

# State, Multiculturalism and Ethnic Leadership in Australia

Jakubowicz, Andrew "The State, Multiculturalism and Ethnic Leadership in Australia" 1995.

**by Andrew Jakubowicz**

**Professor of Sociology,  
University of Technology,  
Sydney**

Joint Seminar - Institute of Commonwealth Studies, Australian Studies Centre, and the Centre for Multicultural Education, University of London, 26 June 1995

## ***Ethnic Leadership***

In June 1995 "ethnic riots" appeared on the streets of Bradford, West Yorkshire. Senior police were heard on television to condemn "ethnic leaders" for their failure to control their youth, who had erupted into violence following police attempts to arrest two Mirpuri teenagers. Police went on to say that the youth were alienated both from British society and from their "own ethnic community". Meanwhile new ethnicities dominated international headlines, the most potent being the crypto-state Bosnian Serbs, anxious to assert a new imagined community in order to legitimate claims to territory and territorial power.

In 1994, Australia experienced the first inklings of the new ethnicities and their impact on its multicultural society, when fire bombs ripped through Greek and Macedonian premises in Melbourne and Wollongong. During mid 1994 the television screens of Australia were loud with images of angry 'ethnic' crowds, marching in demonstrations, confronting federal ministers, being exhorted by state premiers, and joining political party branches in provincial working class cities. Out of the Balkans came a new sort

of conflict for Australia, one where domestic political alliances were mobilised in relation to attempts by the fledgling Macedonian state to survive following the partition of Yugoslavia. The situation was also affected by the perceptions of the Greek government and its Australian supporters that a Macedonian state meant a direct threat to northern Greece and Greek Macedonia. For a brief moment unknown, foreign sounding and for the mainstream media, unpronounceable names began to emerge into the public realm, names of people who were dubbed as 'leaders' in these many ethnic 'communities'. For the most part these leaders were male and middle aged, presenting or being presented as individual personifications of what were in fact complex communities. These communities were diverse in terms of gender, class, age and political and social values.

Such leaders were apparently able to mobilise significant numbers of their fellow ethnics, in some often mystical and unnameable fashion, into practices which were seen as variously, a 'threat to multiculturalism', the 'dangerous but logical outcome of multiculturalism', the 'importation of foreign conflicts', a sign that the government 'did not understand its own policy of multiculturalism', and so on in a rich soup of contradictory interpretations and analyses.

## ***Ethnic leadership and multiculturalism***

Melbourne academic, critic of multiculturalism and immigration, Bob Birrell was interviewed on television, claiming that the Macedonian/Greek row was a sign that multiculturalism had failed. He stated that the mass of immigrant people did not want to be identified by their ethnicity once they had settled in Australia because of the bad publicity that arose whenever old country tensions

resurfaced in Australia. I argued on the same program that multiculturalism could be a valuable goal, but that the Australian government had allowed itself to be manipulated by ultra-nationalists in the Greek community in particular, under direction or stimulation from Athens, into attacking one of the basic principles of multiculturalism, the right of groups in Australia to identify themselves as they believed was most appropriate (the so-called right to "self-identification" - with its consequent basis as a conduit for government ethnic affairs resources). The Australian government had apparently abandoned this principle, by unilaterally referring to Macedonians from Yugoslavia as 'Slav Macedonians', a crude reaction to the ultra-Hellenist position of the Athens government. Soon thereafter the Australian government issued an instruction to all Commonwealth departments and agencies to follow suit, an instruction immediately rejected by both the Special Broadcasting Service and the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, without any apparent comeback from Canberra.

In order to understand contemporary ethnic politics in Australia, we need to recognise that there have been significant changes in what nation states can claim to be able to achieve, particularly those with multiple ethnic formations linked closely to ethnic states overseas. (Yossi Shain makes a similar argument about the US, where since the end of the Cold War and the loss of a sense of "the Other" as the focus for foreign policy, the executive's international policy has been very heavily influenced by ethnic groups within the US with links to foreign governments, or desires for reclamation of national autonomies - Cubans, Ukrainians, Greeks etc.)

The capacity of the national state to limit the body politic and its discursive engagements to its own defined boundaries no longer prevails in the way most Australian nationalists seem to wish it would, if indeed it ever did. The key transformation of the post-modern era, as the contemporary world has come to be described, has been the effective dissolution almost

everywhere of those boundaries asserted by national governments, even where the policing of those boundaries has increased in intensity and extent (e.g. the Joy Gardner case reflects British immigration control strategies).

