## ANNUAL REVIEW 2021 PréCIS

**Centre for Independent Studies** 

## THE CENTRE FOR INDEPENDENT STUDIES

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## We must make the building of a free society once more an intellectual adventure, a deed of courage... Unless we can make the philosophic foundations of a free society once more a living intellectual issue, and its implementation a task

intellectual issue, and its implementation a task which challenges the ingenuity and imagination of our liveliest minds, the prospects of freedom are indeed dark. But 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.

- Friedrich Hayek

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## Goals and Aims

## Vision

The Centre for Independent Studies is Australia's indispensable voice providing independent research and policy solutions enabling the pursuit of happiness and the opportunity to live a prosperous life with less government interference.

### Mission

- Promote evidence-based policy
- Advance free choice
- Progress individual liberty
- Defend cultural freedom
- Foster the open exchange of ideas

### **Our Independence**

CIS is a not-for-profit think tank with tax-deductible status. As a politically non-partisan organisation for more than 40 years, we are proud to be Australia's independent voice in public policy research.

Crucial to our independence is that CIS does not accept government funding, nor undertake commissioned research. Our funding comes solely from members, donors, business and foundations.

CIS promotes evidence-based policy, which advances free choice, individual liberty, defends cultural freedom and the open exchange of ideas.

## From the Executive Director

One of the purposes of history is to use the time between events, and the moment when those events are recalled, to reflect on what those events really meant. It is too early to draw serious conclusions about the consequences of the pandemic. However, a few aspects already seem clear, and painfully so for those of us who believe true liberty and prosperity can only come with a small state that defends free speech and national sovereignty.

The first is that the excessive increases in public spending most governments in the developed world chose to make in response to the Covid crisis show alarming signs of becoming permanent. And the inflationary consequences of the massive rise in borrowing, and of the additional money pumped into the economy, are likely to mean that interest rates do not stay at rock bottom indefinitely.

As **Robert Carling** and **Simon Cowan** have made clear (see pages 6-7), it is little short of insanity for governments to pursue this form of extreme Keynesianism, and not to start reducing the size of the state now the pandemic is waning. Cushioning the blow of lockdowns is one thing; financing an alternative form of socialism (for many of the governments responsible, from Australia and Germany to the United States and the United Kingdom) is quite another.

The electorates currently so happy with big-spending budgets seem oblivious that the costs will continue to be paid by their grandchildren. Perhaps they should be reminded in situations such as this it is not just the super-rich and wealthy who end up footing the tax bill: it is everyone.

Economic history ought to tell these governments that the usual end result of periods of high taxation and high public spending is massive economic inefficiency, overregulation and suppressed prosperity. And that is before one even considers the effects on freedom of the individual. The second aspect of the pandemic has been the expansion, or rather inflammation, of 'cancel culture'. This is the phenomenon by which anyone in public life, the media or academe who refuses to subscribe to the extreme leftist orthodoxies of a militant and vocal minority are 'cancelled'. The 'cancellation' entails not just the denial of public platforms to those who refuse to conform, but also attempts using social media to seek to remove such people from civilised society and the public consciousness.

No rational person can dispute the destructive effects of prejudice on individuals and society. But cancel-culture activists look for prejudice and racism often where there is none. All many of their targets are guilty of is expressing an inoffensive, but unquestionably different, point of view.

It should be stressed that, at this stage, the cancel culture of the so-called 'woke' left is predominantly confined to the US and UK. But as **Peter Kurti** and our Culture team warn (see pages 10-11), Australia is hardly immune to these illiberal trends. If the cancellers strangle debate, they will suppress ideas and seek to standardise opinion.

In universities across the US and Britain (perhaps Australia one day?), outrages against freedom of speech — particularly in disciplines such as politics, languages and history —are being perpetrated almost daily. And those universities are now routinely producing a generation of students who regard free speech as dispensable and liberal values as inherently bad. That, more than anything, is why responsible leaders should act to stop this manipulation of our values and the vilification of those whose only offence is not to agree with the stifling orthodoxy.

Because if they don't, our liberal society, and all the good it has created, will soon be things of the past, and we may not even be allowed to study or debate the history of them.



Finally, China: the Covid crisis has coincided with not just the dramatic centralisation of Xi Jinping's power, but also the expansion of China's global footprint. As **Sue Windybank** documents on pages 14-15, CIS papers and events this year have stressed the importance not only of pushing back against so-called 'wolf-warrior diplomacy' — where Beijing uses its growing economic heft to coerce or harm smaller states that pursue policies not to its liking — but also deepening ties with other countries in our region and beyond that are anxious about China's rise.

CIS remains heavily engaged in all three aspects of the post-Covid era. And thanks to our supporters, we will continue to try to make Australia a free, better and more prosperous place in 2022 and beyond.

Tom Switzer



Events & 71Livestreams



55,000+

275,000+ YouTube Hours Watched

1.07 Million

## 21.5 Million

Social Media & Website Impressions



## Economics

CIS continues to make the case for fiscal discipline to reduce the massive debt burden incurred during the pandemic, as well as advocating for the relaxation of planning controls to improve housing supply and hence affordability. ablishes that planning restriction er they are good or bad. If current paper

Peter Tulip presents his paper on high-rise development

#### Housing

A major focus of our work this year was on housing. Chief Economist **Peter Tulip** followed up his December 2020 POLICY paper, *Planning Restrictions Harm Housing Affordability*, with several presentations to industry groups and public servants. Then, in an April POLICY Paper, *Does High-Rise Development Damage Neighbourhood Character?*, Peter and co-author **Zachary Lanigan** argued that the main reason for planning restrictions — preservation of local character — has little benefit in practice. Peter presented this paper at a CIS lunch that same month.

- A major advance for the housing program came when the NSW Productivity Commission published a White Paper in May, echoing our arguments and placing the issue of supply at the top of the reform agenda.
- Even more heartening, in August the Federal Parliamentary Committee on Tax and Revenue, chaired by Jason Falinski, embarked on a review of housing affordability and supply. Peter appeared before the inquiry in mid-November after CIS made a detailed submission. In addition to zoning, this also discussed the taxation of housing, an issue on which Senior Fellow **Robert Carling** has written several past papers.

While housing policy is primarily a matter for the States, we are hopeful that the Falinski Inquiry will put a spotlight on the problem and apply extra pressure for reform. Contributing to the public discussion on this issue will be a key focus for CIS in 2022.

#### **Other Research**

CIS continued to scrutinise government responses to the pandemic throughout 2021. In January's *The Looming Iceberg: Australia's post-pandemic debt risk*, **Robert Carling** argued that the enormous increase in government borrowing poses a risk to economic growth and reduces fiscal flexibility and the capacity to respond to future crises. The paper attracted considerable attention.

THE CENTR

In early August, Robert also published 90 Days to Freedom?: Why Australia can learn from Canada's vaccination success. The paper argued against the prevailing scepticism that the 70% vaccination threshold would be reached by October and the 80% threshold by mid-November, allowing for the abandonment of 'Covid zero'. Later that month, Robert and Research Director **Simon Cowan** presented the results of CIS-commissioned polling in the Analysis Paper, Attitudes to a Post-Covid Australia. The survey found Australians were keen for lockdowns to be lifted as soon as vaccination rates passed thresholds — although it also found a strong authoritarian streak, with substantial support for strict enforcement measures. Both papers generated considerable media coverage.

It was not all about the pandemic, however. In March, CIS released **Terrence O'Brien**'s *Implications of the Retirement Income Review: Public advocacy of private profligacy?*, which challenged the Review's estimates of the cost of superannuation tax concessions, arguing that savings are not being unduly favoured.



Simon Cowan in conversation with Philip Lowe Joanne Tran gives the Vote of Thanks after Lowe's address

Robert Carling at a CIS lunch

In April, **Grahame Campbell**'s POLICY Paper — *Make Every Drop Count and Count Every Drop: Vanishing groundwater needs proper monitoring and management* — warned that we are drawing on our natural aquifers much faster than natural recharge. The paper was widely covered in regional and rural print and broadcast media.

And in May, **Tony Makin** and **Gene Tunny** revisited the issue of government borrowing in *The MMT Hoax*. Makin and Tunny argued that Modern Monetary Theory, which holds that public debt is not a problem, is deeply flawed. MMT's call for unlimited fiscal activism risks runaway inflation.

