

27 May 2024

Dear IPA Members,

Thank you for supporting the work of the Institute of Public Affairs.

I write to you today to ask you to continue this support by making a tax deductible donation to our 2024 End of Financial Year Appeal. A donation slip is enclosed with this letter, or you can donate online at [ipa.org.au/eofy](http://ipa.org.au/eofy) or you can donate over the phone by calling the IPA office on 03 9600 4744 and speaking with Claire or Jefferson.

Because of your support, the IPA can look back over the past twelve months of the financial year as a story of success and unprecedented growth. Our ongoing growth is a testament to your faith and trust in the IPA and what we do.

The IPA now has 9,100 members across Australia, which is the highest number in our history. In the past five years, the size of the IPA membership has almost doubled. In 2019, we had 5,400 members. In 2014, we had 3,572 members.

In financial terms, the IPA has likewise almost doubled in size over the past few years. In the 2022/23 financial year, our income was \$11.6 million. In 2018/19, it was \$5.9 million. In 2013/14, it was \$3.4 million.

The IPA doesn't receive or seek any government funding. The entirety of that \$11.6 million of income was the product of voluntary donations. Not a single company from the ASX 100 (Australia's 100 largest public companies) donates to the IPA. Not one. But dozens of those companies did, of course, support the divisive indigenous Voice to Parliament. And those are the same companies – companies like Woolworths, Telstra, and NAB – that are trying to cancel Australia Day and all that Australia Day means. Mainstream Australians said no to the Voice, support Australia Day, and reject woke CEOs telling us what to say and how to think.

**It is mainstream Australians who care about the future of our country who are the bedrock of support for the IPA.**

The IPA was founded in 1943. To allow us to plan for the next 81 years of our fight for freedom, it's imperative that we know our long-term financial future is secure. And again, thanks to you, we can do that. The IPA's cash reserves, and the funds held in The Kemp

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Future Fund, now total \$8.5 million. In 2019, that amount was \$3.8 million. In 2014, it was \$2.2 million.

Australia faces many significant cultural, social, economic, and security challenges. We see these challenges in the streets of our cities, in our classrooms, and every time we turn on the television or open a newspaper. These challenges confront us every day.

**Which is why the government wants to stop us seeing what's happening to Australia and why it wants to censor what we're allowed to say about it. And that's why the IPA is fighting for freedom of speech as hard as it has ever fought for anything.**

I'll talk a bit more about that later in this letter.

Australia needs the Institute of Public Affairs more than ever.

The success of our opposition to the Voice provides a way forward for how we can overcome Australia's challenges. At the IPA, our work is built on principle, and we understand we must build for the long-term. Sometimes success is achieved in weeks or months, sometimes years, and sometimes it is yet to be achieved.

The IPA established its 'Race Has No Place' research program in 2015. In September of that year, the IPA mailed every IPA member a twelve-page booklet, 'Race Has No Place - A positive case for equality in the Australian Constitution'. On the inside cover was written:

This booklet produced by the Institute of Public Affairs explains why the Constitution should not be changed and why all Australians, regardless of their race or ethnic background should be equal in the Australian Constitution.

On the back page was written:

All individuals are of equal worth. In the Constitution, all Australians should have the same rights and should share the same responsibilities.

Over the following eight years, the IPA never deviated from that position.

In *The Australian* on 1 June 2019, Paul Kelly wrote about the work of the IPA:

History tells us the Australian people will not vote for any proposal that is seen to create division or separation in the community. The task is to devise a proposal where an indigenous advisory assembly or body – an institution that has a racial basis – becomes acceptable in constitutional terms to the public. This is a daunting challenge.

Anybody who doubts this should read the media release this week from the Institute of Public Affairs, which has a strong following in conservative ranks.

IPA research director Daniel Wild says: 'Calls to insert race into our nation's founding document are retrograde, divisive, and illiberal. Race has no place in Australia's Constitution. Indigenous Australians and non-indigenous Australians are all first and foremost Australians who share a common country, legal system, and destiny.' The

IPA says the dignity of all Australians means they must be treated on an equal constitutional basis.

