



24 - 6 - 2011.

Submission to Senate Rural Affairs and Transport
References Committee.

Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you for the opportunity as a member of the public to have a small say, all be it minute, in the running of this great nation of ours. It is so refreshing for us ordinary people to think that we might be heard if only by a tiny bit.

We, my wife and I live in the Western Darling Downs of Queensland which is smack bang in the middle of the Surat Basin. That is in the middle of this great surge in Coal Seam Gas Extraction operations in the Southeast of Queensland.

We have already attended quite a few meetings on the effects of the coming CSG (Coal Seam Gas) industry on our region. However from what we have seen to date there is nothing that will stand in their way, nothing to stop them from ruining this part of our land for as far as we can see into the future.

Water:

CSG extraction also extracts copious amounts of water out of our ground supplies by its very nature. This might be acceptable in the United States Of America where there is a much greater annual average rain fall than there is here in Australia, which as you already know is the driest continent on this planet. Armed with this knowledge it would be unthinkable to interfere with this most precious commodity whether it be from under the ground or indeed on top of. Any waste of water in Australia for anything other than food security or fibre production is ludicrous, but a hell of a lot more so if it just to prop up the profits of the fat- cat Americans who own the big Companies like Halliburton and ConocoPhillips who rule this Industry. Surely Australia's best interests must outweigh such greed.

I have no need to tell you that thousands of good hard working Australian Farmers and Graziers rely on the Great Artesian Basin for their very existence. Indeed I was one of those very people back in the nineteen fifties and sixties when I was growing up on the 14,000 acre property "Beefwood Downs" northwest of Walgett, and I can assure you bore water was the ONLY water our sheep and cattle had to live on in all but one of our paddocks. If that water dries up there is no sheep or cattle industry in vast tracts of out back Queensland, New South Wales and

South Australia.

However those living along the Queensland and New South Wales rivers that run the Darling River, that is all the rivers and streams from Oberon in the south all the way north to the Condamine near Warwick in Queensland and right out to between Quilpie and Charleville, half way across Queensland; they would have water when the rivers run, but if it were to get contaminated by the gunk the American Companies use to frack with, then even this great water way will be of no use to anyone for years. There goes your Food and Fibre security from this vast area, out the door.

Property Rights and Values of Landholders:-

To tell you the truth, here in Queensland we have NO property rights. The Queensland Government has legislated that a Coal Seam Gas Company could in fact walk in on any landholders property and start extraction work after fifty days even when there is no agreement reached between the landholder and the company within that time frame. The Queensland Government puts NO value on landholders period, despite the rhetoric that we so often hear on the nightly news bulletins about Queensland having the most stringent controls in place, its only real interest is to allow foreign companies in to extract and sell off as much coal and coal seam gas as it can before the world comes to its

senses and stops using these carbon producing resources for power in favour of totally clean Energy such as solar.

Prime Agricultural Land.

At this very moment Prime Agricultural Land is being over run by these Foreign Gas Extraction Companies. If you were to add up the acres of land that is needed by each well, that is the well sight and the service roadway into the well for just the 40,000 that are muted for the Surat Basin alone, it will come to x acres of Agricultural land. Prime Ag land is miss leading as all Ag land produces a food or fibre commodity that is beneficial to Australia's economy. Mind you I'm only talking about the Surat Basin here. If you were to include what is proposed for New South Wales in places like the Liverpool Plains and such then that area of stolen Prime Ag land is increased to I don't know how many acres.

Food Task.

Australia MUST be able to reliably feed its own people. God forbid, were there to be an incident in the South China Seas between say China and the Philippines over their disputed islands, and there were submarines from either side sailing in those waters and who knows where else, all and any food we currently bring in from anywhere else in the world could well be in jeopardy but more especially from our northern neighbours.

Social and Economic Benefits.

There is a lot of talk up here about the Boom that is coming with Coal Seam Gas Mining. it's a well documented fact that where there is Boom there is Bust. So far there is no real sign of the boom to the smaller towns out in the Western Downs. What you will find is that most of the Extraction Companies are sourcing the majority of their workers from the coastal cities and these people go home to the coast at every opportunity. Although there have been shop closures in our immediate town, there has been offices of the Extraction Companies opening up in the vacuum. However the way we see it is, as these Extraction Companies will only be operating in this region for about 15 to 20 years before they move on having done their damage to every thing they touch, there will be the father and son shop, that go alright while there is Boom but when the bust comes there will be the son holding fathers dead baby. Apart from an empty store that will have no prospect of survival, what will the son be left with? This has all happened before.

Relationships between Mining and others.

The way we see it there will never be more than an uneasy truce between the gas extraction companies' workers and the peoples of the regions and always nothing but contempt by the majority of the farmers and these foreign owned Companies here in the bush. We are worlds

apart and never the two will meet. Bush folk tend to love and cherish the land they live on, its more then just where they live. Farming or grazing is their whole way of life. These Extraction Companies couldn't care less, its not their land so why give a shit.

Health.

Personally I cannot comment on the Health issues that might or might not be ahead of us in regards to Coal Seam Gas Extraction. The concept is too new in Australia but I don't believe we can rely on the rhetoric coming out of America as it is mostly supplied by the people with a clear vested interest in the continuation of the at best dubious practice. From what we have learned thus far there are NO health benefits for any Australians emanating from the extraction of yet another carbon polluting energy source. We should be striving to invest in the alternatives and then selling our technical know-how around the world instead of indulging the greed of a few American Billionaires. This would be a much healthier position to be in, for the future of our children and for the planet.

Hoping to have made the slightest difference.

Yours Sincerely,

Darryl and Julie Bishop.