

Manifesto for the Dick Smith Fair Go Group

An economy that benefits everyone – not just the 1% - enabling more young Aussies to obtain a full time career, and older Aussies to afford to keep warm in winter.

Australia's wealthiest 1% own more than the bottom 70% - that's 17 million Aussies!

Become a supporter – and fix the staggering and rising inequality

www.dicksmithfairgo.com.au V88 Updated 8/8/17



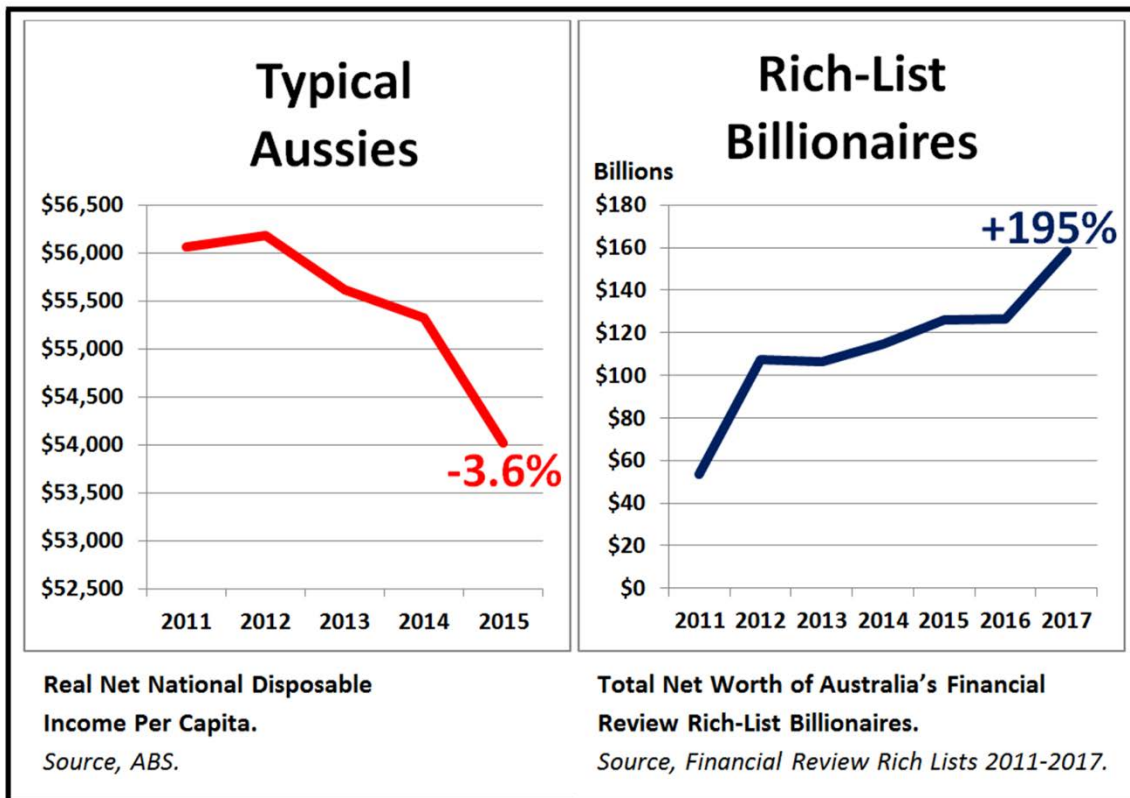
Typical Australian city scene 2050?

“Australia is approaching a ‘danger point’ where the gap between rich and poor becomes so vast it could have ‘awful’ far-reaching consequences at every level in Australian society...”

Bernie Fraser, former Governor of the Reserve Bank, April 2017

“No society can sustain this kind of rising inequality. In fact, there is no example in human history where wealth accumulated like this and the pitchforks didn’t eventually come out.”

Nick Hanauer, billionaire and entrepreneur



Give Australia a Fair Go again – a precis

How?

Reduce Australia's unsustainable world-record population growth

- Every major political party to have a population plan to base policies and planning on.
- Stabilise the Australian population below 30 million.
- Return immigration to the long-term average of 70,000 per annum (it is now 200,000) and increase our humanitarian program to 20,000 per annum (from an average of about 14,800 over the last 10 years).
- Our Foreign Aid to focus on population stabilisation – including family planning, education, and empowering women.

Properly reform the tax system – so the wealthiest pay what they can easily afford

