

# LIBERAL REVIEW

CELEBRATING 75 YEARS OF THE NSW LIBERAL PARTY



young **liberals**  
NSW DIVISION

ISSUE 1

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# *Letter from the editor*

It is already obvious the 20s are going to be a unique decade. Coming off the back of bushfires and drought ravaging our country the COVID-19 pandemic has, for the foreseeable future, transformed the way we live our lives. 2020 promises to be one of the most challenging years for our nation that many Young Liberals will have witnessed.

It is in the shadow of this crisis that our Party celebrates its 75th year. Despite the drastic differences between the Australia of 2020 and the Australia of 1945 some important lessons can be learnt from the environment in which our Party was established. With World War 2 nearing its end, Robert Menzies brought together a coalition of political movements and external organisations that saw calls to nationalise banks and establish price controls as what they were; the irrational wish to fix complicated problems with the bluntest tools of Government. In opposition, these groups united to form the Liberal Party - a party governed by the principle that the free enterprise of individuals unburdened by excessive taxation or regulation will achieve the best outcome for our country.

These same principles ring through the articles compiled in this edition of the Young Liberal Review. Articles like Keenan Smith's on privatised space exploration and Ricky Leong's on "green plates" show how we can conquer the next frontier of science and solve the great challenges by employing the principles of free enterprise. Nikolaos Skondrianos and Natalie Hissey remind us of the value of liberal institutions that the shared traditions of liberalism and conservatism in our Party strive to uphold - institutions like the rule of law and separation of powers.

The articles in this edition of the Young Liberal Review make up an interesting and diverse range of topics and opinions from the next generation of Liberals and highlight the timeless importance of Liberal values.

**LIAM KISS**

PRESIDENT

KU-RING-GAI YOUNG LIBERALS

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



In joining the NSW Young Liberals, you are joining a political movement that has shaped our nation for the better and helped to secure our economic and national security.

The Liberal Party has much to be proud of in our 75th year.

Last year our Party had two great election wins under the leadership of our Prime Minister Scott Morrison and our Premier Gladys Berejikilian.

The pundits wrote us off. But we prevailed because we were in tune with the aspirations of middle Australia.

Our Party's success has always been based on the support of Menzies' 'Forgotten People', Howard's 'Battlers', and Morrison's 'Quiet Australians'.

Our support has never come from the militant activists, fanatical ideologues or organised pressure groups. Our Party has always existed for the majority of Australians who just want to have a go, start a business, be rewarded for their effort, and secure their family's future. Australians who don't want to be told what to believe, who don't want to be punished for their efforts through higher taxes and who don't want to be ashamed for loving their country.

Our values of **free enterprise, individual liberty and smaller government** remain timeless and more important than ever to fight for in the face of a Labor Party that wishes to punish initiative, coerce belief and place more and more burdens on families and businesses.

Former Young Liberals have played a key role in our nation's history in fighting for the freedom of the individual and the importance of enterprise, against the deadening and regimented socialism of the Labor Party. People like **The Hon John Howard OM AC (NSW Young Liberal President, 1962-1964)** who secured our nation's economic future by balancing the

budget and introducing significant tax reform and industrial relations reform. People like our Premier **The Hon Gladys Berejikilian MP (NSW Young Liberal President, 1996-1997)**, who has overseen the largest infrastructure pipeline and construction boom in our State's history without raising taxes and while securing a budget surplus.

Ever since the Party's foundation, our **Movement has produced countless of our Party's State and Federal Members of Parliament, Ministers and leaders in business.**

Within these pages, you will get a glimpse of the many activities we are involved in, from policy debate to campaigning in elections to forming networks of like minded people.

Our Movement is the driving energy of the Liberal Party, and by getting involved, you can make your voice heard and you can make a real contribution to the future of our country.

Currently, our nation faces immense challenges. The COVID-19 virus is creating unprecedented economic damage on top of an already catastrophic bushfire season. This is perhaps the most significant public policy challenge of our time. However, our Liberal Federal and State Governments are cool-headedly getting on with the job of securing our nation's future, as they have always done.

Your support for our cause is needed more than ever, as our Governments seeks to rebuild our economy and grow jobs.

We have successfully been engaging members via online events throughout this period, with hundreds of YLs getting involved in our online policy events and online Young Liberal Councils. We've been just as active as a movement as ever!





Indeed, the role of the Young Liberals is more important than ever. We have a proud tradition of being the conscience of our Party, reminding our Party of our core Liberal values. During a time of emergency when heavy Government intervention is necessary, we must defend the role of free markets and free trade as the foundation of our prosperity and the only institutions that can help our nation bounce back from this crisis.

As we see louder calls for 'self sufficiency' and protection of 'national industries', we must continue to be the vanguard for the economic and political ideas that have created unprecedented prosperity and individual freedom.

We are a great nation and a great people. We have come through many challenges, and we will no doubt get through this together.

When things get back to normal, there will be much to get involved in. You can:

- Engage with the community through campaigning for Liberal MPs and sharing the great work our State and Federal Government is doing.
- Get involved in policy debate and advocacy at our monthly Young Liberal Council or through our issues-based campaigns for tax reform and youth jobs.
- Hear policy ideas or network with like minded people at our many policy and industry networking events with MPs and prominent industry figures or at the annual Young Liberal Convention.
- Take the fight to Young Labor at our annual Mock Parliament.
- Celebrate our Party's achievements with Young Liberals from around the state and MPs at the annual Young Liberal Ball.

In a speech in 1960, our founder and longest serving Australian Prime Minister Sir Robert Menzies gave this encouragement to the Young Liberals: 'Nobody can be a greater believer than I am in the Young Liberal Movement. Because long after I am a dusty memory, there will be plenty of you in this hall tonight who will be occupying leading posts in the political life of Australia and carrying great responsibilities...***but only if you and all of the rest of us from time to time say 'What is it we believe in?'***

For Menzies in that speech, '***If liberalism stands for anything, especially a young liberalism, it's for a passion to contribute to the nation. To be free, but to contributors to be the nation.***'

If you have a passion for contributing to the nation, then I hope you will join us. And I hope that by getting involved, you will help us keep alive for our generation the flame of the liberal values that have made us the most successful political movement in Australian history.

My thanks go to magazine editor **Liam Kiss** and **Georgia de Mestre** for their hard work in putting this edition together, and to the many contributors to this edition.

I hope to see you on the front lines in person soon!

**Chaneg Torres**

President

*Young Liberal Movement of Australia (NSW Division)*

# The Victory of the Quiet Australians



**Diandra Corallo**

Executive Member, NSW Young Liberals  
Vice-President, Georges River Young Liberals

As the cry “I have always believed in miracles” rang across the ballroom at 61-101 Phillip Street, Sydney, hearts across the nation pounded with jubilation. Sighs of relief passed from the lungs of ordinary Australians as common sense shone through the mire of political darkness. For the second time in two months victory had been delivered to the sensible.

Prime Minister Morrison’s elation was palpable. The return of the Berejiklian government months before in New South Wales, and now the return of the Federal Government represented the culmination of strength, determination, hard work and the reward of a solid policy platform that spoke to the hearts and minds of middle Australia.

The Liberal Party has always represented the middle road for Australia. Countless pundits have waxed lyrical over Menzies’s “Forgotten People”, the same people that Morrison has called ‘Quiet Australians’.

But who are the quiet Australians? They are all of us. They are the rational. They are the reasonable. They are the normal people who desire the stability and certainty that the Liberal Party offers. They care about everyday issues, but not at the expense of an idealistic political crusade. They want to be free to live the Australian dream unencumbered by a woke political ideology that is determined to label them as wrong and a ‘boomer’.



The quiet Australians have been galvanised by these electoral victories. Despite the electorate’s frustration at times, they do realise deep down that the Liberal brand is the only choice that will lead this country through these increasingly uncertain times.

I for one, am not surprised that the quiet Australians have been emboldened by the consecutive victories of both the Morrison and the Berejiklian governments. Having worked tirelessly on the ground during both election campaigns, the shock of political commentators that saw seats like Wentworth return to the Liberal fold, Labor heartland seats like Macquarie and Greenway shun an outright victory for their sitting members, and certainly seats like Oatley in the state election bucking the trend and reporting a swing towards the Government, represented what I saw and felt on the ground.



Throughout the election campaigns, I talked with voters and empathised with their confusion over Labor’s mixed messages, undeliverable announcements and continual and sustained unforced errors. These quiet Australians wanted to be rewarded for their hard work, have their communities flourish and grow, and to have their cities renewed and refreshed through smart and sensible infrastructure,





all to make Australia a viable and competitive nation in the shifting arena of world politics.

The Liberal movement represented the energy and backbone of good candidates to the quiet Australian, that renewed the confidence in the general public and brought new clarity and confidence to the minds of the electorate.



Many candidates running for office entrusted Young Liberals such as myself with the highest responsibilities of their campaigns. We were often the face of the Liberal movement to the quiet Australians. It was us that were at train stations and polling booths, manning phone canvassing sessions and giving up our weekends for street stalls. This energy and attitude is represented best by Clayton Hopper, the recipient of the Young Campaigner of the Year, whose tireless work contributed to the successful East Hills campaign or Riley Munro who was recognised as Young Leader of the Year by the Party for his efforts in running as a candidate in dead red seats at both the State and Federal elections.

Each and every member of the Young Liberals should be proud of the work they have performed in the name of the Liberal movement and Quiet Australia. Contesting two elections in the space of a few short months in increasingly vitriolic and chaotic atmospheres is not an easy task. The results garnered are proof of their commitment and the faith that ordinary Australians have for the Liberal brand.



It is a testament to our movement that many of those chosen by the quiet Australians to be their Members of Parliament were in fact former Young Liberals. The Young Liberal movement of New South Wales has proven itself as a successful springboard for political careers and will continue to produce the future leaders of our nation. Tribute must also be paid to the many current Young Liberals who met the challenge and decided to stand for public office, to fly the Liberal flag across the State and provide a figure for quiet Australians to rally behind.

The Liberal Movement will continue to represent the values of ordinary Australia. The youth and dynamism of the Young Liberal Movement will always be an integral part of the Liberal brand. The Young Liberals are the face of modernity, and will always have their fingers on the pulse as to the shifting needs and wants of Quiet Australia.



# Eden-Monaro By-Election



**Greg Barker**  
Miranda-Cook Young Liberals

A swing towards the Government in a by-election during a once in a century health pandemic and unfavorable preference flows... surely this gets a pass mark? The NSW Young Liberals were out in full force during the by-election campaign in Eden-Monaro for Fiona Kotvojs.

It's not hard to see why we supported the Liberal campaign in Eden-Monaro with a high-quality local candidate in Fiona Kotvojs; a farmer and small businesswoman who lives with her husband in Dignams Creek, just outside of Bega. Fiona saw firsthand the devastation caused by bushfires and how this hurt small businesses who rely on tourism during the summer months, right when fires gripped the community.

The Young Liberal effort began with phone canvassing in the weeks leading up to polling day where dozens of dedicated liberals rang into the electorate to listen to voters' concerns both for their region and their nation. Bushfire support was commonplace in light of the events earlier in the year as well as questions and comments about the Federal Government's response to COVID-19.

Polling day, to say the least, was a logistical challenge given the size of the electorate. Fiona mentioned to us that it's larger than the land size of Switzerland and takes eight hours to drive. The Young Liberals were out in all corners of Eden-Monaro, from Bega in the southeast to Queanbeyan & Yass in the northwest and of course Cooma at the foot of the Snowy Mountains. It was a rather cold morning, especially setting up Bredbo Public School at -1c... we were out fighting the good fight!

While not the result we wanted, it was certainly a forward step for the Government coming ever so close to winning a first by-election off an opposition for the first time since the Spanish Flu; only 754 votes separated Fiona Kotvojs from the alternative.

# Young Liberal Council



**Dimitry Palmer**  
Secretary, NSW Young Liberals  
Ryde Young Liberals

NSW Young Liberal Council (YL Council) is the peak body of the NSW Young Liberals. Think of it like the Parliament of the NSW Young Liberals.

It meets roughly every two months to hear reports from members of the Young Liberal Executive, occasional guest speakers and most importantly debate policy motions.

The policy debate at YL Council is a crucial part of the Movement's policy advocacy and development.

Debates usually focus upon topical political, social and cultural issues and present an opportunity for members to have their say on issues.

Debates usually conclude with a policy motion being voted on and either adopted as formal NSW Young Liberal Policy or rejected.

Policy motions passed by the Young Liberal Movement often have a real-world impact upon our politics. The abolition of the White Australia policy began with the policy advocacy of the Young Liberals.

