



Speech by

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MEMBER FOR CABOOLTURE

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REGIONAL FOREST AGREEMENT

Mr FELDMAN (Caboolture—ONP) (6.10 p.m.): It is my pleasure to rise to second the motion moved by the member for Lockyer. Our traditional jobs in the timber industry are under threat because of the emergence of the trendy new worldwide religion that is akin to nature worship and that has replaced the scientific management of the past 100 years. Our forest management is now run on an emotional basis and groups such as the United Nations, which has an anti-industry bias, heavily promote this approach.

The United Nations is an international bureaucracy and, just like all bureaucracies, it is eager to justify its existence and expand its influence. One of the ways that it has done this is by heavily pushing arguably phoney emergencies such as global warming and then promoting treaties to fix them. Global warming is a good example of hysteria triumphing over good science. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has said that the world may have warmed up by 0.3 to 0.6 of a degree in the past 100 years, but the problem is that the alleged increases are within the statistical margin of error. In other words, the alleged increases may have resulted from measurement errors. The jury is still well and truly out on the trendy issue of global warming, yet we are being forced to adapt, at great cost in terms of money and jobs, in order to conform with an unproven myth that the UN is using to justify itself and increase its influence.

The Agenda 21 report is also based on unproven pseudo-science and is directly affecting our forest industries. Part of the agreement focuses on unsustainable patterns of production and consumption, and the need to develop national policies to change unsustainable consumption patterns. Are members aware that Australian Governments are now required to develop policies and strategies to encourage changes in our unsustainable consumption patterns?

Do members know that the bulk of the membership of the United Nations comes from the poorer countries of the world, that those representatives are envious of our good living standards and that many of them regard our lifestyle as extravagant and wasteful? The UN is full of people such as Sir Shridath Ramphal who believes that rich countries such as Australia must adjust to a lower level of consumption. According to people such as Sir Shridath Ramphal, Australia consumes too many resources, our standard of living is too high, and we must adjust downwards for the global good. The really worrying question is: who will decide what our standard of living should be? Will it be a Government that we elect or will it be decided by unelected and unknown people who are biased against the traditional Australian way of life?

Those are the types of extremists who are creating policy at the international level that our Federal Government signs into law, which then forces Queensland laws to be changed. The Federal Government has signed many United Nations treaties affecting our forestry industry, including the Agenda 21 agreement. As a result of those treaties, the Commonwealth and State Governments prepared the National Forest Policy Statement and, in due course, the RFA agreements, and job losses followed. I know that many members scoff at the claim that those treaties are not legally binding. I will quote a small part of a speech by Mr Rob Butterworth, head of the Policy Coordination Division of the Commonwealth Department of Environment and Heritage, delivered on 10 February this year. He states—

"It is important that we keep in mind that every agreement to which the Commonwealth government commits Australia involves some ceding of sovereignty."

I reiterate that this Government has adopted an excessively pessimistic quota of 83,000 cubic metres annual yield for the south-east region, probably because it has been unduly influenced by the likes of Dr Aila Keto who, if she had her way, would probably have us all living in caves and eating grass. The Government should be consulting with organisations such as the Queensland Timber Board, the Forest Protection Society and the Australian Workers Union, which have a far more realistic grasp of the issues.

I ask the House to consider this question: in the light of the speeches that are made today, is our forestry industry managed on scientific principle and rationality? Perhaps more fundamentally, I ask who makes Queensland laws: this Parliament or international bureaucrats? In relation to the question of who should make our laws, it is good that I have found in the Labor Party an ally for reform who supports the community in making its own decisions. I say to the member for Rockhampton that I am pleased to see that he advocates community referendums. I look forward to seeing him cross the floor to vote with One Nation when our national Community-Based Referendum Bill comes up.