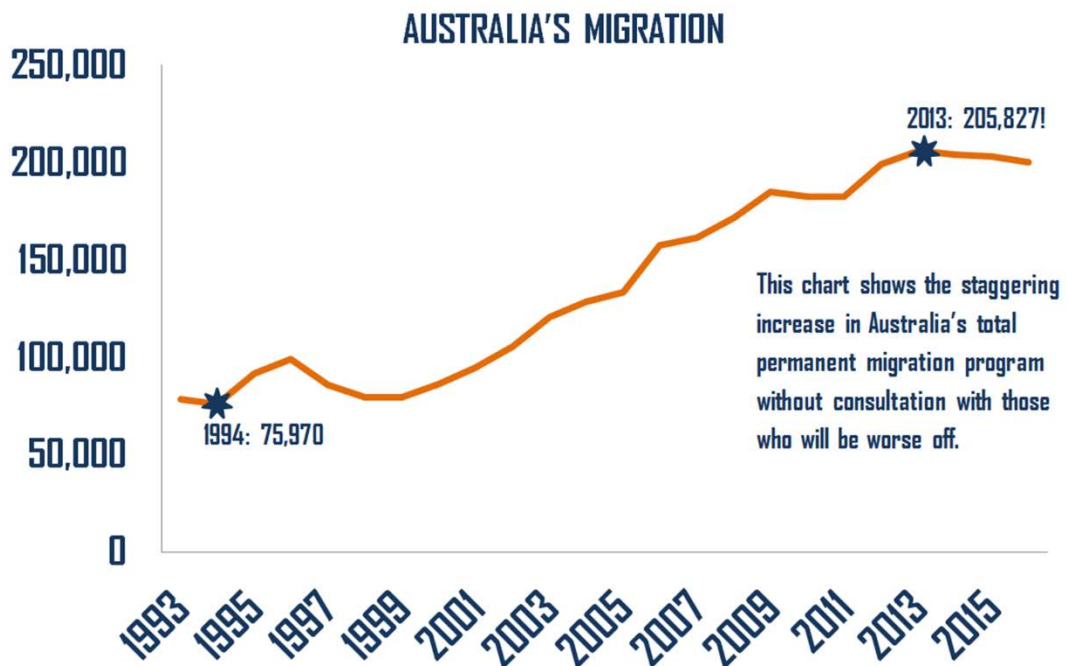
- Fix tax rates to give the government enough revenue to provide proper services and infrastructure, a universal health scheme, and an adequate safety net for the poor, disadvantaged and elderly.
- Name the top 1% of income earners and how much tax they pay (following the Norwegian system) – admire those who are on the top of the list!
- Re-introduce an inheritance tax for the wealthiest 1%.

Abolish donations to political parties and candidates

- Have a new election funding system financed by an increased tax on the wealthy.

Introduction by Dick Smith

I ask you to join me in returning fairness to the system



SOURCE: Department of Immigration

What a con! Australian's wealthiest 1% have pushed for a 300% increase in migration since Prime Minister Keating's time – without consultation with those who will be worse off.

The prime reason for the decline in living standards for many Australian workers is our staggering population growth. Many in the workforce will become worse off because the wealth of our country is finite – coming primarily from mineral reserves and primary production. Increasing the population results in less resources – therefore, less worth – per capita. This results in declining wages. Also, with automation and robotics there are going to be less and less jobs available.

Most importantly, it is the wealthy 1% who lobby for and primarily benefit from this staggering, but clearly unsustainable population growth – the highest in the developed world. The present growth will take us to over 100 million in Australia at the end of this century – when children being born today are likely to be living. This keeps wages down and house prices up, provides more customers for big business, and also puts an impossible strain on our infrastructure and environment – resulting in mind destroying, gridlocked roads driving us to frustration.

"... Harry Triguboff was asked about the potential oversupply of apartments in Sydney and Brisbane, leading to falling rents, to which he responded, "I will simply bring in more migrants.""

Australian Financial Review, 29 November 2016

We also need to fix the tax system so it is not skewed in favour of wealthy multinationals and the 1% of wealthiest Australians.

For the first time ever, our living standards are in decline – other than for the wealthy. This is a catastrophe. Most importantly, much of our growth is being paid for by debt that future generations will be forced to pay back.

Our forefathers went to war to keep this country free and keep a 'fair go' and 'mateship' in existence. They did this so the wealth could be shared, which is certainly not happening now.

The absolute greed of the very few is totally unacceptable in our so-called egalitarian society. Let's do something about it.

We are told by our politicians that taxes on big business and the wealthy must be reduced even further so we can compete with other countries where taxes have already been reduced. These are the countries where the inequality between the wealthy and the poor is even greater than Australia.

At the suggestion of a friend of mine, I have decided to show leadership and attempt a change for the better. This will be done in the form of the Dick Smith Fair Go Group to influence one or both of the major political parties to come up with policies that reflect the interests of the 99%.

Of course it won't be easy. The only way the major parties can be elected at the present time is by spending a staggering amount on election advertising, and this comes primarily from wealthy donors who have a vested interest in growth to provide more consumers to buy their products, keeping perpetual growth going.

Rather than start a new political party (a very difficult and slow undertaking), I have decided it would be more realistic and effective to influence the existing parties where they feel it most – at the ballot box.

With modern political parties only being elected with a 1% or 2% majority, it is clear that you only need a very small number of voters to tip the balance. That is the plan!

Good reading, and I hope you come on board as a supporter of the group. It's free, but I would appreciate any donations to assist in communicating our plans.

Years ago I managed to create the Australian Geographic Society, with over 200,000 members. We had a major positive influence on many important conservation issues at the time. Wouldn't it be great if we could get that number of like-minded people together to instigate important changes?

