

Central Bulletin

A newsletter from Central Queensland's only Senator, Matthew Canavan



MADE IN AUSTRALIA

Plan to restore Aussie manufacturing

Diversify our trade away from China

Labor's reef regs hurting QLD farmers

Adani Mine: almost complete!

GOOD RIDDANCE TO 2020

Build back stronger not just better

The past year has been like none in recent memory. A global pandemic ended Australia's 30 year run without a recession, China has become more aggressive and we have racked up the biggest debt since World War II.

Australia has navigated coronavirus better than almost any other country in the world. However, we will not be immune from the economic and geopolitical fallout from the crisis.

There are renewed attempts from the global elite to anchor Australia to policies that would hamper our economic strength and send more of our industries to China. Now that we owe more, this is not the time to make ourselves poorer.

The latest slogan to "build back better" hides a radical agenda to replace reliable energy with intermittent renewables, replace prudent fiscal policy with rampant monetary expansion, replace free enterprise with state control, replace free speech with big tech censorship and even to replace the nuclear family with an imaginary preferred pronoun utopia.

The latest slogan to "build back better" hides a radical agenda ... Instead we need to use Australian natural resources to once again create manufacturing jobs.

Western countries are all at sea in responding to a once in a century pandemic. And the left has used the confusion to wrestle control of the agenda.

The Labor party claims that we can inspire a manufacturing renaissance by importing solar panels made in the oppressed Xinjiang region of China. And we will pay for them by shipping them our high quality coal, iron ore and natural gas.

Instead we need to use Australian natural resources to once again create Australian manufacturing jobs. Only through making things again from our own produce will we restore our sovereignty and independence as a nation.



Never has it been more important for conservatives to defend what makes Australia the greatest country in the world to live. And, to defend the freedoms that are the foundation on which we have built our country.

We need to rediscover our nation building pioneering spirit and build up our manufacturing strength again.

As Chair of the Nationals Policy Backbench Committee I released a major report on how we can make stuff in Australia again. Our 9 point plan aims to double the number of Australians working in manufacturing over the next few decades.

The Nationals in the Senate have also kick-started a discussion on nuclear. We have drafted amendments to allow the Clean Energy Finance Corporation to invest in nuclear technologies.

As we enter a Federal election year, I will continue to fight to keep Australian jobs here. The 2000 plus people employed at the Adani mine show the importance of elections and the next one will be just as important as the last.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "M. L. ...", written in a cursive style.



At SMW Group in Mackay with Jack Trenaman and Tracey Newitt, the LNP Candidate for Mirani at the 2020 election

MADE IN AUSTRALIA

The coronavirus has exposed Australia's declining manufacturing industry

This is a summarised version of the Nationals' 9 point plan for manufacturing released in January 2021.

Australia has a strong history as a manufacturing nation. Australia is the largest producer of alumina; we have developed techniques in copper smelting that remain world's best practice and we produce some of the world's highest quality food products.

Much of our manufacturing success stems from the use of our abundant natural resources. Australia has always had strengths in turning its rich soils and minerals into higher value-added products.

Lower tariffs, coupled with higher power prices, has led to Australia's manufacturing output falling over the past decade. In November 2020, the number of Australians employed in manufacturing reached a new record low of fewer than 850,000 people.

The Nationals propose that Australia strives to reverse this trend. Among developed nations Australia has the second lowest share of economic output coming from manufacturing. If we could lift our share of manufacturing output close to that which exists in the United States, 800,000 new jobs would be created.

Australia needs to have a manufacturing policy suited to our times - a time of rising geo-strategic threats and of fragile global supply chains. The reasons for Australia's manufacturing decline have been global. The rise of China and large markets in Asia have made it difficult for Australian manufacturers to compete.

If we could lift our share of manufacturing output close to that which exists in the US, 800,000 new jobs would be created.

Other countries, like the United States, have shown how advanced economies can maintain a strong manufacturing sector in the face of intense global competition.

We recommend a 9-point plan to reach our goal of doubling employment in Australian manufacturing.

1. Penalise countries that flout the rules

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the need to protect supply chains in essential products, like medical supplies and food and beverages. Even before the pandemic the Australian Government was seeking to create more stable supply chains in critical minerals, and has been investing to build up our defence force capacity.

Under international trading agreements, the Australian government can take countervailing action

against countries that subsidise their own industries.

The Nationals believe that the Anti-Dumping Commission should be asked to complete a detailed report on the extent of subsidies provided by other countries to businesses in the six key strategic industries selected under the Modern Manufacturing Initiative.

If other countries are subsidising their own industries beyond what is allowed, Australia should take action to protect our own industries and jobs.

2. Increase trade promotion

Given the relatively small size of the Australian market, it will also be crucial to expand exports of Australian manufactured goods.

The Export Market Development Grant (EMDG) Scheme is a popular grant that aided advanced manufacturers to undertake marketing and promotional activities in global markets. A new EMDG round should be administered once international borders are opened so that exporters can re-engage with existing markets and expand into new international markets to assist with the recovery of their businesses.

3. Direct Government Support

We should establish a concessional lending facility for investments in manufacturing.

Many other countries have government backed lending facilities to support investments in manufacturing. There are 13 such finance organisations in Europe and they also exist in China, Japan, Singapore, and India.

The Australian Government should build on these examples by establishing a \$5 billion manufacturing finance concessional loan program to support investments within our manufacturing sector. This agency could work within the Regional Investment Corporation (RIC), and leverage off their expertise.

If other countries are found to be subsidising their own industries beyond what is allowed, Australia should take action to protect our own industries and jobs.

4. Focus on the regions

A renewed focus on the revival of Australian manufacturing, along with the designation of a number of strategic areas and the allocation of dedicated

Australian manufacturing employment



Source: ABS 6291.0 Labour Force, Australia, Detailed

funding, warrants regionally based Offices of Regional Manufacturing to support the regions in achieving this ambitious goal.

The establishment of two decentralized Offices of Regional Manufacturing in Gladstone, Queensland and Newcastle, New South Wales, speaks to the value of the regions and their potential to become the backbone of Australia's manufacturing industries.

5. Lower taxes for manufacturing

In 1990, manufacturing accounted for almost a third of Australian investment in private businesses. In 2019, that share had dropped to just 8 per cent.

The Nationals propose that the scheme for instant asset tax write-offs should be further modified to support manufacturing businesses located outside of capital cities by:

- removing the \$5 billion turnover cap for manufacturing businesses, and
- providing a 150 per cent tax deduction for investments in Australian manufacturing in the strategic industries identified above

These incentives would provide broad support for all regional manufacturing businesses and help avoid the problem of "picking winners" that come from a grants-based manufacturing support system.

6. Buy Australian first

The Australian Government is a substantial purchaser of goods. In 2015-16 Commonwealth agencies reported

spending \$57 billion across 70,338 contracts. Almost 10,000 of the businesses supplying these goods and services were small to medium sized businesses.

However, there is no specific obligation under Australian Government procurement rules for Commonwealth agencies to support Australian content. Businesses bidding for Commonwealth procurement of greater than \$20 million must prepare and implement an Australian Industry Participation plan.