Some of our recent policy motions from YL Council have attracted attention in the media, such as our climate change policy and our calls for reform to the NSW Government's Lockout Laws.

YL Council is also a fantastic opportunity for members to develop and build their public speaking skills.

Speakers are encouraged during the debates so that various perspectives can be shared.

Speeches that are informed, funny and interesting are often the best at YL Council. During more exciting debates, speakers may even get heckled!

YL Council is one of the highlights of the Young Liberal experience.

If you haven't yet attended a YL Council, be sure to contact your branch president and come along to the next one!



# Young Liberal Policy Series



**Deyi Wu**

Officer (Policy), NSW Young Liberals  
Secretary, Ku-Ring-Gai Young Liberals



The Young Liberal Policy Series exposes our members to wide range of industry experts on a broad range of contemporary topics, and is intended to facilitate discussion about policy and reform.

November 2019: We held our first Policy Series event with Senator Dean Smith of Western Australia, focussed on economic policy and liberal values. He provided an insightful history of 'The Dries', The Society of Modest Members and encouraged our generation to remain steadfast and principled in the battle of ideas.

February 2020: We held a Policy Series focussed on disability policy, the NDIS (National Disability Insurance Scheme), and whether current frameworks are sufficient in supporting people with disability to participate as equal citizens in Australian society. The panellists included the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services, Gareth Ward MP, CEO of Hear for You, Dave Brady and Andrew Ford, who runs an NDIS start-up platform called Kynd and is also an Epping-Eastwood Young Liberal.

April 2020: We conducted our first ever virtual Policy Series event on the economic response to COVID-19 with NSW Senator Andrew Bragg and Economics Editor of The Australian Adam Creighton, talking about the conflicting objectives of the COVID-19 stimulus package and limiting further government debt.



May 2020: We continued to conduct the Policy Series online to keep in line with COVID restrictions. We were joined by the Member for Wentworth and former Australian Ambassador to Israel, Dave Sharma MP, Victorian Senator James Paterson, and Executive Director of the Centre for Independent Studies, Tom Switzer for a discussion on foreign policy, diplomacy, and Australia's role on the world stage.

July 2020: It was great to be back in person (socially distanced!) for the July Policy Series with Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts, Paul Fletcher MP, discussing nbn, the ABC and the future of the media sector.



August 2020: We were joined via Zoom by Member for Goldstein, Tim Wilson MP, to discuss liberalism, home ownership and his new book, The New Social Contract.

If you're keen to get involved in policy discussions with other like-minded young people, join today and speak your mind.

# Professional Development



**Natalie Hissey**

Director (Professional Development), NSW Young Liberals  
President, Epping-Eastwood Young Liberals

In the lead up to an election, Young Liberals are usually busy campaigning to ensure the election of Liberal governments.

As we don't face another general election for a few years, 2020-2021 provides a unique opportunity to concentrate on up-skilling our members.

The Young Liberal Executive has been busy developing programs which will roll out in the coming year, designed to provide the intellectual and campaigning skills necessary to be an effective political activist and leader.

We have been working closely with the Liberal Party's secretariat to roll out a campaign training program. This program will involve teaching YLs how to plan campaigns and campaign teams, craft effective campaign messages, use data and insights to target messages and how to undertake the necessary administration that comes with running a campaign such as compliance with electoral funding laws. Young Liberals can then go on to work in paid campaigning roles with our Party's Head Office campaign team or even lead local campaigns during State and Federal Elections.

We have also been working to develop a Liberal Thinking series. This is designed to equip Young Liberals with the foundations of Liberal thought and history. It will include sessions on classical liberal and conservative thinkers such as Adam Smith and JS Mill, the history of economic reform driven by the Liberal Party, and how to integrate liberal philosophy with public policy problems.

As well as this, we will have practical sessions including public speaking training, and we will be continuing our internship program with Members of Parliament which will give new Young Liberals the chance to experience a political office. Indeed, many Young Liberals go on to be paid advisers to MPs and Ministers.

Looking forward to seeing you at one of these sessions!

# CREATING TOMORROW'S LEADERS. TODAY.

## Industry Networking



**Hugo Robinson**

Vice-President, NSW Young Liberals  
President, Ryde Young Liberals

The idea for the Industry Networking Series came from a realisation that most Young Liberals were very well informed on what policy government wanted to enact but knew very little about what industry wanted.

Sure, we could listen to politicians talk about their vision for NSW and Australia but without the other side, we're only hearing one side of the story.

How do penalty rates affect business? How does the royal commission change how banks do business? How do planning laws and regulations impede or promote growth?

The Industry Networking Series seeks to bridge the gap in the policy space by hooking Young Liberals up with various Industry Associations who represent millions of businesses across NSW and Australia.

The Series teaches Young Liberals how these groups enact change through communications campaigns, petitions, policy submissions and more.

The Series is vital for any Young Liberal who wishes to have a deeper understanding on policy and politics.



# Young Liberal Ball



**Shani Murphy**

Director, NSW Young Liberals  
Hurstville South Young Liberals

Every year the Young Liberal Movement holds its biggest event of the year- the Young Liberal Ball.

The Young Liberal Ball brings together hundreds of Young Liberals from across the State as well as Senior Liberal Ministers and Members to celebrate the accomplishments of the Liberal party over the course that year, to let their hair down, poke some fun at ourselves as well as raise money for charity.

The 2019 Young Liberal Ball had much cause for celebration. It was held after two historic election victories for the Coalition, both in NSW and Federally. Young Liberals in particular played a huge part in both the State and Federal campaigns and were rightly ready to celebrate these wins at the Young Liberal Ball.



We had two guest speakers at the 2019 Ball, the Hon. Nick Greiner former Premier of NSW as well as Jason Falinski, Member for Mackellar. Nick Greiner spoke about the importance of Liberal governments and the need for good economic management in order to make important social changes. Jason Falinski provided a fantastic roast which had the crowd in non-stop fits of laughter.

It was an honour to be the organiser of the 2019 Young Liberal Ball!

The Ball was held on June 1, 2019 at the Ivy Ballroom with a theme of Winter Wonderland. The Ball was held in tribute to Josh Murphy, a senior staffer in the State Coalition Government who died after a long battle with brain cancer. In tribute to Josh the Young Liberal Movement selected the charity 'Cure Brain Cancer Foundation' who are the leading organisation for brain cancer research, advocacy and awareness in Australia. They have a time-critical mission to increase the five-year survival from the current 20% to 50% by 2023.



Planning is underway for a commemoration of the Liberal Party's 75th anniversary later this year.



# Young Liberal Convention



**Georgia de Mestre**

2019 Young Liberal Convention Convenor  
Paddington Young Liberals



**Mia Watson**

2020 Young Liberal Convention Convenor  
Officer, NSW Young Liberals  
Shoalhaven Young Liberals

The Young Liberal 2019 Convention saw a hundred Young Liberals descend on Gerringong. Country and Regional Young Liberals, and the electorates they represent, are at times the forgotten people of the Movement. However, the 2019 Convention saw regional members and representatives take centre stage for the weekend.

A highlight of the weekend was the election of Dominic Perrottet, Treasurer of NSW, Gareth Ward, NSW Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services, Natarsha Terreiro, former Young Liberal Secretary, and Christopher Rath, Member of State Executive as life members of the movement. Their election served as a welcome reminder that we're members of a Movement that has shaped many of our Party's greats, past, present and future.

The weekend also provided Young Liberals opportunity to glean wisdom from thought leaders, through panel discussions, and hone their debating and public speaking skills. Young Liberals join the Party because they want to fight for the values that define our Movement, values underpinned by classical liberalism and conservatism.

The battle between these two ideas were explored by Christopher Rath, Peta Seaton AM, James Wallace and Natalie Ward MLC in our first panel discussion 'Politics, A Struggle for Power or a Battle of Ideas?' facilitated by YL Vice President Dimitry Palmer.

Our second panel focused on the regional Liberals who represent our party both in the State Parliament and on local council. Paul Ell from the Shoalhaven YLs Branch lead discussion between Mark Coure MP, Gareth Ward MP and Clr Cameron Walters, focusing on how their experiences on shifting dead red areas to blue.

Young Liberals took centre stage debating whether the Constitution should be changed to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and participating in an open-mic public speaking competition, with Lachlan Finch from the Mosman YLs voted best speech for 'How to be a Young Liberal'.

Special thanks to Cameron Walters (Throsby YLs), Mia Watson (Shoalhaven YLs) and Member for Kiama, Gareth Ward, who helped ensure the success of the 2019 Convention!

For this year's convention we will be located in a fire-affected region so #comewithemptyeskyes and try to support local small businesses! Our 2020 Convention will have a special focus on natural disasters, rural NSW and women in government. Our venue has been booked and planning is well under way to ensure a COVID-safe convention. Hope to see you there!



# Liberals On Campus



**Therese Hava**

Tertiary Institutions Liaison Officer, NSW Young Liberals  
Manly Young Liberals

With over two thousand members, our Movement is challenged with the task of catering for a wide range of interests and motivations. Our Liberal Clubs, in being a frontline of interaction between new members and the Movement, face an identical challenge. One we placed at the top of our agenda in 2019.

Whilst some students join their campus Liberal Club to engage in policy and debate, others join to gain experience in campaign and strategy, or to network with notable figures in politics and business.

For the many that are captivated by erudite and contentious debate, the Sydney University Liberal Club's John Howard Debating Cup proved to be food for their intellectual hunger. Last year marked the tenth anniversary of the event – an intervarsity debating tournament matching the wits of Liberal students across NSW on topics such as foreign interference in our universities, and the efficacy of the European Union.

The tournament also piqued the interests of our networking enthusiasts, who soaked up the opportunity to meet various guest adjudicators, including former Prime Minister John Howard, NSW Treasurer, Dominic Perrottet, and the newly minted member for Wentworth, Dave Sharma. And if this was not enough for our corporate climbers, the UNSW Liberal Club held their Networking Drinks with a focus on building professional relationships with prominent figures such as former Woolworths CEO Roger Corbett, NSW Attorney-General, Mark Speakman, and Commonwealth Bank corporate affairs executive, Andrew Hall.

Our Liberal Clubs also found 2019 to be a busy year of campaigning, with a state and federal election only two months apart. The Sydney University and UNSW Liberal Clubs combined forces and promoted the Liberal brand in several testing and hard-fought electorates – Wentworth, Warringah, and Heathcote to name a few.

Well done to our Liberal Club executives for their marvellous work last year and for the smooth transition to embracing socially distanced and online events this year!





# Meet Our Patrons



**Liam Kiss**

President, Ku-Ring-Gai Young Liberals

*Every new term, the NSW Young Liberal Executive and Young Liberal Council select a State and Federal Parliamentary Patron.*

*The role of the Patron is to promote the interests of the Young Liberal Movement within the Liberal Party.*

*For 2020-2021, our Federal Patron is the Federal Member for Bradfield and Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts, The Hon Paul Fletcher MP, and our State Patron is the State Member for Oatley and Assistant Speaker, Mark Couré MP.*

*Both of these MPs are great champions of the Young Liberals - and were once Young Liberals themselves!*

**Editor's Note: these interviews were conducted before the COVID-19 outbreak with supplementary questions asked at a later date.**



Mark Couré has been the Member for Oatley since 2011 when he won the seat from the incumbent Labor member.

Since then he has increased the Liberal margin at every subsequent election and turned a once safe Labor seat into a Liberal seat with a two party preferred vote over 60% - an increase of over 20%.

Mr Couré currently serves as the Assistant Speaker of the NSW Legislative Assembly.



Paul Fletcher has been the Member for Bradfield since 2009 after winning a by-election triggered by former opposition leader, Brendan Nelson's retirement.

Minister Fletcher has previously been appointed to a number of ministerial roles including Minister for Urban Infrastructure and Cities and Minister for Families and Social Services.

He is currently the Federal Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts.



## **Mark Coure MP - State Patron**

### **When did you join the Liberal Party, and why?**

I am a product of the Young Liberal Movement having joined the Liberal Party and the Young Liberal Movement at the age of 16 in October 1994. I joined to make a difference in my local community and to see good governments get re-elected. The Liberal Party has always represented my values and beliefs so it seemed a natural fit for me to join and get more involved.

### **What does being a Liberal mean to you?**

Being a Liberal means working hard to get ahead, not relying on the government or other handouts to make your way in the world.

### **What has been your proudest achievement in Parliament?**

Having many of my signature projects delivered for my electorate including the redevelopment of St George Hospital, upgrades to Narwee Station and the famous Oatley Station, the widening of King Georges Road and many more. These are critical projects for my community and I am proud to be delivering for them.

