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EDITORIAL

Policy has long been concerned with the values and institutions that underpin a free and open society, so it seems only fitting that the cover story for this bumper Winter issue—the final quarterly print edition—should be a review essay on resurgent challenges to the Enlightenment principles of reason, science and humanism that are the focus of Steven Pinker's latest book *Enlightenment Now*.

Reviewer and longtime friend of CIS **Suri Ratnapala** notes that 'resistance to the central ideas of the Enlightenment is as old as the Age of Enlightenment itself', but argues that the wealth of facts, evidence and reasoning that Pinker draws on to defend the Enlightenment legacy and to support his optimistic thesis about the human condition makes this one of the 'most important works of the 21st century'. He warns, however, that Pinker may be too sanguine about the challenges liberal democracies face from the revival of fascism and revisionist powers like Russia and China.

The nature and extent of the latter challenge to Australia's liberal democratic institutions has been hotly debated since the publication of Clive Hamilton's book on Chinese influence in this country. In our lead book review, lawyer **Dan Ryan** argues that while Hamilton's core claims rely largely on circumstantial evidence, the book contains much useful information about potential threats. Meanwhile leading China-watcher **Rowan Callick's** piece on the centralisation and personalisation of rule under China's new president-for-life, Xi Jinping, should leave readers with few doubts about where Xi's China is headed.

Also in this issue, economics professor **Ross Guest** surveys the evidence on explanations for the (real) gender pay gap and concludes that the case for government intervention is flawed. CIS policy analyst **Charles Jacobs** examines the ten-year record on closing the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous outcomes and suggests some ways forward that learn from past failings. UK education professor and entrepreneur **James Tooley** discusses his vision for a chain of low-cost private schools in England, inspired by the success of similar schools serving some of the poorest people in developing countries around the world.

In other articles, **Glenn Withers** and **Adam Creighton** defend our high rate of immigration while **Judith Sloan** and **Mark Latham** advocate slashing it. CIS economist **Matt O'Donnell** argues that liberal democracy is often automatically associated with individual freedom, but this can blind us to its flaws—which is why democratic government must be limited. Another CIS economist, **David Gadiel**, revisits the disastrous land and other reforms in Zimbabwe under the ruinous reign of Robert Mugabe, a sobering reminder of the importance of property rights.

Last but not least, this issue of *Policy* features a potted compilation of quotes from articles spanning the decades from April 1985 to the present. With *Policy* now in its 34th year in print, selection was an unenviable task. Book reviews and interviews were excluded, but it must be noted that the review section in particular has always been a core strength of *Policy* and a highlight for many readers.

It is clear from this mini-retrospective that *Policy* has made a major contribution to the world of ideas. While it has not been an academic journal in the true formal sense, successive editors have tried to maintain a scholarly but accessible tone. As a quarterly journal with a classical liberal bent it has occupied a unique niche in the small magazine market, especially since securing a newsstand distribution deal some 15 years ago. But the market has changed dramatically since then with the advent of digital devices and myriad online forums and platforms. *Policy's* successor, the unbound series *Policy Papers*, aims to capitalise on these new opportunities to reach audiences in a more timely manner.

Policy has depended heavily on unpaid contributors for content and I am grateful for the time and effort they have put into writing in a volunteer capacity. CIS researchers have been regular contributors—and referees—and I am likewise grateful to them. Specific thanks are in order for our unflappable graphic designer, **Ryan Acosta**, who has overseen layout, **Kerri Evans** as a second pair of eyes at the final proofing stage, and **Karla Pincott** as a sounding board for article ideas. Further thanks are due to editor-in-chief for all but the last two 2018 issues, **Greg Lindsay**, who helped select articles for the compilation '*Policy Through the Decades*'; former editor **Andrew Norton**, an unofficial editorial adviser and prolific contributor over the years; and **Wolfgang Kasper**, another prolific contributor and energetic source of guidance and feedback. Finally to *Policy's* loyal readers and subscribers, farewell and thanks.

Sue Windybank

Editor (2000-2004 and 2016-2018)