

PréCIS

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A N N U A L R E V I E W



LEADERSHIP IN IDEAS



THE CENTRE FOR INDEPENDENT STUDIES

JULY–DECEMBER
2008

The Centre for Independent Studies (CIS) is Australasia's leading public policy research institute or think tank. Founded in 1976 by Greg Lindsay, the Centre's major concern is with the principles and institutions underlying a free and open society, with a particular focus on Australia and New Zealand.

OUR GOALS

- An economy based on free markets
- Democratic government under the rule of law
- An autonomous and free civil society

ACTIVITIES

- Research
- Publishing
- Lectures and seminars
- Liberty & Society student program

FUNDING AND INDEPENDENCE

CIS is funded by private sector donations—from individuals, companies, and charitable trusts—as well as subscriptions and book sales.

Independent in our name means:

- We are politically non-partisan.
- Research is not directed by our supporters.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



The beginning of 2009 marks my thirtieth anniversary as a full-time employee of the Centre for Independent Studies. The Centre had been already around for a few years, but it was impossible to continue it as a spare time institution. So at the end of 1978 I took the risk, left my teaching position, and the rest is history.

As 2009 gets underway, much of what the Centre stands for, and has tried to do for more than three decades, is facing challenges unlike any that we have faced in that time. The global economic crisis has hit the world's economies with a speed and severity in a way few could have predicted. We hear cries that capitalism is finished, the era of globalisation is over, that market 'ideology' has been shown to be faulty, and so on. Nothing is further from the truth—analysts had already been documenting the history of bad and imprudent regulation plaguing modern economies. Policymakers will need to exercise extreme caution and wisdom as they examine what has occurred when implementing any new regulatory measures.

The responses so far by governments around the world should ring warning bells for those who believe that economic freedom is the principal guarantee of political freedom. Calls for increased regulation, massive fiscal stimulus measures, and seemingly endless bailouts represent the most serious, perhaps the worst, assault on the free economy. This at a time when Australia in particular seems to be navigating the shoals of the crisis better than most, though that of course may change. *The 2009 Index of Economic Freedom*, published by the Heritage Foundation/*Wall Street Journal*, listed Australia at #3 (behind Hong Kong and Singapore) and New Zealand at #5. This is reflective as much as anything of our relatively sound economic and legal institutions. Impressive positioning—and something we should cherish and maintain.

Towards the end of 2008 and into 2009, the Centre has been holding a series of events focussing on aspects of the economic crisis, and we expect these to continue for some time. (Videos of the talks are available on the Centre's website, and most of the papers will also be published.) The build-up in the Centre's economic team turns out to have been very timely, and we are in a much stronger position than at any time in the Centre's history to bring the best ideas available to the current debates.

It has been predicted that the economic downturn will have a serious impact on the non-profit sector and we are expecting that the Centre will not be exempt from this. We have plans in place to manage circumstances as best we can, but there is considerable uncertainty. The battlefield of ideas though must not be vacated by those who see that economic freedom and our liberal institutions are the keys to recovery. The Centre will continue to engage in this battle and do what it does best and has been doing for so long now. That risk I took in starting the Centre all those years ago was worth doing then, and now its need seems greater. We are up to the task.

CONSILIUM

HYATT REGENCY COOLUM 31 JULY TO 2 AUGUST 2008



This year's Consilium was notable for a two reasons: first, with 192 delegates and partners, it was the largest Consilium held to date; and second, it was sadly necessary to veil one participant's involvement in a cloak of secrecy. **Ayaan Hirsi Ali**, a Somali-born women's rights advocate and critic of Islam, was Consilium's keynote speaker. Growing up a devout Muslim in Africa, Hirsi Ali suffered violence and an unwanted arranged marriage before fleeing to the Netherlands to seek asylum. Her exposure to the ideas of the West resulted in a change of heart about Islam; public airing of these views resulted in condemnation as an apostate, and a death sentence. She now lives with round-the-clock security.

Receiving a standing ovation at her opening dinner speech for both her words and her courage, Hirsi Ali spoke passionately about the need to stand strong against the tide of anti-Enlightenment sentiment that is rising in the West in the guise of moral relativism, multiculturalism and political correctness.

The first Consilium session discussed *Where to for Africa?* UCLA economic historian, Professor **Gregory Clark**, joined Senator **David Coltart** from Zimbabwe's opposition party MDC, Ugandan journalist **Andrew Mwenda**, and Kenyan economist **James Shikwati** to paint a picture of a continent blighted by strife, tribal disharmony and imperialistic presidents, yet filled with optimism and hope for the future.

Gregory Clark made a re-appearance in session two: *Emerging Economic Challenges*, where Shadow Treasurer, the Hon. **Malcolm Turnbull** MP, debated policy strategy with Treasurer, the Hon. **Wayne Swan** MP, and Professor **Ian Harper**, Chairman of the Australian Fair Pay Commission, **Peter Hartcher** from *the Sydney Morning Herald*, and **Gary Banks** AO, Chairman of the Productivity Commission, discussed unwinding securitisation, the disconnect between the financial economy and the real economy, the tectonic shifts in global markets, and what impact credit rationing may have.

In the third session, *Intervention, Ideology and Indigenous Well-being: Moving Beyond Old Ideas*, speakers included CIS senior fellow, Professor **Helen Hughes**, **Warren Mundine**, CEO of NTSCORP, **Noel Pearson**, director of the Cape York Institute, and **Wesley Aird**, Business Manager for Eastern Yugambah. They spoke on the current state of apartheid that exists in Australia, the crisis in Indigenous education, the need for equal property rights for Aborigines, and the need to mandate personal responsibility as a way of promoting personal and economic freedoms.



One thing for which Consilium is noted is bringing together a variety of thought leaders; the conference acts as an intellectual introduction agency of sorts. This year **Andrew Forrest**, CEO of Fortescue Metals, met with **Noel Pearson**, **Warren Mundine**, Sir **Rod Eddington** of JP Morgan and Prime Minister **Kevin Rudd** at the event to launch the Australian Employment Covenant. A new initiative aimed at reducing welfare dependence by bridging the training-ready gap to 50,000 Indigenous Australians into employment.

Professor David Bowtell, Director of the Peter MacCallum Cancer Institute, **Professor Enrico Coiera**, Director of Health Informatics at UNSW, and **Mike Svinte**, VP of Global Pharmaceutical and Life Sciences at IBM, offered a look into the not-too-distant future of personalised medicine, where powerful new information technologies will change the way healthcare is provided, and bring challenges to civil liberty.