### **What, in your view, is the most significant public policy challenge facing Australia?**

First and foremost it is the drought and bushfire recovery. Many communities are trying to rebuild and recover after these two mammoth events, which is by no means an easy feat.

The Berejiklian Government has many initiatives and programs to assist bushfire and drought ravaged communities including:

- \$1 billion to rebuild infrastructure destroyed by fire
- Clean-up of residences and businesses destroyed by bushfires at no cost to owners
- Volunteer Payments of up to \$6,000 for RFS and SES volunteers
- \$170 million to stimulate business in regional towns
- \$100 million to waive Local Land Service rates for farmers and landholders
- \$840 million towards the construction of dams

### **Do you have any regrets from your time in Parliament?**

I believe that all my Parliamentary experiences have made me who I am today and have led to my current role as Assistant Speaker of the NSW Legislative Assembly.

### **What is the most rewarding aspect of being an MP?**

Being able to achieve things that benefit your local community. A lot of times they can be small things, localised to a few people, like a footpath upgrade or it can be large scale projects like hospital redevelopments and major road projects. In both cases the joy is in seeing your local community being positively enhanced by your work.

### **What is the most difficult aspect of being an MP?**

The time you have to spend away from family and friends.

### **What importance does the YL Movement have in the Party?**

The Young Liberal movement is the engine room of the Party. They are the ones energising campaigns and ensuring that the Liberal Party is winning elections. The YL Movement is also the breeding ground of the future leaders of our party, our state and our nation. It is a great place to learn about politics and gain other life skills like public speaking, networking and event management.

### **How do you relax as a Member of Parliament? Do you ever get time?**

Apart from doorknocking and train stations, I love spending quality time with my family and taking my kids to local parks. Also, watching the best football team in the world, the St George-Illawarra Dragons, play at Jubilee Oval in Kogarah.

### **How do you juggle family life with the demands of your job?**

It is very difficult at times to juggle my job and family life especially with two little kids. I have an amazing wife, Adla (who I met in the Young Liberals and is a former President of Ryde Young Liberals) who is very understanding and my extended family are a great support for Adla and me.

### **What advice would you have for YLs who are thinking of a political career?**

Have a lot of life experiences like travelling and working in different jobs because this will give you the chance to meet, interact and learn about many different types of people. Most of all, be active in the YLs and the party at large. The YLs gives you a great opportunity to hone your political skills and make friends for life.

### **What advice would you have for those who aren't but want to contribute to the Liberal Party in other ways?**

Volunteering, especially during election times, is the best way to contribute to the party. Volunteers are an invaluable and critical resource that often get overlooked. Without volunteers, election campaigns would not be won. I would encourage all YLs to get in contact with their local Liberal MP or candidate and ask how they can assist in their upcoming campaigns.

### **Who would you say has been your biggest political mentor/influence?**

My biggest political influence is former Prime Minister John Howard. I joined the Liberal Party shortly before he became Prime Minister and it was a great privilege to help in many local campaigns that contributed to his 1996 election victory. Mr Howard possesses all the great tenants of leadership and he never let adversity stop him from achieving his goals. My biggest mentor was former Ambassador Joe Hockey. I worked for Joe for many years and he taught me many things about marginal seat campaigning and constituent engagement.

### **What are the main goals of the Berejiklian Government over the next term?**

The main priority for the NSW Government will be helping bushfire and drought ravaged areas of the state recover from the recent disasters. Other top agenda items will include the continuation of the Government's multi-billion infrastructure pipeline including the Parramatta Light Rail and second Harbour Tunnel. As well as delivering on our election commitments in education and health.

### **How has the Government's policy agenda been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic?**

The health and safety of the people of NSW has been the Government's number one priority during the current COVID-19 pandemic. This has meant the Government's policy focus has been centred on the need to limit the spread of the virus, protecting the state's citizens and working to reduce any negative impacts of the virus.

The strong leadership of Premier Gladys Berejiklian and the Cabinet has meant NSW has been able to quickly respond to the health and policy challenges caused by the virus.

The NSW Government has implemented many important policies in response to COVID-19, these include but are not limited to:

- \$2.3 billion targeted stimulus to boost NSW economic recovery
- Record spending on frontline health services, including mental health
- Free accommodation for frontline health workers
- Grants to keep small businesses operating

- Increased funding for domestic violence support services
- Faster payments schemes for government suppliers
- Over 100,000 people accessing free TAFE Courses
- Free Pre-school for 45,000 children
- Cutting red tape to ensure the prosperity of construction projects and jobs
- Payroll and land tax concessions
- Removing license fees for many small businesses

### **What public policy lessons can be learnt from the COVID-19 pandemic?**

I believe the greatest public policy lesson to be learnt from COVID-19 is the positive contribution, policies and decisions that are made when State, Territory and Commonwealth leaders work together for the good of the people. Prime Minister Scott Morrison has done an amazing job establishing the National Cabinet and coordinating the national response to the pandemic. The National Cabinet has meant that policy decisions can be discussed and implemented in a more timely and efficient manner, which is crucial in a time like this.

### **COVID-19 has required Governments of all levels to undertake significant expenditure in order to support people doing it tough, has this presented any challenges for funding the other vital services the Government provides?**

The NSW Government went into the COVID-19 pandemic in a great economic position, having no net debt and a budget surplus. This is thanks to the impeccable economic management of successive NSW Liberal Treasurers, especially our current Treasurer Dominic Perrottet.

The Premier has recently outlined her vision for the State's economic recovery that focuses on harnessing innovation, growing resilience and building a future-proof economy. A main feature of this will be the Government's \$100 billion Infrastructure Pipeline which will create 88,000 direct jobs and continue the Government's commitment to transforming the State's transport network and infrastructure. Additionally, the Government will continue its record-breaking investment in school infrastructure delivering 190 new or upgraded schools.

Further, the Premier is committed to creating the jobs of the future and nurturing the industries where these jobs will be created. This will be done by increasing government digitalisation and investing in advanced manufacturing and local supply chains to build a self-sufficient economy.

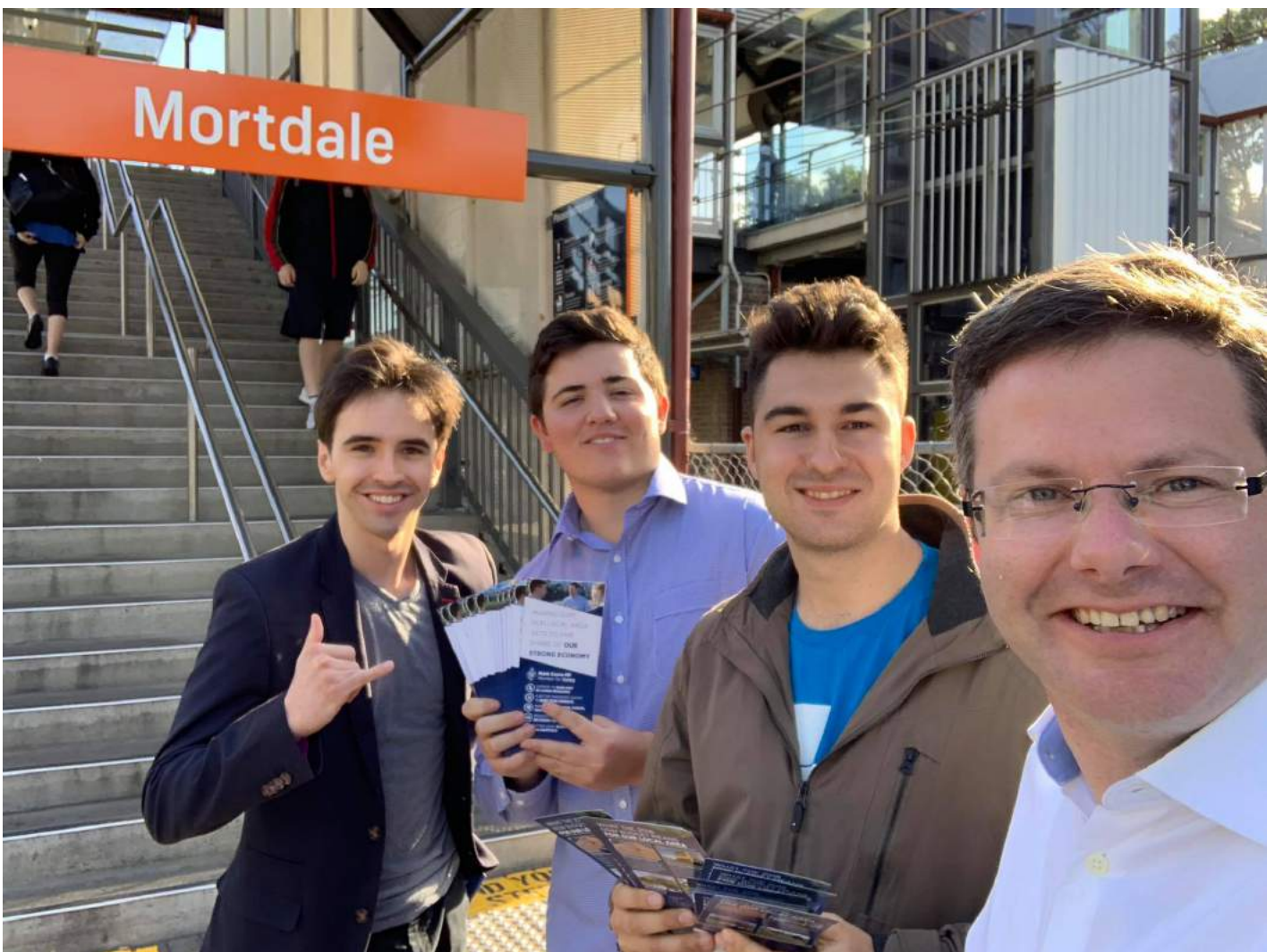
**Do you think the COVID-19 pandemic will change the way people live their lives in New South Wales/Australia in the future?**

Undoubtedly yes. The pandemic will change the way we interact with the world on a global scale and the way we as people interact in our local communities. People will definitely be more cautious when it comes to their health and hopefully this will lead to a more healthy and active society. I think we will also see a greater reliance on technologies such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams. I believe that many businesses will pivot towards more flexible work practices and encourage more staff to work from home. I also believe that Australia, NSW especially, will attract more international investment thanks to our sensible and successful approach to managing the virus.

One thing that has not changed, but has definitely been highlighted throughout this time, is Australia's strong sense of mateship, commitment to helping those doing it tough and love of all things sport!

**How has cooperation between the Federal and State and Territory Governments allowed Australia to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic proactively?**

The National Cabinet established by the Prime Minister has allowed the national coordination of the health, economic and policy response to the COVID-19 pandemic. I have always advocated for more cooperation between the States and the Federal Government because when leaders communicate constructively and regularly, better decisions are made. Many of the decisions made by the National Cabinet during the pandemic have allowed Australia to make innovative and agile decisions in response to the changes caused by the pandemic. One of the best examples of this was the implementation of a national 3-step framework to reopen the economy while keeping Australians safe.





## **The Hon Paul Fletcher MP - Federal Patron**



### **When did you join the Liberal Party, and why?**

I joined the Woollahra Paddington Young Liberals in 1981. As a teenager I had begun to take a keen interest in politics. I found that the Liberal Party of Australia was the best fit for the values I began to form as a young adult.

### **What does being a Liberal mean to you?**

Being a Liberal is about championing the rights and freedoms of the individual, rather than the collectivist mindset of our political opponents. I believe the private sector is the generator of wealth in our society – and all of the incidents of a civilised society such as high quality schools and healthcare, and support for those who cannot support themselves, ultimately depends on the wealth that the private sector generates. And while it may not swell the heart with emotion, I believe managerial competence is something citizens have a right to expect from governments – and is something that Liberals are inherently committed to.

### **What has been your proudest achievement in Parliament?**

The thing I'm proudest of from my time in Parliament was successfully passing online safety legislation in 2014. This followed extensive community consultation about online safety while we were in opposition, work which then Opposition Leader Tony Abbott had asked me to lead. Upon coming to government I was appointed Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Communications, and asked to take this work forward. Pleasingly, once the law was passed – establishing the Children's eSafety Commissioner and a legislated take down scheme for cyber bullying material directed at children – it was subsequently expanded on a number of occasions.

### **What, in your view, is the most significant public policy challenge facing Australia?**

I think the most significant public policy challenge is for Australia to maintain and increase our prosperity in an intensely competitive global economy, where technology is advancing at an extraordinary rate.

### **Do you have any regrets from your time in Parliament?**

It is an extraordinary privilege to serve in the Parliament and to represent my constituents in Bradfield. My main regret over my time in Parliament is that our Party succumbed to the same tendency to change leaders too often which had previously characterised our opponents. That being said, I am optimistic that we are now in a more stable period of Government.

