

Young Heads Filled With Green Mush

By Tony Thomas, Quadrant Online, 3 August 2016

Imagine being a pro-coal activist -- or a climate sceptic, for that matter -- and enjoying open access to Australia's schools. Inconceivable, right? But if you're pushing Oxfam's green myths and downright lies, there is a welcome mat outside very nearly every classroom.

Officially-encouraged child abuse involves greens' lobbyists brainwashing primary and secondary-school kids. A leading lobbyist is Oxfam Australia, gearing up for a renewed assault this month on our idealistic and gullible schoolchildren.

Oxfam this Term 4 is pushing "[Hunger Banquets](#)" for kids — "a fun, eye-opening (and mouth-watering!) interactive and experiential learning event centred on the issue of global hunger: and particularly food insecurity resulting from climate change."^[1] Principals, teachers and their unions have put out the welcome mat^[2] for Oxfam's zealots and their green-drenched propaganda.^[3] [As Oxfam says](#), "The Hunger Banquets project is mapped to the Australian Curriculum (AC) cross-curricular priority of Sustainability. It is also accompanied by a whole heap of classroom resources, linked to AC Geography Yr 9, AC English Yrs 7-10, and AC Health."

Oxfam Australia, the \$110 million local arm of the global \$A1.5 billion [international charity behemoth](#), will "help you [teachers] bring social justice into the classroom."

"Social justice" includes Oxfam exhorting kids' pocket money [into its own coffers](#):

"Hunger Banquet money box: Download our moneybox template if you're asking Hunger Banquet participants for a gold coin donation or raising money for Oxfam's work in other ways. Handy tip: Sticking your printout onto a manila folder or old cereal box will make your moneybox more sturdy."

It matters not that half our kids' parents are conservative voters. There is no push-back from conservative politicians: parents have to suck it up. Moreover, Oxfam is hardly the sole green-left-socialist indoctrinator with entrée to classrooms. Come on in, Greenpeace, plus the Australian Conservation Foundation, [Youth Climate Coalition](#), GetUp, teams of Al Gore's indoctrinators, the [Australian Academy of Science](#), World Wildlife Fund, [Cool Australia](#)— each and every one promoting and cross-promoting^[4] students with activist urgings. I asked a Liberal Party tactician what the party could do about all the brainwashed future greens voters emerging from high schools, and he said he had no idea.

Oxfam also [throws its weight](#) behind the cross-gender-promoting and [Marxist-inspired](#) Safe Schools indoctrination, mandated in Victoria by CFMEUpuppet premier, Dan Andrews. Oxfam says,

We are proud to stand in solidarity with, and state our support for, [Safe Schools Coalition Australia](#) ... as an ally in working towards a world that is more just, peaceful, harmonious and fair.”

No kid is too young to escape the Oxfam net. Oxfam wants to [saturate schools](#) at class-, year- and whole-of-school level, pegging “hunger banquets” in particular to World Food Day , October 16.^[5]Oxfam’s Hunger Banquets involve kids sorting themselves into high, medium and low-income groups, corresponding to global regions. Most kids get only a cup of rice and water for the lunch, but the small group of First Worlders win a tummy-filling three courses that includes Italian pasta. Point made. Except that the point is a bucketful of [Oxfam bull faeces](#): “Hungry for a fair climate? Climate change is the single biggest threat in the global fight against hunger.”

[The reality](#) is that over the past 50 years of sharply rising CO₂, the extra produce grown by farmers runs to roughly \$US274 billion for wheat, \$US182 billion for maize and \$US579 billion for rice. The current value of the carbon dioxide fertilisation effect on all crops is about \$140 billion a year. The proportion of yield increases due to CO₂ increase is estimated at 51% for cotton, 15% for soybeans, 17% for wheat, and 9% for corn. ([Goklany, p19](#)).

