

Open Email to Joe Hockey MP on Government philosophy and Australia's image overseas - dated 28th August 2012

Dear Joe,

It was probably unfair to "ambush" you this morning. The function at the Northbridge Golf Club in Sydney was what is expected of our local Federal and State Members of Parliament. However it was too short at about 1 hour 15 minutes and there should have been two microphones for questioners. Bronwyn Bishop did a very professional meet the electorate function at the Belrose Bowling Club recently.

Concerning my very brief conversation with you at the door, I repeat my views which are strongly held and would welcome a reply.

I argue that the man who cannot be criticised, and the woman who is always criticised mercilessly, have much in common. Over the last 25 years I have travelled regularly overseas, and during the last decade yearly to Europe and irregularly to the USA and PRC - although in the case of China sometimes multiple visits in the one year.

I cited three examples relating to philosophy of government and projection of Australia's image overseas.

- 1) The Pacific Solution re Mark 1 Howard and Mark 2 Gillard. I doubt whether I have ever received more derision in my nearly 50 years of activism. Europe is dealing with millions of refugees/illegal immigrants and we in Australia less than 20,000 boat people annually. Pandering to popularism will ultimately rebound on both Parties.
- 2) Government support for Australian citizens when in trouble over political issues. The David Hicks disgrace, Howard, and the Julian Assange deceit, Gillard, have been trenchantly lambasted even by Americans. Leaving your own citizens "out to dry" when not of your philosophical viewpoint shreds Australia's image internationally.
- 3) Globally infamous corruption scandals such as the AWB and RBA sagas. Given the tortuous revelations about both over many years, you and your parliamentary colleagues on both sides of the House are still in denial - you simply have not maintained the good name and reputation of this country.

Corporate and Union corruption and crime goes mostly undetected and therefore unpunished. To say that former AWB head Andrew Lindberg did not know, as you did this morning, is breathtaking as he pleaded guilty so as to receive the travesty of a sentence re a "\$100,000 penalty and a ban from corporate life until September 2014". The denials by Reserve Bank Governor Glenn Stevens, including recently before the House of Representatives Committee, go on ad nauseam.

A philosophy of governance covering Ethics, Integrity, Corruption and Crime is mandatory for your Party and future Government of Australia. Relating to the world based on realities and not populist slogans is essential for our image abroad - the world is not "having a go at us" - your words. Australian Federal Governments can no longer hide behind old time "great and powerful" friends.

I look forward to your response - and hopefully not written by some junior staffer as we have come unfortunately to expect from our "leaders".

Yours

Michael C H Jones
President – ACCCI