This is a script for a powerful No campaign.

In his 2022 Boyer Lecture for the ABC, Noel Pearson singled out by name the leadership provided by the Institute of Public Affairs in arguing for the principle of the equality of citizenship.

At times over the years, arguing for the principle that all Australians should be equal was lonely work. It's clear from the final referendum result that many Australians when asked by pollsters how they were going to vote were afraid to reveal how they honestly felt. In the eight years from 2015 to 14 October 2023, the IPA truly was the voice of mainstream Australians and their values. But we could only do that because of the support of our members.

Our growth, that you as an IPA member so generously supports, has enabled us to dramatically increase the reach of the dissemination of our research. The IPA is communicating with and talking to more Australians than ever before. Let me give you a few measures. On Facebook for example, over the past twelve months, two million Australians have seen IPA research, and 400,000 of that number have either commented on or shared our research. Those numbers have more than doubled in the past two years.

The IPA's research is talked about so often in the national media that it's now difficult to keep track of it. Last year, our work was mentioned 12,000 times. Back in 2020, we were mentioned 7,000 times. (Going back a bit further, in our 2016 Annual Report to IPA members we announced proudly that we'd received 1,378 media mentions for the year!)

Up until a few years ago, if 5,000 people watched an IPA video, that was a 'big number'. Today, IPA videos are regularly watched by many more people than that. Konstantin Kisin's speech to IPA members in March this year – 'We are where we are because our culture is special' – has been watched 296,523 times. Brendan O'Neill's IPA lecture from last month – 'Why the elites want you to forget' – has been watched 133,703 times. The IPA's podcast 'Australia's Future', with IPA Distinguished Fellow Tony Abbott, is now in its third season and is regularly watched by at least 10,000 people. A recent episode on the future of social cohesion and multiculturalism has been watched more than 21,000 times.

I'm particularly excited about how the IPA's growth has allowed us to take the message of freedom and optimism to young people. The IPA's program for university students, 'Generation Liberty', started in 2014 and since then tens of thousands of young Australians have participated in IPA events, lectures, and debates on campuses around the country. Under the leadership of Brianna McKee, there are now 'IPA Campus Coordinators' for Generation Liberty at eleven Australian universities. (You might remember that in 2020 the student union at the Queensland University of Technology tried to ban Generation Liberty from having a stall for students during orientation week. The IPA fought the ban and lodged a complaint with the Queensland Human Rights Commission – and we won, with the ban being overturned)

I mention all of this to give you a perspective on how, thanks to you, the IPA has grown and continues to grow, and how we are maximising our impact.

At the heart of everything we do at the IPA are the principles set out when we were established. The objective of the IPA is:

1. To further the individual, social, political, and economic freedom of the Australian people
2. To maintain and enhance the Australian way of life.

The objectives laid down in 1943 continue to guide our work today in 2024.

Thanks to the incredible support of our members, the IPA with our research based work was at the forefront of the fight for freedom of speech for: Andrew Bolt in 2011; Bill Leak in 2016; Zoe Buhler in 2020 (the pregnant mother arrested in her living room by Victoria Police for a Facebook post); and for Peter Ridd in 2021. That is a history of commitment and dedication that now goes back more than a decade and one I'm so proud of. The IPA fights for freedom of speech without fear or favour.

We devoted the same intensity to our research highlighting to Australians in 2022 how dangerous were Scott Morrison's plans to censor 'misinformation', and in 2012 when we demonstrated how Julia Gillard's proposal to regulate the media would create a government-controlled 'Ministry of Truth'.

In my first letter to you, when we launched the End of Financial Year Appeal, I shared the Five Pillars by which we evaluate current and proposed activities.