#### Videos, Webcasts and Events

In April, CIS released a short YouTube video entitled "There is No Magic Money Tree". Written and presented by Research Assistant **Anjali Nadaradjane**, it summarised a wide range of CIS work on Covid, tax, fiscal policy and generational debt.

In May, **Simon Cowan** discussed the big-spending 2021 Budget with former Research Associate **John Humphreys** in episode 51 of *On Liberty* (see page 23). Both Simon and John despaired that no-one in Canberra seemed to care any more about fiscal discipline. Simon also appeared on the ABC's *Nightlife with Philip Clark* to analyse the Budget, marking his seventh year on the show's expert panel.

Executive Director **Tom Switzer** put CIS's concerns to the Treasurer, **Josh Frydenberg**, in a special June webcast. Tom suggested that the Coalition government has embraced the political left's role as interventionists and big spenders. Frydenberg pushed back, arguing that the fiscal stimulus was proportionate to the circumstances and, in providing cash outlays, let private households decide how the money should be spent.

In an August webinar, Simon discussed proposals for superannuation reform — a big focus for CIS over the years with NSW Liberal Senator **Andrew Bragg**. Bragg calls for a national default fund managed by the Future Fund.

CIS hosted two in-person events after Sydney's lockdown lifted. On 15 November NSW Productivity Commissioner, **Peter Achterstraat**, discussed housing reform at an invite-only afternoon tea. And on 22 November, Reserve Bank Governor **Philip Lowe** addressed a CIS lunch on challenges facing the Australian economy.

#### **Other News**

In 2012, **Simon Cowan** wrote a research paper on why Australia should consider nuclear-propelled instead of conventional diesel submarines. The paper kept resurfacing in the media, including after a 2017 event when former Prime Minister Tony Abbott suggested revisiting the issue. In September 2021, Australia finally heeded Simon's advice and entered into a strategic pact with the US and UK to acquire the nuclear subs. It goes to show that good policy work can have a long-term effect.

In 2022, Simon's focus will be on inequality, with a forthcoming book in the pipeline. A likely review of the Reserve Bank next year will also be a priority for **Peter Tulip**, who contributed a major article on the need for structural reform of the RBA to the ANU press in late 2021.

## Education

CIS continues to lead commentary and analysis on Australian education policy, with ground-breaking research alongside a series of insightful and engaging events.

In 2021, the CIS education program has tackled key issues facing policymakers and educators, led by Research Fellow **Glenn Fahey**.

In recognition of the impact of CIS research and engagement in the sector, Glenn was featured among Australia's leading agenda-setters in education in the Australian Teacher Magazine's annual Report Card edition.

A special focus this year has been on Indigenous education – both in events and research.

In mid-January, Glenn moderated a wide-ranging online panel discussion on *Advancing Indigenous Education Outcomes* with **Lorraine Hammond**, **Nyunggai Warren Mundine** and **Jacinta Nampijinpa Price**. And, in one of CIS's largest in-person events of the year in mid-May, we hosted Indigenous leader and co-chair of Good to Great Schools Australia, **Noel Pearson**, and Federal Education Minister, **Alan Tudge**, for a discussion on *Scaling up Success in Majority Indigenous Schools*. An edited version of Noel's remarks was later published as an Occasional Paper.

In March, prolific teacher trainer, **Lorraine Hammond**, provided a compelling account of majority Indigenous schooling in the Analysis Paper, *Confronting Indigenous Educational Disadvantage: A Kimberley perspective*. And in June, **Glenn Fahey** published the Research Report, *Mind the Gap: Understanding the Indigenous education gap and how to close it*.



Peter Achterstraat and Glenn Fahey

The research featured in news stories at *The Australian*, *Daily Telegraph* (and across the NewsCorp network) and *The Epoch Times*, as well as the *Education HQ* and *The Educator* websites. It also featured in the Indigenous Education Special Edition of the *Australian Teacher Magazine*.

In August, we were delighted when the Federal government announced the scaling up of initiatives to try to Close the Gap, with new funding for CIS partners and contributors: MultiLit, the Kimberley Schools Project, and Good to Great Schools.

### **Curriculum and Teaching**

Throughout the year, CIS also provided important research and commentary on school curriculum and teaching practices.

In February, Dr **Fiona Mueller** made some key recommendations to promote Australian civics and citizenship in the Occasional Paper, *A 2021 Education Resolution: Keep an eye on the Australian curriculum.* In addition, **Glenn Fahey** provided regular commentary across all major newspaper mastheads following developments in the review of the national curriculum — especially in terms of promoting high standards and evidence-based practices in maths.

In July, **Fiona Mueller** and Dr **Deidre Clary** published a detailed analysis of policy and practice in the paper, *Writing matters: Reversing a legacy of policy failure in Australian education*. And in August, Emeritus Professor **John Sweller** provided a masterclass on the scientific basis of learning and explicit instruction in the Analysis Paper, *Why Inquiry-Based Approaches Harm Students' Learning*. This has proven to be among our most highly-downloaded papers in 2021.



Chris Kenny, Jacinta Price, Noel Pearson, Alan Tudge and Glenn Fahey

Jennifer Buckingham, Sarah Mitchell and Glenn Fahey

This research output was complemented by engaging events to highlight the breadth of important issues in the education sector.

In February, we welcomed NSW Education Minister, **Sarah Mitchell**, for a private in-person discussion on the implementation of the Year 1 phonics screening check that CIS has advocated for some years. In July, **Glenn Fahey** moderated a webinar on the growing role of technology in schooling with Professor **John Hattie** and industry leaders, **Jamie Beaton** and **Wayne Houlden**. And in an October webcast, Glenn hosted London-based educator, **Katharine Birbalsingh**, to discuss her prescriptions to help disadvantaged students overcome the educational odds. The exchange was covered in the quarterly edition of *Leadership Ed* magazine, read by around 60,000 Australian educators.

#### **Other Research and Events**

CIS has also continued its work advancing the economic case for education reform.

In September, Glenn hosted an online discussion with worldleading education economist, **Eric Hanushek**, on the role of education system performance as the key predictor of the wealth of nations. And in November, we welcomed NSW Productivity Commissioner, **Peter Achterstraat**, for a discussion on education reforms to boost productivity in NSW. We are pleased that the NSW Productivity Commission and government are implementing CIS recommendations to promote more flexible entry and training for teachers. And, as ever, CIS has remained plugged into the major developments impacting Australian education policy.

In late October, **Glenn Fahey** published a major research report, *Beating the Lockdown Blues: Students pass the Covid test.* And in November, Glenn, along with Perth-based educators **Jordan O'Sullivan** and **Jared Bussell**, released the Analysis Paper, *Failing to teach the teacher: An analysis of mathematics Initial Teacher Education.* It found a lack of emphasis on explicit instruction in courses for beginning teachers, despite evidence of its efficacy. The paper featured in stories across the NewsCorp network as well as *Education Review* and *Education HQ*.

For an outlook on national education reform, Glenn also welcomed back Federal Education Minister **Alan Tudge** in an October online event on *Reforming Australia's Schools*, with the Minister's call for an overhaul of the history curriculum leading the front page of *The Australian*. The range of reforms also generated widespread coverage across several days of news in major national media outlets.

Heading into 2022, CIS looks to unpack the causes of the decline in Australian students' mathematics achievement, along with identifying policy solutions to turn this around. The central themes of this research include opportunities to improve teaching, teacher training, and the use of technology to lift maths achievement. We also look forward to complementing this work with more research and recommendations to help improve the education outcomes of Indigenous students.

## Culture, Prosperity & Civil Society

The Culture, Prosperity & Civil Society program was established in mid-2018 to ensure CIS engages fully in the key cultural questions of the day. It aims to articulate, defend and promote the principles and institutions that underpin Australia's secular liberal democracy.

The CP&CS team this year comprised **Monica Wilkie** (until August), **Robert Forsyth** and **Peter Kurti**.

A major focus of our work in 2021 was on the corrosive effects of cancel culture. In June, Program Director **Peter Kurti** published the Analysis Paper, *Cancelling the Culture: Critical theory and the chasm of incoherence*, the second instalment in a series on cancel culture and critical theory. This will be followed in early 2022 by a paper examining postcolonial theory and its impact on contemporary Australia.

Publication of *Cancelling the Culture* was accompanied in July by a new Occasional Paper, *The Threat of Identity Politics*, written by British historian and columnist **Simon Heffer**. This, in turn, was a follow-up to a 2020 CIS paper by Heffer, *Moral Terrorism*, that provided a UK perspective on cancel culture.

