

We The People

Program 109

Foreign Aid and Corruption



All Australian governments have variously tinkered with Australia's foreign aid program. The new coalition Government says they intend to cut the growth in foreign aid which is a euphemism for cutting the budget. By world standards Australia is a wealthy country and we should be able to afford to help other countries which struggle to feed and educate their people and we do. Ours is a country based on a convict settlement and hardship in the extreme and it's in our DNA. The poms were sent here for stealing a loaf of bread just to survive and we know that an empty belly is the maker of theft and revolution. To be truly hungry is almost inconceivable for most of us yet over one billion people live in chronic poverty globally. Where the poor are, resides the roots of revolution and violence because people will do almost anything to stay alive and feed their families. The very poor also cling onto primitive religions which chart their path to domination, pain and violence.

Now the conundrum is, the more people on the planet the more will be poor and hungry and we are less able to deal with that situation. The idea that a greater population is good for business maybe true in the short but it's a path to destruction in terms of common sense. Continued growth in population cannot possibly work yet the bigger the world's population the more potential customers for the products of business and that is a paradigm which is over because its unsustainable. So the world has developed numerous ways to provide aid in the form of food and money to poor countries and yet the whole situation is getting worse not better. It seems there is a sense of guilt if Australia decreases its foreign aid and yet some supremely wealthy people like Microsoft's Bill Gates provide large sums of money to inoculate masses of African children from the most prevalent diseases. On the surface that philanthropy may be wonderful but will those children then grow just to starve to death or be deprived of an education to build a better future.

So in terms of Australia's aid program it too has been high jacked by the global political mantra where its more about inter country trade than actually uplifting people in my view. It's more about control and indebting countries to the first world so we can plunder their forests, oil, gas and minerals so first world business can occupy their communities producing slave labour. We try to sanitize corruption in the name of harmony and foreign aid is just the price in many cases for control through trading favours. High on our national list is Indonesia. It's the country to our near north with 250 million people and mostly Islamic which seems to be prevalent with the poor and uneducated and fosters the so called extremist Muslim fundamentalists who are cruel, primitive, violent people. I am unsure how I am supposed to know an extremist from an ordinary Muslim and so I ask where is that line and how do we tell. Now Tony Abbott has just been to Indonesia and actually apologized to them for cutting off their meat supply when they were found to be treating the cattle appallingly. His fawning to them made me sick and no business is worth animal cruelty or becoming a sycophant to another country especially one which is fundamentally corrupt at all levels of government and business. Julia Gillard promised Indonesia half a billion dollars to help run their schools which may well be a breeding ground for hatred and violence toward the free world. Certainly that has been the case. In May this year the International New York Times reported a wave of new corruption in Indonesian government ranks with emphases on the Islamic based Prosperous Justice Party which is a member of the President's coalition.

My question is why on earth is Indonesia receiving the largest slice of the Australian foreign aid pie when their government and the nation including the armed forces are blatantly corrupt and its embedded corruption. It's an obscene use of money when 2.5 million Australians live in poverty including 500,000 children. What's worse, we are now borrowing the money to meet the foreign aid commitments thanks to Rudd and Gillard. Whatever happened to *live within your means* and the current federal government is right to cut back for our sake. It's not that I'm insensitive to the needs of others but before others can expect a handout they need to get their population under control, look after the environment and address corruption. There is no other answer.....none.

Let's do the right thing by Australians and when our debt is under control then by all means provide aid to the coal face in other countries but not via corrupt governments or through fawning to foreign dictators and primitive politicians. **Until next time this is Kent Bayley**