



Peter Hamilton

From: "Wesley Mission - Keith Suter Comments" <suter@wesleymission.org.au>
To: <Keith.Suter.Comments>
Sent: Monday, 9 December 2002 10:28 AM
Subject: Wesley Mission - Keith Suter Comments: Killed By A London Fog - Friday 6th December

Keith Suter Comments

RADIO 2GB NEWS COMMENTARY

Killed By A London Fog

50 years ago this week - on December 4 - a dense fog settled over London. It turned out to be one of the world's worst examples of air pollution. But it is only now that we are learning the full details of it.

The current edition of the "New Scientist" magazine has a brilliant article by Fred Pearce on the 1952 killer fog. I have to declare an interest - I was four years old at the time and could easily have ended up as one of the statistics being misreported by the British Government.

When the Great London Smog eventually lifted, it left behind mortuaries full to overflowing, undertakers who did not have enough coffins, and florists who had run out of flowers. The event was so significant that an international conference is being held this month to examine the fog. The conference is being aided by access to government files - and some real surprises have been located.

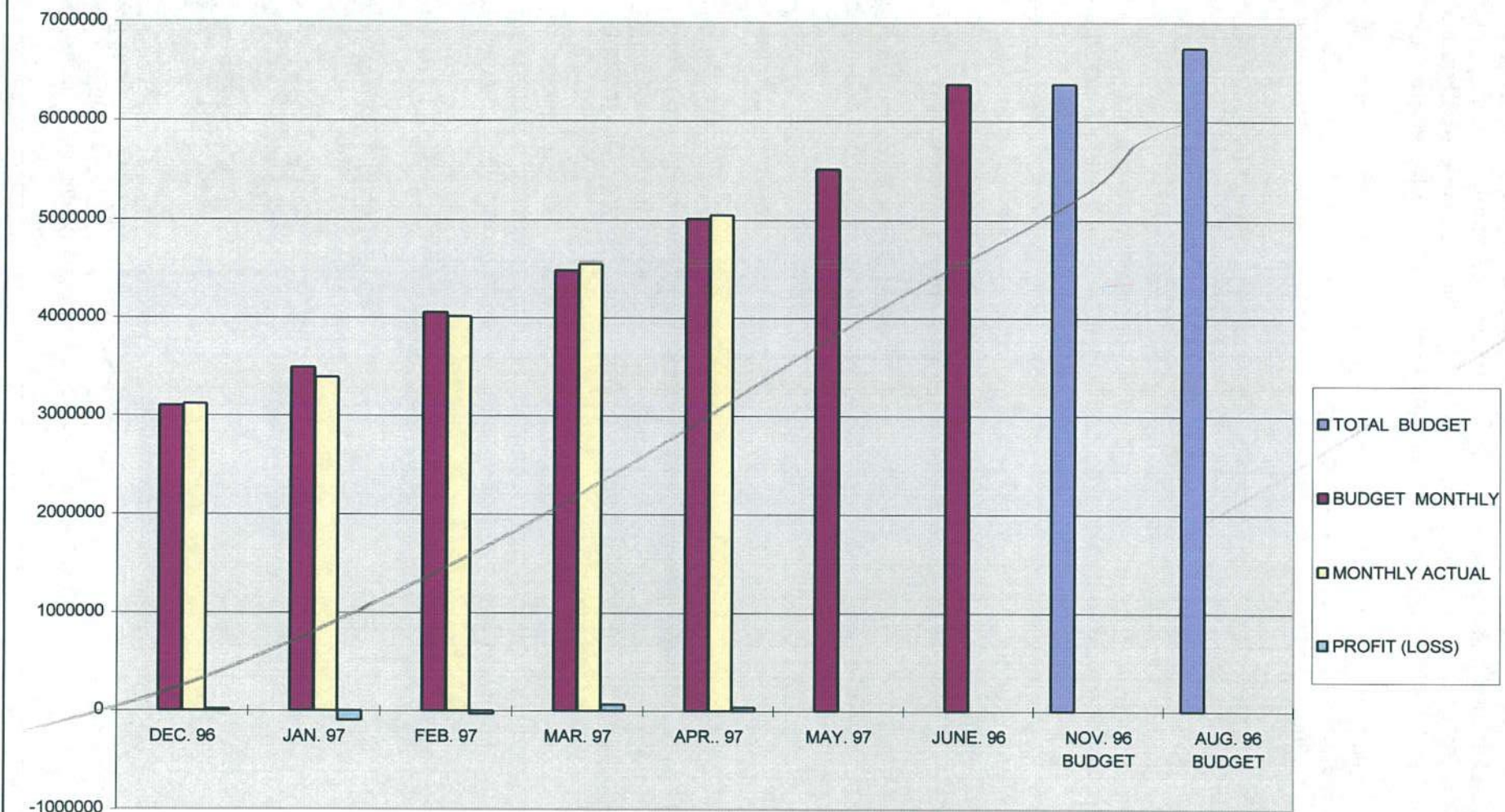
The fog was caused by the Government's decision to sell poor quality coal at home, so as to be able to sell the good quality coal overseas. The answer to the problem was to ban the burning of coal in towns - and this occurred a few years later. London is now a much healthier place to visit.

