

Myth of Australian Egalitarianism

Terry McCarthy

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Benjamin Disraeli:

“Two Nations, between whom there is no discourse and no sympathy; who are as ignorant of each other’s habits, thoughts and feelings as if they were dwellers in different zones, or inhabitants of different planets; who are formed by different breeding; are fed by a different food, are ordered by different manners and are not governed by the same laws.

I speak of the Rich and the Poor.”

Monsignor Cappelletti:

“A socially inclusive society is defined as one where all people are valued, their differences are respected, and their basic needs are met so that they can live in dignity. Social exclusion is the process of being shut out from the social, political, economic and cultural systems which contribute to the integration of a person into the community.”

(Quoted in the Victorian Health Research Summary No 2- January 2005).

From around the mid 70's Australia began to lose, and has now lost, its European (Christian) social democratic values with its ethos of the common good to one of neo-conservative individualism. This encouraged the trend towards reliance on unbridled market forces as the dominating influence on society. And we have seen the results of this in the current credit meltdown crisis which has been caused by 'greed at any price'.

Nelson Rockefeller

- **“If what these people are talking about what to do with the poor, if that became a reality, then the interests of the United States are in danger”**

(1968 following the Medellin Conference of Latin American Catholic Bishops' on Liberation Theology)

Schultze, White House economic advisor

- **“Market like arrangements reduce the need for compassion, patriotism, brotherly love and cultural solidarity as motivating forces behind social improvement.....harnessing the basic good motive of material self interest to promote the common good is perhaps the most important invention mankind has achieved.”**

Pastor Houston of Hillsong Congregation in Northwest Sydney”

- **“If you change your thinking and develop a healthy attitude to money, I believe you will walk in prosperity and the blessing of God.”**

Did you know...?

3.994 MILLION AUSTRALIANS LIVE IN HOUSEHOLDS WITH AN AVERAGE EQUIVALISED WEEKLY INCOME OF \$225.

ANOTHER 3.982 MILLION AUSTRALIANS LIVE IN HOUSEHOLDS WITH AN AVERAGE EQUAVILISED WEEKLY INCOME OF \$414.

THAT IS NEARLY 8 MILLION LIVING IN HOUSEHOLDS ON LESS THAN \$414 PER WEEK.

(ABS Household and Income Distribution Survey, 2005-6. Doc 6523.0-01/08/08)

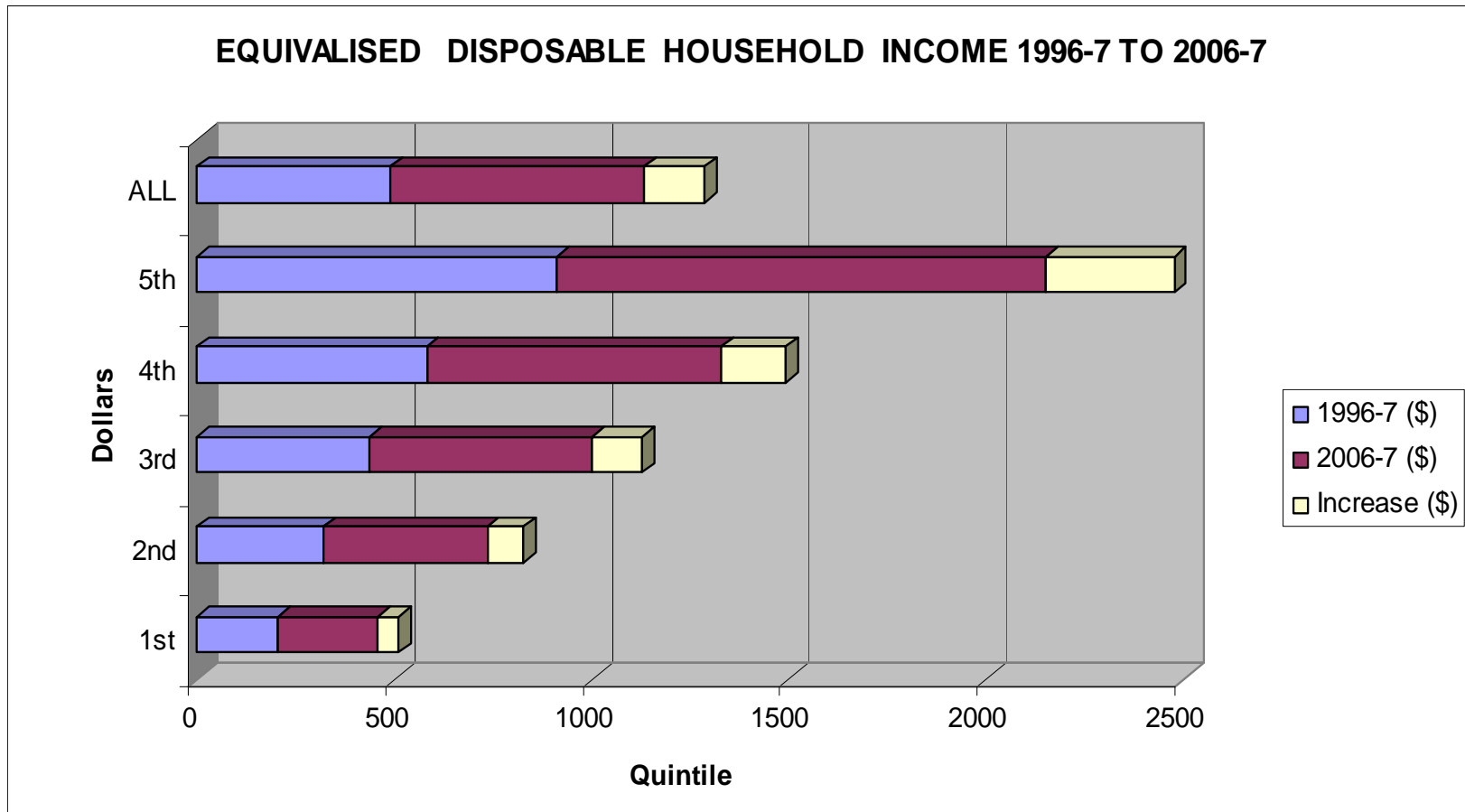
EQUIVALISED DISPOSABLE HOUSEHOLD INCOME 1996-7 TO 2006-7