Other countries provide more direct support for local procurement. For example, the *Buy American Act* provides for the “mark up” on the price of any tenders that do not meet a “domestically produced” criteria.

The Australian Government should establish a similar *Buy Australian Act* that provides a measurable benefit to Australian manufacturers when competing to supply Australian goods and services.

The Australian Government is a substantial purchaser of goods. In 2015-16 Commonwealth agencies reported spending \$57 billion across 70,338 contracts.

7. Harmonise trade qualifications

Sophisticated and advanced manufacturing cannot function or compete without a highly skilled and educated workforce. Australia's most successful manufacturers tend to employ more workers with crucial STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) skills.

The TAFE system needs to be overhauled to better support skills and training for advanced

Scan the QR code below to download the Nationals plan to restore Australian manufacturing



Or download from https://www.mattcanavan.com.au/national_party_manufacturing_paper



manufacturing. Harmonisation of TAFE trades and apprenticeship courses should be a key policy outcome to streamline and simplify their delivery.

8. Invest in reliable energy

The main barrier to Australian manufacturing strength over the past decade has been Australia's high energy costs. If we cannot turn around the rising tide of energy costs, there will be little hope of increasing investment in Australian manufacturing.

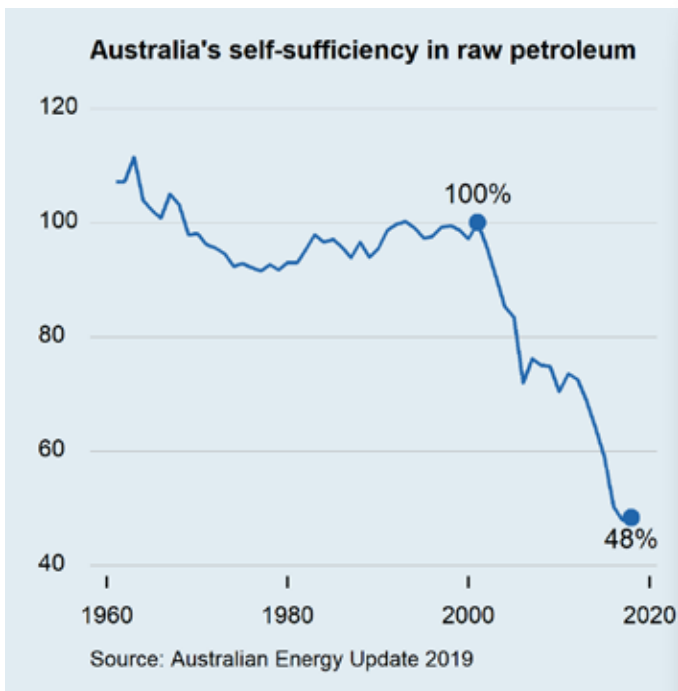
The rise of China's cost advantage in steel manufacturing is a relevant comparison. In 2005 China was a net importer of steel and in that same year they designated the steel industry as a pillar industry for their economy. Research by the Alliance for American Manufacturing reveals subsidies of almost \$30 billion to energy providers, who passed on lower energy prices to all industries, aided the exponential growth of China's energy intensive steel industry.

The way to get power prices down is simple. We need more supply of affordable and reliable power. As a recent Australian Energy Market Operator reported, Australia will need 6 to 19 GW of reliable power to back up renewables over the next 20 years. That is in effect around 4 to 12 coal fired power stations.

Australia needs to build modern coal fired power stations to help manufacturing industries. That is why the Nationals backs the delivery of a coal fired power station at Collinsville in North Queensland.

9. Strike oil

Since the 1960s Australia has been self-sufficient in the production of raw petroleum thanks to the reserves of the Bass Strait and North West Shelf. However, over the past 20 years, the oil reserves of the Bass Strait have



depleted and even those of the younger North West Shelf are starting to decline.

Geoscience Australia estimates that Australia has around 75 billion barrels of potentially recoverable oil resources. Australia uses just over 1 million barrels of oil a day, so this oil represents over 180 years of supply.

The Government should increase the funding of the Exploring for the Future program by \$250 million to fund exploration specifically for oil reserves both onshore and offshore. This could help fund either 6 offshore exploration wells or 50 onshore wells.

What next?

The Nationals plans are ambitious and will be challenging for any Government to implement all at once.

The Australian people want our nation to make more things here. Achieving this goal, however, will require a fundamental rethink of the policies that have seen the decline of Australian manufacturing and threaten to continue that decline unless we reverse course.

Australia needs to embark on policies that seek to build productive industries especially as we see more aggressive actions from China and we have a much bigger public debt to service than pre-coronavirus.

Australia's proud heritage as a manufacturing nation shows that we can do this. We just need to rediscover the vision, focus and commitment that our nation building ancestors once found.



The Nats Senate team announcing our nuclear amendments

NATS GO NUCLEAR

Australia has the world's largest reserves of uranium but no nuclear power plant. There are 30 countries in the world that rely on nuclear power, many using our uranium.

Nuclear has been a four letter word in Australia for too long. Nationals Senators have drafted amendments that would remove a ban on the Clean Energy Finance Corporation (CEFC) from investing in nuclear technologies or carbon capture and storage.

These bans were inserted by Bob Brown when he did a deal with Julia Gillard to create the CEFC. There is no reason for an LNP Government to continue with them.

And there are reasons that we should keep the nuclear power option on the table:

- Nuclear energy is relatively safe and takes up less land than renewables. A single coke can of uranium can provide enough energy for your whole life. With less energy matter there is just less of it to escape and damage the environment.
- Nuclear is cheaper than renewables. Between 1965 and 2018, the world spent \$2 trillion on nuclear compared to \$2.3 trillion for solar and wind. By 2018, nuclear produced double the electricity than solar and wind.
- New nuclear technologies promise to be safer and cheaper again. Generation IV technologies produce less nuclear waste and small modular reactors could suit Australia's smaller population better. Mass production could bring their costs down significantly.

We will not build a nuclear plant tomorrow but we should start researching these latest technologies so we can be prepared if they are needed in the future.



Mustering at Miranda Downs in the Gulf

BETTER LATE THAN NEVER

Federal court win delivers justice to the Northern cattle industry almost 10 years late

Nearly 9 years to the day since the Labor Government's blanket ban on live cattle export to Indonesia, cattle producers in the Northern Territory finally had their win in court.

On 7 June, 2011, the then Agriculture Minister, Joe Ludwig, signed a blanket ban on live cattle exports to Indonesia. This was after a week of uncertainty for producers following a Four Corners report and suspensions of exports to 12 Indonesian abattoirs.

With the stroke of a pen lives were destroyed. With thousands of cattle being mustered, ready to board ships to the only market these producers had access to – their livelihoods were ripped out from underneath them in an instant.

On 2 June 2020 the Federal Court confirmed what we already knew - that a great injustice was done. But the decision also placed responsibility for the consequences on the then Federal Labor Government.

Thanks to lobbying from the Nationals Party Room the Federal Government accepted this decision and will begin to provide compensation to those who have been injured.

