

Dear local, state and federal members

**LEAD IN MANY REGIONAL ALLIANCES AIMED AT GAINING BETTER SKILLS AND MORE JOBS FOR GREENER DEVELOPMENT**

**Take Regional Development and Resource Sector Employment Taskforce direction**

**In Sydney, Far West NSW or elsewhere else, consider working with Gunter Pauli, serial entrepreneur and initiator of ‘The Blue Economy’**

As you are our elected representatives we appeal to you for leadership assistance in the light of the directions of the Regional Development Australia (RDA) and National Resource Sector Employment Taskforce strategies. RDA is a new partnership between the Australian state and territory and local governments which aims to work across all spheres of government and use their combined resources more efficiently to develop our Australian regional communities. On 15.3.2011, the Australian government also accepted and commented briefly on all recommendations in the report of the National Resource Sector Employment Taskforce. These are designed as a path to meet growing demand for skilled labour, while maintaining national momentum on addressing skills shortages and building productive capacity. This is ideally implemented in openly directed projects.

Responsibility for implementing the Taskforce recommendations is shared by industry, state and territory governments and the federal government. We turn to you, as the most relevant government representatives, for assisting the production of better coordinated regional effort between the City of Sydney and other Australian regions, starting with reference to achieving common City of Sydney Plan goals, those of the Far West NSW Regional Plan (2010-2020) and all related national and regional aims and projects. Many related communication, skills development and governance issues are addressed below. Work openly and cooperatively with all government departments but do not wait.

For global direction, universities should consider working closely with Gunter Pauli, founder of the Zero Emissions Research and Initiative (ZERI) at the UN University in Tokyo. Within the constraints of making a living, Professor Pauli’s working life has been dedicated ‘to designing and implementing societies and industries which respond to people’s needs using what is available from nature’. The body of work I saw him present at Sydney University seemed the broadest, most apparently practical and effectively tried approach to implementation of Millennium Development Goals, for example, that I have seen. Professor Pauli is from Belgium, so it is perhaps unsurprising that he promotes the development of his ‘Blue Economy’ approach with all the openness and zeal of an early Enron executive. After all the money we lost so suddenly through opaque, high risk, ethical and green investments in the crash of 2008 we have learned more about what the smartest guys in the room can do. We will not trust them again unless they do it our way. (In old age one finds oneself fleshing out the vulgar Marxist feminism of one’s youth.)

**Design investment to support greener, safer and cheaper directions, jobs and skills**

The Far West NSW Regional Plan (2010-2011) specifically seeks that information about investment barriers is 'provided to government stakeholders' as an aspect of proposing solutions for barriers to growth and facilitating the formation of trusting relationships between 'new investors and prospective partners and suppliers' (p. 7). This information is vital so that both the elected representatives and those they serve have the financial and other knowledge to address their community and business directions better in future. The information that businesses and communities give government is their collective property and in a democracy it should not be kept secretively by bureaucratic and legal forces.

One can accept the reality that everything is connected to everything else and try to deal with it openly and reasonably, or favour a version of normal behaviour that requires blinding oneself and others by pretending legitimate life always remains in a narrow bunch of professional silos properly divided by ironically named Chinese walls. These people have a habit of turning truth into their lies, which they then ram down our necks from many podia. What reason could you have for trusting any of them unless they were part of your family and its close connexions to those in the more expensively credentialed and highly connected know outside your ken? These people are primitives by the more broadly honest and open standards of behaviour, documentation and teaching we expect. We are the stewards of our country. (I am a bit like Dirk Bogarde in Daddy Nostalgie.)

According to the Australian Financial Review, Federal Court judge Ray Finkelstein made a somewhat similar point, when he was retiring (10.6.2011, p. 1). He said 'nobody in his right mind would put two bob into managed investment schemes' and spoke of his 'dislike for a system which treats white-collar criminals leniently compared with what people regard as 'real crime'. He should know. However, others can also gain a fair idea of some of the problems when trying to run a small or large business, or on the couch watching the news and reading the papers, as long as they have done all of it thoroughly.

