

Dear Senators,

This is a story of a young hard working Australian who was 23 years old at the time. I was working hard, developing the farm that my brother and I had been left, when our father died.

I was 12 years old when he died and wanted nothing more than to continue on his hard work and the work of 2 previous generations before him. I was hard at work doing what farmers do, as well as clearing the remaining balance of the farm. There was about 1000 acres of sandy loam stringy bark country, to be turned into pasture, not just clear felled but rather turned into a park like state for posterity. I was heavily invested in machinery, and as the wool industry was going well at the time, things were going ok.

The plan was as follows, develop the remainder of the farm, and make enough to pay out my brother's share thus allowing the whole property to remain in one piece for another generation.

Unfortunately somewhere in Melbourne plans were being hatched which would smash my plans, dreams and hard work into microscopic dust.

I still remember when I heard the news. I was just getting into the Ute after shutting the front gate, the Victorian NEWS was on and the announcer just said that the Kirner Government had **“announced a ban on all land clearing effective immediately”**.

I was dazed confused and bewildered, had I heard this correctly? Was it April fools day? Could they even do this? Surely this was public land, right??

I soon found out that it was all true.

- It came in overnight with no warning (to prevent panic clearing of course).
- There was no recourse and ***no compensation***.
- The ban was effective immediately and yet they had public *“Consultation”* for the next month or so.
- Of course the public consultation came out in favour of the ban, claiming that the “community was calling for it” (not in my community!)

How Naïve was I ????

The reaction was unbelievable. The VFF local organiser had a heart attack and died at a meeting. There were death threats against the Government (apparently). There were incidents against the conservation department. There was protest rallies.

But it was all in vain. I fought as hard as I could, but I was beaten. I could not win this fight. I could not get compensation, and I could not pay my brother out without selling some of the farm.

The bush blocks went on the market eventually and were sold, (at a discounted value, of course as timbered country was now not a commercial proposition).

My young wife walked out on me, I think the whole farming experience was just too negative and stressful for her. I wasn't much fun to be around any more.

And shortly after that the Wool industry collapsed. My brother and I shot around 500 sheep just off shears, during one of those years because you simply couldn't sell them anymore.

What a fun time I was having and I wasn't even 25 yet!

I have a career in Aviation now, a new life and a fantastic family. However I am still passionate about the injustice that was done to all of us back then. An injustice now being replicated on a larger scale throughout other parts of Australia. I fear for all of Australia including you dear reader if this is the best that we can do for our hard working sons and daughters.

To quote [Ayn Rand](#)

“Individual rights are not subject to a public vote; a majority has no right to vote away the rights of a minority; the political function of rights is precisely to protect minorities from oppression by majorities (and the smallest minority on earth is the individual).”

I will continue the fight for individual liberty as long as I am able, more people are waking up now, and many more will soon join them. Liberty is something we can never take for granted, even here in the so called “Lucky Country”.

I eventually penned this submission even though I really did not want to revisit the whole sorry episode again. I hope you find my story enlightening.

Kind Regards