

Subject: VSU

My name is Emma Berglund and I am a 23 year old Business (Economics major) student at La Trobe University, Bendigo.

The GSF supports people like me from rural & regional areas, also, people from low socio-economic backgrounds, and people with disabilities, among countless other people.

With VSU introduced now, I will still finish my degree - and a Dip. Ed., if I get in - however other people who will go through some of the countless setbacks I have been through due to personal issues, will not.

Since being at this university I have used and/or volunteered to help just about *every* service here. There are so many things here that are close to my heart; this has been my home, and the people here have been my family.

Why does your government continue to put more pressure on communities in our society such as student associations, the poor and unions? Isn't it obvious that doing this is increasing the level of political activity, which is more likely to create the communistic sub-societies that you seem to dislike so much? For example, I have noticed that students at this campus have become at least ten times more political than I have ever seen them since VSU was first brought to their attention.

I don't particularly want to be 'wealthy' personally; I *choose* to spend my time helping people, and my money on those who need it. But I won't be able to; this society will force me to spend all my time on earning excessive amounts of money to support myself and any children I may have, and keeping it all to myself 'just in case' one day I need it.

You may be raising the economy, but you are no longer helping the people of your nation. Your government is planning to further de-evolve into the class-divided society that we have spent so long trying to progress from.

Don't you think having the strongest, most creative and intelligent people in the optimum jobs is best for our economy to operate at its most efficient? Do you think this will continue if the members of our more 'challenging' groups of people, who are the most demanding yet extremely stimulating to society, who are gifted and/or determined, are kept out of their areas of expertise?

There are so many people who don't seem to care about the world and their community anymore, as our society goes further towards the current government's 'user pays system' which dictates that they become as productive as they can. They work by themselves, for themselves. Does this make them happier? *No*, humans are social creatures who enjoy interaction with others. If people were happier, it would make them healthier, physically and mentally... but I guess then they would be consuming less (healthcare, luxury items that keep imports high), and may not be producing as much. They might be

spending that time at home with family or with friends, and we can't have a population of people a bit more content, because that would mean the economy might slow down. But I guess the economy is important to the people. Why? Because a higher economy increases the general quality of life, so that people can be happier and healthier... doesn't it? Is it working for you now, because any positive aspects will soon stop working for me. How much more happy and healthy are you purely because of 'healthy national economic growth'? At the end of your life, will you be glad you worked so hard, or will you be wishing you spent more time with the people you love? Will you be glad that our ever-increasingly individualistic society has meant that you spend every lunchtime alone or with people you don't really like in a nice-looking restaurant, reading a newspaper, with a cold handshake from a co-worker who is only pleasant to you because they want your job, instead of being with your wife / husband / brother / sister / children / friends, talking about your achievements and getting honest and loving hugs.

The thing that cuts me the deepest is that there is enough food in the world to feed everybody, as there is enough money in Australia to educate every Australian. It seems that the only way to live to your highest potential in our society is to be born with a silver spoon in your mouth.

Thank you for your time,

Emma Berglund.

“For if you suffer your people to be ill-educated, and their manners to be corrupted from their infancy, and then punish them for those crimes to which their first education disposed them, what else is to be concluded from this, but that you first make thieves and then punish them?” – Utopia, Thomas More