

Lord Christopher Monckton In Australia

by Damian Wyld

Lord Christopher Monckton, a former adviser to Margaret Thatcher, is a leading critic of the theory of man-made global warming and of the recent Copenhagen Summit on climate change.

In Adelaide, on February 4, during his recent Australian tour, he delivered a lecture to a sell-out crowd of more than 600 people at the Intercontinental Hotel.

A short time before he gave his talk, he was interviewed by South Australian president of the National Civic Council, **Damian Wyld** for *News Weekly*. Below are some extracts. (The full 45-minute interview will be made available on DVD and advertised in the next issue of *News Weekly*).

Wyld: Lord Monckton, you've had a varied and interesting career thus far, one which is certainly gathering pace as it goes along, with the number of engagements and other things that you find yourself undertaking. In particular, what first got you interested in the issue of climate change?

Monckton: Well, I used to work for Margaret Thatcher as a policy adviser, and there were only six of us in her policy unit and, like most people in the civil service, nobody had any science except me, and I had a little. So in the world of the blind the one-eyed man is king, and I was her science policy adviser.

It's as rickety as that in little old Britain these days, and at that time scientists were beginning to say this might be a concern. The carbon dioxide (CO₂) had been measured for the first time in 1958 at Mauna Loa. It had been rising ever since, and the observatory there in Hawaii had been monitoring this, using a very accurate method; so there was no real argument that it wasn't happening. There was more CO₂ coming into the atmosphere; it was almost certainly caused by us; and it would almost certainly cause some warming. The debate is, of course, about how much warming it would cause.

At that time we didn't know, and my advice to Margaret Thatcher was that it would be quite a good idea to try and find out. And so she eventually, two years after I left, set up the Hadley Centre for forecasting. And it was in fact my successor, George Guys, who went with her to Chequers, the Prime Minister's country house, and it was a bitterly cold October weekend and they sat chuckling as they threw logs on the fire, writing the speech that eventually provided the funds for the Hadley Centre to study global warming.

Wyld: If you met someone at a bus stop who had never heard your side of the argument, and you had just three or four minutes to put your case, what points would you highlight?

Monckton: I would say, first of all, that it is now reasonably well established by a number of different methods in the peer-reviewed scientific literature that the rate of warming imagined by the UN's climate panel to arise from adding CO₂ to the atmosphere is seven times too big. That is the first point.

The next point is that, even if it isn't seven times too big, even if the UN has actually got it right, then it would still take 41 years of shutting down the entire global economy and emitting no carbon dioxide at all to forestall just one Celsius degree of the global warming that they imagine would otherwise occur.

Therefore, I would finally say that the correct thing to do is to wait and see. We've had no significant global warming for the last 15 years. We've had a global cooling trend, and quite a significant one, for the last nine years. Let's carry on waiting and seeing, because, even if nobody at all deviated and everybody complied with the Copenhagen accord between now and 2020, the only warming we would forestall by complying, as opposed to paying no attention at all, would be at most 0.1 Celsius degrees. So all of this activity by nations around the world is economically pointless and probably climatically unnecessary.

Wyld: You've probably heard of Earth Hour, which Australians have been encouraged to participate in by turning off lights and sitting in the darkness and probably emitting even more fumes by their candles for the one hour. You're talking about shutting *everything* down for 41 years for no impact at all?

Monckton: It would just forestall one Celsius degree of the warming that might otherwise happen if the UN was right about how much warming you're going to get. Of course, if you're only going to get one seventh of a degree, then it's an even more trivial result.

And that's why, of course, *a fortiori*, an emissions trading scheme (ETS), applying only in Australia with 1 per cent of total emissions in the world — that clearly would be still more pointless. There really isn't any point in doing this sort of thing, and all you're doing is kicking your own workers where it hurts most, and

frankly it is the job of governments to protect their own citizens and particularly to protect the jobs and the incomes and the well-being of the working people, on the backs of whose labour the rest of us have the lifestyle we like to enjoy.

Wyld: With that knowledge, it's really a wonder that an ETS has even been contemplated.

Monckton: The extraordinary thing is that the pollies these days don't know what questions they should be asking. You and I have just had lunch with a couple of pollies, and their eyes were like saucers when I indicated to them the sort of questions they ought to have asked before they got into this.

Wyld: We won't name them.

Monckton: [Laughs] No, no names, no pack drill, absolutely. But there was one on each side of the political divide — I think it's fair to say that much. Yet they could see quite clearly that they had not been asking the right questions.

