

Although, as we have said before, *Policy* can never be as topical as a daily newspaper (and is not going to try), current events continue in striking fashion to bear out the importance of our message. The surge of populism on the right, its message eerily matching many themes already present on the populist left, should alert everyone to the fragility of the values on which a free society depends.

In this issue, *Policy's* writers once again display what Marx would have called the unity of theory and practice. Ken Phillips provocatively sketches the intellectual background to the move away from traditional, common-law employment, seeing it as an important vindication of the principles of individual freedom. Wolfgang Kasper looks at the Multilateral Agreement on Investment, a recent target of populists from both left and right, and relates it to the fundamental rules by which society should be organised.

Other practical issues dealt with include Australia's educational exports, particularly to the troubled Asian markets (by Christopher Pokarier and Simon Ridings); the 'new unionism' and its effect on airline pilots in New Zealand (Michael Beverland); and the vexed question of *Wik*, and how one major resource company has dealt with land rights (Paul D'Arcy). We also have a fascinating interview with Sir Alan Walters, former economics guru to Margaret Thatcher, and a discussion of utilitarianism in economics by Jason Soon.

The subjects of our review articles, Mark Latham MP and Professor Anthony de Jasay, stand near opposite ends of the theory-practice continuum. Nonetheless, the reader may detect a common theme in their work – the importance of civil society, and the danger of relying too much on the state to foster it. The CIS is exploring this territory with its *Social Matters* program, and *Policy* hopes to be publishing more on the subject in the near future.

Other topics covered in book reviews include education, crime, sex, political theory and social justice – a heady brew indeed! In *Schools' Brief*, Rick Johnson examines Australia's record and prospects for productivity growth.

Also in this issue, you will find news of our clearance sale on back issues of *Policy*. Please consider taking this opportunity to provision your library with some of the great reading that *Policy* offers – or what about a gift for friends who are interested in the world of ideas? Prices this low are not likely to be repeated. You can order using the card inserted after page 48.

Our program to advance publication dates in line with the seasons continues on schedule. The next *Policy* will be the Spring 1998 issue, which, all being well, should appear around the middle of September.