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COUNCIL FOR THE NATIONAL INTEREST

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN COMMITTEE



SPRING NEWSLETTER – September 2013

Federal Election Outcome

At time of writing the Liberal National Coalition (Coalition) has a clear majority of 34 seats in the House of Representatives with only one seat still in doubt.

The situation in the Senate is not so clear due to the large number of 'minor party' and independent candidates and the cascading effect of preferences. Although the Coalition has not achieved a majority in the Senate and is unlikely to do so when the new Senators take office on July 1 next year it seems likely that the newly elected minor party senators will be more conservative leaning than not. Possible new Senators from Family First Party, the Australian Sports Party, the Motoring Enthusiast Party, Liberal Democratic Party and Palmer United Party could provide fertile ground for Mr Abbott to negotiate support for his policy initiatives.

Mr Abbott's need for the support of these Senators will depend on whether the Labor and Green Senators act in contradiction of the clear will of the electorate which voted for the abolition of the Carbon Tax and the Mineral Resources Rent Tax.

Hopefully, the Greens and Labor will have the good sense and integrity to allow the passing of the Bills to abolish these taxes now and thus give certainty to business and reduce energy costs for all Australians.

Please don't think that CNI is connected to the Coalition. No! CNI receives no support from any political party nor does it support any political party. We are non-party political and we lobby all parties fearlessly in our endeavours to build a better Australia for future generations.

As we have mentioned previously we believe that Australia could not afford the Rudd/Gillard/Rudd Government to remain in office a moment longer. The task facing the Abbott Government to rein in government debt and government waste and duplication and the growth of the bureaucracy without damaging the economy is a massive challenge.

Public Forum – Who's really running Australia?

This forum was held on July 23rd, 2013. The keynote speaker was Nick Cater, a widely experience commentator and columnist and author of "The Lucky Culture". Mr Cater argued that Australia's spirit of egalitarianism, which evolved from the over-riding principle of fairness ie, everybody had a right to a fair go and was obliged to do the right thing by others is now being threatened by the rise of a new breed of sophisticated Australians who claim to better understand the demands of the age. Their presumption of superior virtue tempts them to look down on others and assert the right to rule. The forum was well attended and Mr Cater fielded many questions from those present.

Islamisation

This topic has been raised previously in our newsletters. It should be of real concern to all Australians that there is evidence to suggest that Australia's first suicide bomber was a Brisbane family man. He is believed to have blown himself up in a truck in Syria acting on behalf of the al-Nursa Front, which is affiliated with Al Qa'ida and is a proscribed terrorist organization in Australia and which claimed responsibility for the bombing. Australian counter terrorism authorities are increasingly concerned at the number of Australians involved in the Syrian conflict. They say that there are about 80 and that 20% of these are fighting with al-Nursa Front. About 70% of the total are known to counter terrorism authorities in Australia.

The real concern is that these people are likely to become radicalized and will be prone to initiate and or participate in jihadist activities in Australia when they return.

Political Lobbying

The main focus of CNI over the next few months will be lobbying. This will involve two thrusts. Firstly we will lobby the new Coalition government in Canberra to try to achieve adoption of CNI policy initiatives. Secondly, CNI will lobby new and Independent senators to support these policy initiatives should they be adopted and go to the Senate for debate and decision.

In this regard we attach a list of "Policy Suggestions for Liberal/National Coalition for Federal Election 2013". These were sent to all Coalition Senators and members of the House of Representatives in the lead up to the election. As you read through the list you will note that a number of suggestions were picked up by the Coalition. These include food security, review of the school curriculum, strengthening fiduciary responsibilities of union officials, foreign companies to pay fair tax etc. Separate but appropriate policy suggestions were also sent to Labor, Greens and Independents.

Policy Discussion Group

This group remains active and meets usually once a month to share ideas and coffee and cake. New members are most welcome. If interested, please call Denis Whitely on 0430 147 049.

Contact

We would welcome the email addresses, of members and supporters, where these are not already held. This makes contact so much easier. Please email to address above.

Subscriptions

If you have not paid a subscription for this membership year commencing 1st April, we would appreciate your support now. Perhaps you would like to make a donation this will be very welcome. In either case please use the form enclosed.

27th September 2013

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Policy Suggestions for Federal Election 2013

The over-riding objective, of these policy proposals, is to build a more inclusive Australia by providing incentives to reduce dependency on welfare; to enhance productivity; to reduce the role and size of the bureaucracy and the cost of the Federal Government using the resultant savings to pay off Federal Government debt.

