

# Craig Isherwood - Citizens Party Senate Candidate for Victoria

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Thirty-four years ago, in 1988, when I was 27, my wife Noelene and I, together with a couple of other extraordinary Australians, founded the Citizens Electoral Council of Australia (CEC) in Kingaroy, Queensland. (The party was renamed the Australian Citizens Party in 2019.)

We had three small children, all under five years old. Still, we believed that globalisation and free trade policies were destroying our family farms and industries and any semblance of sovereignty we had as a nation, and we felt strongly that we had to take responsibility to do something about it. The existing political parties no longer represented us, or our community, but served the vested interests of big business and the financial/banking sector. Here we are, more than three decades later, and it is worse than ever.

The CEC was founded just after the 20 October 1987, “Black Tuesday” stock market crash which saw 25 per cent wiped off the Australian stock market, with ordinary folk losing millions. Interest rates were not 0.1 per cent as they are now, but as high as 22 per cent. Inflation was running close to 8 per cent, an all-time high in Australian history.

We were at the end of the “developmentalists” era (to borrow a term from Bob Katter MP) when government leaders took pride in building infrastructure, an era progressively replaced by radical green anti-development policies which have stifled the building of necessary physical-economic infrastructure in power, water, transportation and many other areas.

More personally, throughout the mid '80s, I was part of a small group of farmers trying to develop

new technologies in agriculture, using trace mineral supplementation. Growing a wide variety of good quality veggies in my backyard is an ongoing passion—something that keeps me anchored in the real world.

During these years, we proved that by using these new technologies, exceptionally poor soils could be transformed. We showed that crops grown in these poor soils, already written off by the agricultural authorities as worthless, could match the yields of some of the best volcanic soils in the country. When these discoveries were brought to the attention of the agricultural departments, or more importantly the banks, the true “technological apartheid” confronting real development in this country became clearly evident.

I love science, and the exciting discoveries that science brings. When I finished High School in 1977, I was given an early offer to attend the Western Australian Institute of Technology to study Medical Laboratory Technology—today it’s called Medical Science. I rose to the top of that course in a year, and got to work in the Histopathology Department at Royal Perth Hospital over the Christmas break, but discovered that whilst I loved the science, I did not like the job, but also I did not like the idea of being locked into this as a career course. At 18—this was not what I wanted to do.

Effectively, I took a 10 year “gap-year”, during which Noelene and I were married in 1981. Over this period I worked as a service station attendant; youth worker in Perth, Western Australia, and also in Queensland; council worker in Noosa; farm hand/manager; and then as owner and operator of an equipment hire shop for several years which led up to 1988.

In 1988, Noelene and I were part of a team that decided to challenge the political status quo, and go “political”. My disgust for the lack of commitment for real technological development was a significant factor. We had to change this.

The CEC was formed in February 1988, with its headquarters based in the office of my hire shop in Kingaroy. Through a “mass-strike” grass-roots movement that I helped to lead, catalysed by the previous years’ events that I mentioned earlier, to our surprise, in the April 1988 Barambah by-election, we won our first seat, the seat of the former long-standing Premier of Queensland Sir Joh Bjelke-Peterson. Ironically, the candidate we defeated was the recently retired leader of the National party and former Deputy Prime Minister Warren Truss. Back then, Truss was standing for the State seat of Barambah, before going directly into Federal politics.

Simply by default, as we knew no better at that time, we were a “populist” movement. However, many of us who formed the CEC also held a deep commitment to fight for our sovereignty, and a disgust for the colonialism we still suffered as part of the British Empire—oops sorry, “Commonwealth”. As my fellow Senate Candidate for New South Wales, Bob Butler, has reflected, that deep commitment led to a close association with the international LaRouche Movement, established by American statesman and physical economist Lyndon H. LaRouche Jr. (now deceased).

