

11 – 4 – 09

S.S.C.C. P

Dear Secretary.

I hereby submit a few of my thoughts regarding Climate Change Policy.

I am a retired school teacher and administrator, parent, grandparent etc who has had a long term interest in environmental care plus some involvement with the Goulburn Valley Environment Group, two Department of Sustainability and Environment Committees, and limited experience with Landcare.

I am certainly very concerned with the degree of environmental degradation throughout the world and in our local community.

I respect the Rudd Government but believe they could do much more to promote environmental care in general and certainly, a stronger Climate Policy. They are being too conservative and have put forward a policy that falls far short of what is required. It seems that appeasing the general public, no doubt an important factor in politics, has had too much of an influence

The world is, in my opinion, approaching a catastrophic situation. We say that we love our country and our grand children etc but our life style continues to be out of control and unsustainable. I sometimes express this view to people I meet and it is evident that the vast majority believe that we cant go on living as we do. They see enormous problems in the not too distant future, particularly for our children and grandchildren.

The collective view generally is “weren’t we lucky to be born when we were” and “there isn’t much we can do about the world situation anyway”. What a “cop out” Surely we must make a genuine effort to fight Climate Change and environmental degradation and my prediction is that if we went about in the right way majority support from the general public could be gained. A bit of sacrifice and curtailment to our unsustainable lifestyle might do us all a bit of good.

Countries inevitably unite and accept harsh restrictions during times of crisis and we are certainly in that situation right now. I think Governments might underestimate the degree of co-operation forth coming from the general public if strict methods of combating Climate Change were introduced.

I think Australians, in fighting Climate Change and environmental degradation are capable of setting a commendable example to the rest of the world. It really isn’t too much to expect since, per head of population, we rate close to number one in carbon emissions and consumerism.

People have to be convinced that life as we know it is definitely under threat, possibly much sooner than is presently predicted. Our lifestyle is unsustainable and without being pessimistic or a doomsday predictor, this fact must be publicised to the community.

In particular.

I believe that the Rudd Government have set their targets far too low. I think they have “pledged” to strive for something like 5% to 15% reduction in Greenhouse gases

by 2020. All very good except I believe that the “patient is dying” at a far greater rate than that. We are just “fiddling around” with the problem. Such conservative targets seem to guarantee disaster, rather than alleviating the consequences to any acceptable degree.

The Rudd Government must show more leadership, they must make informed and courageous decisions, for the long term well being of our nation, even if they are politically dangerous at the time.

I must confess that I do not adequately understand Carbon trading and offsets or whatever, and I haven't come across anyone who does. This is a new situation that surely can't be left to politicians. We need an ongoing independent study staffed by a qualified and respected authority, as it all seems a bit of a mess to me.

Whilst confusion and misunderstanding prevail I see little hope of any progress being made on Carbon emission control.

I believe it very likely that vigorously attacking Climate Change can have a positive effect on employment and the economy as new technologies and products become necessary. Numerous industrialists and commentators believe so, and it is something that needs continued investigation and publicity in an effort to get the general public to understand that it isn't all “doom and gloom” if major efforts are made to combat Climate Change. Swift and decisive action is required if Australia isn't to be left behind.

Our planet is in dire trouble. Australia needs strong, courageous leadership if we are to reasonably limit the ongoing destruction that our lifestyle causes. We must set an example to the world and in so doing our nation could “stand proud”

World wide promotion is certainly needed and I think our present Prime Minister is capable of doing this providing Australia can practically demonstrate that we are world leaders. If we are not prepared to take the initiative then we have no hope influencing other nations and without a world wide co-ordinated effort the consequences will be diabolical.

We need to accept that there is no chance at all of maintaining a reasonable lifestyle or perhaps even saving the planet, unless the world's population is firstly stabilised and then reduced. Our type of living is not sustainable and whilst most people realise this they must accept responsibility and strongly encouraged to do something about it. Climate Change cannot be regarded as a singular issue, it cannot be separated from factors such as general environmental degradation, our throw away society, over population, our life style in general etc.

We are not “fair dinkum” and I sometimes wonder if our system of Government lends itself to the difficult unpopular decisions that have to be made. Nevertheless I do have a faint hope that Aussies might appreciate being part of a whole team effort to seriously adjust their lifestyle to alleviate the dangers we face.

We are in fact in a World War Three scenario. Sounds dramatic, but true. Stronger action is needed.

Yours sincerely



Bill Probst