What is now attracting interest are the political implications of the Great London Smog. First, there were no immediate answers to the problem. But it was necessary to reassure - or fool - the general public into believing that the Government was doing something. In a statement that could easily have come from the "Yes Minister" television series, a British Government minister, Harold Macmillan, said: "We cannot do very much, but we can seem to be very busy - and that is half the battle nowadays".

Second, the Government decided that two million cheap "smog masks" should be issued to people with heart and respiratory problems. The Government knew that the masks were useless but, again, it gave the impression that something was being done.

By the way, an American tobacco company offered to donate 100,000 masks that used a novel filter technology designed for cigarettes. The Government rejected the offer because it feared that the company would use the gift in its advertising campaign: "this cigarette filter is so good it could keep out London smog".

Third, the real shocker has been the Government's policy to underestimate the number of people killed. The official line was that the fog was simply killing off the frail elderly, who were going to die anyway; the Great London Smog simply speeded up the process.

NORTH COAST REGION UTILIZATION CHART BY PROJECTS 1996/97

We now know that some medical experts within the Ministry of Health were troubled about this claim. Too many people were dying to whom this explanation would not normally apply: middle aged people and babies.

The Ministry of Health then claimed that there was a 'flu epidemic which had also contributed to the high number of deaths. This was another lie because there is no evidence that there was a 'flu epidemic.

In short: the Government said that about 4,000 people were killed. This month's conference will hear that the figure was about 12,000.

As is so often the case when a government chooses to lie, the truth comes out eventually. But we often have to wait.

Keith Suter

Consultant for Social Policy

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Peter Hamilton

From: "Wesley Mission - Keith Suter Comments" <suter@wesleymission.org.au>
To: <Keith.Suter.Comments>
Sent: Thursday, 16 January 2003 4:23 PM
Subject: Wesley Mission - Keith Suter Comments: The Need For Trust In International Politics - 10 January 2003

Keith Suter Comments

RADIO 2GB NEWS COMMENTARY

We have moved from an age of innocence to an age of anxiety. Innocence ends when an awareness of danger in a situation arises. Thus, the era of terrorism has ended our sense of innocence.

Professor James O'Connell spoke at last year's British United Nations Association Annual Conference on "From Innocence to Anxiety: Order and Disorder in a Global Age". Professor O'Connell is a Professor of Peace Studies at Bradford University, in northern England.

Professor O'Connell said that terrorism is the weapon of the weak. It is the lashing out of those who are invisible. But it does not prove effective in bringing about political change. It also tends to have a limited span because of the costs in sacrifice and the loss of support that grows with time and revulsion. The history of terrorism over the past century showed that the operations eventually wind down.

However, he also warned that the current era of terrorism has three factors that make the current era a little different from earlier ones. First, the current era contains more people willing to kill themselves in operations. Such people are much more difficult to deter because they are not scared about dying for their cause.

Second, the weapons that are now available are much more dangerous than in the past. Third, modern technology also an impact in the opportunity for faster travel and more widespread operations than (say) the Russian anarchist groups a century ago.

How can we respond? Professor O'Connell says that in international terms there have been three ways of responding. First, a country or group of countries can become so powerful that any form of competition is squashed.

Having just returned from London, I am reminded that Europe is littered with such once-powerful countries that bankrupted themselves in trying to maintain their military power. Britain and France are two recent examples. But it is worth recalling that Spain and Portugal were the super powers 500 years ago. But few outside those countries would guess that today - they seem to be far more interesting as tourist attractions. But then perhaps Britain and France are going that way as well?

Professor O'Connell says that a second approach is for the creation of a balance of power. Europe maintained a high degree of peace among its countries in the 19th century through the "balance of power", with the countries in competing alliances. The problem arose in 1870, with the rise of a strong united Germany in the centre of Europe: it was too big to fit into the balancing system and this contributed to the two world wars.

Finally, Professor O'Connell suggests an international system based on trust. A modern

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society is based on a high degree of trust. For example, when I go to a barber I have trust that the person will cut my hair and not my throat. Drivers trust that other drivers will keep to their side of road. Although there are some road accidents, by and large that trust is honoured.

Professor O'Connell therefore suggests that we use the current crisis as an opportunity to build a world that contains better systems of governance, research for new materials and fresh sources of energy, and the creation of international fair trading regimes and worthwhile foreign aid projects. In the process, we may make a future of more stable peace, create deeper respect for human rights, and produce greater shared prosperity than history has hitherto known.

Keith Suter

Consultant for Social Policy

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Peter Hamilton

From: "Wesley Mission - Keith Suter Comments" <suter@wesleymission.org.au>
To: <Keith.Suter.Comments>
Sent: Monday, 2 December 2002 10:36 AM
Subject: Wesley Mission - Keith Suter Comments: Sydney - Capital City Of The South Pacific - Friday 29th November 2002

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Dora 2/12/02*

Keith Suter Comments

RADIO 2GB NEWS COMMENTARY

Sydney - Capital City Of The South Pacific

There has been a great deal of controversy recently about a report on the possible future size of the Australian populations. What ever will be the future, Sydney will be the capital city of the South Pacific.

The Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO) has compiled a report for the Department of Immigration on the options to the year 2050 for Australia's population, technology, resources and environment. I was one of the people interviewed for the project.

Some of the report discusses the options for migration. Governments are very hesitant of discussing immigration. For example, the Australian Treasurer, this year - for the first time - released a Budget Paper on the costs of aging population. But the Paper was flawed because it failed to mention how changing levels of immigration could affect the economic cost of an aging Australian population. "Immigration" is too a hot a topic for Treasury to deal with.

The CSIRO report is a detailed forecast of what could happen to Australia in the context of the three viewpoints in the current immigration debate.

The first point of view is what I would call the "environmentalist" argument. It wants no further immigration. If this were to happen, then the population would peak at 20 million and then go down to 17 million in 2100. The good news is that there would be less pressure on the environment. The bad news would be the onset of economic problems, especially as the population declines.

The second viewpoint - which is effectively that of the main political parties - is to maintain the current policy of about 70,000 immigrants per year. The population would stabilize at about 25 million people in 2050. But land and water degradation would be a problem.

The third viewpoint - which is that of the business community - is to allow the entry of 130,000 people per year, with the figure rising as the population itself rises to over 300,000 people. This would be getting the country back to the immigration levels of the 1950s and 1960s. The population would rise to 32 million in 2050 and 50 million in 2100, with a higher proportion of younger people. There would be considerable environmental problems but there would be the highest economic growth of the three options.

I really don't think that the first option is a "goer". Australia already has a labour shortage - and the shortage shows up in the professions requiring youthful energy: nurses and teachers. Australia will have to recruit professionals from overseas.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS & SERVICES

NORTH COAST REGION

1996/97 PROGRAM OF WORKS: GARRY THOMPSON, CLIENTS PROJECTS MANAGER.

ID	Resource Name	Project/Activity	Total Rev.	Total Funds	96/97 Rev.	96/97 T/O	96						1997																	
							J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F				
88	Thompson Garry (Client /Project Manager			0		0																								
89		D.S.E. MAINTENANCE PACKAGES (NORTH)1996/97	180	795	180	795	D.S.E. MAINTENANCE PACKAGES (NORTH)1996/97																					30/12/		
90	Vantaggiato John (Project Controller)	Woodenbong Central School		435		0																								
91	Vantaggiato John (Project Controller)	Construction	20	435	20	0	Construction																				30/12/96			
92	Vantaggiato John (Project Controller)	Dorroughby Field Study Centre		153		0	Dorroughby Field Study Centre																				30/12/96			
93	Vantaggiato John (Project Controller)	Brunswick Heads Public School		141		0	runswick Heads Public School																				30/12/96			
94	Vantaggiato John (Project Controller)	Afterlee Public School		66		0																								
95	Molyneux John (Project Controller)	Documentation	5	795	5	0	Documentation																				30/12/96			
96	Davie Bill (Con. Sup.)	Documentation	5	795	5	795	mentation																				30/07/96			
97	Devlin Phillip (Con.Sup.)	Documentation	10	795	10	795	cumentation																				30/08/96			
98	McPherson Jock (Level 6 Carp))	Construction	20	795	20	795	Construction																				30/12/96			
99	Farmer Bob (Level 6 Plumb.)	Construction	20	795	20	795	Construction																				30/12/96			
100	Standing Ken (Level 4 Carp.)	Construction	16	795	16	795	Construction																				30/12/96			

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Date: 9/12

Task

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Therefore, the choice is between the second and third options. In either event, Sydney becomes the capital of the South Pacific. Indeed, in the third option, Sydney will have a population in 2100 of 10 million. A challenge, then, is how to make the most of Sydney's dominant role in the South Pacific.

Wesley Mission has been heavily involved in South Pacific affairs for over a century. For example, it has very active South Pacific congregations here in Sydney. It is also involved in some foreign aid projects. It is setting an example for others to follow.

By all means give more attention to Asia - but let us not forget to also look to the opportunities in the South Pacific.

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							J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F		
79	Thompson Garry (Client/Project Manager)			0		0																						
80	Molyneux John (Project Controller)	D.S.E. SCHOOLS FACILITIES MAINTENANCE CONTRACT	61	100	61	61																						
81	Eyears Greg.(Supers Rep.)	Documentation	20	100	20	61																						
82	Harrap Martin (Superintendent)	Documentation	20	100	20	61																						
83	Molyneux John (Project Controller)	Supervision	20	100	20	61																						
84	Muldoon Chris (Clerk 3)	Administration	1	100	1	61																						
85	Molyneux John (Project Controller)	D.S.E.LOCAL CONTRACTS	34	250	34	250																						
86	Molyneux John (Project Controller)	Design	4	0	4	0																						
87	Vantaggiato John (A.C.S.)	Construction	30	250	30	250																						

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