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## **News release**

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### **Working Australians should be grateful to the unemployed**

The Howard Government's mutual obligation principle does not stand up to ethical scrutiny, according to a research paper into the ethics of mutual obligation released by the Australia Institute today.

The research paper, prepared by Dr Pamela Kinnear, found that in the true spirit of mutual obligation, people with jobs should be grateful to the unemployed.

"Australia's system of economic management has relied on creating unemployment to sustain economic growth. The unemployed have been sacrificed for the good of the rest of the community", said Dr Kinnear.

"That the wealthy demand the poor pay them back turns reciprocity on its head. It is 'taking without giving'. The Government's Mutual Obligation policies are part of moral decline rather than the answer to it", she said.

She also said "According to the great philosopher of social justice John Rawls, for mutual obligation to hold, people must have a choice about whether to accept benefits. The Government's rhetoric about job snobs is trying to convince people the unemployed have a choice. But the reality is there are more unemployed people out there than jobs."

Rather than fostering social cohesion by improving the balance between rights and responsibilities, the Government's approach to Mutual Obligation is likely to provoke resentment among the jobless, the paper found.

The research paper was launched by the Reverend Tim Costello at Parliament House in Canberra at 10:30 am this morning.