



Australian Adam Smith Club (Melbourne)

President: Timothy Warner, Editor: Mannie Gross, P.O. Box 950, Hawthorn, 3122

Everyone is bound to assert his rights and resist their invasion by others.
Immanuel Kant (Lecture at Königsberg, 1775)

Tim Wilson

on

Traditional Rights & Freedoms: the Report has arrived

**The Adam Smith Club will host a meeting on Monday the 16th of May, 2016
at Bohème Restaurant Bar, 368 Bridge Road, Richmond.**

The Australian Law Reform Commission has spent two years inquiring into the encroachment and the dangers to Australia's Traditional Rights - what were once called the Rights of Free-Born Englishmen - sometimes the Rights of the Common Law. This inquiry - established originally to discuss matters such as 18C, has now delivered a Final Report. Tim Wilson's work as the 'Freedoms Commissioner' at the Human Rights Commission informed the development of this inquiry and its final report. He will give his unvarnished thoughts on these important matters and perhaps some thoughts on how the Liberal Government may react to its findings.

Tim Wilson was Australia's Human Rights Commissioner from 2014 until his resignation in 2016. He is the Liberal candidate for the Division of Goldstein in the Australian House of Representatives at the 2016 election. Tim was a public policy analyst, commentator and a policy director of the Institute of Public Affairs for seven years.

Attendance is open to both members and non-members. Those desiring to attend should complete the attached slip and return it to the Club no later than the 13th of May, 2016. Tickets will not be sent. Those attending should arrive at 6:30pm for dinner at 7:00pm. The cost is \$45.00 per head for members and \$50.00 per head for non-members (see next page for explanation of arrangements and for electronic booking details).

**Enquiries to Hon. Secretary, mob. 0403 933 786
or email: asmith@adamsmithclub.org**



detach and return

The Secretary,
Australian Adam Smith Club (Melbourne),
PO Box 950, Hawthorn, Victoria 3122.

Please reserve place(s) at \$45.00 dollars per member andplace(s) at \$50.00 per non-member for the May 16th meeting of the Australian Adam Smith Club. I enclose the amount of \$..... in payment for the same.

NAME (please print):

ADDRESS:

SIGNATURE: TEL:

LAISSEZ FAIRE ON THE WEB

This newsletter has an address on the web: <http://www.adamsmithclub.org/laissez.htm>. The Club's web site can be found at <http://www.adamsmithclub.org/>.

ELECTRONIC PAYMENTS

By popular demand, the AASC now offers electronic booking and payment to dinner meetings. Bookings can be made by emailing the number of members and non-members attending to twarner@adamsmithclub.org; a reply email from the club will then be sent with a link to PayPal where the payment can be made by Mastercard, Visa, AMEX, Diners or PayPal Account. Bookings made after Thursday 12th of May will not be accepted online. FEES - a \$2 card fee will apply for the transaction.

NEGATIVE GEARING

Whether one agrees with the principle of negative gearing or not, or whether one agrees with its current application, the Opposition leader's suggested changes must surely make one wonder whose side is he on.

Purportedly, limiting the application of negative gearing only to new construction will increase the housing stock and improve housing affordability while at the same time creating jobs. Noble aspirations maybe, but government legislation is rarely so finely drafted as to achieve such narrow targets. The suggested changes will not apply evenly across the market, but rather add further distortions and inequity than it aims to address.

Pointing out just a few of the unforeseen consequences:

Investors chasing the tax advantage will encourage developers to pull down existing housing stock to make way for new, causing irrevocable changes to the character of our established suburbs. One new house for one old one does not increase housing stock. Higher density housing must pass through statutory planning hoops with its inevitable delays and increased costs.

If investors shy away from established dwellings, then renters may be forced out of these areas as owner/occupiers move in. While housing prices may go down (some experts predict a 2-5% value drop), with less housing stock available for rent, rental rates will inevitably increase. Home buyers benefit at the expense of the renter because not surprisingly, these proposed changes do not miraculously provide renters with the capital to purchase outright.

We are already being warned that the apartment bubble is about to burst with Investors' appetite for off the plan apartment construction waning as occupancy rates fail to keep pace. Moreover, inner city high rise apartment living is generally not a proposition for families, pushing families further outwards.

But wait. As this policy will encourage increased construction on the outer fringes of our capital cities, there should be plenty of houses with enough bedrooms and token gardens, notwithstanding the severe lack of public transport and other vital services to these areas, such as health and education as well as the need to preserve agricultural land.