To be fair to lawyers, (and who wouldn't be), distinguishing between corruption and business as usual may naturally be hard. Historically, legal progression has meant the development of an increasing recognition within the dominant kinship networks and their bankers, of the existence and struggle to live experienced by those outside their own blood and marriage associations. Many forms of 'corruption' simply come down to the legal duty to older feudal ties, such as caring for brethren and other family first and discretely. Confusion between these old feudal duties and newer ones to a broader public are embedded in legal conceptual trash which has been justified and built on for centuries by generations of legal and financial interests. Those wanting to help should start writing honestly and informatively in public, long before they retire. Legal practice is garbage.

Clearer and more broadly educational discussion of matters is necessary rather than the maintenance of professional and related academic and legal barriers, remunerations and compensations. These are often dysfunctional from wider perspectives representing broader interests than the top legal adversarial and related bureaucratic or collegiate traditions. Our problems naturally start with 33 Labor lawyers; 34 Liberal lawyers; 2

Independent lawyers plus 1 Green lawyer in the federal parliament. One wonders what lawyers are doing in state governments, where their associated real muscle often is. (One learns very fast in the public service that courts and lawyers are running the gig.)

In our supposed democracy, we are ruled by many people who have long been taught to justify stupidly feudal and often incomprehensible legal rules and practice which many will seek to go back to again if they lose their seats. Legal practice has never been held properly accountable. It cannot learn from historical or practical work outcomes because it will not. For example, look at the National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting (Measurement) Amendment Determination (2011) Exposure Draft produced by the Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency. This legislation is Greek to me already. Who would pass it and why? Politicians who find their debates meaningful and satisfying should remember that the legislative garble they have passed is all that remains where it counts and that this rubbish is big money for lawyers. Refuse to collude any more in the many dysfunctional legal practices which accelerated the global financial crisis by assuming trust, incomprehensible dictates and secrecy go beneficially together. As Gunter Pauli pointed out, greener practice is often much cheaper and people have long been taught to associate more sustainable practice with poverty – bring back bamboo.

**Use more openly linked Sydney and Broken Hill directions to encourage or support wider regional directions seeking to achieve better development with more jobs**

I recently returned to Glebe from a short stay in Broken Hill which is a historically impressive Australian desert town renowned for its place in international leadership in mines safety, rural health service provision and much related democratic development, including the Barrier Industrial Council. Broken Hill has many historic and beautifully restored buildings and machines and new ones. Nevertheless, there appear to be many mismatches between skills development and work opportunities in Far West NSW and in Sydney. It would benefit both regions to reduce them through better related planning and management. Many elected representatives appear well placed to address this by assisting coordination to achieve regional aims and directions faster than by waiting for markets to operate more blindly, slowly and uncertainly within the normal constraints.

To gain trust and avoid investment barriers, we must all operate more openly in regional arenas where environmental, social and financial goals are also more consultatively and effectively understood, balanced and held to protect, enhance and repair the Australian and global heritage for current and future generations. The process of protecting, lengthening and specialising professional qualifications has increasingly made education the captive of occupational interest groups and divorced it from the potential to render more broadly effective public service, in spite of radio, TV, videos and the internet being there to assist teaching. Global financial crisis was also the outcome of this process of financial, legal, academic and related industrial interests rendering all so blind that the economic crash was not even predicted and ratings were soon seen to be junk. Do not return to a system where those furthest from any ability to influence events are fleeced.

The Broken Hill Community Foundation (BHCF), received seed funding from Pasmenco, with the funds to be capital protected, expanded and invested to provide financial support for local development projects. The core values which drive the BHCF are that at all times it strives to be:

Open and transparent; Independent; Apolitical; Responsible; Non-bureaucratic;  
Proactive and passionate; Community spirited

This direction is hard, where those who ideally have no wrongdoing to hide are happy to have their matters discussed clearly in the open, in the knowledge that criticism and self-criticism are the leadership duty we bear in the search for truth, so all life may flourish. However, as we must depend on the US, the Chinese, and other muscle it seems by far the safest option. (One was not born female to live in this era and country for nothing.)

