

The Big Picture

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"News to use & amuse"



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Wealth and security

These days it's a fair question to ask whether Australian governments have any priority to assure the survival or development of Australians.

In food production, 2 articles this week showed the lack of priority that governments give to healthy food production.

Milk suppliers were looking for a sign that dairy farming was a sustainable industry as they opened the letters sent out by processors last week.

Instead, what many of them found, particularly those in northern Victorian irrigation districts plagued by successive years of chronically low allocations, was confirmation that this year is going to be anything but profitable.

The bare figures speak for themselves - milk suppliers are looking at an opening price of 26 to 34.5 cents a litre compared to their cost of production of about 35 cents a litre. [WeeklyTimesNow](#)

Inadequate allocations of water, high feed costs and low prices from processors combine to drive our farmers out of business.

It's worth revisiting the idea that real national security requires surety of vital supplies like water, food, energy, housing and medicines. Without these we have no security.

Vegetable growers will have to make drastic cuts to their water use as part of the State Government's draft strategy to save the Gngangara Mound.

Conservation Council WA water policy officer Steven McKiernan said it was important to conserve water, but squeezing growers might drive them from the Gngangara system, leaving Perth with less local produce. [TheWest](#)

It's becoming clear that our governments seem to place no priority on assuring these resources, worse many of their policies actively degrade those resources for our future. The only aspect of national security they seem to pursue is the expensive physical security provided by the military, border controls and removing the rights of Australians.

It's noteworthy that more and more government departments are supporting corporate interests (e.g. ABARE, CSIRO) while remaining muted about, or ignorant of, community interests

In Tasmania this is playing out with the ALP government entirely ignoring a community of residents in Rosebery in Tasmania's Western mining district, who are reporting foul water and testing positive for heavy metal poisoning. Other groups concerned about Atrazine and its derivatives in drinking water as a result of aerial spraying have also been roundly ignored.

Cumulative toxins are of serious concern yet the government repeatedly dismisses the fears of communities.

[Crikey's](#) story about CSIRO spruiking the coal industry while being prevented from making a submission on the federal Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) typifies the 'capture' of government departments by vested interests. That capture also appears to extend into the major political parties where 'donations' from subsidised industries have taken on the appearance of laundering of taxpayer monies into political party

accounts via subsidy recipients.

This week, I feature New Matilda's interesting report on how the ETS will result in the transfer of billions of taxpayer dollars from health and education budgets and directly into the pockets of the coal and fossil fuel industries.

Labor has always touted the idea of 'wealth distribution' but it always used to imply from wealthy to needy. These days it seems to mean from the needy to corporate giants, many of whom are creating some of the most serious threats to ourselves and future generations.

This path to decay, as the union differences between corporates, unions and government blurs into invisibility, is headed up by a cleanskin figurehead, who may even believe that he's somehow working for most Australians. Unfortunately the entire ALP including all of the state parties and governments, appear to be embarked on the same course... distribution of taxpayers' wealth to selected corporates, centrally inspired social engineering, reductions in needed social services and progressively ignoring the various communities of Australia.

Victoria, Queensland, Tasmania, NSW are dropping all pretence of public participation in planning. All are captive to mammoth bureaucracies that operate in geologic timeframes while costing astronomical amounts of hard earned cash.

Against this, the best that the federal Liberals can manage is a [Debt truck](#) that highlights Labor's \$330 bn debt. Of course, they ignore the massive foreign debt blowout that occurred under Howard, from around \$50 bn in 1996 to nearly \$1 trillion when they lost office. Much of that was probably driven by government taking too much of low income earners' money forcing them to borrow to get essentials like housing and transport. How will their policies differ from Labor? Will they clean up government and restore some resemblance of representative democracy? Will they shift to small government?

Pungent, but consistently accurate, trend forecaster [Gerald Celente](#) says there's '*the media world, the political world and the real world. In the real world people know what's going on*'. He's right. [Listen to our politicians. What planet are they from? Who talks that way? Why do they all look and sound like that?](#) Because they're being coached perhaps? Mouthing someone else's words? That's some recommendation for office!