This transformation has been occasioned by the globalisation of capitalism as an economic and cultural form, matched in its spread by the accelerated multi-directional movement of peoples, as guest workers, immigrants, refugees, 'illegals', tourists, transients, and travellers. As these ethnies move in fragments around the globe, all the tensions of class and gender which exist within them are carried into new settings, drawn into the new social structures which may challenge the assumptions and values of the newcomers. Women and children become exceptionally vulnerable in this process, especially as for the first time the major movement of single women has come to characterise large parts of the international scene.

The increasing emphatic declamations by governments on the boundaries of the nation state are simply signals of how vulnerable and permeable the boundaries have become - as Australia's ambivalent and excruciating tussling with refugees has demonstrated all too well. Similar problems exist for the Italian and French governments, and underlie the growth of neo-fascist groups in Europe. In Australia anti-immigration political groups have regularly won up to 8% of the vote in recent federal by-elections, reflecting a concern with fears about the dissolution of the "nation" and its values, as much as overt racist antagonism to Asians.

### ***Ethnic politics and the politics of ethnicity***

Most interest in ethnic politics has concentrated on the electoral practices of ethnic groups, rather than the internal political processes, which have been difficult to measure for many monolingual Australian academics. In the mid 1980s the government's then policy think-tank, the Australian Institute for Multicultural Affairs (AIMA) held a first national conference on

multiculturalism, which stimulated some debate on ethnic politics (1,2,3).

Many mainstream political scientists were looking for empiricist accounts, concerned primarily with quantifiable behaviour, examining electoral behaviour and its links to ethnic group, socio-economic status, occupation, and so on. There was evidence presented that various ethnicities were correlated with electoral behaviour which significantly differentiated certain ethnic groups from the wider society, though little attention was paid to the specifics of gender-based political values.

Broadly speaking, voting behaviour reflected socio-economic location at large. Thus the higher social status groups tended to vote for conservative parties, the lower for more labour-oriented parties. Religion was an additional confusing factor, in that the particular history of the labour movement and the Catholic church tended to draw some Catholic voters either to the Australian Labor Party despite their social mobility, or to the Democratic Labor Party (a 1950s anti-Communist splinter group) despite their working class location. Amongst immigrants, eastern European groups tended to vote more conservatively than their class position might suggest, while southern Europeans tended to vote more for the ALP than their increasing social mobility should indicate.

There were some comments as to why these tendencies might exist, but for the most part very little empirical work was undertaken to detail the processes of political attitude formation and political communication within communities. In particular, the process through which leaders emerged within communities and the way in which leadership was understood, was left an uncharted field. A fairly cynical view of the whole field was produced at the end of the 1980s by James Jupp and his colleagues at ANU's Centre for Immigration and Multicultural Studies, who commented in relation to the study of political participation, that

in Australia most analysts and professional activists accepted the elite/intermediaries/passive masses model in practice; for rhetorical purposes they often referred to the classic liberal ideal of an informed public but did not behave as though they believed it... Most political debate, at whatever level, continued as though those involved were all of the same culture and accepted the same institutions and political values. (4)

Over the past decade the sense of an ethnic politics in Australia has hardened in popular culture. For instance, in a discussion of immigration and politics in the Liberal Party, Rubinstein has argued that the party badly compromised its political chances in at least the 1988 Victorian state election, by adopting a Federal policy which led to the alienating of Asian immigrant voters in a string of marginal seats (5). Other comments have been made about the capacity of the Labor Party to hold onto the 'ethnic vote' through a careful playing of the immigration card. By 1995 the Liberal Premier of Victoria, Jeff Kennett, was actively courting the ethnic vote, siding openly with the Greek leadership on the Greek/Macedonian question. Though Kennett was not alone in his emergence into the mainstream of ethnic political controversy, as Bob Carr, the new Labor Premier of NSW has found in his recent instigation of a debate over the impact of immigration on the economy and ecology of the Sydney basin. Prior to the election that brought Carr to power, ethnic issues came to some prominence.