The successful prosecution of these policies and the achievement of the objective will be a major step forward for Australia to avoid catching the Eurozone disease, symptoms of which are excessive and unaffordable government debt; excessive and unaffordable government bureaucracy and excessive and unaffordable welfare programmes.

The borrowing and spending policies of the Rudd/Gillard Governments are unsustainable and as a consequence of these policies the nation's growth level is unsustainable in the long term.

Of major importance also, is the need to put in place policies which will ensure long term food security, energy security and liquid fuel security for Australia.

FAMILY

- Reintroduce a Family Impact Statement (FIS) to accompany all legislative submissions to Cabinet. This will detail any adverse consequences flowing from the proposed legislation and the steps to be taken to ameliorate these.
- The FIS must become a public document free from the concept of 'Cabinet confidentially'.
- Remove any discrimination against the single income family, where one parent remains home to care for the children versus the two income family where the children are put into daycare at taxpayers' expense. Support these single income families with tax relief and financial allowances as compensation for the sacrifices they make to raise the next generation of Australians.
- Scale down the Coalition's expensive 'paid parental leave' policy. It is a 'Rolls Royce' policy, which cannot be afforded in the light of the Gillard Government's massive debt build-up.
- Focus family and children's policy to provide optimum support in the first three years of the child's life. Part of this support would be to restore the baby bonus to be paid in instalments as important milestones are achieved eg at birth; when immunization stages are met etc.
- Work with the State Ministers to review the Year 1 – 12 school curriculum and reverse the current philosophy of 'normalising' gay, lesbian and other un-natural behaviour.
- Promote and strengthen traditional marriage.
- Commence a dialogue with the 'computer games' and TV industries with the objective of eliminating the exposure of young people to the violence in these.

ENERGY/Global Warming aka Climate Change

- Scrap the tax on carbon dioxide (CO2) and the intended Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS)

- Scrap all aspects of the Clean Energy Future legislation and related programmes.
- Scrap the Renewable Energy Targets (RET).
- Withdraw from the Kyoto protocol and all related initiatives including the recent agreement, written into the global climate accord for the first time, to give financial aid for poor countries for the “loss and damage” they suffer from extreme weather events. Australia’s sovereignty is weakened by the legally binding nature of the Kyoto protocol and related instruments.
- Scrap the Department of Climate Change and the Climate Commission.
- Promote the use of coal fired power generation using the latest clean technologies.
- Promote and facilitate the coal, particularly brown coal, to liquids technology to achieve liquid transport fuel security in the light of declining world oil supplies.
- Carefully promote the Coal Seam Gas industry toward achieving energy self sufficiency but, in the process, respect all stakeholders.
- Mandate that gas producers reserve a big proportion of new gas fields for domestic use at well below world prices. This applies to both Commonwealth and State gas fields. (See Industry Policy below)
- Completely reject the Coalition’s Direct Action Plan. The objective of reducing CO2 levels is misguided. The RET and related policies are largely uneconomic. People should be free to pursue such technologies as solar energy but not at the expense of their fellow citizens, through taxpayer grants or higher user costs.
- Limit any government money, for renewable energy programmes, to ‘research only’ with no production subsidies. The objective would be for the research to eventually develop cost competitive renewable energy.
- Take note of the changing dynamics of ‘global warming’ now ‘climate change’ but actually ‘global cooling’ with no rational basis for ‘alarmist’ predicted sea level rises; accordingly adopt a HAZ NET approach as advocated in Fact Sheet – Climate Change (attached). Refer also to “IPCC climate alarm advocacy has failed: what’s Plan B?” R M Carter, National Observer, Summer 2008/2009.
- Work with State Ministers to ensure that the Curriculum material relating to ‘climate change’ is balanced and sound NOT biased in favour of the IPCC reports and unproven Climate Commission “guesses”.

NB The Gillard Government appears to have suppressed the Report 117 “Transport Energy Futures: Long-term Oil Supply Trends and Projections” (March 2009). Refer News Weekly April 28, 2012. The implications of this Report raise grave concerns about the declining world oil production. Additionally, Australia’s reliance on imported fuel oil for its vast transport needs would see the country shut down within three weeks if its oil and fuel supplies were cut off. This situation is simply unacceptable. Refer to NRMA commissioned report on the nation’s liquid fuel security, The Australian newspaper, February 28, 2013.

