



Australian Adam Smith Club (Melbourne)

President: Michael Warby, Editor: Regina Bron, P.O. Box 950, Hawthorn, 3122

In large states public education will always be mediocre, for the same reason that in large kitchens the cooking is usually bad.
F. W. Nietzsche: Human All-too-Human (1878)

Mark Lopez

on

Surviving Your Teachers: What Students Face And How To Deal With It

**The Adam Smith Club will host a dinner meeting on Wednesday the 23rd of July 2008,
at the Malvern Vale Club Hotel, 1321 Malvern Rd, Malvern 3144.**

Mark Lopez is the author of *The Origins of Multiculturalism in Australian Politics*, MUP, 2000. Recently, he has written articles on problems in the education system regarding ideological bias and teacher quality for *Quadrant*, *News Weekly*, *IPA Review*, and *The Australian*. His new book *The Little Black School Book* (due out in August) is about empowering the individual to deal with an education system that presents many hazards for the unwary. Although merit, reason, and originality can bring benefits in grades in subjectively assessed humanities subjects like English, in reality students are often best rewarded for matching their teacher's biased opinions and possibly also their somewhat irrational thinking, rather than for displaying independently-minded objective research and cogent, logical reasoning.

Attendance is open to both members and non-members. Those desiring to attend should complete the attached slip and return it to the Club no later than Monday the 21st of July 2008. Tickets will not be sent. Those attending should arrive at 6:30pm for dinner at 7:00pm. The cost is \$35.00 per head for members and \$40.00 per head for non-members (see next page for explanation of arrangements and for electronic booking details).

**Enquiries to Ms Regina Bron, tel. 9859 8277 (AH) or mob. 0412 006 786 (BH)
or email asmith@economic-justice.org**



detach and return

The Secretary,
Australian Adam Smith Club (Melbourne),
PO Box 950, Hawthorn, Victoria 3122.

Please reserve place(s) at \$35.00 dollars per member andplace(s) at \$40.00 per non-member for the July 23rd meeting of the Australian Adam Smith Club. I enclose the amount of \$..... in payment for the same.

NAME (please print):

ADDRESS:

SIGNATURE: TEL:

LAISSEZ FAIRE ON THE WEB

This newsletter has an address on the web: <http://www.economic-justice.org/asmith.htm>. The Institute for Economic Justice has been created by David Sharp a former president (and current committee member) and Timothy Warner the current Treasurer of the Club. As stated on the web site, 'The Institute has been founded to assist those who have been subject to economic injustice, and to increase both public and professional awareness of remedies available under the Law.'

ELECTRONIC PAYMENTS

By popular demand, the AASC now offers electronic booking and payment to dinner meetings. Bookings can be made by emailing the number of members and non-members attending to asmith@economic-justice.org; a reply email from the club will then be sent with a link to PayPal where the payment can be made by Mastercard, Visa, AMEX, Diners or PayPal Account. Bookings made after Monday 21st of July will not be accepted online. FEES - a \$2 card fee will apply for the transaction.

FARM LOBBIES ABANDON FARMERS

The Carbon Sense Coalition (30/6/08) accused the big farming lobby groups, government departments, politicians and Ministers representing agriculture of ignoring science and abandoning farmers to unjustified carbon taxation.

The chairman of "Carbon Sense", Mr Viv Forbes, claimed that there was no justification whatsoever for including emissions from farm animals in any carbon emissions tax scheme. "Every intelligent farmer can understand the carbon food cycle whereby every bit of carbon dioxide released by farm animals or plants into the atmosphere has previously been removed from the same atmosphere."

"This simple process is surely not beyond the understanding of all the lobbyists, bureaucrats, researchers and media living off farmers? In the farm sector carbon balance, apart from any fossil fuel used, it is a zero sum game, and all farm animals have ZERO NET CARBON EMISSIONS."