In a new initiative to reach younger audiences, CIS produced a short YouTube video summarising Heffer's work. The script was written and presented by Research Assistant **Yuki Cheng**. Peter Kurti's 2020 Analysis Paper, *Cancelled!: How ideological cleansing threatens Australia*, was also made into a video written and presented by Research Assistant **Anjali Nadaradjane**.

Meanwhile, Executive Director **Tom Switzer** contributed a chapter on cancel culture to a new volume of essays entitled *Australia Tomorrow* (Connor Court). He warned that liberals must push back against this dangerous ideology lest the foundations of democracy become permanently disfigured.



Claire Lehmann and Peter Kurti discuss cancel culture and identity politics

In August, new external contributor, **Professor Joseph P. Forgas**, published a fascinating Occasional Paper entitled *The Psychology of Populism: Tribal challenges to liberal democracy.* The paper examined the threat posed to liberal democracy by the resurgence of both left-wing and right-wing populism. In an October webinar, **Peter Kurti** interviewed Forgas about his thesis in a wide-ranging philosophical discussion.

And in early December, Peter interviewed award-winning UK columnist **Melanie Phillips** about the real crisis in the West: the eclipse of reason and truth by ideology and prejudice. In the course of losing its rationality, the West is also losing its freedoms.

Peter continues to write regular opinion pieces that have appeared in *The Canberra Times, Spectator Australia, The Epoch Times,* and *Daily Telegraph* on issues ranging from euthanasia, religious freedom and cancel culture to lockdowns and the fantasy of 'zero Covid'.

Until her departure from CIS in August, Policy Analyst **Monica Wilkie** continued to conduct discussions with various prominent intellectuals, both in Australia and from around the world. In February, Monica hosted a live forum on cancel culture and identity politics featuring **Claire Lehmann**, founding editor of *Quillette*, and **Peter Kurti**. The YouTube video of this event has notched up over 42,000 views. Monica also re-interviewed bestselling American author **Lionel Shriver** and *spiked online* editor **Brendan O'Neill** one year on from



The Sydney Morning Her

## Margaret River's Colo ripped from shelves controversy

REWIN

COLONIA

Anjali Nadaradjane presents a CIS YouTube video based on Peter Kurti's work

their 2020 CIS webinar on cancel culture. The video, *Where the Woke Things Are*, has attracted over 40,000 views and counting.

Monica remained heavily involved in debates on the intersection of popular culture and the culture wars. She wrote numerous pieces on this topic for *Spectator Australia*, one of which was re-tweeted by Jordan Peterson.

In late March, Monica presented the findings of CIScommissioned polling by YouGov in the POLICY Paper, *Australians' Attitudes to Social Media: Connection or Curse?*. The survey aimed to understand how Australians use social media and whether they benefit from these communicative technologies. It found that most people value the ability to connect with others, thus viewing social media more positively than the mostly negative coverage of it in mainstream media. Monica followed up with a piece in *Quadrant Online* arguing that regulating social media content is at odds with what people want.

#### Liberalism in Question

Senior Fellow **Robert Forsyth** continued to develop the *Liberalism in Question* podcasts, which have been well-received. The series asks people who are both sympathetic to, and critical of, classical liberalism about its nature, value, limits and future.

Yuki Cheng presents a CIS YouTube video based on papers by Simon Heffer

The first season, which aired over January and February this year, featured conversations with former Prime Minister John Howard, Ramsay Centre for Western Civilisation head Simon Haines, journalist and author Stan Grant, economist Ian Harper, Liberal MP Tim Wilson, former Sydney University Vice-Chancellor Michael Spence, and columnist Parnell McGuinness as well as our own Glenn Fahey, Salvatore Babones and Peter Kurti.

Rob has continued to work on a second season featuring former Liberal MP **David Kemp**, columnist **Henry Ergas**, political scientist **Hannes Gissurarson**, arts patron **Simon Mordant**, political theorist **Chandran Kukathas**, NSW Senator **Andrew Bragg**, and CIS Research Director **Simon Cowan**. Season Two goes to air over summer 2021-2022.

## Indigenous Affairs

In order to begin solving the problems facing Australia's most disadvantaged citizens, CIS believes that the narrative must change — it must become based on facts, not popular opinion or political correctness.

Calls to 'change the date' in the lead-up to Australia Day on January 26 grow louder every year, yet these calls have become little more than an annual ritual that privileges symbolism over action and opinion over facts. So on January 25 this year, Program Director **Jacinta Nampijinpa Price** released a major POLICY Paper to raise awareness about the real issues facing some of our most marginalised citizens.

In Worlds Apart: Remote Indigenous disadvantage in the context of wider Australia, shocking data laid bare the dire education, employment and health profile of Indigenous Australians living in remote communities, which are also plagued by escalating crime rates, alcohol abuse and domestic violence. Radical solutions are needed that target communities based on evidence rather than assertions about race and culture.

The media largely ignored the paper. There were a few exceptions — a *Sydney Morning Herald* report, an article in *The Australian*, and a sole ABC radio presenter who invited Jacinta onto his program. But most media coverage focused on the 'change the date' campaign instead. This shunning of unpalatable truths in favour of metropolitan obsessions outraged *The Australian*'s Chris Kenny, who dedicated his weekend column to Jacinta's paper and the relative lack of concern over the gap not only between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians but also the growing gap between remote Indigenous Australians and those living in urban areas.



Jacinta Nampijinpa Price

Over the next few months, Jacinta followed-up with several op-eds in *The Australian* in which she argued that the loudest voices come from the cities not the bush, with remote Indigenous Australians living in a prison of selective outrage. She then hit the road in mid-March and again in mid-May, travelling first to Brisbane and later to Toowoomba and Maroochydore in Queensland, to speak at sold-out events about her *Worlds Apart* report.

#### **Other Research**

Jacinta's work was accompanied in early May by a new Occasional Paper from positive psychology and education researcher, Dr **Anthony Dillon**, entitled *Indigenous Suicide: Finding a catalyst for action*. Anthony also discussed the new leftist phenomenon of so-called Indigenous 'truth-telling' which promotes a sanitised version of our past that ignores inconvenient truths facing Indigenous people today — in episode 58 of *On Liberty* with CIS Research Fellow, **Glenn Fahey**, in early July (see page 23).

Later that same month, CIS released another major report on remote Indigenous disadvantage. In a follow-up to his 2020 CIS paper, *It's the Economy, Stupid*, **Nyunggai Warren Mundine** teamed up with **Elizabeth Henderson** to present the findings of extensive community consultation in *Back to Basics: A new model for business creation in remote Indigenous communities.* The paper outlined a practical model for business



Jacinta Nampijinpa Price and Tom Switzer in Toowoomba

Nyunggai Warren Mundine

creation that harnesses the fundamental principle of supply and demand, which has been stifled in remote areas by government regulation and other obstacles. Warren and Elizabeth followedup in the *Australian Financial Review*, arguing that building profitable businesses in remote areas will help 'close the gap' caused by a chronic lack of economic participation.

CIS wrapped up the year with the early December release of development researcher **Peter Gregory**'s Analysis Paper, *Township Leasing and the Democratisation of Opportunity.* This evaluated the advent of township leasing on Indigenous land covered under the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* from an institutional economics perspective.

#### **Other News**

In a major loss for CIS but a big gain for federal politics, Program Director **Jacinta Nampijinpa Price** — who was elected deputy mayor of Alice Springs last October — resigned after scoring another victory in June this year when she won the pre-selection battle for the Northern Territory Senate.

In mid-September, we were delighted to announce that **Nyunggai Warren Mundine** has joined the CIS team to lead the Indigenous Affairs program. A member of the Bundjalung people from northern NSW, he is a former deputy mayor of Dubbo, national president of the ALP, and chair of the Abbott government's Indigenous Advisory Council. In recent years, he has written several CIS papers on Indigenous business and participated in live and online CIS events.

#### **CIS Indigenous Forum**

Warren will lead the Indigenous program in a new direction with the CIS Indigenous Forum. Building on past CIS work, the Forum aims to identify, develop and promote Indigenous voices from the spectrum of conservative, centre-right, libertarian and classical liberal viewpoints.

A major goal is to change the dominant narrative from the left-wing, grievance and victim mentality to a narrative that promotes self-reliance, economic participation, personal responsibility, and strong families and communities.