Regards



Dick Smith

dicksmithfairgo.com.au

Underlying Principles

- Living in balance and removing the need for perpetual population growth currently underpinning our economy - just about all of our problems, both in Australia and world-wide, are harder to overcome with a bigger population.
- A return to a fairer distribution of wealth – the egalitarianism for which Australia was famous.
- A substantial effort to reduce the youth unemployment rate of 13.5% in a major way.
- Home ownership – making it affordable again to have a home with a backyard and cubby house, and access to the natural environment.
- Living within our means – eliminating the half trillion dollar debt our children will have to pay back.
- Extreme capitalism – reducing the necessity for this cruel system

Preface

“Almost 5 million Aussies live pay cheque to pay cheque. In other words, there is nothing left – or less – at the end of the week, fortnight or month.”

Sun Herald February 15, 2017

Here are the plans of the Dick Smith Fair Go Group. What do we do about clearly non-sustainable perpetual population growth? What do we do about the increasing inequality as the rich get richer and the poor get poorer? How do we cope with a reduction in productive employment and job satisfaction due to robots and automation?

The demographers tell us that in rich nations such as Australia, the next generation will live shorter lives than their parents while levels of unhappiness and mental illness will be rising.

Most of us feel something is wrong but we don't know what to do about it.

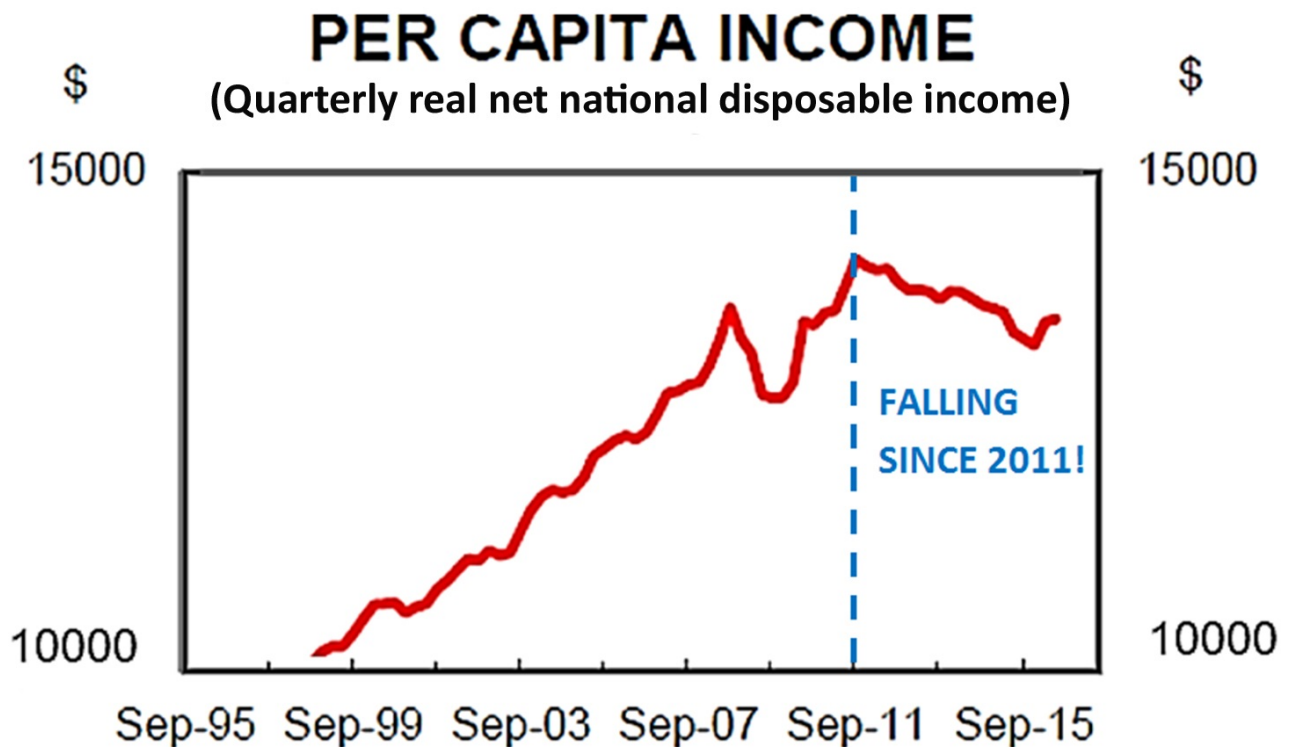
Surely our grandkids should have as good a life as we have had? That is a fundamental belief of the Group. The policy will be to have affordable housing, good access to health care, education and fulfilling jobs available with decent wages.

At the present time, Australian consumers spend an extra \$50 million per annum for free range chooks – but what about our ‘battery kids’ jammed into high rise buildings like termites?

“People wonder why their youngsters can't get housing in the big cities. The answer is we are going for breakneck population growth and it is all about the supply and demand.”