Mr Michael Triguboff, Coudert Brothers and others have also shown leadership. The article 'Tax row brings claims of Lazard losses to light' in the Sydney Morning Herald (SMH 6.6.2011, Business 8) raises many issues which also demonstrate the educational importance for Australians and others of clearer reporting about things that matter, in order to redirect our resources effectively into greener and safer pastures. Mr Triguboff worked for Lazard. The Australian Tax Office (ATO) argued the sums paid by Lazard to Mr Triguboff's companies on his departure from Lazard were taxable as a capital gain or termination payment. Mr Triguboff challenged the tax bill by saying the payments were not taxable because they were compensation for 'a wrong or injury'. He claimed he left Lazard after his unwelcome criticism of its improper investment management practice. His approach to his tax bill suggests other Australian investors in Lazard may also have suffered a wrong or injury. One assumes for satisfaction one would have to show that Lazard was mishandling investments as accused and that it was this fact which lost the Lazard investors \$2 billion, as occurred to their money some time later. Could Mr Triguboff's termination payment be seen as a bribe or hush money? (It seems unlikely.)

In common speech the word 'compensation' has two different meanings (remuneration or an award for damage). Few laws have aims or define words, let alone intelligently or consistently with common dictionaries. Clear consistent definitions are usually necessary for effective communication, management and research but this has never bothered lawyers. Our feudal tradition assumes truth is most easily found in secretly building the case that will demolish an adversary to the maximum extent possible as the lawyers do battle. Those running organizations, like Lazard, do not question their top authority to advance their interest by holding many separate financial secrets and practices as courts have demanded their duty to do it for centuries. This has been against the longer term scientific, democratic and communication demands of society – if anybody besides Justice Finkelstein on the eve of his retirement cared to look. You prefer us admiring and stupid?

One tires of articles on water, energy, waste, etc. that one does not properly understand because their reflection is often of narrow or garbled hybrid theoretical paradigms whilst also glossing over a lack of reliable information. Gunter Pauli spoke clearly and very

enlighteningly, albeit with an apparently conventional US market paradigm of the kind that recently lost our economic inheritance, in spite of his calling it a new 'blue' one.

No sensible custodian of Australian funds should subject the Australian people to courts or the lawyers' rush because only the lawyers win. In societies which claim to seek fairness, to take matters into the open for clearly accountable development and problem solving is likely to be the most protective, democratic, educational, cheap and effective, collective decision strategy. However, this recommended intellectual approach to development and order, which was violently perverted in the course of the Chinese Cultural Revolution, must also be contrasted with the legal practice Australians have inherited from a long and unbroken feudal tradition of English common law and statute.

On the other hand, never bet against the democratic sophistication and intent of the Chinese leadership and people. They have travelled from feudalism to communism to more competitive approaches to production in less than a century and from great poverty and sacrifice, with over a billion others. They do not lack experience in comparison with many who spent recent history comparatively coasting along in a more relaxed fashion.

The Far West NSW Regional Plan, which is addressed later, suggests many clear and apparently excellent directions, from the kind of health and greener development perspectives one has avidly read about for years in City of Sydney Council, NSW government and federal representatives' leaflets. The City of Sydney Council motto is 'Integrity – Innovation – Quality – Courage – Collaboration – Respect'. One often feels government practice has instead been to employ many people with similarly confusing titles to raise greener expectations by householders on one hand, while employing many other people with similarly confusing titles to dash them on the other. See attached correspondence with Council about how our residents might avoid constant rubbish dumping at night in our dead end street. We assume this happens because those moving, renovating or cleaning won't pay the cost in time and money of taking furniture, etc. to the tip. This is a high turnover, growing suburb where dumping is a problem. Council gave our greening and rubbish control ideas the complete early brush off, based on how wide old pavements have to be (as distinct from new ones or those in a dead end street).