On August 8, 1994, Sydney's tabloid newspaper, the Daily Telegraph Mirror, ran a front page 'exclusive', headed 'Ethnic Vote Chase : Grants up 200pc'. The story claimed to show that the NSW Liberal state government had gone out to 'buy' ethnic votes through increased grant allocations - some allegedly prior to applications being made by the groups concerned. The article claimed 'the head of one large ethnic group is said to have told Premier John Fahey he could deliver the 800 votes needed to win Parramatta' (a state seat in which a by-election was soon to be held). Towards the end of the article we discover that the leader in question

had denied the allegations, and had furthermore argued 'I couldn't promise the votes... [The community] are an astute and independent-minded people... It's wrong to say I can tell anyone how they should vote... we're not highly organised, we're more like a baby trying to find our way through this complicated Australian political system'.

The discursive power of the term 'ethnicity' lies in its capacity to convey a communalist potency, which by implication forces individuals to react to stimuli in ways which they find inescapable, even pre-rational. Such a view of ethnicity has its roots in the debates about questions of the primordially of human sentiment and attachment to the close extended kin group. It is worth recapping them in the contemporary context where events in Africa and Eastern Europe in particular have been interpreted in public debate as arising from 'ethnic' divisions.

### ***Ethno-nationalism and ethnic politics***

Ethnicity carries with it a sense of solidarity, a term used by Alexander to refer to 'the subjective feelings of integration that individuals experience for members of their social groups.' (6). They are phenomenological in character, dealing as they do with self-asserted emotions rather than any 'objective' characteristic. Such a concern with myth and ritual as a component in contemporary social life in Australia suggests that to theorise ethnic leadership requires a cultural anthropology of immigrant settlement as much as a sociology or political economy of that process. A similar argument has been made by Connor who has suggested that it is precisely the non-rational (not irrational) and emotional basis of ethno-nationalism which renders it so potent a force. The core conviction embodied in ethno-nationalist discourses remains the sense of ancestral relationality - or ties of blood (7). (Indeed it is this socially-constructed notion of blood ties that explains in part the interlocking of resurgent patriarchal values and ethno-nationalism, where the control and masculine ownership of female fertility is claimed to be necessary to protect the blood line, and women

are urged to reproduce to build the ethnic group numerically. Many of the gains for women under the former communist regimes - a degree of reproductive autonomy, child care, employment, have been abolished by new ethno-nationalist governments in eastern Europe, while organised rape becomes a key weapon of ethnic cleansing wars).

The fear of ethno-nationalisms re-igniting in Australia marked much of the public rhetoric of White Australia and assimilationism in the years after the Second World War. This was particularly important during a period of 'nation building', where the bringing into existence of the nation required a suppression of diversionary or counter-posed narratives of blood, soil and history - including those that would challenge Anglo-centric and masculinist world views. Governments, the media and the broad popular culture proposed that only through an immediate cessation of previous allegiances and cultural practices, and the accelerated acquisition of 'Aussie' language, attitudes, values and cultural practices, could the new Australians find acceptance and their hosts a sense of security during a period of rapid change.

The minority ethno-nationalisms that survived or were constructed in that early post-war period were of two kinds, each a fall-out from the war - one was associated with the establishment of organisations of irredentist nationalists from the countries of eastern Europe, the other focussed on the development of the Zionist movement and its support for the state of Israel.

With the Soviet encapsulation of eastern Europe and the advent of the Cold War, anti-Communist (and sometimes ex-fascist) political refugees found safe havens in the West - including Australia. The development of right wing émigré political groups was facilitated by Australian government agencies such as the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO), which provided them with some resources and protected many of their leaders whose repatriation was sought by the post-war

European governments for prosecution as war criminals. Aarons noted this link between government and these groups in his careful documentation of the process through which various Nazi fugitives found refuge in Australia (8). By 1953 the émigré groups were well established within the Liberal Party of NSW, on its immigration committee, which became its Migrant Advisory Council in 1956, and for a short period a party Ethnic Council (1975) until the issue of former Nazis on the Council led to its demise in 1979 (9).

The Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations (ABBN) provided an opportunity for a number of these groups to join together as part of an international network of ultra-nationalist groups, linked through the United States and focussed on the destabilisation of Soviet power in Eastern Europe. Some of the key activists were former Nazis or Nazi collaborators, who were prominent within both nationalist political and cultural organisations in Australia, while others were conservatives or religious nationalists. By 1959 they were supporting a call, originating in the USA, for the public declaration of Captive Nations Week. From the 1960s on the coalition came to be known as the Captive Nations group. Many of these organisations became the basis of Australian support for the post-Soviet political forces which moved back into power after the demise of the Communist bloc.