### **What is the most rewarding aspect of being an MP/Minister?**

Having the opportunity to see the remarkable things that so many Australians are doing – and being able to assist people who have taken the initiative to help improve our country. For instance, I was recently able to visit Forge Pizzeria in Ballarat and see how a 90 person business can use NBN and cloud technology to operate more efficiently – a small business in Australia using technology in a way that many large multinationals could learn from.

### **What is the most difficult aspect of being an MP/Minister?**

I would say the low regard that many people have for politicians – and this is coming from a former lawyer!

### **What importance does the YL Movement have in the Party?**

The Young Liberal Movement has been the source of many of our country's most respected Members of Parliament – including John Howard, Gladys Berejiklian and many of my state and federal parliamentary colleagues. The Young Liberals are also reliably the most active campaigning arm of the Liberal Party – put simply, without the enthusiastic campaigning of the Young Liberals across the country it would be much harder for Coalition Governments to be elected. Taking a longer term perspective, the Young Liberal Movement plays a vital role in developing the next generation of Australian leaders. Members of the Young Liberals are given the opportunities to develop a range of skills (anyone who has helped make A-frames will know this ranges from communication skills to carpentry) and to build lifelong friendships. The Young Liberals also play an important – if often unmentioned – role in increasing the understanding of and commitment to our democratic system amongst young Australians.

### **How do you relax as a Minister? Do you ever get time?**

I try to ensure I can get to the gym or go for a run. Exercise is important for balance and stress management. I like to visit our local national parks (Ku-ring-gai and Namadgi), and to take my kayak out on Middle Harbour or from Bobbin Head.

## **How do you juggle family life with the demands of your job?**

It is challenging – but one of the benefits of being Minister for the Arts is that I am sometimes able to take my wife and son along to events with me. We all recently enjoyed a performance by the Flying Fruit Fly Circus – Australia’s only full-time circus school for young people aged 8-19.

## **What advice would you have for YLs who are thinking of a political career? What advice would you have for those who aren’t but want to contribute to the Liberal Party in other ways?**

First, spend time working outside of politics so you have a broader perspective. Second, try to build expertise in a policy area that you’re interested in - tourism or health or IT or the arts, whatever it might be - and work to influence policy in that area by bringing forward motions within the Party and by putting suggestions to Ministers and Shadow Ministers.

## **Who would you say has been your biggest political mentor/influence?**

Amongst elected politicians, I would point to Nick Greiner and Richard Alton. I worked for Richard for nearly four years when he was Minister for Communications and the Arts in the Howard Government. I first met Nick when I was involved in the Sydney University Liberal Club and as NSW Opposition Leader he made the time to meet with our Club’s executive. Both men have influenced my approach to politics and policy. As for non-parliamentary figures, I would cite Chris McDiven; I greatly admire her sustained advocacy to get more women into the Parliament.

## **What are the main goals of the Morrison Government over the next term?**

Continuing with the task of budget repair and strengthening our national economy is a central priority. Another major focus is delivering on our nation shaping infrastructure agenda. In a previous portfolio I worked on our plans for Western Sydney Airport and now I am overseeing the National Broadband Network as we approach completion of the rollout. And of course keeping Australians safe is always a priority for a Liberal National Government.

## **How has the Government’s policy agenda been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic?**

The pandemic has regretfully caused a disruption to our path to budget surplus. However, the pandemic has also brought together previously opposed organisations to work proactively on policy areas in need of reform - for instance, industrial relations. In recent times industrial relations has been a sensitive topic of public policy in Australia but the pandemic (and related economic impacts) has encouraged

stakeholders from across the political spectrum to work constructively on positive policy changes that can be made to aid Australia’s recovery.

## **What public policy lessons can be learnt from the COVID-19 pandemic?**

One of the most significant lessons from the pandemic - which is reflected in Australia’s success in mitigating the spread and quickly identifying new cases - is the importance of policy makers drawing on the advice of scientific experts. The importance of clear communication is another important takeaway from the pandemic. Scott Morrison, Josh Frydenberg, Greg Hunt and Gladys Berejiklian amongst others have been very clear communicators throughout this period. Finally, the pandemic has made evident the importance of strategic reserves in a crisis - in this case, medical and protective equipment.

## **COVID-19 has required Governments of all levels to undertake significant expenditure in order to support people doing it tough. Has this presented any challenges for funding the other vital services the Government provides?**

This is a big challenge. It is a good thing that we have worked so hard on budget repair from 2013, including achieving a balanced budget in 2018-19. This has given us much greater capacity to fund our response measures than if the budgetary position was still the mess we inherited in 2013. As the Treasurer, Josh Frydenberg, has pointed out, the Government has adopted measures in responding to COVID that are short-term shocks to the budget position - rather than ongoing expenditure over forward estimates - this means that we will come out of the pandemic without considerable year-on-year costs.

## **Do you think the COVID-19 pandemic will change the way people live their lives in New South Wales/Australia in the future?**

I expect once we get through this people’s behaviour will in the main quite quickly return to previous practices. That being said, there will be some longer lasting impacts. For example there could be an increase in people working from home - an area of particular interest to me with responsibility for the NBN falling within my portfolio.

## **How has cooperation between the Federal and State and Territory Governments allowed Australia to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic proactively?**

Cooperation between Governments in Australia has been very important. The establishment of National Cabinet has allowed the leaders of the Governments to communicate regularly and to make collaborative decisions while avoiding bureaucratic rigmarole. This is an important reason why Australia’s performance has compared well against other federations like the United States.

# Cancel Culture – A Deeper Perspective



**George Bishop**  
Director, NSW Young Liberals  
Kogarah-Barton Young Liberals

Books censored. Statues removed. Dissenters' livelihoods destroyed. Cancel culture, whatever its supposed good intentions, grates against the fabric of Western society. It demands sinless obedience to its law. It requires humankind to be perfect, not merely forgiven. Its punishments for blasphemy are swift, unrelenting and without mercy. This is not to condone in any way the actions of those whom cancel culture seeks to cancel, nor to gloss over the hurt which people may feel. But humankind is not perfect and it never will be.

The wages of sin against its law are a living death, not merely for the sinner, but for the society in which the sinner participates. Cancel culture creates a malaise of the human spirit and of human intellect. It fosters an environment of intellectual laziness and dogmatism. No longer should opinions and views be weighed and reasoned according to rational argument and separated from the person making them. Rather, the content of the argument and the manner in which it is presented render the argument summarily invalid if they do not conform to the canons of cancel culture.

These are not new revelations for the Right. Yet they fall on deaf ears, at least for those 'loud' Australians. I suggest that the reason for this is because society has become so conditioned to mere rights-based argument and rhetoric. The debate on cancel culture, at least between those with more thoughtful and considered opinions, one thread of the debate often reduces to an argument between freedom of speech and freedom of association or economic enterprise. Those on the side of free speech trot out the usual 'right to free speech' argument. Those on the side of cancellations point to the right for employers to fire those who don't accord with the values of the business, the right for event organisers to uninvite whomever they wish or the right of book publishers to stop publishing books they think aren't appropriate for their branding and reputation (subject, in each case, to contractual arrangements).

Each of these rights exist and are substantial. Some would argue that certain of those rights should overrule or override others. Perhaps this is true. But debate centred around the hierarchy of rights will inevitably not get far outside the chambers of law

professors and in any case will result in greater entrenchment of each position.

The hope for lifting the debate around cancel culture is to shift the debate from rights-based arguments to responsibility-based arguments. You have the right to say what you like, but it doesn't mean you should. You have the right to uninvite a speaker who said something you don't like, but it doesn't mean you should. Yet at present, this hope for lifting the debate is its greatest hurdle. Responsibility is inherently a values-based inquiry. 'Should' is a morally laden word. Should a person restrict their speech for the sake of kindness? For the sake of love? For the sake of country? What if that speech is a harsh truth? What if the speech is tough love? Should a business refrain from firing persons who express opinions that executives do not like? For the sake of free speech? For the sake of staff welfare? What if that speech is highly damaging to the business? What if it wouldn't materially impact the bottom line?

The answer to these questions is difficult and will vary in each circumstance. But at present, our debate does not engage with them. Indeed, I suggest that the great divide between each side of the debate occurs at a level much deeper than the surface. We cannot even agree that free speech is not merely a right to fight for, but a value to be treasured. Free speech is not merely a device to protect the minority from the majority, or citizens from the government. The course of history shows that the best way to produce good ideas and survive them through time is to promote a free, robust exchange of ideas and for persons not to face consequences for expressing them, whether criminal or privately economic in nature.

We must continue to stand up against cancel culture. But where one side of the argument makes, in the words of Mill, an "assumption of infallibility" and where in the debate both sides cannot mutually agree on the value as opposed to the right to free speech, we still have a way to go in the battle against cancel culture.





# The Modern Day Myth Of Self-Sufficiency



**Chanum Torres**  
President, Macarthur Young Liberals



**Julia Kokic**  
Menai Young Liberals

There have been increasing calls for Australia to achieve a state of 'self-sufficiency' in the wake of the COVID-19 epidemic. Worryingly, calls for protection, subsidisation of flagging industries and nationalisation are gaining currency in civic discourse and within the Liberal Party. While the epidemic has exposed our over reliance on a single trade partner, it is now, more than ever that the Liberal Party must defend free trade and economic liberalism.

Economic reality ultimately blows a hole in any argument for self-sufficiency. Wages in Australia are artificially high, rendering our manufacturing sector uncompetitive. Before Australia even thinks about being internationally competitive in manufacturing, it must contemplate serious and sweeping industrial relations reforms to keep industries in Australia.

Protectionism amounts to taxpayer subsidisation of inefficient practices. Protection saps competition and innovation. This inevitably leads to higher prices. A lack of imports means consumers will have little choice but to cop the higher prices. Their living standards fall. While high income earners can bear the higher cost of living, everyday Aussies would have to go without. Former trade partners retaliate with tariffs and subsidies of their own. With dwindling export destinations, local firms go out of business and domestic unemployment rises.

All the while, those with political connections are able to secure state subsidies, enabling them to monopolise entire swathes of the market. Failing companies that merely claim that their products are in some spurious way vital to the national interest would be able to avail of subsidies and bailouts, slugging the taxpayer and the everyday consumer. In the end, protectionism is a game with no winners.

This would be the absolute worst time for Australia to pursue tariffs and subsidies. The stimulus packages have steeped the Australian Government in debt.

Some estimates reach \$1.5 trillion dollars. Australian people are bracing for at least a decade of high taxes to pay it back. Are we really to expect the Australian people to also foot the bill for keeping unprofitable industries in Australia?

However, the argument for protectionist policy springs from the question of our national security. As supply chains were interrupted, and the hoarding began, the coronavirus revealed Australia's dependence on China for essentials like pharmaceuticals. To this, the economically liberal answer is diversification.



The mark of any prudent investor is the diversification of assets. The same principle holds in the world of trade. The crisis has exposed our economic overdependence on China. It highlights the dangers of putting all of one's eggs in a single basket. Being overly reliant on China for trade was a mistake. The solution is not a retreat into isolation but a diversification of trade partners moving forward into the future. There are emerging opportunities to establish FTAs with Britain, India and other up-and-coming SE Asian countries. If viewed correctly, COVID-19 marks an opportunity for Australia to forge an exciting new path, forming new relationships and diversifying our trade portfolio.

Those in the Liberal Party who would abandon orthodoxy and rush headlong into the bosom of protectionism at the first whiff of grapeshot should reflect long and hard on if it is indeed the party for them. The Liberal Party boasts a long and proud history of championing economic liberalism. For the Liberal Party to abandon a principle so intrinsic to its character would be its undoing. True protection of the Australian economy lies in more free trade, not less.

# A Defence of Defence Spending



**Calvin Stead**  
Killara Young Liberals

*Australia just announced an enormous increase in defence spending when the country is already facing decades of debt. Here's why this is a good thing.*

On 1 July 2020 the Prime Minister and the Minister for Defence announced that over the next 10 years, Australia will invest \$270 billion to upgrade the capability and potency of the Australian Defence Force . This announcement comes at a time when Australia is still weathering the economic shocks of the COVID-19 pandemic, with some forecasts predicting that if current economic settings are maintained, Australia will not reach a net zero debt threshold until FY2056-57 . With that in mind, why has the Government committed to this spending endeavour, and why has the Federal Opposition come out in support of it?