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That was the week that was

Financial mess

Alarming aussie debt bomb is ticking [TheAge](#)

Governance & spin

Rudd as impotent as Howard [TheWest](#)

FOI claims outsourced to business [TheAge](#)

Growing trend to centralise power in WA [TheAustralian](#)

\$480,000 for banquets and booze for Brumby [HeraldSun](#)

Emergency bureaucracy must pull finger out [TheAge](#)

Forestry/Food/Agriculture

Great Southern insolvent [Stock&Land](#)

MIS bribes/death threats claimed [WeeklyTimesNow](#)

Clock ticks for dairying [WeeklyTimesNow](#)

Climate/water/energy/environment

NSW bans bottled water [SMH](#)

Time to ditch climate policies [BBC](#)

Truth lost in waves of obfuscation [TheAge](#)

Buyback plan fails Murray Darling [Australian1](#) [Australian2](#)

G8 agrees to emissions cuts [TheAustralian](#)

WA water cuts anger veggie growers [TheWest](#)

Health/education revolution/communication/defence

Net filter a danger to us all [CourierMail](#)

New childrens hospital may have no room for kids [TheAge](#)

Fatal flaws in WA ambulance company [TheWest](#)

Economy/social/shelter/transport

Dickensian disgrace points to accommodation crisis [TheAge](#)

1,000 more homeless each year [TheAge](#) [HeraldSun](#) [SMH](#)

NSW flogs crime hot spot cop shops [Telegraph](#)

The bushfire story no-one is doing [TheAge](#)

Indigenous policy improvement needed: Banks [TheAustralian](#)

Ineptitude in path of inferno [TheAge](#)

KKK infiltrates Australia First party [SMH](#)

Action needed on homeless [TheAustralian](#)

World

US kids tasered on prison visits [TheWest](#)

MI6 Chief's wife posts personal details on Facebook [TheAge](#)

More of the same

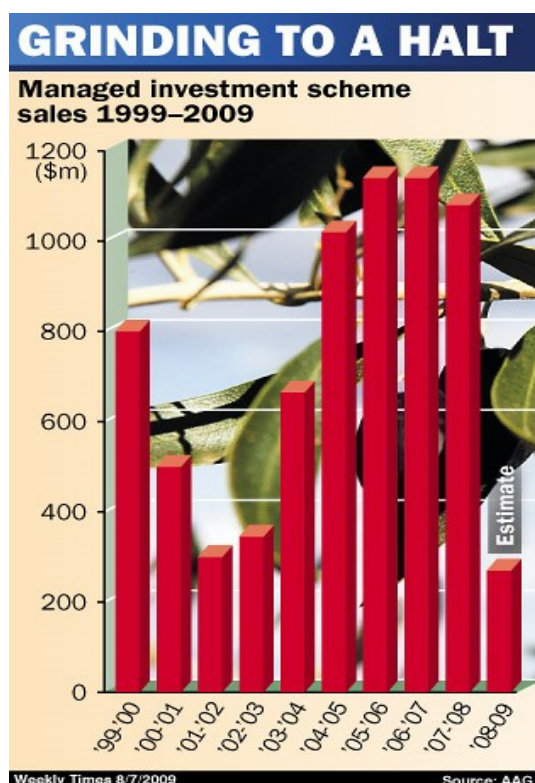
[TheAge](#) reports that...A SENIOR adviser to Deputy Prime Minister and Employment Minister Julia Gillard met executives from a firm with ties to Britain's Labour Party which later won lucrative contracts under the Federal Government's new jobs scheme.

UK work placement firm A4e earlier this year displaced Australian job agencies by winning contracts under the Government's \$4.9 billion Jobs Services Australia program.

A4e executives met Ms Gillard's deputy chief of staff, Tom Bentley, in February last year to discuss the Government's plans to reform employment services for Australia's unemployed. A4e had no contracts in Australia at this time.

MIS sales dying out

[WeeklyTimesNow](#) graphs these sales levels...



ALP coke smuggler?



Rudd's ETS victims

By **Richard Deniss** 7 Jul 2009 © NewMatilda



In an extraordinary display of unfairness, Rudd's CPRS promises to pay off the big polluters at the expense of state health and education budgets.

The parlous state of state government coffers is not a new story. But the extent to which they'll be hit by the Rudd Government's Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme is.

Did you know, for example, that the scheme will impose around \$2.2 billion worth of costs per year on the states? And that the Commonwealth has no intention of providing compensation, despite the largesse being afforded to big business?

What has not been made clear to the electorate during the CPRS debate is that every dollar that is given to the big polluters is a dollar that will come from the health and education budgets of the state governments.

Here is how it works. The Rudd Government's CPRS is the first comprehensive national attempt to tackle climate change. That's good. In putting a price on carbon pollution, the price of coal-fired electricity will go up. That's good too.

However, in order to help offset the impact of the higher electricity prices, the Rudd Government will give all of the revenue it makes from the scheme back to the big polluters as compensation. That's bad. And along the way it will neglect to give similar compensation to the states. That's appalling.