As we have witnessed, throughout Australia’s recent history, populist political movements come and go like shifting sands. Without a solid philosophical and intellectual base, they quickly disintegrate when confronted with real political issues and challenges. The CEC in its early days risked the same demise.

In order to make sure that our Party did not disappear, in 1989, I founded *The New Citizen* newspaper, which printed over 20 million copies in more than 100 editions. *The New Citizen* was used as the vehicle to bring together members and supporters, from all over Australia, who supported the aims of the CEC/ACP. Since 2019, due to changing times created by the rise of the internet, *The New Citizen* has been replaced with the *Australian Alert Service* newsletter, weekly flyers and leaflets, and our on-line advertising and outreach methods.

In 1991, after spending several months in the USA with the LaRouche organisation, I re-founded the ACP as a principled, philosophical political party based on the discoveries I had made during this time—discoveries in the science of physical economy. In 1992, because of the excitement generated Australia-wide after sharing my new discoveries, it became necessary to establish a national office to coordinate our political activities. I moved my family from Queensland to establish our national office in Coburg, Melbourne, where we are still based.

The philosophy of the ACP, written into our Constitution, is that all human beings are created *Imago Viva Dei* (in the image of the Creator), and endowed with creative reason which, if developed and nurtured, enables us to make discoveries of the unseen physical principles that govern and determine the way the universe works. This divine nature of creativity sets us apart from all other animals, and gives us a responsibility to master those “unseen” physical principles which can improve the human condition, and the condition of the planet as a whole, for generations to come. These principles, when applied through technology into the physical economy, can transform the productive powers of human labour for the betterment of all human beings. This is not some arbitrary good idea, but is the essential nature of what it means to be human, and is embraced by all the main mono-theistic religions, as well as Confucianism, in an equivalent way.

Our human creativity, which is the true nature of mankind, is the idea celebrated by the world's greatest poets, musicians and artists (Shakespeare, Schiller, Keats, Shelley, Bach, Beethoven, Mozart and many others), and which resonates with me, having studied piano from a very young age, and continuing today with my attempts to play the classical organ—two hands and two feet, simultaneously!

This philosophy gives the ACP the place to stand to develop just and progressive policies, to oppose the tyranny of those who wish misery on the world by reducing human beings to less than beasts, inducing them to accept less than their true human potential, and denying justice, in all its forms, to those who need it.

For Noelene and I, the ACP has never been about politics, but rather a mission to help bring about a better world, and that mission is now shared by our sons Aaron and Glen, along with Aaron's wife Katherine. (Those were the young ones under 5 when we started out.)

It is our shared mission for all forms of justice. I support the concept of a New Just Economic Order globally, which is developing through various organisations including the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa). Such a just order stands in stark contrast to the terrible misery inflicted by the still hegemonic (but decaying) policies of free-trade, globalisation and war-mongering coming from the West. In 2015, at the invitation of Prof. Georgy Toloraya, Executive Director of the Russian National Committee for BRICS Research, I travelled to Russia and attended the 2015 Civic BRICS Forum.

This experience confirmed my fierce opposition to the "McCarthyite" short-term and very dangerous war-mongering attacks on China, and President Xi Jinping's Belt and Road Initiative and "Win-Win" solutions. We need peace through this type of economic development, not war created by geopolitical ambitions of the West.



Although my life is a political mission and leadership of our national political party can be a seven-day-a-week responsibility, not everything is politics. Living in Melbourne allows me to attend many cultural events such as famous operas and musical performances.

I enjoy gardening and growing as many fruits and vegetables in my garden as I can. My father was a master cabinet maker and builder, so I have continued to use the knowledge and experience

I gained from him to build furniture, which Noelene completes with beautiful mosaics.

Finally, after training for over a year during COVID lockdowns, at age 61, I completed my first half-marathon in the Nike Melbourne Marathon Festival. This was a very satisfying experience, requiring focus and discipline. Good health and wellbeing are going to be needed by all of us, to face the immense challenges ahead.

I ask for your vote and your support in the upcoming election.

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