



Australian Citizens Party

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Australia in dire need of the Endersbee vision for economic prosperity

Australia's present economic disaster has been four decades in the making. The two major political parties jointly pursued a radical neoliberal agenda that replaced long-term vision with short-term opportunism, through: financial deregulation that turned banks into casinos; privatisation of our hard-won national wealth; and free-trade outsourcing of our manufacturing capacity that reduced our industrial economy to a raw-materials quarry.

One great Australian who didn't go along with the economic insanity was the late Dean of Engineering at Monash University, Professor Lance Endersbee. Lance was a product of and a leading participant in the great post-war infrastructure boom that created modern Australia, and he knew what made an economy work. He rejected the short-term and parasitical nature of neoliberalism, and devoted his final decades to promoting a vision of integrated national economic development which would truly set Australia up for the 21st century. From 1996 until he passed away in 2009, the Citizens Party had the great honour to work closely with Lance Endersbee to promote economic development. Now, compelled by the urgent need for real solutions to the current economic crisis, the *Citizens Insight* YouTube program has compiled Lance's proposals presented over 15 years at numerous Citizens Party (then Citizens Electoral Council) seminars into a special episode, "An engineering great: 'Get on with it'".

[Click here to watch Lance Endersbee—An engineering great: 'Get on with it'.](#)

The *Citizens Insight* episode demonstrates both Lance's project ideas, and more importantly his clear economic thinking. Put simply, Lance knew how things worked. As he describes in the *Citizens Insight* episode, he started his career as a leading young engineer on the Snowy Mountains Scheme under the outstanding Commissioner William Hudson, who sent Lance to the United States to learn from the veterans of the New Deal infrastructure program of the 1930s. He also worked for Tasmania's Hydroelectricity Commission on world-leading projects, and on dam-building projects in Southeast Asia. Lance finished his career as Dean of Engineering at Monash University in the 1980s, where he saw already then that the economic policy changes coming into Australia meant that his engineering students wouldn't have the same opportunities as he had enjoyed to actually work on significant economic development projects. This motivated Lance to spend his retirement travelling Australia and scoping out ideas for an integrated national economic development program of rail, road, and water projects that could set Australia up as a powerhouse of agricultural and manufacturing production to supply ourselves and the growing massive Asian markets to our north.

The *Citizens Insight* episode features Lance explaining his ideas for:

- A Melbourne to Darwin fast freight railway line that could get high-value crops and products from southern Australia to Darwin within 24 hours, to connect to high-speed shipping that could reach some of the biggest ports in the world in 48 hours;
- An Australia ring railway to integrate the undeveloped north and northwest of Australia with the rest of the country and open up development opportunities;
- Developing the rivers of northern WA and the Northern Territory to integrate with an expanded Ord River development area;
- A pumped-storage and flood mitigation project on the Clarence River in northern NSW to supply fresh water into the Murray-Darling Basin.

Lance frankly assesses the obstacles to development, including the state's rights mentality that must give way to integrated national development, and the privatisation mentality and associated ideological opposition to government involvement in the economy. "You need people who have the authority to get on with the job and have the best expertise", he said in 2003. "I can remember 40 and 50 years ago where the senior public servants were expected to be the best in the world in their field. If you were involved in irrigation or electricity or water supply, you were expected to be operating at world's best practice, and you got a kick in the bum if you didn't. I was with the Hydro in Tasmania; I was going overseas every two years. They say we were not operating according to market forces—we were competing with Ontario Hydro, Quebec Hydro, we were trying to attract industries to Tasmania. We watched their prices like a hawk, we knew exactly the prices of all our world competitors, and we organised ourselves, and we got a reputation for advanced engineering and

[being] the best in the world in some of the things we were doing. We were first in the world in machine tunnelling and things like that. But we were a government organisation where the top management expected the young engineers to be operating at world's best practice, and no excuses ... you were expected to be on top."

That is precisely the thinking and excellence Australia has to get back if we are to develop the nation to its full potential and out of this multi-decade downward spiral. The Citizens Party's policy of a national bank is intended to provide the financial support that can achieve the national vision Lance Endersbee championed. As we look to the future from our present national malaise, instead of cowering in fear and wondering what it will be, we should draw on the vision and expertise of our own recent past that Lance exemplified to create the prosperous future we want our children and grandchildren to be able to enjoy.

[Click here to watch Lance Endersbee—An engineering great: 'Get on with it'.](#)

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