The answer lies in the strategic realities of the Indo-Pacific region. Australia can no longer assume that the US will remain the hegemonic power in the Indo-Pacific. Despite the Obama administration's 2012 'pivot' to Asia, China's regional power has continued to grow, and assertions of regional economic and territorial dominance have become commonplace. Parallel to this are the growing fractures within the US domestic political establishment that threaten to draw Washington away from foreign policy commitments in the Indo-Pacific. Australia is caught in a complex position; for decades the US has been its closest strategic ally, however it is also inextricably economically reliant upon China. Faced with this, Australia must move to adopt a new approach to its defence posture in the region.

Despite the 1 July announcement, Australian regional security will still be largely dependent on the US continuing to view the Indo-Pacific region as a foreign policy priority for force projection for years to come. Corollary to this is the fact that as the domestic political climate within the US shifts, so too does its approach to foreign policy . As the President sets the direction of US foreign policy, every 4 years there may be a seismic shift in the way the US conducts itself around the globe; Australia's historic reliance on the US for regional security has made this a vulnerability. The current Trump administration has



been criticized for taking a haphazard approach to foreign policy informed more by populism than strategic advice , a stark contrast from previous administrations. While this unpredictability may not be the norm of US foreign policy, it does highlight the vulnerabilities Australia faces by relying on a leader that we have no democratic influence over. Similarly, domestic political influences within the US will shape how foreign policy is developed; in 2020 alone, the US has been hard-hit by the COVID-19 outbreak, deteriorating race relations, and widespread public unrest . These pressures have the ability to draw US attention inwards and away from foreign policy. While Australia is currently enjoying the security benefits of the strategic focus now, there is no guarantee that the US will continue to see the region as indefinitely strategically important. As such, Australia needs to embrace policy options that diversify the sources of our regional security away from single actors such as the US.

Since President Xi's rise to power in 2012, China has not shied away from asserting its newfound power, both hard and soft, throughout the Indo-Pacific. In 2015 it was reported that China was aggressively pursuing land reclamation and the development of military installations on multiple reefs in the disputed territories of the South China Sea, the Paracel and Spratly Islands, an act that former Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull described as "pushing the envelope" . This assertion of territorial dominance has opportunistically continued while the world was wrestling with the COVID-19 pandemic; in April 2020 China declared two new administrative districts across areas within the Spratly and Paracel islands . In addition to territorial dominance, since 2013 China has also sought to assert economic and diplomatic dominance across the world through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), an international investment mechanism estimated by some to be valued anywhere





between US\$1 trillion to US\$8 trillion . There is growing concern within the international security community of the long-term security and sovereignty impacts of signing on to the BRI, especially for developing states who appear to lack the financial capability to repay these loans - yet sign on regardless . This predatory economic strategy is not limited to the BRI.

Australia's continued economic growth is dependent on Chinese trade. Accounting for over a quarter of Australia's two-way trade, and nearly a third of Australia's export market, China's control over the Australian economy is substantial – and China has not been reluctant to remind Australian policy makers of this. In the context of Australian policy decisions unpopular with Beijing, whether it related to the banning of ZTE and Huawei from the operation of the Australian 5G network, or the passage of foreign interference transparency legislation, China has been willing to pull economic levers in response; briefly banning coal imports in February 2019 , applying anti-dumping tariffs on Australian barley in May 2020 , and more recently warning Chinese tourists and students not to travel to Australia - threatening industries worth billions to Australia's GDP. Australia's economic reliance on an assertive China presents a serious security and sovereignty risk.

The 1 July announcement is an extremely positive step in the right direction to address these strategic vulnerabilities, and the Government should be congratulated for it. With \$75 billion alone allocated for maritime capability investment, Australia will be well placed to engage in force projection throughout the Indo-Pacific in years to come. However, it is important for policymakers to remember that an investment in traditional defence capability is strategically worthless if the nation still possesses other security vulnerabilities in the economic and cyber spheres. Policy development must be guided by a national security grand strategy that looks well into the future, proactively identifying potential threats and vulnerabilities.



# Campbell Soup



**Hugo Robinson**  
Vice-President, NSW Young Liberals  
President, Ryde Young Liberals

People who know me best know that I love to tell a good story, and this one is no different. It's one of sex, drugs, rock n' roll and explosions.

Love lost, fortunes gained and the ever-maddening chug, chug, chug of the steam train of time stopping for no one.

So, strap yourselves in. You may want to be seated for this one. Grab your favourite beverage and brace for impact. This is really going to blow your socks off!

Ok, now that I have your attention, I can talk to you all about the 1979 Campbell Report into financial reform.

You're probably thinking "Hugo, you're a funny guy with a great smile, but who cares?". Well I do and you should too! And thank you for the compliment!

Understanding this little footnote of history is pivotal in understanding why the Liberal Party advocates for small government, decentralisation and the free market. It is a key part of what makes the Liberal party, well, liberal.

Forty years ago, when Malcolm Fraser was Prime Minister, then Treasurer John Howard (yes, that John Howard) initiated a committee led by accountant Sir Keith Campbell named the, you guessed it, Keith Committee.

Just kidding, it was called the Campbell Committee.

Committees typically are used to give the government reason to do nothing by handing down recommendations that already meet the consensus of the day.

However, unlike most committees, this one was special. The Campbell Committee was given explicit instructions to hand down recommendations that would challenge current thinking on economic efficiency and the state of Australia's financial institutions.

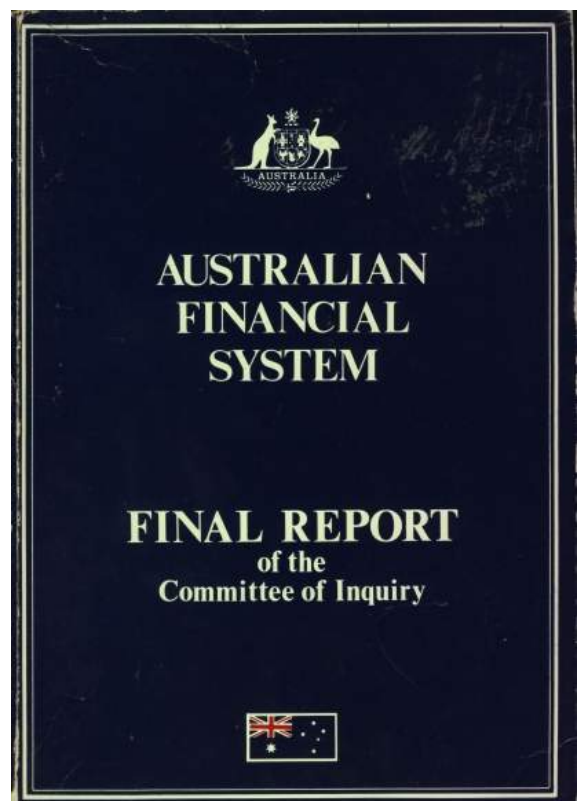
And although it wasn't the watershed moment it should have been, it would prove to have a profound impact on economic thought in the Liberal party and the Hawke/Keating governments following Fraser's defeat at the 1983 election.

Sure, there had been the "Modest Member" Bert Kelly and other backbenchers like John Hyde and Jim Carlton who agitated for radical reform to Australia's ailing financial apparatus, but the recommendations handed down in October 1981 were incredibly radical for a country which had been characterised by high tariffs, nationalised industries and centralisation.

Recommendations included:

- Removal of controls on the interest rates charged by banks.
- Abolition of controls on bank lending.
- The entry of foreign banks to the Australian market.
- That banks be permitted to pay interest on cheque accounts.
- The floating of the Australian dollar.
- That restrictions on the transfer of funds in and out of Australia be lifted.
- That company tax be integrated with personal taxation.
- Removal of the tax concessions available to superannuation funds.
- The winding up of the Commonwealth Development Bank.
- That banking licences become less restrictive.

Despite the delight that the Report gave the Dries and the private sector, Australia's powerful interest groups and government itself slapped most of the recommendations down.



For instance, Treasury Secretary John Stone was strongly opposed to floating the currency, arguing that “dark forces” from overseas would manipulate our currency. However, the Treasury Department was probably more afraid of losing their influence.

Cabinet lost their mind when Howard suggested relaxing foreign investment guidelines (which stoked fear that foreign companies would buy up every Australian company) and managed to freak them out even further when he announced the removal of the ceiling on the interest that trading banks could offer on deposits.

Finally, the Wheat Board, which at that time received funds from the government to acquire each years’ harvests from farmers, was forced to raise \$300 million of the \$1 billion needed from the market and complained that it was being deregulated.

We must remember that “deregulation” at that time was an official dirty word along with “gosh”, “darn”, “fiddlesticks” and “oh snap!”

Howard did, however, have some big and highly beneficial wins which would pave the way for the reforms of Treasurer Keating.

He snatched the last remaining monetary policy away from the States, allowed the major banks to merge until only three and the Commonwealth Bank (which was later privatised between 1991 and 1996) remained and lifted controls on several interest rates.

Given that Howard faced opposition from a very entrenched and intimidating economic establishment who had thrived for decades off Australia’s high levels of centralisation and protection, it was incredibly impressive that he got so much done via stealth.

The Fraser Government would lose in 1983 and a new Treasurer Keating would, in his words, “get the Campbell debate back on the table”.

Building on what Howard had done, Keating floated the dollar within months of being elected and would shape Australia’s economic future for decades to come with many more reforms that were based on the Campbell Report’s recommendations.

The reforms that the Report called for is a key reason our economy has been so strong for the last 30 years and one of the reasons we fared so well during the Global Financial Crisis of 2008.

So, there we go. That is the history of the Campbell Report and how it played a crucial role in introducing Dry Economic Thought to the Australian policy arena, not to mention, the profound effect it has had on Liberal Party policy ever since.

That wasn’t so bad, was it?

# Green Plates



**Ricky Leong**  
Epping-Eastwood Young Liberals

Have you ever bought an airline ticket? You may have noticed a little check box asking if you'd like to offset the carbon emissions from your flight.

Why can't RMS provide a similar option? While a motorist is renewing their rego, RMS will give them an option to offset their car's annual carbon emissions.

People who sign up will get a special "Green Plate" to recognise their commitment to sustainability.

Funds raised by Green Plates would be directed to sustainable projects in NSW. This will create local jobs and support local communities.

The cost to Government from this program will be minimal. No new taxes are required and participation will be entirely voluntary.

Voluntary programs can significantly reduce carbon emissions. Roughly 8% of Qantas customers offset their emissions - with uptake growing rapidly. If we saw similar uptake of Green Plates, this would offset 2.4 million tonnes of emissions in NSW - or roughly 2% of statewide emissions.

I also expect many businesses would support Green Plates and roll these out across their vehicle fleets.

This policy represents an incremental step towards a cleaner and more sustainable NSW.

There is no financial impact to government or taxpayers. If successful, I believe this program will be replicated in many jurisdictions in Australia and overseas.



# Judicial Activism: Power Without Responsibility



**Natalie Hissey**

Director (Professional Development), NSW Young Liberals  
President, Epping-Eastwood Young Liberals

What's wrong with the kids today? They're not radical enough, according to Michael Kirby.

Pardon the pun, but a former High Court judge proclaiming that the kids are indifferent to the challenges of our time is a great injustice. Mr Kirby could learn a great deal from today's youth.

They know better than anyone that community activism is the key to effective change. Whether it's voting with their feet, their money, or running for political office and asking for votes themselves, young people understand what it takes to change hearts and minds. They are at the coalface of climate activism, applying much-needed pressure on the federal government to reduce emissions. The Yes for Marriage Equality campaign was spearheaded by young people petitioning, canvassing and doorknocking. And it's because of young people that Sydney's lockout laws have been repealed.

Above all, young people understand that activism is best practiced within the community. Not on a High Court bench far away in Canberra, where judicial

activism is wrapped up in excessive expense, inaccessible legal jargon, and where judges face limited public accountability for their decisions.

It is essential under the rule of law that the use of power by Governments is lawful, and open to challenge. The question is not whether judges make law - everyone cheerfully accepts that they do - but rather in what contexts they make law, and to what extent. There is a very real distinction.

Mr Kirby's black and white construction of the debate surrounding judicial activism as a battle between bully boy "conservatives" and "independent judges" fighting for human rights is self-serving and mischievous. It transforms what should be a debate about the jurisprudential and constitutional limitations of the judicature into a political football match. Whilst certainly convenient to Mr Kirby's own political agenda during his time on the bench, his brand of judicial activism enables unelected judges to effect significant change in policy without a democratic mandate.

In Mr Kirby's 2006 essay on the subject he asserts that a judge's role is not simply to interpret written texts. Rather, in giving meaning to a written text, it is essential to construe the text in the current context. In making an assessment of the various contexts we live in, one inevitably contributes their own opinions and belief systems.

