



THE HONOURABLE KEVIN RUDD
26th Prime Minister of Australia

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Dear Mr Fray,

I write to you about the article 'How are politicians trying to spin the climate crisis?'.

If Chris Woods doesn't think I've been taking the fight to the Coalition on climate change, he'd do well to review the bevy of speeches, interviews and articles I've produced on the topic over recent weeks, months and years. He can start with my speech to the Asia Society and syndicated opinion article [only last month](#).

We on the centre-left who are committed to climate action have never let up on this fight. But what Woods seems to suggest is that, while we are fighting the conservatives for an actual policy outcome, we should lie down and accept the Greens making that task harder by flinging mud at us like cowards. How preposterous.

We on the pragmatic left were drawn to criticise the Green party this month by their own leader, Richard Di Natale, who sanctimoniously proclaimed: "Every politician, lobbyist, pundit and journalist who has fought to block serious action on climate change bears responsibility for the increasing risk from a heating planet that is producing these deadly bushfires." Di Natale's party failed that test in 2009 and they continue to fail it now by not owning up to their mistake.

Woods is also dead wrong that the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme was ever "shelved". After the Green party twice ganged up with Tony Abbott to block our legislation in parliament, we decided to delay implementation for two years, to coincide with the commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol. We would certainly have pushed ahead with the scheme then, had the plotters not staged their leadership coup in June 2010. Then, having implemented the scheme, our target also would have ramped in line with our commitment at Paris.

As for the "extremely effective, Labor-Greens carbon price", as Woods puts it, it was in fact a much weaker regime for reducing carbon emissions than the CPRS. Julia Gillard explicitly excluded transport fuels, presumably after having been lobbied by the Transport Workers' Union, a core part of the NSW right faction which had supported her rise to power. Whereas the

CPRS covered a total of 1000 major emitters across the country, the carbon tax included only 400 companies. By 2013, this had been reduced to 260 ‘entities’ of which, by the first year of its full operation, only 180 were liable for paying for carbon units.

The Gillard-era carbon price also lacked effectiveness in one very important area – legitimacy. It passed with no Coalition support and Gillard had herself branded the carbon price as “effectively a tax”, effectively sealing her political fate. Had the Green party backed the CPRS, it would have passed with support from them, Labor and – crucially – moderate Liberals, who had gone to the 2007 election promising an emissions trading scheme. That cross-party support would have made the CPRS almost impossible to unwind without fracturing the Coalition, and Abbott knew it.

The next time Woods wants to wade into this debate, he should think more deeply than to simply parrot the Green party’s internally inconsistent talking points.

Yours Sincerely,



Kevin Rudd

CC: Chris Woods