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SHITSTORM

Lenore Taylor and David Uren, MUP, \$34.99

Taylor and Uren are journalist and economist respectively. Their book is a well-written recent political history of Australia, beginning with the onset of the worldwide financial crisis in mid-2007, and closing with Kevin Rudd in difficulties by mid-2010.

The writers are well informed and have devoted most of the first part of the book to the crisis, and then segue to the emissions trading scheme, to "building the education revolution", and to the unfortunate home insulation program; it ends with Rudd in political difficulties and concludes: "The political shitstorm may be wilder and more damaging than Kevin Rudd ever imagined".

Yes indeed. As a study of human behaviour. this book is a lot better than the

potboiler one might have expected.

The first challenge was the financial crisis and, judging by

Australia's position today compared with that of the US, Britain, and some European countries, the Rudd government performed superbly, in spite of relentless attacks from the opposition and media.

The next problem was posed by the refusal of the opposition to countenance any form of action on climate change. Kevin Rudd simply folded. The die was cast by the haste, and lack of consultation, in the home insulation and building programs.

Shitstorm gives us food for much thought.

David Christie