Once kids are suitably conditioned by Oxfam’s heart-wrenching videos and dodgy “science”, the charity steers them towards directing email blitzes at local and senior politicians, plus us groupthink nostrums to “make this world hunger-free” and prevent governments and big businesses allowing climate change “to destroy the world we love”.

Oxfam [exhorts kids](#) to

1. Email our political leaders telling them you’re looking for someone to step up and lead Australia on climate change.
2. Get local for climate action! Get your friends together and visit your local Federal MP to talk climate.
3. Join one of our local climate action teams.

Oxfam ramped up its anti-government campaigning among youngsters during the 2016 federal election campaign. Here’s a few [Oxfam samples](#):

- “The Australian Government has been shirking responsibility and acting in the interests of the big dirty polluters.”
- “Our government is still failing the climate leadership test.”

- “But while the energy revolution gathers pace, the Australian Government remains stuck down the deep, dark coal mine of the past...Captured by an ailing coal industry and urged on by conservative commentators, our government has delivered a series of bizarre and misleading pronouncements about the future of coal.”
- “Dirty polluting companies are causing climate change to worsen, poisoning our clean air, and threatening our food, water and health.”

Earlier, it [directed students](#) to its “Take Action” page (link now obsolete):

“Tell the PM [Abbott at the time] to be the Australian leader we need. Demand he goes to New York and commits in person to the new UN #Global Goals for Sustainable Development.”

Take Action also says, below a caricature of Abbott holding an umbrella against a cyclone, and alongside a political petition (sorry, another obsolete link):

“So far, the Abbott Government has absolutely failed the climate leadership test. Email our political leaders now. Tell them you’re searching for someone to step up and lead Australia on climate..”

*Tell them that Australians want a bold and visionary government that’s prepared to make the right choice. For everyone, not just for polluting vested interests. **Take action now!**”*

Oxfam Australia spends about \$4.5 million a year on pushing green political causes and other [“public policy and education programs”](#), including \$2 million for “community education”. This propaganda include shutting down Australia’s coal industry and keeping cheap electricity out of reach of the Third World’s poor. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade doled out \$29 million in taxpayer funds to Oxfam Australia last year (30% of Oxfam’s revenue), apparently unaware of Oxfam’s mission to kill our \$40 billion a year coal-export industry.

Oxfam International’s plan for 2013-19, integrating the 17 national bodies, tilts the charity’s humanitarian work even more towards [political agitation](#):

“The proposed ‘worldwide influencing network’ aims to drive our shared agenda more powerfully within the broader global movement for change.... It marks a trend towards working more on influencing authorities and the powerful, and less on delivering the services for which duty-bearers are responsible.”

Oxfam’s tax-exempt charity status requires it to be politically non-partisan. Rabidly anti-conservative Greenpeace in Canada was [defrocked of its tax-exempt status](#) by the Tax Office in 1989, partly because its timber-mill closing campaigns could drive people into poverty.[\[6\]](#) [In New Zealand, the High Court in 2011](#) upheld Greenpeace’s 2010 loss of tax-exempt status,

because of too great an involvement in politics and illegal activities, making charity work just a fringe activity. In the UK, Oxfam itself was warned by the Charities Commission about partisan political fusillades against the Conservative government's austerity drive.[7] UK law requires tax-exempt charities to "remain neutral and should consider working with other parties to help ensure public perceptions of neutrality". One Tory MP added, "This judgement should make all charities think very carefully about how they use the very generous donations by people when they are in 'campaign mode', rather than 'poverty alleviation mode'."

As if Oxfam Australia would ever give equal time to representatives of Australia's 50% conservative-voting public. Indeed, its urgings of kids and others to do green-oriented email blitzes of politicians in the federal election run-up was cut from the same cloth that "appalled" Tory MPs in Westminster.