Quintile	1996-7 (\$)	2006-7 (\$)	Increase (\$)	% Increase
1st	203	255	52	25.60%
2nd	321	414	93	28.80%
3rd	437	565	128	29.30%
4th	582	746	164	28.20%
5th	912	1239	327	35.90%
ALL	491	644	153	31.20%

Source: ABS Household and Income Distribution Survey 2005-6

Doc: 6523.0 – 01/08/08

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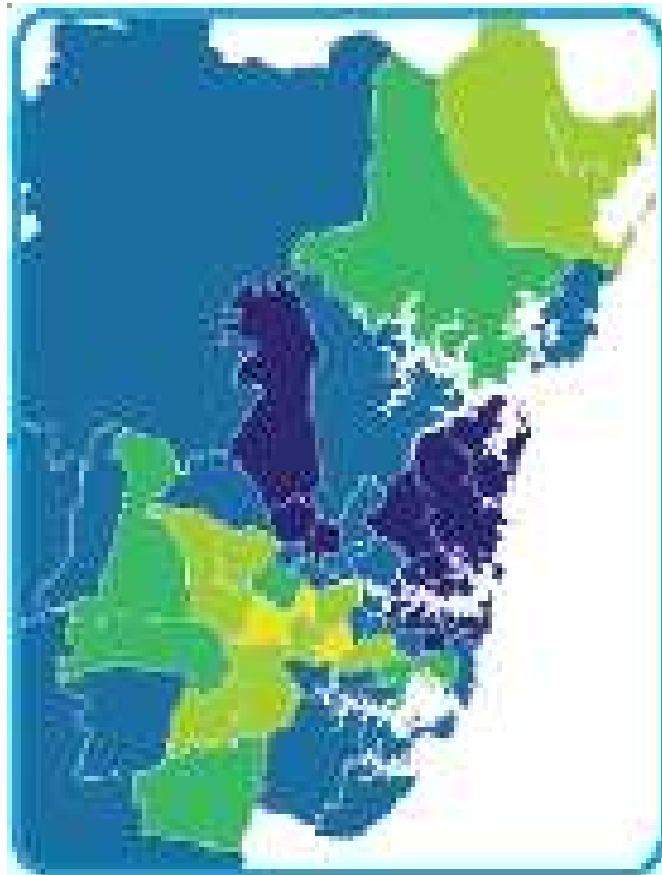
Professor Iveson:

“A striking feature of political discourse since 1990s.....social injustice, as a way of thinking about politics and economics in general, is almost completely marginalized.....”

The short answer is that rising levels of inequality make the worst off even more worse off overall. And that is unjust.....Over 70 years to 2004 the ‘headline’ rate of poverty (50%of median income) increased from 7.6% to 9.9%.....Over the next two years, it increased from 9.8% to 11.1%....”

(Opinion article in SMH of Saturday, 2nd August,2008.)

Equivalised gross income deciles for small areas, Australia 2006 Sydney



- Income deciles
- Decile 1 (bottom 10%)
 - Deciles 2-4
 - Deciles 5-6
 - Deciles 7-9
 - Decile 10 (top 10%)
 - Excluded (< 30 people)

Source: NATSEM Report – Advance Australia Fair? – Trends in small area socio-economic inequality 2001-2006, Dr Quoc Ngu Vu

Prof. Barry Jones:

“Relieving the scourge of global poverty, which imposes its own form of economic slavery, especially in Africa, compounded by global warming, high rates of HIV-AIDS and significant population growth, must be high on our agenda as an ethical society. I see little evidence that it is.”

Kevin Rudd:

“Christianity..... must always take the side of the marginalized, the vulnerable and the oppressed.... areas of social, economic and security policy, is to speak directly to the state to give power to the powerless, voice to those who have none and to point to the great silences in our national discourse where otherwise there are no natural advocates.”