



## A Land Of Official Experts

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The year is 2021. Kissing has been banned. Social interactions of any kind are subject to state permission. Daily government announcements inform the citizenry of acceptable travel limits. In some states, an army of enforcers called 'Authorised Officers' roam the streets to keep the population in line.

A chaotic system of checkpoints, permits and quarantine has been imposed to control the movement of people around the country, and 'rings of steel' periodically pop up to keep segments of the population within city limits.

And if you want to leave the country, good luck.

The government keeps a tight lid on departures, and even if you can get your head around the paperwork, international travel is increasingly the preserve of state officials and well-heeled insiders.

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It's a brutal existence, but life was tough long before we were all plunged into what the governing classes cheerfully call 'the new normal'.

Electricity has gone from a basic utility to a luxury good as reliable, though ageing, power plants are replaced by crude windmills that attract hefty subsidies but produce little power.

Misleading unemployment statistics conceal a growing underclass who have quit looking for a job altogether and now subsist on government payment.

A labyrinthine system of centralised wage fixing means that employers are hesitant to take on new staff and, save for the public service and a handful of favoured industries, pay rises barely keep up with inflation. Meanwhile, ham-fisted 'stimulus' by our central bank has jacked up asset prices such that acquiring so much as the family home – let alone any actual wealth through investment – is increasingly out of reach for many.

And if you have a problem with any of this, you're probably an idiot – or at least the government thinks that you are.

The absurdity of what passes for 21<sup>st</sup> century public policy, they tell us, is based on advice from 'The Experts', and in many cases mandated by 'The Science'.

But not to worry.

Billions in higher education funding is stamping out unhelpful wrongthink, with our nation's best and brightest emerging from university to join the ranks of our compliance officers and HR consultants, ready to take on societal evils like problematic brand names and the improper use of pronouns.

I could go on, but you get the point. What I've just described would have once sounded like the setting of a trashy dystopian novel, or the indicia of a third-world country.

But of course, it is our reality, bequeathed to us by a political and cultural elite who continue to insist – despite all the blindingly obvious evidence to the contrary – that they know better than we do.

Whatever this is, it's not Australia.

Not the Australia many of us once knew, and certainly not the one we want.

And for those of us who still believe in liberty, democracy and the Australian way of life, it's tempting to be pessimistic.

But we shouldn't be, because in the marketplace of ideas, a big reversal is coming, and freedom is coming back into vogue. Already we are seeing notional improvements in public policy. Gladys Berejiklian has proven that premiers who try to keep their states open are more popular as those



who want to shut them down.

And the early superannuation release scheme saw millions of Australians take back control of their own money, despite the predictable squealing of rent-seekers from banking oligopolies and glorified union slush funds.

But politics is downstream from culture, and ours is shifting. Fundamental rights that many took for granted are more important than they have ever been before, and much more precarious.

The arrest of Zoe Buhler over an anti-lockdown Facebook post turbocharged community concerns about freedom of speech.

The societal ruin unleashed by lockdowns gave us a sobering lesson on what an omnipotent state can inflict on its own citizens.

Climate and identity politics remain a fascination of the chattering classes, but most Australians now realise that they are indulgences that we can no longer afford.

Younger people, too, are seeking answers.

The popularity of conservative opinion content from the likes of Ben Shapiro and PragerU has been growing for years and boomed in 2020.

And on campus, young people know that they're being short-changed intellectually, with research from the Institute of Public Affairs indicating that 86 per cent of university students now believe that they should be exposed to different views, even if those views are challenging or offensive.

And yet just four days ago, the ABC ran a piece titled 'Was 2020 the year Australians learned to trust politicians?'

It's emblematic of the kind of condescension, gaslighting and downright chutzpah we're up against.

No matter how bad things get, our governing elites will still insist that only they can fix what they have wantonly broken.

Things will only get better if mainstream Australians start speaking up. We need to stop taking things at face value, and not be afraid to question public policy 'solutions' that are so often divorced from the basic bounds of reality, let alone common sense.

And we must demand that our politicians listen to us, and make it clear that if they don't then we will elect ones who will.

Let's make 2021 the year in which freedom starts to make a comeback. The 'quiet Australians' can be quiet no longer. The roaring twenties will roll on, and we'll be the ones doing the roaring.



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