The former Labor government's rash decision to ban live cattle exports caused enormous, unnecessary pain. The \$316 million live cattle trade to Indonesia saw a 42% drop-in exports between 2010 and 2012.

There was a dramatic drop in employment, especially Indigenous employment. And the effects were felt throughout every aspect of the industry. Sale prices for producers on the eastern seaboard crashed, as their market was flooded with NT cattle, families struggled to keep the lights on and pay their kids' school fees.

Justice may have been delayed but at least it has not been denied.



I was not a good jackeroo at Miranda but got by with some help!



OPE

SAVE ACLAND JOBS

NEW HOPE
GRP
500
Local
Contractors

Addressing the Save Acland Rally at Oakey during the Queensland election

FALLING SHORT

QLD ELECTION REPORT

COVID made winning tough but it doesn't make the loss any sweeter

When I was young, I didn't think I would attend a political rally. In the last few years I organised a number of them - COVIDsafe plans and all.

A week out from the state election last year showed how politics has been reorganised. Three current and former Coalition Resources Ministers - me, Ian Macfarlane and Keith Pitt - were proudly marching with generational CFMEU members in the small town of Oakey west of Toowoomba.

We were there to demand justice for the 500 coal miners who faced losing their jobs if the LNP were not elected.

Labor had refused to budge on their position that they would not grant a mining licence to the New Acland Mine unless all court cases were exhausted.

A recent court decision had meant this could be years away. Thus the Labor Government cruelly extended the uncertainty for mining families in a saga that had been running since 2007 when the first application to extend the mine had been submitted.

The subsequent Labor victory crushed the spirit of the miners. Many have lost their jobs. Labor has long since stopped caring for the labourer.

It is tough for the LNP volunteers who put in so much effort but have come up agonisingly short in the last few elections. But most of us have a job and life to return to. Think of the once committed Labor voters whose jobs are sacrificed so the Premier can keep her job.

Unfortunately some good LNP members lost their jobs on election night too. Members like David Batt in

30 October 2020

The Courier Mail

Time to put some doers back in charge

My article in the Courier the day before the QLD election

LABOR is saying that the last thing Queensland needs is a change of direction. Yet it is the Labor Party that has been trying to change Queensland over the last five years.

The inner-city Brisbane, Labor-Greens Queensland government has been trying to change Queensland's identity. Labor has spent five years denigrating our coal and gas industries, imposing new regulations on farmers and letting crime spiral out of control.

Our identity as Queenslanders is entwined with what we produce. We are banana benders, we watch lightning crack over cane fields, it was a Queensland shearer that grabbed the jumbuck and our national airline starts with the letter "Q". Even our moniker, the "Sunshine State", hints at our ability to grow world-class cattle, cotton, grains and sheep. We mine coal, gas, and bauxite. We make aluminium, copper and zinc.



With Mark Robinson on the campaign trail

Queensland is a producing state. Over our storied history, we have paid the bills for the nation, not racked them up. We are proud of the jobs and wealth we create.

When future historians write about the last five years of the Palaszczuk-Trad government they may call it the "Great Pause". It has been a period in which we have stopped playing our role as builders for our great nation.

The Palaszczuk-Trad government tried to smother Adani with delays. Labor only approved Adani after they were thumped in last year's Federal election. This Labor-Green government still refuses to approve the New Acland Mine after 13 years of consideration.

We shrug off the worst cyclones, we smash better skilled Blues teams and, against all the odds, we have built the greatest wealth producing areas of our nation.

It is time for Queensland to have some doers back in charge. To rediscover Queensland's spirit we have to kick this government out.



Bob Brown was popular on the campaign trail ... he even won a meat tray at Middledmount!

Bundaberg who lost despite the Labor Government's shocking treatment of farmers impacted by the Paradise Dam fiasco.

Deb Frecklington and the LNP team of candidates put in an enormous effort. They had bold plans to build dams and upgrade roads. In the end, probably nothing could overcome the "she kept us safe" message.

That doesn't soften the blow though of facing four years of Labor. This Labor Government hasn't done much since its unexpected election in 2015 and they already look tired.

The basic strategy seems to be to always blame someone else whenever something goes wrong. Steven Miles is perfectly cast for the role. I can't believe I am going to say this: but bring back Jackie Trad.

All the more reason we have to win in four years time. We might even have to organise more rallies!



The Rocky Coal Convoy arrives at the Acland mine

CQToday

Vaping is safer than smoking

Smoking continues to be the drug that kills more Australians than any other. The best estimates indicate that smoking kills around 20,000 Australians annually compared to 6,000 from alcohol and 2,500 from illicit drugs.

Australia probably leads the world in reducing smoking rates. We were one of the first countries to place restrictions on advertising and include prominent warnings on packaging. We are at risk of losing that mantle, unfortunately, because of a reluctance to legalise e-cigarettes.

E-cigarettes deliver nicotine through an electronic mechanism that turns liquid nicotine into a gas or "vape". It allows a smoker to mimic the interaction they have with a smoke and, compared to nicotine gums or patches, it delivers the nicotine "hit" in a similar way to a cigarette.

The best health outcome would be for people to neither vape nor smoke. Nicotine is highly addictive and like all drugs can have bad impacts on your health. But e-cigarettes do not contain the cancer causing carcinogens that smokes do. Lives would be saved and lives would be improved if more people quit smoking and switched to e-cigarettes.

A young Mum gave evidence to a Senate committee this week about her switch to vaping and how it has improved her relationship with her two young children. She no longer smells of tobacco around the kids and doesn't have to pop outside all the time just to have a smoke.

The good news is that more Australians are giving up smokes for the alternative of e-cigarettes. Over the last three years 130,000 more Australians are using e-cigarettes according to the largest national survey on drug use. And, over the last three years, 127,000 Australians have given up smoking.

The bad news is that vaping remains illegal in Australia. You can sell a vaping device and there is a limited ability to import liquid nicotine with a prescription. But it is illegal to sell liquid nicotine and, in most Australian states, it is illegal to possess liquid nicotine.

LIBERALS AND NATIONALS FOR VAPERS RIGHTS

SUPPORT A SMOKE FREE AUSTRALIA

Our petition got over 70,000 signatures in just 3 days

In reality these laws are not enforced and many do import liquid nicotine through online shops even without a prescription. Australia is the only developed country to ban all vaping products. We risk losing the mantle of a leader in tobacco reduction efforts.

Our "black market" creates other health risks. Many vapers import liquid nicotine in concentrated form, often in containers without child proof caps. Tragically a 3 year old girl died in Victoria a few years ago after she ingested her mothers concentrated nicotine.

We should instead have a regulated market that imposes proper standards on the packaging of products and restricts their sale and marketing just as we do for tobacco products.

A recent major review of all of the scientific evidence from around the world concluded that "e-cigarettes probably do help people to stop smoking for at least six months."

Some are concerned that if we legalise e-cigarettes, these products could create a "gateway" for young people to start smoking. But a recent CSIRO study concluded that "the evidence for [the gateway effect] being an important route to smoking initiation in Australia does not appear strong."

We should focus on practical solutions that can improve people's lives. There is so much evidence from thousands of Australians that vaping as helped them get off the smokes and made their lives better. It is time for Australia to catch up to the rest of the world and legalise e-cigarettes.