Our Charities Commission guidelines for tax-exempt status have grey areas in terms of permissible activism. They say that "promoting or opposing a political party or a candidate for political office"**cannot be charitable** (my emphasis), but that charities can still distribute information or engage in debate about the policies of political parties or candidates, "where these activities must be ways of achieving their charitable purposes." It also lists a string of motherhood-style legitimate purposes, such as health and environmentalism, but adds, "If your organisation has non-charitable purposes and these do not further its charitable purposes, your organisation is unlikely to be registered as a charity." In the recent election's run-up the charities commissioner further defined legitimate advocacy, in did so in ways that suggest, certainly to me, to me that Oxfam's anti-government rhetoric is borderline illegitimate. Why not let the ATO decide?

India's federal government of Narendra Modi a year ago deregistered Greenpeace's 300-staff operation and froze its bank accounts, accusing Greenpeace of sabotaging India's power development. The courts overturned the ban in an ongoing saga that includes Modi's de-funding of 9000 other charities.

In Australia, Oxfam's schools campaigning is financed largely by donations from citizens who imagine the priorities, and their financial gifts, are prioritised at ending the world's hunger and want.[8] In fact, one in three Oxfam dollars leaks to fund-raising (20%) and administration (11%). At the top, CEO Helen Szoke was on a tax-concessioned \$237,000 last year, significantly more than UK counterpart Mark Goldring (\$A218,000 equivalent), who runs a six-times better-funded Oxfam organisation — \$A700 million vs \$A110m. (As a contrast to Oxfam Australia, the \$US950 million Rotary Foundation charity has only an 3.5% admin costs and 7.3% fund-raising expenses, a leakage of only 11% from aid funds).

Apart from the government, our naïve banks and their staff have supported Oxfam only to get Oxfam's smack in the face. ANZ for example put in [\\$180,000 in 2012](#). Westpac in the three years to 2012 was a massive Oxfam donor, including \$250,000 in 2011 for Pakistan flood relief. Soon after, Oxfam was accusing them of “backing companies that are kicking people off their land, destroying lives and leaving people homeless and hungry.” [\[9\]](#) The banks by now may have learnt not to finance their political foes.

Oxfam knows the world's poor need more coal-fired electricity. As Federal Resources Minister Matt Canavan [put it this week](#), coal is a critical energy source for developing countries that want to lift their people out of poverty: “If [Third Worlders] decide that the best way to improve the lives of their people is to build coal-fired power stations and provide cheap electricity, I don't think we're in a position to deny them that right.”

Oxfam's international parent [concedes the impact of its assault](#) on the Third World's poor:

*“Poorer developing countries ...**will inevitably have to move [develop] more slowly**, especially as fossil fuels can play an important role in immediate social and economic needs...Rich nations should support them with public funds.” (My emphasis).*

Curiously, Oxfam Australia board member Ann Byrne is a member of the [Compliance Committee](#) of BlackRock Investment Management Australia Ltd. The US parent, [according to The Guardian](#) a year ago, led the list of asset management companies investing in top-50 listed coal companies (\$US24.6 billion worth). [BlackRock's strategy](#) was to go contrarian and invest in “beaten-up natural resources equities as a hedge if US dollar strength fades.” A naughty interpretation is that the green alliance (including Oxfam) beats down the coal industry. Meanwhile, BlackRock invests to cash in on the low coal prices.

Oxfam actually thinks stopping climate change, *i.e.* global warming, is the world's [number one priority](#) for ending global hunger (much as President Obama thinks climate change is [higher priority than ISIS terror](#).[\[10\]](#)). Mains electricity, clean water and disease control, fertilizer, education, cheap two-way freight, land and investment security, open markets, women's equality, freedom from official corruption — these are also-rans in the Oxfam narrative.

Of course, boosting food production requires the expansion of cheap coal-based electric power. Oxfam instead proffers costly and unreliable solar and wind. These power sources have already [demonstrated their ability](#) to wreck the South Australian economy, let alone the prospects of third-world peasants in grass huts.

