



THE

# Sydney Institute

## QUARTERLY

VOLUME 3 NO 3 & 4  
DECEMBER 1999

**GERARD  
HENDERSON**

versus

**Robert Manne  
(again)**

**GLOBALISATION**

**NEW AGE POLITICS**

**RACISM ON  
THE WEB**  
with Alan Gold

**PAULINE AND  
MARGO** on the  
election trail

**MEDIA WATCH**  
On Les Murray's  
U-turns, Bob Ellis'  
fiction and the  
Queen's men

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**McAuley's**

**Devil**

*with Gerard Henderson's*

# **MEDIA WATCH**

## CONTENTS

<b>Globalisation &amp; a New Ethic of Place</b> - Mark Tredinnick	3
<b>Sensitive New Age Politics</b> - Anne Henderson	7
<b>Exports and the Sydney Olympics</b> - Tim Harcourt	8
<b>Gerard Henderson Replies to Robert Manne</b>	11
<b>Book Reviews</b> - John McConnell	19
<b>Review of the Reviewers</b> - Stephen Matchett	21
<b>Fascism on the Internet a Cautionary Tale</b> - Alan Gold	28
<b>Gerard Henderson's Media Watch</b>	33

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## AFTER THE DEBATE IS OVER

**P**hew, it's over. The last major Australian political debate of the 20th Century has been completed. Forget the outcome for the moment. How did we perform in the argument over whether Australia should become a republic or remain a constitutional monarchy?

It is a matter of record that some of the movers and shakers in the "No" case evoked the memory of this century's victims to prophesise a possible similar fate for Australia sometime in the foreseeable future.

Bronwyn Bishop, the Federal Minister for Aged Care, was the first off the mark. In the House of Representatives on 9 August, she warned that if, in the 1930s, Germany "had had the constitution it has today, instead of the Weimar Republic constitution, Hitler could never have become chancellor". From this Mrs Bishop concluded that "the very structure of your constitution matters". This implies that Adolf Hitler and the Nazis were constitutionalists. Wrong. They were revolutionaries who would have found their way around any, and every, constitution. The Bishop analysis was supported by fellow Howard government minister Tony Abbott. He claimed that it was "fair enough to use Weimar Germany as an example of what can happen in a country under stress when you have untried and untested political structures". Assume that Bronwyn Bishop and Tony Abbott sincerely hold these views and that they were not running lines for political point-scoring purposes. If so, they are profoundly ignorant of the political climate in Europe between the wars. Moreover, they are mightily pessimistic about Australia at the turn of the century.

On September 16 Ian Campbell issued a statement in which he asserted that "the system of appointment to the presidency in the former Soviet Union was actually far more transparent than the [proposed] republican appointment process". If the Perth-based Liberal Senator seriously believes that there was any form of transparency under such communist dictators as Lenin, Stalin and Brezhnev, then he is profoundly ignorant about Soviet totalitarianism.

Fellow Liberal Senator Ross Lightfoot shares a similar dark view. He wrote to *News Weekly* on August 28 warning that an Australian republic might follow the ways of Hitler's Germany, Lenin's USSR and Franco's Spain. Such a prophecy could only be uttered by someone who has little faith in the democratic instincts and evident good sense of Australians. There was more such hyperbole on the "No" case side. Queensland Liberal Peter Slipper warned that, if Australia were to have an Australian head-of-state, then "the only protection against excessive use of presidential powers would be a military coup". Not to be outdone, Tony Abbott used the term "ethnic cleansing" to describe suggestions that British citizens living in Australia who arrived before 1984 (and who do not hold dual Australian/British citizenship) should not be entitled to vote in Australian referendums. Once again, you could only make such a claim if you know nothing of the human trauma involved in the real forced deportations of nationalities.

All political debates in modern democracies have their share of overstatement. However in Australia on occasions there is an unfortunate tendency to compare (contemporary) like with (historical) unlike. In its day, the left used to make false comparisons with fascism. Nowadays some conservatives delight in prophesising (fascist) doom and/or (communist) gloom if Australia does this or that. This not only diminishes the good sense of Australians. More seriously, it underrates the memory of those who died this century at the hands of real despots.

# GLOBALISATION & A NEW ETHIC OF PLACE

**Mark Tredinnick**

Globalisation is both promising and dangerous. It means a world where place ceases to matter. In the global world, the fences are down. The world becomes a single market, a common ground for trade, commerce, communication, and entertainment, unlimited by ancient barriers of distance and time. Globalisation imagines, and the internet delivers, a world I can enter without delay and without leaving home. It brings us a world increasingly abstracted from place and human touch. Transactions between human beings - traffic in money, goods and services, ideas, conversation, and intimacies - become electronic, virtual, and intangible in the global world.

That makes things happen fast. It opens up a world of choice to everyone with a modem and a telephone line. It lets me buy old books from Ohio and Amsterdam. It allows transnational businesses to streamline head offices and manage, through information networks, production spread out across the globe. But it promises also a disembodied way of life. In a global world, it is possible to be constantly somewhere else, but always in the abstract.

The first step toward preserving the body of the world that sustains human life - not virtually, but really - is the memory that we too belong in the landscape, that nature runs through us, that we do not stand apart from it. How can we hope to keep our rivers, our air, and our earth clean and full of life, Aldo Leopold wondered in his essay "Land Ethic", back in 1949, if we lose touch with them? We cannot respect, we cannot love, what we do not come to know.

It is 50 years since Aldo Leopold's essay appeared in his book, *A Sand County Almanac*. That book, which has exercised a slow but winning influence over the current of ecological thought that has grown strong and more audible over 50 years, came out a year after its author died fighting a forest fire on the very ground he had written about in the *Almanac*. Those years have seen the passage into history of the Cold War, the retreat of the industrial age and the ascendancy of the age of information. And now the world of many places once distant and discrete - at least the human world in which we have to make a living, keep the peace, and prosper, if we can - has gone global.

How will we hold onto local knowledge if we come to imagine ourselves participating in a world where place is unimportant - in which we are never at home? Globalisation may take us increasingly far from that awareness, substituting a uniform and abstract landscape for a living one; and if it does, it threatens not just our joy and sense of belonging, but our very life on earth.

It exercises the mind of Thomas Friedman, too, and gives him the title of his new book on globalisation, *The Lexus & the Olive Tree*. The book offers a short history and an elegant explanation of globalisation, welcome at a time when the word has almost been drained of meaning by overuse and inadequate explanation. The challenge for communities and nations in the years ahead, says Friedman, is to keep a balance between building the global and nurturing the local. His feeling is that the more the world goes global and barriers of difference drop away, the more our native human need to belong together in a place storied with meaning, enriched by shared history, alive with local knowledge will grow and express itself. The more we build a world without borders, the more we will attend to the olive tree of home. His book is optimistic, and his optimism catches on.

It serves no purpose to demonise globalisation and ignore its wonders - which are many. It is just as mindless to speak only of its inevitability and its promises, without regard for what would be lost if the dream of its apologists came fully to pass. Globalisation is upon us. We need to embrace it with care, not fall victim to it.

Australia's Foreign Minister, Alexander Downer reminded the National Press Club in December 1997:

**"[W]hether we like it or not, we are part of an international community which is becoming increasingly global. As the economic and social map takes shape for the next century, we all fall into one of two camps. You are either a globophobe or a globophile... But whether people fear globalisation or not they cannot escape it."**

Downer speaks in the urgent voice that many champions of global change have adopted. Others in business and politics, narrowing the world to a marketplace and life to mere economics, speak the same language: globalise or perish. According to Associate Professor John Wiseman of RMIT University, and author of *Global Nation*, this voice, which we hear on both sides of politics, polarises and oversimplifies the central issue of our times, and allows no time for the reflection out of which just and considered policy may come. This is the concern of the San Francisco-based International Forum on Globalization (IFG), an international alliance of 60 scholars, economists, researchers and writers formed to stimulate new thinking, joint activity and

public education in response to what they call “the rapidly emerging economic and political arrangement called the global economy”. IFG fears that globalisation is being advanced at enormous speed and with too little thought for its profound consequences for community life, social welfare, and the natural world.

Globalisation makes winners - international currency traders and financiers whose capital can find its way in an instant to profitable ventures anywhere in the world; smart young computer wizards in Silicon Valley and Sydney designing new internet businesses with global markets; clever businesses that reach out to global markets using new information technologies; information workers who can market their skills everywhere and supply them to clients from their laptop computers at home; governments who lure job-generating businesses and investors to their local market. It also makes losers - workers in traditional industries no longer sustainable in the face of international competition; people without the means or education to access the internet and understand its importance; societies condemned to supplying the cheap labour that global businesses rely on for competitive advantage. And it is clear that the winnings do not simply trickle down to the poor in a global world, without the intervention of national and international agencies.

**“Globalisation, by its very nature, its reach and infrastructure, symbolises our interconnectedness.”**

The ideology of globalisation emphasises small government and self-regulated markets. Its economics pursue constant innovation and what Joseph Schumpeter, Harvard Business School professor, called “creative destruction” - the repeating cycle of destroying old and inefficient systems and products, and replacing them with something new. But, as Friedman reminds us, left to itself, that pattern will undermine the health of the global system. On the ground, the logic of the economics unravels. The market will not find new jobs for those put out of work by the information revolution, and it will not distribute wealth to globalisation’s losers.

Debate about what policies might ensure that balance between winners and losers is maintained is now beginning, says Rob Ferguson, chairman of BT Funds Group. “Both here and overseas. It is the critical debate.”

Government has two roles to play to counterbalance the economics of globalisation. One is to provide a safety net to protect the members of the community who fail to keep pace with the demands and changes

of globalisation. As Professor Anthony Giddens, head of the London School of Economics, has explained, the state needs not just to catch in a welfare net those who lose their jobs and livelihoods as the information economy replaces the one we are used to, and as global markets force uncompetitive industries under. It needs to help them get the skills to return to the system.

“I used to believe,” says Rob Ferguson, “like the economists, that the markets would find the best solutions to structural unemployment caused by transition to the global economy, and trickle down wealth to the poor. But it is now clear that it doesn’t work like that.” In reality, people still live in houses in towns and suburbs, pay mortgages, and have their children in local schools. They are attached to places, and despite the elegance of economic theory, people do not find it easy to leave a place and a past, acquire new skills in a new city and enter the information economy. It falls to the state, say commentators like Giddens, Friedman, and Ferguson, to keep its people in the system, not outside it, to skill them to take part in the information economy, where distance from employment and markets matters less than it did. Success, for a nation, in the global competition for capital, depends on sustaining a skilled, flexible, and healthy workforce.

The second task is to water the olive tree. Social researcher Hugh Mackay has discovered in the Australian community what Friedman has noted worldwide - that the shadow side of globalisation’s dedication to constant change is deep-seated community anxiety, and a sense that much that is familiar and valuable at the local and national levels is being lost. Governments, Friedman argues, must not only position economies to participate globally, but also help communities remember and preserve old, authentic customs that bind communities together at the local level. Global success depends upon keeping local cultures strong.

But globalisation, by its very nature, its reach and infrastructure, symbolises our interconnectedness. It makes it impossible to sustain a belief that anyone belongs only to one place and one culture. Curiously, it has taken developments in finance and technology, the spread of the world wide web, to show us what ecology has been telling us for decades - that all of us, and all species, on planet earth, are connected intricately, that we are not walled off by borders and cultures, and that the action of every member of a system affects every other, no matter how remote.

“We are all one river,” says Friedman. We know this from the way that financial and political chaos in certain Asian markets in 1997 spread to others, to stock markets in America and Europe, hit the value of the Australian currency, and continues to bring

refugees to our shores. We know this from watching how brands and cultural artifacts - Big Macs and IMAC, Star Wars and Spice Girls, street gear and Nike shoes - travel across vast distances and language barriers on film, television, and the internet. We can't, after Chernobyl, ozone depletion, global warming and acid rain, escape any longer the knowledge that environmental damage done in one part of the world impacts on another. We share one world.

**“We need to meet and talk and know the things that pass between us in a shared space, things that will never make it onto the net.”**

Another thing ecology teaches us is that wild systems stay strong and healthy as long as they stay diverse. Perhaps the forces of the global system will favour diversity too. If the ecological metaphor holds, we will find that small, fast, evasive and well adapted species - read nations, operators, empowered individuals - can hold their own in the company, predatory no doubt, of larger dominant types who thrive just about everywhere. But the global world is a system shaped by human ingenuity not by nature, so the metaphor is unlikely to hold unaided, unless human nature changes: without the work of governments and thinking people, we can expect the extinction of languages and cultures across the globe to proceed at pace, taking with them ancient systems of local knowledge and millennia of wisdom about ways of belonging on earth; we can expect those countries unblest with technology and prosperity, no matter what other blessings of nature and culture they may have, to lose their franchise in the global market; and we can expect communities untouched by the democratisations of information, capital, and cleverness to fall into decline.

But we will not be without champions of the local and the slow and the off-line. Longing for those things is certain, I think, to grow in all of us the more abstracted and homogenised the human world becomes. Much of value will be lost. Much that is beautiful too, no doubt. But that is the way of the wild world too, and of the passage of evolution. We must remember to pay attention again, more of us, to the things near at hand in which we place our love and find it returned to us; and we must practise growing respect for the small and untradable things in which other people ground their sense of belonging. If we don't, then the global world will simply swallow the local completely and all we will have is an abstract realm to which we will continue to sacrifice the resources of the earth until there are no more. I have a strong feeling though, like Friedman, that the olive trees are going to get watered. Globalisation carries a child - the rebirth of locality, the insistence of place.

# LUCY TURNBULL'S SYDNEY

Lucy Turnbull says her interest in Sydney goes back decades - an interest she put into action writing her major portrait of the city - *Sydney: Biography of a City* (Random House, 1999). Now Deputy Lord Mayor of Sydney, Lucy Turnbull believes her ideas for her favourite city have a chance to be heard. Lucy Turnbull will address The Sydney Institute (on the eve of celebrating our first Australia Day for the 21st Century) and speak on Sydney, the city, its past and its future.

**SPEAKER** : LUCY TURNBULL  
**TOPIC** : *Sydney's Story*  
**DATE** : Monday 24 January 2000  
**TIME** : 5.30 for 6.00pm  
**VENUE** : Museum of Sydney  
Theatrette, Cnr Bridge &  
Phillip St, Sydney

**FREE TO ASSOCIATES/ASSOCIATES' PARTNERS \$2  
STUDENTS \$5 - OTHERS \$10**

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I have a friend who works for CNN Online in Atlanta. Recently, he described how his team and two other media agencies located in different parts of the world worked together by internet and teleconference to pull together a new joint news site. For months they exchanged ideas and files, and disagreed heatedly. Nothing came together. Finally the principals flew to Atlanta and talked it out in real time. It took an old fashioned meeting, even among global information professionals, to save the project from disaster. Such stories suggest that we cannot get by in a completely abstract world. We need to meet and talk and know the things that pass between us in a shared space, things that will never make it onto the net. Perhaps one of globalisation's greatest blessings will be to restore to all our dealings an understanding of the place of the human factor.

Last spring, Bruce Eglington bought 400 acres of country on the Denman road near Mussellbrook. The Hunter River waters his stretch of ground. For generations they have called the property Piercefield, for the man who first cleared it from the forest.