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Or go to:

https://www.mattcanavan.com.au/opinion_articles

27 February 2020

THE AUSTRALIAN

Net zero emissions = net zero jobs

In some respects, the Labor Party is as Australian as the Magic Pudding, both revel in fantasy. According to past Labor leaders, high public spending won't raise taxes and, in any case, high taxes won't damage economic growth. Now we have Labor's greatest magic pudding yet, we can cut our carbon emissions to zero and no coal miner will lose their job.

The Labor Party refuses to produce numbers to explain this remarkable outcome, but fortunately others have. Last year, New Zealand passed into law a net zero emissions target and in doing so they commissioned actual economic modelling on its impact.

The analysis, by the New Zealand Institute of Economic Research, evaluates a number of different assumed scenarios. All of these incorporate optimistic assumptions on future technologies, including for example a methane vaccine (which stops sheep from "emitting"). And, in another leap of faith, 50 per cent of trucks go electric by 2050.

Even with these assumptions, the negative impact of net zero emissions on the New Zealand economy is massive. The policy would reduce the size of the New Zealand economy by 10 to 20 per cent. In Australian terms that would amount to a \$200 billion to \$400 billion annual impact. Employment would fall by 2 to 4 per cent. If that happened in Australia 200,000 to 400,000 people would lose their jobs.

New Zealand's main industry of agriculture would be smashed. Its dairy industry would reduce by more than half and that leads to a much poorer nation. Depending on technological assumptions, wages reduce by 8 to 28 per cent. In Australian terms, that would mean a \$7000 to \$24,000 annual hit to an average worker.

Of course, the economic impact on Australia would be bigger given that we have large coal and gas industries, as well as agriculture.

As it turned out, the New Zealand Government ended up exempting agriculture from its net zero emissions target. Agriculture makes up half of the country's carbon dioxide emissions. New Zealand's "brave" target that was welcomed by environmental activist groups is literally an example of doing things by half.

Here in Australia, however, the Labor party has not ruled out imposing a net zero target on our farmers. A net zero target is a double hit to the agricultural industry. They pay the direct cost of having to pay more for fuel, for feed and for vehicles.



At the Stanwell coal fired power station west of Rockhampton

They also pay the cost of having productive farmland turned to trees (so we can sequester more carbon) and the loss of future growth opportunities because more land can not be developed.

This is where the "net" part of net zero kicks in. Under "net zero", rich people can still fly to Davos to lecture others about carbon dioxide emissions. To do so, some pay an "indulgence" to have farming land locked up. Productive farm areas, in effect, would be turned into National Parks to house more weeds and fuel for bushfires.

Net zero emissions means net zero development, net zero jobs but far from net zero hypocrisy.

Labor has been keen to quote the CSIRO's latest National Outlook report to conclude that net zero emissions is achievable but the CSIRO report does not do what Labor is saying it does. The CSIRO concludes that agricultural production levels "experience a substantial decline once the rising carbon price improves the relative profitability of other land uses such as forestry". Up to 24 per cent of our agricultural land would be converted plantings on the CSIRO's analysis.

Nor does the CSIRO measure the net impact of net zero emissions. It measures the economic outcomes of two scenarios, one dominated by a protectionist world with high barriers to trade and the other a world of free trade, global cooperation on climate and magically high productivity. Surprise, surprise, free trade and high productivity lead to higher economic growth. The unique and separate impact of net zero emissions remains unmeasured by the CSIRO's analysis.

Also, to get to net zero, the CSIRO estimates that a global carbon price of \$273 a tonne is required. Once again Labor shows their addiction to a carbon tax.

In The Magic Pudding, the possum and the wombat create a fire to distract Bunyip Bluegum while they steal the pudding. A similar distraction seems to have afflicted the modern Labor Party, where this summer's fires have distracted them away from their founding mission of defending and protecting workers. Labor once again has not seemed to learn the lesson that you can't have your cake and eat it too.



14 December 2020

THE AUSTRALIAN

Levy on iron ore exports would test China's mettle

When my wife decided she wanted a new clothes-line this year, we thought we should buy the good-old, Aussie-invented Hills Hoist. Then we discovered that Hills Hoists are now Made in China. As they are made from galvanised steel, I suppose it made commercial sense for Hills to move production to where more than half of the world's steel is now produced.

Australia is the world's largest exporter of iron ore and coking coal - the two key ingredients that go into making steel. Yet we are now a net importer of steel, something that should be more widely acknowledged as a cause for national shame.

Modern times are known as the information age but it is steel that has unlocked the greatest economic advancement in history. Just 30 years ago, two of every three people, in our region, lived on less than US\$1.90 per day. Today, less than 5 per cent of people live in such extreme poverty.

Such rapid economic advancement came about more because of a doubling of steel production than the invention of the mobile phone. China has grown its steel production by more than 20 times in a generation. Steel is what has built the tractors, highways, trains and apartment buildings that have allowed so many to escape from the crushing poverty of subsistence living.

Australia is the world's largest exporter of iron ore and coking coal - the two key ingredients that go into making steel. Yet we are now a net importer of steel ...

China has become the dominant producer of steel because of enormous government assistance to its industry. The latest evidence, compiled by Dr Usha Hayley in 2014, showed that 80 per cent of China's steel industry profits came from government subsidies. Researchers do not have more accurate or recent data because the Chinese Communist Party still refuses to disclose the full amount of its subsidies, despite that being a condition of its joining the World Trade Organisation 20 years ago.

No matter how much government largesse it provides, however, China would not be able to produce over half of the world's steel if not for Australian iron ore. Australia exports almost 900 million tonnes of iron ore a year. The next biggest exporter is Brazil at around 350 million tonnes, and after that it is daylight, and then the Ukraine at just 45 million tonnes. China gets about 60 per cent of its iron ore needs from Australia.

Iron ore is the one product that China has not slapped tariffs or restrictions on in its increasing trade war with Australia because it can not easily replace our supply. China's trade action has already caused massive economic harm to our beef, barley, seafood and wine industries. To avoid further harm we need to make the Chinese Communist Party pay a price because that will be the only thing that will stop further trade restrictions.

We should apply a levy on exports of iron ore to China. The funds raised can be used to compensate the Australian industries harmed by China's actions. Our exports of iron ore to China amount to \$85 billion a year. So even just a 1 per cent levy would raise over \$800 million a year, more than enough to assist those industries harmed by China's unjustified trade actions.

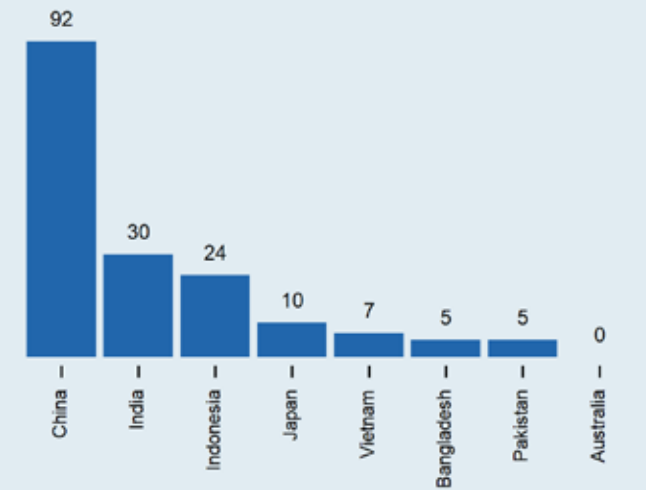
We could then signal that every time China takes further action against Australian exporters, the levy would go up. We could signal that the levy would be removed if China ended its unjustified trade restrictions.

