

## Man-Made Climate Change: A Tale of Lies and Waste

By Dr. John Bruni

Wednesday, the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March 2011 witnessed a political rally in Canberra, launched by the Liberal-National Coalition against the Gillard government's proposed Carbon Tax.



It is hoped by the protesters that that rally might have some impact on a Prime

Minister who has publicly stated that she deliberately lied to the Australian people regarding the imposition of a Carbon Tax.

Australia is no stranger to Prime Ministers who lie to the public for tactical advantage, or, in order to impose something they believe to be in the public's interest. In 1995 John Howard told the Australian people he would 'never ever' introduce a Goods and Services Tax (GST), yet upon his re-election in 1998, he did just that. At the time there was a public outcry, but the truth of the matter was that Australia needed some reform of the national revenue base in order to keep the national economy globally competitive. Had Howard not introduced a GST, a Labor leader would have rehabilitated the concept and pushed it through. So in fact there is a sense of inevitability that on big picture issues, Australian leaders on both sides of politics

will do what they consider 'necessary' to save the country from itself.

What makes the whole Carbon Tax issue highly contentious is the fact that it is based on a lie. A lie that, repeated often enough by noted personalities, politicians, and experts in 'climatology', the general public has by and large accepted as truth. What is the lie? That Climate Change is man-made and that what we are seeing in the global weather pattern is something that we can change back to a 'default setting'. However, there is no default setting for climate. Any person with a modest knowledge of geology knows that the Earth's climate has changed wildly over millions of years. And what has happened before will happen again without us, Earth's latest custodians, having any great impact. The Earth might be our home, but it is also neutral to the activity of any of its life forms – humans included. As a rock whirling around our star, the Sun, with its magnetic and gravitational influences interchanging with our planet's atmosphere and surface, we can neither shut down these extraterrestrial causes of climate change nor mould the Earth to our will and dictates. And even were there some technological fix for scrubbing Carbon Dioxide from our atmosphere, scrubbing this trace gas from our atmosphere would plunge Earth into a deep freeze – precipitating true man-made Climate Change. So, what is a Carbon Tax about? It has less to do with Carbon and more to do with Tax.

And what of the hundreds of millions of dollars that the Gillard government has

pledged to the UN to fast-track international efforts to combat ‘man-made’ Climate Change? Of the initial \$599 million package of tax-payer’s money that Gillard promised in 2010 to the UN to help poorer countries adapt to new, extreme climate variations, \$473 million of this has already been allocated. According to the government document ‘Australia’s Fast-Start Finance Progress Report’ published December 2010:

*Australia has allocated A\$473 million of our A\$599 million fast-start package to date. New funding allocations announced in Cancun total A\$236 million:*

- *A\$15 million to the Adaptation Fund;*
- *A\$169 million in additional adaptation allocations under our International Climate Change Adaptation Initiative, with up to \$A80 million to the Pacific, up to \$A44million to Southeast Asia, up to A\$25 million to Africa, and up to A\$20 million to South Asia;*
- *A\$32 million in additional allocations under our International Forest Carbon Initiative for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries (REDD+) activities in Indonesia and globally;*
- *A\$10 million to the Partnership for Market Readiness; and*
- *A\$10 million to the Climate Investment Funds’ Program on Scaling-Up Renewable*

### *Energy in Low Income Countries.*

So, should this investment in the future of the planet be considered a point of Australian national pride? Proponents of man-made Climate Change believe this is a start, but not enough. They advocate that a Western country by dint of its development and relative wealth to the poorer countries of the world has a never-ending revenue stream that can be tapped into to subsidise what they consider necessary to end Climate Change. The proponents of man-made Climate Change think that they can defeat this ‘immediate threat’ to human existence by creating a byzantine architecture of committees, national and multilateral in nature. Naturally committees require money to set-up, money to maintain and money to expand and expend. But what happens once the Australian dollars leave Australian shores, where exactly do they end up? The language used in ‘Australia’s Fast-Start Finance Progress Report’ is fine sounding but ultimately obtuse and bureaucratic, leaving the reader with more questions than answers. It is designed to give the impression of a vital mission being executed in earnest – something that the Gillard government and her supporters can point to as evidence of their good actions. However, taking half a billion dollars out of the national pot and distributing it thinly over many far-flung and grand-sounding initiatives can also be considered duplicitous, especially if what we are actually doing is spending this money on a lie because this ‘man-made’ Climate Change

is in fact *natural* Climate Change – a crisis of an order of magnitude we have no control over whatsoever.

Another issue worth considering is that Developing Countries are not known for their record keeping, fiscal responsibility, political accountability and transparency. They are also not known to readily take to the fashionable political agendas of the West. Generally Western aid, no matter how confabulated, has a hard time reaching those in need. In many African, Asian and Pacific Island countries, aid money – whether dispensed by the UN or the many NGOs resident in poorer countries – has to pass through the hands of corrupt national officials; corrupt local provincial officials; or tribal chiefs who use the money to buy support for their continuing leadership. While many efforts have been made by various Western countries to tie aid to good governance, Developing Country recipients often see this as neo-colonialism. There is no guarantee that UN Climate Change Financing will be any different to other aid programs. And if there is a sure-fire way of accounting for national monies being spent on supporting this cause ‘de jure’, then the Gillard government should have unambiguously spelt it out prior to committing this nationally significant amount of money.

The most confronting truth that we humans have to come to grips with is that we do not have mastery over all we survey. We are a clever species, yet there are limits to our knowledge. We’ve only had custody over

planet Earth for some 2 million years (200 years as an industrialised civilisation). Natural Climate Change has been with Earth since its formation 4.5 billion years ago. It is based partly on the shifting of the continental plates and attendant volcanism; it is partly based on the interaction between the Earth and the Sun; it is partly based on disruptive events such as asteroid strikes – none of which we can stop. Politicising a term like Climate Change and attributing it to human activity alone, simply muddies the waters. It obviates the need to come to terms with the realities of the dynamic planet upon which we live. Yes, humans need to adapt to Climate Change – natural, not man-made. Yes, humans need to clean up their overcrowded and severely polluted urban environments but population control is out of fashion and taking steps necessary to enforce better standards of personal, corporate, and community hygiene is unpopular among the chattering classes. Until we develop a more harmonious and rational way to co-exist with and on our world, what we are in danger of doing is spending money unwisely on large-scale, expensive and untried technological ‘Green solutions’ that in the end will harm the economies of Developed Countries, making them less able and ultimately less willing to help the poor.

Anti-Carbon Tax rally images:

<http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/environment/climate-change/abbott-calls-for-new-election-on-carbon-tax-20110323-1c5yl.html>