Eglington, who learned and practised horticulture in the United Kingdom, and then made a sudden, global success out of a business supplying information management solutions to farmers, has cleared one hundred acres of Piercefield of thistles, weeds and wire, and readied it to plant olive trees. The trees he is putting in the ground this spring - a mix of plants whose mother stock comes from Israel, Italy, and Spain - won't yield fruit for seven years. In the meantime, he has five olive trees 100 years old growing around the homestead that came with the land, high on a ridge of rocky ground piled up by the river in some ancient aberration. At Easter, with a few friends, he combed the ancient trees for fruit, pressed oil, bottled it, and gave bottles out to people he knows. It was a kind of practice of belonging. I would say, as well as a test to see what trees in that ground might yield.

This picking and pressing carries on an ancient ritual. It celebrates the generosity of nature, the transformation human labour can perform, and the beauty of a disciplined process applied with a passion. Making oil from those old trees yields Bruce nothing but joy. But knowing where this bottle of Piercefield olive oil came from, and by what process, gives it a meaning and a flavour no global brand can match.

In seven years time, all going well, Bruce Eglington's new plants should give him a large commercial yield of premium olive oil, for the local market and for export. Tourism, trade, books like *Under the Tuscan Sun*, and the spread of mediterranean cooking have made a global market for olive oil, and many other

Australian growers apart from Eglington are readying themselves to sell into it.

But Bruce discovered something important about pressing oil from the olives of those old trees - freshness counts. The first oil he tasted from the vats had a taste that is lost in the bottled oil as time passes. Freshness has a taste, and taste has a market. To supply the market with oil freshly pressed may be a source of competitive advantage. It forces a farmer like Eglington to work on strategies to position his produce in that way, get it to market fast, and resolve the problem that arises from the fact that you only get one crop a year. One idea he has is to buy some orchards in Italy. Because globalisation has not yet altered the fact that olive trees come into fruit at different times of year in Italy and Australia, a man with olive groves in both places will get two lots of oil each year, two chances to deliver fresh pressed oil to the market.

Here, at play, is the process of marrying the local and the global. You can see it, too, in the provenance of Eglington's corporate design. When it came to designing labels and letterhead, he called on a small design firm just out of London, who had done work for him when he ran the software company. He knew their work and trusted it. They produced designs in a northern hemisphere spring and sent them electronically into a southern hemisphere autumn. One of those labels now dresses a bottle of oil, in my kitchen, from a few old olive trees growing near the Hunter river. In a few years that label may announce a global brand.

All of us, it seems, face this challenge: to embrace change and reimagine ourselves as citizens of a global community, participants in a single market, while not losing contact with the places on earth that hold our affection - the things at hand that ground us, that keep us in touch with each other and a world shaped by the passage of seasons and the work of human hands. I hope globalisation brings to birth a new ethic of place - not a mean-spirited turning from each other, nor a reawakening of tribal animosity (though, human nature being what it is, we will see both things) but a deepening of care for the land, for local traditions, and the pattern of relationships that sustain each of us on earth. Globalisation moved by such an ethic will enrich us all.

*(Mark Tredinnick is an essayist and teacher)*



# SENSITIVE NEW AGE POLITICS

Anne Henderson

Victoria's new premier Steve Bracks says he will give up the job if it overrides his family life and responsibilities as a parent. Enter a new voice in politics - SNAP - the Sensitive New Age Politician.

In one watershed State election and a referendum on the republic, the growing dysfunction in electoral politics has finally taken its toll. Political confidence in balanced budgets and healthy surpluses is under challenge. John Major and Paul Keating both lost elections heading governments able to boast "a beautiful set of numbers". Prime Minister John Howard seemed to forget this in his first term of office.

Now, however, John Howard has recognised, what some commentators have been pointing out for years - for the many who have gained financially with market driven policies, there are equally many who have fallen between the cracks. Governing for "all of us" is not simply about economic statistics.

Ironically, just as Steve Bracks and the Frankston East by-election sounded a wake up call on this very issue, Minister David Kemp's proposal to help fund universities, by making students pay the costs of their university education with loans at market interest rates, offered a timely example of policy myopia about the growing divide between social and economic outcomes.

And it will be the generation that roared outrage at Kemp's proposals, and their families, that will be crucial to the policies parties offer at the next federal election.

For Kim Beazley and John Howard, two recent studies from Demos, the British think tank closely connected to Tony Blair's New Labour, are worth consideration in this regard. Charting attitudes of those aged between 18-34, *The Real Deal* (consulting intensively with over 150 disadvantaged young people), and *Freedom's Children* (qualitative research of three groups of representative young people under 35) offer guides to the social values which will underpin the next two decades.

The fragmentation of values illustrated in *Freedom's Children* shows just what a difficult task it is to govern, whether politically or as an employer. The

trend is away from traditional values and towards values of "to have, to be and to indulge".

What's more, a growing number of "underdogs" are ready to bite back - "we call them the 'underwolves'" write the authors of *Freedom's Children*. Frustrated ambition governs much discontent. "As life expectations have risen throughout society, those with fewer opportunities are becoming increasingly dissatisfied with their lives and increasingly certain there is something standing in their way."

The fundamental discontent thrown up by these studies is that of disconnection - politically and socially. Eighteen to 24 year olds, *The Real Deal* found, are the group most likely to change their vote on the basis of a single issue. The widening gap between the haves and have nots has seen the systematic exclusion of wide sections of the population by serious and multiple disadvantage whether by poverty or widening income inequality. This has a disproportionate impact on children and young people.

**"A young female graduate with a child, in a salaried position, will find her percentage of take home pay diminishes as she moves from part-time to full-time employment. With full-time work, she will pay a minimum of 50 per cent of net income on childcare plus a heavier repayment for HECS."**

Margaret Thatcher's reforms certainly wiped out the excesses of Britain's welfare state. By 1995 close to one in three children were growing up in Britain in poverty. As the social statistics have impacted, community has once again become recognised as an essential support for people struggling against disadvantage. Enter "freedom's children".

Both studies confirm the trends - the rising power of women, convergence of values between younger men and women and rejection of traditional restraints. Most surveyed take for granted they can control their lives and believe in autonomy whether in relationships, careers, lifestyles or beliefs. But with new freedoms have come problems of how to ensure commitments in family life; achieve stability in a fluid labour market; create a sense of common purpose and ownership in the political system; balance autonomy and interdependence.

And for those debating the referendum on the republic in Australia, it is also worth noting that national identity was not hugely important to these young people. Work, however, was. Even the most disadvantaged were well aware of the increasing need for qualifications to gain secure work - the increasing cost of higher education noted by some as a barrier.

The outcry at David Kemp's university fees proposals suggests much is no different in Australia. At a time when the birth rate is falling and young women are encouraged to make the most of their opportunities, repayment of HECS and childcare costs can be a deterrent to working. Having a child and returning to full time work – recognised as essential if young women are to match their male counterparts in the promotion race – is often financially unattractive.

A young female graduate with a child, in a salaried position, will find her percentage of take home pay diminishes as she moves from part-time to full-time employment. With full-time work, she will pay a minimum of 50 per cent of net income on childcare plus a heavier repayment for HECS.

*Freedom's Children* pulls no punches, recommending "a new form of parentalism, which concentrates on addressing children's needs while also enabling both fathers and mothers to achieve a better balance between work and family life ... in ways that still enable women to work – because otherwise growing numbers will simply opt out of parenting."

All this because most younger women will never accept they should remain at home, supported by a partner. Meanwhile older generations are increasingly absorbing more than their share of the welfare cake propped up by a diminishing proportion of younger taxpayers.

What these studies confirm is that whether disadvantage comes with regional or generational difference, or as a result of gender, voters are capable of working out where they feel they are being cheated of their share of government spending. This is known as the dynamics of exclusion. The cost of higher education as an essential to secure employment has seen four times as many under 34s in negative equity and debt as in older generations.

From welfare to parenting to national identity, the next generation of voters has a message for government. Longer working hours and ever less security is leading people to seek security in relationships and family life. At the same time employers are less important as sources of influence, relative to friends, family and work colleagues. There is a need for a pact between the employer, the individual and the state, as well as a balance between flexibility and commitment if the generation known as X is not to direct its frustration against older generations - and government.

Over to you Steve Bracks, John Howard et al.

(Anne Henderson is Deputy Director of The Sydney Institute)



# EXPORTS AND THE SYDNEY OLYMPICS

**Tim Harcourt**

"AND THE WINNER IS ....SYDNEY" were the words spoken by International Olympic Committee President Juan Antonio Samaranch when Sydney successfully won its bid to host the Olympic Games in the year 2000. It is less than a year before we let the games begin on 15 September, 2000. There is great anticipation (as well as much construction activity) in Sydney as we close in on the first significant world event of the new millennium.

But what will the Olympics do for Australia apart from providing one big party in Sydney for two weeks? Well, it has already provided a significant boost to construction activity, particularly in New South Wales and has been part of an improved level of confidence in the Australian economy. It is also likely to bring technology and knowledge to Australia that will remain with us after the big event is over. According to a study by Arthur Andersen and the Centre for Regional Economic Analysis (CREA) the Olympics will contribute an additional \$6.5 billion to Australia's GDP for the twelve year period 1994-95 to 2005-06. In short, Australia has a lot to look forward to in 2000 and beyond in addition to some fine athletic performances at the Games themselves.

The economic benefits of the 2000 Olympics can be classified as *direct* and *indirect*. Direct benefits include the impact of the Olympics on exports, investment and employment. In terms of exports, the main impact will be inbound tourism, sponsorship fees, media broadcast rights, and ticket sales.

The staging of the Olympics will encourage more international tourists to visit Australia. According to the Tourism Forecasting Council 1.5 million additional international tourists are expected to visit Australia over 1994-95 to 2005-06 because of the staging of the Olympics. This is estimated to generate an additional \$2.7 billion in tourism exports .

Sponsorship fees received from international sources will be strong leading up to the Olympics and according to the Reserve Bank of Australia, broadcast rights (approximately \$1 billion in value) will be recorded as exports in September quarter 2000. Ticket sales sold to overseas visitors (of up to \$100 million in value) will also be recorded in the September quarter. The RBA estimates that the

overall boost to export receipts will be equivalent to around 1 % of GDP in the September quarter of 2000. Similarly, the Arthur Anderson/CREA study (p2) estimates a positive impact on the balance of trade from the Olympics of \$0.8 billion in 2000 and \$ 0.2 billion in the post-Games period of 2001-02 to 2005-06.

In terms of investment infrastructure projects have greatly boosted domestic economic activity, particularly in New South Wales. The total value of Sydney's construction project is \$ 3.3 billion of which \$1.1 billion is funded by the private sector, according to the RBA this construction activity has already assisted the economy by contributing a little over half of one percent of annual Australian GDP over the five years beginning in 1995/96. The largest stimulus to growth probably occurred in 1996/97.

The infrastructure spending not only includes spending on Olympic facilities such as Stadium Australia but also upgrades to Sydney airport, roads and railway related investment. These improvements will benefit both local resident and overseas and interstate visitors to Sydney well after the Olympics as well as during the event.

**“The Olympics is not just a competition of the athletes of nations but is as much a battle of the scientists, architects, engineers and artists of those nations as well.”**

The Olympics has provided an important boost to employment. The OCA estimates that more than 35,000 people have worked on OCA construction sites since the first project at Homebush Bay was started. It is estimated that since the OCA was formed in 1995, over 12.5 million hours have been worked on Olympic related projects. There will also be multiplier effects. According to the OCA, every job created on a construction site will create two more off site for suppliers, material producers and transport workers.

The Olympics are expected to boost NSW employment by 5,300 in an average year of the 12 years representing the Olympic period. In addition 2,200 jobs are expected to be created outside NSW over the same period.

It is also important to highlight the *indirect* benefits that the Olympics will bring. Certain export sectors will enjoy more profile and opportunity. The obvious one is tourism with an associated boost to the transport and hospitality industries. For instance, in aviation, the staging of the Olympics will bring significant benefits for Ansett and Qantas in terms of increased traffic, earnings growth and brand awareness. The Olympics will also be an opportunity

## ROBERT MENZIES WITH ALLAN MARTIN

Allan Martin spoke for The Sydney Institute after the publication of his first volume of his biography of Robert Menzies in 1993. Now with *Robert Menzies - a Life Vol 2* (Melbourne Uni Press), Allan Martin has completed his story. This is your chance to hear Allan Martin recount some of the well known and not so well known anecdotes in the life of Australia's longest serving Prime Minister - Sir Robert Menzies - at The Sydney Institute.

**SPEAKER :** ALLAN MARTIN (author of *Robert Menzies, A Life: Volume 2 [MUP]*)

**TOPIC :** *Robert Menzies*

**DATE :** Tuesday 15 February 2000

**TIME :** 5.30 for 6.00pm

**VENUE :** 41 Phillip Street, Sydney  
Light refreshments

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for sports exporters . According to Australia Sport International (ASI), Australia exported \$363 million worth of sporting goods in 1998 and is expected to increase its exports to Asia, North America and Europe with the help of the staging of the Sydney Olympics.

Indirect benefits will also come from increased exposure to Australia as host of the millennium Olympic Games. Austrade is driving the Government's Australia Open for Business campaign which takes advantage of the heightened global interest in Australia at the time of the Olympics. A global promotion for Australia as a prime business destination is supported by a number of new business programs which capture new interest to turn it into export and investment revenue. The key program under Australia Open for Business is Business Club Australia. Also, managed by Austrade, Business Club Australia connects Australian exporters with overseas buyers and investors through a global networking club which also shares the excitement of the 2000 Games (see [www.australiaforbusiness.com](http://www.australiaforbusiness.com)).

**“Sydney is well placed to avoid some of the pitfalls that affected host nations of the past.”**

As well as the networking opportunities provided at the Olympics, Australia will benefit from the transfer of technology and knowledge as host of the Olympics. As a world class and internationally visible event, the Olympic Games have attracted innovation as countries try to better each other in terms of technology and technique. The Olympics is not just a competition of the athletes of nations but is as much a battle of the scientists, architects, engineers and artists of those nations as well. It is a 'knowledge Olympics' as well as an athletic Olympics. For example the Homebush Bay site and associated venues are examples of design excellence produced by Australian architects. Australia will benefit as many of these great ideas of the new millennium will be put into practice on our own soil in 2000. There will be a vast array of talented people in Sydney in 2000, which Australia can learn from. This will assist us greatly as Australia competes globally in the information age where knowledge and innovation are at a premium.

The hosting of the Sydney Olympics has already brought significant benefits to Australia in terms of environmental technology. For example Olympic Village has been designed to be a net contributor to local power generation in western Sydney. Similarly, the water reticulation system has been developed to ensure an ecologically sustainable and economically efficient outcome from the Olympics. The

environmental impact of the games are an important indirect benefit to Australia's stock of "green" capital which will be crucial to future economic performance.

Of course, a note of caution should always be included. Some economists have warned the Australian public not to exaggerate the benefits of the Olympics because of past experience. However, many poor results in the past occurred because of poor financing, unexpected geo-political events and a prior record of uneven economic development. The OCA and SOCOG are well structured so that the financing of the Sydney Olympics is shared between the private and public sector. Australia is an open economy currently experiencing good economic performance despite adverse international conditions. It is a stable, pluralist, multicultural country with a highly educated and skilled population. Accordingly, Sydney is well placed to avoid some of the pitfalls that affected host nations of the past.

In summary, the preparations for the Sydney Olympics in 2000 have already provided significant economic benefit for Australia in terms of export promotion, investment, economic growth and jobs. There will be a big boost to Australia's trade performance, tourism and the economy overall in 2000 because of the event itself. Importantly, the benefits will continue well into the new millennium as Australia gets more international exposure for its exports and gains from the transfer of technology and knowledge from the world's best. Opportunity beckons for the athletes, for exporters, for artists, for scientists and for the whole Australian community.