1. **Freedom** – for an Australia in which we can speak freely and make our own decisions.
2. **Security** – furthering measures to secure our borders, our property rights, and the essentials of a free and prosperous society.
3. **Nationhood** – promoting core values and shared stories bringing Australians together.
4. **Self-reliance** – encouraging self-reliance and development of character, rather than dependence on the State.
5. **Prosperity** – demonstrating how a free society unleashes opportunity and shared prosperity.

As we plan for the future, I'd like to share our thinking on current issues.

## **Freedom**

The ceaseless growth in the size and powers of government is inimical to our freedoms. The more that governments can tell us what to do, how to work and how to spend our money, the fewer choices we have. This is the reality of modern Australia.

Increasingly, the agenda of our supposedly sovereign national and state governments are set far from here, in the institutions of the United Nations, the EU, at Davos, and in organisations like the World Health Organisation, which purport to be independent and global but which are subject to the influence of non-State actors. To even say that is to risk denunciation as paranoid, or worse, 'populist', but it is a statement of fact. Take Australia's eSafety Commissioner, Julie Inman Grant, appointed by Malcolm Turnbull. At Davos in 2022, she said:

So I think we are going to have to think about a recalibration of a whole range of human rights that are playing out online, you know, from freedom of speech to the freedom to be, you know, free from online violence.

It is clear Ms Inman Grant has neither an interest in, nor even a basic understanding of, the principles of free speech, or rights in general.

Our traditions of free speech date back at least to the concept of *Parrhesia* in Ancient Greece, the right and responsibility of the citizens ‘to speak freely’ in the assembly. Free speech was the subject of glorious elaborations in the Enlightenment, by Milton, Locke, Spinoza, and John Stuart Mill. As Milton wrote in 1644:

Though all the winds of doctrine were let loose to play upon the Earths, so Truth be in the field, we do injuriously by licensing and prohibiting to misdoubt her strength. Let her and Falsehood grapple; **whoever knew Truth put to the worse in a free and open encounter?**

Ms Inman Grant, again:

If free speech means only the loudest voices are heard, then I would argue it is only the illusion of free speech, when the voices of marginalised communities are suppressed.

The last time I saw that kind of argument was in a book with the actual title *Against Free Speech*, by Marxist author, Anthony Leaker. He argued:

If we care about larger social concerns, the common good and our responsibility towards others, especially the marginalised, excluded, and oppressed and their right not only to be heard but to live free and fulfilling lives, then we need a radically alternative conception of freedom and free speech.

No. Free speech is free speech. It is everybody’s right – limit the right of one, and you have limited the right of all because application of the principle is in the hands of bureaucrats, and you are living anxiously under the uncertain power of the arbitrary state. If you decide which voices should be suppressed, so those of the ‘marginalised’ can be raised up, then you have put yourself in charge of settling which of us is to be on which side of the divide between good and evil, oppressor and oppressed.

This is essential context for our examination of the proposed regulation of 'disinformation', designed to enable the removal from social media platforms of any matters the government considers contrary to the truth (as defined by the government) and which cause ‘harm’, where harm means any of the following:

- hatred against a group in Australian society on the basis of ethnicity, nationality, race, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion or physical or mental disability;
- disruption of public order or society in Australia;
- harm to the integrity of Australian democratic processes or of Commonwealth, State Territory, or local government institutions;
- harm to the health of Australians;
- harm to the Australian environment; and

- economic or financial harm to Australians, the Australian economy, or a sector of the Australian economy.

This list allows the Australian government to censor basically discussion about anything it wants.

Under the proposed censorship laws nothing the federal government or a state government or the mainstream media says could be 'disinformation'. (Which explains why the mainstream media have largely been silent about the issue. The mainstream media wants to protect its own privileged position against anyone challenging it.)

The struggle for freedom is never-ending. But at least we know in 2024 and 2025, the principal ground on which it must be fought in Australia. Our research is ongoing, as are communication efforts such as *Australia Censored* with John Storey, which feature our research and aim to educate Australians on the issues.