Bob Carr, former Foreign Minister

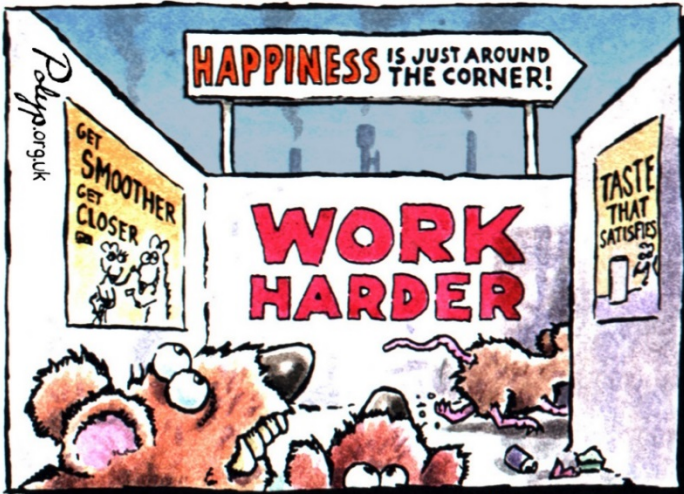
Income inequality increasing in Australia



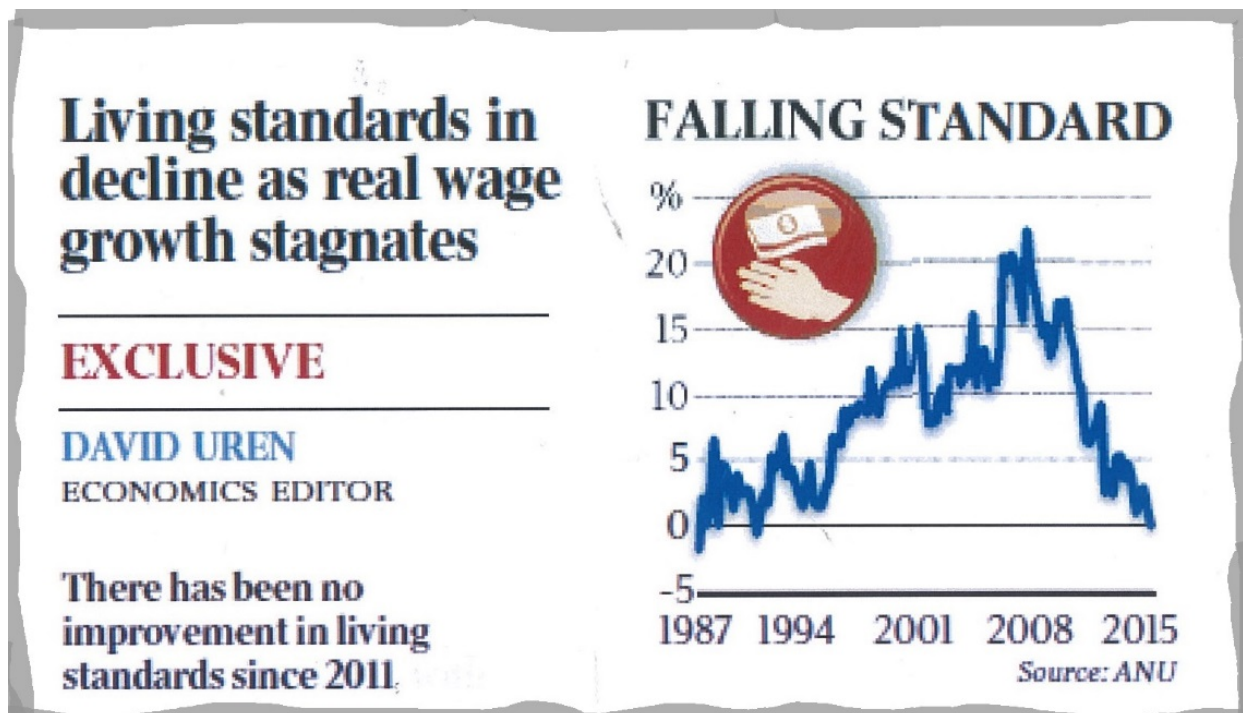
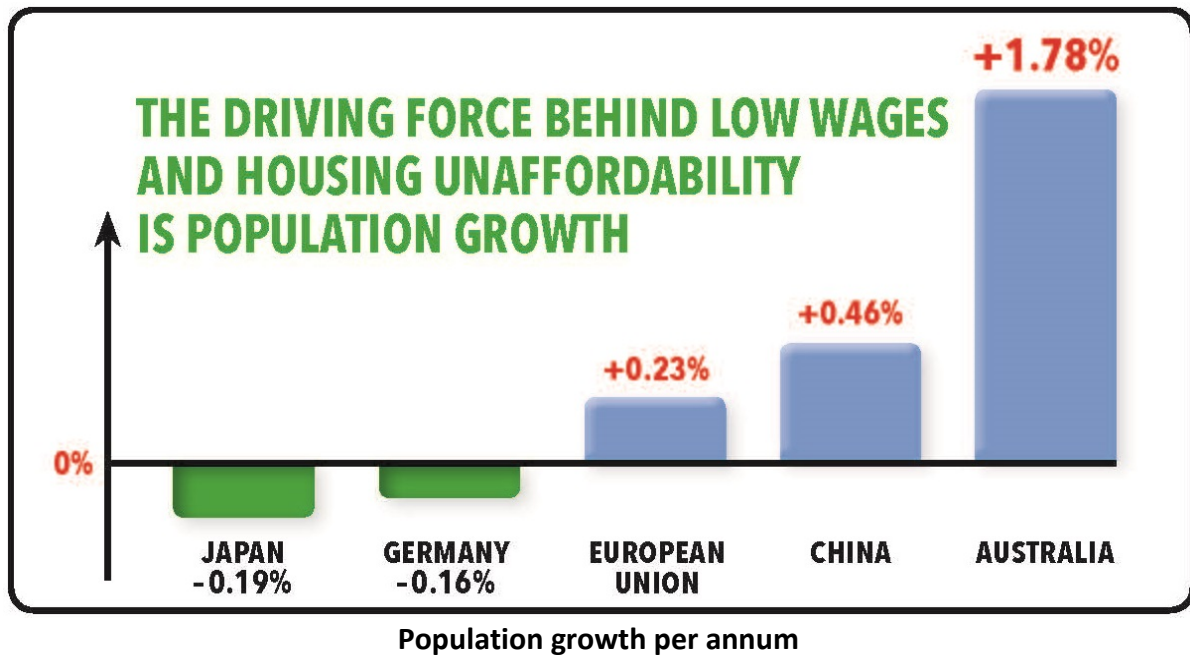
The figures show that not only is there incredible wealth inequality in this country, but income inequality is increasing. Between 1988 and 2011, the poorest 10% of Australians received an increase in income of about 3%, while the richest 10% increased income growth of more than 28%. This is unfair, in the past it would even be considered 'un-Australian'.

