

12th January 2003

Media alert

Attention: Radio and TV producers

“Pulling out of the rat race”

The Australia Institute has released a new report entitled *Downshifting in Australia: A sea-change in the pursuit of happiness* (Discussion Paper No. 50 by Clive Hamilton and Elizabeth Mail). The agenda-setting report features prominently in *The Age* and *Sydney Morning Herald* this weekend.

The report argues that the preoccupation with money and consumption comes at an increasing cost. Many Australians believe that money-hunger conflicts with their deeper values and preferences and results in a society that is too materialistic.

The study details the results of a survey commissioned from Newspoll. It shows that around a quarter of the population has decided on a long-term change in lifestyle involving lower incomes and consumption levels in order to have more balance in their lives. This phenomenon is known as downshifting and the Institute's report is the first systematic study of it in Australia.

A summary of the report can be found under What's New on the Institute's website www.tai.org.au.

For comment, please contact Dr Clive Hamilton, Executive Director of The Australia Institute on

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The Australia Institute is a public-interest think tank based in Canberra.

www.tai.org.au