These ethno-nationalists concentrated on a politics which was 'homeland' focussed. They saw their primary roles as keeping the pressure on the Australian government not to accede to the sovietisation of eastern Europe, and also as maintaining an ideology of nationalism and anti-communism within their communities, usually through politico-cultural events. Their penetration of the Liberal Party in NSW was very well orchestrated, and they have been an important component of the support for the right wing mainstream 'dries' who are part of the current hierarchy. Their influence though tended to be subterranean rather than public - close links with the National Civic Council and the Democratic Labor Party, ties to the security

services, support for right wing mainstream politicians who would echo their philosophies, and so forth.

Their presence was tolerated, even welcomed in some alliances, but their public profile was low, appearing from time to time during the waves of anti-Communist rhetoric which would flow around election times. By the 1970s their purchase on the Australian body politic seemed to falter, when Labor's new Attorney General Lionel Murphy exposed the Croatian Ustashi groups, identified their role in terrorist activities and spelled out their links to ASIO. In a series of highly publicised raids in 1973, Federal police raided Croatian homes in Sydney and Melbourne, arresting scores of people linked to anti-Yugoslav political and paramilitary action. The raids and their aftermath revealed the fragility of a leadership which was dependent on the political values of the host government for its sustenance and influence.

Jewish community support for Israel was a different type of politics - not émigré nor revolutionary, but rather focussed on diasporic political work for the development of the new nation. It was consciously non-partisan, both within the community where Zionist bodies drew support from Labor and Liberal voters, and outside with its sustained work on all major political parties. This work was multifaceted, and included the creation within Australia of an understanding of the newly emerging culture of Israel, particularly amongst the Australian born children of the Holocaust survivors who arrived in the post-war Displaced Persons wave (often, unknowingly, on the same boats as some of their torturers). Thus Jewish tradition was passed on not only through religious practices and rituals, but also through communal organisations (especially youth groups). The communal re-imagining of Judaism as Zionist was one of the crucial cultural foci, as important for the traumatised survivors and their co-religionists in Australia as for Israel.

There had been strong Jewish organisations before the War, though most were assimilationist in orientation. In the post-war

period the Jewish community developed and then built a leadership which saw the way to achieve goals of communal security within Australia and the Jewish homeland in Israel, as lying in elite politics. Close relations were established with the leaders of both major political parties, with major media figures, and with other mainstream influentials. These people were provided with information briefings, opportunities to visit Israel, and well-argued strategies to sustain the viability of both integration within Australian society and support for a 'foreign' power. At the same time the community organisations were active in anti-fascist work in Australia, culminating in the ill-fated war crime trials of the early 1990s.

While quite a small community, the voices of its leaders were treated with respect, in part because of the social class of many Jewish people (and their growing economic resources in Australia), in part through the public presentation of communal unity and solidarity on Israel, and in part through a belief amongst the Anglo-Australian elites that this solidarity could be converted to votes for or against the mainstream parties on the Israel issue alone. The Jewish model of political influence and communal organisation grew to provide an important model for other ethnic communities emerging from the first traumas of immigration and settlement.

## ***The New Ethnic Groups***

The mid 1970s witnessed the emergence of a new sort of ethnic politics in Australia, one focussed around ethnic rights and coalitions of ethnic qua ethnic organisations. Ethnic nationalist groups with irredentist politics discovered that the new Labor government was unimpressed by either their rhetoric or their practices - including armed training for insurgency in the homelands - and for a time their potency subsided.

Moreover, other groups, particularly Mediterranean and middle eastern, concerned with the conditions of their communities within Australia, began to focus on an interest group

politics. For instance, Greek Welfare in Melbourne modelled itself on the Jewish Welfare organisations. The concern about the welfare of the communities was also influenced by the emergence of tertiary educated minority women whose employment in the community services sector brought them into direct engagement with the social experience of poverty, unemployment, psychic distress, domestic violence and child care. For the first time a female leadership emerged which was not solely concerned with fund-raising and culinary support for male dominated "activist" organisations.