"The latest economic figures in - while profits are up by 8.4% in the last quarter, the nation's wage bill fell by 0.5%."

Sydney Morning Herald, March 3 2017



How do we make it fairer for the 99%?



From the front page of *The Australian* newspaper dated 17 April 2017

1. Reduce Australia's world record population growth – actually have a population plan – more people means less resources and wealth per capita

Every major political party should have a population plan. How can you properly plan and organise to provide necessary services – especially health and education – for the community; maintain living standards (real wages); have affordable housing and adequate infrastructure, and provide a proper “safety net” for the poor and elderly, without having a population plan?

Aussie families can have up to 20 kids during their lifetime, but none do. This is because parents have decided the optimum number of children for which they can put in the time, energy and effort to give each child a decent life. Some families have four or five kids, others have one or none. At the present time, the average number of kids being born per family in Australia is about replacement level – showing how sensible Australian families are.

Yet our major parties have no similar plan for our country. They push for endless perpetual population growth which will clearly result in less wealth and resources per capita.

The former Treasurer Peter Costello claimed that Australian families should have one child for Mum, one for Dad, and one for the country. This was totally irresponsible.

The high population growth we have, primarily coming from record net immigration, disproportionately benefits big business and the 1% of wealthy Australians.

Just about every problem we have in Australia today will be harder to fix by having more people - from air pollution to income inequality, to every increasing electricity prices and health problems such as obesity.

We should follow recently retired backbencher Kelvin Thomson's 14 point plan (<http://dicksmithpopulation.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/Kelvin-Thomson-MPs-14-Point-Plan-November-2009.pdf>) in relation to population and immigration:

- a. Stabilise Australia's population below 30 million by reducing the net overseas migration program to 70,000 per annum (as it was in Prime Minister Paul Keating's time) rather than the current 200,000.
- b. A carefully screened humanitarian program of 20,000.
- c. Organise an Australian volunteer family to mentor each refugee family to assist them into becoming part of the Australian dream.



Polyp.org.uk

2. Change our perpetual growth Ponzi-type economic system

It is clear that it is impossible to have perpetual growth in a finite world. However that is what our politicians tell us every day. Every time you hear a politician mention the word 'growth' – and Labor, Liberal and the Greens mention the word – make sure you put the word 'endless' in front so it is 'endless growth,' or more to the point, 'endless greed'.

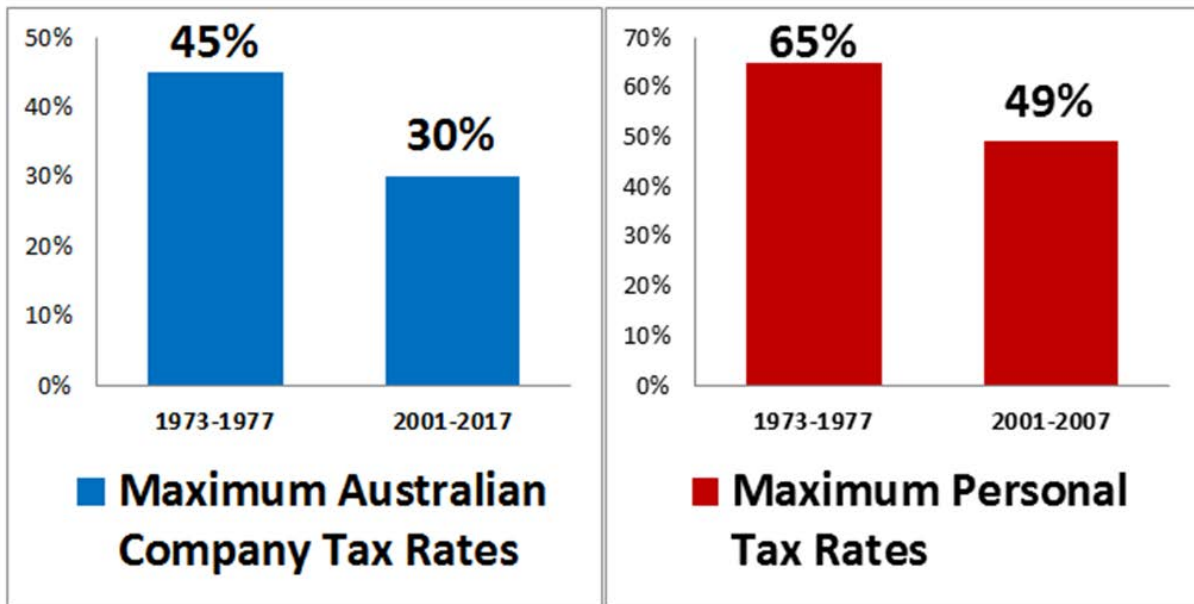
The politicians know that big population growth keeps Gross Domestic Product (GDP) numbers artificially inflated, which makes them look like better economic managers than they really are.