## Security

For our national defence, we look to our armed forces and are grateful for their service. But national security is the responsibility of all of us, through our democratic process. Civilian oversight of the military is part of our Western and British tradition, one not upset since the English Civil War nearly four hundred years ago. But Parliament must rise to its responsibility.

At the moment, our democratic process is failing us. We face the most perilous geopolitical risks since the 1930s, perhaps ever, but in Canberra there is inattention, inaction, and indolence. The deep roots of this malaise go beyond the term of the current government, or even the previous. If praise can be shared, so can blame. The question is, what do we do now?

In Europe, there is finally a sense of urgency, spurred on not just by Russian aggression, but the brutal jibes of candidate Trump at their level of defence spending. The EU average hovers around 1.6 per cent of GDP. Australia has been hovering about 2.0 per cent or less. Would we be immune from a wake-up call like that which Trump has issued? Would it suffice to say, as Minister for Defence, Richard Marles, did recently – 'Defence's funding will now reach around 2.4 per cent of GDP by 2033-34'? That is a decade away.

Informed observers suggest that rather than ten years, the planning horizon – within which conflict is credible – is now more like two to three years. Nothing is inevitable, but there is a plethora of analyses which marks 2027 as the year in which China will best be able to, and may well, threaten Taiwan.

From such, a vortex no amount of diplomacy or appeasement could extricate Australia. While defence planning is complex, the one thing we know for sure is that in the wake of conflicts in Ukraine and Israel, there is now a shortage of materiel (e.g. ammunition, drones, missiles) right across the West, and a decimated manufacturing sector unable to ramp up. We have meanwhile, allowed our already shrunken ADF to fall below its official complement, as the woke culture dishonours service and interferes with recruitment programs.

How far we have fallen when the National Security Committee of Cabinet has uninvited the

heads of ASIS and ASIO from attending but will instead include the Minister for Climate Change and his departmental Secretary as permanent members. It reeks of delusion.

Your support is vital as we seek to elevate national security to the position it warrants. It has been said of a free people that those who sacrifice their liberty for their security will get neither, and we have seen that recently in Australia, in the case of the pandemic, and scares about the power of the internet. But in the wider geopolitical realm the dynamic is very different. Security is essential to freedom, as I explain below when examining the next of the IPA Five Pillars.

## **Nationhood**

To motivate people to defend our land mass and territorial waters we have to prove that the people who inhabit and lay claim to them do in fact constitute a nation, and that they believe it to be one worth defending. When Vladimir Putin invaded Ukraine, he expected it to fold in three days because it was 'not a nation'.

Over one hundred years ago, the ANZACs helped forge a nation from what were once disparate colonies, but they would be confused by much of what goes on today. One of the many benefits of being part of the community of IPA members is that there is no question of which country they belong to, and are trying to cherish and defend.

In 2022, the IPA commissioned a survey of 1,000 Australians, asking them 'If Australia was in the same position as Ukraine is now, would you stay and fight, or leave the country?' The results were bracing.

Overall, 46 per cent of respondents said they'd stay and fight, 28 per cent said they'd leave the country, and 26 per cent were unsure. But of those aged 18 to 24, just 32 per cent said they'd stay and fight, 40 per cent said they'd leave, and 28 per cent were unsure. As we said at the time, the negative and self-hating view of Australian history and culture forced on to students at school and universities has resulted in barely one-third of young Australians believing their country is worth fighting for.

In previous letters, I have set out my views that that the principles of freedom we cherish are perfectly compatible with a conservative world view that puts the nation first. The globalist attempts to erase national differences and sovereignty is a dangerous and failed dream that must be resisted.

In a submission to a Senate inquiry in 2022, the IPA set out how Australia can become an 'asset-owning democracy'. There are five key components of an asset-owning democracy which give Australians a stake in the success of the nation:

- home ownership is a stake in one's local community and in the country;
- work is a stake in one's dignity through personal responsibility;
- enterprise is a stake in the economy and the success of others;
- tax is a stake in the size and activity of government; and
- saving, especially for retirement, is a stake in the future of the country.

