

Dear Secretary,

We wish to nominate Professor Emeritus Joseph E. Isaac ('Joe' to his many friends and admirers) for the Economic Society of Australia Distinguished Fellow Award for 2016. We enclose a copy of his CV. A look at the Honours section in it shows that this seems to be the only award he has not received over his long years of service to the profession and the community (he is now 94).

Joe has made fundamental contributions to the development of labour economics and industrial relations theory, application and policy, as well as to economic policy generally in Australia. While he has an impressive knowledge of a wide range of disciplines across the social sciences, he is first and foremost an economist. He was a Professor of Economics at both Melbourne and Monash Universities, and is an Emeritus Professor of Economics of Monash. His first and third published articles were in the *Economic Record* and his last two were in the *Australian Bulletin of Labour* and were clearly on economic and history of economic thought topics respectively. Perhaps his most influential article, the Giblin Memorial Lecture, was entitled 'Wage Determination and Economic Policy' and published in *Australian Economic Papers*. Apart from his major contributions to labour economics and economic policy more generally, Joe has also served our society well over the years. He was President in 1969 and he was also for three years (1985–87) President of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia.

Joe was the first economist to be appointed a Commissioner of the Australian Conciliation and Australian Commission. (He was Deputy President from 1974 to 1987.) At the Commission, he was universally respected and liked by all sides of the industrial relations divide for his courtesy, clearheadedness, deep understanding of labour markets in Australia and for his humanity. He brought to the task a comprehensive knowledge of the history and institutions in Australia and the need for the decisions of the Commission, not only to achieve fairness at the micro level but also to be integral parts of equity in the

application of macroeconomic policy, especially the role that incomes policy should play in this. Along with Eric Russell, Wilf Salter and others, Joe argued for adjusting money incomes to reflect changes in the general price level and overall productivity. Such an adjustment is both equitable and efficient when included as an integral part of full employment policy.

Joe has a well-deserved international reputation. He has been much in demand in both Australia and overseas for his wisdom, knowledge and great powers of conciliation. He is one of few Australians who has been made an Honorary Fellow of the LSE. Joe was/is a wonderful teacher and mentor. GCH learnt the economics of Keynes from him in Melbourne in 1951, in a huge lecture class over which he had complete control because of the clarity of his presentation and the quiet fervour which he brought to the task (and which he retains to this day). His door was always open for students and colleagues to visit. His advice was sage and he followed the careers of his pupils with great interest and support.

Golda and Joe's hospitality at 5 Vista Av. Kew is legendary. Their home has a wonderful art collection, as is to be expected of such civilised and cultured people. They are proud of their children and grandchildren, and are an ever-present support for their many friends.

G.C. Harcourt

J.W. Nevile