Those seeking to invest only in more stable and greener developments face many related problems. For example, see the related discussion attached of WSN Environmental Solutions Request for Expressions of Interest in the NSW government sale of the waste management business WSN, prepared by UBS Investment Bank. From the ideal perspective of the householder, business and government, the documents prepared by UBS and its lawyers for NSW Treasury were so misleading, repetitively demanding and uninformative that one assumes few expressions of interest in WSN were received. One would love to learn how approaches to biogas generation and use based on waste water treatment plants and organic solid municipal waste could be useful in many more areas. With such potentially broad and useful projects, how could one go wrong? However there is a general conspiracy of silence in regard to how production works which often makes the discussion of the management of waste very sketchy and incomprehensible.

Production chains live off regional environments and their waste ends up in regional environments. Nevertheless, the National Environment Protection (Used Packaging Materials) Measure has an approach to dealing with waste which depends on the householder to drive the avoidance, reuse and recovery of materials by driving the recycling of waste. This is doomed to failure. It depends for success upon far too many people having to undertake a widening variety of recycling efforts for an increasingly packaged, variable and increasing range of materials. The householder has no control over secret product production, processing, storage, transport, marketing or manufacturing procedures. A major percentage of the population remain too ignorant, poor, rich or busy to take notice of very many different recycling requirements which are often also incomprehensible. People who gave up cars to save money, encourage public transport and reduce pollution are treated as recyclers as if we still own them. In regard to waste management, one often senses the muffled sound of unseen mafia laughter. (One feels similar about country trains and many other matters reported on in the press.)

**Ask major employers what their skill priorities are and help develop these openly in the context of the related production of more practical green projects and jobs**

Stated unemployment is double the national average in Broken Hill and Wilcannia. Over the recent decades of mining decline and drought many have left to go elsewhere for work and education. The median age in Broken Hill and Menindee is now much older than the national average and one in every five families in each of the major population centres is also a single parent family. Nevertheless, Broken Hill appears quite prosperous with many services and a comfortable way of life. Sydney, on the other hand, is a global city with many secondary and tertiary institutions. Students abound and often find they cannot gain the type of work experience to which their very expensive and theoretically driven qualifications may have led them to aspire. Many students may excel at or love their many skills, sports and hobbies. Others may have few supports except parents and may be badly stressed in an expensive new city while engaged in costly theoretical study.

The Far West NSW Plan seeks an understanding of regional skills priorities among existing major industries (p.6). Ask the major employers what their skills priorities are. This question may also be most objectively put by anybody, in the context of their related capacity to deliver broader economies of production scale, which may also benefit more consumers of greener services and skills and which may also support many new niche markets for greener development. If anybody wants new work or a quieter life they should state what they would like to learn or offer, with a view to open accreditation for competent production, conducted on the job. Inclusive approaches to greener development ideally plan the welfare of the locals within the broader context of global and regional interests, especially in centres like Broken Hill where history is ideally also an opportunity for more open and stable change than that driven by mates with Texas.

One assumes Broken Hill Council and many others know the major businesses and we would all like to know. The Plan also states the National Broadband Network and all linked improvements are critical for success (p.9). Broken Hill is one of six priority locations to fast-track development through provision of \$250 million under the Regional

Backbone Blackspots Program. In health care, personally controlled electronic health records, remote monitoring and tele-health are listed as priority development areas and other vital aims are listed in education, entertainment, government and the environment, to serve communities better. Newspapers, radio, TV and videos have also been around for years for those genuinely interested in improving skills and community development.

According to the 'Barrier Daily Truth' (17.5.2011, p. 1) Dick Smith is opening at Centro Westside, adding to the number of multinational companies in Broken Hill, where Leasecorp Shopping Centre is also a new \$18 million project undergoing tendering. Under its economic growth and job creation strategy to remove barriers and provide support for existing employers, the Plan states that an incentive scheme will be made available to encourage the retention of existing businesses and the attraction of new businesses or industries to the region. (p. 6) Assist and support many to be greener. The Far West Regional Plan seeks Ramsar classification for 'part' of the Menindee Lakes System and through investment in related eco-tourism, business and festival opportunities (p. 8). See the related discussion of this attached. (What vegetation is ideal and why?)