Asking the question: *If Money Can't Make Us Happy, Can Government?* the fifth session looked into the scientific crusade of happiness. CIS research fellow, **Andrew Norton**, Dr **Andrew Leigh** from ANU, Professor **Steven Schwartz**, Vice-Chancellor of Macquarie University, and Professor **Frank Furedi** from the University of Kent—all agreed that governments cannot legislate for happiness, and nor should they.

The last Consilium session: *The Ideas of the Enlightenment in the Twenty-first Century*, featured Chief Justice **Jim Spigelman**, the Hon. Dr **Craig Emerson** MP, Minister for Small Business Dr **Jonathan Le Cocq**, Head of Music, Film and Theatre Studies at the University of Canterbury, historian Dr **Arthur Herman**, and **Ayaan Hirsi Ali**. Superstition, fanaticism and orthodoxy were discussed, particularly in terms of the climate change debate and Islamic extremism. Exploring the Enlightenment ideals of tolerance, enquiry, progress, and human values was a fitting end to yet another successful Consilium.



2008 EVENTS AT A GLANCE

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
27 February	Lightbulb Lunch: Dr Razeen Sally	CIS
11 March	Lightbulb Lunch: Maria Ranka	CIS
10 April	Forum: Hayek's Ideas in the 21st Century	CIS
11 – 13 April	Liberty & Society Conference	Sydney
14 April	Lightbulb Lunch: Daniel Pipes	CIS
15 April	Forum: Big Ideas to Supersize New Zealand's Economy	Auckland
5 May	Roundtable: Fixing Federalism	CIS
25 June	CIS Distinguished Fellows Award Dinner	Sydney
26 June	Lightbulb Lunch: The Hon. Tony Abbott MP	CIS
30 June	Roundtable: Directions in Family Policy	CIS
21 July	Acton Lecture: Father Robert Sirico	CBA Auditorium, Sydney
22 July	Lunch with Chinese Dissident Chen Ziming	CIS
31 July – 2 August	Consilium	Hyatt Regency Coolum
1 – 3 August	Liberty & Society Conference	Sydney
4 August	Forum: Dr Arthur Herman on Gandhi & Churchill	Stanton Library, Sydney
4 August	Big Ideas Forum: The Ideas of the Enlightenment	Sydney Opera House
5 August	Forum: Where to for Africa?	CIS
27 August	Lightbulb Lunch: Denis Dutton	CIS
3 – 5 October	Advanced Liberty & Society Conference	Sydney
22 October	CIS Cinema: Flunked	CIS
12 November	CIS Crisis Commentary: The Ban on Short-Selling	CIS
17 November	Roundtable: Indigenous Housing	CIS
26 November	CIS Crisis Commentary: Depositor Protection & Government Bailouts	CIS
8 December	CIS Crisis Commentary: The End of Capitalism?	CIS
15 December	CIS Cinema: Flush It	CIS
16 December	Lightbulb Lunch: The Hon. Craig Emerson MP	CIS

25th Annual John Bonython Lecture – Postponed

Originally scheduled for December, this special anniversary event was sadly postponed due to the illness of speaker PJ O'Rourke. He recently underwent treatment for cancer, and the CIS is very pleased to report that he is doing well and has agreed to re-schedule the lecture for April 2009.

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

Acton Lecture: Must Religion be a Threat to Liberty?

21 July 2008

Commonwealth Bank Auditorium, Sydney
Father Robert Sirico, President of the Acton
Institute, USA

In his Acton Lecture address, Father Sirico suggested that religion is not a threat to liberty, and that Christianity in particular is responsible for many of the freedoms that the West enjoys today.

"Indeed, it was Christianity that lies at the root of the body of ideas we know today as classical liberalism, which can be summed up in four essential claims: all people have rights that cannot be abrogated; society flourishes most when the state does the least; economic advance is desirable and made possible through free enterprise; and that social peace is best maintained when religion and the state are separated," said Robert Sirico.



Big Ideas Forum: The Ideas of the Enlightenment in the 21st Century

4 August 2008

Sydney Opera House

Ayaan Hirsi Ali, Professor Frank Furedi,
Dr Arthur Herman, Dr Jonathan Le Cocq,
and Chief Justice Jim Spigelman

The 2008 Big Ideas Forum attracted close to 500 guests eager to hear the values of liberty, freedom and progress discussed from a twenty-first century perspective. Cultural relativism, political correctness and environmental zealotry were given short shrift, with the warning that Western liberty is at risk not only from fanatical extremists, but also most insidiously, from do-gooders wishing to curtail our rights to free speech under the guise of righteous behaviour.



SOCIAL FOUNDATIONS

Aged-care providers have refused to take up more than one-third of the new bed licences issued by the federal government this year because they cannot afford the cost of building and staffing new facilities.

Jeremy Sammut in The Australian Financial Review, 4 October 08

FAMILY POLICY

Jessica Brown was heavily involved in the debate about paid maternity leave, proposing a system of self-funded parental leave and critiquing the Productivity Commission's proposed scheme. Jessica appeared before the Productivity Commission to argue her case, and made two inquiry submissions. She advocated the simplification of family payments, and commented on childcare policy, feminism, family law and welfare in the media.

It is not changes in the average woman's wage, or a drop in the average number of hours spent vacuuming, that empowers women. It is the ability of each woman to make choices about her own life.

Jessica Brown in The Sydney Morning Herald, 21 August 08

HEALTH AND AGEING

In two papers released earlier this year, **Jeremy Sammut** questioned the efficacy of government spending on preventive health. He argued that the federal government's 'Super Clinic' policy was an inappropriate response to the ageing of the population. Jeremy also drew media attention to the flawed evidence cited by the health minister to justify the 'alcopops' tax hike. In his most recent publication, he challenged the wisdom of increasing the value of the old age pension, given the negative impact the growth of the welfare state and the rise of the handout culture has had on thrift, national saving, and self-funded retirement.

Jeremy was a keynote speaker on 'questioning prevention' at the Victorian Healthcare Association Annual Conference in Melbourne. He addressed the Macquarie Health Corporation Staff Workshop on federal government health policy in August and the Second Conference of Australian Parliamentarians.

