses like this nonsense they are proposing. Only **their** pockets would be affected - and no doubt **they** would be "squealing like stuck pigs" in such a situation.

Now we hear Tony Burke saying improved infrastructure is not the solution to the MDBA problems – or similar words, so apparently he is not **heeding or hearing** what the farming communities are saying - **and why was he absent from ALL**

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the community meetings? Scared of being unable to give a knowledgeable answer to any question he would have been undoubtedly asked! Burke's absence from all the community meetings needs to be noted when the Standing Committee is addressing the MBDA's disastrous Plan. Another individual with little or nil real knowledge and experience for his allocated Ministerial role!

The Dams were built to provide water for irrigation **NOT** the environment. Some Dams even display plaques stating this fact. All this nonsense about the environment **is just that**. How is it that the environment survived all those hundreds of years **before** we had Dams? Hume Dam did not function until the mid 1930's and the Murray River often stopped running before that. One only has to see the rainfall records for the last 100 years to realise that; also we have photographs of families at picnics in the bed of the Murray River. Despite this the environment survived – without any assistance from us humans. These matters are **known facts** to all we people who have lived beside the Murray River and the Barmah Red Gum Forest all our lives.

What powers are at the disposal of this Standing Committee on Regional Australia? Has it the power to discard this ludicrous plan the MDBA has developed? If so, both the Plan and the MDBA need to be discarded immediately, and a new start made with some sensible, knowledgeable and realistic people who have some understanding of what needs to be done to improve the MDB problems, without wasting all that water on the environment, and completely destroying many regional livelihoods and Businesses – and at present the Barmah Red Gum Forest. Or is this just another farcical exercise and waste of time and money to deflect the "heat" from the MDBA personnel and the current Federal Government, in the hope that community anger and frustration will decrease - which I doubt will happen?

I make no apology for this "in your face" type of correspondence. Like many other local people, I have experienced scandalous Government decisions regarding the Barmah Red Gum Forest, where the bureaucrats with no real experience or factual knowledge on the subject they were addressing, carried on with so called community consultations and still went ahead with what they intended to do anyway. They depended on "computer modeling" and the "best available science" rather than generations of factual experience and knowledge of local people, as a result of vigilant observation of nature and seasonal conditions over many, many years. Everyone with any nous knows computer modelling is a farce; specific data can be entered to give the answer the bureaucrats want. No real knowledge, experience or facts on the subject involved are needed for this exercise! The "best available science" is certainly questionable – simply because so called equally credentialed Scientists' opinions can – and do differ considerably on the same subject.

Personally, I suspect this matter could be fait accompli. Can anyone honestly deny that the "final print" of this Plan is **not** already done? I hope I am entirely wrong in thinking this, but I have good reason **not** to trust bureaucrats and Governments. I would be delighted if we ended up with a sensible, practical and viable outcome that ensures farmers can plan ahead, and continue to produce quality food for our use and export.

Yours truly,

Frances Corry

c.c. Mike Taylor [Chairman, MDBA]