TOWARDS A MORE INCLUSIVE AUSTRALIA

- Review and overhaul all welfare programmes with a view to building in incentives for the recipients to become self supporting wherever possible. This would include work for the dole; employment-education transition programmes from unemployed to employed; a fair and balanced approach to loss of other benefits when a dole or other welfare recipient obtains employment.

- Develop these policies in consultation with the Industry and Business to build an employment partnership. Ensure the inclusion of indigenous people.
- Specifically enhance employment opportunities for people with disabilities and provide incentives to employers. Work with States, who have successful disability services policies, such as Western Australia, with a view to enhancing these and developing them in other States. This should be the preferred policy rather than a National Disability Insurance Scheme, which is unaffordable and difficult to establish and manage in such a way as it is free from rorting.
- Reject the Nicola Roxon Bill to combine anti-discrimination laws as, if enacted, freedom of speech in Australia will be severely damaged and democracy threatened.

AGRICULTURE POLICY/FOOD SECURITY/FOOD SAFETY

- It is critical for Australia's long term food security that the next Australian Government implements an Agriculture Policy. The objective is to provide a level playing field for Australia's farmers, graziers, horticulturists and other producers. A protectionist policy is not advocated but Australia must develop policies and strategies to offset the subsidized production coming from our trading partner nations.
- Reduce to nil the Foreign Investment Review Board level for foreign investment in farming land and thus put a stop to it. Thereafter work with the States to revise the arrangements and processes for foreign ownership of Australia's farming properties. The objective should be to allow leasehold only and then only on terms which will serve the interest of the State and Australia's national interest and be subject to a State Agreement. (In Western Australia thousands of hectares of productive agricultural land have been acquired by a Chinese state-owned corporation with no benefit spelt out for WA.)
- This is particularly important where the foreign investor seeks to practice a 'vertical integration' model resulting in the end product being marketed, totally, in the foreign country.
- Prevent monopolistic predatory pricing, which has the real threat to drive producers out of business and thus threaten food security. (There is something inherently wrong with the operation of the free market economy when two major supermarket chains, with a total of 70-80% of the food retail market in Australia, can conduct a price war, which if not halted, will drive Australia's whole-milk producers out of business.)
- Overhaul Foods Standards Australia and New Zealand (FSANZ) to ensure that world's best practice is adopted in relation to food safety with particular attention to food additives, colours etc.
- Change the focus of BioSecurity from facilitating/promoting import trade to the protection of Australian products from imported diseases.
- Provide the resources to AQIS to properly check and monitor imports to prevent, totally, diseased and or poisonous or chemically contaminated produce from being imported to Australia.

- Prohibit imports of produce, for example from China, being processed in another country eg Canada or New Zealand and then being labeled “Product of Canada” or “Product of New Zealand” when exported to Australia.

INDUSTRY POLICY

- Take steps now to manage the free market economy in the national interest:
 - (i) High Australian Dollar(AUD) – impose a variable, non-discriminatory tax on all capital inflows. This will enable the Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) to continue to control inflation without an exchange rate that is severely handicapping many Australian industries. Arguably, if this is not done, either inflation will be ignited by further cuts in interest rates or, as is already happening, large sections of industry will be wiped out by a high AUD, which with a high cost base, makes businesses globally uncompetitive. (Refer to the work of PD Jonson, Adjunct Professor and former chief economist at the RBA reported in the Weekend Australian January 12-13, 2013.)
Once wiped out it is highly unlikely that these industries will re-emerge when the value of the AUD recedes.
 - (ii) Because the Australian currency is the preferred plaything of worldwide currency speculators there is ample justification for a tax on capital inflows.
 - (iii) Implement strategies for rebuilding Australia’s manufacturing industry. The Dow Chemical Company Advanced Manufacturing Plan for Australia as outlined by Mr Andrew Liveris, in an address to The National Press Club on October 17, 2012 is a very good example of a practical vision for Australia’s future manufacturing industry. Mr Liveris is Global President and CEO of Dow Chemical Company and a Co-Chairman of US President Obama’s Advanced Manufacturing Partnership.
The plan is not about protectionist policies but about encouraging “advanced manufacturing” by creating the right environment for manufacturing that is export competitive and dependent on innovation and by promoting partnerships among researchers, government and other firms.
One objective is to “increase investment in innovation, by lifting incentives for venture capital, co-operative research centres and the “D” end of R and D, to bridge the gap between Australia’s world-class research effort and its rate of commercialization.” This is where it will be vital to have access to cheap energy as referred to in ENERGY above.
It should be mandatory for all new gas producers, whether under federal or State licences and whether LNG or Coal Seam Gas (CSG) to reserve say 15% of production for use in Australia at a discounted price below the international market price. If Australia does not do so then within a few years imports of cheap CSG from USA will severely damage our economy.