It is a serious mistake to conclude that judicial activism will always push the agenda to the left. Judicial activism also has a propensity to veer to the right. A notable example is the 2008 case *District of Columbia v Heller*, where the American Supreme Court affirmed that the Second Amendment protects an individual's right to bear arms. Protection of the Second Amendment enabled Adam Lanza to use a



gun legally purchased by his mother to murder her, and 20 innocent children in school. It also led to the murder of 49 people in a gay club in Orlando. Guns killed more Americans between 2001 and 2013 than AIDs, war, terrorism and illicit drug overdoses combined. Judicial activism like this does not 'protect minorities, the weak and the vulnerable' as Mr Kirby insists.

In the same essay, Mr Kirby expresses his appreciation for the long tradition of common law in Australia, which he declares has stemmed from judicial activism. The British common law tradition has a long history of activism by judges who are not representative of our communities. The extreme lack of diversity within the judicature has disenfranchised female, LGBTIQ and racial minorities in the common law. Nowhere is this more obvious than in sexual assault laws. In *Papadimitropoulos v The Queen*, the High Court defined rape as "... carnal knowledge of a woman without her consent: carnal knowledge is the physical fact of penetration." In common law, penetration was only viewed as penile penetration of the vagina, and represents a viewpoint that is woefully out of touch with modern society. Such is the lack of trust in the judicial activist process that there has been a move towards a statute-based body of sexual assault law. Now, sexual penetration without consent is defined as also involving penetration of a vulva, vagina, anus or mouth by any part of the body or an object.

Mr Kirby also goes so far as to say that "no branch of government operates more transparently, explains its actions more openly and is subject to internal checks,

appeals and review conducted in public, so much as the judiciary." Not according to a 2018 study conducted by the Monash and Deakin Business Schools. Only 6-10% of participants could correctly guess the names of current sitting High Court judges. In fact, more survey participants knew of the US television judge known as Judge Judy than were able to identify any member of the Australian High Court, including Australia's first female Chief Justice, Susan Kiefel.

Public support for the courts is strongly linked to their level of understanding about how they work; these results point to a significant shortcoming in our understanding of the High Court, which can lead to confusion and cynicism around other executive functions.

So, when do we draw the line under judicial activism?

Where the law is unclear or its application to a specific scenario is vague, judges should only refer to institutional or social sources relating to the law, such as legislation, second readings, past judicial rulings or customs. In this way, judges are restrained from imposing their personal moral values (and subconscious biases,) upon the legal system, for which they do not have a mandate.

While Mr Kirby may be too old to sit on the bench, there are very few limitations on who can sit in our most democratic of institutions - parliament. I'd suggest he have a crack.

Who knows, I may even vote for him... although perhaps that's too radical for me to say.



# Why we should NOT lower the voting age



**Dimitry Palmer**  
Secretary, NSW Young Liberals  
Ryde Young Liberals

In October 2019, Greens Party Co-Deputy Leader Adam Bandt MP re-introduced a bill to allow for 16-year old and 17-year-olds to voluntarily enrol and vote.

This bill and its consequences would have a detrimental effect upon our democracy with little benefits.

It may seem strange that a youth political movement like the Young Liberals would oppose such a reform that appears to enfranchise young people.

However, there are four reasons why we should not lower the voting age.

Firstly, and most obviously, this proposal is self-serving for the Greens and Labor.

Conventional wisdom says that young people tend to skew towards support for the political left.

A 2016 Youth Action poll showed that 44.6% of those aged between 17 and 25 support the Greens, while the Greens received 37% of the vote from 18-24 year olds in the 2019 Federal Election.

This proposal would bolster electoral support for Labor and the Greens under the guise of 'enfranchisement'.

Their real motivation however, was inadvertently exposed by Greens Leader Richard Di Natalie's comment that, "If there was a vote amongst people who are under 30 in Australia, there'd possibly be a Greens Prime Minister."

Despite the self-serving and partisan nature of the proposal, there are further reasons why it is a bad idea on its merits.

Australia is clearly in line with the rest of the world when it comes to the age of voting, and this recognises the many responsibilities that come with the age of majority.

A study of 239 national voting systems by the ACE Electoral Knowledge Network showed that merely 4.5% of nations permit for voting below the age of 18, while 86.6% of countries permit voting from age 18.

Further, the 2016 Australian Election Study showed that only 11% of voters support lowering the voting age to 16.

Although many young people may be interested in politics from 16-years of age (like the participants in the School Strike 4 Climate), the reality is that many more are apathetic.

The minority of politically-active 16 and 17-year-olds should not dictate the rule.

Thirdly, one of the bill's stated goals is the facilitation of "greater civics education".

Every year, 18-year-olds graduate from high school and are sent out into the world without adequate civics education and a poor understanding of how our political system works.

Lowering the voting age will only worsen this issue.

If the Greens genuinely wish to see an improvement in non-partisan civics education, then including civics in school leaving requirements would be more effective.

Further, just because 16 and 17-year-olds do not formally participate, local MPs ignore their concerns at their own peril.

Young people have an enormous capacity to influence friends and family and are only 1-2 years away from having their own say.

Finally, this reform creates two-tiers of electors and opens the door to the problematic question of expanding voluntary voting.

In the United States voluntary voting has created a system where parties must shape their policy and message to get out the vote.

This has led to a greater polarisation of the American polity, as both Democrats and Republicans have doubled down on messaging that seeks to cultivate their own base, rather than reaching across the aisle to govern for all.

This political polarisation would be incredibly damaging to the Australian political system and may create a far more fractured and gridlocked system.

Voluntary voting, even if restricted to 16 and 17-year-olds, would lead to populist policies developed solely to get out their vote.

Lowering the voting age simply won't help young people, it will only weaken the democracy they are due to inherit.

To let Labor and the Greens pretend that only they represent youth is both politically silly and a flat-out lie.

Organisations like the NSW Young Liberals allow for young people to genuinely advocate for their views, learn about politics and make a difference.

If you aren't already a member be sure to join today!

# Reaching for The Stars Through Capitalism



**Keenan Smith**  
Epping-Eastwood Young Liberals

The great clash between communism and capitalism that dominated the latter half of the 20th Century was a truly remarkable period: technological boundaries pushed, countless proxy wars, ideologies tested and thoroughly debunked (looking at you, commies).

This struggle between the capitalist and communist world can be best seen through the space race. An endless game of one-upmanship that would even put a campaign trail Bill Shorten to shame. The result of this rivalry between the two superpowers was extraordinary technological development: in little over 60 years humanity went from taking its first flight to taking its first steps on the moon.

While the Soviet Union was corraling resources into putting sickles and hammers into space, the sad reality of a centrally planned economy became apparent. By the late 1980s when the USSR was developing cutting edge space stations and orbiters, it was also approaching its capitalist enemies, cap in hand, for technological assistance with its milking machines. The shortfalls of the bureaucratic, centrally planned ogre that was the Soviet Union had been made abundantly clear: central planning had led to vast amounts of resources being blindly plunged into projects with little care for the “bigger picture”.

The past decade has made even clearer the importance of free enterprise in securing sustainable technological development. Companies like SpaceX have gone from being fringe vanity projects of pot smoking futurists to regularly and profitably placing satellites into orbit. As an example, per kilogram costs for space launches were on average \$18,500 before the introduction of private companies in space. With private players, it now costs around \$2,720 per kilogram. The pressures of profit and competition means radically new designs, lowered costs and greater reliability. The impact of this is real and meaningful: it means more reliable communications across the world, better scientific research and pushing the envelope of innovation, prosperity and development further.

The 30th of May marks a monumental moment: for the first time in 9 years, astronauts were launched from the United States into space on the “Crew Dragon Demo-2” mission. This was done for the first time in history using a private company, SpaceX to construct the rocket and run the mission. Even before all the benefits of an ongoing production line and economies of scale kick in, the United States is already saving 30% on the cost of sending people to space versus both the Space Shuttle programme, and ignominiously paying the Russians to get to Space. There can be no doubt this marks a new era for space related technological development.

Free-market capitalism may be messy at times, but its ability to spur technological innovation and promote rising living standards is unmatched. The lesson from all of this is clear: central control, constraint and over-bearing regulation hold back the full potential of free individuals and businesses – to reach for the stars.





# The Dangers of the “Quiet Australians” Rhetoric



**Ben Hines**  
Manly Young Liberals

When Scott Morrison rode to electoral victory in 2019, he did so, in no small part, as the result of an opposition-style, personality-focused campaign. That said, in the days leading up to the polling booths there still existed the almost mooted belief that the Coalition’s time in power was up; public discourse seemingly mooting Labor victory.

Thus, when all pretence was subverted and popular analysis tarnished, when Australia emerged from the 2019 election with a strengthened Coalition parliament, it made sense for its leader to declare it was “the quiet Australians who have won a great victory.” An iconic axiom for an outstanding result. A calling card for the newly empowered Morrison with a fresh and undoubtable mandate – something previously marred by the events of the leadership spill.

Make no mistake, the “Quiet Australians” are not a fairy tale per se, nor were they in the 2019 election. The citizens of the nation avoid the slinging of modern politics yet remain just as informed or passionate as those within it. Similarly, these individuals are more than entitled to form a key component of the mandate of this present government. The comments made immediately after the election were more than appropriate in isolation.

Yet the Prime Minister’s positioning as the champion of the “Quiet Australians”, whilst an effective rhetorical flourish not removed from all reality, is burdened by an albatross of danger. The harms present thereto represent a scathing indictment on a modern political system fraught with the need to put once-mandated party ideology over the changing desires of the public. A system conflating mandate to represent the nation with that of a policy platform in isolation.

Intrinsically and perilously, the Quiet Australians represent the view they are ascribed by those with the capacity to do so. They are an instant, irrefutable majority in support of any idea for which they are useful. Should an individual that would ostensibly have been a quiet Australian disagree with the government, yet remain characteristically quiet, they

remain spoken for. Should they disagree and speak out, they are no longer a part of the silent majority. The nebulous and constantly varying size and composition of those termed the “vocal minority” means that no matter the proportion of these groups accounted for by previously “quiet” individuals, they are discounted as disrespecting those that voted for the government.

The strength of the Quiet Australian as a concept lies in its quasi-noumenal classification, in its silence, and in the election victory they supposedly enabled. Essentially, it doesn’t matter how public discourse appears unless there is tangible proof that the majority supports an idea. There will always be, so the rhetoric implies, the large bloc of those remaining silent that deserve to be prioritised over the “vocal minority.”

Consequently, numerous dangers accompany future use of this rhetoric. One pertinent example would be the climate debate. The Prime Minister has, both in the past and recently, dismissed many citizens either protesting at events such as the Climate Strikes or engaging in secondary boycotts as “radical activists” seeking to “deny the liberties of Australians”. These people, so it goes, don’t actually represent most people, as the government does, but only those involved and those crazy enough to speak out. There exists the capacity for this dismissal to be extrapolated to any issue as deemed convenient.

The potential nefarious outcomes also find themselves manifest outside politics. In response to the aforementioned secondary boycott issue, Morrison urged companies to listen to “Quiet Shareholders.” The transformation of the election-winning rhetoric is subtle, yet entirely unfounded. The assumption is that if these people existed in the electorates, they must exist as shareholders in the same proportion. If not, the democratic mandate represents a convenient excuse to act as if they did. Once again, the government’s, or at least the Prime Minister’s, agenda is seemingly legitimised and imparted.

The Prime Minister needs to remember that the government does not just represent the Quiet Australians, nor do the Quiet Australians exist as a homogenous bloc with identical views to each other or himself. Quiet Australians may not always remain quiet, but even if they did their legitimacy lies in their voting and their actions, not in being spoken for.

Scott Morrison should be congratulated for empowering those who may have felt disenfranchised, and certainly has a mandate to act in the interests of the majority, but it is imperative to do so in good faith and not to fall victim to excesses that might lay with taking advantage of the dangers herein outlined. The Government must ensure that if it

relies on the support of the silent as legitimising a policy position, the sentiment behind said silence should be demonstrable. To act otherwise would be to act against the will of the Australian people; this alone should give Mr Morrison pause and add a sense of reticence to repeated reliance on the Quiet Australians.

# WA's Public Child Sex Offender Register - The Way Forward



**Lauren McGrath-Wild**  
Manly Young Liberals

Over 40% of child sex offenders will re-offend within a four year follow up period while on parole. There are currently thousands of offenders on parole who live near children.

The Child Abuse Royal Commission heard 8000 chilling personal stories from victims as well as parents, spouses and siblings of relatives who had been abused, many who were further victims to suicide. Survivors require a great deal of courage and determination to tell their stories. Their bravery catalysed urgently needed justice reform. We have the Commission to thank for historical criminal justice reforms such as stronger sentencing laws and the High Risk Offender Scheme. However, it seems that the pleas of victims were not enough to produce a publicly available sex offender register. When deciding between protecting the reputation of convicted, repeat offenders of child abuse, and keeping kids safe, the answer seems obvious.

