

## WE CAN NO LONGER BE INACTIVE WE MUST ACT NOW

### ABSTRACT

It is the end of a busy day of being an advocate visiting our Parliamentarians, for the life of future generations. There is a Native Indian saying how *will our decision effect the seventh generation?* The question we need to ask is will there be a seventh generation and what sort of a Universe will have evolved as a result of our actions. Things are so serious we cannot sit by and let others deal with these problems for we have all played a part in polluting our atmosphere. *more*

*"We cannot simply think of our survival; each new generation is responsible to ensure the survival of the seventh generation." Everything that we do has consequences for something else. This circular pattern of thinking is a constant reminder to us that we are all ultimately connected to creation. What we do today will affect the seventh generation and we must bear in mind our responsibility to them today and always."* [http://www.iisd.org/pdf/seventh\\_gen.pdf](http://www.iisd.org/pdf/seventh_gen.pdf)

On June 2<sup>nd</sup> in Canberra Sisters Margaret Hinchey and Marie Butcher joined with representatives from Australia's Uniting, Anglican, Catholic, Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh, Bahai and Jain religious communities to show their support for action on climate change.

The morning started with a briefing to re-iterate the policy of Australian Religious Response to Climate Change ([ARRCC](#)). In groups of four we visited parliamentarians from each side of parliament. We asked them to support strong action on climate change. We affirmed the Prime Minister on her stand to put a price on carbon but insisted it should be only one of a number of measures to bring down emissions. We also expressed concern that Australia is not doing enough to finance adaptation in developing countries.

The day culminated with a public forum in the evening at the Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture. The forum featured Bishop Browning, Mark Dreyfus, *Parliamentary Secretary for Climate Change*, and Shadow Minister, Greg Hunt and Dr Janette Lindesay, *Assoc. Professor at Australian National University Climatology*, climate variability and change science, climate vulnerability and adaptation. Bishop Browning opened the procedure with a Theological Position Paper on Climate Change (**attached**). The Hon. Mark Dreyfus agreed completely that there was no doubt about the science and that the problem is urgent. He expressed exasperation with the misrepresentation of the science by public figures, saying this is a question of scientific fact, not mere belief. "One doesn't get to choose to believe in, or not believe in, the physics behind the operation of a car", he said. Mr Dreyfus parted ways with the Bishop that a carbon price should fast-track change and not offer protection to carbon-intensive industries. The Government doesn't want to precipitate disruption to the current shape of the Australian economy.

The Hon. Greg Hunt agreed completely with the science but was much less frustrated than other speakers about Australia's rate of progress in bringing down emissions. His main concern was the unintended consequences of a carbon price, eg, companies taking their businesses off-shore.

Dr Janette Lindesay spoke quietly and persuasively about the grim consensus among reputable scientists about the data on climate change. Dr Lindesay stated that we have reached the threshold. The planet is moving rapidly towards a stage when the trees, the environment will not be able to absorb the carbon in the air. We need to move rapidly towards no emissions.

The message from the forum was passionate and strong. People asked the Government for strong leadership on the issue. There was a request for bipartisan cooperation on such an important issue.

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*Photo: Jan Barnett, Julie Owens MP (Parramatta), Margaret Hinchey, Marie Butcher,.....*