Our politicians need to seriously think this one through rather than grab headlines with one-liners. More likely this will end in tears. *RB*

VENUE ARRANGEMENTS

For the May 16th dinner at Bohème Restaurant Bar, there will be a two course dinner (main & dessert, followed by tea or coffee). The restaurant is fully licensed (no BYO). A separate (upstairs) room has been reserved for the dinner meeting. We hope these arrangements do not cause inconvenience and we welcome your feedback. Please note that because the Club must provide final numbers of attendees to the restaurant on the 14th of May, **we are unable to admit anyone to the dinner who has not notified the Club of their attendance by Friday 13th of May.**

Laissez Faire

Newsletter of the Australian Adam Smith Club (Melbourne), No 116, April 2016



CLIMATE OF DECEPTION

Our mainstream media continue to warn of climate change catastrophe unless we curb all forms of fossil fuel consumption. Yet despite their best efforts the message is not getting through. Polling in the US, UK & Australia indicate that as the message is becoming more strident fewer people are believing. Catastrophic climate change is continually lowering on people's priority list.

An example of the subtle dishonesty of the media can be found on the Page 14 of the *Sunday Age* (25/4) which has an article entitled "Off its tilt: How we made the Earth fat (and thin)". Science writer Peter Spinks opens with "For the first time, the growing ecological footprint of humans has caused the whole planet to change its tilt." This is not a quote from any scientist but the writer's assertion stated as if it were established fact.

After a little Internet investigation, it is clear that *the Age* article is derivative. Similar articles have appeared in the *Nature World News* (11/4), *the Guardian* (9/4), *National Geographic* (8/4), *CBS News* (8/4), *ABC Science* (7/4). The original scientific paper can be found at *Science Advances* (1/4), hopefully not an April Fool's Day joke. This paper claims to be able to explain the shift in Earth's spin axis over the period 2005-15 by changes in the distribution of water over the Earth's surface over the same period. Data from satellites that measure changes in gravity over the Earth's surface are analyzed & from changes in these gravity measurements the authors conclude there must be movements of mass (water). The paper claims to have measured large amount of ice melting in Greenland & West Antarctica and significant drying out of land (Africa & Asia). It is claimed that the shift in water is caused by climate change. The chain of reasoning goes like this:

1. Grace satellites measure a change in gravity over the Earth's surface;
2. From astronomical measurements, the Earth's spin axis has moved slightly over this period;
3. The movement of the Earth's spin axis is explained by the change of the distribution of mass over the Earth;
4. This change in gravity correlates very well with the (measured/modelled?) movement of water over the Earth's surface. Therefore, the change in the distribution of water over the Earth's surface is the cause of the shift of the Earth's spin axis;
5. The cause of the shift in water distribution is due to global warming/climate change;
6. The cause of global warming/climate change is human emissions of (mostly) CO₂. (This last point is not in the original article but is made in most of the news articles referred to above.)

In assessing the credibility of an article, often "the devil is in the detail". <https://wattsupwiththat.com/2010/09/06/grace-under-fire/> is an article that questions the accuracy of the Grace satellite measurements. If the satellite measurements are claimed to indicate change in to the distribution of water over the Earth's surface, then this change should also be apparent in tidal gauge measurements. I am unaware of any such check on the accuracy of the satellite measurements being made.

In the ABC Science article, Karl Kruszelnicki at least recognizes that the sudden change in the shift of the Earth's spin axis does not correlate with change in the climate:

Why, in 2005, did both the Chandler wobble and the spin axis shift suddenly instead of gradually? Again, we know that they did, but we don't why - yet.

In other words, the change in water distribution over the Earth's surface is too gradual to explain the sudden change in the tilt of the Earth's spin axis. It is also important to note that correlation does not prove causation and the shift of the Earth's spin axis may be due to something else altogether. Assuming the Grace satellites are measuring a significant change in the distribution of water over the Earth's surface, it does not prove it is mostly due to climate change. For instance, there are many active volcanos under the Antarctic ice. It is not known how much they contribute to melting the ice. However sudden changes in seismic activity (and thus increases in melting of ice) might correlate better with the sudden changes in the tilt of the Earth's spin axis.

And finally we come to the last and most contentious point. The climate has been changing for millions of years. For most of Earth's existence, humans have not roamed the planet. It is true that CO₂ emissions cause some global warming but the degree of warming, as shown by actual measurement, is far less than predicted by the IPCC.

