

Senator Barnaby Joyce

Leader of the Nationals in the Senate

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GET TO KNOW YOUR ETS, TAKE IT OUT TO DINNER

It has become apparent that there is a general lack of understanding in the community about exactly what an ETS is. People may understand the sentiment that surrounds it but they don't really understand how it works and how it will affect them.

The ETS, which will be the Employment Termination Scheme or the Extra Tax System, take your pick, has not been properly explained to the Australian people away from the politics that surround it. There is a need to explain exactly what it is and how much it will cost the Australian consumer.

Over the weekend I addressed a meeting on the Tweed and clearly most people I spoke to were not aware of what Mr's Rudd's proposed scheme is going to cost them.

This morning while getting a lift on the Gold Coast the gentleman driving me said the same thing, "we don't actually know what an ETS is", so I think that we in politics have a duty to start telling the Australian people exactly what the ETS means in very simple terms.

If your actions in work, enjoyment or at home, away from you actual breathing, involve the emission of carbon dioxide then you have you a problem and the Government is going to tax you to stop.

Let's look at some examples to bring this home to the dinner table. If you live in a cave with a candle you would probably be OK, but if your house is wired up for power then every electrical appliance will be attached to a power generator which in all likelihood will pay a tax and that tax will be passed on to you, the consumer. The price of toasting bread has just gone up, the price of ironing the school uniform has just gone up, the price of vacuuming the living room has just gone up and the price of watching the Sunday afternoon game on TV has just gone up.

If you live on a diet of naturally grown wild berries and lentils, which you scavenge for in your back yard, then you'd also probably be OK. But if you're associated with the consumption of food, that's either grown with the use of carbon intensive processes, or if you like to eat beef, mutton or lamb, which involves the emission of methane and is apparently a super form of carbon, then under Mr Rudd's proposal, you'll potentially have to pay for the privilege.

Put simply, a single beast, which ends up on our supermarket shelves as steak, roast, mince or sausages, emits about 70 kilograms of methane and according to the Kyoto protocol this has to be multiplied by 21 which means that each beast is responsible for emitting around a tonne and a half of carbon.

Utilising NAB modelling on the price of a carbon permit, a tonne and half of carbon, multiplied by about \$50, is equivalent to an additional cost to the farmer of approximately \$75 dollars per beast per year.

\$75 dollars per beast per year = no beef industry in Australia!

If the consumer wants to eat beef and can afford to pay for it then you will be buying it from a country that doesn't have an ETS.

The price of beef in Australia will be above the price paid in other countries that don't have a beef industry which will result in you paying better than \$100 dollars for a prime cut roast.

Quite obviously the quality of the Australian standard of living, as reflected in our diet, will be reduced.

When it comes to lamb and mutton, sheep emit around 10 kilograms of methane, so using the same formula; this means around 210 kilograms of carbon per year, per sheep which equates to Australian sheep farmers being slugged about \$10 per sheep annually and this will ultimately drive sheep meat out of the market.

So, if you decided to have a lamb roast for dinner this Sunday, which the gentleman in the car giving me a lift today said he was planning to do, then expect to pay almost \$100 dollars at the butcher for it.

This is the sort of reality that we as Australians have to understand we'd be signing ourselves up for if Mr Rudd gets his way with his ridiculous Emissions Trading Scheme.

Penny Wong has said publicly that she would not accept the proposition put by Malcolm Turnbull that would exclude agriculture, so lets not play ducks and drakes here, agriculture in Australia is going to suffer massively if Mr Rudd gets his way and the biggest losers in all this will ultimately end up being the consumer as they struggle to pay to fill the family shopping basket each week.

If Mr Rudd's plan was actually going to make a difference then it would be slightly plausible, but the fact is, it is not. Mr Rudd's ETS will not result in the planet being cooled and has not even the slightest prospect of doing anything for the global climate.

Mr Rudd's ETS is merely a gesture, a token. There are all sorts of wonderful gestures we can offer as comfort for the world's problems, however if imposing a tax on consumers, which Mr Rudd wants to do, is the right way to deal with things, then we may as well impose a tax to bring about world peace.

Mr Rudd keeps coming up with all these peculiar ideas.

Imposing a crippling tax on consumer's, forcing us to pay massively inflated prices at the supermarket for the food we eat and forcing Australian farmers out of business is implausible, short sighted and dangerous.

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