

CLIMATE CHANGE - LIBERAL PARTY POLICY

51. Mrs J. HUGHES to the Minister for Climate Change:

I am very pleased to see that the minister is called the Minister for Climate Change, as this shows that the government is putting this issue on the front foot.

Mr T. Buswell: Don't make a speech; ask a question! Talk about Wanneroo!

The SPEAKER: Order, I call the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to order for the second time.

Mrs J. HUGHES: Can the minister inform the house of any recent developments or proposals in respect of the development of a carbon trading scheme in which Western Australia could take part?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN replied:

I thank the member for Kingsley for her ongoing concern about the very important issue of climate change. I was interested and somewhat surprised when I read *The West Australian* and noted that the opposition spokesperson for the environment suggested that Western Australia should take the lead globally in developing a carbon trading scheme. We would expect that that would have merit. However, when reading on one finds that in terms of the draft Liberal Party statement that has been released on its draft environment policy the Liberal spokesman contradicts himself. This demonstrates that the Liberal draft environment policy was out of date before it was released!

I will go through a couple of key important issues because the house needs to understand the difference between the opposition's approach to climate change and the government's action on climate change. We all know that, until recently, the federal government was full of sceptics on climate change. The Prime Minister is now being dragged by his ears to recognise that this is an issue that we all face in our communities in Australia.

I will refer to some of the things quoted in the policy. Let us look at what we should be doing. The opposition spokesman said that emissions trading will only be supported if it applies equally to all countries and jurisdictions. That is at complete odds with the Minerals Council of Australia and the Business Council of Australia, which both recognise that that is unrealistic. Not only that, when the Prime Minister established the ministerial emissions trading working group he already acknowledged that some five years ago. The opposition spokesman has not read his policy. Even more bizarrely, he states -

Mr C.J. Barnett: "Bizarrely"?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: If it is not a word, it is now. The Liberal policy justifies its backward position by stating that there are more millionaires in China and India than there are in Australia. According to my notes, the policy states -

Supporters of the Kyoto proposals need to explain why all of Australia's residents, including low income earners, should pay for climate change when India's eighty thousand millionaires are excluded.

That is an interesting point. It is interesting to note that India has a population of 1.1 billion people and that they live on incomes that all of us in Australia would recognise as extreme poverty. We also know that per capita greenhouse emissions of Indians are 20 times less than Australians. The policies of the opposition get better - they get more zany! In today's *The West Australian*, Dennis Jensen, the federal member for Tangney, who is the Howard government's greatest climate change sceptic and who was rescued by the Prime Minister in his preselection process, referred to the third point of the Liberal Party's policy on climate change. He said that we should string up "a giant shade-cloth between orbiting satellites in an effort to combat global warming". He continues -

"You would need four satellites over hundreds of square kilometres and a glorified shade cloth in between, attached to the four of them," . . .

This is the mentality of members opposite. They have a three-point plan. They intend to introduce nuclear energy. We know their policy on nuclear energy and what they intend to do. Secondly, they will focus on millionaires in India and China and make them more environmentally friendly. Thirdly, the big killer is the idea of shade cloth strung up in outer space.