- (iv) Investment of Superannuation in the national interest to support export manufacturing and import replacement industries. Refer to CNI Policy Discussion Paper “Australia – Closer to the Brink.”
- * Review and overhaul the Fair Work Act to achieve a fair balance. Involve the Business Council, Australian Industry Group and other such Associations with ACTU and Government in striving to achieve a balance between costs, productivity and fairness.
- Recharge strategic manufacturing export industries with private/public partnerships to achieve world’s best practice so that these vital industries can then continue to compete globally.
- Reform the superannuation industry to create a National Savings and Retirement Fund to be invested in the national interest. Refer CNI policy discussion paper op cit. In the process, Union management of industry super funds will be removed as is only proper.
- Overhaul Union management and supervision to make Union Office Bearers accountable to the same set of prudential and ethical standards as company directors. Such a requirement may well have deterred the rorts at HSU and AWU.
- Put in place mechanisms and procedures to ensure that all foreign companies, investing and operating in Australia, pay a fair share of income tax and do not unfairly siphon off income to foreign destinations. If necessary, set a minimum tax rate payable on gross revenue.
- Review all Free Trade Agreements to ensure that they are in fact “Free and Fair”. The US/Aus FTA is a case in point it is not a fair agreement and has resulted in Australia incurring a massive and growing trade deficit with the USA.

GOVERNMENT-FEDERATION-BUREAUCRACY-COAG

- Take steps to reverse the trend to centralization of all aspects of government in Canberra.
- Reverse the growth of duplication of bureaucracies, committees and overview organizations (QUANGOS) and achieve billions of dollars of savings.
- Start to hand back decision making powers to the States to encourage economic efficiency and the pursuit of excellence rather than the centralized uniformity leading to mediocrity. Health and Education would be a good starting point.
- Encourage harmonization of State laws but accept that there are justifiable differences.
- Overhaul COAG and build a co-operative ‘Federation’ rather than a Federal dictatorial stance, which seems to be the case currently.
- Discontinue any attempt to include Local Government in the Australian Constitution.
- Review all of the Rudd/Gillard Government United Nations initiatives. Terminate or qualify those which are not achieving a worthwhile purpose eg the buying of votes to seek support for a seat on the UN Security Council. Resign from this position. Another example is the commitment of \$96.4m for the world’s first and only Global Ambassador for Women and Girls established in the Pacific region.

- The review should extend to all such treaties, protocols and accords to ensure that they are still relevant and to claw back Australia's sovereignty where this has been weakened.
- Change the Treaty Making Process so that all of these instruments must be approved by the House of Representatives and by a two thirds majority of the Senate before they signed or ratified.
- Review the vast number of not for profit organizations (NFPO), which receive government funding or enjoy 'Income Tax Exemption and/or Tax Deductible Gift status'. Withdraw funding, income tax exemption and tax deductibility, where the activities of the NFPO are contrary to the national interest, eg the many environmental or 'green' groups involved in a radical strategy to sabotage Australian coal mines, railways and ports. Refer Byrne, Patrick J, News Weekly, March 31, 2012.
- Address the emerging threat of radical 'Islamisation'.
 - (i) Reverse instances where Sharia Law has been recognized eg some Family Court decisions.
 - (ii) Proscribe the extremist Islamic organization Hisb ut Tahrir in Australia.
 - (iii) Review government funding and tax deductible status of Islamic organizations and where their activities are clearly not in the national interest or are being rorted, discontinue funding and tax deductibility.
 - (iv) Encourage all migrants and refugees to embrace the Australian way, to speak English and seek to fit themselves for work. Repatriate any who are convicted of a criminal offence.

ELECTORAL REFORM

- Change the Electoral Act to
 - (i) Provide for identification of voters at the polling booth.
 - (ii) Provide that postal vote papers, when sent out to voters by politicians, must be returned direct to the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) not to the politician.
 - (iii) Implement a wide ranging ongoing education campaign, by the AEC, directed at the youth and new Australians, to inform them of their responsibility to enroll.
 - (iv) Close the Electoral Roll on the day that the writs are issued for an election.
 - (v) Scrap the "Automatic Electoral Enrolment" on eighteenth birthday proposed by the Gillard Government.

6th February, 2013