*(John Harcourt is Chief Economist, Australian Trade Commission)*



**Austrade's Australia Open for Business web site details how Australia is staging the 2000 Games, and specific business initiatives -**

**[www.australiaforbusiness.com](http://www.australiaforbusiness.com).**

# GERARD HENDERSON REPLIES TO ROBERT MANNE

*Gerard Henderson was subjected to a personal attack by Robert Manne in the Sydney Morning Herald and The Age on 19 July 1999. Set out below is his personal "not-for-publication" reply to the opinion page editors of the two papers*

Dear Opinion Page Editor

As you will be aware, Dr Ron Brunton and I were subjected to a sustained personal attack by Robert Manne in his column which was published on 19 July 1999. Associate Professor Manne's targets also included three organisations – the Institute of Public Affairs (based in Melbourne), the Centre for Independent Studies (based in Sydney) and The Sydney Institute. But not the Evatt Foundation.

This was a particularly spiteful piece. In the first paragraph of his article, Mr Manne sought the guilt-by-association trick by linking me (and others) with the "present John Laws case". As I understand it, the central case against John Laws turns on the allegation that he personally accepted around \$500,000 to change his position on the role of the banks. I have not accepted *any* money from *any* individual, business or association to change my views on *any* issue. Moreover my positions on a range of public issues over three decades have been remarkably consistent – much more so than Robert Manne's (re which see the Postscript). Robert Manne's allegation was so outrageous – and so demonstratively false – that it was not taken up by any considered commentators. It is no surprise, however, that it was picked up and used by the conspiracy-minded leftist John Pilger in the *New Statesman* (18 October 1999). Mr Pilger quoted Mr Manne in connection with his all-too-familiar rant about the CIA influence in Australia - and all that.

I left for South East Asia on the evening of 19 July 1999 – so had little time to respond to Mr Manne's criticism. But I did compile a brief (200 word) response which was attached to my weekly *Sydney Morning Herald* column as a postscript on Tuesday 20 July 1999. *The Age* ran this comment as a letter on Wednesday 21 July 1999.

When I was in Thailand/Vietnam, Mr Manne chose to return to the scene of his allegations about me – via a letter which was published in the *Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Age* on Friday 23 July 1999. I do not believe that columnists, who have access to the Opinion Page of newspapers, should also compete for space on the Letters Page. So I refrained from replying to Mr Manne's second attack on me in less than a week. However, in view of Robert Manne's defamatory comments about me and the wilful errors contained in his criticisms, it seemed appropriate that I should respond in this – not for newspaper publication – form.

## ROBERT MANNE'S INACCURATE COMMENTS

In his *SMH/Age* column of 19 July, Mr Manne asserted that "corporate money has been used in Australia to influence the shape of opinion on matters of public concern". As a result of this, he alleged, the "national interest and corporate self-interest became hopelessly confused". Mr Manne also asserted that, in this "new marriage of thought and money", certain "potential conflicts of interest...became clear". Only two names were named - Ron Brunton and myself. Mr Manne did not see fit to mention that Dr Brunton and I actually disagree on a range of issues – particularly with respect to native title. Presumably such a fact would have discredited his simplistic theory that corporate money has been used "to influence the shape of opinion on matters of public concern".

Ron Brunton can speak for himself. It should be pointed out for the record, however, that Mr Manne was critical of Dr Brunton's work as an anthropologist after he left Macquarie University in 1981 "to fashion for himself a new think tank career". In his *SMH/Age* column Mr Manne asked the following question:

**Does anyone really believe that if Brunton began to write reports which coincided with left-liberal sentiment concerning Aborigines his work would retain its value for the IPA?**

Needless to say, Mr Manne produced no evidence to support his implied allegation that Dr Brunton's work as an anthropologist bears a direct relationship to the fact that he does some work for the IPA which, in turn, receives corporate support. Nor did Robert Manne reveal that, during his time as editor of *Quadrant*, he actually commissioned Ron Brunton to write for the magazine on Aboriginal issues – in particular, on Coronation Hill (see Ron Brunton "Controversy in the Sickness Country: The Battle over Coronation Hill", *Quadrant*, September 1991, pp. 16-20). It seems that Mr Manne's concern about the relation "between the national interest and corporate self-interest" developed some time after he asked Dr Brunton to write for *Quadrant*.

Mr Manne's comments about me are equally defamatory. And equally lacking in evidence. He alleged on two occasions that I had "embarked upon" a "crusade" against Henry Bosch (who headed the National Companies and Securities Commission from 1985 to 1990) in defence of corporate "cowboys". Mr Manne provided no evidence that there ever was such a "crusade". He alleged that "time and again" in my column in *The Australian* in 1988 and 1989 I accused Mr Bosch of being "a 'media groupie' and of having an insufficient grasp of the rule of law. He also wrote that I criticised Mr Bosch for conducting trials by media.

In fact Mr Manne referred to two articles only – my columns in *The Australian* of 24 October 1988 and 13 November 1989. There was another column (29 May 1989) where I criticised Mr Bosch's complaint that establishing guilt beyond reasonable doubt was too high an evidentiary target to apply when bodies like the NCSC were attempting to prosecute in the area of company law. In my 13 November 1989 column I opposed the (then) NCSC chairman's statement that it was "absolutely right" for him to use the media as an "amplifier".

I have re-read all three columns – and stand by everything I wrote then. The fact is that Mr Bosch's attempt to prosecute-by-media-amplification proved ineffective. He stepped down as NCSC chairman in 1990. I did not criticise Mr Bosch's successor. There was no crusade against the NCSC of which I was – or am – aware. However, as a columnist, I am entitled to criticise high profile public servants who choose to use the media as a platform for their views.

For the record, I have always doubted Henry Bosch's judgment. In his autobiographical reflections *The Workings of a Watchdog* (William Heinemann Australia, 1990) Mr Bosch bewailed the decline in influence of "the middle and upper classes" since they espoused "moral and ethical principles" not found, apparently, among those born less fortunate. He also regretted that the "democratisation of the professions and the decline in influence of the clubs..." had resulted in the loss of "another pillar of traditional ethical behaviour". Henry Bosch looked back with pleasure to a time when the gentleman's club was at the centre of society and issues could be resolved by "a word in the club over lunch". He did not mention that most clubs of this kind where "professional men and business leaders would meet fairly regularly," excluded women, Jews and Catholics.

My doubts were reinforced in July 1993 when Mr Bosch described Aborigines as the "most backward one per cent of the population", a "Stone Age people", and commented that "Aboriginal reconciliation is a complete waste of time". (*The Australian*, 23 July 1993). Subsequently in a radio interview, he claimed that Aborigines had "got away with murder" in Australia over the last two centuries. Robert Manne

quoted both comments in his *Sydney Morning Herald* column of 9 August 1993. I am surprised that Robert Manne, in his current mode as reconciliation campaigner, still sees fit to quote from, and proclaim, the wisdom of Henry Bosch.

In his 19 July 1999 *SMH/Age* column Robert Manne wrote:

**In the late 1980s, Dr Gerard Henderson, well known to readers of this newspaper, left his job as adviser to the Leader of the Opposition, John Howard, and set out upon a new career as a columnist at *The Australian* and director of the Institute of Public Affairs in NSW, soon to be reborn as the influential Sydney Institute.**

The comment is incorrect – as Mr Manne could have established had he bothered to check the facts.

- My resignation from Mr Howard's office was announced in December 1986. At the time, there was no understanding of any kind that I would set out upon a new career as a columnist.
- In January 1987 I took up the position of director of the Institute of Public Affairs (NSW). This is a technical, but important, point. Contrary to Mr Manne's claim, I did not become "director of the Institute of Public Affairs in NSW". No such entity ever existed. There was never any connection – legal or financial – between the Melbourne based Institute of Public Affairs and the Sydney based Institute of Public Affairs (NSW). Both organisations had been formed in the early 1940s, both were essentially funded by business and both had similar names. But there was no formal link of any kind. By the mid 1980s the IPA (NSW) was all but dead while the Melbourne-based Institute of Public Affairs was enjoying a revival.

I was not a board member of the IPA (NSW) – but, rather, an employee. And I am not a board member of The Sydney Institute – but, rather, an employee. However I was involved in the decision to close down the IPA (NSW) and establish The Sydney Institute. This was done for two reasons. First, the Melbourne based IPA was regarded as too close to the Coalition side of Australian politics – John Stone and Rod Kemp worked for the IPA before successfully seeking pre-selection as National Party and Liberal Party politicians respectively. In Sydney, we wanted to set up an institute which had good relations with all mainstream political parties. Second, in Sydney we wanted to move away from the traditional think-tank concept (where books and journals are published and position papers produced) in favour of creating a public forum for debate and discussion. It was believed that this could best be achieved by a name change to reflect the different direction The Sydney Institute was taking.

As executive director of The Sydney Institute, I followed the pattern I had established when appointed director of the IPA (NSW) in January 1987 – namely to encourage an environment for debate and discussion. The Sydney Institute commenced full operations in mid 1989. At this time Anne Henderson joined the staff. One of her roles included developing a speakers' program.

It is wilfully false for Robert Manne to allege that "the Institute of Public Affairs in NSW" was "reborn" as The Sydney Institute. One phone call would have clarified the issue. But it was not made.

Consequently it is wilfully false for Robert Manne to assert – without providing any evidence – that The Sydney Institute has "advocated" a set of reforms including "the end of tariffs, lower corporate taxes, weakened trade union power". The Sydney Institute has no such policies – although, no doubt, many members of the Institute's board and staff would hold some of these positions. So what? Others would disagree with one or more positions. Again, so what?

Free traders (e.g. Fred Hilmer) have addressed The Sydney Institute – so have those who favour greater regulation (e.g. Cheryl Kernot). Business leaders (e.g. Stan Wallis) have addressed the Institute – so have senior trade union officials (e.g. Jennie George). Coalition politicians have addressed the Institute (John Howard/Tim Fischer) – so have Labor MPs (Paul Keating/Kim Beazley). Miners have addressed the Institute (e.g. Hugh Morgan) – so have Aboriginal activists (Marcia Langton). All papers delivered at the Institute are published in *The Sydney Papers* which is edited by Anne Henderson. They are edited in the normal way. No censorship of any kind is exercised – provided, that is, there is no potential problem with the defamation laws. This demonstrates that, contrary to Robert Manne's assertion, The Sydney Institute does not advocate a set of policies. Nor does the Institute engage in any lobbying of any kind.

My role as director of the IPA (NSW) – and, subsequently, as executive director of The Sydney Institute – was always independent of my role as a columnist. Nevertheless I believed it appropriate to advise readers of my column about where I worked. So, from early in 1987, my column in *The Australian* concluded with the following words: "Gerard Henderson is director of the Institute of Public Affairs (NSW)" and, later, "Gerard Henderson is executive director of The Sydney Institute". When I moved to *The Sydney Morning Herald* in January 1990, the reference was as follows: "Gerard Henderson is executive director of The Sydney Institute a privately funded think-tank". *The Herald* was responsible for inserting, and later omitting, the reference to "a privately funded think tank".

In his column of 19 July 1999, and subsequent letter-to-the-editor of 23 July 1999, Robert Manne queried whether Larry Adler or Christopher Skase were

supporters of The Sydney Institute. The late Larry Adler (who died in December 1988) was on the board of the IPA (NSW). He passed away before The Sydney Institute was formed. Larry Adler's position as an IPA (NSW) board member was widely known – and included on the Institute's publicity material at the time. When he died, The Sydney Institute named its annual oration after him. No secrets there, not even to one so conspiracy-minded as Robert Manne. As far as I am aware, there was no connection between Christopher Skase and the IPA (NSW) or The Sydney Institute.

Robert Manne's criticism is familiar. Sections of both the extreme right and extreme left have queried my right to be a columnist because I am employed by The Sydney Institute. This despite the fact that the Institute is a forum for genuine debate and discussion. Mr Manne's position appears to be that I should not be entitled to write newspaper columns because I run an organisation which is devoted to debate and discussion. John Pilger holds the same view. It's as irrational as that.

## ROBERT MANNE'S SELECTIVE CONSCIENCE

In his newspaper column and subsequent letter, Robert Manne went back over a decade to newspaper articles I had written in *The Australian* in the late 1980s to support his views about the contemporary public debate in Australia in the late 1990s. In neither article nor letter did he acknowledge his own role in organisations which have been involved in raising finance from the private sector.

### (i) Quadrant

In late 1989 Robert Manne was appointed the sole editor of *Quadrant* – to take effect from the March 1990 edition – and the *Quadrant* office was moved from Sydney to Melbourne. This decision was essentially made by those acting on behalf of *Quadrant's* corporate supporters at the time. I understand that Mr Manne received the honorarium traditionally paid to the magazine's editor. In other words, Robert Manne was a direct beneficiary of the involvement of business in *Quadrant* – in both a career and financial sense.

Mr Manne edited *Quadrant* from 1990 until 1997 when he lost the support of much of the group which had appointed him editor some years before. In view of Mr Manne's belated interest in the relationship between corporate support and ideas, it is important to record that at no time during his period as editor did *Quadrant* concede on its pages that it received corporate support. The only outside money acknowledged by *Quadrant* during Mr Manne's editorship was that provided by the Australia Council. In other words, by taxpayers. The July-August 1990 issue of *Quadrant* provides a convenient case study – by the time of its publication Robert

Manne was well settled in as editor. No corporate support of any kind is acknowledged. The only reference to outside financial assistance reads as follows: “*Quadrant* gratefully acknowledges the assistance of the Australia Council and the NSW Minister for the Arts”. That’s all. The issue also carried “vanity” advertisements for the Institute of Public Affairs and B.A. Santamaria’s publication *News Weekly*.

On 30 April 1990, shortly after he became editor, Robert Manne wrote a letter seeking support for *Quadrant*. The letter, which was consciously directed at business, contained somewhat apocalyptic terminology. Mr Manne sympathised with the view that “our nation’s future is at risk” and stated “that only with fresh ideas... can we extricate ourselves from the crisis we now face”. He declared that “for more than 30 years” *Quadrant* had been “committed to the values of free enterprise, traditional morality, and the open, unregulated society”. Mr Manne proudly announced that it was in *Quadrant*’s pages “that the ‘Industrial Relations Club’ was first identified”. In fact this article was written by me. So, in 1990, Robert Manne was apparently unconcerned about the (alleged) interaction of corporate interest and national interest – at least in so far as I was concerned.

In his letter to the editor (*SMH/Age* 23/7/1999) Robert Manne denied that “in the past” he had ever had “potential conflicts of interest”. He added:

**The magazine I edited from 1990, *Quadrant*, did seek corporate support before 1993. I discovered then, to my surprise, that one donation had ideological strings attached. I did not seek donations after that time.**

In his profile on Robert Manne entitled “Loose cannon of the Right” (*The Bulletin* 2 November 1993), Damien Murphy wrote that Robert Manne’s “first task” at *Quadrant* editor “was to chase corporate sponsorship”. Mr Manne was interviewed for this profile. So, clearly, between 1990 and 1993 Robert Manne saw no conflict between what he (now) terms “the national interest and corporate self-interest”. On his own admission, he only opposed “corporate support” which (allegedly) “had ideological strings attached”. This does not imply opposition to corporate support per se.