In particular, the Forum aims to grow the number of Indigenous voices in support of liberal democracy, free market economics, and free speech as well as to train the next generation of Indigenous leaders who are not captive to the leftist grievance mentality.

The Forum also aims to educate and inform the Australian community — Indigenous and non-Indigenous — about Indigenous history and reality through promoting the facts, myth-busting, and 'truth-talking' as opposed to 'truth-telling'.

Papers slated for 2022 include research on Indigenous governance, business opportunities in remote communities, and Indigenous trade.

## China and Free Societies

Established in 2019 to raise awareness of the pressing challenges an increasingly assertive People's Republic of China (PRC) poses to a free and democratic Australia, the program's focus expanded this year to explore deepening ties with regional countries anxious about China's rise.

2021 began with US President Joe Biden taking office amidst much speculation over how his administration would come to grips with the limits to American power in a more multipolar world, whilst leading a coalition of US allies and partners to check China's regional ambitions in the Indo-Pacific.

As Executive Director **Tom Switzer** argued in a January op-ed for *The Australian*, these questions are of crucial importance for Canberra, which has invested heavily in the US alliance in the face of a more threatening China. Adjunct Scholar **Salvatore Babones** discussed some early signals from Washington in his mid-January Occasional Paper, *The New President: What Biden's foreign policy agenda means for Australia.* 

CIS then launched a new series of papers on how Australia can form closer defence, security and intelligence ties with regional countries anxious about China's increasing assertiveness if not aggression.

American analyst **Erik M. Jacobs** kickstarted the series with a comprehensive strategic assessment of the rapidly changing security dynamics in the March POLICY Paper, *The Need for U.S.-Australia Leadership to Counter China Across the Indo-Pacific.* This was followed in early April by leading strategic thinker **Alan Dupont**'s POLICY Paper, *Resisting China's Economic Coercion: Why America Should Support Australia.* The paper was featured across the *news.com* network.

In late June, CIS released the UK Foreign Affairs Committee chair, **Tom Tugendhat** MP's POLICY Paper *Crucial* 



Collaboration: The case for closer Australia-UK defence and security ties in light of a rising China. Tom followed-up with a piece in the American journal Foreign Policy in early July. His recommendations were later vindicated by the announcement of the new security pact between the US, the UK and Australia (AUKUS) in September, with Tom revisiting his CIS paper in an ANU podcast with strategic analyst **Rory Medcalf**.

Regional reactions to AUKUS included a strong statement of support from Manila, and in the late September POLICY Paper, *The Philippines Caught Between Appeasing and Constraining China: How Australia can help tip the balance*, Professor **Renato Cruz De Castro** explained why. China's growing influence closer to Australia's shores was also the focus of an Analysis Paper by PNG-born Australian writer, **Sean Jacobs**, entitled *Time to 'Step Up' the Tempo: Australia's answer to Beijing in Papua New Guinea*.

Then, in early November, CIS published esteemed analyst, **C. Raja Mohan**, on India's centrality in the emerging coalition to balance China in the Analysis Paper, *Between Geography and History: Canberra and Delhi in Indo-Pacific Security.* 

While the PRC's external behaviour is a key focus of foreign policy debates, it is equally important to keep a close eye on the rapid changes within China itself that are driving its increasingly hubristic behaviour. In September, **Rowan Callick** discussed these changes in an Analysis Paper in the wake of the Chinese Communist Party's July centenary celebrations. Entitled *Xi Dreams of 100 More Glorious for the Party: Might China awake?*, Rowan followed-up with several op-eds in *The Australian* and *The Spectator* (Australia), and was also interviewed in episode 75 of *On Liberty* (see page 23).





#### **Events and webinars**

In 2021, the domestic debate intensified over how best to handle the China challenge. In what turned out to be our last in-person event in early June before Sydney's winter lockdown, CIS showcased six up-and-coming analysts to debate the motion: Australia's policy approach towards China is in the national interest. Speakers for the Affirmative were Yuki Cheng, Chanum Torres and Research Associate Satya Marar. And on the Negative side, speakers were Yun Jiang, Yidi Yan and Frank Yuan. The debate was moderated by Adjunct Scholar Salvatore Babones, with author of Red Zone: China's Challenge and Australia's Future, Peter Hartcher, providing some opening remarks.

In mid-September, Tom Switzer hosted a wide-ranging webinar on the implications for US credibility of the American withdrawal from Afghanistan in Can We Rely On Uncle Sam?. Featuring US author of *The Strategy of Denial*, **Elbridge Colby** - who served as deputy assistant secretary of defence for strategy and force development in 2017-18 - and former DFAT head, Peter Varghese, it went to air the same morning that news broke of the new AUKUS pact, which made for a lively discussion. Tom also published op-eds in The Australian and Australian Financial Review on why the withdrawal was good

news for US allies in the Indo-Pacific – albeit bad news for the Afghan people as Emeritus Professor William Maley argued in his Occasional Paper, Afghanistan on the Brink of an Abyss.

In mid-October, CIS welcomed back distinguished University of Chicago professor and past CIS guest, John Mearsheimer, to discuss 'The New Cold War' between China and the US with Tom Switzer upon the release of John's lead article, 'The Inevitable Rivalry', in the American journal Foreign Affairs. A lone voice in Washington throughout the 'engagement' era with China, Mearsheimer's 'tragedy of great powers' thesis is now unfolding in real-time.

As Sydney finally emerged from lockdown, late October saw Tom Switzer live in conversation with investigative editor at The Australian, Sharri Markson, about her bestselling new book What Really Happened in Wuhan. Before a capacity crowd, Markson revealed how she joined the dots to expose the possible leak of Covid-19 from the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

The intensifying economic and security competition between the US and China, and the deterioration in Australia's strategic outlook, will continue to be a major focus for CIS in 2022.

## Scholar-in-Residence

The Scholar-in-Residence Program is named in honour of noted economist and freedom advocate. Ronald Max Hartwell. Each year, CIS hosts an international scholar for a month-long residency.

Max Hartwell (1921–2009) was an Australian-born economic historian of the British Industrial Revolution. Hartwell's first academic appointment was at the University of New South Wales, where he held the chair of economic history. This was followed by a readership in Recent Economic and Social History at the University of Oxford, before becoming a Professorial Fellow of Nuffield College, Oxford, in 1956.

In 2014, in honour of Max's legacy, CIS introduced the Scholarin-Residence program. Since then, we have showcased scholars from the US, UK and Canada. Those scholars include:

Doug Bandow (February 2020). A Senior Fellow at the Cato Institute who specialises in foreign policy and civil liberties, Doug writes regularly for publications such as Fortune magazine, National Interest, The Wall Street Journal and The Washington Times.

Anastasia Lin (August 2019). An actress and former Miss World Canada 2015, Anastasia is the Macdonald-Laurier Institute's Ambassador for China policy and a senior fellow at the Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights.

James Bartholomew (October 2018). A journalist and author with a particular interest in the harm welfare states can do to nations, he has been a leader-writer for the Daily Telegraph and the Daily Mail and has written for many other publications including The Spectator.

Kay Hymowitz (March 2017). Kay is the William E. Simon Fellow at the Manhattan Institute and a contributing editor of City Journal. She writes extensively on childhood, family issues, poverty, and cultural change in America.

Theodore Dalrymple (April 2016). Former medical doctor Anthony Daniels, more popularly known by his pen name Theodore Dalrymple, has been a regular columnist with The Spectator (UK) and Quadrant. He is the author of Life at the Bottom.

Tom G. Palmer (April 2015). Tom is a libertarian author and theorist, a Senior Fellow at the Cato Institute, and Vice President for International Programs at the Atlas Network. He is the author of Realizing Freedom: Libertarian Theory, History, and Practice and editor of The Morality of Capitalism, After the Welfare State and many other publications.

Brendan O'Neill (March 2014). Brendan is editor of spiked online, the magazine that wants to make history as well as report it, and is a columnist for The Big Issue in London and for The Australian. He is author of A Duty to Offend and Anti-Woke

Work is underway to finalise plans for our next Scholar-in-Residence. We have selected James Mann, who is arguably one of the leading diplomatic historians of Sino-American relations, to join us in March 2022.



## Liberty & Society Student Program

A crash course in classical liberal philosophy, this longstanding program is aimed at giving students a forum for testing and challenging their ideas about freedom and individual liberty.

Through our Liberty & Society (L&S) Student Program, CIS aims to identify, nurture and support young people who have an interest in exploring the foundations of a free society. Our annual conference creates an intellectual environment where ideas and opinions about what makes a free society are debated.