Some will argue that an iron ore export levy would



With Ken O'Dowd at the Gladstone Power Station

More than 200 coal plants are under construction



Source: Global Coal Plant Tracker

cause China to look elsewhere for its iron ore needs and kill our iron ore golden goose. But China is doing that anyway with its development of the massive iron ore deposits in Guinea, and its faltering attempts to support the growth of the Brazilian iron ore industry.

We are better off encouraging a more stable and diverse spread of steel production across the world. We should work with like minded countries to increase the production of steel in non-Chinese countries so that the world does not just unduly rely on Chinese steel.

Such action has precedent. The European Union began its life as the European Coal and Steel Community which managed steel production levels across countries so as to reduce tensions. And, in the 1960s Japan agreed to limit exports of its government subsidised steel to the US so as to maintain balanced production between countries.

Such an agreement could also see Australia return to growing our own steel production. We were once a significant producer of steel, making much more than just clotheslines. Everyone is in love with the idea of growing Australian manufacturing. We should start by adding value to our high quality natural resources like iron ore and coal creating thousands of Australian jobs. If we help other countries increase their steel production that would help the world reduce its dependence on a bullying and aggressive Chinese Communist Party.

CQToday

World beating beef sector should celebrate



At CQUniversity's cattle yards in Rockhampton

At the start of the pandemic panic, toilet paper shelves were the first to go bare. But not long later, mince and meat departed the supermarket shelves. However, there were some products that remained stubbornly resistant to the bunker mentality. Veggie burgers and tofu shelves remained well stocked.

There is a lot of hype about plant based protein but most people just prefer a big, juicy steak. Why then do so many in the beef sector play defence when there is massive support for their industry?

Last week the ABC's *Landline* ran a story about beef's "social licence". A former industry leader claimed that beef is "emerging as agriculture's coal equivalent". This is a load of rubbish in terms of both substance and public support.

We need to discard the term "social licence". The term originated as a description of why a major project, like a mine or property development, should get the support of those in the local community before being approved. That is common sense.

But social licence has now morphed into meaning that any vegan or climate change warrior apparently deserves to have their views listened to about the environmental impact of the grass fed beef industry. That is absurd. Local people understand the impact of a development on their local community so they deserve to be listened to. Activists that have never stepped foot on a farm, don't

have any useful knowledge on the beef industry and should be ignored not pandered to.

As the empty meat shelves during the pandemic showed people love meat and they are not about to give it up anytime soon. Farmers consistently rate as one of the most respected professions among all Australians. Those that grow our food deserve to be ranked alongside those that protect our health and educate our children.

So why do so many in farming act like they must repent for some kind of original sin? There is a noisy few that want to attack farming, that want to stop building dams or stop clearing paddocks to grow food. There are even a smaller number who want to end all meat consumption and make us all eat lettuce.

The beef industry risks its future by pandering to the few and ignoring the many. When I talk to beef producers, the biggest risk to their future remains whether they can make consistent profits over drought cycles. Costs have been rising while prices have gone up and down over the past decade. There can be no sustainable future for the beef industry if you can't make an income.

Yet just one of the six priorities in the industry's Beef Sustainability Framework focuses on profitability. The other priorities are all defensive, seeking to bat back the attacks from the activists on animal welfare, deforestation or climate change.

And because they are on the back foot, they give ground to the activists. The Sustainability Framework accepts the notion that reduction in land clearing has helped the beef industry reduce its carbon emissions. This is rubbish given that a lack of land clearing just replaces some form of vegetation growth (trees) for another (grasses). But worse, how are we going to campaign to remove the ridiculous restrictions placed on land clearing today if the industry accepts that these laws are essential for them to meet an artificial net zero emissions by 2030 target?

It is time for the beef industry to get on the front foot. There is so much to celebrate in our world beating beef sector. I joined many beef producers in Kingaroy on the weekend to celebrate National Agriculture Day - an initiative launched by Ms Gina Rinehart who has heavily invested in beef in recent years.

Another opportunity comes next year when we celebrate Beef Week. Although it will be a much smaller event given the coronavirus, it is perhaps the ideal opportunity to get on the offensive, ignore the loud minority and say with pride how great an Aussie steak is and that is here to stay!



Bushfires in Yeppoon in November 2019 (Photo: Kent Murray WIN Rockhampton)

15 February 2020

SPECTATOR

Fighting fires

The richest man in Rome at the time of Julius Caesar was Marcus Licinius Crassus. Crassus made his fortune through many nefarious methods but one lowlight was his creation of the first fire brigade in Rome. Like any normal brigade his would rush to a fire but then things took a twist. Crassus would offer to buy the homes in the path of the blaze for a fraction of their value. If the homeowner refused he would order his brigade to stand idle. Eventually, most homeowners would accept the low-ball offer to get something rather than nothing. Then his trucks would sweep in save the homes, and Crassus would make a small fortune.

Many politicians over the past few months have acted like the dishonourable heirs of Crassus. They have turned up at the scene of fires not seeking to help people in need, or even to offer support and condolence. Instead, they have launched into harangues that are all about politically profiting from another's tragedy, just like Crassus.

There is a word to describe their behaviour: crass. A word we get from the Latin root, crassus.

The likes of Adam Bandt are crass because as they seek to accuse others of killing people, they stretch the truth and paint an incomplete picture of why these fires have occurred.

It is true that we have experienced more fire weather days (that is hot, dry, windy days) over the past 40 years. That is all laid out in a definitive report by the CSIRO and the Bureau of Meteorology. Their report *Climate Change in Australia* is the go-to official guide for the likely impacts of climate change over the next few decades.

That report includes clear data that 'fire weather' days have been increasing but then in that same report the CSIRO states that 'no studies explicitly attributing the Australian increase in fire weather to climate change have been performed at this time.'

So what does the IPCC say, the apparent global oracle on all things climate?



Inspecting damage to Jack Cowie's farm

In their latest report they conclude that there is 'little to no information' about any link between climate change and bushfires in Australia.

So why, if we are getting more hot days, is there not an established link? That is because weather conditions are only one factor in causing a fire. The CSIRO identify four 'switches' that determine fire potential. These are: ignition, fuel dryness, weather and fuel load.

Climate change is a convenient bogeyman for state governments to distract attention from their own failings.

On each of these, the connection to climate change is not as clear as our green friends try to make out.

Over 200 people have been charged for lighting the past summer's devastating fires. The prime cause of the fires rests with these arsonists and the law book should be thrown at them.

