

13.8.03.

Jill Hall, MP,
Member for Shortland.

Dear Jill, **CURRENT CULTURE OF INSECURE EMPLOYMENT.**

The Federal Government is killing off the great energies of the workforces of our past. There are more and more people out of work, or working in part time jobs, some by choice, but most by the fact that part time work is the only work available.

Australians, as a rule, are, by choice, very hard workers. It is most insulting to those currently out of work to have to look for, or to apply for jobs, when there are no jobs available.

I am a volunteer, because I am an aged pensioner that chooses to earn my pension by volunteering, whilst still physically able. I am now finding that I am working beside wonderful people that have been in the workforce, but find themselves out of work, redundant. These people are 'mutual obligation volunteers'. They bring to our landcare teams a huge raft of skills. They are still expected to seek full time work, in a market which does not exist. This is a ridiculous state of affairs. We are one step off the retrograde move of setting up workhouses, the shame and scourge of the seventeenth century.

We must not go backwards. There are wonderful people with great skills to offer, given the opportunity. These people have lost self worth, self esteem. We must not allow OUR country to sink into an abyss, and slide into third world conditions.

This continent is not well suited to agriculture as is now being proved. We need to turn things around and become a producer of brainpower, and a manufacturer of innovative gadgets that all the materialistic world hankers for. This requires high standard University and TAFE education, but the foundation of these two further educational areas is the basic schooling we give to our children. Mr. Howard does not seem to be aware of this.

Recently, we had the situation where a Landcare Facilitator, employed by the late DLAWC, now DIPNR, found his funding was running out at the end of the week. He packed up his desk, and on Friday at 4.00 p.m. he was told he was still employed till the end of August. He has since been told that he will be employed till the end of the year. This kind of uncertainty impacts on, not only the employee, but his partner, his family, his work associates, and those in the community dependent upon his support in his role as a facilitator. Mark you, this person's territory was the Hunter, Central Coast and lower north coast

regions! One person to do a more than a mammoth task in the first place! Landcare is the solution to the repair of this ravaged continent. It has lost the flavour of the month with Mr. Howard, because he has spent the Telstra monies, I guess! He still expects results, though, without the input of funding!

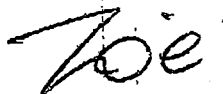
Under Mr. Howard, this country has widened the gap between the have's and havenots. Mr. Howard and his Party are begging this country with it's policies and it's extraordinary attitudes to employment and the workforce, and unemployment. By having the unemployed be involved in mutual obligation, the unemployment figures possibly change and look better!

I urge you to pursue my concerns with the appropriate Minister, and please do not rest until you have received some guarantee that there will be changes made, remembering that changes have to start at the TOP, not the bottom, as Mr. Howard would like us to believe.

We need a strong and stable workforce, with guaranteed term of tenure, so that workers can plan their lives, and their careers.

Thank you, Jill, for all that you do for you constituents, and those, too, from other areas, who i know full well that you help. You are a most excellent and trustworthy representative, and we are very blessed to have such a person of high integrity, as our representative. God Bless You.

Yours sincerely,



Zoe Russell,
19 Pelican Street,
Swansea. 2281.