

To Senators on the Senate Select Committee on Climate Policy,

How many warnings can the Government get and yet still they don't take global warming seriously? We voted the Howard government out partly because of its appalling human rights record but mostly because everyone is very worried about global warming. The huge response to Earth Hour is an indication of people's feelings.

There is an idea that we can either respond to the economic situation or to the environmental crisis but not both. Of course this is wrong. The process of moving from the fossil fuel industries to the renewable energy industries is one of relocating workers and retraining them but not of just dumping them. Such a change has occurred before when computers restructured much of the way our society was organised. People did lose jobs but were then retrained for other positions.

There is no way out of this crisis except to face it and tackle it courageously. That is difficult for someone who has never been PM before and whose every effort is derided by an idea-free opposition. However to fund the pollution creators is truly stupid. We simply don't have time for this dilly dallying. Our biosphere is unravelling fast and one of the endangered species is our own. Already the people of Africa and Australia are suffering as drought spreads the desert further through their countries. And others are suffering from cyclones and storms. All of these cost millions of dollars to deal with and there are lots more on the way if we don't take on our responsibilities.

We export coal to China but we could be exporting solar technology, energy conservation techniques and windpower expertise, instead of discouraging our own inventors so much that they go and deal directly with China, bypassing this country altogether.

Instead of asking people to put solar water heaters on their roofs, why not regard the roofs as so much solar harvesting area and have the government place the solar water heaters there. That would stimulate the solar industry so much that prices would come down, jobs would go up and energy demand would come down. Solar water heaters offer the best savings for money invested as so much energy is used in each household heating water. My solar water heater is so efficient that I don't seem to need the booster at all in the warmer months.

It seems to be impossible for the government to grasp our urgent situation is - or perhaps they have already resigned the human race to the universe's scrap heap! It is nightmarishly frightening to see them ignoring the looming danger, like being in a family with drunk parents.

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