We can still have growth, but it needs to be a different type. That is, growth in quality not quantity, and growth in efficiencies – not just digging more and more out of the ground.

When the former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd said he believed in a big Australia of 36 million it was almost universally condemned – not only by 8 out of 10 of the public, but by most politicians. Yet we are now going to a bigger Australia than that – to over 100 million at the end of this century – with our present record population growth.

It is clear we need a plan. That plan should be one of reducing immigration levels so that our population stabilises.

3. Fix the tax system so it is not skewed in favour of wealthy multinationals and the 1% of wealthiest Australians



Back in the 1970s, when Gerry Harvey, John Singleton and I started our businesses and made our fortunes, the company tax rate was 50% more than it is today and the top personal tax rate was 65%. Despite this, we, and lots of other business owners at the time, did very well and we were able to share the wealth in a more equitable way with our fellow Australians.

Since then, tens of millions of dollars have been spent by the wealthy, using the most astute corporate lobbyists to convince governments their taxes should be reduced.

The story goes like this. “Reduce the tax on us wealthy, and that will motivate us not only to work even harder and make more money, but also to put more money back in to promote business growth, and this will trickle down to all Australians, so everyone will benefit.”

It is a total con. The result is easy to see. With tax on the wealthy consistently lowered over the last 30 years, the rich have become richer while ordinary Australians have lost out – and our present Government policy is to reduce corporate taxes even further!

To reduce the unfair wealth concentration, the taxes should be put back to where they were in the 70s and extra taxes as shown below should be introduced.

4. Full openness of the tax paid by the 1% of our wealthiest Australians

For the lowest 70% of Australian wealth holders, it is hard to hide the tax that is paid. If you are a teacher, a policeman, a nurse, or work for a Government department, your pay rates can be easily found and the tax you are obliged to pay is on the public record.

However if you are part of the wealthy 1%, everything is secret. This benefits the wealthy who want to minimise their taxes – or pay no tax at all.

“48 Australian millionaires earned \$118 million ... paid accountants and lawyers \$22.2 million to reduce their taxable income to \$0 and pay tax of \$0.”

Sydney Morning Herald, April 20th 2017
(Source, ATO Tax Office statistics 2014/15)

We should introduce the Norwegian system for the 1%. That is, total transparency in tax returns.

See this link to the article from *The Guardian* [here](#) which explains the tax transparency provisions in Norway. It has been in place for over 100 years. The gross income and tax paid by the wealthy citizens who pay large amounts of tax are considered as heroes – as they should be.

	INNTEKT	FORMUE	SKATT	BOSTED
1	Inge Arve Birkeland (1954)			
	Income	\$2,541,502	12 472 153	
	Fortune	\$5,009,185	24 582 039	
	Tax	\$740,107	3 631 999	
	Residence			Osterøy
2	Nils Skjerping (1966)			
	Income	\$1,204,726	5 912 064	
	Fortune	\$5,679,921	27 873 605	
	Tax	\$408,710	2 005 701	
	Residence			Osterøy
3	Alvar Håland (1950)			
	Income	\$1,061,373	5 208 575	
	Fortune	\$132,463	650 049	
	Tax	\$307,997	1 511 463	
	Residence			Osterøy

On the left is an example of what appears on an iPhone app of three taxpayers on the island of Osteroy in Norway. It is good to see that these three Norwegians pay substantial tax.

The tax paid is completely transparent. This could work towards a complete change in the ethos of the wealthy. Instead of doing everything they can to minimise tax so they can buy a bigger waterfront house or a larger boat to show off, they will be able to do their showing off by letting people see how much they are putting back into making Australia such a fantastic country.

5. Tackle big business tax dodging by legislating full tax transparency

What could be fairer? I understand it is reported that Apple in Europe pay less than 0.005% tax. We don't even know what percentage of tax they pay here in Australia.

The greed and utter selfishness of these huge corporate giants is almost unbelievable. Take a look at this video on YouTube [here](#).

