

I look now to the CSIRO—and it is a shame the minister has just left the chamber. In 2008, Senator Carr very sensibly gave the CSIRO a new charter to protect academic freedom, stating that Australian scientists should be able to contribute their personal opinions to public debate. Unfortunately, what happened when respected CSIRO scientist Dr Clive Spash tried recently to question the emissions trading scheme? He was gagged by the CSIRO senior management on the basis of the same charter that Senator Carr had given them on the grounds that Australian scientists should be able to contribute their opinions. His contribution to the debate was to argue that economic theory underpinning emissions trading is far removed from the reality of market permits. I will quote him:

While carbon trading and offset schemes seem set to spread, they so far seem ineffective in terms of actually reducing GHG's ... Despite this apparent failure, ETS remain politically popular amongst the industrialised polluters.

He could have added banks. He went on to say:

The public appearance is that action is being undertaken. The reality—

according to Dr Spash—

is that GHGs are increasing and society is avoiding the need for substantive proposals to address the problem ...

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He is one of our most respected scientists and he wanted to say that publicly. He was gagged from doing so. Where is the cowardice in that? What we have to know is that this emissions trading scheme, this bill, will not change anybody's behaviour and will have no improving effect on world carbon, greenhouse gas or, indeed, importantly, environmental sustainability.

In my contribution to this debate in June, I pointed out that the government had refused to release any Treasury modelling on what the impact would be on Australia if our trading competitors and partners did not participate. I simply do not believe that professional Treasury officials did not do that modelling. If they have not, they are derelict, but this government must now demand they do it and they must release it. I call on them to do so. Some Treasury data was, of course, recently made available for the community to scrutinise. The bottom line is that its own modelling shows that the ETS will have little or no impact on the coal-fired electricity generation industry in our lifetime.

The Australia Institute CEO, Dr Richard Denniss, hardly a person from our side, stated:

What she—

Senator Wong—

doesn't tell us is that her CPRS, complex and impenetrable as it is, does not actually result in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from our coal-fired power stations.

He went on to say:

The CPRS is complex, expensive and ineffective. The government's strategy—

and these are his words—

is to suggest to voters that they are taking significant action on climate change while simultaneously allowing them to assure industry that they aren't really doing anything. It may or not turn out to be a well-designed political tool, but as a policy tool it is an enormous distraction.

So then we have the issue of what the Prime Minister is doing about it. Who is he protecting, and for how long? He says he is going to protect low-socioeconomic families but he does not tell them openly that it is only for a two-year period. What is he doing for self-funded retirees? And who is missing out again on any sort of support in this ill-considered legislation? Who will bear the burden of it? It is, naturally enough, the engine room of this economy: small business people and middle-income Australians. They are the ones who provide the employment and take the risks out of their own pockets and in their own businesses. They are the ones who will be slugged on this occasion.

In June of this year I made a comment in this place. It has recently been picked up by community leaders and economists. Bill Evans, the senior economist from Westpac, said only recently that if Australia 'genuinely wants to reduce global carbon emissions, we should be investing heavily in research and development in those areas where we can make a difference'. He agreed with me that Australian research organisations and industry have a strong record in this area. The results of that R&D could be sold to wealthy countries to recover and invest further and could be given by Australia as a wealthy country to the developing countries as our contribution. The point being made is that this will have a far greater effect on the 1.5 per cent.

I conclude with reference to the fact that it is a remarkable coincidence that this conference in December is to be held in Copenhagen, the spiritual home of the fairytale teller Hans Christian Andersen. We all know of the fable *The Emperor's New Clothes*. For those who need reminding, it is of the emperor who cares for nothing but his own wardrobe. He hires two so-called weavers—swindlers—and they promise to make him the finest suit of clothes. The only problem is

that it is invisible. The emperor sends his ministers along to see how the job is going. The ministers think, 'Well, I can't possibly stand up and say there is nothing there; I will go back and I will join in the rort.' He sends advisers and the advisers do the same thing. As we all know, what ends up happening is a parade. All the people want to see this wonderful exercise. The people cheer, hoot, carry on and clap and only one little boy in the crowd says to his dad, 'The emperor has no clothes.'

What is the plot? It is an arrogant emperor who placed his own vanity ahead of national interests, two swindlers who saw him for what he was, demand by them for resources that would rob the people of their assets, sycophantic advisers and colleagues who perpetuated the myth, a crowd looking for leadership and an innocent bystander who himself was not a coward. We all know we need change. I am here to say that this bill will not deliver that change.