"Grazing animals have not yet learned to live on coal or diesel fuel, and they cannot create carbon out of rocks, soil or water. Therefore they must extract it, via grasses and grains, from that marvelous gas of life in our atmosphere, carbon dioxide. All foods and organic matter represent carbon that has been sequestered by life processes into living matter. The carbon is simply recycled at ZERO COST."

"Farm plants and animals are every bit as green as forests. Both farms and forests extract carbon from the air and store it in organic life forms until that organic matter is burnt or decays in the open air, thus returning their borrowed carbon to the atmospheric storehouse. Why then do those who grow forests attract a carbon credit but those who grow cattle and sheep cop a carbon tax?"

"Australia and New Zealand lead the world in harvesting solar energy and carbon dioxide to produce an abundance of clean green food. Why then are both the New Zealand and the Australian governments proposing to force farm animals into their emissions trading quagmire? And why are they subsidising the conversion of farmland producing food into forests producing nothing but carbon credits or crops producing ethanol motor fuel? What are future generations going to eat?"

Forbes claimed that farmers need to start agitating now or they risk being the only bunnies still paying carbon taxes.

"Motorists who vote and use petrol will escape the carbon tax by sleight of hand - petrol excise will in future be called "carbon tax". Exporters will get an exemption to enable them to compete with more sensible regimes with no carbon taxes. Other protected species like working families in marginal electorates will get subsidies to cover carbon taxes on electricity bills. Truckies will blockade the roads if politicians add carbon tax to diesel prices. That leaves farmers as the only big group with so few votes and such incompetent leadership that they will pay the carbon tax."

"Farmers have been abandoned by Ag Force, the Meat and Livestock Authority, CSIRO, the National Party, our "working families" Government and most of the similar organisations in New Zealand. It is not clear whether this is because of a lack of scientific logic or cowardice in the face of electoral hysteria on global warming."

"But the politicians representing the treasured "working families" in the battling suburbs had better start taking notice of rising food prices or a more soundly based hysteria about the growing shortage of food will sweep emissions trading nonsense from the political landscape." www.carbon-sense.com

VENUE ARRANGEMENTS

At the Malvern Vale Hotel, a private room upstairs (to the right through main restaurant entrance when entering from Malvern Rd) has been reserved. There is NO BYO at this venue. Drinks are at bar prices. Car Parking is available on Malvern Rd from 6.30pm and in the car park at rear. The No. 72 tram stops outside. The Tooronga Station is 400m away. We hope these arrangements do not cause inconvenience and we welcome your feedback.

Laissez Faire

Newsletter of the Australian Adam Smith Club (Melbourne), No 87, July 2008



RON PAUL MAKING WAVES IN U.S. ELECTION

Ron Paul is a Republican candidate for the President of the United States. Never heard of him? Few Australians have, but he is the biggest threat to John McCain in the Republican camp. His book on the Ron Paul Revolution has topped the New York Times best seller list.

What is going on here? Ron Paul has been filtered out by the Australian media. Apart from a few mentions in the “quality press,” nothing has been heard from him; despite the fact he polled over 20 percent of the vote in the Republican Idaho primary and regularly polled ten percent elsewhere. There is talk of him being on the ticket as John McCain’s running mate.

Why is he so far off the Australian radar? Because he doesn’t fit into any convenient category. American politics can be broken down into four main categories – the Left, the liberals, the conservatives and the libertarians. The first three are represented in Australia – the libertarians are almost unknown in elective politics. Apart from a few oddities like John Singleton’s Worker’s Party, they have had almost no electoral profile – and less impact.

Ron Paul is a doctor, specializing in obstetrics. Despite serving as a Republican Congressman, he has managed to deliver over 4,000 babies – many of whom are now his constituents in the coastal south Texas electorate he represents. He has seen off fierce challenges from both Republicans and Democrats. Paul believes that America should not be bound by “foreign entanglements.” This means closing down all U.S. bases overseas and defending the homeland by building a fence along the U.S.-Mexican border. Illegal immigrants arriving in the U.S. would be immediately deported. The Constitution would be amended so being born in America would not be a guarantee of U.S. citizenship, doing away with so-called “anchor babies” – babies that give their illegal immigrant parents an argument for staying in the United States.