But why should the state governments get compensation, I hear you ask? Simple really: state governments spend a lot of money on energy — running things as diverse as air conditioners in schools to trams in cities. Under the proposed CPRS, the state governments will be required to buy pollution permits from the Commonwealth, which will drive up their electricity bills. While this leaves the Rudd Government with more money to give to the polluters, unfortunately it leaves the state governments with less money to spend on teachers and nurses.

So why aren't the state premiers following the lead of the big polluters and demanding money to protect their citizens? Unfortunately, that's the billion-dollar question that state opposition parties are yet to ask.

There is no doubt that the state premiers and treasurers are aware of these costs. Last year the Australia Institute published a report called [The Impact of an Emissions Trading Scheme on State Government Budgets](#), which highlighted the direct costs of the CPRS for state and local governments. Earlier this year a [report by Access Economics](#), commissioned by the state governments themselves, confirmed our findings. According to Access Economics, the cost to the state governments of the CPRS would be more than \$2.2 billion per year, with the biggest increase in costs being in the provision of health services.

But that is just the tip of the iceberg. Apart from literally taxing the state governments, the Rudd Government's approach to

climate change ensures that while all the revenue raising is done by the Commonwealth, all the big new spending must be undertaken by the states.

Responding to climate change involves "mitigation", which means trying to reduce emissions in order to avoid dangerous climate change, and "adaptation", which means investing in new forms of infrastructure and services to help cope with the change that we cannot avoid. Unfortunately for the state governments, the less effort the Commonwealth puts into avoiding climate change, the more money the states will have to spend adapting to it.

That is, if the Rudd Government locks us into dangerous climate change by setting low emission reduction targets, the amount the states will need to spend to protect their roads from sea level rise and their elderly deaths from heat waves will increase exponentially. Similarly, the more money the Rudd Government spends buying the support of the big polluters, the less money it has left to help the states provide the services their citizens will need.

It is hard to imagine a scheme that is less fair than the CPRS. The Commonwealth collects the revenue and the states do the spending. The polluters get compensation and those dependent on the public health and education systems get nothing.

Of course, tackling climate change doesn't actually need to be so unfair. With the legislation delayed in the Senate, the state premiers have an opportunity to try and redress the imbalance.

It would appear that they have four options. They can demand that the Rudd Government divert money away from the greedy polluters and toward the provision of essential services by the states. They can significantly increase state taxes. Or they can provide lower quality services.

The final option, of course, is to keep their heads in the sand and hope that they are not still in office when the costs of the CPRS come home to roost.

Worth repeating

Thomas Jefferson quote:

The system of banking [is] a blot left in all our Constitutions, which, if not covered, will end in their destruction... I sincerely believe that banking institutions are more dangerous than standing armies; and that the principle of spending money to be paid by posterity... is but swindling futurity on a large scale.

Thomas Jefferson quote

We must not let our rulers load us with perpetual debt. We must make our election between economy and liberty or profusion and servitude. If we run into such debt, as that we must be taxed in our meat and in our drink, in our necessities and our comforts, in our labors and our amusements, for our calling and our creeds...[we will] have no time to think, no means of calling our miss-managers to account but be glad to obtain subsistence by hiring ourselves to rivet their chains on the necks of our fellow-sufferers... And this is the tendency of all human governments. A departure from principle in one instance becomes a precedent for another... till the bulk of society is reduced to be mere automats of misery... And the fore-horse of this frightful team is public debt. Taxation follows that, and in its train wretchedness and oppression.

CSIRO spruiking coal industry

TUESDAY 07 JULY *Clive Hamilton writes © Crikey:*

Since when did it become normal for publicly-employed scientists to spruik for the coal industry? The Australian Coal Association's slick new website aimed at promoting "clean coal" features video grabs of CSIRO experts mixed in with industry spokespeople.

ACA Executive Director Ralph Hillman begins by informing us that renewable energy cannot meet our energy needs. So "[on this website independent scientists](#)" explain how clean coal technology will cut carbon dioxide emissions from coal-fired electricity by up to 90%.

He's followed by the Director of the CSIRO's Energy Flagship, Dr John White, [who tells us](#) that coal "has been blamed" for climate change and "the climate scientists tell us there is a problem in global warming".

Then the Senior Social Scientist at the CSIRO Division of Exploration and Mining, Peta Ashworth, [opines](#) that the only way we will solve the global warming is "for everybody to make the effort", including "changing behaviour at the individual level". The "big problem", she says, is that the public "don't link their daily behaviour to being part of the problem".