Theoretically, there is plenty of federal money available that I guess will not be spent, which is common. The latest Community News from Tanya Plibersek states up to \$4200 per year per child will be available for eligible families with kids at school between sixteen and nineteen. A \$1700 bonus for up to 8868 apprentices will be available in the Sydney electorate to encourage them to complete qualifications. This is part of the federal government promise to spend \$481 million to support skills training including a national apprenticeship mentoring program and tax free payments to apprentices for completion of qualifications. Apprentices can be older adults. The federal government promised \$200 million to ensure students with disabilities get the opportunities of a quality education and \$425 million to reward great teachers. Small businesses will be able to claim on motor vehicle purchase. A \$34 million package will help suppliers win more contracts to supply resource projects. The government will give \$9.7 million to protect marine life.

It appears to be axiomatic to many teachers and in the construction industry that any money spent in students travelling to nest near well endowed or refurbished educational institutions with many huge and small lecture rooms, libraries and offices is money well spent, especially in bigger cities. To benefit many more, however, the clear and inviting presence of paid work, on the job skills development, cheap housing and cheap transport must first be designed and delivered in ways that are both organized and attractive enough to improve the chances of many more green and productive exchanges than currently occur. Better coordinated work, education, housing and transport are also necessary to enable the broad, close and critical relationships between theory and practice that are vital for greener and more inclusive forms of production. This is also necessary to benefit Australian and related regional communities. The Far West Plan does not address workforce issues except to point out the Greater Western Area Health Service has a country careers program. It does not state how this works and if it does so effectively.

The Plan states the Regional Leadership Advisory Network will coordinate opportunities 'to identify, develop young leaders with structured access to support, leaders in the region

via the RDA Far West NSW' (p. 2). In my long experience as a teacher, it is an insult to young people to see them as primarily motivated by prestige, career and money when even if this were true, it is clearly the way they have been driven by Americanization of market culture and the projection of the related values of career and endless shopping. (I much prefer true love.) Many young people just want to have fun and many are also extremely open to all kinds of learning, often with a high desire to work and be of service. The technologies now exist to bring this about in the interests of all, but academic and related training institutions resist using them in good management to suit the lives of young people and potential employers, preferring their professional traditions.

One wonders how many new and greener directions in parks, housing, energy and other community development will happen anywhere fast, if hardly anybody working in government or tertiary institutions is ever prepared to stick their neck out and be held more publicly accountable for holistic judgment related to the specific regional case. They already have comparatively comfortable and secure jobs where they know their old familiar ever growing rule books and apply them. The examples of the National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU) policy of a fixed ratio between insecure and secure academic jobs and all related collegiate policy or practices which hinder cheaper, better education, organizational growth and greener and fairer development spring to mind. One wonders if the NTEU ever expects to grow and direct the business which supports its members through superannuation and related fund investment. It does not help many more post graduate students get jobs as tutors. It acts to narrow the field academics are drawn from.

UniSuper has \$27.6 billion in funds under management and \$4.7 billion in pension funds. Its new top ten Australian and International Shareholdings now include Apple, Microsoft, Google; four Australian banks (not Macquarie thank God); Telstra, Westfield Group, Woolworths, BHP Billiton Ltd, Rio Tinto Ltd, Exxon Mobile Corporation etc. It seems sensible that universities should invest in broader communication, in company with other educational media, and it is a pity universities are not better directed to assist clear and objective communication development to meet a general need for greener development.

Consider, for example, the News Hour discussion of NATO on SBS TV (11.6.11). American leaders from a wide spectrum warn European countries that if they continue to downgrade their defence sector they will decline into collective military irrelevance. Following the experience of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the end of the Cold War this state may appear the most naturally protective one for populations everywhere. For many years, the prohibition on war production helped Japan to go in new and productive directions after WW2. The US is set to cut defence spending so one wonders where jobs will be found outside the usual mass war productions unless stable shifts to green futures occur.