As this interest group politics grew it became part of the emergence of multiculturalism, which specifically sought to 'de-nationalise' ethnic politics in Australia. The first principle of multiculturalism, the one that gave legitimacy to the participation of ethnic groups in the body politic, required the abandonment of the ethno-nationalist politics of the previous three decades. That is, the nationalist struggles that had been imported with the immigrants were now to be abandoned and converted into a politics of the new nation. The new nation, the multicultural nation, required a primary allegiance to the domestic state, or at least the well-tended impression of such a primacy. This tension had first been fully tested during the latter stages of the Vietnam War, when resident non-citizen young men became eligible for conscription.

Uncomfortably and clumsily this new allegiance began to take hold, pushing ethno-nationalist politics underground, and increasingly valorising ethnic differentiation in Australian political life. For the period of about twenty years a nationalising tendency encompassed Australian ethnic political life, even though a vibrant émigré politics also continued - amongst refugees from Pinochet's Chile, amongst other Latin Americans, among Timorese survivors of the Indonesian blitzkrieg, among South Africans struggling for the end to apartheid, amongst Eritrean opponents of the Ethiopian junta, amongst Kurdish autonomists, and many other groups.

From the late 1970s, social institutions were forged by governments and ethnic communities and community activists which required coalitions of groups in order to gain a foothold in the struggle for resources - as in the network of Migrant Resource Centres which developed after the 1978 Galbally report on settlement and post-arrival services for immigrants. These centres often provided a base for a more extensive inter-communal involvement, with the Wollongong centre actively supporting the Jobs for Women campaign. That Campaign won the right to work in the steel industry for migrant women, after fifteen years of struggle. While individual organisations from specific communities also negotiated, made representations and organised at the local and wider levels, the ideological position adopted by government stressed commonality and communality in the funding of programs and in statements such as the 1989 National Agenda (10).

### ***Multiculturalism, the nation and the State***

The National Agenda was a specification of the national project at a time globalisation was about to bite with a vengeance. The first principle of multiculturalism asserted the right to cultural identity 'within carefully defined limits'. These limits were in fact not carefully defined, but it was hoped they could be captured through a statement that 'All Australians should have a commitment to Australia and share responsibility for furthering our national interests' (11).

This assertion of 'our national interests' began to become when the tension between the ethnic and political nation started to re-surface in Europe after 1989. As European multi-ethnic polities shattered in the wake of the loss of trans-ethnic political rationales provided by the ideologies of communism, ethnies without polities started to make noises about wanting them, thus threatening polities with subordinated ethnies within them. The echoes were picked up in Australia.

The ethno-nationalist politics in the diaspora were crucial for the political struggles in the homelands. On the one hand the diasporic communities could engage in domestic political pressure on national states in an international process to help legitimise or delegitimise emerging polities as nations, while on the other they were a source of economic and human resources to support fledgling struggles for or against autonomy. With new communications technologies, the movement of ideas, ideology, information and people across the planet accelerated, and with it the capacity of homeland political groups to revivify flagging ethno-nationalist sentiments in the diaspora.

Exactly at the historic moment Australia was trying to reinforce its national cultural boundaries, the global processes were drawing people who were parts of ethnic minorities towards new re-alignments and calling up different 'nations' to the one heralded in multiculturalism. Rapid learning curves were evident in what this meant locally. In the mid 1970s in the wake of the defeat of the Whitlam Labor government, Greek and Italian community activists and political practitioners had argued the Victorian Labor Party into providing ethnic branches. These branches had provided one important avenue for political education of the communities, the development of ethnic constituencies, and mobility and access for ethnic leaders into the political mainstream.

The creation of the Ethnic Communities' Councils across Australia in the years after 1975 reflects the recognition of the new political realities and opportunities. In NSW the July 1975 public meeting of over 500 people which set up the NSW ECC, saw Prime Minister Whitlam and Opposition leader Fraser on the same platform, at a most difficult moment in Australian political life (four months later Whitlam was to be sacked). The alliance was formed by a number of power brokers - professionals working in ethnic welfare, eastern Europeans with links to both the right wing groups and the centre ground of ethnic welfare and employment as professionals (lawyers) within the state sector, and younger second

generation academics and community sector activists with an orientation to Australian political culture. Many of these were women who found the older patriarchal forms of politics unattractive and/or exclusionary, and believed that the interests of women were not being articulated by the older groups. The first alliance contained, amongst others:

