



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

MEDIA RELEASE

STRICTLY EMBARGOED UNTIL 11:00am, Tuesday, 28 July 1998

Australian Taxation Reform debate must include the principles of morality and justice

Maintaining the common good of society, enhancing the prosperity of the Australian community and protecting the poorer sections of our community are paramount concerns for the Central Commission of the Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference in the current Australian taxation reform debate.

In a Position Paper released today, the Central Commission states their desired outcomes for Taxation Reform based on fundamental principles that the Catholic Church holds as essential to achieving a just society.

“Through our agencies, services, institutions and community involvements, we are in daily contact with the ambitions, challenges and problems of many Australians,” said Cardinal Edward Clancy, President of the Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference. “We draw on this experience and our long tradition of social teaching to contribute to the current public debate by asking some of the questions that need to be addressed in relation to tax reform.”

The Bishops conclude their Position Paper by outlining 10 desired outcomes of Tax Reform:

1. That low-income families and individuals are better off in absolute terms.
2. That disincentives to the workforce participation which arise from the interrelationship of the tax and social security systems are eliminated.
3. That those on modest incomes who wish to reduce workforce participation to care for dependents do not suffer significant financial hardship arising from that choice.

1/2

National Catholic Media Office

GPO BOX 368 CANBERRA ACT 2601 TEL: 02) 6201 9859 FAX: 02) 6247 2579
Email: media@catholic.org.au Street address: 63 Currong Street BRADDON ACT 2601



4. That the tax system is strengthened to raise sufficient revenue to fund essential social services.
5. That opportunities for companies and wealthy individuals to avoid paying their fair share of tax through artificial contrivances are eliminated.
6. That a tax environment is created which is conducive to savings, investment and employment growth.
7. That a tax environment is created which does not place small business at a disadvantage relative to large businesses.
8. That public benevolent and charitable services suffer no detriment in a new tax regime.
9. That to the maximum extent possible the essentials of life remain free of tax.
10. That compensatory measures introduced to counter the negative impact of tax reform are sustainable.

The Bishops urge all participants in the taxation reform debate, particularly the Government and the Opposition, to have the common good and justice for the disadvantaged as their primary considerations when formulating and commenting on proposed policy.

**To arrange an interview with the President of the Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference, Cardinal Edward Clancy, please phone: 02) 9390 5188
02) 9220 0400 (A/H)**

To obtain a copy of the Position Paper please contact Jackie Brady on 02) 6201 9859 or 0418) 214 752. It is also available on our web-site at: <http://www.catholic.org.au>