Jeremy wrote a submission to the House of Representatives Inquiry into Obesity in Australia in June. He is currently completing a policy monograph on the public hospital 'crisis' and the need to expand the role of private hospitals.



School performance reporting is the foundation for effective federalism in education.

*Jennifer Buckingham in the **Canberra Times**, 12 August 08*

EDUCATION

Jennifer Buckingham weighed into debates on child care, women’s workforce participation, school choice, and school accountability. Her paper, *Making The Grade*, which advocates school reporting in Australia, was released in November to coincide with a visit to Sydney by New York Schools Chancellor, and school reporting guru, Joel Klein.

Jennifer was an expert contributor at the Future Summit in Sydney in May, where she spoke on teacher quality and performance in education. In August, she prepared a discussion paper on education and federalism for a Concept Economics forum and also attended a meeting on school funding convened by the Boston Consulting Group.

Jennifer Buckingham’s current project is a joint publication with **Andrew Norton** on the social effects of increased school choice.

HIGHER EDUCATION

The Bradley report on higher education policy, released in December, recommended that a voucher scheme be implemented and extended over time to include the private higher education sector. However, the Bradley committee did not support deregulating student contributions, and proposed only minor increases to government subsidies. **Andrew Norton** has recently released a paper arguing that without proper price signals, a voucher scheme is unlikely to benefit students.

WELFARE STATE

Peter Saunders’ report *What are Low Ability Workers to Do Part 2* sets out a range of policy responses to assist the long-term unemployed back into work. Peter also criticised the Rudd Government’s weakening of mutual obligation requirements in *A Whiff of Compassion*. In another book, *Declaring Dependence, Declaring Independence: Three Essays on the Welfare State*, edited by Peter canvassed strategies for opting in and opting out of the welfare state. In *Million Dollar Babies*, **Jessica Brown** criticised tax/welfare churning in proposals for taxpayer-funded paid maternity leave. The impact of the handout culture was also examined in **Jeremy Sammut’s** *A Streak of Hypocrisy*.

Unfortunately, for university applicants, Victoria is not the place to be ... If Victoria was more like the rest of Australia, 1,900 more Victorian applicants would be likely to have started university in 2008.

*Andrew Norton in **The Age**, 6 October 08*



ECONOMICS

The CIS expanded its economics program in 2008, with the appointment of two new Research Fellows, Dr Stephen Kirchner and Dr Oliver Hartwich. These appointments proved timely, coinciding with a deepening in the global financial crisis, which saw increased demand for commentary on economics issues. The CIS initiated a series of Crisis Commentaries Roundtables, which will be continued in 2009. Throughout the crisis, the CIS has provided a free market perspective that would otherwise be missing from public debate.

During 2008, the Economics Program published new research focused on fixing federalism, government intervention in housing finance, and the regulation of foreign direct investment. This research brought fresh perspectives to these issues and attracted considerable media attention.

In 2009, research will focus on the role of local government, solutions to Australia's housing affordability problems, competition policy, the relationship between monetary policy and asset prices, reforming fiscal policy rules, as well as addressing transport and infrastructure issues.

In October, the federal government announced a \$10.1 billion fiscal stimulus package. The CIS responded with critical opinion pieces in the *Australian Financial Review* and the *Wall Street Journal*, and commented on the package on national radio and television programs. In a climate of bipartisan support for the spending measures contained package, the CIS was one of the few dissenting voices favouring tax cuts as an alternative approach to fiscal stimulus.

*Despite their flaws,
markets have
consistently turned
out to be the best
way to coordinate
economic activity.
They aren't perfect,
but what is?*

*Oliver Hartwich in
The Australian,
11 December 08*

CIS CRISIS COMMENTARY EVENTS:

The Ban on Short Selling: Help or Hindrance? 12 November

Amid sharp falls in global stock markets, governments around the world implemented temporary bans on the short-selling of financial stocks. In Australia, the authorities went further, banning the short-selling of all stocks. CIS economist Stephen Kirchner, Robert Bianchi from QUT, and company director John M. Green debated whether the ban was necessary and whether it was effective in stabilising markets.

Depositor Protection and Government Bailouts 26 November

This forum discussed the extent to which regulation contributed to the financial collapse, and whether government and central bank policy responses to the crisis have been appropriate. UTS' Warren Hogan, UNSW's Peter Swan, and the economics editor of *The Australian*, Michael Stutchbury, spoke on monetary policy, liquidity injections, selective interventions to rescue or nationalise specific institutions, and the Bush administration's \$700 billion bailout package.

The End of Capitalism? Exploring the Global Financial Crisis 8 December

LSE's Razeen Sally and CIS economist Oliver Hartwich discussed the underlying causes of the crisis and how it evolved from a decline in US house prices to a global financial sector meltdown. How serious will the backlash against capitalism be?

The Australian Financial Review
www.afr.com • Tuesday, 10 August 2008

Let's snub bronze in tax quest

Australia should stop merely looking to the OECD for reform ideas, writes Robert Carling

International competitiveness is front and centre in the federal government's "fast and frugal" review of the tax system. But despite its motherhood quality, international competitiveness is not the be-all and end-all of tax policy. A more balanced tax reform must recognise that much of the case for more and broader tax reform must elsewhere. Moreover, competitiveness is not often measured by diffuse international comparisons, which are too easily manipulated to support a predetermined objective.



inform the tax reform debate. The amount of the international competitiveness argument is that Australia will suffer as the competition for cross-border investment and financial flows if our tax system is relatively unattractive. This is true, but a much broader case for reform should also be made. Cross-border opportunities only represent the tip of the iceberg of the tax reform debate; the rest of the case for reform is in the domestic economy. Cross-border flows would not be a consideration, but they would be a useful tax policy benchmark. To the contrary, the design of a tax and transfer system would be a major influence on aggregate efficiency, growth and well-being.

The broad case for tax reform starts with the obvious effects of tax on the distribution of income and wealth. The tax system should be designed to support a more equitable distribution of income and wealth. The OECD tax system is a good benchmark, but it is not the only one. The OECD tax system is a good benchmark, but it is not the only one.

smh.com.au Tuesday, October 7, 2008 13

Opinion

Starting to choke on this gravy train full of lumps



GAURAV SODHI

There are lots of people scratching their heads trying to understand how listed companies, owned by savvy shareholders, could allow managers to take their money, use it recklessly, then pay themselves a greater return than shareholders get. If this sounds familiar to anyone living in NSW, it should. The taxpayers of NSW, like shareholders of Wall Street financial companies, have been taken for a ride. In NSW there is a company we would be proud to call the people of NSW. After all, who provide taxes and pay for the

About half our international aid effort goes into "governance" programs to fight featherbedding. It is worth opposing only if it happens somewhere else. Every day of every year, taxpayers spend millions of dollars supporting the personal activities of former politicians. It is money that individuals and families have worked hard for, saved and sacrificed for, and we are entitled to ask what value we get in return.

