

Sustainable Farming

– *the Impossible Dream*

Viv Forbes

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A print-ready copy of this issue of "Carbon Sense" can be downloaded from:
<http://carbon-sense.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/retreat-to-past.pdf>

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"To be truly 'sustainable', a farm must recycle everything - otherwise it is depleting its soil minerals. Therefore it cannot sell any of its produce. This means it cannot buy items from the outside world, such as machinery, to make labour less arduous, and to produce more food. It is thus an impossible dream."

Bob Long

The man-made global warming crisis has gone cold, the "man-made extreme weather" scares are wearing thin, and people are waking up to the "tax war on carbon", so a new theme is needed for handing control of our lives, businesses and property to the world bureaucracy. The theme for the next green alarm is "sustainability" and a favourite target is "sustainable farming".

We need to recognise some realities. Modern cities are not sustainable without farms, and modern farms are not sustainable without modern machinery, mineral fertilisers and affordable energy.



Are Cities Sustainable?

City people should thank the lord for the machinery, fertiliser and cheap energy that produce the surplus food and all the trucks, road trains, refrigerated vans and milk tankers that bring it to their supermarkets every day. The last thing they should advocate is "sustainable farming".



Meat for the Cities
Road Trains loading cattle from Helen Springs Station Northern Territory, Australia.

Unlike most armchair experts on sustainable farming, my early life was spent on an almost-sustainable farm. The memorable lessons we learned are described below.

Cows were milked by hand, ploughing and planting was done with a team of draft horses. Here is how green power works (except we should have used a wooden plough):



Ploughing using Hay-burners

Photo Credit: (c) Kapai / www.fotosearch.com

Lucerne was cut using a horse-drawn mower and rake. Haymaking on our “almost sustainable” farm was a family affair when everyone got a job with a pitchfork – mine had a special short handle. I still have it. Here is how it was done.



Making Bio-fuel for Hay Burners

Photo credit: <http://thekinnickproject.blogspot.com.au/2012/07/75-years-ago-eileens-diary-july-9-1937.html>

For a full description of how a sustainable farm really works you can quickly download the full article in print-ready pdf at:

<http://carbon-sense.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/sustainable-farming.pdf>

Retreat to the Past

The deaths of Steve Jobs and Neil Armstrong could signal the end of a remarkable era of scientific and engineering achievement that started about 200 years ago when James Watt and Robert Stephenson managed to harness coal-fired steam power to drive engines and locomotives. This was followed by magic like electricity, diesel engines, nuclear power, the Model T, jet aircraft and the Apple 2.

During that era of innovation, we progressed from horse and buggy to supersonic flight; from semaphore to smart phone; from wood stoves to nuclear power; from the abacus to the PC; from flickering candles to brilliant light at the flick of a switch; and from wind-jammers sailing to the New World to rocket-ships landing on the Moon.



That era of curiosity and innovation brought prosperity, longevity and a richer life to millions of people while creating the surpluses of food, energy and savings for investment that allowed them to take better care of their environment. It also gave the free world the ability and tools to defend itself from aggressive dictators in two World Wars and the Cold War.

We are now living in the after-glow of that era, relying on past achievements and investments while Green doom-mongers are allowed to scare our children and reject our heritage. "We must not experiment, nor try new things", they say – just in case something goes wrong.

What will today's "Green Generation" be remembered for?

Already they have re-discovered wind power, wood energy and electric cars that were tried and largely rejected a century ago; they now encourage the production of once-banned ethanol corn whiskey, but waste it on cars; they spurn the energy potential of nuclear, coal, oil and gas; and they would close our airports and lock up our resources whilst developing computerised spy-ware to record, regulate, ration and tax our usage of everything.

And one branch of NASA, the once-great risk-taking scientific and engineering body that put Neil Armstrong on the moon, is now supporting an anti-carbon anti-industry cult that advocates the closure of the whole coal industry from mine to power station.

The legacy of today's doom-mongers will be measured by the number of dams not built, the number of mines, factories, farms, forests and fishing grounds closed and the number of humans starving or living in poverty.

Like the emperors of the Nero era in ancient Rome, they celebrate their destructive achievements by staging expensive Climate Circuses, while behind closed doors they plot to destroy the last vestiges of the freedom and property rights that allowed past generations to "Reach for the Stars".

The slogan of the coming era should be "Retreat to the Past".

So vale Neil Armstrong and Steve Jobs - we are losing far more than most people realise.

(For a look at the achievements of the Green Generation, have a look here at how their \$250 billion investment in "Renewable" energy is panning out:

<http://carbon-sense.com/2012/09/17/renewable-energy-investment/>

Those funds they have spent are not renewable. They were wasted on unproductive junk.

Climatists not Fair Dinkum?

A "greenhouse gas" is one capable of absorbing infra-red (IR) radiation.

The most common atmospheric gases with such properties are water vapour and carbon dioxide (CO₂). Water vapour is far more abundant with an average of 20,000 parts-per-million (ppm) in the atmosphere compared to just 395 ppm of CO₂. Moreover water vapour is more effective as a greenhouse gas because it can absorb IR radiation over far more bands of the IR spectrum.

