

Premise

Global warming is such an all-encompassing issue it calls for an all-encompassing response. The Ministry's *Questions to guide your feedback* are extraneous in the way that a consultation process over travel costs and baggage would be extraneous when a tsunami is about to engulf your home. Hence the panoramic focus of this submission, for the threats and potentials of our situation go far beyond bickering over percentages.

We need to 'think big'—but not in commercial terms. We need to consider what New Zealand stands for. We need to challenge habits of perception. New Zealand began as a social experiment by people who had made the longest migration in human history and settled among the descendants of Pacific explorers. That pioneering spirit has been buried in recent times by a narrowly pragmatic, profit-driven attitude. We need to release it to take advantage of our land's advantages and inspire our people.

An enormous opportunity faces us—and, more particularly, our government. Through the exercise of leadership, vision and boldness, our current politicians could be remembered for having formed a great New Zealand government that allowed our nation to be revitalised and transformed.

It is apparent that a social revolution is underway, driven by outrage at inequalities and injustice and by concerns over environmental damage and climate change. Social media has made this revolution global. Due to what appears a deliberate policy of misinformation and news suppression many people in our country seem unaware of it, but the groundswell is growing, it is unstoppable, and a critical point is approaching beyond which the revolution will be explosive in its growth and repercussions. Against this surge stand conglomerate commercial interests and their political agents that gained power in a world of seemingly unlimited resources. But that world is finished.

If our government would change its allegiance from the global economy that is failing most of the world's population to the electorate it is employed to represent, it could achieve greatness. The change will involve struggle, but we are fast approaching a point where there will be no choice. Estimating the cost of action in terms of dollars is puerile in relation to the costs of inaction and the benefits of success.

Actions

The school system needs to educate our children about global warming and resource depletion as well as alternative lifestyles and technologies, so they can make informed choices.

We must utilise New Zealand's ever more fraudulent 'clean green' image and turn our agricultural industry organic and GE-free while reducing its dependence on wasteful and polluting animal production. The agricultural sector will doubtless resist, but we can't compete in price with the mass output of major nations (witness the developing contest between our dairy industry and China's), so why not do what we've always done and niche market, fine-tuning to boutique products? We already have the brand, so why not use it to become known for producing clean green food and technology?

We need to shield New Zealand commerce from empire-building corporations (and if protectionism rankles, maybe our politicians should start reading up on alternative economic theories), meanwhile

encouraging business initiatives at local community level. We desperately need to employ more people in meaningful work— ‘meaningful’ defined as productive, locally beneficial and personally fulfilling. This is hardly radical or even experimental—numerous business models exist from successful localised enterprises around the world.

Obviously we need to reduce carbon emissions to zero (or below), but achieving this requires an agility that is beyond the cumbersome rigidity of a bulk-blinkered economic system that benefits only a few. Zero carbon emissions will be achieved as a result of individuals and communities finding practical solutions and being given freedom to develop them. This can be subsidised by taxes on the financial speculation and wealth hoarding that belong to a decaying old world.

Our political parties should work together in the nature of a war government, because surely this is a fight for survival as much as Britain faced in 1940. The reality is that the only things dividing most of our political parties are threadbare ideologies based in the exigencies of a bygone era.

Summary

A world is ending. This is not just about climate change. The world’s economic system is creaking under a growing weight of wealth inequality, overused resources, rampant commercialism and failing government, and when natural disasters are added to the pressure, it is not a question of ‘should’ or ‘must’—there *will* be change. Any government that realises this and directs and facilitates the wave of change—rather than holding fast and being engulfed by it—will be honoured and remembered.

To our politicians and bureaucrats, for God’s sake—and for the sake of your kids—tell the truth to the ordinary New Zealanders who employ you to serve them, and then listen to what they have to say. One day you will have to look your grandchildren in the eye and justify your actions in creating their world. The small-mindedness displayed by so many of your number suggests you will have a lot of explaining to do. You may never be forgiven.