This interpretation is supported by an interview Mr Manne gave to Peter Ellingsen which was reported in *The Age* on 22 July 1992. Referring to the 20 per cent of funding which *Quadrant* received from the mining industry at the time, he was quoted as commenting:

**I’ve been running an economic line that the miners thought was crazy. But I have never felt constrained about what to put in the magazine.**

In other words, Robert Manne asserted circa 1992 that his ethics were of such a standard that he had never felt “constrained” to publish, or not to publish,

merely because *Quadrant* received corporate funding. Fair enough. But Robert Manne now maintains that corporate support per se blurs “the distinction between the national interest and corporate self-interest”.

I have no problems with *Quadrant* funding, now or then. But it may surprise those who are aware of *Quadrant*’s financial circumstances over the years to read Mr Manne’s claim that the magazine “did not seek corporate support” after 1993. For example, *Quadrant* at the time carried corporate advertising. Is Robert Manne seriously suggesting that *Quadrant*’s advertising was anything but corporate support? Having personally spoken to Robert Manne circa 1990 I know that, from the beginning of his editorship, he was anxious to obtain corporate support for *Quadrant* – either as advertising or by means of a direct financial contribution. Again, I have no problems with this – except for the obvious double standard involved. Moreover Mr Manne’s claim that he did not seek donations for *Quadrant* after 1993 does not mean that such donations were neither sought nor received by others on *Quadrant*’s behalf.

### **(ii) Australian Institute of Public Policy**

As Mike Nahan has pointed out (*SMH* 23/7/1999), Mr Manne was formerly on the research board of the Australian Institute of Public Policy (AIPP) which was headed by John Hyde. The AIPP undertook similar work to, and subsequently merged with, the Melbourne based Institute of Public Affairs. John Hyde became executive director of the IPA following the merger.

There is no evidence that Robert Manne ever expressed any concern about “corporate money” being used “to influence the shape of opinion on matters of public concern” when he was on the AIPP’s research board. This despite the fact that the AIPP was publishing research papers on business related matters – including protection, tax and industrial relations. As far as I am aware, the AIPP did not provide advice about its corporate supporters when Mr Manne served on its board.

### **(iii) National Civic Council**

For an extended period in the late 1980s and early 1990s, Robert Manne was close to B.A. Santamaria’s National Civic Council. So close in fact that Mr Manne addressed the NCC’s 50th Anniversary Function on 7 October 1991 at the National Gallery of Victoria – along with Bob Santamaria, Archbishop Eric D’Arcy and (then) Bishop George Pell. The late Mr Santamaria was not only NCC president – he was also a weekly columnist for *The Weekend Australian*. From at least the mid 1960s, the National Civic Council received corporate support.

At no time during his close involvement with B.A. Santamaria did Mr Manne (i) ever call for the NCC to publicly disclose its corporate sponsorship or (ii) maintain that Mr Santamaria had a potential conflict

of interest as a columnist simply because the organisation of which he was full-time president received corporate support. Indeed Robert Manne is on record as declaring that the late Bob Santamaria “showed in his life, in a manner almost without parallel in his time, the civic virtues vital to its achievement”. (Robert Manne, *The Way We Live Now*, Text, 1998, p.173). Once again, I have no problems with how B. A. Santamaria’s NCC was funded. But it points to (yet another) double standard on Mr Manne’s behalf.

#### (iv) Brisbane Institute

Robert Manne is a member of the board of the Brisbane Institute which commenced operations in Brisbane this year. It is a matter of fact that the Brisbane Institute was directly modelled on The Sydney Institute. Indeed Anne Henderson and I spent many hours briefing those who initiated the Brisbane Institute concept about how to run a policy forum organisation. It is surprising that Mr Manne would wish to belong to the board of an organisation which was consciously set-up to imitate The Sydney Institute when he apparently believes that The Sydney Institute blurs the division between national interest and corporate interest.

Mr Manne claims (*SMH/Age* 23/7/1999) that his membership of the Brisbane Institute is of the “honorary” kind. Since he is into a holier-than-thou morality on corporate money, perhaps he could advise whether his travel costs (from Melbourne to Brisbane) to attend board meetings are covered by the Brisbane Institute. Once again, I am untroubled about the Brisbane Institute’s corporate support. But it is disingenuous for Mr Manne to claim that “the sources of support for the Brisbane Institute have, from the first, been open to public scrutiny”. According to his own logic, a complete declaration would include full documentation about all sources of support – along with information about past rejections and potential approaches. There is no evidence that the Brisbane Institute makes this information available. Nor should it – except according to the criteria laid down by Robert Manne.

It is true that the Brisbane Institute reveals the list of its current sponsors. But it does not provide information about its corporate members. Indeed Dr Peter Botsman, the Brisbane Institute’s executive director, is on record as claiming that the Institute’s “corporate members...deserve a measure of confidentiality”. In other words, Mr Manne’s assertion that all “sources of support for the Brisbane Institute” are “open to public scrutiny” is false.

#### (v) Centre for Independent Studies

As far as I am aware, Robert Manne has no connection with Greg Lindsay’s Centre for Independent Studies. Indeed the CIS was one of the targets in his column of 19 July 1999. But it is worth

recording that in the introduction to his edited collection *The New Conservatism in Australia* (OUP, 1982), Mr Manne wrote: “I must admit to having no competence in economics whatsoever...”. And he suggested that readers of the book who were interested in economics should “turn to the occasional publications of the Centre for Independent Studies”. Apparently, at the time, Robert Manne saw no problem with think-tanks receiving corporate support.

#### (vi) A Personal Interlude

In late 1994, on the recommendation of one of Mr Manne’s associates (who was an occasional contributor to *Quadrant* during Robert Manne’s editorship) I was asked by La Trobe University to act as a referee concerning Mr Manne’s application for promotion to associate professor. I advised La Trobe University that, in my view, the promotion was justified – despite the fact that the applicant did not have a Ph.D. I indicated that Mr Manne’s work was of a standard which would have merited a doctorate had it been submitted for a higher degree.

I am surprised that the person in question would have proposed me as a referee to La Trobe University if there was a view that my opinions had been blurred by what Mr Manne now terms the “new marriage of thought and money”.

#### ROBERT MANNE AND “GOOD MONEY”

Robert Manne concluded his *Sydney Morning Herald/Age* of 19 July 1999 column as follows:

**Those interested in the health of public debate should fight like tigers to support the ABC, the institution which brought the [John] Laws case to public attention, whose independence has remained unquestioned to the present day.**

Mr Manne made similar comments during his appearance on the ABC TV *Lateline* program on 20 July 1999. There he asserted that the ABC could become one of the “small islands...of non-corruption” in a world where journalists and commentators were being bought by corporate money. The implication here is obvious – and troubling. Mr Manne maintains that the only (so-called) corruption-free money is that obtained by public institutions, via the taxpayer. This overlooks the fact that taxpayer-supported commentators can be bought. Comments can be made, or articles written, to entice favours. For example - academic promotion, research grants, visas, book contracts and the like. The idea that private funding is tainted - while public funding is pure - is simplistic in the extreme.

These days Mr Manne signs letters to newspapers in his capacity as “Associate Professor, La Trobe University”. He makes this declaration – without any reference to the fact that contemporary universities

seek – and receive – corporate funding. So do a few ABC personalities. For example, I recently received a flyer from the Word of Mouth organisation. It offered “bankable talent” to businesses. The talent comprised media personalities who could perform as presenters, speakers, celebrity MCs, and media trainers. Among the talent were some eight high profile ABC media personalities.

I am untroubled by the fact that some ABC employees earn outside income. But, for the record, Mr Manne’s claim that the ABC’s “independence has remained unquestioned to the present day” is just not true. Moreover, over the years, there has been greater diversity of opinion at The Sydney Institute than found in large areas of the ABC or within *Quadrant* during Robert Manne’s time as editor.

## CONCLUSION

Robert Manne’s confusion is understandable. His essential problem turns on the fact that his argument in this instance is of an ad hominem variety. The fact is that – in so far as his particular allegations are concerned - he has not demonstrated that there is any link of any kind between corporate support and public comment. Nor has he demonstrated why any such support might matter in some instances - but not, apparently, in others.

Since commencing as a newspaper columnist, I have always indicated where I work. I have never sought to disguise the fact that The Sydney Institute is privately funded. I am pleased that The Sydney Institute has set up a forum for debate and discussion which is unique – and that our format has been essentially copied by Robert Manne and his fellow Board members on the Brisbane Institute.

I am also proud of the fact that, unlike Robert Manne, none of my writings have ever been funded by the taxpayer. I have never applied for scholarships. I have never received sabbatical leave. And I have never sought government funded research grants. I note, for the record, that Mr Manne uses his privileged publicly funded position to query the morality of individuals and organisations who/which make no claim on the taxpayer.

## POSTSCRIPT

### **GERARD HENDERSON’S VIEWS – AS DESCRIBED BY ROBERT MANNE**

In his letter to the *Sydney Morning Herald/Age* on 23 July 1999 Robert Manne wrote:

....Gerard Henderson writes of my “constant opinion changes”. For someone who had switched allegiance from B.A. Santamaria to Paul Keating with John Howard in between, this accusation strikes me as bizarre.

The fact is that my views over three decades have been remarkably consistent. Issues have changed

but my core positions of opposition to all shades of totalitarianism – along with a recognition that democratic societies should support their least well off – have not altered.

- I had an association with B.A. Santamaria and the National Civic Council from the mid 1965 to late 1974 – and I worked part-time for the NCC in 1970 and 1971.

In 1965 I was particularly attracted to B.A. Santamaria’s unequivocal opposition to communism and his rejection of the White Australia Policy. Still am. But it is well known at the NCC in the late 1960s and early 1970s that I did not agree with some of Mr Santamaria’s economic and social policies. However, my attitude to communism (as one aspect of totalitarianism) – and my opposition to racial discriminatory immigration policies – are just the same today as when I first supported Bob Santamaria on these issues circa 1965. In this respect my essential views in these areas have not changed at all.

- I worked for John Howard in 1984, 1985 and 1986. He invited me to join his staff after reading my article in the September 1983 issue of *Quadrant* entitled “The Industrial Relations Club”.

I was attracted to John Howard’s advocacy of economic reform (particularly in the areas of industrial relations and privatisation) and his foreign policy views. But it was well known in Mr Howard’s office at the time that I did not agree with some of his conservative social policies. I did, however, agree with other aspects of John Howard’s (then) social agenda – in particular his support for immigration and strong advocacy of the Asian component of the intake. It is a matter of record that Mr Howard changed his views on Asian immigration and, later, immigration. My position, on this issue, is the same now as when I joined John Howard’s office in January 1984. Likewise with the on-going need for economic reform. My essential views in these areas have not changed at all.

- It is quite false for Robert Manne to assert – without evidence, of course – that I was ever “aligned” with Paul Keating. I agreed with Mr Keating on some issues (e.g. economic reform, the republic) but disagreed with him on others (aspects of industrial relations). There was never any “allegiance” between Paul Keating and myself – re which I could switch to or from. This is just another Robert Manne ad-hominem attack point.

### **ROBERT MANNE’S VIEWS – AS RECORDED BY GERARD HENDERSON**

#### **• University Days**

When we were at Melbourne University in the late 1960s, Robert Manne was a member of the Labor Club. In contemporary political parlance, the Labor Club was extreme left, the Democratic Socialist Club

was centre-left and the ALP Club was right-wing Labor. On entering Melbourne University, Robert Manne went with the Labor Club. The Labor Club was best known in the late 1960s for its avowed support for the Viet Cong and Ho Chin Minh's North Vietnamese forces – both of which were opposing Australian forces in the field of combat.

When we were fellow academics at La Trobe University in the mid 1970s, Robert Manne sided with the left in the Politics Department in opposition to Hugo Wolfsohn's support for his colleague Dr Joan Rydon to be appointed as a professor. Not all the opponents of Professor Wolfsohn on this issue were leftists - but most were. Mr Manne's attitude seemed somewhat ungracious. Especially since Hugo Wolfsohn had supported his appointment to a tenured lectureship despite the fact that he (Mr Manne) did not have a Ph. D.

#### • Party Politics

As a student and, later, as an academic Robert Manne was quite open about his political support. He voted ALP and, in the early 1970s, was something of an enthusiast for Gough Whitlam. Then, when the Whitlam government began to falter post 1974, he exhibited sympathy for Malcolm Fraser and the Coalition.

These days Robert Manne is one of those columnists who believes that newspaper readers really want to know how he votes. So it is on record that he supported Paul Keating in 1993, John Howard in 1996 and Kim Beazley in 1998.

#### • Labor

Addressing the NCC in October 1991, Robert Manne argued that "in pre-1970 conditions an ALP victory would have been a national calamity" (*News Weekly*, 26 October 1991). He neglected to mention the fact that he supported Labor in 1969 and, consequently, advocated the very "national calamity" which he later came to deplore. Robert Manne subsequently wrote in *The Shadow of 1917* (Text, 1994) : "In 1969 I still thought of myself as a leftist and a democratic socialist and would have been as likely to vote for the Liberal Party as to aspire to a career in real estate".

#### • Australia's Vietnam Commitment

Robert Manne marched in the May 1970 Vietnam Moratorium (see his interview with Damien Murphy - *The Bulletin*, 2 November 1993). The aim of the Moratorium, which was led by Labor left-winger Jim Cairns, was to bring about the unilateral withdrawal of Allied forces from Vietnam. In 1982 Robert Manne wrote that "in 1975 the Vietnamese people were not liberated from foreign aggression, but rather subjected to a Stalinist regime, from which an enormous number of Vietnamese have already, and will in the future, risk their lives in order to escape" (*Quadrant*, March 1982). Mr Manne made no

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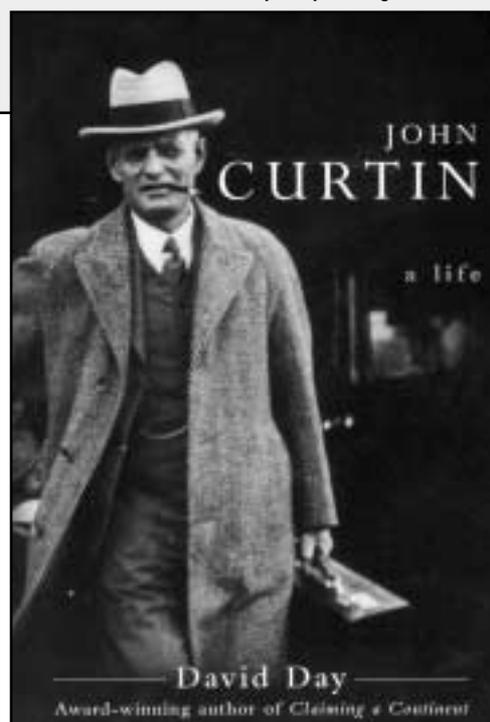
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mention of the fact that, when it mattered, he supported the immediate and unilateral withdrawal of Allied forces from Vietnam.

#### • B.A. Santamaria

In the late 1960s, when anti-communism was unfashionable, Robert Manne was an anti anti-communist. In the 1968 issue of the *Melbourne University Magazine* he depicted B.A. Santamaria as suffering from “intellectual obsession” and, mockingly, described him as being on a “holy mission”. Mr Manne also linked Australian anti-communists with “McCarthyite reverberations”.

In 1991, by which time anti-communism was less unfashionable, Robert Manne declared that “no political battle in post-war Australia was more just” than B.A. Santamaria’s campaign “against Australian Stalinism” (*News Weekly*, 26 October 1991).

