

Dennis Pukallus

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Committee Secretary

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

Dear Committee Secretary and Senators, I am writing this submission as the Covid crisis has shown just how vulnerable this country is when shutdowns hit overseas manufacturers. As an island nation we are at the mercy of the whims of offshore suppliers and this should not happen.

Post WW2 this country was pretty much able to make most things we needed as we had to be self-reliant. But due to economic rationalism and the need for the lowest price so profits can be maximised so only a very few people can benefit.

Having worked in the health sector for 40 years I was astounded when PPE was in short supply for front line workers when the pandemic hit this country. But this is not the only item that we do not produce in this country and test kits for lots of diseases are also affected as most are made overseas even though we have the expertise here to produce them.

Automobile parts are hard to get for overseas produced vehicles and don't have a crash in one you will be waiting months for new panels. If we still had an auto manufacturer people would now be drawn to purchase vehicle produced in this country.

My son makes towers for the communication industry and can do so competitively with overseas suppliers and are sort after especially by the military as they are a local product and parts and service are readily available not hampered by any overseas supply issues.

If he could source the raw aluminium and steel necessary to make his products from Australia then it would be a fully home-grown product. We used to produce these materials and can value add to them by making items that are necessary to advance this country.

We need a space industry to keep up with technology and launch our own home-grown satellites into orbit. For that we need a steel industry like the "Iron Boomerang" proposed by a number of sources. We need to make aluminium and other high-end metals and alloys for a space industry.

The potential is enormous as to what we can do if the funding is there from a national infrastructure bank to get these big ideas off the ground and not be beholden to overseas industry and banks. It is time to look after this country first and establish an industry for this country and then any surplus can be traded.

If this is done then the living standards for all Australians will be raised and there will potential to decentralise our capital cities and have more people living in the regions taking the pressure off our crowded cities and roads.

At the moment it seems we are relying on a real estate bubble to keep some form of economy going and this is unsustainable. We need real industry and real well-paying jobs to keep this country going forward instead of treading water and living off mortgages and debt like we are currently doing.

Kind Regards

Dennis Pukallus