The public service in NSW has become a black hole into which 50 per cent of government revenue – our taxes – are sunk. And yet the State Government operates on management principles that would make most companies blush.

During the last election, inconceivable changes to Epping Road in Sydney were delayed until after the election so the effects would not be felt at the ballot box. Similarly, changes to the rail timetable at Ryde are being delayed until after the by-election. This is the cost of "agency". And it is the cost of corporate and political life, except that when it comes to the

Legacy of free-market thinker pinpoints government failure

Friedrich von Hayek showed us why top-down planning doesn't work well, writes Geoff Huggins

In a speech delivered at the Sydney School of Economics, Friedrich von Hayek, the Nobel Prize-winning economist, pointed to the failure of government intervention in the economy. He argued that government intervention in the economy is a failure because it distorts the price mechanism, which is the most effective way of allocating resources in a free market.



www.theaustralian.com.au

Protectionist ploy a blast from past

Andrew Norton

PRIVATE providers of higher education have been assisted by the extension of the FEE-HELP loan scheme that lets their Australian students borrow

Good ideas beat ideological divide

Politics has moved beyond the old divisions of Left and Right, observes Craig Emerson

COMPETITORS of ideas seek moral high ground that others belong to.

An AussieMac won't help home buyers

proposal to establish a US-style government-sponsored enterprise (GSE) dubbed "AussieMac" after its US counterpart, Freddie Mac. AussieMac would seek to replace the government's funding advantage in capital markets to support the market for RMBS, with a view to lowering retail mortgage interest rates.

But any benefits from the creation of AussieMac could be fully offset by the RBA as it sought to maintain its desired level of credit restrictions. The RBA has always calibrated monetary policy to prevailing financial market conditions. These two terms of government would be operating at cross purposes, with no benefit in promoting cheaper housing finance.

The AussieMac proposal also characterises the domestic implications of the global credit crisis as a failure of competition. The problems in credit markets and the market for mortgage-backed securities are better characterised as financial instruments and not as a failure of competition.

Whether government superior substitute an either a temporary or one that will result in governments in financial markets, with benefits for buyers and without any cost to taxpayers. Since finds that most of advantage enjoyed by

their housing GSEs was not passed on to home buyers, but was instead captured by the GSEs in the form of higher profits.

But even if lower wholesale funding costs were passed on to consumers in the form of lower retail rates and not offset by RBA policy actions, this would simply be capitalised into house prices, with no benefit to home buyers.

Housing affordability needs to be tackled from the supply side, not the demand side. This means building more houses, not giving consumers government guarantee to become the dominant players in the US mortgage market, earning huge profits from their government-supplied funding advantage that should have been passed on to consumers.

Their implicit government guarantee allowed Freddie and Fannie to operate from a very low capital base and encouraged excessive risk taking, leaving them dangerously exposed to even small changes in the value of their assets. After the downturn in the US housing market, Freddie and Fannie now find themselves undercapitalised and the US government has been forced to make its implicit guarantee explicit.

The final cost to US taxpayers of this guarantee is yet unknown. But the US experience demonstrates that there is no free lunch in exploiting the government's power to tax to secure funding advantages in capital markets. Taxpayers should not be surprised when faced with the clean-up bill for the financial risks they underwrite through government-sponsored enterprises, such as the proposed AussieMac.

■ Stephen Kirchner is a research fellow at the Centre for Independent Studies. His paper "Government Intervention in Mortgage Finance: The Case Against AussieMac" will be released by CIS today.

The Wrong Plan for Australia

By Stephen Kirchner

SYDNEY—Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd has just unveiled a fiscal stimulus plan worth 10.4 billion Australian dollars (\$7.4 billion). At around 1% of GDP, it's bold. Will it work? Probably not as intended.

The plan consists of a set of handouts for politically appealing groups, such as old-age pensioners and families with children. There's also a big boost to infrastructure spending. It's a dramatic change for a government that as recently as May was addressing to the tightest fiscal policy since 1970-71, with a budget surplus of 2.1% of GDP. That budget was designed to put downward pressure on inflation. Taken together with the Reserve Bank of Australia's one-percentage-point easing at the beginning of the month, the new stimulus

proposal to accelerate its infrastructure spending agenda. Even with an accelerated timetable, work on these projects will not commence until well into 2009, with much of the spending not seen until even later, when Australia may already be through the feared economic downturn. Infrastructure spending decisions made in a crisis atmosphere might not be evaluated to the highest standards. Australia could be saddled with some wasteful rather than productivity-enhancing infrastructure projects.

Other aspects of Mr. Rudd's plan are at odds with what government should be doing in the current environment. The plan provides \$1.5 billion in grants to first-time home buyers. It would double the amount to house of exist-

"down payment on long-term pension reform," but it leaves the long-term future of pension reform an open issue. The case for future reform needs to be on reducing dependence on the government pension. This means making the pension less rather than more attractive, so as to encourage people to save for their retirement.

Similarly, the government will make a one-off \$21,000 payment for each child in eligible families. While this may have some value as a short-term economic stimulus measure, it does not address some of the long-term issues clouding the family payments system, including the disincentives to labour-force participation.

The biggest problem with the stimulus plan, however, is something that's not in

Mr. Rudd's 'stimulus' is anything but.

NSW state services are found wanting not because there is insufficient spending but because the spending lacks bang for the buck.

Robert Carling in *The Australian Financial Review*, 10 November 08

The focus for future reform needs to be on making the pension less rather than more attractive, so as to encourage people to save for their retirement.

Stephen Kirchner in *The Wall Street Journal Asia*, 15 October 08

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS RESEARCH PROGRAM

By locking Aborigines out of real jobs in the real economy, the CDEP has perpetuated a cycle of joblessness and family dysfunction.