In his introduction to his *The Shadow of 1917* Robert Manne wrote how he “discovered in 1969” that he “had become an anticommunist” but that it was not until “early 1976” that he “threw” himself, for the first time in his life, “into a form of anti-totalitarian political activity”. By early 1976 Soviet communism had been discredited, Saigon and Phnom Penh had already fallen to communist totalitarianism and Mao Zedong’s death was imminent. In short, Robert Manne only engaged in anti-totalitarian political activity after totalitarianism had been essentially de-authorised in the West and had ceased to be fashionable in academic circles. Better late than never. But late nevertheless.

#### • Asian Immigration

In August 1988 Robert Manne wrote a column in the *Melbourne Herald* (5 August 1988) which was soft on contemporary comments by Geoffrey Blainey and John Howard that the Asian component of Australia’s immigration intake should be reduced. During a phone conversation following the publication of this (1988) article, Robert Manne told me that he was very sympathetic to Mr Howard’s position on Asian immigration – namely that the Asian component of the intake should be reduced. Later Mr Manne became a public critic of the Blainey/Howard stance on Asian immigration circa 1988.

#### • Multiculturalism

In June 1989 Robert Manne signed a *Quadrant* editorial entitled “The Perils of Multiculturalism” in which he argued that “it would be beneficial to the nation if the idea of multiculturalism was quietly abandoned” (*Quadrant*, May 1989). These days Mr Manne parades as the multiculturalist par excellence – writing recently that “multiculturalism, properly understood, is not the negation of the culture of old Australia; it is, rather, an expression of that culture at its best...”. (*Sydney Morning Herald/Age* 17 May 1999).

#### • David Irving

Robert Manne initially advocated that the British revisionist historian David Irving should be given a visa to visit Australia – maintaining that “on the evidence available” he saw “no reason why David Irving should not enter the country and express his views” (*Quadrant*, March 1993). Then Mr Manne changed his mind and declared that he had “become a supporter of a ban on David Irving” (*Sydney Morning Herald/Age* 7 July 1993).

#### • Economic Reform

On 30 April 1990 Robert Manne wrote a letter seeking corporate support for *Quadrant* in which he argued in favour of “values of free enterprise...and the open unregulated society”. In late 1991 Mr Manne gave an address at the Malthouse in Melbourne when he linked the outcomes advocated by economic reformers in the H.R. Nicholls Society with those which resulted from Josef Stalin’s policies in the Soviet Union (see Peter Elligsen’s report in *The Age*, 22 July 1992).

This (latter) theme was repeated in the book *Shutdown : The Failure of Economic Rationalism And How to Rescue Australia* (Text, 1992) which Robert Manne co-edited with John Carroll. The editors argued in the preface that “the Australian way of life is at risk”. In his chapter Mr Manne asserted that, in so far as Australia’s economy was concerned, “it is genuinely difficult to foresee a non-disasterous exit”. He blamed Australia’s plight on the economic reform agenda – without mentioning that he had publicly barracked for this very cause just two years previously.

#### • Paul Keating

In April 1993 Robert Manne told Gideon Haigh: “My central image of Keating has always been one of a man riding a bike with no hands while smiling at the audience” (*The Independent Monthly*, April 1993). In his regular spot on the ABC Radio National *Life Matters* program Robert Manne recently commented: “I think Paul Keating was in a way the most interesting politician that’s been around for a very long time in Australia; and I found him to have various qualities that I don’t think many other politicians have.” (ABC Radio National *Life Matters*, 5 August 1999).

#### • The Republic

Robert Manne first campaigned strongly against Australia having an Australian head of state. Then he became strongly in favour of the cause. His book *The Way We Live Now* (Text, 1998) contains chapters entitled “Why I Am Not a Republican” and “Why I Am No Longer Not a Republican”.

And so on.



# BOOK REVIEWS

**John McConnell**

**FIT TO PRINT:  
INSIDE THE CANBERRA PRESS GALLERY**  
By Margaret Simons  
UNSW Press pb 1999 rrp \$17.95  
ISBN 0 86840 649 X

**OFF THE RAILS:  
THE PAULINE HANSON TRIP**  
By Margo Kingston  
Allen & Unwin pb 1999 rrp \$22.95  
ISBN 1 86508 159 0

Two recent books highlight the role played by political journalists - in particular, the members of the Canberra Press Gallery. The books are *Fit to Print: Inside the Canberra Press Gallery* by Margaret Simons, and *Off the Rails: The Pauline Hanson Trip* by Margo Kingston. Margaret Simons is a freelance journalist and writer. Margo Kingston is a political journalist with the *Sydney Morning Herald* and an ABC Radio National columnist. Margaret Simons travelled to Canberra to watch the watchers. Not all of the journalists realised initially that this was so. Put this down to a misunderstanding.

The author stratifies Canberra press gallery members into three levels. There are the junior reporters - "the Young and the Restless". There are the senior journalists who are in their thirties or forties - "the heavy-hitters". Then there are the gallery leaders - journalists such as Glenn Milne, Paul Kelly, Alan Ramsey, Michelle Grattan, Kerry O'Brien and Laurie Oakes. Margaret Simons sought an interview with Laurie Oakes - "the leading journalist".

But he said no. He also said: "I hate the press gallery". The author constructs a picture of press gallery members interacting with each other professionally and socially. Becoming part of a community is a process, she says, that involves accepting particular viewpoints and making compromises. Here is a diverse group of individuals working on the second floor of the Senate side of parliament house. A group that revels in the code that is Canberra-speak. Yet a sameness is born of such diversity. Perhaps that should read conformity? For here is a world of insiders and outsiders. It is a group with internal intrigues and poisonous conflicts. It is a club that unifies in response to external criticism. External criticism is not welcome. It is most definitely not welcome. Neither is straying from the club's line on certain issues.

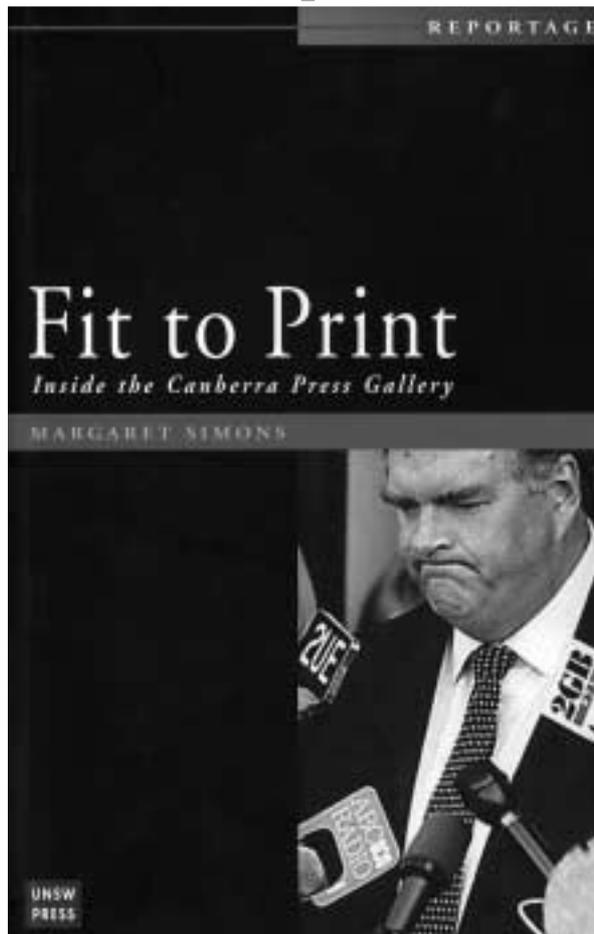
Gallery culture displays a decisive bias against breaking ranks. But the culture is capable of being sucked in when master spin weavers are at work. Just over a hundred pages in length, *Fit to Print* consists of four sections. These are entitled: watching, telling, feeling and seeing. There is an underlying theme.

The Canberra press gallery represents an example of the intersection between private and public lives. Some of the journalists Simons interviews believe that politicians lead public lives, and journalists do not. Interesting intersection. Margaret Simons recounts the friendly welcome and warm friendship extended to her and her family on their arrival in Canberra. This inevitably influences her feelings about what to put into print.

Margaret Simons writes: "Part of me fears the censure of colleagues. Part of me wants to be a good girl. Part of me wants to be liked. Part of me thinks 'to hell with it'. Part of me is cross with them for being so precious." One journalist involved in revealing the name of the former student with whom Cheryl Kernot had an affair, requests Margaret Simons not to

publish something about her personal life. Simons cooperates with the request, if perhaps reluctantly.

The author reports discussions with Margo



Kingston. There is reference to a story that appeared some time back in the *Sydney Morning Herald*. A journalist reporting on high school students. They thought he was one of them. Particularly while he was buying them drinks in a pub. Particularly as some of them were under-age. Margo Kingston - who posed as the said journalist's older sister - comments that the ethical issues didn't enter her head until it was all over. Margaret Simons remarks that "...when people talked about the media falling out with the Hanson camp [during the 1998 federal campaign], they usually meant Margo."

Referring to Kingston as "indiscreet", Margaret Simons writes that Margo Kingston is not just a journalist but a player of the game of politics. "And yet it was clear from what she wrote," adds Simons, "that she had in a weird way come to quite like Pauline Hanson, if not Oldfield." Margaret Simons concludes that there is a strong and urgent case for political journalism to be revived; not easy to achieve, she believes, amidst the barren legacy of today's journalistic culture.

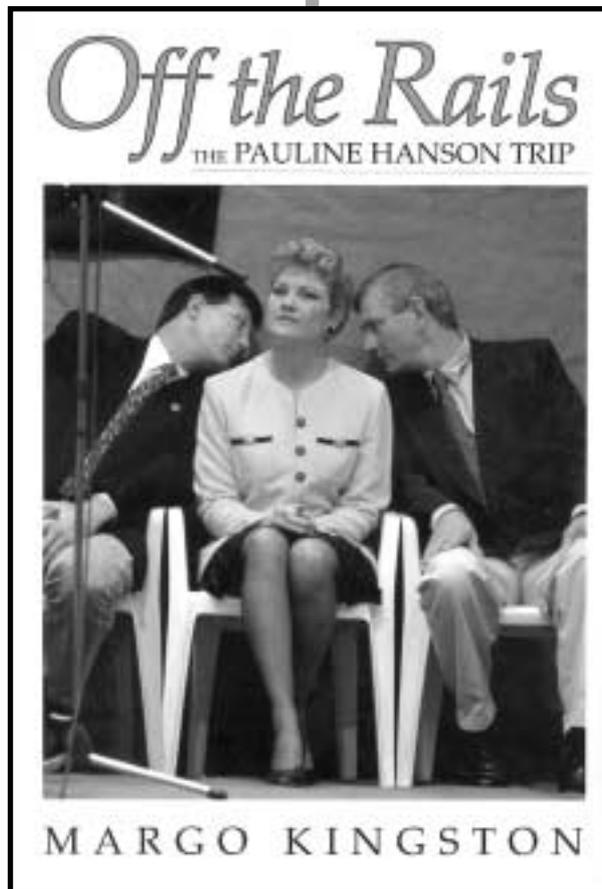
Margo Kingston's *Off The Rails* reruns 31 days of the 1998 federal election campaign. There is sufficient material here to confirm that Margo Kingston became too close to Pauline Hanson during the 1998 campaign. That professional balance suffered. That professional objectivity was displaced by the excitement of it all.

Consider:

- Margo Kingston spent the entire campaign on the Pauline Hanson trail; remarkably, Fairfax did not swap staff at all during the campaign.
- On occasions, Margo Kingston slipped from reporter into the role of unofficial media advisor to Pauline Hanson. Kingston advised on the style of clothes Hanson should wear. She wanted to assist Pauline Hanson in the wake of the incredible two per cent cascading tax episode. And when a Fairfax photographer agrees to do a shoot to be used as a One Nation campaign poster, Margo Kingston observes that "...it is hardly the media's role to help construct party election material..." This comment indicates the depth of the professional problem that was emerging.

- With her sister - Gay Alcorn of the Melbourne *Age* - Margo Kingston persuades Pauline Hanson to meet Jeff Kennett at a shopping centre. Note the reporter's words: Pauline Hanson "didn't like the idea of chasing Kennett. She didn't see why she should. This was so politically stupid as to be beyond belief, as well as torpedoing a good story. Since it was in both sides' interests, I had no moral qualms about talking her round - at the time, anyway. I took her aside. 'Look, this is look-you-in-the-eye advice. It's good for you to meet Kennett. It's the big bad Southerner thing - it doesn't matter that you chase him down'".

- With another journalist - Helen McCabe - Margo Kingston ends up staying overnight at the home of Pauline Hanson when it is difficult to obtain a cab after dinner. Beyond the pale, she admits.



- When the One Nation campaign is going badly, Margo Kingston remarks to Helen McCabe: "Jesus, if we don't manage the campaign, the thing's going to fall apart". A journalistic ethics course could begin with that remark.

- When the One Nation campaign is falling apart, a group of journalists, including Margo Kingston, become so upset at One Nation's failure to produce a set of costings - an irrelevance given major party decisions on the distribution of preferences - that the reporters became the story.

- It was not as if Margo Kingston was not alert to the dangers or not warned along the way. "...we were lucky to be on Hanson," she observes. "She wanted to break a lot of rules (or, more precisely, she had no idea what the rules were in the first place) so it was an exciting prospect journalistically. Her party didn't have the money, structure or skills to choreograph a campaign." Colleagues issued warnings. Louise Maher of 2UE said: "Don't stay too long on this campaign." "I knew what she meant," Kingston says. "Gee, I did look like her [Hanson] media adviser... Louise was afraid I'd get 'too close' to be objective." An ABC reporter cautioned: "Margo, you don't think you've become too close to this whole campaign and this whole issue of Pauline Hanson?"

- David Oldfield emerges from the book's pages as a devout attention-seeker. He is self-obsessed, manipulative and deeply contemptuous of Pauline Hanson and One Nation's members and supporters.

Margo Kingston portrays Pauline Hanson as manipulated, naïve and a figure betrayed. On the 31st day, Margo Kingston realises that Pauline Hanson is uninformed about the nature of the defeat. She decides to put gloss on her statement to Hanson: "...it's a little bit lower than you hoped, but no one's prepared to call you down and out except some Victorian called Peter Costello."

It is to Kingston's credit, I suppose, that she incorporates this material in *Off the Rails*. But what about the professional implications of this material? Margo Kingston manages to skip that (professional) step. Basically, she dismisses it. She fails to properly examine the crucial matter of professional objectivity.

Margo Kingston had indicated to Gerard Henderson some time back that she would reply in the book to a letter he wrote detailing his concerns about the events that occurred during those 31 days in 1998. She devotes two paragraphs (on page 209) to Gerard Henderson's comments. She calls it a classic statement of official media theory. Then she dismisses the notion of professional objectivity.

The reporter's role as observer, according to Margo Kingston, is unrealistic theory. Critics do not understand. Official media theory - the journalist as observer and reporter of facts - is not on. There are repeated references in *Off the Rails* to the author needing to find balance. But the precise meaning of finding professional balance is not revealed. It appears to be something highly personal. There are repeated references too to running red lights during the campaign. Margo Kingston describes the driving of two photographers as "the closest thing to paparazzi in Australian newspapers. Their driving was superb and risky, better than most of the Hanson cops who tried to lose us throughout the campaign."

Running red lights. Dismissing the role of political journalism as impartial observer of the facts. The excitement of the 1998 campaign overtook Margo Kingston. *Off the Rails* - is this meant to be confined to the Hanson camp? - is missing a final section in which the ethics of political journalism are subjected to rigorous analysis. Meanwhile, let us hope that media personnel in this country do not model themselves on the paparazzi. For obvious reasons.