Oxfam's agenda is a 65% cut in Australian emissions below 2000 levels by 2030, and an economy-bankrupting zero-emissions target (including a 90% coal cut) well before 2050. Australia, Oxfam tells kids, must hand over \$1.6 billion a year to Third World kleptocrats

and [UN corruptocrats](#) as part of the first world's \$100 billion-a-year compensation for our past climatic vandalism.

Believe Oxfam and global warming is already devastating the land. "The warning bells are deafening. Take action now!" Oxfam says. "Smaller harvests mean farmers can't feed their families or make a living. Even in Australia, climate change has affected the large-scale production of crops like wheat." Pardon me, Oxfam, but don't make stuff up. Australian wheat tonnages in the past decade have been around 24 million tonnes a year, [far above the average](#) of 1960-2000. (In the 1960s output was only 7-12 million tonnes).

"Climate change is already taking a heavy toll on poorer communities around the world," says Oxfam, oddly since global warming has involved a mere 0.8degC in the past 100 years, a wholly beneficial emergence from the previous Little Ice Age to 1850. Global fertilisation by increased CO2 has boosted plant growth by an area equal to [twice continental USA](#), greening the deserts, according to new satellite recordings.

Never letting a catastrophe go to waste, [Oxfam's Helen Szoke presents](#) that Cyclone Pam, which hit Vanuatu in 2015, was one of climate change's '[devastating impacts](#)'.

"What we can see here is the massive impact of climate change, erosion of sea into what was once land, the impact of the cyclone on areas of this village that are still to be cleared. Why should Vanuatans have to bear the brunt of climate change? Let's do something and actually make a difference so climate change doesn't continue to keep people in poverty and ruin their beautiful communities."

The [tide gauge at Port Vila](#) has data for only 21 years, and this shows 25mm of sea rise, or a totally unalarming rate of 12cm (5 inches) per century, less than, say, [Fremantle 1897-2010](#) (15.4cm or 6in). Szoke is making stuff up about these so-called "drowning islands".[\[11\]](#)

I happened to be off a tourist boat in Vanuatu two year ago, pre-Cyclone Pam, and villagers showed us how, for generations, they have sheltered from similar cyclones inside the base of giant trees.

Similarly, Szoke denies the IPCC science that global warming does not cause extreme weather. The IPCC's 2012 special report said warming may actually reduce extreme weather in the next 20-30 years.[\[12\]](#)

But Oxfam propaganda runs:

It's not just the average temperature that is rising. [Satellites show insignificant atmospheric warming for almost two decades, and last year's El Nino warm spike is [reversing with startling](#)

rapidity]. *With more heat and energy in the atmosphere and oceans, our weather is becoming more extreme and unpredictable.* [As if weather was ever predictable, and extreme weather such as US land-falling cyclones have been on a decade-long low trend].

As leading satellite-monitoring scientist Dr Roy Spencer puts it, “There are no obvious changes in global hurricane activity, heat waves, or droughts, and no decrease in snow cover.” [\[13\]](#)

Oxfam shamelessly shoves at kids its music-enhanced videos of naïve Third World peasants parroting catastrophism. The kids feel the outrage, just as intended. For example, Oxfam quotes a struggling South African woman plot-tiller, a certain Yvette Abrahams, to push the worst-case IPCC scenario, which in her case will allegedly mean her tribal lands will get 4-6 degrees hotter. (The IPCC was actually talking year 2100).

“My family is meeting to discuss moving. We cannot stay... there will be nothing to feed our livestock soon. So the little [land] that we have managed to preserve through slavery, genocide, colonialism and apartheid, we are about to lose to climate change.”