Paul would abolish the federal Department of Education – along with a raft of other federal agencies – and hand back power to the states. He supports home schooling. He believes that all Americans should have the “right to bear arms” and that restrictions – such as there are – on gun ownership should be lifted. He says that Americans are defenceless on commercial aircraft because they cannot carry guns on board and that in the event of a high jacking, the armed passengers and crew should fight it out with the terrorists.

When the U.S. went to war with Iraq, he was the only Republican to vote against it, although he did vote for action against the Taliban – while suggesting that the U.S. government should authorize “privateers” to attack America’s enemies.

The United Nations is on Paul’s hit list – he says the U.S. should quit the international organization -- and the U.S. should also withdraw from NATO. He is also an enthusiast for “hard money” – that is, a currency backed by gold.

Paul is unequivocally “pro life” – he believes life begins at conception – and is against the “federalisation” of abortion, meaning that he believes that abortion, along with drugs, should be a state matter.

While Paul’s “revolution” has spread like wildfire, fanned by the Internet and a veritable flood of individual donations, he has upset many people. His refusal to aid Israel has upset the Jewish lobby and his allergy to government welfare payments has put many black Americans offside, who claim Paul has made racist comments -- an allegation he denies. Paul wants to abolish income tax and fund the government in Washington through tariffs and other indirect taxes. One of his proudest boasts is to never have voted for a tax increase.

Apart from being assessed as being the most conservative member of Congress in the post-Depression era, Paul is also a shrewd politician, who looks after his constituents very well. He still practices as an obstetrician and refuses to accept federal funding, preferring to work pro-bono in cases of financial hardship.

George Bush has alienated many Americans with big spending and by prosecuting the Iraq war. He is seen as a captive of the “neo-conservatives” who want to use the power of the United States to pursue a wide range of foreign policy objectives. Presumptive Republican presidential candidate John McCain has alienated many traditional Republican voters by being “soft” on illegal immigration and his liberal stance on social issues. He also has been accused of favouring higher taxes.

Ron Paul cannot win the Republican presidential nomination, let alone the presidency. But if he endorses a third candidate, for example from the Libertarian Party, he could cost McCain votes in the West, where McCain must carry to win the presidency. You could hear more about Ron Paul yet. *JRB*

RON PAUL'S REVOLUTION

There is considerable interest in Ron Paul's latest book "The Revolution; A Manifesto". The Club has purchased a number of volumes and will be selling them at the dinner. Those attending will be able to purchase a copy for \$25, a considerable reduction on the Melbourne retail price.

A STATUE FOR FATHER

As this newsletter goes to press (July 4th) the Adam Smith Institute will be unveiling a statue to Adam Smith on the Royal Mile in Edinburgh, Scotland. Organised by the ASI and paid for by public subscription the unveiling will be attended by Dr Fred Hansen, ASI blogger and Australian Adam Smith Club member and his lovely wife Jutta. Such a public monument is overdue, and it is appropriate that private funds and effort have brought about this fitting commemoration. See www.adamsmith.org. *TW*

THE CONSEQUENCE OF KEYNES (AND BAD GOVERNMENT)

Now is the winter of our discontent. Despite record and rising prices for Australia's abundant natural resources, particularly iron and coal, house prices at an all time high with many homes worth well over a \$1 million and unemployment levels purportedly at a 20 year low it appears nonetheless that many of us are unhappy.

