

Thanks Michele – and I would like to note that the ACTU is supporting Per Capita’s full employment project, alongside Maurice Blackburn, and we thank you sincerely for that – our work wouldn’t be possible without the donations we receive from partners and supporters.

Tomorrow, 30 May, is the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the tabling by Minister John Dedman of the Curtin Government’s White Paper on Full Employment in Australia.

As Wayne Swan said this morning – we have done this before. We can do it again. There are powerful forces aligned against us, but if we maintain our solidarity, we can prevail.

Per Capita’s “Jobs for Australia” project will tackle the many and varied elements of what we need to rebuild a *good society*.

This means a good, secure job for everyone who needs one, and who is able to work.

It means using all the levers of government – fiscal and monetary policy, social policy, industry policy, direct investment in infrastructure and in human resources, leveraging government procurement to increase employment opportunities, and the direct creation of public sector jobs with the government as an “employer of last resort”.

It means an industrial relations system that prioritises secure, well paid work with strong conditions.

It means a strong social safety net, and the provision of a living income to anyone who can’t work for any reason – whether that be because of illness or disability, caring responsibilities or because there isn’t a job available (although, if we succeed in creating full employment, that shouldn’t be the case). We must reject the idea that unemployment is a personal failure, and stop treating people who are structurally locked out of the labour market with cruelty and contempt.

It means an employment services system that actually helps people find work, rather than exists to punish them for not being in jobs that aren’t there.

It means ensuring that people with disabilities are given care and support, to reach their full potential and live secure, safe and dignified lives.

It means recognising the value of unpaid work and care, and ending the chronic underpayment of women’s work in the economy.

It means ensuring that men and women can share the work of caring for others, raising children and performing unpaid domestic labour more equally.

It means investing in the foundational economy – the essential workers who have been on the frontlines during this crisis – in the same way that we have, in the past, invested in manufacturing and construction.

It means investing in our children – providing free, universal access to early childhood education and care.

It means providing access throughout our lives to education and training that allows people to develop their skills and adapt to new ways of working.

It means ensuring that a fairer share of growth and profit goes to labour, through higher wages and shorter standard working hours.

It means working with First Nations people to ensure we end the unacceptable rates of poverty and ill-health that exist in their communities – and this must start with a Treaty and enshrining their voice in our constitution. The first step in building a better Australia is embracing the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

Critically, it means decarbonising our economy – moving to zero emissions as soon as possible, while leaving no-one behind. We must invest in the new jobs and new industries that can be powered by renewable energy, and provide secure jobs to replace those that rely on fossil fuels.

We can grow our economy sustainably, with the wellbeing of people and the planet at the centre of our approach.

All of this can be achieved if we reject austerity and promote investment in the productive capacity of the economy, and in what Wayne called our most important asset – our people.

Because, despite the neoliberal rhetoric, there **is** such a thing as society – it is all of us. The era of small government is over – it is time for smart government, caring government and for an economy that works for all people, lifting living standards for all.

Please sign up to our newsletter to ensure you hear about our upcoming work. Next cabs off the rank will be Shirley's report on youth unemployment, Simone's report on mutual obligation in the employment services system, and Myfan's next report in the Home for Good series we are doing with TACSI on better housing solutions for an ageing population.

Later in the year, we'll be publishing papers on strengthening the foundational economy, and on diversifying our industrial base, on regional jobs, on advanced manufacturing and more.

The summit we had planned for today has been postponed to a time when we hope to be able to travel again, in late September, at Old Parliament House in Canberra. Stay in

touch with us via the website, or our social media platforms, to ensure you don't miss out when tickets go on sale. It will be an opportunity for

And keep an eye out for our upcoming book, in partnership with Melbourne University Press, which I am co-editing with Professor Janet McCalman. What happens next? *Rebuilding Australia after COVID-19* will be released in the second half of the year, and will feature essays from some of those you've heard from today, including Michele, John and Andrew, as well as from Fiona Stanley, Roy Green, Mark Butler, Jenny Macklin, Stephen Parker, Rob Moodie, Liz Allen, Jay Weatherill, Terri Butler, Thomas Mayor, Jim Chalmers, Shireen Morris, Clare O'Neil, and Anthony Albanese – a list too long to go on with here. And also from our host today, Peter Lewis!

Thanks to all our speakers, Wayne, Ged and Andrew, Michele and John.

Thanks to my amazing colleagues at Per Capita – Abigail, Matt, Myfan, Shirley, Simone and Warwick. I feel lucky every day to work with such great people.

And finally, thanks to Peter and Ariane from Essential Media for hosting us today and managing the technology – it's gone incredibly smoothly, and even run to time!

Finally, a reminder to sign up to the Per Capita newsletter – all our work is free to access and download.

Per Capita is a small think tank, and we rely largely on donations to keep doing our work so, if you are fortunate enough to still have an income in these extraordinary times, and you can spare a dollar or two, please consider making a tax deductible donation to our research fund – you can do that via our website, or by emailing us at [info@percapita.org.au](mailto:info@percapita.org.au)

Thank you all for participating today – for sharing your time and your thoughts, your expertise and your interest. We hope to see you at Old Parliament House in September!