



# Australian Citizens Party

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **Must watch! Return government to the people—take back national and economic sovereignty**

The Australian Citizens Party's National Policy Platform launch on 17 November showcased a powerful line-up of speakers on the ACP's policy theme "Return government to the people".

The speeches are essential viewing for in-depth insights into the principles that underpin the ACP's policies to enable the people to take back control of government from vested corporate and foreign interests, to save ourselves from disastrous wars and revive our national economy.

[Click here to read the ACP's Policy Platform.](#)

These vested interests include the Big Four banks, the consulting firms, and the duopolies and oligopolies, which dominate the important sectors of the economy; and the foreign-funded think tanks, the weapons manufacturers, the defence lobbyists, and the foreign governments which set the terms of Australia's foreign policy.

The ACP's policies are focused on taking control back from these interests, so Australians can once again know that the government they elect is truly in charge, and can be held accountable to them.

The ACP will take to the next election its headline policies of fighting for an independent foreign policy to reclaim national sovereignty from Washington and London, and for a public post office People's Bank to reclaim economic sovereignty from the Big Four banks and corporations which control Australia's economy.

Following are the links to the YouTube videos of the speeches by a combination of ACP leaders and guest presenters.

#### **Panel 1: National sovereignty—Australia needs an independent foreign policy**

[Australia is not sovereign without an independent foreign policy](#)

*Speech by John Lander, former Australian Deputy Ambassador to China (1974-76), former Ambassador to Iran (1985-87). John Lander is eminently qualified to speak on this subject, as a veteran Australian diplomat with 30 years' experience in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Alongside his embassy postings, John Lander headed up the China Desk at DFAT three times, where he played a central role in building Australia's relationship with China, and also represented Australia at UNESCO.*

[Subservience to a foreign power damages Australia's most important trade relationship](#)

*Speech by Richard Yuan, founder Australia-China Entrepreneurs (ACE) Club, founder ABC World Pty Ltd (speaking in place of Kingsley Liu, past President of Asian Australian Lawyers Association, Honorary President of the Chinese Community Council of Australia). Richard Yuan is a strategic leader, and community leader in Australia, with record of fostering China-Australia relations through business innovation, cultural exchange, and digital influence. Richard founded "ABC World Pty Ltd" in 2000. It is a global digital platform for immigration advisory, investment management and media services, and is one of the largest WeChat platforms in the Southern Hemisphere. As founder of the "Australia-China Entrepreneurs (ACE) Club", Richard has created a high-impact network blending cultural heritage, business diplomacy and social ties.*

[Australian government's Gaza hypocrisy betrays its Muslim citizens](#)

*Speech by Aisha Novakovich BA, LLB, lawyer, community advocate, entrepreneur. Aisha Novakovich is a unique leadership voice in Australia, including on matters relating to Australia's Muslim community, and the experience of Australian Muslims in dealing with the Islamophobia that our governments have invited to help justify Australia's involvement in Anglo-American wars in the Middle East. Aisha was invited to share the perspective of an Australian Muslim on the message that the Australian government sends to Australia's Palestinian and Muslim communities, by its seeming inability to take an independent position from the United States on the genocide in Gaza.*

#### **Panel 2: Economic sovereignty—Australia needs a national bank**

## [Reclaim economic sovereignty with a post office People's Bank](#)

Speech by Elisa Barwick, Chief Editor, Australian Alert Service. Elisa is a 30-year veteran of the ACP, who has accumulated an extensive body of research into a wide array of issues, including the inner workings of the global financial system.

## [The Commonwealth Bank of Australia From Promise to Despair and Despoliation](#)

Speech by Dr Evan Jones, Honorary Associate in Political Economy at the University of Sydney. In his career at Sydney University as a lecturer in 1973-2005, Evan Jones was part of the resistance against the neoliberal revolution that swept the world and Australia. Dr Jones didn't have to wait to see the outcome of the neoliberal deregulation of Australia; he predicted it, he opposed it as it happened, and he has been vindicated. He has spent more than two decades dealing with one of the messes that these policies created, by advocating for some of the hundreds of thousands of victims of the rapacious practices of the major banks.

