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# Tipping Point 2029

A Play on Climate Change



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# Characters

In alphabetical order

Julian **Berndes**, CEO of ABC-TV (age 45-55, casual dress, no tie)

Steven **Fissler**, Sociologist, Futurologist (age 50-65, professional, casual)

Walter **Millert**, CEO of an Energypower Group (age 55-65, formal attire)

Joseph **Molden**, Federal Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communication (age 55-60, formal attire)

Frank **Rauter**, Movie/Theatre Director, Author and Action-Artist (age 30-45, casual)

Bettina **Roland**, TV-Presenter (age 40-50, professional, elegant attire)

Mia **Schellinger**, Eco-Activist with »Degrowth-Movement« (age 27, eco dress)

Paula **Spiteri**, Evolutionary Biologist, Ecologist (age 40-50, professional, elegant attire)

## **First scene**

*When the curtain rises, the elegantly dressed presenter Bettina Roland stands alone in the studio. She wants to get in the mood a little for the moderation of the recording of live discussion that is about to begin. She is still stressed from the preparations for her show.*

### **PRODUCER**

One hour to the start of the recording of the panel discussion. 60 minutes call!

### **BETTINA ROLAND**

*The final editorial review was far too long. (checks her Smartwatch) Blood pressure too high, pulse too high, blood sugar levels not optimal, wet hands, not done enough physical work today, possible weak concentration during the show. (She takes off her shoes and jacket, which she places over one of the seven chairs and does a few loosening exercises. Then she wipes herself dry with a handkerchief and takes a glass of mineral water that is on the table. She puts her shoes and jacket back on and sits down quite casually on one of the seven chairs, looking slightly exhausted.)*

*The team should not turn up for another 15 minutes. (just about getting a cigarette out of the package the producer walks in)*

### **PRODUCER**

Everything okay?

**BETTINA ROLAND**

My introduction is OK. The only people I have to be really wary of are the sometimes rather unpredictable action artist and the fairly freaked-out activist of the Degrowth-Movement who as far as I know can be rather dogmatic.  
*(mockingly - imitating the CEO Julian Berndes)*

The discussion is not meant to unsettle the audience at all; it is meant to make them confident about the near future. So, I just shouldn't let them talk too much. The other guests are, in my estimation, easy. I've had the slick Millert and the self-righteous Federal Minister Molden several times in past shows. I find them both extraordinarily lousy, but they are really well suited for this discussion.

**PRODUCER**

You are aware that this discussion will reach the biggest audience you have ever had. It will be broadcast throughout our entire network and shown with subtitles in more than 20 countries. That's a new one - another Australian first!  
*(leaves the studio)*

**BETTINA ROLAND** *(mobile phone rings)*

Hello Darling, yes, I am fine, and how are you, Ben? The recording of the show starts soon, so unfortunately, we haven't got much time. Yes, Ben, I will host the show calmly.

I've been doing it for almost ten years and I've never let my guests throw me. I guess I'll be home around eleven, eleventhirty. Please turn down the air conditioning in the bedroom as it may be getting quite hot later. It hasn't been quite so hot outside for a few days now, after all. With thirty-

nine degrees during the day and a bit over thirty degrees at night, we both manage well. Besides, we still have our trusty Turbo-air con.

Yes, I've just said that. I don't know, anyway, you can do pretty much anything else with me. ... Oh, I would like that too. I love you too. (*Molden and Millert cross the rear of the studio*)

Hold on, there are already guests straying around in the studio. We have to end this conversation right now. See you later, darling. Bye.

Welcome Minister, nice to see you again; hello Mr Millert, you too of course. Please proceed to the Guest Lounge, Alan, our producer will look after you.

(*after they leave Bettina lights a cigarette and moves to the opposite corner of the studio – Julian Berndes walks in*)

## **JULIAN BERNDES**

Good evening, Bettina!

## **BETTINA ROLAND**

(*tries to hide the cigarette*)

Oh, Julian, good evening. What a surprise. What is the almighty CEO doing in my humble abode? I actually want to get in the mood for the show and need some peace and time to concentrate.

## **JULIAN BERNDES**

I came because you smoked.

## **BETTINA ROLAND**

How do you know I've been smoking here? You don't seriously come into the studio to check whether I smoke here. This isn't kindergarten.

**JULIAN BERNDES**

No, I was just joking. Actually, as you surely know smoking has been completely banned in public places since January 2025, meaning here as everywhere else in Australia. The fines are really high. But, (mockingly) dear Ms Roland, the whole team knows that you are smoking at least one cigarette in the studio before every show. Even I have known it for a very long time... and I'm okay with it.

**BETTINA ROLAND**

No way...?!

**JULIAN BERNDES**

Yes, but please don't tell the team. Because I promised never to tell.

**BETTINA ROLAND**

It's all right. It's a really good team, isn't it?

**JULIAN BERNDES**

Yes, a really good team. Well, in about 45 minutes the discussion will start. I just want to tell you something or give you some advice.

**BETTINA ROLAND**

Now, let's be clear. What's up?

**JULIAN BERNDES**