On fuel dryness and the weather, it is not at all clear yet what the significant long-term trends will be. The fire weather data the CSIRO uses show a trend for forty years in a concerning direction, but this time period has been marked by a number of significant El Nino events that cause drought in eastern Australia. And, late last year there was a record reading of the Indian Ocean Dipole effect which also causes dry conditions over south-eastern Australia.

There is a lot going on with our weather that is completely separate from climate change.

Which brings us to fuel load. The fuel load that has been lying around like a ticking time bomb is not caused by climate change. It is the cause of state governments taking rights off farmers to clear their own land. And state and local governments not doing their job by clearing national parks and road verges ahead of a fire season. This is why we see so many state governments lurch to blame climate change. Climate change is a convenient bogeyman for state governments to distract attention from their own failings.

Fuel load is also where the debate on climate change and fires gets murky. While there is some evidence that climate change is leading to hotter

days, that could be counteracted by the fact that, if it is drier, there will be less build up of fuel to burn. As a recent scientific paper concluded:

Effects of elevated carbon dioxide on plant growth could counteract effects of future dryness on fuels, but such effects in local ecosystems are uncertain. Thus there is potential for fire activity to either increase or decrease in the Sydney region as a consequence of climate change.

You probably won't read that conclusion in the *Sydney Morning Herald* but last time I checked the *Herald* was not a peer-reviewed publication.

Whatever the debate about climate change, Australia always has and always will face a severe risk from bushfires. That risk may be increasing because temperatures are increasing. But that does not significantly change what we should do on the ground to prepare.

The FFDI increases are partly driven by temperature increases that are attributable to climate change. Similarly, temperature changes alone have been shown to contribute significantly to evaporation and surface evapotranspiration in drier catchments of the Murray Darling Basin (McVicar *et al.* 2012). However, no studies explicitly attributing the Australian increase in fire weather to climate change have been performed at this time.

Extract from the CSIRO's Climate Change in Australia report

Long before climate change was a thing, Indigenous Australians conducted wide-scale burnoffs to protect against fire risk. Not even in the most surreal speculations of Bruce Pascoe's *Dark Emu* were Aboriginal peoples burning coal to generate electricity through a steam turbine. Just maybe there was some other cause of bushfires back then.

We should not panic about these latest fires. They were a great tragedy, that we all mourn. Our nation faces tragic natural disasters almost every year. In the past we have strengthened our resolve, united as a country, learned lessons and tried to protect ourselves better in the future.

The crass panic merchants should be confronted and their absurd prescriptions should be challenged. In the case of fires, and the political debate around them, the old adage is still true, we should fight fire with fire.



Down the Mandalong mine with David Gillespie and Barnaby Joyce

POWERING ON

The Nationals are taking the fight into Labor's Hunter heartland

The last time Labor lost the Federal seat of Hunter, Kaiser Wilhelm was on the throne in Germany. The Hunter electorate has been a safe Labor seat for generations - and two separate father-son teams, first Rowley and Bert James, then Eric and Joel Fitzgibbon - have held the seat easily for all but 4 of the last 93 years.

That was until an ABC tsunami of Adani, Bob Brown and Coal, at the last election, caused a 10% swing away from Joel Fitzgibbon. Labor now only holds the seat by a slim 3 per cent margin.

Joel had a near death experience and like most men in a foxhole he converted ... to the cause of coal. Voters remain sceptical, however, about their local member who has only started fighting for their jobs, after his job was threatened.

In contrast, the Nationals have been fighting for jobs in mining, agriculture and manufacturing without needing a poll to tell us what to believe.

In November last year I toured the Hunter with Member for Lyne, Dr David Gillespie, and Member for New England, Barnaby Joyce, as part of our efforts to promote using our coal resources here at home.

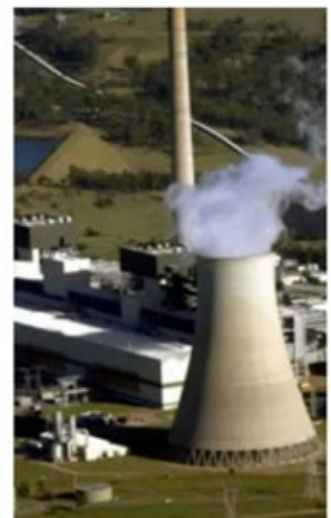
Over 1000 jobs at the Tomago aluminium smelter in the Hunter rely on reliable power for their livelihoods. If we stop using our coal to make power here, those jobs will go overseas with the coal.

Voters remain sceptical, however, about their local member who has only started fighting for their jobs, after his job was threatened.

Why would we export the world's best coal but not use some of it ourselves to create our own wealth and opportunity.

IF YOU WANT THIS ...

YOU NEED THIS



CQToday

McEwen sets an example

The Nationals celebrated their 100th year as a political party in 2020 and it was fitting that a statue of a Nationals Prime Minister, John McEwen, was unveiled to coincide with the celebrations.

There have been too many statues torn down this year. So it was good to finish 2020 by unveiling a new statue of John "Black Jack" McEwen in Canberra last week.

As Marc Antony said in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, "The evil that men do lives after them. The good is oft interred with their bones." A statue helps preserve the good that a man or a woman has done. It does not mean that they did no evil. But a statue does serve as a physical reminder of the good someone has done. It serves as an example for us all to strive to do better in an imperfect world.

The good that has been done by leaders past also helps us deal with present challenges. John McEwen's example is a tutorial for us all on how to deal with a world beset with difficulty.

John was from a poor family. He saved money to buy a soldier settler block post World War I. He survived by eating the rabbits on his new property so he could put everything else in to developing his own block.

He rose to prominence representing farmers in rural Victoria eventually being elected to Parliament to represent them as a Country Party MP. He went on to serve in the War Cabinet during World War II, served as Trade Minister for over 15 years and as leader of the Country Party for 12 years. He became Prime Minister for a short period after the death of Harold Holt.

As veteran journalist Laurie Oakes said of McEwen a few years ago, "He is one of the few people I've met in 50 years in journalism who I think deserves the description 'great'".

What made McEwen great was his determination to build up what he called the "wealth producing industries" of farming, mining and manufacturing. To do this he bravely pursued trade deals with Asian countries and passionately fought for government assistance to help Australian farmers and industry compete in a global environment.

Working with one of Australia's best economists, Sir John Crawford, McEwen could see that our traditional trade partner of Great Britain was becoming closer to Europe than its former colonies. So, as he put it, we needed to find another nation off the coast of a major continent hungry

for natural resources. Japan fit the bill and McEwen staked his political career on finalising a trade deal with Japan just 12 years after the end World War II.

As our now major trading partner in China threatens to cut off trade, we need McEwen's leadership again to strike new trading relationships.

John McEwen has been heavily criticised in recent years for his adoption of "protection all around" policies. He supported tariffs to protect Australian manufacturing jobs and floor prices to help Aussie farmers survive. McEwen's policies helped deliver a massive surge in Australian manufacturing of steel, cars and food products.

Much of McEwen's legacy has been dismantled in the push to free trade over the past 40 years.