Of course, it may be that such perception is incorrect and that many of us are in fact not unhappy. Regardless there would appear to be any number of reasons why we should be unhappy. Constantly we are told that we have had it too good for too long; that our extravagant and irresponsible use of energy is causing the planet to heat up and that as a result we must spend much more to produce much less. In spite of enjoying what is allegedly the longest boom in economic history, average wages properly adjusted for inflation and imposts are probably no better off than they were 40 years ago and possibly

worse. Average debt levels are at an all time high. Inflation is rampant. And now the USA, the world's largest economy, on which so much of the rest of the world depends, is sliding into recession.

Consideration of the above factors or even 1 or 2 of them is likely to cause the typical adult to ask him or her self some questions, such as

- Am I likely to lose my job and if I do am I likely to find another or at least one that pays as well?

- If the answer to the above question causes concern then the next question might well be, could I continue my present lifestyle, pay my debts or even continue to support my family?

- Having answered the above questions it is likely that our typical adult will give some thought as to why the present circumstances have arisen and more importantly what should now be done about it?

While there are some particularly gloomy short term future predictions now

being openly canvassed in the Main Stream Media, the truth is of course no one really knows how bad, (or even how good), that short term future is likely to be. After all, as Adam Smith himself said, "There is a great deal of ruin in a nation". However what we are likely to have occur is an upsurge in cries that the system has failed, and that we must now embrace a new system.

The real danger is that the system which has bedevilled the world now for more than half a century, (in essence if not in detail, the system propounded by J M Keynes in his 1936 book "The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money") and which is a socialist system, will be branded and attacked as capitalism. It is time, it will be said, for the evil and failed capitalist system to be replaced by true socialism. If that unhappy fate is to be avoided, those of us who know better will have to do better. *DBS*

THE GARNAUT CATASTROPHE

The weekend newspapers devote many column inches to Professor Ross Garnaut's just released draft report (*Garnaut Climate Change Review*). The *Age's* (5/7/08) unquestioning regurgitation is still an interesting exercise in spin analysis. Garnaut is quoted as saying, "The most inappropriate response would be to delude ourselves, taking small actions that create an appearance of action, but which do not solve the problem." Setting aside the delusion that the 20th Century warming is human caused, this statement implies that the point of any action taken must be to solve the problem. Given that Australia's emissions of CO₂ are insignificant compared to the total global emissions; no actions Australia takes can solve the problem. If Australia were impossibly to

cease all emissions of CO₂, it would be made up in less than a year by the increase of emissions from China, let alone the rest of the world. Garnaut is aware of this but does not overtly say so. Instead the *Age* states that Garnaut "wants China locked into a global post-Kyoto reduction agreement by 2013." But China has already stated that it will not commit to any limits on its growth.

So what we have is a situation where Australia will take action that cannot solve the "problem", the inevitable result of which will be ... what? I didn't find anything in the newspapers to quantify the cost of any emissions trading scheme. A quick perusal of the 537 page draft report didn't show anything obvious. There was plenty on the purported costs of doing nothing. Apparently the costs of

doing something will have to wait till the final report. But given that the developing world nations have consistently stated that they will not cease growth to try to mitigate a problem caused by the developed world nations, an inevitable result of placing additional costs on the production of CO₂ (and thus energy production) will be to drive industry out of the country to where energy costs are cheaper. This will in turn cause unemployment. The amount of unemployment and destruction of industry will depend on the level of carbon taxation. But I have no delusion that Australia's standard of living will drop significantly. This will be a far greater catastrophe for the nation than any future human induced global warming. *MG*

VALE JOAN RYDON

Long time Club member Joan Rydon died on 29th April from the effects of pneumonia. A regular attendee at Club events for the last fifteen years she was an immensely accomplished and honoured academic. The first female professor at La Trobe University and the author of a number of foundation works on voting behaviour and procedures. The Kings College London Australian Studies fellowship is named in her honour. Her work with Albert Langer in publishing the limitations that the Electoral Acts demand of a citizen - in effect the compulsion for attendance rather than voting - earned her the enmity of many bureaucrats. At the final dinner she attended, the speaker Peter Faris QC noted that her question was the most pointed of the evening. She is survived by her son John Soper.