## [A People's Bank will set standards for serving consumers](#)

Speech by Assoc. Prof. Andy Schmulow, Faculty of Business and Law, University of Wollongong. Dr Schmulow is prominent in the debate about financial corruption and regulation in Australia, on which issues he is known for his striking clarity. Dr Schmulow has been a driving force in the very large Senate inquiries into PwC, ASIC, and the supermarket duopoly, and he made an invaluable contribution to the Senate inquiry into bank closures in regional Australia, which was reflected in its recommendations. The Citizens Party nominated Dr Schmulow alongside Christine Holgate as two possible members of the Expert Panel recommended by the Senate to investigate the feasibility of establishing a public bank.

### **Panel 3: Return integrity to government**

#### [Abolish and replace ASIC](#)

Speech by John Adams, Independent Economist and Principal Economic Analyst at Adams Economics. John Adams is very well known here and around Australia. He has a YouTube program with banking expert Martin North called *In The Interests Of The People*, and his own channel called *The Public Crusader*. He has been extraordinarily effective in using social media to mobilise public opinion on crucial issues such as the 2019 cash ban bill, the 2020 bail-in repeal bill, and the 2022 Senate inquiry into the Australian Securities and Investments Commission.

#### [Lawforce: Equality of Arms for financial victims](#)

Speech by Michael Sanderson, Foundation member of 'Bank Warriors' and Advisor with 'Bank Reform Now'. Michael Sanderson represents the hundreds of thousands of Australians who are victims of the banks and financial predators. He has become a tireless advocate for bank victims as part of Bank Warriors, who attend all bank Annual General Meetings to ask pointed questions of the CEOs. From his experience, Michael has developed a proposal to fix the enormous legal power imbalance between the banks and their victims, which the Citizens Party has adopted as policy.

#### [Banking self-regulation has failed Australia](#)

Speech by Geoff Fader, Chair of the Tasmanian Small Business Council, Former chair of COSBOA. Geoff Fader has spent years advocating for small business bank victims, which involves navigating the legal minefield in which the banks have all the power. Under Geoff's leadership, the Tasmanian Small Business Council has endorsed the post office bank policy, and Geoff testified that support to the Launceston hearing of the Senate inquiry into bank closures in regional Australia in October 2023.

### **Panel 4: An honest approach to governance**

#### [True transparency in government: support and protect whistleblowers](#)

Speech by John Shipton, political philosopher, anti-war activist and leading advocate for his son Julian Assange. Our first speaker is an institution in Australia, and a profound political philosopher. John's advocacy has taken him around the world, to engage with high-level government officials in many countries, including his own. He was the subject of the documentary *Ithaka: A Fight to Free Julian Assange*, aired by the ABC in 2022. John Shipton is a close friend of government whistleblower David McBride, and recently met with David in prison in Canberra.

#### [The ACP's principled approach to politics](#)

Speech by Dr Hakim Gassiep, Secretary of Islamic Society of Melbourne Eastern Region (ISOMER). Dr Hakim Gassiep works as a doctor in general practice in Melbourne. His experience in politics goes back to his early years in apartheid South Africa, where he was an activist with the African National Congress before moving to Australia in the 1970s. Since recently becoming involved with the Citizens Party, and becoming a community liaison for the party, he has brought boundless enthusiasm for the party's principles and campaigns.

## [How the ACP will represent citizens in Parliament](#)

*Speech by Robert Barwick, Citizens Party Research Director and Victorian Senate Candidate. Robert Barwick is a 30-year veteran of the Citizens Party, and spearheads the ACP's political campaigns and organising in Parliament, where he has travelled most months of the year every year since 2018 to talk sense to politicians. Robert represented the ACP at all 13 hearings of the recent Senate inquiry into bank closures in regional Australia, and testified at the Canberra hearing alongside Glen Isherwood.*