Creating economic prosperity is ultimately about allowing people to trade and cooperate with each other at increasing scales, which is why we must also foster a culture conducive to small

business. Again, the way to do this is by removing government-imposed barriers, like cutting red tape and reducing the corporate tax rate. Enterprise should be allowed to flourish, not just because prosperity will benefit all Australians, but because hard work should be rewarded if we want a strong and successful nation.

## **Self-reliance**

We Australians like to think of ourselves as self-reliant, but the self-image is hard to maintain when the welfare rolls have grown by fully one quarter in just the last five years. To be self-reliant is a critical element of character, self-respect, and ultimately of human flourishing.

Thus the IPA commissioned research from the psychiatrist and author, Dr Tanveer Ahmed, on the need to encourage rather than inhibit self-reliance.

Self-reliance requires, firstly a belief in human agency, secondly, the ability to defer gratification, thirdly, a set of basic skills around economic and financial literacy, and, lastly, the ability to be able to get along well enough with other people to form social connection.

Many of these traits fall under the category of character, a concept with a moral connotation that is steadily being replaced by the more medicalised notion of personality.

I keep thinking of this when I see contemporary student protests, be they for ‘climate action’ or a ‘free Palestine’. While there are undoubtedly professional activists and malevolent forces involved, the balance of the protests seems to be a cohort of vapid and easily led young products of the smartphone generation, teetering always on the edge of hysteria.

The moral calculus which valorises victimhood encourages a ceaseless search for victims with whom to ‘ally’, and a desire to portray oneself as one of the oppressed in the act of protest (always a challenge for the privileged children of contemporary elites).

And these psychological and cultural trends manifest themselves in our bloated welfare state. In early April, we released an IPA research paper, *The Growth and Distribution of Welfare in Australia*, which found:

Approximately 2.1 million Australians (aged 15 and over) are currently receiving welfare through either the National Disability Insurance Scheme, Disability Support Pension, Jobseeker, or Youth Allowance. This is approximately 425,000 higher than in 2018, before the NDIS was implemented in full and before the Covid-19 lockdowns.

Approximately 86 per cent of the growth in the total number of people on welfare since 2018 stems from the NDIS.

The research identifies that it's not inevitable that the number of Australians in receipt of government income support should always be increasing. From 2013 to 2018, the total number of Australians on welfare declined by 115,000. If this trend had continued through to 2023, there would have been 1.5 million Australians on welfare, instead of the 2.1 million that there were.



## Prosperity

Prosperity is the final of the Five Pillars, because if we get all the others right – with a free people, secure borders, a united nation made up of self-reliant people – then prosperity will follow. Two centuries ago, Adam Smith said this:

Little else is requisite to carry a state to the highest degree of opulence from the lowest barbarism, but peace, easy taxes, and a tolerable administration of justice; all the rest being brought about by the natural course of things.

All governments which thwart this natural course, which force things into another channel, or which endeavour to arrest the progress of society at a particular point, are unnatural, and to support themselves are obliged to be oppressive and tyrannical.

Prosperity is important for its own sake, to enable human flourishing, but a steadily increasing prosperity is also a balm to social tensions and a beacon of hope to rising generations looking to better themselves. The engine of prosperity is those who create value for others – not crony capitalists and bureaucrats.

Governments have a role, but with the basics, not picking winners. Certainly not to try and conjure whole industries out of thin air, as the Albanese Government is now doing with everything from solar panels to quantum computing.

The IPA has led the national debate on our out-of-control immigration program and the associated housing crisis; the punishing penalties on potential workers like students, veterans and pensioners and the disincentive to their being part of the labour force; the rampant environmental bureaucracy and proposed Nature Positive laws, and further hits to our primary industries; the union-sponsored industrial relations laws targeting the most productive areas of the economy; and the crushing impact of the debts being accumulated by state governments in particular as they pursue their 'Big Builds'.