Oxfam bleats that climate change will starve an extra 50 million people in 2050, with rising seas flooding another one billion. In 2009 Oxfam was fibbing to Melburnians via billboards near Flinders Street Station that climate change was creating 50 million climate refugees. By mid-2016 the actual claimants to official climate refugee status total one – Mr Ioane Teitiota from Kiribati, whose claims were debunked by the NZ courts and who was later exposed for domestic violence and assaults. [\[14\]](#)

I have no problem with snake-oil vendors revving up teenagers outside of school gates. That’s democracy. But allowing them to proselytise uncontradicted from state classroom podiums is a travesty of education. [\[15\]](#) Would reps from the Coal Association or the Institute of Public Affairs be equally welcome to harangue primary grades? (That’s a rhetorical question). Some say the horse has already bolted. As one blogger wrote to JoNova last year:

“I am somewhat despairing about what my grandchildren are reporting from school. Their talk is all about the horrors of European and English culture, about how we are destroying the earth through the climate and CO2, how we are to blame and it’s all about white privilege. When I attempt to counter some of it I get a disdainful, “the teachers wouldn’t be allowed to teach it if it wasn’t true.”

Kids might be more suspicious if they realised that teacher inflows now include the barely-literate and barely-numerate dregs of the tertiary cohorts. Of students with below-50 ATAR tertiary-admissions ranking [\[16\]](#) and entering primary and secondary education degrees, the proportion has almost doubled from 7.3% in 2013 to 14.3% in 2016. The Australian Council

for Educational Research, blaming cash-cow-seeking university policies, says almost everyone who applies finds a place in a teacher education program.

Some rationalists despair that a mix of pro-and-con lobbyists to schools is now feasible. Instead, children should be taught logic, scientific method and the ability to see through propaganda from all areas of the spectrum. Given teacher standards, this may be whistling in the wind.

Hat-tips: Dennis Ambler, John McLean for help. My previous pieces on Oxfam are [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).

Tony Thomas's new book [That's Debatable – 60 Years in Print](#), is available from [Connor Court](#)

[1] Email to local registrants, Looking for an engaging simulation activity? 25/7/16.

[2] The other two cross-curriculum Trojan horses for Left propaganda are “Indigenes” and “Asia”.

[3] The 2013-14 Oxfam Australia annual report says more than 20,000 teachers used Oxfam resources to teach 100,000 students. And more than 6800 students in high schools and universities took part in 40 Oxfam workshops to help them become discussion leaders among their peers.

[4] Oxfam: “You can send student leaders to the fantastic [Australian Youth Climate Council Summit](#), 17-18 August, Trades Hall in Melbourne.”

[5] These “hunger banquets” date back to Hollywood in 1991, when Dustin Hoffman, Whoopi Goldberg, Mel Gibson, Desmond Tutu et al skipped a meal.

[6] Revenue Canada’s charities division says that the Greenpeace Environmental Foundation can’t be considered a charity because its activities “have no public benefit.”

[7] Oxfam UK had close personnel links with high-ranking Labor figures. The tragically murdered Labor MP Jo Cox was earlier an [Oxfam head of policy](#).

[8] Oxfam’s third-party fund-raisers cream off 90% or so from the first year of someone’s annual public donation.

[9] The Youth Climate Coalition smacked down its big-bank donors by campaigning against them on behalf of Bendigo Bank, which doesn't lend to coal producers.

[10] Oxfam's GROW campaign "identifies limiting climate change as the world's number one priority if we are to end global hunger."

[11] Szoke was previously Federal Race Discrimination Commissioner and Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commissioner

[12] "Projected changes in climate extremes under different emissions scenarios generally do not strongly diverge in the coming two to three decades, but these signals are relatively small compared to natural climate variability over this time frame. Even the sign of projected changes in some climate extremes over this time frame is uncertain. For projected changes by the end of the 21st century, either model uncertainty or uncertainties associated with emissions scenarios used becomes dominant, depending on the extreme." P22-23

[13] A Guide to Understanding Global Temperature Data, July 2016. P21

[14] Oxfam Australia also claimed in 2009 that climate crises would harm 375m people by 2015, "threatening to overwhelm the world's ability to respond". Anyone notices these 375m?

[15] Meanwhile, NAPLAN literacy and numeracy levels in our schools stagnate

[16] Out of 100, the average ATAR rank is 70. Some student teachers are being admitted with scores of 30.