



A Message to  
 Constituents from  
 Hon Rodney Hide  
 MP for Epsom  
 Leader, ACT New Zealand

the Treaty of Waitangi were to be expunged from all legislation. Why? Because, according to Dr Don Brash, who was the National leader at the time, the principles of the Treaty were undefined and unnecessary. Here is what Don Brash said in 2005, an election year: "This process" - that is, the process of inserting the principles of the Treaty every which way - "is becoming deeply corrupt, with some requirements for consultation resulting in substantial payments in a system that looks like nothing other than stand-over tactics." I am sorry to say this, but the National Government, the Prime Minister, and the Minister for Climate Change Issues have allowed themselves to sell out their voters

and their supporters, to insert in legislation the principles of the Treaty that they were opposed to, and to cobble together this deal in the last few minutes before going public. They are ramming through under urgency, with no parliamentary scrutiny or public input, a deal for consultation for the principles to be given effect to and for regulations down the track to be passed. I say that Don Brash was right when he said that this process is becoming deeply corrupt, with some requirements for consultation resulting in substantial payments in a system that looks like nothing other than stand-over tactics.

Source: *Parliamentary Hansard.*

## Climate Change Response (Moderated Emissions Trading) Amendment Bill

You may well have concerns about why the ACT Party has not supported this bill. There are several reasons for this which will become apparent when you read my speech to Parliament in response to the bill. But first some explanatory background.

The Party has been labelled "climate change deniers." This is not correct. The world's climate has changed in irregular cycles for the entire duration of earth's existence. What we take issue with is the contention that current changes are the result primarily of human activities rather than natural climate variability. We remain sceptics, but of the view that our policy response should be sensitive to the evolution of climate science and responsive to international agreement.

The ACT Party produced a minority report to the select committee investigating the Emissions Trading Scheme, and we concluded that:

- If it was considered desirable to respond to such scientific evidence as there is - eg by application of a precautionary principle, to be seen to be "playing our part" internationally, or to avoid risks of formal or informal trade restrictions - it is unlikely an ETS is the most efficient solution.
- We agree that New Zealand should be seen to be willing to play a part in any fully international agreement. A low rate carbon tax and subsidy scheme is a more appropriate initial step, with any advance from there dependent on the

advance of scientific knowledge and on a fully international effort to reduce emissions.

I believe I hold the credentials to entitle me to comment.

I enrolled at Canterbury University and obtained a science degree majoring in botany and zoology. After returning to New Zealand from overseas my plan was to become a resource manager because I wanted to ensure that science was properly applied in determining how the natural environment was used.

To this end my next move was to acquire a two-year masters degree in resource management at the Joint Centre for Environmental Studies run by Lincoln and Canterbury universities. The subjects covered were ecology, hydrology, law, engineering, economics, geography and population dynamics.

I stayed on at university when I finished my masters to teach and do research in the Centre for Resource Management. Later I joined the Economics Department at Lincoln University and also completed a Masters in Economics at Montana State University in the United States.

My speech in Parliament on the ETS Bill follows.

PS. Go to [www.act.org.nz](http://www.act.org.nz) for ACT's ETS Minority Report.



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### Feedback

Tell me what you think of the Climate Change Response (Moderated Emissions Trading) Amendment Bill?

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## Climate Change Response (Moderated Emissions Trading) Amendment Bill

Tuesday, 24 November 2009, 4:30 PM



Hon RODNEY HIDE (Leader - ACT): Let me be clear about a number of things. First up we have a very, very good Government. Certainly, we have an excellent Government compared to the Government that we had for the previous 9 years. Even a good Government can make bad policy, and with this Climate Change Response (Moderated Emissions Trading) Amendment Bill, we have a very good Government making atrocious policy. Not only do we have a very good Government making atrocious policy but also we have a good Government following an atrocious process. The Ministers of this Government who are voting for this bill and for this process have to accept that responsibility, and so does every member of Parliament who is voting for this legislation today and confirming the process that has been followed. Let me also make it plain that the ACT Party totally opposes having an emissions trading scheme for New Zealand. An emissions trading scheme for New Zealand will hike the costs to business, to farmers, and to hard-working New Zealanders right at the time when we can least afford it. There is no doubt about it, an emissions trading scheme will put up the cost of basic goods and services for ordinary New Zealand families. That is what this bill is doing to New Zealanders, that is what an emissions trading scheme will do, and that is

why the ACT Party is the only party prepared to stand up in this House to oppose having an emissions trading scheme. Following the election we had a difficult situation with regard to the emissions trading scheme. Because we had National committed to the emissions trading scheme and the ACT Party implacably opposed to it, we agreed to have a comprehensive review through a select committee. What we wanted, and what the select committee was supposed to do, was to do the rational thing for the country: to look at the options and to provide the costs and the benefits. It never happened. To this day this Parliament and the public of New Zealand still have no idea of the cost of this scheme. They have no idea of the cost of an alternative, such as a low-level carbon tax, or the cost of having a simple delay for a couple of years. They know nothing. Then we discovered that the Government had done a deal with the Maori Party in order to put through the select committee the changes that National wanted to make to Labour's emissions trading scheme.

What was disgraceful was what happened next. That was the true disgrace. At that point, I said on behalf of the ACT Party to the Prime Minister and National that we understood that they did not have the Maori Party's vote all the way through and that if there was any difficulty with the vote, then

they should come and talk to the ACT Party. I said that we opposed the emissions trading scheme, but we were prepared to help the National Government for the good of the country and, indeed, we were prepared to swallow a dead rat. We were prepared to swallow a dead rat in order to get a better result for New Zealand. National never came to the ACT Party in order to discuss the options for the reform or the delay of the emissions trading scheme. National made a decision to commit to the Maori Party and to lose any negotiating power that it might have had. I accept that it is the prerogative of Nick Smith and the Prime Minister to do that. They are the ones with the votes. They are the leaders of this Parliament and this Government, but I say that the result was bad policy. It was atrocious policy and an atrocious process, and New Zealanders were sold out. What have we discovered? We discovered that all of this had to be done in a great rush, ahead of the rest of the world, in order to be done before the talks in Copenhagen. We are ahead of every other country. We discovered today at question time that this deal with the Treaty clause in it was concluded, according to the Minister, only after 1 o'clock yesterday, which was a couple of hours before it was announced. We know from the Minister of Maori Affairs that the deal was concluded only at 12

minutes past 3 - presumably, that was when he was told that it had been accepted at Cabinet - which was 18 minutes ahead of the deal being made public. The deal with these five iwi and with the Treaty clause will now be passed under urgency, with no proper parliamentary scrutiny and no public input. It was agreed to only yesterday and it will be passed into law. I will read this Treaty clause to members: "In order to recognise and respect the Crown's responsibility to give effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi." I challenge the Minister for Climate Change Issues and the Maori Party to stand up in this House and put on record in Parliament what the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi are. If we are to have Parliament giving effect to something, then I think it is quite reasonable to ask what we are giving effect to in this Parliament. We are not giving effect to the Treaty - actually, if we were giving effect to the Treaty, then we would not be having an emissions trading scheme - but we are giving effect to the principles of the Treaty.

As a support party of National's position in 2005 it is our job to remind National of its principles, its position, its philosophy, and its policy. Its policy in 2005 was that the principles of

*continued overleaf*

