

An Open Letter from Brendan Hall

Dear Sir/Madam,

It is now 35 years since the introduction of the *Family Law Act*. There is over a whole generation of people that have lived their whole lives under this Act. There is practically nobody who has not been affected. This would include either himself or herself, a relative or perhaps a friend.

It is interesting to see what they have to look forward to. Most will have to bargain for wages and conditions with a far greater resourced and experienced employer. The younger people will be expected to bargain for conditions and wages yet will not ever have had a job before. It is very likely they will be offered family unfriendly hours due to the lack of penalty rates.

Despite having been involved in a family breakdown they will most likely have to choose between family unfriendly hours that suit their employer or risk not only not having a job at all - but also their Newstart cancelled as well.

For those a little older; they are most likely partnered, wanting to start a family and also wanting to try and buy a house. The chances of them buying a house and having a stay at home partner is only slim. If they can actually qualify for a mortgage it will probably mean using every dollar allowable from two (2) incomes.

The cost of home ownership is becoming increasingly beyond middle-class Australia; never mind those less well off. The cost of Government taxes and charges on new block of land without any developer profit is almost out of the reach of a large portion of young people. The government charges on a block of land in Sydney are \$117,000!

This not only makes new blocks of land dearer; it also causes a flow onto the existing blocks of land that did not pay these charges – thus making all housing more expensive as there is no more cheap land coming onto the market.

If the Government just wanted to raise taxes, why didn't they increase sales taxes when the house or land was sold or would have that dug into the old silvertails' pockets? At least it would have made buying a house less expensive for those trying to get started.

The Government does not have a *housing plan* for the future. What about mandatory renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power be installed on the roofs of houses? Then the necessary infrastructure would be in place as improved technologies evolved.

What about making designs that maximised natural light, compulsory insulation, window treatments and a recycling of gray water legislation? At least the Government would then bring down the long-term costs of running a

house. It would then take some of the heat out of the building materials market, by driving prices down.

What about mandating that all new residential estates have to have 10% of houses below a certain size and covenants on them barring extensions for 10 years on them?

The Government and the Opposition know only how to spend money; but not how to create plans for the future.

Yours sincerely

Brendan Hall

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