Sara Hudson in The Adelaide Advertiser, 19 August 08

The CIS Indigenous Research program has continued to question government policy in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and to disseminate our message to a wide audience. Articles by CIS staff have appeared in newspapers around the country, with a particular focus on areas with a large population of Indigenous people, for example, *The Alice Spring News*, *The Adelaide Advertiser*, and *The Sunday Territorian*. The CIS has also written submissions to the Senate Select Committee and government departments on policy issues affecting Indigenous Australians. CIS submissions have been referred to repeatedly in subsequent government reports.

Sara Hudson's focus this year has been on the intergenerational effects of passive welfare in Indigenous communities. In particular, the Aboriginal work-for-dole scheme known as the Community Development Employment Project (CDEP). Sara argued that the CDEP had failed to provide people with meaningful work and to develop the economies of remote communities. Since the release of Sara's report the federal government has announced sweeping changes to CDEP, including reclassifying CDEP payments as welfare rather than wages—a point Sara had argued for in her paper.

Poor literacy and numeracy test outcomes are not the result of ethnicity, but are the result of separatist education policies.

Helen Hughes and Mark Hughes in The Australian, 17 September 08

Helen Hughes continued work on Indigenous education with the release of a Policy Monograph on *Indigenous Education in the Northern Territory* and an article in the March edition of *Quadrant*, *Strangers in Their Own Country: A Diary of Hope*. The Northern Territory education minister, Marion Srymgor, has started to take note of the arguments made by Professor Hughes and has embarked on a number of changes to education in the Northern Territory, including committing \$4 million to turn two 'learning centres' into fully fledged schools, and introducing teaching in English for at least four hours a day.

TURESTORY

tion apartheid: A reality in Australia today?

INGTON SEEKS ANSWERS TO THE CHARGE THAT INDIGENOUS CHILDREN ARE CONDEMNED TO LIVES OF POVERTY.



Srymgor backs boarding schools

NT Territory Education Minister Marion Srymgor has backed boarding schools to remedy educational problems in remote Indigenous communities.

Srymgor, who is the territory's deputy premier, said the move would allow the government to "provide a better education for the children of remote communities".

"I don't think it's the case that boarding schools are a panacea for the educational problems of remote communities," she said. "But it is a step in the right direction. We need to ensure that all children have access to quality education, and that includes those in remote areas."

The move is part of a broader strategy to improve educational outcomes in remote areas. Srymgor said the government would continue to work on other initiatives to support Indigenous education.



Sara Hudson

Sara Hudson is a writer and researcher who has written extensively on Indigenous issues. She is currently working on a book about the impact of the CDEP on Indigenous communities.

Sunday Extra

A failing time-waster

CDEP leads indigenous Australia through the same maze

INDIGENOUS Australia's employment situation is a maze of dead ends. The Community Development Employment Project (CDEP) has been a major part of the government's response to unemployment in remote areas. But a new report from the Senate Select Committee on Indigenous Affairs says the program is failing. The report says that CDEP payments are being used to pay for welfare rather than wages, and that the program is not providing meaningful work for participants. The report also says that the government should reclassify CDEP payments as welfare and that it should invest more in training and education for Indigenous people.

NO CHANGE: Communities still lack the basics that urban centres expect. The report says that many Indigenous communities still lack basic services such as electricity, water, and sewerage. It also says that many communities still have high unemployment rates and that many people are living in poverty. The report calls for the government to invest more in infrastructure and social services in remote areas.

SENATE SELECT COMMITTEE ON INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS: The committee's report says that the government should reclassify CDEP payments as welfare and that it should invest more in training and education for Indigenous people. It also says that the government should improve the conditions of work for CDEP participants and that it should ensure that CDEP payments are used for their intended purpose.

THE PACIFIC

The Pacific has had an idyllic image since European traders and missionaries first visited the region hundreds of years ago. The coconut trees and blue skies are still there, but the Pacific today is blighted by unemployment, stagnation and increasingly, violence and crime. For thirty years, there has been little economic development while the population has grown. Young people are bored, frustrated, and growing fast enough to represent both a security problem and an economic tragedy. A book by **Gaurav Sodhi** and **Helen Hughes**, to be released in 2009, will argue that the Pacific need not be damned to poverty. With appropriate reform, there is no reason the Pacific cannot experience the breakthrough economic development that has occurred in Asia.

Helen and Gaurav's report *The Bipolar Pacific* was well received and coincided with a government decision to trial a guest workers scheme, an idea that was treated with caution in their findings.

CHINA, SOUTH EAST ASIA, THE US & AUSTRALIA

In 2008, **John Lee's** research revealed that political and economic reform within China had stalled over the past two decades. China remains eager to avoid foreign policy tensions with established powers, such as the USA, in order to strengthen its economy. Yet, internally Chinese thinkers are keen to continue the build up of both soft and hard power in order to return the country to greatness.

In the second half of the year, John's work responded to the onset of the global economic crisis. Beijing remains focused on maintaining growth at all cost. Although this is a relief in the short term, in the longer term, current Chinese policies mean that genuine reform of China's economic and political institutions is less likely.

With substantial criminal interests operating in the region, the Pacific is developing its comparative advantage as a location for international crimes such as people-smuggling, drug production and arms trafficking.

Gaurav Sodhi in The Australian, 21 August 08

COMMENT 09

China's complicit universities

Academics in China are no longer agitators for democracy, but party to the Party machine, says John Lee.

In the past decade, the role of universities in China has changed. Academics are no longer agitators for democracy, but party to the Party machine, says John Lee. The role of universities in China has changed. Academics are no longer agitators for democracy, but party to the Party machine, says John Lee. The role of universities in China has changed. Academics are no longer agitators for democracy, but party to the Party machine, says John Lee.

OPINION ANALYSIS

Pacific guests invited over our unemployed

It's been a good reception for a polarising policy, writes Helen Hughes and Gaurav Sodhi.

THE announcement that Australia is to accept a trial of a guest workers scheme to help fill the skills gap in the Pacific has been met with a mixture of interest and concern. The trial is a significant step towards addressing the Pacific's unemployment problem. It is a sign that the Pacific is being taken seriously as a region with a future. The trial is a sign that the Pacific is being taken seriously as a region with a future. The trial is a sign that the Pacific is being taken seriously as a region with a future.

on point

Why Kevin Rudd's 'security community' will annoy Asia

QUEST COLUMNIST John Lee

Chris wants to be the dominant political and cultural power in East and Southeast Asia but that's hardly what anyone else wants.