The Prime Minister is claiming Australia can be a 'renewable energy superpower'. That is an utter fantasy. In December, last year the IPA released a major research paper *Analysis of land use by variable renewable energy production by 2050*.

It was the first realistic analysis of exactly how much land would be needed if Australia was to reach net zero by 2050. The paper examines four scenarios according to the proportion of energy derived from solar power and wind power. If it's assumed that in 2050, renewables will replace all the energy from coal, gas, and oil extracted in Australia, and that renewable energy is made up of 50 per cent solar power and 50 per cent wind power, then the land required would be 119 million hectares.

*That is the equivalent of 15% of Australia's landmass, approximately one-third of Australia's prime agricultural land, or an area larger than the size of South Australia.* In 2021, when Scott Morrison committed the Coalition to net zero, he didn't mention any of this. Other than the IPA, no-one else is talking about it either. The Labor government certainly isn't.

This is research the IPA team is travelling around Australia to communicate. *Australia: Our Future* is a program set up last year that takes our work to what's been sometimes called 'the real Australia' – those communities outside of our capital cities.

We've gone to more than 70 towns and centres across every corner of Australia, from Marnoo in Victoria's Wimmera district (with its population of 99 residents), to Katanning in Western Australia, to Sheffield in Tasmania. In March, the IPA held meetings with community leaders and residents in Queensland in Rockhampton, Emerald, Longreach, Mackay, and Gladstone.

IPA research identified that the Queensland Government's emission reduction policies are putting 157,000 jobs in the state at risk, with employment in the regions most under threat. The heaviest job losses would occur in agriculture, coal mining, and electricity supply.

Through our research, you will know the energy transition encapsulates all that is wrong with current ideas of 'economics', believing that with the application of literally trillions of dollars of taxpayer dollars we can bend the laws of physics and create utopia on earth. All this to satisfy a green religion and respond to a manufactured catastrophism at odds with the very science it purports to quote.

My purpose now is not to once again summarise all that: rather I promise to you on behalf of the team that with your support we will, between now and the next election, produce a blueprint for whomever is in power from 2025.

It will cover the big issues.

It will have the recommendations for action, and it will reflect the values we hold dear.

It will necessarily cover not just so-called 'economic' reforms, but also essential changes to our national security stance, immigration system, higher education, school education, housing, free speech, energy, climate policy, welfare, the NDIS, and industrial relations.

In conclusion, I'd like to say this.

Despite all the challenges ahead, I am optimistic about the future of Australia. We have faced grave challenges and threats before, and we have overcome them. The IPA itself was founded in the middle of the Second World War.

The success of the Voice referendum last year – when more than 9 million Australians voted for the principle that all Australians are equal regardless of their race or background – gives me incredible hope for the future. The Voice result wasn't just a 'green shoot' for a better future – it was a flood of democracy that showed Australia at its very best. We said NO to identity politics and NO to division.

I trust Australians to get it right. The problem is that our country's elites, our media, and sometimes our political parties don't trust their fellow Australians.

As Australians look at the world around them, they're coming to understand just how lucky we are. History tells us though that freedom is not the product of good fortune. Freedom and our way of life must be defended and fought for.

That is what, with the support of our members, the Institute of Public Affairs has been doing for 81 years – and that is what we will continue to do.

**Your support is vital to the IPA's work. As I wrote at the start of this letter, it is the**

**generous donations of thousands of mainstream Australians like you that keeps the IPA going.**

Which is why, once again, I ask you to make a tax deductible donation to the IPA's End of Financial Year Appeal. To make a donation to support the research of the IPA, you can call our office on 03 9600 4744, or return the donation slip enclosed with this letter, or donate online at [ipa.org.au/eofy](http://ipa.org.au/eofy)

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Yours sincerely



**Scott Hargreaves**  
**Executive Director**