*(John McConnell is the co-author of several senior text books)*



# REVIEW OF THE REVIEWERS

Stephen Matchett

Cassandra Pybus is the once and future scholar. As a freelance intellectual who makes a living from her pen and the patronage she attracts for her editorial and promotional projects, she is an independent person of letters, a woman from another age before the post-war expansion of the universities created the intellectual tariff barriers of tenure.

In a world where the www has cut the cost of scholarship and where anybody can publish and find research resources, on-line Pybus also represents the future. It may not be the relative decline in public funding or the eccentricity of intellectual fashions in what used to be called the humanities which finally break the universities' fragile hold on intellectual life, as much as the accessibility and reduced cost of scholarship offered by new media such as the web.

Certainly Pybus' career demonstrates what the wandering cyber-scholar can achieve. She edits an on-line journal, manages literary www sites and contrives to write traditionally constructed and published scholarly works from outside the academy.

But freelance intellectuals still need an audience; they need to keep their pictures in the paper, their names before the reading public and their profile strong with the givers of grants. In short they need publicity and one way of generating it is to provide controversial copy. Which, of course, is something Dr Pybus would never do; so perhaps it is her questioning intellect and scholar's training that lead her to discover tantalising explanations that others have missed.

This is certainly what appears to have happened in her biography of poet and Cold War warrior James McAuley, *The Devil and James McAuley* (UQP, 1999). Her otherwise unremarkable study of the poet generated an enormous amount of print media interest, mainly because she suggests that McAuley was troubled throughout his life by homoerotic urges which he displaced onto a positively medieval belief in the Devil and the manifestation of evil in communism.

Pybus is too coy to claim that her suggestion is incontrovertible truth but she has a fair old go at arguing that McAuley was less a creature of the

intellect than of the flesh. In essence she proposes that McAuley's fierce hatred of communism and communists may have been an attempt to suppress urges to have sex with men. Dr Pybus has a bob each way on this issue. On the one hand she makes the explicit claim only in a postscript and calls it 'highly speculative'; on the other she offers up only the flimsiest support to make the case.

Nor is the "McAuley as repressed gay" argument as diffidently and casually offered as Pybus might have us think. Certainly it is not made much of until the end of the book, where she casts around for all sorts of desperate evidence - one footnote uses second hand anecdotes, or what less charitable readers might misinterpret as mere hearsay and gossip (notes 21 and 22, p. 297).

But the postscript is no afterthought: the argument that McAuley had a homosexual orientation is set up at the start of the book where Pybus describes his university friendships. There is even a gratuitous allusion that McAuley associated himself with the star Aldebaran, "with its alternating colours of pink and blue" (p 18). It is an argument that has lost its way from the 1960s, when sexual repression was held to be at the heart of much unhappiness.

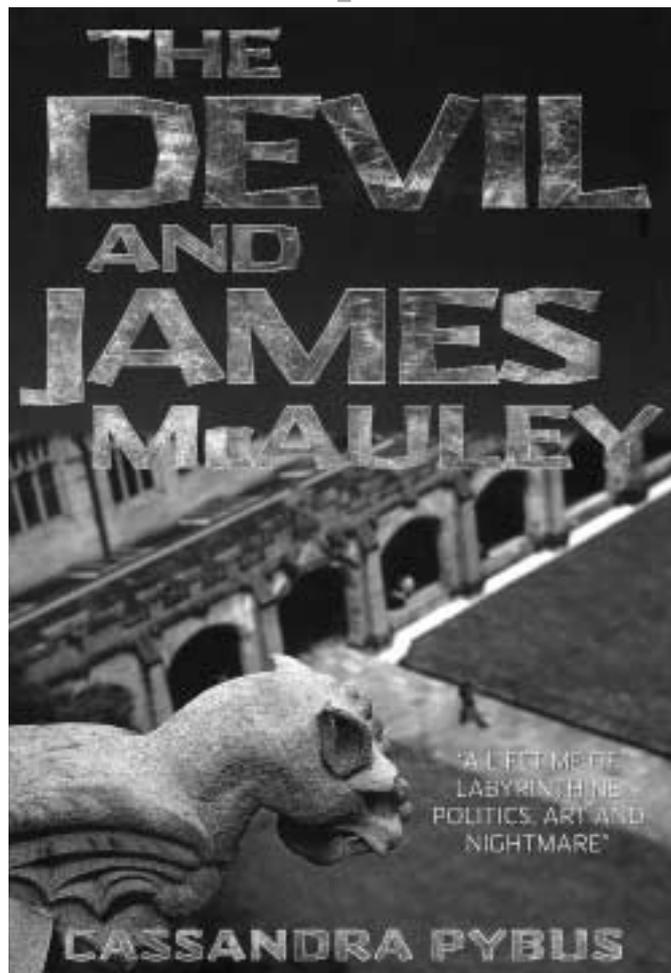
Pybus has ample evidence that McAuley was never at peace with himself. He was prone to screaming nightmares, given to hard drinking, had a taste for intense friendships that could quickly turn to hatred and took up womanising late in life. His Catholicism was based on a struggle between good and evil where the Devil regularly visited the saintly to physically torture them. His politics were also theatrically Manichean, with BA Santamaria playing the part of Good, and pretty much everybody on the left taking a turn on stage as imps of Satan.

But this is hardly evidence that makes McAuley homosexual, repressed or otherwise. It is an argument that simply fails to stand up. Pybus offers no evidence that McAuley ever had sex with a man, and even if she could make a coherent case that the

thought crossed his mind, she offers no reason as to why it should matter to anybody. This may be why Pybus dresses up this slight issue to speculate that McAuley's core beliefs, his traditional Catholicism, reactionary intellectual interests and hatred of communism all sprang from his struggle to deny his homosexual urges.

It is a outlandishly big call to make on no hard evidence and one which, having made it, Pybus tries to play down: "My thesis is only that McAuley was troubled by - terrified by - his sexual urges, especially the homoerotic, which he displaced onto the Devil and his communist agents" ( p 263). Perhaps he did, but even if Pybus were correct to argue that an intelligent man who embraced religion and hated communism did so because of an unsettled mind, renders her McAuley one-dimensional when the biography shows him to be anything but.

Pybus makes a claim without an adequate case and the book is the poorer for it. The irony is that she claims her purpose is to explain McAuley as a political figure when his private persona had disappeared with the loss or closure of many of his private papers. It would have been a more coherent and credible book if she had stuck to McAuley as public figure. At least it would have offered up an alternative portrait of the other side of the



Cold War debate, dominated as it is by writings on the left.

This is what Pybus does best; her discussion of McAuley's circle and the role they played in public life from World War Two on will fascinate those whose political consciousness does not stretch back past Whitlam.

Compared to the extraordinary Alf Conlon, for example, and the privileged think tank he built up during World War II, McAuley turns into a minor player in his own biography. That this medical student, Conlon, could convince the military and political leadership to give him the staff and budget

to set up his own bureaucratic fiefdom is an extraordinary demonstration of what the bureaucratically skilful public intellectual can accomplish. That Conlon produced so little is a warning to all those with a weakness for peddlers of intellectual snake oil who promise that whatever the problem, the new thinkers can always produce an innovative solution.

Pybus is also strong on McAuley's role in the post-intellectual flux that occurred as the nation's needs outgrew the old universities and Australia struggled to find its role in the post-colonising Pacific. She describes McAuley's fascinating public life and social milieu, and perhaps inadvertently, gives the lie to the accepted truth that all was barbarism in Sydney life before the election of the Whitlam Government.

She is particularly interesting on McAuley's role in the early years of *Quadrant* and the battle between the groupers and the communists in the labour movement. McAuley was fiercely engaged in politics to an extent hard to imagine in these more moderate and consensual times. With the Cold War warriors nearly all gone, Pybus does well to capture the spirit of an age when intellectuals were directly engaged in politics and believed it to be more than a struggle for the spoils of office. But it is where Pybus addresses the interface between McAuley's actions and his psychological motivation that the book is at its weakest. Apart from the poorly constructed argument about his sexuality she is inadequate on his conversion to Catholicism.

From the start of the book, Pybus carefully builds a case that McAuley was not an emotionally stable man, that he was given to mood swings and night terrors. But this is hardly sufficient to explain his conversion to Catholicism, which occurred after meeting a sympathetic bishop who saw him through an attack of malaria in Papua New Guinea. The best Pybus can do is to speculate that: "The fragility of his self-concept suggests he was highly susceptible to the pull of a unified and coherent system of belief which might prove a stable centre to his life in place of the despairing void which threatened to overwhelm and annihilate him."

Why McAuley turned to the church rather than the once, supposedly coherent, system of communism is a question which Pybus, intent on portraying her subject as the definitive Cold War warrior, does not address.

The McAuley portrayed by Cassandra Pybus would not have been to all tastes: driven, blindly prejudiced and intellectually contemptuous of those who did not meet his self-proclaimed standards. He had a great talent for male friendship but managed to fall out with most. He was, supposedly, utterly dependent on his wife (largely invisible in this book), but apparently took to womanising late in life.

Overall Pybus does little to explain this contradictory and intellectually proud man. It is not a great biography and the concerns of its subject are sufficiently out of joint with the spirit of these times to ensure that it will not appeal to a large audience. It will certainly find few readers under 40.

The tragedy is that Pybus' suspicions about McAuley's sexuality and the claim that his politics was just an offshoot of his unhappy emotional state will detract attention from what is otherwise a useful book. To argue that a warrior in the great 20th century struggle against totalitarianism was motivated not by a sense of right but by a flight from his own demons requires more evidence than she offers. Dr Pybus is too young to have experienced the full fervour of the anti-communist struggle but it is no positive reflection on her scholarship that she is unable to see that McAuley, repressed homosexual or not, may have been a footsoldier in a fight that mattered.

Perhaps she knew what she was getting into, but her less than entirely convincing claims create a very real risk that her book will be dismissed as a season's minor scandal rather than an important contextual history. In the biography of a man who belled the modernist cat in the Ern Malley hoax, who was a leading poet and who also made a major contribution to Australian thinking on the government of its Papua New Guinea protectorate, this is a great loss, but one that Pybus brought on herself. As David Leser suggests in a recent profile (*Sydney Morning Herald* 31 July), Cassandra Pybus is a risk taker.

Certainly it is the homosexual angle which has unhappily exercised many of the reviewers. Mark Thomas (*Canberra Times*, 25 July) is one of the few not content to be swept away by the Cold War rhetoric. In a carefully modulated piece he looked at the book as a whole, making only a slight reference to the claims of homosexuality, and found the text wanting for failing to portray the complexity of the whole man: "The issues may have been more complicated, the balances more subtle, the man more substantial than he appears here."

His judgement, that McAuley's poetry is a better guide to the man than this biography, is all the more damning for the review's restraint. Pybus simply had not set out the complete man, who was far more than "the minor political agitator whom Pybus has conjured up".

Edmund Campion (*The Bulletin*, 3 August) is equally restrained. On the one hand he praises Pybus for her "admirably measured prose" in describing the belief in the literal presence of the Devil which shaped McAuley's conversion to Catholicism. On the other he criticises her for "a page of gratuitous assertions and unsupported speculations that would fail a first-

# James McAuley remembered

I was a Tasmanian student of McAuley and served on the SRC at the University of Tasmania from 1962-65. I can recall what a wonderful lecturer he was. He was mesmerising. He was the most inspiring lecturer on the metaphysical poets or any poetry. His lectures were full to overflowing. His enunciation and quiet declamation of poetry was very affecting. He was generous in his time to his students. He was courteous to his students. He was enthusiastic about the student body and worked in a collaborative fashion with the SRC and academic staff on trying to get a solution to the Orr problem.

In my own case I was on the national student delegation to Papua New Guinea in 1964 and he was interested in that. He kept up his interest in Papua New Guinea. He was also instrumental in getting World University Service, which raised funds for students in South Africa and round the world, off the ground. And, indeed, in getting ABSCHOL started within the University of Tasmania and doing something about opportunities for Aboriginal students on Cape Barron Island, quite remarkable at that time in Tasmania - which was not then noted for its acknowledgement of its Aboriginal population.

So, Cassandra, he may have been all the things you claim to have known and written about but the man I remember was someone very, very special whose gifts to the student body were very important. And I think there would be few students in English at the time who believed differently.

- Pattie Warn at The Sydney Institute, 22 September 1999

year student". Like Thomas, Campion expresses his lack of interest in the allegations of sexuality, noting that readers learning of McAuley for the first time "may be more interested than I was in her final pages, where she explores the question whether he was a might-have-been homosexual, someone who thought about it but did nothing".

Donald Horne began as he meant to go on by telling his readers far more about his experience of McAuley than the book (*Australian's Review of Books*, July 1999). In a long, rambling piece, he mentioned his own books four times, generously offered an opinion on the relevance of sociology and demonstrated his familiarity with the novels of Anthony Powell.

But when he did discuss the biography he was very careful to be fair. Thus he called Pybus' psychological portrait "intriguing" but described her suggestions of a link between homoerotic urges and McAuley's anti-communism as "fashionable silliness".

Horne argued that this detracts from the book's real achievement, which is, "to evoke some of the intellectual milieu in which he spent his post-university, post-bohemian life". This was the point that provided Horne with the opportunity to fill his space writing about his own intersections with McAuley and the world they both moved in. As such his review may be of more interest to scholars of Horne's role in post-war intellectual life than to those interested in Pybus' biography.

Then there were the declared supporters and detractors - those less inclined to the caution of Thomas, Campion and Horne.

John Docker produced the most overtly partisan treatment in his speech launching the book, reproduced in an e-journal edited by Pybus (*Australian Humanities Review* [www.lib.latrobe.edu.au/AHR/archive/Issue-July-1999/docker.html](http://www.lib.latrobe.edu.au/AHR/archive/Issue-July-1999/docker.html)). For Docker the book is a necessary trumpet blast against right wingers of the 1950s and their equally unpleasant descendants 40 years on.

Thus in a carefully understated comparison he lumped McAuley's work as an ASIO source with talkback radio hosts, "a hired gun for secret interests", not to mention the East German secret police. And in case anybody missed the point he also suggested that McAuley would have felt entirely comfortable with the Spanish Inquisition. Of course, we all know where that led: "The insistence by the Catholic monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella in 1492 that a society be unified in ethnicity, religion, culture and mores also created the disaster of European nationalism and ultimately in my view the horror of Nazism."

There was more, much more of the same in a piece that was passionate rather than carefully argued. However, in refusing to get involved in the debate over McAuley's sexuality Docker went to the heart of the issue. For Docker it was less a question of whether McAuley had homosexual desires as of why the critics had seized on Pybus' suggestion that he did and that they were linked to his anti-communism, as "a slur on the holy and righteous project of the Cold War itself".

Docker's point was that there is little sense in placing Cold War warriors like McAuley above criticism because while they opposed communism their own behaviour was not admirable. "Cassandra has followed the Cold Warriors into the archives and there found, in McAuley ... a romance with secrecy, a love of conspiracy, back door dealings, meetings in shadows, shafting in silence. And to me such secrecy is profound betrayal of intellectual life and lives." Of course, McAuley and his pals didn't actually run all that many gulags and the fact that history has vindicated their hatred of those who did is not a point Docker spends much time answering.

Bob Ellis was amusing but not entirely forgiving (*Overland* 156, 1999). He spent most of the review showing off and offering his opinions on this and that ("Catholicism looks sillier and sillier these days"; "Ken Slessor did better, I think, with the mere English language and its *rhymer's cul-de-sacs*". Of course it would have helped if Ellis had bothered to get his facts right, such as his claim that Alf Conlon never graduated in medicine when Pybus makes it quite clear that he did (p 268). Overall Ellis thought well of the book: it "wonderfully evokes the pre-war Sydney University revues" and "gets well too how it was in the dodgy wartime quangos". He attributes some of Pybus' failings to the "late date of composition", with so many of McAuley's friends dead.