THE Australian government's proposal to build a 'security community' in East and Southeast Asia is a bold move. It is a move that will annoy Asia. It is a move that will annoy Asia. It is a move that will annoy Asia.

Dr John Lee is a visiting fellow at the Centre for Independent Studies. His paper 'Waiting nomination to China as host' was released in 2008.

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PUBLICATIONS LIST

- JANUARY **Five out of Ten: A Performance Report on RAMSI** Gaurav Sodhi
-
- FEBRUARY **In Praise of Elitism** Peter Saunders, Charles Murray, Denis Dutton, and Claire Fox
What Are Low Ability Workers To Do When Unskilled Jobs Disappear? Part 2 Peter Saunders
Do Secular Societies Provoke Religious Extremism? Tom Frame
-
- MARCH **State Tax Reform: Progress and Prospects** Robert Carling
-
- APRIL **Anglo Primacy at the End of History: The Deep Roots of Power** Lawrence Mead
Indigenous Education in the Northern Territory Helen Hughes
-
- MAY **The False Promise of GP Super Clinics, Part 1: Preventive Care** Jeremy Sammut
KiwiSaver or KiwiSucker? A Critical View Phil Rennie
Putting Democracy in China on Hold John Lee
-
- JUNE **Adam Smith: A Primer** Eamonn Butler
The False Promise of GP Super Clinics, Part 2: Coordinated Care Jeremy Sammut
A Whiff of Compassion? The Attack on Mutual Obligation Peter Saunders
-
- JULY **Declaring Dependence, Declaring Independence: Three Essays on the Future of the Welfare State** Peter Saunders, John Humphreys, Eugene Dubossarsky, and Stephen Samild
Child Care and the Labour Supply Jennifer Buckingham
CDEP: Help or Hindrance? Sara Hudson
-
- AUGUST **The Faulty Arguments Behind Australia's Corporate Tax** Sinclair Davidson
The Bipolar Pacific Helen Hughes and Gaurav Sodhi
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- SEPTEMBER **Government Intervention in Mortgage Finance: The Case Against 'AussieMac'** Stephen Kirchner
Baby Steps Toward Self-funded Maternity Leave Jessica Brown
Must Religion be a Threat to Liberty? Robert Sirico
-
- NOVEMBER **China's Insecurity and Search for Power** John Lee
Million Dollar Babies: Paid Parental Leave and Family Policy Reform Jessica Brown
Making the Grade: School Report Cards and League Tables Jennifer Buckingham
Capital Xenophobia II Stephen Kirchner
Where to for Australian Federalism? ed Robert Carling
-
- DECEMBER **Harmacy: The Political Economy of Community Pharmacy in Australia** David Gadiel
A Streak of Hypocrisy: Reactions to the Global Financial Crisis and Generational Debt Jeremy Sammut

PUBLICATIONS

Policy Monographs



CDEP Help or Hindrance

Sara Hudson

The Community Development Employment Projects program was established to help Indigenous Australians move from welfare into work. Despite its good intentions, thirty years of CDEP has prevented Indigenous people from getting mainstream jobs.

The Faulty Arguments Behind Australia's Corporate Tax

Sinclair Davidson

While public debate has concentrated on personal income tax, there has been little demand for corporate tax reform. This paper investigates Australian corporate tax and highlights a number of issues that deserve greater public awareness.

Capital Xenophobia II

Stephen Kirchner

Australia has an overly restrictive Foreign Direct Investment regime. The government's mistrust of FDI, or 'capital xenophobia,' lowers Australia's chances of attracting the productive capital that can contribute to rising living standards.

Harmacy: The Political Economy of Community Pharmacy in Australia

David Gadiel

The pharmacy sector is one of Australia's most protected industries. Unnecessary regulation has inhibited competition and increased the costs that Australian consumers pay for many non-prescription pharmaceuticals sold only by pharmacies.

A Streak of Hypocrisy: Reactions to the Global Financial Crisis and Generational Debt

Jeremy Sammut

Household savings in Australia have collapsed due to an unnecessary dependence on welfare handouts. This means the next generation of young people will have to pick up the bill for the baby boomers' taxpayer funded healthcare and aged pensions.

ISSUE ANALYSIS



Child Care and the Labour Supply

Jennifer Buckingham

This paper seeks to verify the claims about the effects of child care on female labour supply and whether government funding is contributing to child care affordability or making it more expensive.

The Bipolar Pacific

Helen Hughes and Gaurav Sodhi

Australians have become accustomed to bad news from the Pacific islands, but there appear to be two Pacifics. One group of islands has managed to grow, while a second group of islands has stagnated at best.

Government Intervention in Mortgage Finance: The Case Against 'AussieMac'

Stephen Kirchner

This paper argues that government intervention in the market for mortgage-backed securities is an inefficient way of promoting housing affordability, and that the 'AussieMac' proposal is unlikely to deliver benefits for Australian home buyers.

Baby Steps Toward Self-funded Maternity Leave

Jessica Brown

This paper examines some of the complexities involved in implementing a taxpayer- or employer-funded paid maternity leave scheme, and challenges some of the assumptions made by those for whom paid maternity leave has become a symbolic issue.

China's Insecurity and Search for Power

John Lee

China feels strategically vulnerable and is working to strengthen its power and influence. This insecurity has led Chinese policymakers to develop strategies designed to build greater productive capacity in order to further its mission: to return China to greatness.

The CIS has published around 421,000 words this year, not including opinion pieces in the media. For comparison, this is roughly 75% of the volume of *War and Peace* in English translation.

PUBLICATIONS

ISSUE ANALYSIS



Million Dollar Babies: Paid Parental Leave and Family Policy Reform

Jessica Brown

Support for paid parental leave has been so vocal that rather than being a means to an end, paid parental leave has become the end itself. Evidence-based policy has been sidelined with the Productivity Commission setting the task of designing a set of objectives that justify the desired policy.

Making the Grade: School Report Cards and League Tables

Jennifer Buckingham

International research shows that students in schools that publish their results publicly perform better than students in schools that do not. It is time for Australian schools to be accountable too.

In the last year, across four editions, *Policy* has published 66 articles and reviews. Thirteen new contributors were among the authors and overall, circulation is stable at around 2,000 copies per issue.