But as a new book released this week by my National party colleague, Bridget McKenzie, argues we are all McEwenists now. The pandemic has highlighted the peril in relying too much on overseas manufacturing. We need to study McEwen's legacy to learn what we must do to fix this vulnerability and rebuild Australian manufacturing again.

Bridget's book, and the McEwen statue, have been released to mark 100 years since the Country Party (now the Nationals party) was formed. The Nationals party is the second longest serving political party (after Labor) in Australia. But its message of support for the industries that are the backbone of our great country is needed more than ever.

At the base of McEwen's new statue there is a mural representing all the industries he supported in his career. We need to once again steadfastly support these sectors so we can lay a strong foundation for an Australia that grows in strength through challenging times.



With Ron Boswell at the unveiling of John McEwen's statue in Canberra



4 July 2020

SPECTATOR

Dictatorship of the alphabet

Isidore Helman's engraving of the execution of King Louis XVI invariably draws you to the gruesome visage of a man displaying the severed head to the assembled lines of National Guard troops. Something more apt for our contemporary eyes, however, is an unremarkable concrete plinth in the back right of the then *Place de la Révolution*. You can tell from its jagged edges that something had been violently removed from its top. This plinth had held a statue of Louis XVI's grandfather, Louis XV, until pulled down by revolutionaries five months prior to the King's execution.

It is easy to dismiss the statue desecration and 'cancel culture' that we are living through as trivial and of no great concern to everyday matters. Does it matter much if a few statues are no more? Is it a serious problem if we can no longer struggle through four hours of *Gone with the Wind*?

The thing is, though, that no one in 1789 predicted that within a few years a king would be executed and unimaginable terror would be unleashed on the streets of Paris. As Alexis de Tocqueville's history of the French Revolution noted, 'there never were events greater, better prepared, longer matured, and yet so

little foreseen.' Maximilien Robespierre, the author of the Terror of 1793, had just two years earlier argued that the death penalty should be abolished without exception.

I am not predicting any such outcome from today's events but I do think we should reach further back in history to explain the forces attacking Western culture. There is always a tendency to view current battles through the prism of the last battle; in our case between capitalism and communism. Hence, the protesters are often described as Marxists. The labels are not always used pejoratively. Patrisse Cullors, the co-founder of Black Lives Matter, describes herself as a 'trained Marxist'.

As Alexis de Tocqueville's history of the French Revolution noted, 'there never were events greater, better prepared, longer matured, and yet so little foreseen.'

But are these people really Marxists? How many of the organisers, let alone the protesters, understand dialectical materialism, or could explain Marx's labour theory of value? And, I don't see too many of the proletariat among their ranks on the street. So

if Antifa and the like do not seek to own the means of production, how could you define them? Do they really have much in common with Marxists?

Like many past revolutionaries, their main objective is to destroy. Destroy our history, destroy our culture and destroy civilisation as we know it. Their destructive instincts are bred from a self-hatred of their own country. A hatred that we have foolishly let spread among our schools, universities and media over the past generation. As de Tocqueville also said in his history 'it may be strictly said that one's love for despotism is in exact proportion to one's contempt for one's country.'

They seek to replace patriotism with identity. They don't so much seek a dictatorship of the proletariat as a dictatorship of the alphabet. Instead of feeling you belong to your country you should be defined by what letter you are in the LGBTIQ+ universe. Humans naturally want to feel part of a tribe. The wonder of modern Western civilisation is that we have created 'tribes', or nation states, not defined by race but defined by principles and values. Anyone can be an Australian provided you subscribe to a set of universal values largely based on freedom.

Our alphabet revolutionaries want to re-establish tribes based on old concepts like race, and new ones like gender and sexuality. These concepts are inherently divisive within a community or a nation, especially a multicultural one like ours.

When membership of a tribe can be decided by elastic concepts such as identity, basic rights can be overridden. The French Revolution started with high ideals of the Rights of Man but within a few years a member of the Committee of Public Safety, Collot d'Herbois, could say 'the rights of man were not made for counterrevolutionaries, but only for the sans culottes [common people].'

Second, like most revolutionary movements, they have a propensity to eat their own children. In the French Revolution, this happened to almost all of the revolutionaries as the radicals of the past raced to prove themselves as radical as those of the present. A hero of 1789, the Marquis de Lafayette, was lucky to escape into exile. Eventually the Girondins, the Jacobins and Robespierre himself suffered the same fate as the King they helped execute.

Third, revolutionaries have a tendency to ban things they don't like and rename things that remind people

of the past. Somewhat forgotten today was the French Revolution's anti-Christian philosophy – the greatest atrocities occurred in staunchly Catholic areas such as the Vendée. During the revolution, the ringing of church bells and the wearing of crosses were banned, towns named after prominent Christians were renamed and a whole new calendar was enforced. Today we have movies being cancelled and calls for the renaming of our states.

Our alphabet revolutionaries want to re-establish tribes based on old concepts like race, and new ones like gender and sexuality. These concepts are inherently divisive ...

Fourth, these revolutionaries have no sense of humour. Even woke comedians have been some of the first children eaten for various crimes against the orthodoxy. But a similarly humourless approach is the hallmark of almost all revolutionaries. Parts of the Reformation had similar iconoclastic impulses to today's protesters, which still can be seen at many ancient cathedrals where statues and stained glass remain destroyed as memories of an orgy of anti-Catholic violence. Erasmus once vividly described the 'surlly' parishioners of early Protestant services who came out of church with 'anger and fury'.

The vast majority never join revolutionary ranks. Bolsheviks, Jacobins, Khmer Rouge, cancelistas and their ilk are always only a small number of the overall community. We can see the majority dismiss their efforts with the renewed popularity of *Gone With The Wind*, Colonial beer and my renewed appetite for chicos.

However, these minorities sometimes still succeed, almost invariably when the majority stay silent and do not defend what others seek to destroy. While there is no need to over-react to the adolescent attempts to establish autonomous zones, they are clearly a symptom of an inadequate defence of our civilisation.

If we don't do that with more zeal we may be surprised how quickly we can lose what takes generations to build. The only fragment left of King Louis XV's statue is its right hand. Whatever your thoughts on the *ancien régime*, this small artefact shows the remarkable artistry of the 17 foot statue that took 15 years to create, but just one night of violence to destroy. We must do more to promote the fundamental merit of Western society before more than just statues are torn down.



Meeting cane farmer Andre to discuss the impact of Labor's reef regulations with LNP candidates Amanda Camm, Chris Bonanno and Tracie Newitt

11 March 2020

SPECTATOR

Crying wolf over the reef

As passengers come into land at the Brisbane airport, few realise they are flying over a reef that has more marine diversity than any single reef on the Great Barrier Reef. The Flinders Reef is just 30 kilometres from the mainland.

More people live in Brisbane than in the catchment area of the entire Great Barrier Reef. Yet we are told that the human use of the Great Barrier Reef catchments — farming, mining and simply living — are causing untold destruction to one of the world's greatest natural assets. How then could a reef of unparalleled diversity be thriving just near one of Australia's busiest cities and ports?