The conference is a great opportunity for university students to meet, debate and network with other like-minded people, many of whom stay engaged in our network and form part of our large L&S alumnus. We foster real debate on topics such as individual freedom, private property, limited government, and free trade.

For over 25 years, L&S has provided a rare forum for young people who may be questioning consensus views on social, political, and economic issues, with the live-in weekend conference exploring the world from a classical liberal perspective. Students attend sessions and discussions on economics, political thought, law, and public policy over the weekend, interspersed with arguments about foreign policy, education and social policy.

Our conferences are open to undergraduates, recent graduates, and even postgraduates residing in Australia or New Zealand. Applicants can be studying any subject. It is not a prerequisite to have in-depth knowledge about classical liberalism. We are interested in people who are inquisitive about society and how it works, and we conduct a rigorous application and selection process.

Participation is free with generous scholarships covering all meals, accommodation and conference costs. Students may also apply for additional scholarship funds for flights and transfers to the conference. These scholarships are made possible through the generous support of contributors to CIS.

Our next conference is scheduled to take place in Sydney on the weekend of 6-8 May 2022. Apply online today at cis.org.au/events





## Events at a Glance

JANUARY

DECEMBER

Lunch with NSW Education Minister Sarah Mitchell, Glenn Fahev Roundtable • 11 February

Indigenous disadvantage in the context of wider Australia (Brisbane) Jacinta Nampijinpa Price, Tom Switzer Lecture • 11 March

Zoning, affordability and neighbourhood character Peter Tulip, Tom Switzer Lecture • 29 April

> Indigenous disadvantage in the context of wider Australia (Toowoomba) Jacinta Nampijinpa Price, Tom Switzer Lecture • 19 May

#### Australia's China policy debate

Peter Hartcher, Salvatore Babones, Yuki Cheng, Chanum Torres, Satya Marar, Yun Jiang, Yidi Yan, Frank Yuan Debate • 3 June

Is technology our educational saviour? Jamie Beaton, Wayne Houlden, John Hattie, Glenn Fahey Panel Discussion • 13 July

#### **Biden's first six months**

George F. Will, Tom Switzer Interview • 28 July

Senator Andrew Bragg at CIS Andrew Bragg, Simon Cowan Interview • 19 August

Freedoms eroded in the name of Covid zero

Chris Uhlmann, Tom Switzer Interview • 31 August

Can we rely on Uncle Sam?

Elbridge Colby, Peter Varghese, Tom Switzer Panel Discussion • 16 September

Is populism a threat to liberal democracy?

Joe Forgas, Peter Kurti Interview • 30 September

The new cold war John Mearsheimer, Tom Switzer Interview • 13 October

What really happened in Wuhan

Sharri Markson, Tom Switzer Book Launch • 27 October

NSW housing reform agenda Peter Achterstraat, Peter Tulip Roundtable • 15 November

**Revolutions and the US constitution** James Philips, Stephen Loosley Book Launch • 25 November

A conversation with John Howard John Howard, Tom Switzer

Lecture • 3 March

Cancel culture crusades Claire Lehmann, Peter Kurti, Monica Wilkie Panel Discussion • 30 March

Scaling up success in majority Indigenous schools Noel Pearson, Alan Tudge, Glenn Fahey Panel Discussion • 18 May

Indigenous disadvantage in the context of wider Australia (Maroochydore) Jacinta Nampijinpa Price, Tom Switzer Lecture • 20 May

**Treasurer Josh Frydenberg at CIS** Josh Frydenberg, Tom Switzer Interview • 18 June

Where the woke things are Lionel Shriver, Brendan O'Neill, Monica Wilkie Panel Discussion • 20 July

Climate targets in our sights Erwin Jackson, Rupert Darwall, Tom Switzer Panel Discussion • 11 August

Schools producing woke sense and sensibilities

Claire Fox, Tanveer Ahmed, Glenn Fahey Panel Discussion • 24 August

Is educational success the key to the wealth of nations?

> Eric Hanushek, Glenn Fahey Interview • 8 September

Generational inequality in Australia Tom Ballard, Satya Marar, Tom Switzer Panel Discussion • 21 September

**Overcoming the educational odds** Katharine Birbalsingh, Glenn Fahey Interview • 7 October

**Reforming Australia's schools** Alan Tudge, Glenn Fahey Interview • 22 October

NSW education reform agenda Peter Achterstraat, Glenn Fahey Roundtable • 15 November

Governor's roundtable with Philip Lowe Philip Lowe, Simon Cowan Lecture • 22 November

The Eclipse of Reason: The real crisis in the West Melanie Phillips, Peter Kurti

Interview • 7 December

## Event Highlights

Our events program has focused on marketing our research, responding to current affairs, and has highlighted speakers from around the world.

CIS hosted over 70 events throughout 2021, a combination of live in-person and virtual forums. This, despite the challenges brought on by government restrictions, has been no mean feat. We are grateful to all our members and attendees who have shown support.

We kicked off the year with a series of in-person events. First up was a lunch roundtable with NSW Education Minister, **Sarah Mitchell**, followed by lectures from former Prime Minister **John Howard** and CIS Indigenous Affairs Program Director, **Jacinta Nampijinpa Price**, to sell-out audiences in Sydney and Brisbane respectively.

In March, CIS Policy Analyst **Monica Wilkie** was joined onstage by founding editor of *Quillette*, **Claire Lehmann**, and CIS Senior Research Fellow, **Peter Kurti**, for a conversation about the persistent cultural putsch in many Western institutions that strikes at the heart of liberal values.

To discuss the 'cancelling' of people for

upsetting 'woke' sensibilities, CIS also welcomed back former guests **Lionel Shriver** and **Brendan O'Neill** for a conversation with Monica. We then explored how schools and universities are perpetuating these sensibilities with Baroness **Claire Fox** and Dr **Tanveer Ahmed** in a discussion hosted by CIS Research Fellow **Glenn Fahey**.

Highlighting our commitment to evidence-based research to help counter educational disadvantage faced by Indigenous students, **Glenn Fahey** moderated a panel discussion in mid-May with Indigenous leader **Noel Pearson** and Federal Education Minister, **Alan Tudge**, before a sell-out crowd of 150 guests. **Jacinta Price** and Executive Director **Tom Switzer** also hit the road, travelling to Toowoomba and Maroochydore to host events on Jacinta's *Worlds Apart* report (see page 12).

In early June, we invited six young up-and-coming analysts to debate the motion that *Australia's current China policy approach is in our national interest*, with **Peter Hartcher** providing opening remarks. Then, in an October webinar,

Well-organised, interactive and interesting, good venues, thoughtprovoking!

- 2021 Event patron

**Tom Switzer** interviewed former CIS guest, **John Mearsheimer**, about the new Cold War between the US and China. The video on our YouTube channel attracted 60,000 views in just its first month.

Hot off the back of the release of **Sharri Markson**'s bestselling book, *What Really Happened in Wuhan*, CIS hosted its first in-person launch in late October after Sydney's lockdown lifted. Before a capacity crowd, Sharri explained how she spent more

> than a year investigating the possible leak of the Covid virus from the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

CIS was also proud to launch *Revolutions and the US Constitution* by **James Philips**. The event featured **Louise Clegg** and **Stephen Loosley**, coinciding with Thanksgiving celebrations.

Finally, in 2021, CIS has lamented that the Coalition government has embraced the political left's economic credentials as

interventionists and big spenders. **Tom Switzer** put these concerns to Federal Treasurer, **Josh Frydenberg**, in a special webinar in the wake of the May Budget.

Rounding out the year, we then hosted an exclusive members' lunch in late November with Reserve Bank Governor, **Philip Lowe**. The Governor provided an overview of the challenges facing Australia's economy whilst in conversation with CIS Research Director **Simon Cowan**.

Thank you to everyone who attended our events in 2021. In total, we had over 2000 unique bookings, delivered 40 livestreams (see page 23), hosted 31 events, and produced event videos and content that have reached over 20 million people online.

A full listing of all in-person and online events appears opposite. Further details can be found at cis.org.au/events or on our social media and YouTube channels.



## On Liberty

Our weekly live stream series gives CIS members the opportunity to question newsmakers and policy analysts online in real time.

Hello and welcome to the end-of-year report for *On Liberty*,

coming to you not-quite-live from the Centre for Independent Studies in Sydney, Australia. Your host has been **Salvatore Babones**, and this year we've talked to dozens of leading thinkers and policy experts in Australia and around the world.