But he was carefully ambivalent, in uncharacteristically tortured prose, on the suggested source of McAuley's anti-communism, and agreed with Gerard Henderson: "A Catholic believes in the Devil and a Devil who is an active agent in the world of men (which) does not, as Henderson in his defence of him asserts, prove Stalin was not a bad man, and that Jim was not right to think so, but it puts in some psychological context his belief that communism was an ultimate evil."

A surprisingly careful piece.

Judith Brett (*Arena*, 42 August 1999) proved to be by far the most coherent of Pybus' supporters. She particularly welcomed the book for its discussion of a generation of Australian intellectuals in public life: "It is a terrific book ... which tells the reader as much about Australian political culture in the 1950s and

1960s as it does about the individuals who make up the story."

But Brett used her review to run a line, one far more sophisticated than Pybus, but which nonetheless focused on McAuley as a representative of a political culture. For Brett, McAuley personified the Cold War warriors, men she did not esteem. She wrote of "their contemptuous construction of tolerance as weakness; their hostility to relativism; their demonisation of the Left as far more sinister and powerful than it was ... their unshakeable sense of their own importance and that of the struggle with which they were engaged."

She revealed her reasons for being so exercised by McAuley in a telling paragraph: "McAuley exemplified any of the personality traits which could be found among Australian right-wing intellectuals from the 1950s through to the end of the 1980s when the Cold War finally released them from its grip, and his scornful contempt for the followers of fashionable left-wing causes, from environmentalism to Aboriginal rights, could still be heard in right-wing circles in the 1980s."

It is an argument that goes some way to rescuing Pybus, and Brett is careful not to defend the "McAuley as repressed homosexual" thesis. While Brett called it "plausible" she immediately argued that it is also "essentially on the wrong track, the product of a construction of psychoanalysis as being mainly about sex, when it is more useful to think about it as mainly about the self and the lifelong struggle to build a stable inner core of self worth." On Pybus' own evidence Brett's idea of the forces that drove McAuley is the far more convincing:

**Despair, not homoerotic lust, was McAuley's demon and he sought to escape it by transforming the contingent circumstances and small conflicts of his life into something grander and far more significant. The certainties of the Catholic Church helped him stabilise and contain his turbulent inner life, and the battle with communism imbued his life with the necessity of destiny.**

Brett's is a cogent review; one that did the biography more credit than its unconvincing treatment of the relationship between McAuley's psychology and politics deserves. Andrew Riemer (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 24 July) verges on being critically supportive, calling the biography "stylish and thoroughly annotated" and "in one sense a lucid and economical survey of a troubled life".

While he ignores the sexuality question, Riemer's major critical theme is that Pybus did not like and may not have even understood the circumstances that shaped McAuley's world view. In an attack on

the sort of argument raised by Judith Brett, Riemer makes the point that when McAuley nailed his political colours to the mast in the first issue of *Quadrant*, the 1956 Hungarian uprising was only weeks old:

**That Pybus does not acknowledge the conjunction between McAuley's editorial and that defining moment in modern political and ideological history reveals the limitations not merely of her book but, more significantly, of our decade's view of the recent past.**

Like Riemer, Peter Pierce in the *Courier Mail* (31 July) avoids focusing on the allegations of sexual ambivalence and criticises Pybus for "some sexual tattle and speculation towards the end of the book". Pierce seems anxious to appear balanced. He suggests that Pybus condemned her subject simply because she did not like his views: "The book seems driven by a desire to indict a man before the investigation of him has been concluded, and by an uncertainty as to why he should be arraigned." But he immediately qualifies this point by referring to Pybus' "dry fair-mindedness" in her treatment of McAuley but then adds that this "leaves the impression that Pybus wished she had more disconcerting things to say". Pierce's final judgement, that Pybus had "half heartedly demonised" McAuley, applies equally to his review.

There is no such pussy footing around among the outright critics, most of whom get stuck right in. Padraic P McGuinness (*Sydney Morning Herald*) set the tone by attacking Pybus on two fronts. Firstly, he denied McAuley's supposed sexual yearnings and argued that even if they had existed there was no necessary connection to his politics: "This kind of parlour psychoanalysis, though popular among academics, would be rejected by any professional psychotherapist as unethical malpractice."

Secondly, McGuinness argues that McAuley's vigorous hatred of communism and its fellow travellers was entirely right: "One would think that McAuley and others around him were fighting a straw man, not the regimes which had murdered tens of millions and their agents, propagandists and apologists in Australia."

There is much more of the same and McGuinness is happy to take on Judith Brett's argument that conservatives like McAuley opposed all sorts of necessary social reforms. He claims that the reverse was true: "It was the cynical exploitation of social problems by the communists which prevented any real action to remedy them."

Peter Coleman (*The Australian* 17 July) was keen to make sure his readers shared his outrage, fulminating at great length at the book's research

failings before making eight points against its construction and argument. Coleman was obviously very angry but whether this was solely because he thought it an exceeding bad book or because he felt duped as well is a question he put on the agenda by referring to the help he provided Pybus:

**At no point did she suggest that her approach to McAuley was other than respectful and admiring, if not reverential. I regret my cooperation and can only let my experience stand as a cautionary tale.**

Some readers might wonder whether his experience influenced the review; Coleman was obviously so furious he did not care. "There it is: a silly book degrading a great writer."

Dame Leonie Kramer (*Quadrant*, October 1999) was more genteel but just as cross, in a review concerned with McAuley as poet far more than as Cold War warrior.

**Pybus has approached her task with a distorting magnifying glass of preconceptions and prejudices. Armed with this instrument she reports gossip as though it were truth, entertains speculations for which there is no evidence, and makes assumptions for which there is no authority.**

Kramer argued that Pybus' greatest failure was her inability to understand McAuley first and foremost as a poet, and accused her of not having "the faintest idea what the poems are about".

While the Dame is not above the occasional barb - "selective quotation (is) one of her many finely-tuned talents" - she is primarily interested in demonstrating how Pybus has mishandled McAuley's poetry as a core source. Thus she claims that her interpretation of McAuley's poems of the early 1970s is "breathhtakingly wrong" and damns her for "her persistent misrepresentation of McAuley's character and views, and [failure] to convey the complex nature of his thinking, and his extraordinary depth of scholarship".

But it is the political dimension of the biography that exercises the two most coherent critics, Robert Manne and Gerard Henderson.

Manne, writing in *Australian Book Review* (August 1999), argued that Pybus' greatest failing is her ignorance of McAuley's world. "Because she appears to know so little about the nature of communism her portrait of the Australian Cold War is likely to perpetuate our current misunderstandings as to what was most seriously at stake." At times the review reads as if its real protagonist was Judith Brett. Manne took her point that conservatives like McAuley did not move with the political times from

the end of the 1960s and retreated into "a kind of reflexive anti-leftism, a smug self-certainty and dull reactionism". But his bedrock criticism of Pybus was quite clear: her sexual repression argument reduces McAuley's anti-communism to irrationality:

**That she can still mount so crude a case as this seems to me symptomatic of a literary culture which has still not come to terms with the communist question and which still, despite all the evidence, remains convinced in its heart that those who were right about communism were wrong in being right, while those who were wrong about communism were right in being wrong. If there is an irrationalism in all this it is precisely here.**

Gerard Henderson's sweeping review (*Sydney Morning Herald/Age*, 27 July) criticised Pybus for her unsupported claims on McAuley's sexuality but focuses on the overtly political issue of his anti-communism. For good measure the review included a serve at the expense of Judith Brett's psychobiography of Robert Menzies, a book Henderson has never liked.

**Brett and Pybus were once leftists. The sensible approach when discussing communism today is to acknowledge that, for whatever reason, most anti-communists were correct in their analysis of Lenin's legacy ... Instead both have elected to examine the psychological condition of anti-communists. No doubt some were psychotic. But most, including McAuley and Menzies, were not.**

Henderson's conclusion said it all: "McAuley had his strengths and weaknesses. However, barracking for totalitarian despots was not among the latter."

A defining response for a book that would have deserved more if Pybus had not taken such a risk with a case that did not stand up.

Ms Pybus did not quite see it this way in a defence of the book she mounted in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, 10 November 1999. In fact she made only the most oblique reference to McAuley's sexuality and proclaimed her neutrality among the various cold war warriors:

**What the men of both the Left and Right fail to grasp is that I belong on neither side of their Cold War divide. Insofar as I had any political engagement in the 1960s and 1970s it was with feminism, and what ideological baggage I bring to this project is a critical eye for McAuley's various male-centred areas of activity as key sites for masculine identity in the postwar era - replete with unresolved difficulties in McAuley's case.**

There may, as Judith Brett demonstrated, be a point to this. Although reducing McAuley's behaviour in the last stage of the great 20th century struggle between authoritarian dictatorship and liberal democracy to unresolved issues of masculine identity is drawing a long bow indeed.

But just in case anybody missed her point, gender wars are far more important than arguments about evidence and Dr Pybus made it clear where her opponents were coming from when she referred to her opponents as "certain male critics". Presumably Dame Leonie is an honorary man for Pybus' purposes.

Most importantly she criticised her opponents for their insistence on reading the biography in the context of the Cold War when in fact it was a study of an individual. In this Pybus had a point, the majority of the book does not address McAuley's later years as an ideologue. In fact if the biography had ended in 1945 it would have been an unremarkable scholarly study of the formation of a great Australian poet.

The problem is that it is in his later years that McAuley's life becomes more interesting and in taking up the challenge of interpreting them Pybus inevitably left herself open to critical scrutiny. The fact that not all the reviewers agreed with what they read is neither remarkable nor a demonstration of gender bias.



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# THE CONSTITUTION A HUNDRED YEARS ON

Helen Irving is a lecturer in government at the University of Technology Sydney and has written extensively on Federation and Australia's constitution. Her best known work is *To Constitute a Nation* (A cultural history of Australia's constitution). In the wash up after the republic referendum, what is the future for constitutional change to a document now a hundred years old. Join in the debate.

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# FASCISM ON THE INTERNET A CAUTIONARY TALE

**Alan Gold**

**H**itler's jackbooted thugs are on the rise once again. This time, though, they're not just marching throughout Europe, they're all over the world. As we enter the 21st century, the footsteps of the Führer's newest stormtroopers are impossible to hear, their footprints invisible to the naked eye. But just as the fascists once trampled down national borders, today they are stomping around in cyberspace.

The lies and distortions propagated by Dr. Goebbels in the 1930s and 1940s are being heard once more, this time courtesy of new generations. The racism of the Nazis once again is loud, strident and evil, and can be heard and seen clearly in Australia and Asia and Europe and America...indeed everywhere that the internet is active.

That's both the beauty and the danger of cyberspace. The internet is a medium of entertainment, education, research, and business. In the seven years since it has become one of the most popular communications media the world has ever known, it has infiltrated loungerooms and classrooms and boardrooms. It is now a friend to two hundred million people, and today in the United States, more people get their daily news from the Internet than from newspapers.

Of course for every lightbeam, there is also a shadow; in the view of the Australian Government, the dark side of the internet is pornography. Messers Howard and Alston, orchestrated in their opinions by Senator Brian Harradine, believe that the act of viewing copulation leads to a severe decline in family values and must be stopped.

Yet hardly a word has been said by our government or opposition (or for that matter by our religious or community leaders) about the real dark shadow of the Internet...the hate sites which are proliferating like mushrooms.

Although the number grows by the day, there are probably upwards of a thousand race hate sites on the internet. Many of them are very attractive to young and less critical casual visitors...they use the graphic imagery of the medieval age, such as swords,

pennants, dragons, shields and knights in armour to promote their causes. And that is perhaps their greatest danger. Because unlike the pornographic sites which by US law must warn viewers of their content, the hate sites present their visitors with no such injunctions. They welcome everybody.

So what are these hate sites, what do they say, and why do they say it?

In the main, hate sites exist to propagate the particular philosophies of small numbers of extremist thinkers. They are against any group or individual who hasn't been born in the precise mould which they believe God created expressly for them. The hate sites which originate in the US are invariably run by white Anglo Saxon Protestant extremists. Because, like mushrooms, they grow in the dark, it is difficult to identify who is behind them, whether they are organised and run by groups of individuals working out of an attic in Memphis, or whether they are the expression of the large and virulent militia units found in Oklahoma. And while most are centred in the nation of origin of the Internet - the United States - there are also hate groups in Canada, the United Kingdom, Germany, Australia and many other countries.

The names of these sites read like a directory of Fascism - Adolf Hitler Free Corps, The Ku Klux Klan, Knights of the White Kamellia (sic), Aryan Preservation Society, Carolinian Lords of the Caucasus, Christian Brotherhood of Holy War, and many more.

They all follow the same predictable pathways to their virulent hatreds. They are uniformly anti-Semitic, anti-Black, anti-Asian, anti-gay, anti-anything which is different. Read, for instance, this diatribe from a website owned and run by The World Church of the Creator (<http://www.creator.org/>), whose front page has a flaxen haired maiden dressed in a neo-Nazi uniform standing beside a neo-Nazi flag and staring into a distant blue sky:

**Throughout history when our people have been confronted with challenges, either physical threats or societal dislikes, they have utilized either one of two choices: they have either run or they have stood their ground and fought. At this time in the Jewish orchestrated twilight of our Race, we as a people must decide which choice we will follow. When the bloody RAHOWA begins, will we run from the enemy like scared rabbits, seeking refuge in some forsaken location (only to have to run again when the enemy knocks at the door) or will we dig our heels into the ground, resolved not to yield one more yard to the enemy's encroachment?'**

RAHOWA means Racial Holy War, and will, according to the true believers, be the cleansing

# WHAT RACIST SITES ARE SAYING

## White Camelia Knights of the Ku Klux Klan

*<http://www.wckkkk.com/>*

We see more and more All-Black TV programs that pollute the airwaves. Where are the White people in these Black Sitcoms? You can be sure to find a majority of the credits for these Back Sitcoms belonging to the Jews. In a Country where the Majority rules, you would think that the White Man would be in control and therefore rid this land of the evil that plagues it. But instead you have the parasitic Jew at the Head of Government. The Whites are discouraged from taking part in political events, while the Non-whites are very encouraged. This is apparent at any election time. The candidates can always be found having some sort of political rally in the Non-White sections of cities. Where as every single election, the Republican and the Democrat always promise to better the Non-White. The White man is told that it is wrong for him to belong to a pro-white organization. While at the same time it is greatly accepted for Negroes, Jews and Hispanics to belong to Pro-Race organizations.

# WHAT RACIST SITES ARE SAYING

**Stormfront**

**[www.stormfront.org](http://www.stormfront.org)**

The control of the opinion-molding media is nearly monolithic. All of the controlled media . television, radio, newspapers, magazines, books, motion pictures . speak with a single voice, each reinforcing the other. Despite the appearance of variety, there is no real dissent, no alternative source of facts or ideas accessible to the great mass of people which might allow them to form opinions at odds with those of the media masters. They are presented with a single view of the world . a world in which every voice proclaims the equality of the races, the inerrant nature of the Jewish "Holocaust" tale, the wickedness of attempting to halt a flood of non-White aliens from pouring across our borders, the danger of permitting citizens to keep and bear arms, the moral equivalence of all sexual orientations, and the desirability of a "pluralistic," cosmopolitan society rather than a homogeneous one. It is a view of the world designed by the media masters to suit their own ends and the pressure to conform to that view is overwhelming. People adapt their opinions to it, vote in accord with it, and shape their lives to fit it.