The answer is succinctly put by Peter Ridd, a scientist with 30 years experience researching the Great Barrier Reef, and who has been sacked from the academy for his heterodox views. He points out that the "inshore reefs" near the coastline of North Queensland are adapted to high concentrations of sediment and mud. As Peter says "The coral species on the inshore reefs are often very different from the Great Barrier Reef as they have to be tolerant to lots of mud." The Flinders Reef in Moreton Bay is of a similar kind so it has thrived despite being near a major city.

The inshore reefs make up about two per cent of the corals of the Great Barrier Reef (even though they don't strictly make up part of the "barrier"). But it is these reefs that can be affected by agriculture. The reefs of the Great Barrier Reef are 50 kilometres or more from the shore and sediments, nitrogen or phosphorus from the land rarely reach them. As the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority has said: "mid-shelf and offshore waters are typically less influenced by land-based run-off."

The risk of these runoffs damaging the inshore reefs has led the Queensland Government to impose unprecedented regulations on North Queensland farmers. Governments have adopted a target of reducing fine sediment loads by 25 per cent by 2025, along with other targets. Because these targets are not on track to being met, the Queensland Government has passed new laws that will empower bureaucrats to tell farmers how to farm and make creating new jobs in North Queensland extremely difficult through the establishment of a "no net decline" test for new developments.

It is hard to find strong evidence for these targets. There are reams of reports produced on the Great

Barrier Reef but almost all of them take the 25 per cent reduction in fine sediments as gospel and report against that standard. There is very little explanation of why that target is important. (As an aside this once again demonstrates why we should be very wary of setting a net zero emissions target.)

It is unclear that the increase in sediment runoff since European settlement is as significant for the reef that is made out. The Queensland Government points to evidence that fine sediment loads delivered to the Great Barrier Reef lagoon have increased approximately 5-fold. This sounds like a lot until you realise that the Government has been very careful with its use of the word “delivered”. The sediment delivered from land-based run-off only makes up around 1 per cent of the sediment that impacts onshore reefs. The rest is from the natural churning of the seabed that kicks up mud. That means that the increase in sediment impacting these inshore reefs has increased by only around five per cent. not fivefold.

Senator CANAVAN: It's a pretty simple calculation. Those costs in the agricultural sector averaged over those farmers comes out to \$65,000. Is that your estimate of the impact of these regulatory changes on average for each farmer?

Ms Nichols: Yes, that's an average impact. But the RIS does explain that the impact will be variable across farmers. So farmers that are complying will not have such an impact. Some properties will have higher costs than others depending on what action—

Evidence from our Senate inquiry confirmed that the average cost of the QLD Government's reef regulations is \$65,000 per farmer. Ms Nichols is an Executive Director at the Department of Environment and Science.

That is not to say that land-based runoff should not be reduced for other reasons. For one, soil, nitrogen and phosphorus are all valuable elements for farmers. Letting them just run away from their property is the same as throwing money on a cane fire. So farmers for a long time have been improving their practices and led the development of what are variously called Best Management Practice regimes.

Last week I visited the farm of a sugar grower, Mario Quagliata. He is just about to become BMP accredited through a voluntary process. Indeed, in Mario's Tully area 70 per cent of growers have adopted best practice techniques.

Why then has greater accreditation not led to substantial improvements in outcomes?

This is probably because farmers like Mario are not silly. Even before best practice became formalised, farmers were building silt traps, laser levelling land and maintaining river banks so that valuable minerals stayed on their property.

The formal accreditation process does normally help improve matters but because our farmers are already great environmentalists, the new techniques improve things incrementally not through a revolution.

The Great Barrier Reef is an amazing natural asset for those who live near it like me. Unfortunately, it has become a tool to stop the economic development of North Queensland.

The passing of the strict Queensland laws led to an outcry in North Queensland last year and that led to the establishment of a Senate inquiry into what really is the science behind the targets and the new laws. At its heart is a clash between the views of government officials who think they know how to farm better than farmers. The Senate hearings start next week.

Last week I visited a natural resource management group in Cairns. They are good people but when I asked them to explain why we have these targets, they can't say, they are just employed to try and meet them. This is the fundamental problem with setting arbitrary environmental targets. It creates an artificial industry. The jobs in that industry then become reliant on meeting arbitrary targets regardless of their real world outcome. In contrast, farming requires constantly producing something that customers want (like sugar) and doing so better than your competitors.

The Great Barrier Reef is an amazing natural asset for those who live near it like me. Unfortunately, it has become a tool to stop the economic development of North Queensland. Perhaps the first recommendation of the Senate inquiry should be to extend the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park area down to Brisbane, to include the Flinders Reef. That way the people of Brisbane can too experience the wonderful joy of having an army of bureaucrats dictate their lives.

12 March 2021

CQToday

Worth the wait



The 200km rail line to the Carmichael mine under construction

Some days I wonder why I put my hand up for a job that typically sees me away from my wife and 5 kids for more than 200 nights a year. Then there are other days when I remember why it is all worthwhile.

Last week I had the privilege of travelling to the Adani Carmichael mine.

This was my third visit to the site and previously I was always struck by it being in the middle of nowhere. You can draw a circle, of 150 kilometres in radius, around Carmichael and you won't encompass a single substantial town.

Now it is a hive of activity. The camp is full - a bed had to be freed up to house a young pilot who arrived at the same time we did. The mine pit is now 25 metres deep and with only another 30 metres to go, first coal should be hit around mid year.

I meet Ferg whose concrete company at Capella has 12 blokes on the site constructing massive big valves to funnel coal into the trains. He has never worked on a job this big and the project will make his company more experienced not just more solvent.



A Mackay based company is ramping up on the preparation plants, massive big factories that crush and wash the coal before it is shipped out. Altogether there are 2000 people working on the mine, almost all of them from Central and North Queensland. That's 2000 families in which someone has a job thanks to Adani finally getting off the ground.

Don't believe what you read on social media, I did not see a single robot truck (all of Adani's trucks are manned) nor an Indian worker on site. In Australia, Adani does not employ anyone on visas.

The first coal should be shipped to India within two years of construction starting. There are still 300 million people in India without access to electricity and this coal will help them get the basic necessities that we take for granted.

It took 10 years to approve Adani's paperwork and just two years to build the whole thing. We have to get rid of the bureaucracy and regulation that holds us back as a nation.

As I fly out I get a great view of the railway line, 200 kilometres long, snaking its way across a distant and undeveloped plain. Once completed this line will open up the first coal basin in Australia for 50 years. It will help other mining, gas and agricultural opportunities get going in an area that has previously been undeveloped.

There are five other proposed mines in the Galilee and altogether 16,000 coal jobs could be created from the Galilee coal basin.

I fly back to Emerald. Before the Bowen coal basin was opened up Emerald was barely a town. Now it is a growing city thanks to the mines that were opened in the 1960s and the Fairbairn dam built in the 1970s.

We live in a great country with so much potential. Sometimes you wonder why it takes so much effort to just do simple things. But then when you see them happen and it encourages you to just fight that much harder to do more.



Scan the QR code to watch amazing footage of the Adani mine being built

FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT ON AIR



To watch more interviews make sure you follow me on Facebook by scanning the QR code



As always, if there is anything that I or my office can assist you with, please get in touch:

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