Executive producer **Max Hawke-Weaver** and his production team (including **Nikko Malyon** and **Emily Holmes**) have organised an impressive line-up of talent, and our guest hosts – CIS Research Fellow **Glenn Fahey**, Policy Analyst **Monica Wilkie**, Research Director **Simon Cowan**, and Executive Director **Tom Switzer** – have helped hold them to account. But the toughest questions haven't come from us; the most difficult questions have all been delivered by viewers via the YouTube chat window. And we wouldn't have it any other way.

We do our best to keep viewers entertained as we tackle some of the most challenging topics in the policy space. This year we've featured politicians, journalists, scientists and professors alongside CIS scholars and external contributors discussing their most recent research. Our guests are listed from left to right in order of appearance on the page opposite.

Some of our most-watched episodes have focused on hotbutton cultural issues, contemporary politics, and Australia's



Salvatore Babones

security. China has been a consistently popular theme – producing some of our most controversial YouTube chat conversations. We've even attracted the attention of China's '50 Cent Army' of social media trolls.

This year, we delivered 40 live episodes of *On Liberty* to our loyal followers online, whilst also reaching thousands more viewers through our videos on the CIS YouTube channel and audio podcasts.

*On Liberty* is entirely driven by you — the viewer. We always prioritise your questions over our own, and we do our best to book guests based on your recommendations. Most viewers watch the recorded show, but we usually have 50-100 people watching live every Wednesday at 12.30pm.

If you haven't tuned in live lately, please give it a shot in 2022. Get some friends together to watch live with you, and keep the conversation going in the chat window. All our active chatters get live callouts on the show. We're as proud of our viewers as of our guests, and we look forward to being viewed by you in 2022.

Past episodes of *On Liberty* can be found at youtube.com/CISAus or on your podcast platform of choice.



## Media and Communications

The Centre for Independent Studies has a longstanding reputation for developing rigorously researched and insightful policy ideas, and promoting them to the public through events and the media.

In 2021, CIS published more than 200 op-eds, and (with syndication) was cited in more than 14,500 news stories, radio and TV broadcasts across networks.

Research is developed on the foundation of CIS's principles and message, and is the main focus for the media and communications work in broadcasting policy proposals and helping raise the CIS profile.

Research promotion this year was focused on a total of 33 publications, including 2 Research Reports, 11 POLICY Papers, 8 Occasional Papers and 12 Analysis Papers, as well as 4 submissions to government.

14,500 news stories

> 200 op-eds



## Publications

Our rigorous research publications form a crucial part of the foundation of CIS's public profile and endeavour to promote policy proposals. CIS had a bumper year in 2021, publishing 2 Research Reports, 12 Analysis Papers, 11 POLICY Papers, and 8 Occasional Papers.

A full list of our publications appears below.

#### **Occasional Papers 2021**

## The New President: What Biden's foreign policy means for Australia

#### Salvatore Babones

19 January • OP178

This paper argues that there are three areas where the Biden Administration's policy choices are most likely to affect Australia: China policy, climate policy, and digital platforms.

### A 2021 Education Resolution: Keep an eye on the Australian curriculum

#### Fiona Mueller

11 February • OP179

The Covid-19 pandemic has tested the strengths and weaknesses of Federation, coinciding with a review of the Australian

curriculum. This paper argues for a renewed commitment to nation-building through an enhanced Civics and Citizenship curriculum.

## Indigenous Suicide: Finding a catalyst for action Anthony Dillon

6 May • OP180

Suicide is the fifth leading cause of death for Indigenous people, compared with the 12th for non-Indigenous people. This paper discusses some of the likely causes of this crisis and possible solutions.

## Afghanistan on the Brink of an Abyss

William Maley

1 July • OP181

The withdrawal of US forces from Afghanistan after 20 years casts a deep shadow over its future prospects. This paper discusses the implications of the Taliban regaining control, before warning of a humanitarian disaster and refugee crisis.





### Scaling up Success in Majority Indigenous Schools

**Noel Pearson** 

8 July • OP182

Based on an address to CIS, Pearson outlines the education model adopted at Good to Great Schools, the organisation he co-chairs, and the critical role played by teacher-led, direct instruction in overcoming disadvantage.

## The Psychology of Populism: Tribal challenges to liberal democracy

### Joseph P. Forgas

19 August • OP183

Resurgent left-wing and right-wing populism presents a serious challenge for liberal democracies. This paper provides a

psychological account of how populism appeals to our age-old tribal instincts when group cohesion was the key to evolutionary success.

## The Threat of Identity Politics

Simon Heffer 1 September • OP184

Global outrage over the killing of George Floyd by a white policeman in America last year has led to the weaponisation of identity

of ideas in free and liberal societies.

politics across much of the Western world.

This threatens freedom of speech and the marketplace



### Reflections on the EU Project and Its Flaws: A fatal conceit about markets and the real world Richard Alston

9 September • OP185

The EU is an elite-driven project that rejects the primacy of market economics over social welfare models, compounded by a disdain for democracy. It has thus arguably turned into a self-preservation exercise of saving the elites at the expense of the masses.



### Research 2021

## Worlds Apart: Remote Indigenous disadvantage in the context of wider Australia



#### Jacinta Nampijinpa Price

25 January • PP34

This data-driven paper lays bare the dire education, employment and health profile of

Indigenous Australians living in remote communities plagued by escalating crime rates, alcoholism and domestic violence. Radical evidence-based solutions are needed rather than assertions about race and culture.

## The Looming Iceberg: Australia's post-pandemic debt risk

#### **Robert Carling**

28 January • PP35

This paper warns that the enormous increase in government borrowing during the Covid-19 pandemic poses a risk to economic growth in the longer-term, and reduces fiscal flexibility and the capacity to respond to future crises.



### Implications of the Retirement Income Review: Public advocacy of private profligacy?

**Terrence O'Brien** 17 March • AP19

The recent Retirement Income Review implies

policies that would reduce after-tax returns to superannuation saving, encourage faster spending of life savings and of equity in the family home, and minimise bequests.

### Confronting Indigenous Educational Disadvantage: A Kimberley perspective

#### Lorraine Hammond

24 March • AP20

This paper documents the challenges faced by educators in WA's Kimberley Region, as

well as the lessons being learned by a current initiative across 24 schools. It argues that overcoming Indigenous educational disadvantage is possible with the right teaching approaches and school policies.



### The Need for U.S.-Australia Leadership to Counter China Across the Indo-Pacific



25 March • PP36

In the face of China's increasing assertiveness, this paper assesses different ways in which

Canberra can work with Washington as part of a broader coalition of like-minded nations rightly concerned about what a future of Chinese economic coercion, maritime disputes, and contested shipping lanes may hold.

### Australians' Attitudes to Social Media: Connection or curse?

#### Monica Wilkie



Contrary to the mostly negative portrayal in mainstream media of social media, CIScommissioned polling reveals that most

Australians value the ability to connect with others and are thus unlikely to support regulation that limits social media content.

### Resisting China's Economic Coercion: Why America should support Australia

#### Alan Dupont

8 April • PP38

China's unprecedented trade campaign against Australia is a case study in economic coercion

for geopolitical purposes. This paper outlines ways that the Biden Administration should lead in helping Australia and other targeted countries to defend themselves against China's coercive practices.

## Make Every Drop Count, and Count Every Drop: Vanishing groundwater needs proper monitoring and management

### Grahame Campbell

22 April • PP39

We are drawing on our natural aquifers

much faster than natural recharge. This paper calls for a renewed effort to audit and evaluate the current state of the monitoring system, with recommendations for improvements to bring it up to an acceptable level.

### Does High-Rise Development Damage Neighbourhood Character?

**Peter Tulip and Zachary Lanigan** 29 April • PP40

Local residents often oppose new apartment buildings on the grounds that they would harm neighbourhood character. This paper argues these concerns are overstated after analysing five examples of high-rise development in Sydney.

### Back to Basics: A new model for business creation in remote Indigenous communities

Nyunggai Warren Mundine, Elizabeth Henderson

20 May • AP21

This paper outlines a practical model for

business creation in remote Indigenous areas that harnesses the fundamental principle of supply and demand, which has been stifled by regulation and other obstacles. Building profitable businesses will help 'close the gap' caused by a lack of economic participation.

