

Editorial & letters



We say You say

Norman on Typhoon Haiyan

Politics columnist Audrey Young compares Russel Norman's address linking climate change and Typhoon Haiyan to a "long lecture on cigarette-smoking . . . at the funeral of someone who had died of lung cancer".

As a doctor who treats lung cancer in Auckland, I have a point of view. The funeral is for someone who never touched a cigarette, and the church is full of chain smokers.

Tobacco smoke got me into climate change because both are catastrophic for health and because the tobacco industry wrote the script for denying climate science.

Our country and its leaders are in a state of denial about climate change caused by fossil fuels. The Prime Minister has said he could go into coalition with Conservative Colin Craig, who says he is "sceptical of man-made climate change".

Dr Norman's address on Typhoon Haiyan was not just politics. Similar to passive smoking, the harms of climate change will be felt by those who have least indulged. New Zealand's scramble to develop coal, oil, and gas must stop. We must put our efforts into renewable energy. Until we change, we share the blame for extreme weather events.

*Dr George Laking,
medical oncologist, Devonport.*