We must immediately legislate that all large organisations have totally transparent tax affairs, including their revenue, the number of employees, their assets, the profits, and every other detail that is necessary to make it completely clear what tax they are paying in our country.

They may threaten to leave Australia, but if we stand firm, they won't. These companies would rather make some money than no money.

EXCLUSIVE
ADAM CREIGHTON
ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

Technology giants paying lpc tax

HOW THEY COMPARE

	Income tax \$m	Tax as % of revenue
GOOGLE	16.6	1.5%
FACEBOOK	3.3	1%
APPLE	128.2	1.7%
EBAY	0.57	1.1%
PAYPAL	3.2	0.8%

Published in *The Weekend Australian*, May 20-21, 2017

“Microsoft, McDonalds and IBM are among dozens of multinational giants that have not signed up to the Federal Government’s tax transparency measures aimed at giving the public more details about company tax affairs.”

6. Prohibit the use of tax havens

Our Prime Minister has announced that he is reducing corporate tax because we in Australia have to compete with countries that pay lower tax. In effect, it is a race to the bottom.

It is all a complete con. For example, America has lower taxes because it provides fewer public services. They don't have a proper universal health system, and the minimum wage they pay to government employees of less than \$10 per hour is about half the amount paid in Australia. They don't share the wealth.

The only way Australia could have the tax rates that are paid in America would be for us to increase the inequality even more than it is now, and make it closer to the United States – where they have 77.1 million on a minimum wage of about \$7.25 per hour.

“...most of Australia’s workers currently have declining real wages.”

Bernard Keane, political journalist

7. Reward tax avoidance whistle-blowers

The tax avoidance industry in Australia, made up of big accountancy and legal firms, earns hundreds of millions of dollars, advising wealthy individuals, companies and foreign multinationals on how to avoid tax – throwing ethics to the wind.

In the UK, those involved in this tax evasion and aggressive tax planning who whistle-blow to the tax authorities are given a share of the penalty collected. This is a fantastic idea. The Australian Labor Party has said it would introduce a similar reward scheme, however they have capped the reward at \$250,000. It shouldn’t be capped, it should be a large amount of money. The whistle-blower will know they can earn more money from the reward than from the normal enormous salaries that are paid by the tax minimisation and avoidance industry.

“Under Labor’s plan, individuals who highlight tax avoidance behaviour, tax evasion, aggressive tax planning and other tax issues could collect a share of the penalty collected. Labor plans to name and shame multinationals on tax evasion.”

Gareth Hutchins, The Australian, 13 May 2017

8. Encourage wealthy Australians to sign the Gates/Buffett “Giving Pledge”

“Of 6,000 Australians who have a taxable income of over \$1 million, over 2,000 make no claim at all for charitable donations tax deductibility.”

Australian Taxation Office (ATO)

Imagine that. One-third of our really wealthy donate zero to charity. Their accountant would ask at the end of the year, “Did you donate anything to charity?” “No.” The accountant would say, “But surely you gave \$50 to the Salvos on the Red Shield Appeal day?” “No.”

Those who sign the Giving Pledge commit to giving away more than half of their wealth to charitable causes – either during their lifetime or in their will.

Already, Australia’s Andrew “Twiggy” Forrest has signed the pledge, along with such well-known people as Bill Gates, Warren Buffett and Richard Branson. See [here](#) for details.

Most importantly, see [here](#) to read the letters which the wealthy have submitted when signing the Giving Pledge. How fantastically inspirational they are, and it is great to see that there are a small number of the extreme wealthy who are happy to publicly commit to putting a huge amount of money back into society.

“From my parents’ example, it was natural for me to continue the family tradition of trying to do some good in the world around me.”

Margaret Adams (quote from a Giving Pledge letter)

Wouldn’t it be great if more of the wealthy – especially the billionaires – in Australia signed the Giving Pledge. Maybe then, if joined by the other 1 percenters, the pitchforks won’t come out as predicted by American billionaire Nick Hanauer.

9. Reintroduce inheritance taxes for the wealthiest 1%

It is almost unbelievable that in Australia today, when a billionaire worth \$12 billion dies, he or she can pass every cent of that money to their kids. This is the prime reason for the extraordinary wealth concentration and unfairness in our country.

Inheritance taxes by country

Ranking	Country	Inheritance tax
1	Japan	55%
3	France	45%
4	United Kingdom	40%
5	United States	40%
20	Australia	0%

Of course, we would all love to leave every cent of our fortune to our kids, but that won’t be of great use to them if they are killed when the pitchforks come out. I’m glad to say that John Singleton’s business partner Mark Carnegie also supports inheritance taxes. This is what he has said:

“As to the inheritance tax, my position has been consistent, which is I don’t believe the only tax-free occupation in Australia should be sitting on a Toorak coffee bar waiting for your dad or mum to die.”

Mark Carnegie, ABC Lateline, 4 October 2011

Legislation will have to be introduced to stop the rich from rorting the system and paying no inheritance taxes at all. This is clearly what happens in the USA, as they have the most staggering difference between the wealthy and poor in world existence.

Perhaps inheritance taxes could go by law into the future fund. We could follow Norway in developing a substantial fund that will assist both present and future generations.

