

**DELIVERING CLIMATE SECURITY:  
INTERNATIONAL SECURITY RESPONSES  
TO A CLIMATE CHANGED WORLD**

**INTRODUCTION**

**1. Continuing Debate over Climate Change**

- not everyone is convinced about there being a problem (eg the change in temperature may just be the sun getting hotter in one of its periodic cycles)
- even for those that agree that there is a problem created by humans, there is no agreement over the extent of the problem; by the time that there is agreement, the problem will be so far advanced that few remedial actions will work in time
- value of the “no regrets” approach: we should do more to protect the environment (refuse, reduce, recycle)
- defence/ security forces will themselves have to become more “green” eg cutting back on fuel consumption

**2. Australian Politics of Climate Change**

- Rudd may have promised too much: no matter what Australia does, in aggregate terms, Australia does not amount to much compared with (say) US and China; he has created unrealistic expectations of what Australia can do compared with what is actually required in US and China eg 80 per cent of cars sold in China are bought by first-time buyers (less than 10 per cent of US buyers are buying for the first time) and they do so to improve their way of life eg get their sons married off and so bring a daughter in law into the family
- this does not excuse Australians from taking action (after all, we can hardly complain about the US and China if we are not doing anything ourselves, especially since we are so bad individually on a per capita basis!) but we have to get Australia’s impact in global perspective
- Australian emissions trading etc could be like the long-running debate over scrapping protectionism: there were winners and losers and it was difficult to predict who would win or lose; it becomes an act of faith
- whatever the Rudd Government eventually proposes, the Senate is a difficult body through which to get major reforms: eg look at the GST and the horse-trading over excluding food – and the GST was simply a new tax

**3. 21<sup>st</sup> Century: “The Century of the Environment”**

- The Club of Rome: 20<sup>th</sup> Century: “century of economics”: we now know what works for economic growth
- 21<sup>st</sup> Century: “century of the environment”: environmental problems will force themselves upon us
  - speculation over climate change is now driven by both NGOs and the insurance industry
  - climate change as an issue is becoming self-sustaining; there may be periodic reductions in political salience but climate change will remain on the political radar screen: too many people now have too many interests in it and the issue itself is too big simply to be solved by a few immediate legislative changes
  - are our ancestors coming out of the ice to warn us?

#### **4. Is the Environment Striking Back?**

- four stages of humankind's relationship with the environment/ nature
- Pre-Modern: humans felt dwarfed by nature, often worshipped it, relied on it for food, with agriculture as the main human economic activity
- Early Modern: moving away from nature to live in the cities and work in the factories
- Late Modern: humans now powerful enough to subdue nature by damming rivers, cutting canals, removing the tops off mountains for mining
- current stage: nature is now striking back eg extreme weather events

#### **5. Karl von Clausewitz (1780-1831) Would Feel at Home in the Current Debate**

- Clausewitz saw the management of war as running a giant machine ("Early Modern" thinking)
- warned about the dangers of "friction" to the military machine
- he used weather as an example of "friction"

### **SOME OF THE SECURITY THREATS**

#### **6. Direct Security Threats**

- problem is emerging at a time of speculation about the earth running out of easily available raw materials (eg The Club of Rome and The Limits to Growth report, with a warning about the year 2040)
- more extreme weather events and larger insurance payouts; some areas may become uninsurable
- melting of the Polar ice caps
- gradual loss of low-lying islands
- loss of biodiversity, flora and fauna; changes in agricultural patterns
- increasing droughts and famines
- additional burdens for defence and police forces

#### **7. Indirect Security Threats**

- declining environmental standards will increase the number of "environmental refugees" and so there will be additional mass movement of peoples
- mass movement of peoples may trigger additional ethnic conflicts as peoples move onto the lands of others
- there will be anger among some of the general public who will feel that they "were not warned about" the changes; they will feel betrayed by politicians
- there will be a growing sense of despair and an increase in religious extremism

### **SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR RESPONSES**

#### **8. This is No Longer Just an "Environmental" Issue**

- "climate security" is an international political issue (it has been the subject of a UN Security Council meeting in April 2007) [if you want government action add "security" to your noun eg "water security", "superannuation security"!]
- therefore there is a need for a "whole of government" approach

### **9. Need for Greater Resilience**

- we may not be able to stop all the adverse events but we can respond better to them
- government to finance non-government/ business education projects to encourage resilience
- encouragement for this topic to be incorporated into television “soaps”
- learn from nurse Georgia Sadler’s campaign on women’s health (she educated the hairdressers)
- Winston Churchill in World War II: “You do your worst and we will do our best”

### **10. More Investment in Critical Infrastructure**

- Australia has under-invested in infrastructure for some years; this is now a good opportunity to reverse that trend
- there has been a wasted opportunity during the years of the economic boom that began in the early 1990s: the money went back to the citizens as tax cuts rather than an investment in the future
- medical facilities should be seen as part of the front line and so there should be increased expenditure on health
- the War on Terror could also have been used to reduce our addiction to oil
- buildings to have some of their own sources of power and water built within them as a security measure (eg solar collectors to generate electricity and then if necessary sell the surplus to the grid: “feed in tariffs”, recycling of “black water” eg Melbourne’s Council House Two): a “green” building is a “safer one”

### **11. New Employment Opportunities**

- education/ training for completely new jobs eg Perth’s experience with hydrogen powered buses
- new careers: eg carbon forensic accounting: making sure that the carbon records are accurate (and new police work as well)
- appointment of a “carbon master” (like a CIO/ “webmaster”) to monitor developments: (a) within the organization and gather staff suggestions and (b) the outside eg government legislation

### **12. Green is the New Black**

- young potential staff members want to work for “green” organizations/ companies
- they will (if necessary) force culture changes: with high employment rates they can afford to be choosy
- they want to work for organizations/ companies that match their values
- they want to be part of an organization/ company they can feel proud of telling their friends about
- Australia can re-invent itself as “clean, green and safe”

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