### The MMT Hoax

#### Tony Makin, Gene Tunny

27 May • PP41

Modern Monetary Theory (MMT), which holds that public debt is not a problem, is essentially a reprise of 1930s Keynesian economics. The authors warn that MMT's call for unlimited fiscal activism risks runaway inflation.

## Cancelling the Culture: Critical theory and the chasm of incoherence

Peter Kurti

03 June • AP22

Critical theory holds that there are many biases and imbalances of power in society that are

hidden from view by dominant cultural structures. In seeking to identify, expose and overturn these structures, critical theory threatens to erode our traditions of tolerance and liberty.



POLIC







### Crucial Collaboration: The case for closer Australia-UK defence and security ties in light of a rising China



#### Tom Tugendhat

23 June • PP42

Growing militarisation and Chinese aggression

are destabilising the world's most dynamic region. Now is the time to broaden and deepen the Australia-UK relationship at both an economic and security level as the post-Brexit UK tilts to the Indo-Pacific.

### Mind the Gap: Understanding the Indigenous education gap and how to close it



#### Glenn Fahey 24 June • RR41

This paper examines the sources and extent

of Indigenous educational disadvantage and proposes how policymakers can better 'close the gap'. It finds that the single most important factor explaining the student achievement gap is the difference in school attendance rates.

### Writing Matters: Reversing a legacy of policy failure in Australian education



#### Deidre Clary and Fiona Mueller

28 July • AP23

Generational decline in student achievement and teacher expertise in writing is the result

of shifts in policy and practice that have abandoned consistent, explicit instruction about how the English language works as a system — alongside a preoccupation with students' sociocultural 'experience'.

### Why Inquiry-based Approaches Harm Students' Learning

#### John Sweller

11 August • AP24

Australia's rankings on international tests such as PISA have been falling for many years. Those falls have been concurrent with an

increased emphasis on inquiry learning over explicit instruction. This paper suggests a causal relation between inquiry learning and reduced academic performance. Cognitive load theory explains why.

### 90 Days to Freedom?: Why Australia can learn from Canada's vaccination success

## **Robert Carling**

18 August • PP43

This paper supports predictions made that Australia would achieve full vaccination of

70% of the eligible population by the end of October and 80% by mid-November, thereby meeting the thresholds for the abandonment of 'Covid zero'.

## **Attitudes to a Post-Covid Australia**

**Robert Carling and Simon Cowan** 

26 August • AP25

CIS-commissioned polling suggested that Australians are unlikely to accept ongoing lockdowns once vaccination reaches threshold levels. But the survey also found substantial support for strict enforcement measures.



### Xi Dreams of 100 More Glorious Years for the Party: Might China awake?

This paper discusses the Chinese Communist

#### **Rowan Callick**

16 September • AP26



Party's past 100 years before turning to its centenary celebrations with Xi Jinping at the helm. It then focuses on potential paths ahead, arguing that the Party's grip on history and ideology will be key signposts as Xi intensifies Party control over country, society and the economy.

### The Philippines Caught between Appeasing and Constraining China: How Australia can help tip the balance

**Renato Cruz De Castro** 

28 September • PP44

A failed pivot to China has left the Philippines

with little choice but to constrain Chinese expansionism through balancing with the US — alongside US allies such as Australia, Japan and South Korea — or through international law and multilateralism, or a combination of all these policies.



## Time to 'Step Up' the Tempo: Australia's answer to Beijing in Papua New Guinea

#### Sean Jacobs

21 October • AP27

This paper recommends ways Australia can better use its tools of statecraft to mitigate

China's growing influence in Papua New Guinea, whilst also warning that Canberra should not lose sight of its longstanding interests in PNG's self-development at both a national and grassroots level.

## Beating the Lockdown Blues: Students pass the Covid test

#### Glenn Fahey

25 October • RR42

Students have suffered educational disruption during the Covid-19 pandemic, but *a priori* assumptions about home-based learning

trump the available evidence. This paper finds that rather than significant additional resourcing, better investment of existing funds to improve teaching practice would be most effective.

## Between Geography and History: Canberra and Delhi in Indo-Pacific Security

#### C. Raja Mohan

11 November • AP28

The Australia-India relationship has grown rapidly, underpinned by a convergence of security interests in the new Indo-Pacific geography and complemented by their membership of the revived Quad. The ever-bolder assertion of Chinese power explains why this new alignment is likely to endure.

### Failing to Teach the Teacher: An analysis of mathematics Initial Teacher Education

#### Glenn Fahey, Jordan O'Sullivan, Jared Bussell

25 November • AP29

This analysis of Initial Teacher Education (ITE)

courses for beginning mathematics teachers finds a lack of emphasis on explicit instruction, despite clear evidence of its efficacy. It argues that ITE providers must incorporate evidencebased practices into their mathematics ITE courses if the decline in student achievement is to be overcome.

## Township Leasing and the Democratisation of Opportunity

#### Peter Gregory

2 December • AP30

Township leasing was a significant reform to the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* (ALRA). It gave Traditional Owners

the right to issue leases and licenses for economic activity on their ALRA land. This paper evaluates township leasing from an institutional economics perspective.





## Fundraising and Development

2021 has certainly been a roller-coaster of a year for Fundraising and Development. While the start of the year looked promising for bringing all our members together for events, we were once again hit with another wave of lockdowns. Despite this, our supporters at CIS were as dedicated as ever, tuning into online events and giving generously throughout the year, particularly during our End of Financial Year campaign.

We welcomed new staff to our development team and have been hard at work to ensure that our members enjoy even greater engagement and exclusive benefits in return for their commitment to CIS. While 2021 has certainly limited the opportunity for face-to-face interactions, we greatly look forward to seeing you all in the new year with many exciting things planned!

#### Independence Society

We are delighted to have launched our Independence Society this year, which is the first of a series of structured giving clubs that we are introducing to CIS.

With the Prosperity Society set to launch early next year, we look forward to giving members even more opportunities to support our work. If you would like any information on these clubs or would just like to get in touch with the Director of Development, you can contact Deborah Henderson at dhenderson@cis.org.au or on her mobile 0415 516 780.

#### Legacy Society

We are very grateful to supporters who have committed to be part of our growing Legacy Society by making CIS a part of your will. It also gives us the opportunity to thank you for your gift in your lifetime. We will run an event for our Legacy Society members — and those who are interested in joining them — in 2022.

A bequest to the Centre for Independent Studies will allow the continuation of the policy research that you currently support. For more information, or to request a booklet about the CIS Legacy Society, please contact our Development and Membership Manager, Sophie Causer, at scauser@cis.org.au.

#### **Make Your Impact Heard**

You can make a difference today by joining as a member or contributing a tax-deductible gift. We would love to discuss options and ways for you to make the greatest impact in person.

Donations, memberships and other forms of support are the lifeblood of our work, and we thank all our contributors for their continued generosity. All donations over \$2 are tax deductible, and all support makes a difference! For more information, please call us on (02) 9438 4377 and ask for our Development and Membership Manager, Sophie Causer, or go to cis.org.au/donate

## **Research Staff**

### Associate Professor Salvatore Babones

#### Adjunct Scholar

Salvatore is a political sociologist at the University of Sydney. This year he authored the Occasional Paper, *The New President: What Biden's foreign policy agenda means for Australia.* He is also the host of the weekly CIS live-streamed webcast, *On Liberty.* 

## **Professor Gary Banks AO**

#### **Senior Fellow**

Gary was Chief Executive and Dean of ANZSOG, and Chairman of the Productivity Commission

from its inception in 1998 until 2013. Among his current roles, Gary chairs the OECD's Regulatory Policy Committee and is on the board of Macquarie Bank. He has headed national inquiries on a variety of significant public policy and regulatory topics. For many years, he chaired the COAG Steering Committee for the Review of Government Services, was the Convenor for the Review's Working Group on Indigenous Disadvantage, and had responsibility for overseeing the Commonwealth's regulationmaking processes through the Office of Regulation Review.

### **Robert Carling**

#### Senior Fellow, Economics Program

Robert's expertise is in fiscal policy, taxation and federalism. In 2021, he published two POLICY

Papers — The Looming Iceberg: Australia's post-pandemic debt risk and 99 Days to Freedom?: Why Australia can learn from Canada's vaccination success — and also co-authored the Analysis Paper, Attitudes to a Post-Covid Australia. He was a frequent commentator on pandemic responses.