Wyld: I think the BBC will, in fact, be here this evening.

Monckton: Well, I'm hoping they will. They've certainly been following me around most of this tour. They perhaps missed one of the highlights of the tour, which was my meeting with federal Opposition leader Tony Abbott. I had also hoped to meet Prime Minister Kevin Rudd and had asked to do so, but I'm still waiting for a reply on that one.

Wyld: Perhaps he's got a ticket in the queue with Al Gore somewhere.

Monckton: [Laughs] Yes, Al Gore has been dodging a debate with me for the last three years on the matter of the science, and indeed when I last tried to testify alongside him on this matter, when I was invited by the ranking minority leader of the Energy and Commerce Committee of the Congress last summer to answer Al Gore's testimony [I was] refused the right to testify.

For the first time in history, they didn't let me testify because they were terrified that I would simply destroy Al Gore, and, of course, implicit in that terror is an admission that they know that the science that he and they are peddling has no truth and can very easily be exposed by somebody who is sufficiently widely read in the subject, which by now I probably am, and so they ducked away from it because in their heart of hearts they know that none of this is true.

Corporate Australia

Wyld: What, or who, brought you to Australia?

Monckton: Two very kind, retired engineers from Noosa, friends who dug deep into their pockets and superannuation — they put their houses on the line, in effect, to bring me here. They didn't know whether anyone would come to my talks; they just felt they ought to give me a right of reply to an extraordinary 45-minute personal attack that was made on me by Kevin Rudd in a major speech last year to the Lowy Institute. Fortunately, my visit has now been paid for entirely by the pennies of the poor, the people coming and actually paying their \$20 to hear me speak. That's how this tour has been funded, because it is expensive — it's cost \$100,000 in airfares and accommodation and setting up rooms and equipment.

So if anyone says, "Oh, but are you funded by fossil fuel interests" — no, I am not! Not a single corporation was willing to put up its money to say, "We will give you a donation to this tour". All donations we've had have come from individuals, concerned individuals. Corporate Australia is terrified of a vengeful government ... and they would not help.

Wyld: Do you think some of them perhaps might see an opportunity to profit from an ETS or something similar?

Monckton: Oh yes, of course. The first people who gain from any rigged market are those who rig the market. Everybody else in the market loses and, of course, if it is a rigged and compulsory market, then everybody else, except those who rigged the market, is made to lose, and those who rig the market are enabled to make a profit. That includes the government and the actual operators of the rigged market — which, of course, are the banks. And so, one of the strongest arguments one can give — because bankers are not particularly popular at the moment, as you know — against the ETS is to say: if you have an ETS, the only people apart from the government that will get rich are the bankers.

Wyld: With the public in general, faced as they are with the possibility of an ETS or even, as we will discuss in a minute, of the potential loss of sovereignty, have you found a willingness among them to resist that, and perhaps to question it and to take a stand in some way?

Monckton: I think that what has happened is the mood has radically changed over the last year – and we’ve already been through the history of that – and people are now no longer believing a word that they are told on either side. In fact, it was put rather well by a radio interviewer that I have just come from, who said that “Frankly, people have now heard so much from both sides about this that they are suffering from analysis paralysis.” I thought that was a good, a nice phrase. And people actually get slightly cross-eyed listening to yet another talk about climate change. But the difference, I think, with my talks is that here is the chance to hear a reasonably comprehensive analysis in three different directions.

[My] three messages – the moral, the economic and the scientific – are extremely popular with the audiences. The moral message in particular is very powerful, that we have caused starvation by going for this dash for biofuels, taking agricultural land out from growing food for people who need it and into growing biofuels for clunkers that don’t and causing mass starvation in a dozen different regions of the world.

That is something which appeals very strongly to people’s sense of the unfitness of being careless about the collateral damage, as the military might put it, caused by policies that we haven’t properly thought through because we have simply believed scientists and, really, frankly, pressure groups whose vested interest is not the interest of ordinary working people and businesses here in Australia.

Biofuels

Wylde: To pick up on that issue of biofuels, we discussed earlier the situation in some parts of Australia where existing industries, such as sugar, could be turned towards that without loss of arable land. Have you got any comments?

Monckton: Now that’s a perfectly sensible thing to do. If you’ve got a crop which is the only thing you can grow on marginal land, and sugar cane is good from that point of view – it always has been – then, if you can’t sell the sugar-cane crop for sugar, then if you can mulch it down for biofuels or grow something else on it which will grow there but food won’t, well that’s a perfectly appropriate use of the land. No point in just leaving the land fallow if it can produce and make some contribution.