10. Increase the tax on the wealthiest 15% by 15%

The best short term way of bringing some fairness back into the system is to follow Mark Carnegie's suggestion to increase the tax on the wealthiest 15% by 15%.

He stated his belief on ABC Lateline on 4 October 2011. This is a great initiative to consider would bring some fairness back into the system. The 15% tax increase would raise \$13 billion per annum, and untold billions would be raised by an inheritance tax.

Businessman Mark Carnegie is calling for the wealthiest 15 per cent of Australians to pay an extra 15 per cent in tax.

"...my proposal is that the richest 15 per cent of the community pay 15 per cent more tax in order to set ourselves up optimistically and positively for the next generation, and the generation after that."

Mark Carnegie

11. Political donations

It is clear that our present system of political donations is why the wealthy 1% have far more power politically than the other 99%. There should be a new method for funding elections. As a suggestion, the \$74 million currently donated and used to fund political parties could come out of the additional tax which was to be placed on the wealthy mentioned in paragraph 10.

12. Home ownership

Australia has moved from viewing homes as a place for a family to live in with security, to seeing it as a tax advantage and investment opportunity. To once again have house prices that young couples can afford would require us not only to reduce population growth, but also to remove the capital gains tax exemption and reform the negative gearing rules in relation to home purchase. (See an additional paper by the Dick Smith Fair Go Group *The Housing Affordability Crisis: An honest debate* available [here](#), or by contacting the Dick Smith Fair Go Office.)

13. Overseas aid to concentrate on assisting population stabilisation

Our present \$5 billion in overseas aid should be concentrated on assisting other nations stabilise their population. The fact that the United Nations claims that the world will go from 7 billion to either 10 or 12 billion shows a catastrophe in the making.

Access to safe and affordable family planning should be a basic human right, along with access to nutrition, health and education. We must ensure that every child born is a wanted child, and has the opportunities to enjoy a safe and healthy life.

14. Facilitate union membership for the lowest paid workers

One of the prime reasons we have shared the wealth better in Australia in the past is the union movement. With more aggressive and ruthless globalised companies taking over our existing businesses, there is clearly a need for the revitalisation of the union movement to protect the lowest paid workers.

15. Move away from GDP as a measure of success

The Gross Domestic Product is a historic relic that has outlived its usefulness. It does not measure the satisfaction and happiness of the citizens. We should move to something like the General Progress Indicator for judging the success of our society and our politicians.

16. Measure and publicise the inequality index

It is clear that over the last 30 years, inequality has been increasing in Australia. A yearly figure should be published by the Government showing how we start to correct this. That is, that the 1% don't continue to have the same wealth as 70% of the lowest Australian.

17. Consider the introduction of a living wage – or a shorter working week

It is clear that with the substantial increase in automation and robotics, there will be less jobs than ever before. Should we look at following Finland's basic universal income – a guaranteed minimum wage? This is supported by people such as Bill Gates and Sir Richard Branson. The issues will be how those without jobs can have acceptable self-esteem, and also those taxpayers with jobs do not look down on those without – a challenge.

Alternatively, the working week could be reduced to 30 hours. With productivity and efficiency gains, this could be without a reduction in remuneration. This would enable more young Australians to actually get a job.

18. CEO wages to be limited by the average salary paid by that company

Should we limit the wages of chief executives of a major public company to no more than 30 times the average salary paid by that company? If CEOs want to increase their take home pay they will also have to increase the take home pay of their workers.

Note: By end of the 1970s, BHP's CEO earned around 6 or 7 times the average Australian earnings. It's now 89 times. Other companies have kept up too - the average total pay for chief executives in Australia's top listed companies has now hit \$4.84 million — 63 times an average worker's earnings.

Special note from Dick Smith

Why am I doing this?

As I am clearly a member of the 1% group, some would say, “**Dick, why, as a wealthy capitalist, are you ratting on your mob?**”

The reason I am taking this action is self-interest. That is, a concern for my grandchildren. It is obvious that our economic system has gone off-track.

I have benefited greatly from growth and it would have been easier for me to say nothing. However, that would be a cop out.

Rather than wait for the pitchforks to come out – with the resultant misery and deaths, I think we should be moving to restore fairness and live in balance now.

I hope you will come on board as a supporter.

dicksmithfairgo.com.au

Become a supporter of the Dick Smith Fair Go Group Be proud to say, “I’m a Dick Smith Fair Go-er!”

Pledge

Yes! Please include me as a foundation supporter for the new Group. I understand the Dick Smith Fair Go Group is not a political party. It is simply a group of concerned Australians who wish to return to a more egalitarian society.

Optional donation

See the donations section on dicksmithfairgo.com.au



Polyp.org.uk

“In absolute numbers, more illiterate, improvised, and chronically malnourished people live in the world at the end of the 20th century than at the beginning.”

Marvin Harris

“Youth jobless rate rises to 13.5%, underemployment to 18% hitting the highest level in 40 years.”

Helen Davidson, The Guardian, March 2017

“Anyone who believes in indefinite growth on a physically finite planet is either mad or an economist.”

Sir David Attenborough

“High population growth: good for the rich, bad for the rest of us.”

Eric Claus

dicksmithfairgo.com.au