

The appropriateness, effectiveness and efficiency of the Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments' business support and income support measures provided to help manage drought by the Hawke, Keating and Howard Federal Government's has been absolutely appalling, totally inadequate and does absolutely nothing to take care of massive debts accumulated by this community sector. During the last 15 to 20 years of drought, climate change and under today's huge cost structure and dismal low commodity prices will change absolutely nothing for this sectors benefit, if continued, will only allow this community sectors present horrific debt levels to escalate at a more rapid and alarming pace.

The present Prime Minister's reply to a statement made on behalf of most rural and regional Australians by the Australian of the Year, Mr Leigh Kearnegan proves the present Prime Minister and Minister for Primary Industry are being advised by economists and others who do not know what they are talking about or they are very happy to see and let this sectors debts continue to rise at an alarming rate.

The Prime Minister's response was absolutely appalling, very weak and not ready to announce any measures or policy change to effectively bring Australia's rural sector out of the depths of despair where it is a present, to the vibrant sector he has stated he wishes to be Prime Minister of.

The Primary Industry Minister's gleeful out pouring witnesses during the last 2 days of the last Parliamentary term were absolutely appalling and reeked of total incompetence where he stated the present Government was going to set the sector up for economic recovery with a totally ludicrous and excruciatingly stupid small amount of money to be spent over 4 years, mind you.

The impediments of present Labour Party Policy are the major factor that will never allow or improve self-reliance and preparedness for periods of financial difficulty to occur.

The most appropriate, effective and efficient Commonwealth, State and Territory Government response to build self-reliance and preparedness to manage drought, must begin by repaying to farmers, farm businesses and farm dependent rural small businesses, the amount of tax losses registered with the Australian Taxation Office at the present time. Only businesses whose value is less than \$10 million would be eligible.

Those businesses which qualify must be reimbursed by Treasury 40% in the 1<sup>st</sup> year, 30% in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year and 30% in the 5<sup>th</sup> year, to reduce pressure on the National Budget and will provide portion of the sectors financial requirements to commence an economic recovery.

I have been completing Government financial and productivity surveys for at least 55 of my 74 year life, none of them have been the answer to the Rural and Regional sectors financially escalating debt, massive rise in input costs, low commodity prices or reverse the trend where property infrastructure maintenance on most farms is about 15 years behind schedule.

Decades of totally appropriate Government advice must end – talkfest's must end – surveys must end – and positive action implemented without delay to make debt reduction a reality to secure and improve the sectors property equity to provide finance for superannuation and guarantee a future fund for the sector to operate more financially secure and to adequately compete against climate change and droughts of all dimensions and encourage young people to enter the sectors industries and businesses.

Government's have taxed Australian's to provide a Superannuation Future Fund for the bureaucracy, presently amounting close to \$100 billion, to benefit those who do the nations paper work, research and pass on useless advice to Government's in too many cases.

Child care and baby bonuses are costing the taxpayer \$15 to \$20 billion per year.

The Indigenous Australians receive \$4 to 5 billion per year.

Government is running with a Budget surplus of \$17 to 27 billion and it would appear to me, the bureaucracy are attempting to advise the Government to provide too little drought support to the Rural and Regional sector and the sector should somehow provide its own financial security to overcome drought and financial downturns of the industry. Is this fair and equitable and socially acceptable when the bureaucracy has had provided for them, a Superannuation Future Fund of close to \$100 billion at present???

I recommend implementation immediately, of a plan or policy similar to what I put forward to commence a debt crisis recovery phase, to be incorporated in Government Policy now.

John Uebergang