- eastern European groups reeling in the aftermath of the loss of sponsorship from the Federal government, seeking a new way to maintain their equilibrium and pursue their welfare and cultural goals, if not protect their political ones,
- Greeks whose power base was tenuous after the Junta period and who had broken from the established and conservative Archdiocese,
- various service delivery and welfare organisations which could see benefit in a coalition politics,
- Italian left groups, such as FILEF, anxious to widen their work amongst Italian immigrants, and
- other ethnic organisations which did not have embedded networks of influence with government. (12)

The alliance has grown to involve hundreds of organisations and groups, and activists, with a significant staff, and a key role as a lobby to government and an adviser to bureaucracies. As well it sustains a populist role, in action such as research and organisational support for public sector cleaners, nearly all immigrant women, threatened with job loss through privatisation of cleaning services.

### ***The Macedonian Question in Australia***

The ECC established by 1976, was able to hold together an increasingly diverse coalition of groups until 1995, when the Greek/Macedonian conflict saw a successful Greek move to bar Macedonians from the organisation. When the

Greek/Macedonian fracas surfaced, Greek Australian politicians were in a position to target key mainstream leaders, to talk Realpolitik, and to mobilise large numbers of people in demonstrations led by priests.

This solidarity amongst Greeks was a very recent event, since the Greek communities in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide had been split between the Archdiocese and the Community for many years. In 1992/1993 the Greek government, anxious to ensure diasporic solidarity and support in what it feared would be a potential conflict in the Balkans, brokered a rapprochement in Athens between the Australian Communities and the Archdiocese. With that rapprochement in place, the former left/right tensions could be suppressed and replaced by a call to Hellenic unity, an ultra-nationalist ethnically based reprise that could transcend more rational political debates and seek for an emotional trigger to release the growing political clout of the Greek community in Australia. There is a strange twist in the situation, in that it is the multiculturalist environment of Australia that has legitimised the retention of Hellenic cultural politics here, while in Greece this same Hellenic cultural politics rejects a multicultural acceptance of diversity (e.g. Macedonian language and culture) within that country.

The practice of this politics by Greeks in Australia demonstrates their penetration into the élite world, with its private conversations and comfortable clubs, its influence, its capacity to mobilise well disciplined marchers to demonstrate in support of Greek rights. In Sydney, the legal adviser to the Archdiocese was a senior Liberal politician, for a time Parliamentary secretary for ethnic affairs, while a former Greek welfare activist, a key machine man for the Liberal Party both federally and in Victoria, recently won the by-election for the blue-ribbon seat once held by Menzies.

The Macedonians have had a far more difficult row to hoe. On the whole compared to the Greeks, the Macedonian community from Yugoslavia are far more recent immigrants, far



fewer in number, with less economic power and human capital, with lower levels of education, a less well developed or entrenched intellectual class, located physically on the periphery of the metropolises. They have few political resources, their leaders are less well-educated or established, few if any went to the right schools, and they find it more difficult to engage in élite politics.

While they are also embroiled in the global communication net that ties them into contemporary Macedonian affairs, and the government in Skopje is as anxious as the one in Athens to ensure their participation, their skills are more limited. Their access to the élite is far more restricted, so their frustration levels are likely to be higher. When they march they are portrayed as angry rioters rather than concerned demonstrators. When they join political parties as the Greeks did twenty years ago, they are charged with 'stacking' branches and engaging in under-handed political action.

## **Conclusions**

This review of ethnic political practice suggests two conclusions - that there is a hierarchy of acceptable and effective political organising which draws on political resources, and has at its apex a capacity to merge into the élite, and legitimise an ethno-nationalist politics of the diaspora, while retaining an active participation in domestic political life. Secondly, ethno-nationalist politics in multicultural nations are likely to increase, just because the boundaries of nations are becoming far more porous, dual citizenships more common, and geographically mobile life-trajectories more widely spread. The challenge for multicultural policies in ethnically diverse states is both to recognise that this politics will increase, and handle the consequences without domestic strife erupting. The attempts by Croatian and Serbian leaders in Australia to cool out the potential for major local conflict reflects one aspect of such a strategy, though this does not prevent legitimate protest and demonstrations against Australian government positions on these issues. It also does not prevent the re-invigoration of ethno-

nationalism within Australia, as occurred with Dr Tudjman, Croatia's President, who addressed 8000 supporters in Melbourne on 24 June 1995, telling them of the imminent liberation of those parts of the "real Croatia" still in Serbian hands (*The Age*). His earlier meeting (21 June 1995) with Paul Keating, had been full of the Australian PM's call for peace, prosperity, and respect for the equality and dignity of all citizens regardless of ethnicity, religion or language (*Canberra Times*). It appeared to have made little impact on Tudjman, who was legitimated to the wider Australian public by his reception by the Australian PM, rather than convinced of the need for moderation and pacifism.