In 2012, Western Australia launched the Community Protection Website (CPW), enabling public access to specific areas of the sex offender register. The CPW offers a unique balance of rights, operating differently to many other public sex offender registries such as those in the United States. The Western Australian government not only restricts the information available but also has security mechanisms to monitor any possible vigilante activity. This means that individuals accessing the website have to provide details of their identity and address. Importantly, members of the public can only access information regarding convicted repeat offenders in their residential area.

While there is limited evidence to show that public registers reduce recidivism, sex offenders subjected to community notification are arrested more quickly for a repeated crime than those not publicly identified. While critics point to the reform's failure to resolve recidivism, they cannot provide an explanation as to why an enforcement-assisting policy should not be pursued.

The Police Association of NSW reported more than 4000 offenders on the child protection register in 2018, but only a fraction were monitored regularly, with the responsibility falling to time limited local police officers. The President of the Association stated: 'The officers who do this work day in and day out are stretched to capacity... we simply don't have enough police to do the job.'

The NSW government's policy to recruit 1500 NSW police officers across four years was a welcome attempt to address the problem, but it did not reach the requested 2500 officer. Further, reports by the Australian Federal Police indicate that child sexual abuse grew by 77 per cent between 2017 and 2018. The numbers continue to be of concern and the internet is only facilitating the perpetuation of child sex crimes.

A restricted, yet public, child sex offender register balances the rights and safety of children against those of convicted offenders. Ultimately, when the stakes are so incredibly high, something is better than nothing, and the success of publicising the identities of missing paedophiles is made evident each time the community has located such offenders. This proves that there exists untapped potential amongst observant Australians to reduce child sex crimes. Surely, an extension of this policy to the public naming of dangerous and high risk offenders would assist in the reporting of suspicious behaviour and possibly the prevention of further crimes.

The man responsible for the death of Daniel Morcombe had two prior convictions of violent sexual assault of a child. A witness reported seeing him approaching Daniel, yet they were completely ignorant of his criminal history. Daniel's case is only one of many, where an informed onlooker could have changed or even saved a life. If access to a public child sex offender register similar to that employed in Western Australia was able to prevent even one more instance of child sexual abuse then it is certainly worthwhile. The Child Abuse Royal Commission has brought welcome reform because it has finally made us aware of not only the pervasiveness of this issue but also the incredibly terrible impact this particular crime has upon the lives of victims - surely this is reason enough for action.



## **Crisis and Politics: Thoughts from the Green Wattle Creek Fire**



**Amelia Baker**

President, Wollondilly Young Liberals

This bushfire season has been hell for those who have lived in the path of destruction. The media of late has been using the word unprecedented a lot, rightly or wrongly, to describe the bushfires and the reaction to them. In my mind the thing that could be considered most unprecedented in regards to these fires is the media's response to them and their coverage.

Politicians have been hounded about spending time with their families, false stories have been published and shared on social media, designed to stir and incite hatred, and emotions have been used as a weapon instead of being used to bring people together. The divisive nature of news stories and the trolls on social media are far from reflective of the emotion on the ground in places hit hard, which have found a way to still exhibit true Aussie spirit. Although there have been many vocal instances of people taking their anger out on politicians, it seems to be a small yet noisy minority. Yes, people are angry, some people want someone to blame, but in general

most people want to focus that anger on ways to prevent this from happening again or on helping out their friends and members of their community who have lost everything.

I still live in the small village I grew up in. Hill Top is known for being a quiet and relaxed place, and for arguments on social media about pizza. If there is one thing residents dislike above all others though, it is politicians and waffle. Despite this, many residents who fled their homes as the fire that destroyed a large swathe of neighbouring villages headed south, took comfort in the presence of our local state and federal MP's - most valued as someone to listen to concerns and as a shoulder to cry on. It is abundantly clear in places such as this that politics isn't at the forefront of thoughts, our community is.

When Hill Top RFS station was announced as the staging area for the RFS response to the Green Wattle Creek fire, our community banded together to ask "what can we do to help?". We were answered on social media with a list of donations needed and then met the request with a constant stream of gatorade, energy drinks, lollies and 'cheesy dippits', and anything else the brigades enjoyed being delivered to the fire shed. On Christmas Day our local RFS crew had to ask that there be no more deliveries of prawns and ham, because although the donations were greatly appreciated, they just didn't have the capability to store it all. The generosity and love exhibited to all the crews as they were staged at Hill Top RFS for those weeks was incredible to witness.



With the sad loss of the lives of two young men when their truck rolled at nearby Buxton, once again I noticed that the community ignored the screams for blood on social media and fuelled by the media and instead wanted to see what they could do to help the young families of those incredible young men with fundraisers quickly organised and a makeshift shrine soon appearing and the desire for a more permanent one to take its place.

Whilst the media continues to hound our leaders, quizzing them on their locations at all times whilst this crisis unfolded on the east coast, the focus of those of us living in and around areas impacted by these fires has been to get through this, and once we get through this season it will be to rebuild and help our neighbours and hopefully have a voice in the way things are managed so this scale of crisis doesn't happen again.

We don't want to hear the words climate change, not because of lack of belief, but because it seems to be a scapegoat for inaction. We're tired of Greta Thunberg and the obsession the media have with her. People living in rural areas such as Hill Top want to know from our leaders at all levels of government and that changes are being made to help with fuel load reduction so hopefully we don't have to go through a crisis of this magnitude again. We want to know why the media is making this crisis out to be about climate change and lies about funding cuts instead of what really matters.



There is an abject failure in the response to these fires. That failure is evident in that the media is too interested in following the Prime Minister around until he makes a mistake, which as a human being is inevitable. That failure is evident when the Defence Minister is being hounded at a press conference as to her whereabouts on Christmas Day, whilst her location is unimportant to those in a village impacted by fire. That failure is evident when Balmoral Village isn't connected to town water, despite this being the third major bushfire to impact the village in 20 years and yet there is nothing in the media. The media is so focused on a handshake (or lack thereof) that news that is important and could change lives is thrown to the wayside.

The people who live in my village are full of classic Aussie spirit. They have a deep sense of community and they love where they live. The media in its focus for a cheap shot at our nation's leader is eroding this spirit. We are angry about these bushfires and having that emotion prayed upon. The people here aren't looking to blame anyone in particular, and we might be considered country bumpkins, but we would like to have a voice that is heard as we are people who end up losing their homes when things go wrong.



# Public Education Reform



**Timothy Pinzone**  
Epping-Eastwood Young Liberals

Australia is a nation of opportunity, it is a land where, regardless of one's social status we can all choose our life pathway and pursue our individual ambitions.

Whether you're Gladys Berejiklian, daughter of immigrants growing up in the north western suburbs of Sydney receiving public school education and become the Premier or whether you're Scott Morrison, son of Australian born parents from affluent origins who grew up attending the most prestigious schools in the country and become the Prime Minister. All Australians can pursue their ambitions.

More importantly, the foundation that primary and secondary schooling sets for us should enable any individual to thrive in our world.

If it were not for a good quality public education, Gladys Berejiklian would never have become the Premier of NSW.

That is why the public school education system espouses traditional Liberal values. That no matter our parents, no matter our social status, no matter where we were born - we can achieve our ambitions and follow our passions. That anyone "who has a go, can get a go".

Education should be the Liberal party way. The most effective education system is one that instead of bringing the wealthiest Australians down, lifts the poorest and most disadvantaged Australians up. We need an education system that produces thinkers and innovators rather than imitators and followers.

There are several ways to achieve this:

## Introduction of Personal Finances classes in high school

Personal Finance is a skill that many young Australians struggle with. Many don't know how to do their taxes, select an insurance coverage they would need, choose a Superannuation account and don't know how to budget. Personal finance classes - separate from traditional Maths classes will ensure that students will have more time to learn and focus on basic financial skills that will be necessary in the modern world.

To ensure that schools have the ability to teach Personal Finance classes, traditional Maths content should be reduced (because who really needs to know algebra, angles, and long division?) and be replaced with the 'real Maths' that will be studied in Personal Finance classes (because everyone needs to know taxes, insurance, and how to manage a budget). Personal Finance classes should also be provided as an elective for Yr 11 & 12 students, as an option for those who do not study maths.

## Subsidies for socio-economically disadvantaged students for excursions, school camps, extra-curricular and school events/performances

All students should be able to make the most out of their education. Australian students should not miss out on enhancing their education because of their parents financial status. Therefore, the State Government needs to provide a hand up to struggling Australian students. Through subsidising the cost of excursions, and extracurricular activities, students can experience a holistic education that leaves no student behind regardless of one's family wealth or status.

## Compulsory extra curricular activities

Based on an idea from the newly elected Member for Wentworth, Dave Sharma's proposal for 9am - 5pm school hours for secondary students.

9am-5pm classes will not only make being a parent more convenient but it also brings many of our State's public high schools in line with some of our nation's elite private schools which have expectations of student engagement in after hours, extra - curricular involvement.

Traditional school operates from 9am - 3pm and then from 3pm - 5pm students will engage in compulsory extra - curricular activities such as sport, volunteering, community service or music. This helps students enhance their education, builds their social skills which improves student wellbeing which means they will more likely be committed to their education and therefore their studies will improve as a result.

## Reforming humanities and history classes

With our increasingly globalised world, the topics studied in history and geography are steadily progressing away from Western civilisation to focus on many other cultures and regions. With so much history and geographical areas to study our curriculum is struggling to fit everything in. As a result, it is likely that students will miss out on exploring important historical and geographical events, and locations. Instead of trying to cram every culture, region, event and period into our humanities subjects; humanities should focus on teaching students how to think. Teaching students how to analyse sources, how to study historical events and students need to be taught about bias, partisanship and usefulness of the news sources we have, through



the backdrop of history.

This not only provides students the skills to be able to study historical periods and events that they're passionate about, but it also skills students in disseminating between trustworthy and untrustworthy information in an ever increasingly 'fake news' society that is perpetuated by the rise of social media.

# The perfect time for climate change discussion



**Jared Wright**  
Terrigal Young Liberals

Climate change isn't a new idea, beliefs in a changing paleoclimate and the conceptualised greenhouse gas effect have been debated by scientists and organisations since the early 19th Century. In over two decades of discussion within the scientific and scholarly community, multiple policies have been examined towards reducing carbon emission and the human footprint.

Whether you have seen the smoke haze in the CBD or you have experienced evacuation in Port



Macquarie or Batemans Bay, everyone has considered the idea of climate change during the bushfire crisis. The NSW Young Liberals have had a clear stance for greater action on climate change. After a decade that saw a rise in populist principles from liberal and conservative governments across the globe, I believe it is imperative that we focus on the everyday

Australian. To do so, we need to harness the economic and environmental bipartisan that is clean renewable energy.

While it is pleasing to note that the Morrison Government has provided over \$1 Billion in funding for renewable energy in 2019, nothing will spell progress for the 'quiet Australian' quite like solar panels on roofs or hydrogen fuel cells in our cars. Tangibility and results are two sides of the same coin for many Australians who are feeling disenchanted with politicians and the political process.



There is no better environment for reformist policy promoting personal and economic liberty than within the heart of the Liberal Party. Incentive is where innovation thrives, and by building a framework for environment considered energy policy, we can utilise market force to benefit consumers, benefit the environment and boost our economy.

With our market economy and innovation driving down prices for renewable energy and with the NSW Upper House on the cusp of repealing nuclear prohibition, there is no better time for investment and education. Despite the Federal Government exceeding the Renewable Energy Target last year and providing record investment in clean energy, the ordinary Australian is left wanting more. Red tape, taxes and mining prohibition will do nothing to make the energy market more effective and efficient. If we want transformative change, we need to utilise the power of the market. Whether it's a tax break incentive, a small business rebate package or an instant asset write off, there are viable options which limit government intervention and expenditure while promoting citizen sovereignty.

As this progression draws more prominent in the public and private sphere, production and innovation will follow suit. As the next generation of policy makers, it is our job to generate and encourage ideas which create economic growth and environmental sustainability.



# Pragmatism and Complacency: The Slow Death of Liberalism and Human Rights



Alex Galitsky  
Ryde Young Liberals

The universality of human rights is facing the most serious challenge to its legitimacy since first being codified in international law by the United Nations in the wake of the Second World War. In this brief history, never has such apathy towards the role of human rights in both foreign and domestic policy existed.