The majority of the media is in lock-step in its climate-change message. If you search the Internet it is often relatively easy to refute the various claims of approaching climate catastrophe. As each prediction eventually fails to eventuate, the number of skeptics grows & the political support to limit CO₂ emissions reduces. *MG*

THE RETURN OF THE BARBERSHOP

Those of you who keep an eye on what is going on around suburban shopping strips may have noticed barber shops springing up around Melbourne. These are different from the one-man operations that struggled to turn a profit and displayed signed endorsements from third-rate celebrities, commending the proprietor on his skills.

Haircuts were often cheap and the results were uniform. Short back and sides ruled. Many barbers could do no other style. Men with wavy hair often went to unisex salons because women's hairdressers, female and occasionally male, knew how to cut these types of hair. Gradually the barber shop became an endangered species. The days of undercover sales of cigarettes and condoms drew to a close. The smell of cheap pomade and stale cigarette smoke did nothing to improve the ambiance of the traditional barber shop.

Then, a miracle. Barber shops began opening again. Men wanted hairstyles, not just a haircut and the barbers could provide them. The hairstyles came in all forms; men started taking pride in their hairdos. Men also started growing mustaches and beards, often so exceptional as to be almost unique. If they wanted to look like legendary Viking Ragnar Lothbrok, that was okay. These new styles required expert trimming. Shaves with cutthroat razors also came back into fashion. And men were prepared to pay for these services. At my local barber shop, minimum price is \$25. The price for whippersnappers is lower. The barber shop is quite luxurious; no worn out, fifty-year-old barber's chairs.

On Saturday mornings, the barber shop near me, with its four chairs, is doing good business. All four chairs are occupied, with men and boys waiting in comfortable chairs. Few women are seen in the barber shop. Fathers take their sons for a haircut, just as they did 50 years ago.

Business, like most things, is cyclical. The demand for stylish haircuts for men is returning to the way things were in the 1950s. As for facial hair, it is gaining in popularity. In its various forms, the mustache and beard have been around literally forever, but the artistic arrangement of facial hair is gaining a popularity it has not had since the Victorian era. Complex mustaches are no longer the province of spivvy salesmen. Many younger men wear these stylish mustaches. I find it reassuring that fathers introduce their young sons into the company of men by taking them to the barber shop. They are saying: We are men; this is our place.

Imagine what starting a new trend in hair care must be under socialism. All the planning required, making up templates for new hairstyles, having them approved by the Ministry of Hair Improvement, then planning and gaining approval for new shops and property leases. Of course, there would be a long and complex course on being a barber, with heavy emphasis on the political theory and practice of barbering under socialism.

Compare that to a free enterprise system. If you want to open a barber shop, you lease some premises; if it works out its great, if it doesn't you come to a commercial arrangement with your landlord to break the lease. No drama. You start out with a range of hairstyles; if your customer wants a new style, that's okay, you can do it for him. Your social interaction with your customer goes along the lines of "Geez, the Doggies are doing well this year. You reckon they're a chance for the finals?" If you've got a lot of business on Saturday, you hire some casuals. If it's slack during midweek, you can handle it by yourself

It is reassuring that men are reclaiming a part of their masculinity which had been alienated. That men are doing this for themselves. That fathers are introducing their sons to the company of men. And that because of free enterprise capitalism, we are free to choose whatever hairstyle we like. *JRB*

NOVEMBER DINNER REPORT

The April Meeting was a lively one. Our speaker Dr Gary Johns gave a short address - outlining the social problem of intergenerational poverty, and his suggested solution, contractual agreements with welfare recipients to take contraceptive measures until their removal from welfare. The first part of the talk was widely supported, but his solution was subject to strong criticism and strong support.

The Q & A was an hour in length and engaged the audience. One questioner complimenting the speaker on his perspicacious analysis and horror at his solution. May questioners sought further details of Dr Johns researches and the alternative schemes tried in New Zealand and the UK.

With our friendly book publisher Anthony Cappello moving the 'Connor Court' HQ to Brisbane, we had a new representative in Mikayla to dispense books when Connor Court authors are speaking. Her questions and conversation at dinner showed Connor Court Victoria is in good hands.

The venue provided an excellent meal, the continuing renovations make it a great choice. Michael Warby gave a very engaging Vote of Thanks with reference to a recent paper on the economics of sexual choice - the evenings debate almost restarted spontaneously, with the Hon Treasurer calling for citations from the floor. A great start to the year. *TW*