But if the Greek/Macedonian is an exemplar of the new politics of contemporary ethno-nationalism in a multicultural state, the Victorian and Commonwealth governments each contributed to conflict rather than helping to resolve it. In NSW strategies of conflict management used by the state Ethnic Affairs Commission seemed to minimise local tensions outside legitimate political avenues.

Overt violence and the active alignment of mainstream politicians with specific ethno-nationalist groups have generally been interpreted as problematic for the consensual view of multiculturalism that is promoted by most state and the federal government. (This view leaves multiculturalism as a fairly unproblematic "fair chance for all" type of concept, allowing it to mask inequalities of class, gender, culture, race, disability, and age. Multiculturalism is under sustained criticism in the UK and the USA for these failures, and has been similarly analysed in Australia - see 13,14).

The recent past suggests that ethnic leaderships, to be successful in persuading governments to adopt their agendas, will increasingly follow the strategy described above by Jupp as a politics of the élite, while also mobilising the masses in ritual events - demonstrations etc. It will assert the legitimacy of ethno-nationalist concerns within Australian society, and also accept responsibility for participation within the

Australian political, cultural and economic mainstream. As one journalist researching ethnic political leadership commented to me, it is preferable after all, to have the ear of the Prime Minister or the Foreign Minister, than to be a supplicant to the Minister for Ethnic Affairs. To do that requires the development of major political skills, a goal increasingly well recognised by the new generations of ethnic leaders. The closer ties with government, which have now become so proximate that governments have ethnic "representation" in almost every dimension of political life, may also have pulled the leaders into a closer identification with government policies and state strategies. In England, the chasm has opened up between the mass of the communities in their various forms and their older leaderships. In Australia, that dilemma, of representation of the "community" versus participation in the state, has yet to confront the tensions which exist for divided and marginalised minorities.

## References

1. A. Jakubowicz, 'Social Science, Ethnicity and Immigration: an overview of research in academic institutions in Australia', Background paper for AIMA Ethnicity and Multiculturalism 1986 National Research Conference, Institutional Overview: academic sector, Melbourne, Friday May 16, 1986.
2. J. Jupp (ed) Ethnic Politics in Australia, Allen and Unwin, Sydney, 1984.
3. R. Birrell and T. Birrell An Issue of People: Population and Australian Society, Longman Cheshire, Melbourne, 1987.
4. J. Jupp, B. York and A. McRobbie, The Political Participation of Ethnic Minorities in Australia, AGPS, Canberra, 1989.
5. C. Rubinstein, 'Immigration and the Liberal Party of Australia', in J. Jupp and M. Kabala (eds) The Politics of Australian Immigration, Bureau of Immigration Research and AGPS, Canberra, 1993.
6. J. Alexander, 'Core Solidarity, Ethnic Outgroup, and Social Differentiation: A Multidimensional Model of Inclusion in Modern Societies', in J. Dofny and A. Akiwowo (eds) National and Ethnic Movements, Sage , Beverly Hills, 1980, p.6.
7. W. Connor, 'Beyond Reason: The Nature of the Ethnonational Bond', Ethnic and Racial Studies, 16,3, July, p.373-389, 1993.
8. M. Aarons, Sanctuary: Nazi fugitives in Australia, Mandarin, Melbourne, 1990.
9. Jupp et al. *Op.Cit.*, p. 24, Aarons, *Op.cit.*, p. 82, 186.
10. Office of Multicultural Affairs, National Agenda for A Multicultural Australia, AGPS, Canberra, 1989.
11. Office of Multicultural Affairs, *Op.cit.*, p. 1.
12. This summary is based on research underway at UTS, in the Making of Multicultural Australia Project.
13. D. Goldberg (ed) Multiculturalism: a critical reader, Blackwell, Oxford, 1994.
14. A. Jakubowicz et al. Racism, Ethnicity and the Media, Allen and Unwin, Sydney, 1994.