But what is clearly offensive is to plough up agricultural land which was growing food crops and then turn that into growing biofuel crops when you have starvation around the world. Herr [Jean] Ziegler – who is the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, the spokesman for those who have no voice and are starving – he has said this: “When millions are dying of starvation, the diversion of land from growing food to growing biofuels is” – and these are his words – “a crime against humanity.”

And crimes against humanity are usually punishable by a very severe penalty. But in this case, it is not we who are paying the penalty at the moment; it is the poor around the world who are starving and dying in their millions because of the doubling of world food prices that the dash for biofuels directly caused.

Loss of sovereignty

Wylde: Returning to Copenhagen and the potential loss of national sovereignty that many, many people face, you have previously linked the international “green” agenda, if I may call it this, with communism. Would you care to comment further?

Monckton: Right, certainly. First of all, the communistic elements ... were identifiable in the draft Copenhagen treaty as it stood on 15 September [2009]. I got a copy of that in early October, immediately went public with it, and the mere fact of going public with it prevented it from happening, because so many people got in touch with their legislators here in Australia, in the United States and in Canada – not of course in Britain, because the commissars of the European Union are not elected. It doesn’t matter what you say to them; they go their own way. We have no power anymore; we have no sovereignty anymore. But the communistic elements in that treaty were, first of all, that there was going to be a world government – this is the Socialist International. That’s point one.

Point two: it was going to have power over the commanding heights of the economy worldwide – that’s come straight from *The Communist Manifesto*. It was going to have power to set the rules under which all markets, whether financial or other, operate. So there would be no such thing as a free market any more, just as there isn’t in a communist country. They were going to take that away. They were also going to levy enormous and crippling rates of taxation, rates of taxation associated previously in history only with communist countries.

And the clincher for me was that, in the 186 pages of that draft of September 15 of the Copenhagen treaty, there was not one mention of the word “election”, “democracy”, “ballot” or “vote”.

Halfway through the Copenhagen conference, there was an enormous march of environmental activists in the centre of Copenhagen outside the parliament – hundreds or even thousands of them, carrying red

flags with hammer and sickle emblems on them, the first time these hated symbols of communist tyranny and murder had been seen on the streets of Europe since the Berlin Wall had come down 20 years previously. Now, if I am not entitled to call communists “communist”, then what should I call them?

Wyld: Speaking of the European Union, are there any lessons, both in terms of emissions trading schemes there and perhaps, more broadly, Brussels-based governance and other EU issues — are there any lessons Australians can learn?

Monckton: The first lesson I unhesitatingly say, which in the wider sense, is this: do not give up your democracy as we did. It was done to us by stealth. We were told it was good for us. But in fact we are no longer a democracy. We are a police state, governed by an alien authority which we cannot elect, cannot question, cannot hold to account, cannot remove and cannot replace. We are powerless. Ninety per cent of our laws are made by commissars — that’s the official German word for them. They are called “commissars”, just as they were in the hated Soviet Union. And those commissars have greater power than the Politburo of the Soviet Union to direct what happens in Britain.

The other lesson from the European Union, and you also asked about this, is the emissions trading scheme. Now, we’ve had one for years. It collapsed twice because the countries of Europe allowed themselves higher rates of emission before you had to pay than the amount they were already emitting, so the price of a tonne of carbon in this rigged market collapsed to zero, they couldn’t rig it to make it come up. They tried again a second time, and then the world economy collapsed so the price went down to zero. Now they are trying a third time and, of course, they are now saying it’s working terribly well. But it isn’t, because what’s happening is they are driving business overseas.

Wyld: Given such things as the personal attacks that you have endured, and some of the nastiness that does arise in your work, how do you maintain your drive and your passion?

Monckton: My passion is for trying to get the science and the economics right, rather than just coming and singing about it. And so, if I come and speak on these tours, I do it because people want to hear about the science and the economics, and I am very happy to tell them. And so I just quietly get on with it for as long as I can and for as long as the good Lord keeps me fit to do it. I don’t regard this as a kind of zealous mission. I’m not there like some kind of preacher. I just go where people ask me to go.

Wyld: I think that’s a very noble principle to have and I wish you the very best in your endeavours.

Monckton: Well, thank you very much indeed, and God bless Australia!

The full 45-minute version of the Lord Monckton interview will be made available on DVD and advertised in the next issue of *News Weekly*.