Therefore, if man-made CO₂ causes dangerous global warming, (a dubious proposition anyway), then man-made water vapour is far more dangerous.

The two main electricity generation fuels in Australia are coal and gas. Coal is a dense fuel with a high carbon content which, when burnt, produces mainly CO₂ with some water vapour. Natural gas has more hydrogen and less carbon and produces a higher proportion of water vapour, the main greenhouse gas.

Thus if the climate alarmists are really scared of man-made greenhouse gases, they should be promoting coal instead of gas or systems that need 100% gas backup, such as wind. Gas generates copious quantities of both “greenhouse gases”.

And if they believe a tax on man-made greenhouse gases will control the climate, a tax on steam makes more sense than a tax on carbon dioxide.

Finally, if they want "zero emissions" of either greenhouse gas, the only significant energy sources that qualify are nuclear, hydro and geothermal. Naturally the only one unlikely to prove widely useful in Australia, geothermal, is the only one promoted by the greens.

Maybe the climatists are not fair dinkum?

Or maybe the whole man-made global warming scare is an unscientific fraud?

(For a look at how well the IPCC forecasts of dangerous man-made global warming are working out see here: <http://c3headlines.typepad.com/a/6a010536b58035970c017744c486c3970d-pj>)

The Last Word

“Why have we not noticed effects of the carbon tax? – they planned it that way.”

It was foolish of some politicians to give the impression that there would be dramatic consequences on Day 1 of the carbon tax era. The Green Coalition now governing Australia is dangerous and destructive, but they are not stupid. Their goal for this session of Parliament was to entrench the carbon tax quietly onto our law books and into our psyche. So they planned carefully to have no dramatic consequences for carbon tax opponents to latch onto. The method was to over-compensate most consumers with handouts, exempt most producers from tax liabilities, provide free emission credits liberally and then back off from some of the extreme demands and high tax rates. Nothing can be allowed to rock the boat until the next election is over. Then the screws can be tightened slowly.

All of the jobs losses, industry closures and deferments, and increasing costs for power and food will occur, but slowly so no one will notice that they all have a common cause. And in electricity costs, many of the costs of the climate change policies occurred BEFORE the carbon tax was introduced.

And it is not just the carbon tax we should fear. For example, the Twitter Generation will blame “Climate Change” for the coming food shortages. Climate change has always affected food production. But droughts do end, floods do recede and farmers always recover from natural weather extremes. But “Climate Change Policies” will cause a continuing food crisis. And unlike real droughts and floods, this crisis will not end with a change in the weather. The destruction of our ability to produce food by ethanol subsidies and mandates, Kyoto scrub clearing bans, carbon credit forests and the creeping paralysis of “protected land, heritage and habitat” will have a far more insidious effect.

Listen to the story below of how the Yuppie Clothing Corporation, R M Williams, is benefitting itself at the expense of struggling Qantas by destroying our ability to produce beef. Ask yourself – “Can we continue this foolishness forever?”

<http://kzoo.co/VfEZvW>

The alarmists are still alive in Parliament. We may even see Rudd in the red corner and Turnbull in the blue corner, supported by their ranks of academic mercenaries, all promoting an emissions trading scheme. We are pawns in this battle. But anyone who plays chess knows that you cannot stop an attacking pawn, and he never retreats – you can only kill him. We and a few other lonely skeptic pawns will continue to oppose these destructive and pointless climate policies. Please help us spread the word. If you do nothing else, copy and distribute “The Last Word” with the link to this hard hitting video clip.

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PS We have had three weeks of electronic chaos because someone sent us a virus which killed our main computer. We may have lost some members and may be sending to some who have asked to “Unsubscribe”. If so, apologies in advance, and please let us know again. Pls also make sure we are an “allowed sender”, or check your “Junk Mail” folder. And let us know when you change your email address.

“Carbon Sense” is a newsletter produced by the Carbon Sense Coalition, an Australian based organisation which opposes waste of resources, opposes pollution, and promotes the rational and sustainable use of carbon energy and carbon food.

Please spread “Carbon Sense” around.

For more information visit our web site at www.carbon-sense.com

Literary, financial or other contributions to help our cause are welcomed.

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How to Create an Intermittent and Costly Electricity Supply Industry.

“Large wind farms are being built to take advantage of subsidies, mandated market shares, guaranteed prices and/or government contracts. But because the wind always supplies intermittent energy, everything else on the power grid is forced to also become intermittent. It happens this way:

“When the wind blows, the incremental cost of electricity produced is zero and wind power therefore forces other higher cost generators to temporarily close. They also become intermittent suppliers. This results in costly capital assets earning insufficient revenue to cover debt servicing and standby costs. Investors hesitate to build new facilities, so the supply industry itself risks becoming intermittent because of brownouts or blackouts.

“Once we have intermittent supply it must be matched by “intermittent demand” – some consumers will find their power rationed or shut off by smart meters.

Welcome to the cold, dark, green world.”

Viv Forbes

I acknowledge Professor Dieter Helm, Professor of Energy Policy at Oxford University, for his insight on how wind power spreads its intermittency germ throughout the electricity supply industry. Reported in CCNet 17/9/2012.