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Submission: I took up the opportunity to put both photovoltaics and solar hot water on the roof in response to the feed-in tariff a couple of years ago. I will be investing the surplus from the payments generated into further photovoltaics in coming years and then a battery system so as to become independent of the grid.

I can understand why Australian energy companies are unhappy with people like me. However, some innovative energy companies overseas are seeking to service people like me and transform their businesses into a new age. I think the domestic energy companies are being disingenuous in their concerns about subsidies when not only were the coal fired plants and wires developed by public funds many years ago but there are well documented government subsidies for the production of coal. The construction of the power plants took place as a result of government policies to develop the state for the benefit of the people.

I see the implementation of solar subsidy programs for renewable energy as simply the modern equivalent of the old power station subsidies, i.e. the government/people setting a new course for the future and seeking to overcome the financial power of entrenched interests. To me, this is what government is there to do. Thankfully we still subsidise (at least to some degree) other societally beneficial activities such as education, public transport and health. Our economy is there to benefit the people, not the other way around.

What Australian power companies need to do is to become way more innovative. Huge amounts of money must have been spent by them in the current war against renewables. Whilst these big companies simply seek to entrench the old ways of doing things rather than coming up with a mechanism for transitioning to a post coal future we will lag further behind the rest of the world and aggravate the existing environmental damage at both a domestic and international level