OCCASIONAL PAPERS



Declaring Dependence, Declaring Independence: Three Essays on the Future of the Welfare State

Peter Saunders (ed), John Humphreys, Eugene Dubossarsky, and Stephen Samild

This essay collection proposes two solutions to the nanny state - let people declaring dependence on the state for greater welfare entitlements in exchange for forgoing the right to vote. And declaring independence, by relinquishing government services in exchange for lower taxes and greater personal freedom.

Must Religion be a Threat to Liberty?

The 10th Acton Lecture on Religion and Freedom delivered by Father **Robert Sirico**, president of the Acton Institute, USA.

Where to for Australian Federalism?

Robert Carling (ed), Ken Baxter, Wolfgang Kasper, Jonathan Pincus, Cheryl Saunders, and Cliff Walsh

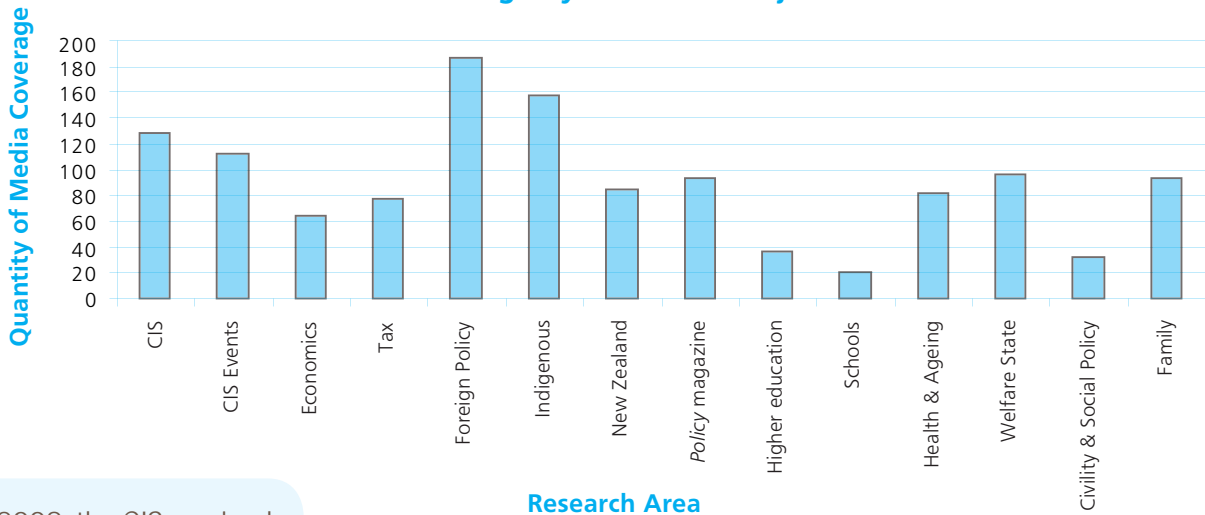
This collection by some of the Australia's most experts on federalism presents diverse views on the balance of cooperation and competition between the states, on the development of intergovernmental agreements, as well as the fiscal aspects of Australian federalism.

MEDIA

206 CIS opinion pieces have been published in Australian and international newspapers in the past twelve months. Many of these have since been republished online too.

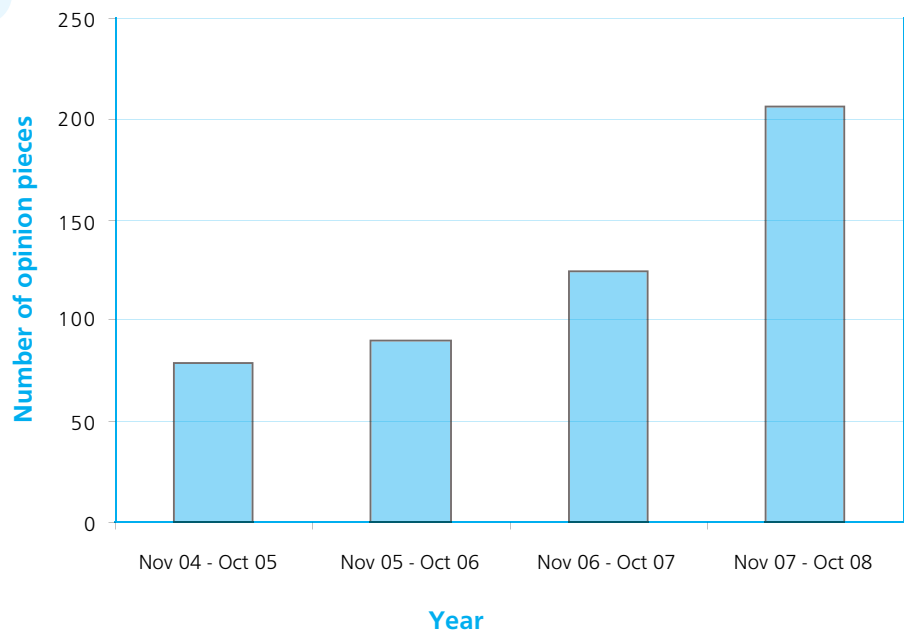


Coverage by Research Subject



In 2008, the CIS received more media attention and coverage in every form of media than ever before.

Comparative Opinion Pieces



345 mentions of CIS research appeared in print media news articles in 2008, plus 465 online mentions, quotations and links to our work.

Over 12 years, Liberty and Society (L&S) has given 655 young people an insight into classical liberal thinking and how it can be applied to contemporary policy and cultural issues. The majority of L&S attendees continue to maintain contact with the CIS and each other. Many commented that the L&S has given them a unique, new way of looking at issues they are learning about at university.

In 2008, CIS held three L&S conferences—introductory courses in April and August, as well as an advanced conference in October. Speakers and lecturers included Dr **John Hirst** from La Trobe University, Professor **Ian Harper** from Access Economics, Dr **Darryn Jensen** from University of Queensland, and Dr **Jeremy Shearmur** and Professor **Geoff Brennan** from ANU.

CIS researchers Dr **Jeremy Sammut**, Dr **John Lee**, **Jessica Brown**, **Jennifer Buckingham**, and **Andrew Norton**—all spoke at the L&S this year, as well as the Hon. **Ruth Richardson**, a director of CIS.



The CIS is delighted to see L&S alumni progressing into important careers where their philosophical position can make a difference. L&S alumni have become academics at ANU, La Trobe, University of Queensland, University of Adelaide, and Southern Cross University. Alumni are leaders in business and finance at PriceWaterhouse Coopers, UBS, and the Reserve Bank of Australia. Many are political advisors and politicians themselves in state and federal parliaments, as well senior policymakers in various government departments. Others have gone on to practice law, establish themselves as local and international journalists, and even as researchers at think tanks.