Liberal democracies in the three decades since the end of the Cold War could best be described as complacent. While revisionist powers such as China, Russia, Iran and Turkey consolidated their tools of dictatorship and expanded their regional footprint, our community of nations have squandered opportunity and capital, both financial and reputational, in the pursuit of indulgence.

During the Cold War, liberal democracies fought to prevent the expansion of an ideology which had manifested into the single most destructive and genocidal force in history - one that threatened the foundations of the liberal world order borne from the defeat of fascism and imperialism.

Today, we find ourselves at a frustrating juncture in which our actions are no longer necessarily derived from principle, but pragmatism.

This dichotomy – between principle and pragmatism – is one often employed as an excuse for inaction. Whether it be our hesitancy to criticise China's activities in the South China Sea, or condemn the genocides of the Uighurs and Rohingya Muslims, or provide support to the people of Hong Kong, Kashmir or West Papua in the face of brutal crackdowns, our decision-makers are often confounded by how to deal with some of the most pressing global human rights crises due to a fear of commitment driven by cynical cost-benefit analyses that reduce humanity to statistics.

If we are to maintain that what differentiates our vision of world order from those who seek to challenge it are the foundational principles of universal human rights and liberal democracy, then it stands to reason that it would be pragmatic to advance the cause of liberalism. In other words, it should be in the national interest to promote our principles.

While this belief propelled the policies of Western democracies during the Cold War when the threat to liberalism was obvious and monolithic, our complacency in victory has led us to ignore the new more insidious threat to liberalism: apathy, and the unwillingness to stand up for our values.

One of Australia's most confusing international relationships has come to exemplify unprincipled policymaking and the betrayal of national values. No one contests that under the leadership of Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Turkey has become increasingly authoritarian – yet Australia has done little to register its objection, and everything to seek Ankara's approval. When Turkey's Erdogan disgracefully insulted our ANZACs and incited violence against Australians for political gain in the wake of the Christchurch massacre Australia's threat of strong action fell flat. And while Turkey pursues its genocidal policy against the Kurds of Eastern Turkey and North Syria, and continues to lead the world in the arrest of journalists and opposition politicians, Australia has not only offered very little by way of criticism but has bent over backwards to appease the dictatorship. Nothing better encapsulates that than the ongoing refusal by Australia to recognise the Armenian Genocide for fear of reprisal.

As this is an issue of great importance to me as an Armenian Australian, it would be remiss of me not to note that much the same could be said of Australia's absurd relationship with Turkey's neighbour Azerbaijan, which has pursued a brazenly genocidal assault (both physically and culturally) against the Armenians of Artsakh – a position both DFAT and a (now former) government minister defended. This in itself a betrayal of Australia's historic support for the fundamental right to self-determination in the cases of East Timor, Kosovo, and South Sudan in the name of preventing genocide.

And this doesn't even begin to address the desertion of principle in domestic policy making. Whether it be the wasted opportunities to lead the world in climate action, the stifled half-hearted efforts to provide an Indigenous voice to parliament, and a refugee policy that has attracted criticism from the United Nations for its defiance of international humanitarian law, Australia has been pushed to the brink of irrelevance by embodying the status-quo and aspiring to mediocrity.

Our isolation, prosperity, dynamic democracy, unique demography, and enviable geography have all the trappings of a state which could lead the world in its ingenuity and exert a moral and cultural authority well beyond the bounds of our military might and economic influence in the same way other small and middle powers (such as Norway or Switzerland) have. But instead, we have become so risk-averse, so fearful of pushing the boundaries, that we have out of expedience begun to abandon what defines us.

To end with a quote from Robert Menzies: "We took the name 'Liberal' because we were determined to be a progressive party, willing to make experiments, in no sense reactionary but believing in the individual, his rights, and his enterprise, and rejecting the socialist panacea."

In an age where liberalism and the universality of the values and rights that underpin it are being challenged on all fronts, we cannot afford to concede to complacency.

## Cultural Soft Power



**Emily Steadman**  
Ku-Ring-Gai Young Liberals

The political economy of Asia-Pacific is shifting away from the US towards China, yet Australia risks isolating itself by neglecting to interact with the region culturally. Our most abundant export industries coal, iron ore, natural gas and higher education should be followed by, if not exceeded by, the Hemsworths or rather what they represent; our film and television Industry.

The Australian industry has atrophied, due to neglect and outright hindrance by successive governments, the successful 70s/80s film era ushered in by the policies of John Gorton's Liberal government have been dismantled. It established Australia as the laidback, peaceful country surviving on a hostile continent, to ourselves and the world at large. The enduring legacy is exemplified by Crocodile Dundee, a film targeted at the American market. Love it or hate it, Dundee created the demand for tourism, Australian faces in their media, consumption of Australian products and American investment in Australia. Now, Australia should be looking to encourage the Asia-Pacific similarly.

Film is an integral part of the consumable culture; it is quickly digestible and a transferable medium with a lasting impact. Our fastest-growing economic partners, China and India, are powerhouses of the



cinematic market with adaptable audiences proven by the success of Chinese-American movie *The Meg*. Why is the Australian government making it expensive and challenging to film here? Allowing studios from other regions to shoot and create in Australia will not only increase tourism, promote Australian products but encourage the younger generations who study here to participate with Australian culture. China and India are the largest consumers of our international education. Two-thirds of the world's middle class will be in the Asia-Pacific by 2050, creating a massive market for creative content and Australian products if we invest now.

Establishing a thriving industry allows a robust national identity consistently constructed, examined and reconstructed as society evolves. This identity then can be packaged and exported in targeted films to Asia-Pacific similar to *Crocodile Dundee* in America. Our homegrown talent has been routinely drawn overseas for decades to Hollywood's prominent home market; therefore, the salaries and budget to match. Nevertheless, celebrities like Chris Hemsworth have shown support through bringing the filming of *Thor: Ragnarok* to the Gold Coast. While the Morrison government's policies of tax rebates, direct funding and regulatory measures have been successful in securing the production of the next instalment "*Thor: Love and Thunder*" further investment is crucial. Achieved through a \$24.1 million Location Incentive grant, Minister Paul Fletcher discussed the economic advantages of a single production in Australia, "The film is expected to invest over \$178 million in our economy, create up to 2,500 jobs and use the services of around 1,650 businesses." An aggressive strategy of promotion and collaboration to Asian markets should be embraced to replicate this lucrative opportunity on an ongoing basis. Not only should we be funding the arts but enabling the market to support by encouraging private and foreign investment. Encouraging a distrustful domestic market to consume locally produced content, exploring our cultural identity through comedies, drama, history, crime, sci-fi and supernatural themes. The stories we tell ourselves to entertain, explore, question in a light, unobtrusive style are integral to forming cultural norms. Who else

would depict and explore our history in nuanced voice while questioning our present? It conjointly allows Australia to control our reputation and image overseas.

Our neglect of film and television in this country has made it easier to be more aware of American or British history than ours. With streaming services, Stan and Netflix are beginning to produce Australian content, Tidelands (Netflix), True History of the Kelly Gang (Stan), there is ample opportunity to reinvigorate our mediascape. We should be leveraging the thirst for more content by encouraging production locally with our writers, actors and other creatives behind the projects.

To enable this, the guidelines for what would be supported need to be reviewed and optimised. Current guidelines set down by Screen Australia minimise the opportunity for genres outside of dramas and kids programming to be produced. In line with the Morrison government stance of “any changes in this area would need to be made carefully and with industry consensus,” the Liberals should be investing in a thinktank or review involving industry professionals from abroad and domestic markets to help create a flourishing industry and encourage cross-cultural collaborations. Successful promotion of Australia will always include representations of the intended audience. Crocodile Dundee featured an American lead and was partially shot in America. We need to incentivise collaboration with production companies in Asian and Pacific nations to allow for easy consumption while also introducing Australian films to untapped markets.

The Liberal government needs to learn from our predecessors and embolden our creative industry. It may take years to rebuild our creative sector, but we cannot neglect it. It is the key to our role in Asia-Pacific and boosting our ties beyond trade. Australia must effectively bring together the necessary elements - people, ideas and resources - to realise the potential of our film industry. It is time for Australia to step into a new role in the region, one that can mediate and ensure prosperity for the entire region. We have the people and the ideas; all they need are the resources.

# The Importance of Liberal Institutions



**Nikolaos Skondrianos**  
Macarthur Young Liberals

Australia’s Pacific Step Up has been an ambitious and comprehensive policy that has seen investment poured into Pacific Island nations, strengthening the sovereignty, stability, security and prosperity of our region.

But our interests go beyond the Pacific.

We have an interest, regionally and globally, to ensure that our values, our interests, are not only represented but upheld in our relationships between nations and in international institutions. Our presence, whether it be military, diplomatic, or economic, is vital to championing our values on the international stage.

In an age of rising concerns of escalatory actions abroad, competing interests and values are making the international system susceptible to illiberal forces. Australia has an obligation to consistently step up to ensure the values that we enjoy in Australia, freedom of the individual, of expression and from oppression, are rooted and strengthened in the international order. We achieve this through a multitude of ways.

Our alliance system has been a vital asset since the establishment of the current international order. It has seen our relationships develop from the United Kingdom, to the United States, and more recently, the broader Indo-Pacific, laying down the bedrock for deeper ties with our allies. This is best illustrated by our growing number of diplomatic missions, our most recent being established in Palau and the Cook Islands.

Our economic ties are stronger than ever. In 2019, Australia ratified Free Trade Agreements with Indonesia, Peru, and Hong Kong, increasing our number of FTAs to 15. Ongoing negotiations on free trade agreements, including with India, the UK, and European Union, and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, Australia is well placed to ensure continued investment in our region and Australia.

Our military alliances strengthen and preserve the peace and security of our region which we have enjoyed for decades. Our alliance with the United States has seen us secure our region and globe from a multitude of threats. The ‘Quad’, bringing together



the United States, Australia, Japan, and India, is a vital relationship emerging to support and guard a free and open Indo-Pacific.

Australia has been an active member in the international community and our ability to leverage our soft power is one of our greatest assets. Our engagement in multilateral organisations, such as the Pacific Islands Forum, the Five Eyes, and TPP-11, are an opportunity for Australia to contribute and influence outcomes aligned to our interests and values. They provide a forum by which we can engage within the international system to communicate our interests and values, concerns and expectations. This is vitally important to promote and strengthen our increasingly important regional and potential global position.

They also provide an invaluable intelligence gathering opportunity. As we signal our own intentions, we gain insight into other states. It allows us to inform policy, engagement with states and the international system, aimed at effectively communicating with states, balance competing states' interests, and ensure our own interests and values are secure.

In a dynamic and multipolar international order, increasingly susceptible to illiberal forces, Australia must step up to safeguard our interests and values in the international system. This is not done by constraining states through further organisations, such as former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's Asia-Pacific Union. He was right that current and future issues are "collective challenges that no one country can address alone", but we cannot afford another organisation plagued by problems, such as those in the European Union.

It is a delicate balance we confront daily. Economic, military, and diplomatic problems can come unexpectedly, and these can be dealt with unilaterally, or by one or more institutions. We must never be constricted to believe that future challenges can be solved by a simplistic formula of a single organisation or process to provide a comprehensive and complete solution.

Our involvement in Operation Sentinel in the Strait in Hormuz demonstrates how Australia can, and does, ensure its interests and values are upheld. We saw the importance of the Strait for Australian and global oil trade and the need for Australia's engagement, tempered by our continued support for the JCPOA, despite escalating tensions between the US and Iran.

We are the party of small government, and that includes on the international stage. Rigid, legalistic organisations are not always necessary to achieve our goals. While they serve a purpose, we should not sacrifice the liberal international order for the sake of encompassing all states and attempting to bind them in institutions or organisations with competing interests and values. Action through alliances and multilateral organisations, such as the Quad, East Asia Summit, and Pacific Islands Forum, are to be based upon consensus between nations, not a supra-state organisation enforcing rules upon its member states arbitrarily.

We face a future system divided by ideology and competing interests, threatening the sovereignty and security not only of Australia but all nations which have benefited from the liberal international order. Australia must continually step up and ensure that our interests and values are upheld in the liberal international order, whether unilaterally or in cooperation with other states, which has ensured the security of our region and globe, and the freedom of its peoples. As the German Foreign Minister said, "If we pool our strengths . . . we can become something like 'rule shapers,' who design and drive an international order that the world urgently needs."



*The views expressed within belong to the authors, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Liberal Party of Australia (NSW Division) or the Young Liberal Movement of Australia (NSW Division).*



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NSW DIVISION

Authorised by Chaneg Torres, Young Liberal Movement of Australia (NSW Division) Level 12, 100 William Street, East Sydney NSW 2011.