In 2009, the total operating revenues of 39 Australian universities were \$20.5 billion. Of these operating revenues, 42% came from Australian government grants and another 11% was HECS-HELP Australian government payments. This seems to mean the Australian government is the major shareholder in the university business, and its projects should also be managed more openly and sensibly to grow the business in the direction of the public interest, which is greener. It costs nearly \$20 billion to teach one million students!

Why not teach using more radio, videos or TV? This would be cheap. One could spend the money on more applied and productive assessments than tick the box exams. Academics devise and hopefully hide these often highly flawed examinations from students because assisting production and undertaking more worthwhile assessments is often the most time consuming and stressful task of an academic's life. It is an industrial relief from a huge burden when almost the total responsibility can thankfully be handed over to a computer. (But what is this kind of learning worth and why? They never ask.)

The government will spend \$2.2 billion in mental health care. More work and other exercise with related discipline and achievement seems more likely to be an answer than just education. In societies which clearly value thin youth very highly, obesity is the most obvious mental health issue because of its clearly related physical effects like lower mobility, which may have cumulative effects. For example, fat old women eating cake in the staff tea room may see a colleague running up stairs as acting dangerously and ban it, while ignoring the dangers of many other falling triggers like high heels. Those steeped in rehabilitation after occupational overuse syndrome may fear for those who have never had it and do not worry about it, wilfully sitting dangerously at their computers. Some blame McDonalds for increasing the fatness of the Australian population but in Broken Hill I like to blame the Social Democratic Club. How do they think they should fix it?

The funds addressed in Tanya Plibersek's newsletter are unlikely to be spent effectively on greener skills and jobs without more decisive action by many. You should lead it. Where else will skilled and less skilled workers be found to implement the Far West NSW Plan, as distinct from writing or talking about it? This is a natural question.

In spite of all the press discussion of overcrowded class rooms over the years, it has always seemed to me that we have often had venues coming out of our ears at about the same rate as giant hotels and giant concrete rooms for giants. Potential new management synergies exist between Sydney University, its alumni and its student body as a result of imminent termination of the Venues Agreement and the Agreement for Services. Under the former, the University of Sydney Union is granted the right to use 250 venues on the Camperdown and Darlington campuses and hire these venues out for profit. Under the Agreement for Services the University grants the USU the right to commercially manage certain food and beverage services and other retail, childcare and housing services on the campus for a period of two years. Apparently the agreement also obliges the USU to manage certain student programs. This is an opportunity to benefit current and potential students through many more planned and practical travel, work and study opportunities.

The unspoken cry of the stressed heart may often be that at least we know and quite like our current situation so should not change much when we may easily be unable to do so in a nice way and can also make believe instead. Like the maypole, this may involve comparatively little activity other than weaving in and out with ribbons, followed by cake or wine. One sees why such a model of regionally limited action may be attractive to many people in Sydney and Broken Hill whether unemployed or not. Few of us like to be driven by others' demands for speed or harder work. Slow food is a movement. In

financial realms, more ambitious higher action models ignored many outcomes on the ground of their investment practices and preferred their numerical fantasies for years. In international terms, Australians remain comparatively prosperous, free and stable. We must be doing something right. On the other hand, why not stop pretending to the kids, especially the ones getting up early, working hard and paying out a lot of money, who may be unable and unwise to buy a house because they cannot ever be sure of getting a grip on sufficient income stability to even allow them to accrue the deposit.

For effective national workforce development the performance of teachers and all related competencies are ideally conducted and assessed openly, in practice, and as research into the comparative quality and cost of performance. This may also be seen as anchoring more truthfully productive communication in more truly open markets, as distinct from pursuing more secretive, adversarial and exclusive commercial action which mainly seems to encourage the rest of us to talk drivel to each other and a small circle of friends. No more sound of music. (Baby, I was only kidding. We love the sound of music best.)

We look forward to your efforts on our behalf. See more on [www.Carolodonnell.com.au](http://www.Carolodonnell.com.au)

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