FUNDRAISING

'Better a society where our descendants are free to be the best they can be than an inheritance of assets in an un-free one.'

Neville Kennard

CIS' BEQUEST PROGRAM

CIS has broadened its fundraising activities with the aim of building solid foundations for the Centre's future growth. This has included the building of a Bequest Program, which was launched in October, seeking the support of members, friends and like-minded individuals who believe in the importance of an independent voice, limited government rule, and in creating a strong civil society.

Friends who pledge their support to CIS by way of a bequest are making an investment in the future, in securing freedom, defending core values, and in creating a society we all want for our children and grandchildren. The message is this: a bequest is an inheritance of freedom, a legacy and a gift for future generations to enjoy. A bequest can be contributed to the CIS for general activities or for a specific purpose, by way of cash, property or shares.

CAPITAL GAINS

The CIS Capital Campaign has received strong support in 2008, and is close to reaching its initial target of \$5 million. The Campaign, established in 2006 to mark the thirtieth anniversary of CIS, will ensure the Centre's long-term viability. However, the future, as we all know, is not always certain. The CIS will therefore continue to build on the strengths of our staff, assets and resources by seeking the ongoing support of the corporate sector, foundations, and individuals who are the lifeline of our business.

The CIS raises all of its funds from membership subscriptions and donations, and will continue to ask for support, especially during these difficult times, to ensure that programs are maintained and expanded and that policy is probed for positive solutions that benefit our society.

If you are interested in helping the CIS, please make a donation to our Capital Campaign or contact us regarding a Bequest. To do so, email or phone the CIS Development Office at development@cis.org.au or on (02) 9438 4377.



With thanks to all our donor and supporters for 2008, including:

Supporting the CIS Health and Ageing Policy Research Program
Macquarie Group Foundation

Supporting the Liberty and Society Student Conference Program
Mannkal Economic Education Foundation

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE SUMMARY

INCOME	To June 2008 Audited \$	To June 2007 Audited \$
Donations	1,985,058	1,431,372
Book sales and Subscriptions	145,911	140,030
Events/Seminar Income	573,301	693,167
Interest and Sundry Income	57,046	58,968
TOTAL INCOME	2,761,316	2,323,537

EXPENSES		
Research, Functions, Publishing	494,618	577,095
Fundraising and Development	70,184	59,434
Salaries Including Research	1,730,379	1,286,809
Administration and Rent	337,740	310,907
TOTAL EXPENSES	2,632,921	2,234,245
SURPLUS	128,395	89,292

CAPITAL FUND

INCOME	To June 2008 Audited \$	To June 2007 Audited \$
CAPITAL FUND		
TOTAL INCOME	1,194,529	1,738,732

NEW CIS STAFF



Holly Hamilton is Personal Assistant to Greg Lindsay and the Centre's Events Assistant. She has a Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in History & Politics from the University of Warwick, England. Holly worked in the English Department at Warwick

University before coming to Australia just over a year ago. Prior to joining the CIS, Holly worked for Jones Lang LaSalle.

Dr Oliver Hartwich is a Research Fellow with the Economics Program at the CIS. Previously, he was the Chief Economist at the British think tank Policy Exchange, where he specialised in housing and planning policy research, urban regeneration, and transport policy. Before that he worked as an adviser to Lord Oakeshott of Seagrove Bay in the UK House of Lords. He studied Business Administration and Economics at Bochum University in Germany, and went on to complete a Master's Degree and a PhD in Law at the universities of Bochum and Sydney.



Dr Stephen Kirchner is a Research Fellow with the Economics Program at the CIS. Prior to joining CIS, he was an economist with Action Economics, LLC and Director of Economic Research with Standard & Poor's Institutional Market

Services, based in Sydney and Singapore. He has also worked as an adviser to members of the Australian House of Representatives and Senate. He has lectured in economics at the University of New South Wales, Macquarie University, and the University of Technology, Sydney. He has a BA (Hons) from ANU, a Master of Economics (Hons) from Macquarie University, and a PhD in economics from the University of New South Wales. Stephen blogs at www.institutional-economics.com.

Luke Malpass is a policy analyst with CIS' New Zealand Policy Unit. Previously Luke worked as a teaching assistant at the University of Canterbury, where he completed a Master of Arts in political philosophy. He holds a Bachelor of Arts with first class honours from the University of Otago.



Mangai Pitchai has joined CIS as Editor. She has an MPhil and an Associate's degree in Journalism. She has a range of experience starting with high school teaching, then various editing positions in newspapers in the USA and India. Since moving to Australia she has worked for LexisNexis, McGraw-Hill, and has helped edit various websites.



Sally Woodward is the Design & Production Manager at CIS. She has a Bachelor of Design (Honours) in Visual Communication from the University of Technology, Sydney. Sally has several years of experience in design, publishing and studio management. Prior to joining the CIS, she was Studio Manager of Corporate Marketing for ACP Magazines, as well as freelancing for a variety of clients.

John Humphreys is a Research Fellow with the Economics Programme at the CIS. He previously worked as a policy analyst for the Commonwealth Treasury and as a consultant for the Centre for International Economics. He is also the Director of the Human Capital Project, a non-profit that provides financing to Cambodian university students. John has an Economics (Hons) degree from the University of Queensland.



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Editor

Leonie Phillips

Publisher

Greg Lindsay

Designer

Sally Woodward

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Australia

PO Box 92 St Leonards NSW

1590 Australia

Ph: +61 2 9438 4377

Fax: +61 2 9439 7310

Email: cis@cis.org.au

www.cis.org.au

New Zealand

PO Box 5529 Lambton Quay

Wellington 6040

New Zealand

Ph: +64 499 5861

Fax: +64 499 5940

Email: cis@cis.org.nz

www.cis.org.nz

We must make the building of a free society once more an intellectual adventure, a deed of courage. If we can regain that belief in the power of ideas, which was the mark of liberalism at its best, the battle is not lost.

– F. A. HAYEK



The Centre for Independent Studies

Level 4, 38 Oxley Street, St Leonards, NSW 2065 | PO Box 92, St Leonards NSW 1590
Tel: +61 2 9438 4377 | Fax: +61 2 9439 7310 | Email: cis@cis.org.au | www.cis.org.au