### Yuki Cheng (from September)

#### Research Assistant, China and Free Societies

Yuki is studying commerce and economics at UNSW, and provides research support to the Commissioning Editor. This year, she also wrote and presented a YouTube video on identity politics.



## Simon Cowan

#### **Research Director**

Simon heads the research team and manages the report writing process. In 2021, he also co-



authored the Analysis Paper, *Attitudes to a Post-Covid Australia*. He writes a regular column for *The Canberra Times* and is a frequent commentator on super and the Budget.

### **Glenn Fahey**

#### Research Fellow, Education Program

Glenn came to CIS from the OECD. In 2021, Glenn published two Research Reports – *Mind the* 



Gap: Understanding the Indigenous education gap and how to close it and Beating the Lockdown Blues: Students pass the Covid test. Glenn also co-wrote the Analysis Paper, Failing to Teach the Teacher: An analysis of mathematics Initial Teacher Education.

## The Right Rev. Robert Forsyth

## Senior Fellow in the Culture, Prosperity & Civil Society Program



A former Anglican Bishop of South Sydney, Rob hosted a series of podcasts called *Liberalism in Question*, which aired in the summers of 2020-21 and 2021-22.

### The Rev. Peter Kurti

## Senior Research Fellow and Director of the Culture, Prosperity & Civil Society Program



An Adjunct Associate Professor of Law at Notre Dame University, in 2021 Peter published the Analysis Paper, *Cancelling the Culture: Critical theory and the chasm of incoherence.* He also wrote regular opinion pieces on lockdowns, 'Covid zero', and cancel culture.

## **Zachary Lanigan** (from January to May)

#### **Research Assistant, Economics Program**

Zac has a BA from Brown University. In 2021, he co-authored the POLICY Paper, *Does High-Rise Development Damage Neighbourhood Character?*.



### **Barry Maley**

#### **Senior Fellow**

Barry's research focuses on social policy with particular attention to family and taxation. Other areas of interest include cultural change, ethics, and civil society.

## Satya Marar (from May to August)

#### **Research Associate, Economics Program**

An admitted solicitor to the NSW Supreme Court, Satya conducted research on inequality for a

forthcoming CIS book. He was also a speaker at the China Policy Debate and in a webinar on intergenerational equity. He left CIS to pursue postgraduate study in economics at George Mason University.

### **Dr Fiona Mueller**

#### Adjunct Scholar

A former Director of Curriculum at ACARA, this year Fiona published the Occasional Paper, A 2021

Education Resolution: Keep an eye on the Australian curriculum, and co-authored the Analysis Paper Writing Matters: Reversing a legacy of policy failure in Australian education.

### Nyunggai Warren Mundine (from September)

## A former deputy mayor of Dubbo, national

**Director, Indigenous Forum** 

president of the ALP, and chair of the Abbott government's Indigenous Advisory Council, Warren co-authored the 2021 Analysis Paper, Back to Basics: A new model for business creation in remote Indigenous communities.

### Anjali Nadaradjane (from March to September)



#### **Research Assistant, China and Free Societies**

With a BA and Bachelor of Laws (Honours) from Macquarie University, Anjali provided research support for the China program and contributed op-eds on Myanmar. She also wrote and presented two YouTube videos, one on cancel culture and the other entitled 'There is no magic money tree'.

#### Scott Prasser

#### **Senior Fellow**

Scott trained as a political scientist and served as education adviser to two federal education ministers.



Jacinta Nampijinpa Price (until June)

A deputy mayor of Alice Springs, in 2021 Jacinta

Remote Indigenous disadvantage in the context of wider

**Director, Indigenous Affairs Program** 

authored the POLICY Paper, Worlds Apart:

Professor Schwartz is a former Vice Chancellor of Macquarie University. His expertise is in higher education

### **Joanne Tran**

Indigenous issues.

#### **Research Assistant, Economics Program**

Joanne is studying Arts/Law at Macquarie University. She provides research support for the Economics team and, in 2021, contributed commentary on pandemic responses.

#### **Peter Tulip**

#### **Chief Economist**

Peter came to CIS from the Reserve Bank. His focus is on housing affordability and monetary

policy. This year, he co-authored the POLICY Paper, Does High-Rise Development Damage Neighbourhood Character?, and he was also a frequent commentator on Reserve Bank reform.

#### Monica Wilkie (until August)

#### Policy Analyst in the Culture, Prosperity & **Civil Society Program**

Monica has a BA from Newcastle University

and a Master of Media Practice from Sydney University. This year she released the POLICY Paper, Australians' Attitudes to Social Media: Connection or curse?. She was also a frequent commentator on cancel culture and wokedom.

### Kitae Yoo (from August)

#### **Research Assistant, Education Program**

Kitae is an Honours student at Sydney University. He provides support for data analysis and assists with the review of education research and policy literature.























## Staff

Tom Switzer Executive Director



Jane Black General Manager



#### Jennifer Brown (until July) Executive Assistant and Development Associate



Sophie Causer (from April) Development and Membership Manager

**Design and Production Manager** 





Karla Pincott Communications Director



Kerri Evans Office Administration

**Rvan Acosta** 



Max Hawke-Weaver

**Deborah Henderson** 

*(from February)* **Development Director** 



Sheena Gulati (from March) Accounts Officer

Cathleen Ly Accounts Manager





Sue Windybank Commissioning Editor



Nikko Malyon (from April) Event Officer



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**Dr Gary Weiss** 



**Christopher D. White** 



**Steven Wilson AM** 



Sir Bill English KNZM (from 28 April)





## Accounts

## The Centre For Independent Studies Ltd

Income & Expenditure Statement

Ending Financial Years 30/06/2021 and 30/06/2020

INCOME	To June 2021 AUDITED (\$)	To June 2020 AUDITED (\$)
General Donations	3,482,949.00	3,397,298.00
Building Fund Donations	-	25,000.00
Book Sales and Subscriptions	165,262.00	143,555.00
Consilium/Seminar/Lecture Income	40,993.00	779,936.00
Interest & Sundry Income (Includes Capital Fund Income)	68,851.00	103,626.00
TOTAL INCOME	3,758,055.00	4,449,415.00

EXPENSES		
Research, Functions, Publishing	222,898.25	937,694.64
Fundraising & Development	139,673.70	60,273.85
Salaries Incl. Research	2,295,447.47	2,595,622.48
Administration & Rent	695,527.58	716,222.03
TOTAL EXPENSES	3,353,547.00	4,309,813.00

SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	404,508.00	139,602.00

CAPITAL FUND AS AT 30 JUNE 2020	\$339,973.00
DRAWINGS	\$ —
CAPITAL FUND AS AT 30 JUNE 2021	\$339,973.00

## Alan McGregor Fellows

Ms Janet Albrechtsen Mr Gary Banks AO Mr Andrew Buttfield Mr Robert Carling Mr Peter Coleman AO (1928-2019) Ms Katrina Grace Kelly Professor Greg Craven Mr Michael Darling Mr Frank Devine (1931-2009) Dr Anthony Dillon Hon Sir Roger Douglas MP Right Hon Sir Bill English KNZM **Right Reverend Robert Forsyth** Hon John Howard OM AC Professor Helen Hughes AO (1928-2013) Mr John Hyde Professor Wolfgang Kasper Mr Paul Kelly Mr Roger Kerr CNZM (1945-2011) Mr Bill Leak (1956-2017) Mr Barry Maley Mr Djambawa Marawili AM Mr Nyunggai Warren Mundine AO Ms Jacinta Nampijinpa Price Ms Bess Nungarrayi Price Professor Suri Ratnapala Ms Ruth Richardson Professor Steven Schwartz AM Professor Judith Sloan

## Distinguished Fellows

Professor Ray Ball John Calvert-Jones AM Michael Chaney AO Michael Darling David Darling (1925-2012) Dr Roderick Deane Alan Gibbs Ross Graham-Taylor (1919–2010) Professor R. M. Hartwell (1921–2009) Andrew Kaldor C. R. Bert Kelly CMG (1912-97) Neville Kennard (1937–2012) **Barry Maley** Alan McGregor AO (1936-2005) Hugh Morgan AC Dame Elisabeth Murdoch AC DBE (1909–2012) Maurice Newman AC Professor Ross Parish (1929-2001) lan Roach AO (1925–2003) Professor Peter Saunders Dr Ben Teh (1941–98)

Honorary Auditors

# THE CENTRE FOR INDEPENDENT STUDIES

## **Centre for Independent Studies**

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