The message is reinforced by Anna Littleboy, Operations Director of the CSIRO Minerals Flagship, [who says that](#) when she is dialoguing with the public they "are often surprised by how little greenhouse gases Australia produces relative to the rest of the world".

The CSIRO is perhaps Australia's most trusted "brand" so Big Coal has struck marketing gold with this website.

Next comes a spokesperson for Delta Electricity —owner of four coal-fired power plants —telling us that, "mathematically", cutting Australia's emissions won't do much for climate change and "the best way Australia can contribute" is through projects like Delta's Munmora [carbon capture pilot](#).

It's less surprising to find Tony Maher from the CFMEU talking on the website about the union's "[united front](#)" with the coal industry to encourage the Government to spend more money on clean coal, as if the vast sums already diverted to coal from the renewables industry were not enough.

Participating directly in coal industry propaganda is the culmination of an increasingly intimate relationship between the industry and Australia's peak scientific research body.

Concerns about CSIRO management's commitment to independent science go back at least to 1994 with the appointment of Donna Staunton as director of communications. Staunton was the chief executive of the Tobacco Institute of Australia where she had rejected the science linking smoking and cancer, [telling a Senate committee](#): "I do not believe that cigarette smoking is an addiction, based on any reasonable definition".

We now know that there are close links between those who denied medical evidence about smoking and those who deny climate science. In fact, the two campaigns were often conducted by the same organisations using the same "experts" following the same strategy of sowing doubt [in the public mind](#).

It turned out that Staunton had [served on the board](#) of the Institute for Public Affairs, one of the foremost climate science denial organisations in this country.

Fast forward to 2006 when the Howard Government appointed two fossil fuel industry executives to the CSIRO board —Dr Eileen Doyle was Chair of Port Waratah Coal Services and Mr

Peter Willcox had served as the CEO of BHP Petroleum.

In February 2007, Rosslyn Beeby reported in the *Canberra Times* that "the CSIRO has confirmed coal industry bodies have the power to suppress a new report questioning the cost and efficiency of clean-coal carbon capture technologies because they partly funded the research".

For some years, CSIRO management had been gagging climate scientists from speaking about their research. Dr Graeme Pearman, an eminent climate scientist and head of the Division of Atmospheric Research, felt he had a duty to tell the public what the science was showing. His old-fashioned belief that the public has a right to know the truth led in 2002 to the refusal to reappoint him and his departure [from the organisation](#).

In 2009 senior climate scientists are still being gagged by [CSIRO management](#). Climate scientists were forbidden to make a submission to the Senate inquiry into the Government's emissions trading scheme. Four of them took a gamble and submitted their expert opinions in a strictly private capacity.

But there was no gag on Dr David Brockway, Chief of CSIRO Energy technology and its foremost "clean coal" expert, who appeared officially to explain the benefits of [clean coal](#).

Brockway had blithely confirmed that the coal industry was entitled to suppress the results of CSIRO research if the results [didn't suit it](#).

The capture of key sections of CSIRO by the coal industry occurred under the watch of Chief Executive Geoff Garrett. Recruited in 2001 from CSIRO's South African sister organisation, Garrett is a firm believer in commercialisation and worked hard to rein in the traditionally independent divisions by exerting tight managerial control, often against strong resistance.

According to journalist Peter Pockley, when divisional Chiefs needed intellectual refreshment, instead of the traditional stint at another major research institution, Garrett send them to [business school](#).

When Garrett famously announced that CSIRO should set "big, hairy, audacious goals" few guessed they would dovetail so neatly with the commercial interests of the Australian coal industry. He [defended CSIRO's decision](#) to shift money out of renewable energy research and into coal by saying our dependence of coal-fired electricity was "unlikely to change in the foreseeable future".

Garrett finished up at CSIRO at the end of last year, but there is no danger of any break in the CSIRO-Big Coal nexus. His replacement as Chief Executive, Dr Megan Clark, was plucked from a senior executive position with [BHP Billiton](#).

In May this year, four months after Clark's appointment, it was announced that BHP Billiton would be shifting a substantial portion of its research capacity into the [CSIRO's Queensland Centre for Advanced Technologies](#).

Global fascism?

Here's a theory. In 1972, during his first year as director of the Council on Foreign Relations, [Zbigniew Brzezinski](#) wrote:

Nation state as a fundamental unit of man's organized life has ceased to be the principal creative force: International banks and multinational corporations are acting and planning in terms that are far in advance of the political concepts of the nation-state.

