

## **Howard's Secret Agenda**

Craig Emerson's article in last weekend's Australian, "Sky won't fall from a carbon price", smacks of desperation in quoting John Howard twice. No mention was made of the scientific rationale for the carbon tax, which is understandable as the Earth is exactly the same temperature it was thirty years ago.

Mr Emerson and the other Howard-quoters who have graced these pages completely misunderstood the Howard ploy. While he declared himself as an agnostic on global warming, Mr Howard systematically built the global warming bureaucracy that we have today. When he had control of the Senate, he did not roll back the Australian Greenhouse Office or the Renewable Energy Target Scheme.

The last dark deed of the Howard Government was the passage of the National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting Act in October 2007. This is the auditing basis of the carbon tax. His plan was to get the auditing system bedded down, then start taxing. Labor's carbon tax would be a couple of years behind schedule if Mr Howard had not laid the bureaucratic foundations for it.

As we rationalists at the time found, Mr Howard had no interest in the science of climate. To his mind, climate was serving a higher purpose, which was to bring forward the day that Australia adopted nuclear power. As such, he was a second-rate Machiavelli. He did not trust the Australian people to make that decision for themselves, and he did not trust his cabinet colleagues enough to tell them either.

The evil that men do lives after them, and in Mr Howard's case that is a possible future in which Australia does not have a cement industry, a steel industry, oil refining, a multitude of other industries and, most importantly, a synthetic liquid fuels industry. That is the Howard legacy that many of us are toiling mightily to avoid.

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