Armageddon in which all mud people (Negroes), all Jews, all Asians, and all sub-human groups will be exterminated, leaving only whites, Anglo Saxons, and those who follow a hideously narrow distorted view of Protestantism. It is these kinds of apocalyptic threats which run like a virus through the racial hatred sites. And not for one minute are these hate sites exclusively WASP. Extremists on all sides are now taking to the internet as a way of globalising their philosophies.

The internet has been a dream come true for these groups. Before the advent of instant public global communication, the groups who dreamed up these concepts and hated all around them who were different, were confined to a relatively small geographical territory. Even the Ku Klux Klan, one of the oldest organised groups of racists, found it difficult to spread beyond the borders of a few Southern States. And when civil rights legislation outlawed their public displays driving them underground, they were hard pressed to maintain membership. The exception, of course, is Nazi Germany in the 1930s when Hitler appropriated the methods of mass communication and turned propaganda into news.

**"Right wing activity is starting to dominate the US elections. Fascists and neo-Nazi groups are marching again in France and Britain and Scandinavia and Canada."**

But when computers were suddenly able to be linked to other computers across the globe, it enabled these racists suddenly to avoid the censoring editorial policies of news media; it allowed them to circumvent local law enforcement and racial vilification legislation; and when the site of origin of a website could be concealed behind numerous electronic firewalls, the racists suddenly had an unparalleled new propaganda medium. Now they could promote their viewpoints through a global cyber network which was owned and controlled by nobody, to which they were answerable to no overarching authority, and in which they could say anything without the fear of legal sanctions.

Certainly, there are the beginnings of voluntary censorship, with some Internet Service Providers banning extreme racist material; and very recently the owner of the antisemitic Australian web site, the Adelaide Institute run by Frederick Toben, who was arrested and jailed in Germany for defaming the memory of the dead (Germany and Israel are two of a handful of countries where Holocaust denial is a criminal offence). But the abhorrence of the global internet community to net censorship will likely

deter much further action of a similar nature. And the efforts of Senator Richard Alston in banning porn from Australia's internet will be like trying to kill an elephant with a pea-shooter, so even if he wanted to, an Australian government minister alone stands no chance of seeing off an internet Ku Klux Klan site in Tennessee.

But is there any real danger from these racial hatred sites? Will they lead to an upsurge in Nazism, to decent people suddenly goosestepping and saluting, to jackboots trampling on our sacred democratic institutions?

On their own, no! But there has been a dramatic rise in extreme right-wing activity. The recent Austrian elections have given warning of this to the rest of Europe. Right wing activity is starting to dominate the US elections. Fascists and neo-Nazi groups are marching again in France and Britain and Scandinavia and Canada. And let's not forget the appeal of One Nation in Australia. What concerns many observers, however, is how widespread their growing appeal has become because the internet knows no boundaries.

All of these groups have turned to the internet as the medium for their voices to be heard, as their means of expression. Of course other mainstream political and social groups also use the internet, though hubris in cyberspace can be self-defeating, as the former Victorian premier Jeff Kennett found to his cost recently. The difference between the racists and mainstream political groups on the internet, turns on the danger which comes from their seduction of young and uncritical minds.

Whilst I was writing my latest novel, *Berlin Song*, a book about life in Germany in the 1930s and 1940s, I used a number of search engines to find out what material there was on the internet concerning Nazism. I used certain keywords in the search, and with no difficulty whatsoever, I was led to dozens of neo-Nazi websites. It was a sobering experience. The lies about Hitler's knowledge of the gas ovens, the mindless denial that the Holocaust actually happened, the spurious "facts" which were used to disprove the eyewitness evidence of millions of people, was frightening and disgusting.

As an author, it is my job to study the facts of history and to recognise the distortions. But what worried me was how young minds would view these sites - whether they would be influenced - whether they would read the lies and distortions and believe them - whether they might be unwittingly inculcated into their web of deceit.

I visit many schools to talk about creative writing. I began to ask whether the boys or girls had ever visited any of these sites. Of course, there were the usual denials, as there would be if a parent asked a

# WHAT RACIST SITES ARE SAYING

## Christian Identity Church

<http://www.christianbiblestudy.org/>

The 4 Largest Problems of  
Christian Government and  
Christian Society Today are:-

1. Anti-Christ Jewish Control of our Churches, Government, Schools, and News and Entertainment Media
2. Race Mixing, which is a form of Genocide, that is Destroying ALL Races
3. Abortion of White Christian Children - Children are the gift of GOD, GOD does not give you what GOD does not want you to have. It is very disrespectful not to take what GOD gives you.
4. Influence of Homosexuals in Christian Society – Biblical References

# SEVEN DAYS IN EAST TIMOR WITH TIM FISCHER AND MARISE PAYNE

Tim Fischer MP, former deputy prime minister, arrived in East Timor four days before the ballot for independence and left three days later. Senator Marise Payne also made fact-finding tours of East Timor with parliamentary visitors. They saw at first hand what happened in Dili and among the people before the militias began their devastating killings. Tim Fischer has written a book recording his observations - *Seven Days in East Timor: Ballot and Bullets* (Allen & Unwin, 2000). Hear what he and his parliamentary colleague Marise Payne observed.

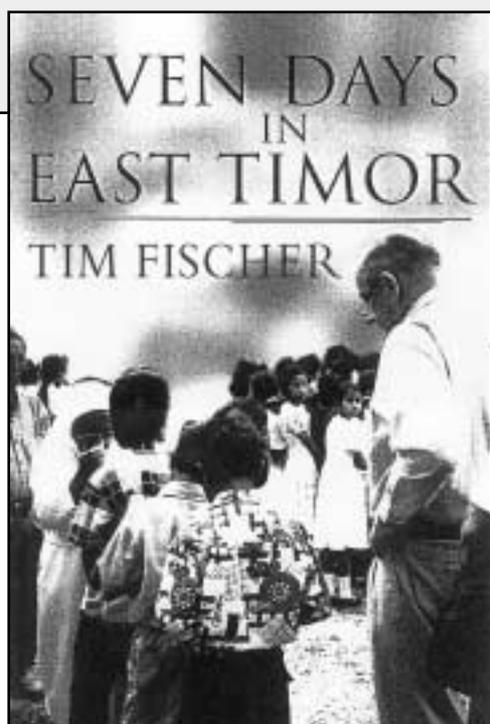
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child whether they'd ever visited an adult site on the web. But I soon learned how to phrase the questions to elicit the truth. And the reality was very troubling. Because, by my calculation, in an average class of 30 children, at least five to eight will have visited one of the extreme racist websites.

Why? Just to have a look? The usual answer was that they were researching a social science or history project, and they happened on the site by accident. But I believe that the creators of these sites are more devious than relying on a serendipitous visit. Even a casual visit shows that their artwork is designed for young people's interest in Crusader imagery. Much music and other popular culture today is Gothic. Most of the youth games rely on the Gothic for their creativity - dungeons and dragons and knights in armour. The *Star Wars* films are medieval phantasies with 23rd century weaponry. Indeed much of the ethos of today's youth culture would have been recognisable to a European youngster living in the world of Henry the Second and Richard the First.

So is there a conspiracy amongst all these racist website owners and designers to entrap young people in their mesh, and convert their minds, to become the next generation of fascists? And how much of a real danger are these sites to a democratic society?

It isn't possible to give a definitive answer. The racists who drive the engines of these sites don't respond to questions about their size or their motivations. Anyone who questions them is part of the conspiracy to stop them propagating their philosophies. And nor do they reveal their membership lists, so no accurate count can be made of the numbers of people who have been influenced by them since they began purveying their concepts seven years ago. And nor is it safe to ignore them. Because in the 1930s, the world hoped Adolf Hitler would go away.

But should we censor them? No. Firstly it isn't possible because of the very nature of the internet. And secondly censorship isn't the way to fight racism. In a one-man effort to present an alternative viewpoint, I have begun my own website, Writers Against Racism on the Net, or W-A-R-N. The address of my website is <http://www.w-a-r-n.org>. It's only just started, but it will grow. And it will have articles written by writers from around the world of how repulsively they view racism, especially on the internet. My hope is that when young people visit a racist site, they will want to seek an alternative viewpoint. Hopefully they'll come to W-A-R-N and see the truth of history.

- Alan Gold is a writer who has addressed The Sydney Institute. His most recent novel is *Berlin Song* (HarperCollins, 1999)

## GERARD HENDERSON'S

# MEDIA WATCH

### RICHARD CARLETON AND THE LATE ALEXANDER DOWNER

You've heard about exit polls. They are popular in some Western democracies – in particular, the United States – as a means of predicting election results. On leaving polling booths, electors are asked in private how they voted. Their responses are calculated and used to predict the likely outcome.

Now there is a brand new Aussie initiative. It's called entry polling. In this method – developed by Channel 9 personality Richard Carleton – electors are asked how they intend to vote before entering the polling booth. Any responses are filmed and shown, sometime later, on the Channel 9 *60 Minutes* program.

Richard Carleton initiated the entry poll genre when reporting the East Timor plebiscite. He thought it a you-beaut idea to ask East Timorese, who were queuing to vote, whether they intended to support independence (from Indonesia) or integration (with Indonesia). It is no surprise that most of the East Timorese vox-popped by Mr Carleton declined to proffer an opinion. No doubt they had a clearer perception than the intrepid *60 Minutes* reporter - stocked up, for the occasion, with fine food and wine from Five Star Gourmet Foods at Crows Nest on Sydney's lower north shore. In the event, the tragic events following the plebiscite proved the good political sense of the East Timorese. And the flawed judgment, in this instance at least, of the *60 Minutes* star.

The pro-integration East Timorese militias, with the support of sections of the Indonesian Army, waged civil war on the overwhelming majority of East Timorese who supported independence. Demonstrating, if demonstration was necessary, the inherent foolishness of Richard Carleton's judgment in attempting to ask East Timorese in public as to whether or not they supported independence.

Richard Carleton's behaviour was criticised by, among others, former Deputy Prime Minister Tim Fischer and Foreign Minister Alexander Downer. Carleton used his *60 Minutes* program (which went to air on Sunday 19 September) to attack Fischer. He also chose to give Downer a serve on ABC Radio *The Media Report* on 2 September 1999. Let's go to the (audio) tape:

*Richard Aedy:* You have got a very confrontational style on camera, but isn't there a time and a place when maybe discretion's the better part of valour?

*Richard Carleton:* Well I'll take Mr Horta's advice on that.

*Richard Aedy:* Is it worth putting yourself, your crew, the people you spoke to and other Australian journalists at risk for a few seconds of absolutely great footage?

*Richard Carleton:* As for the Australian journalists, I don't particularly want to express an opinion, I have told you what I think there. As to what risk I put the people at, again I rely on Mr Horta's view; he has seen the tapes. But Alexander Downer to me is the man who has made these accusations against me without the benefit of the true facts. If Mr Downer cares to look at the camera tapes, he may do so any time he chooses, look at the camera tapes, he will realise his error - and if he's half the gentleman that his late father was, he will then withdraw and apologise. The ball is in Alexander Downer's court. I suggest to him that he put up or shut up. His father was a great Australian, spent three-and-a-half years in Changi prisoner-of-war camp. Alexander Downer is the only son. His father would like him to apologise.

Well, at least Richard Carleton (journalist) had two sources. And at least one of them is extant. According to Carleton, his vox-pop in Dili was legit because Fretilin's Jose Ramos-Horta said so. Carleton quoted Horta as saying that his entry poll was neither "improper" nor "provocative" and that it was a "very simple and straightforward question". At the time this imprimatur was given, Mr Horta had not lived in East Timor for a quarter of a century. It is doubtful that he was the most appropriate authority on security in Dili in the lead up to the United Nations supervised plebiscite. But at least Jose Ramos-Horta is alive and, as such, able to elaborate on his reported comments. In the event, ABC TV *Media Watch* program commented that, in fact, Mr Horta had seen only a few minutes of the *60 Minutes*

tapes. It is unclear as to how much he actually knew of Carleton's vox-pops in Dili.

But what about Alexander Downer (1910-81) – father of Australia's Foreign Minister? How did Richard Carleton know that the late Sir Alexander wanted his son to apologise to the *60 Minutes* reporter? Is RC into the art of séance? Does he have a ouija board? Can he read tea leaves? In fact this could be *60 Minutes*' greatest scoop. An alive Richard Carleton interviews a deceased Sir Alexander Downer. Just imagine the possibilities. "Hello, I'm Richard Carleton; I talk with the dead". Tick, tick, tick.

## GREAT U-TURNS OF OUR TIME (CONTINUED)

### • Les Murray

Last time round *Media Watch* documented the \$448,510 which poet Les Murray received in taxpayer funded subsidies from the Australia Council between 1973-74 and 1991-92 including four years on a Creative Art Fellowship (commonly known as Keatings). This amount was not adjusted for inflation. *Media Watch* commented on your man Les's non-fiction (including his 1996 claim that John Howard was guilty of "insensitive cowardice") and commented gratuitously:

**Les Murray is a fine poet. But his ventures into non-fiction as a social commentator have not been inspiring. Give the man (yet another) Keating. Or, if necessary, a Howard. And send him back to writing (taxpayer subsidised) poetry.**

Guess what? No sooner had *The Sydney Institute Quarterly* hit the presses than word arrived that your man Les was back on the taxpayer funded drip. Witness the following poem published in the June 1999 edition of *The Adelaide Review* which is edited by Christopher Pearson. And note, in particular, the acknowledgment at the bottom right hand corner:

**A lot of interesting  
people speak at  
The Sydney Institute.  
For a complete list  
of our forthcoming functions,  
visit our website:  
[www.sydneyins.org.au](http://www.sydneyins.org.au)**

## SOUND BITES BY LES MURRAY

**Attended by thousands, the Sun is opening**

**it's a body-prayer, a shower: you're**

**in touch all over, renewing, enfolded in a  
wing -**

**My sorrow, only ninety-five thousand  
welcomes left in Scots Gaeldom now.**

**Poor cultures can afford poetry, wealthy  
cultures can't.**

**Sex is the ever-appeased class-  
system that defeats Utopias...**

**but I bask in the pink that you're in (Repeat)**

**The windy marsh water starts pricking  
On more places than it has reeds**

**What's sketched at light speed  
thunder must track, bumbling, for miles**

**If love shows you its terrible face  
before its beautiful face, you'll be  
punished.**

**People watching with their mouths  
an increasing sky-birth of meteors**

**Y chromosomes of history, apologise to  
your Xes!**

Publication of this writing has been  
assisted by the Commonwealth  
Government through the Australia Council,  
its arts funding and advisory body

Yet another great Les Murray poem, to be sure. But what's that tucked away in the bottom right hand corner? You know, the acknowledgement which reads: "Publication of this writing has been assisted by the Commonwealth Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body." Hang on a minute. Is this the very same Les Murray who renounced the Australia Council and all its funding in his article "The Noblesse Trap" published in Peter Coleman's edited collection *Double Take* (Mandarin, 1996)? Afraid so. In this essay Les Murray proudly announced that he had "resolved never to accept Australian government funding for my work in the future, except maybe in the form of prizes" and confirmed that he "broke with the Literature Board and the Australia Council in 1992".

But there was more. Les Murray also wrote: "I'm not far from thinking any writer who takes funding while others are left in want is a scab." Not far. But far enough, apparently. For the evidence indicates that, once again, Les Murray is accepting Australia Council funding – through the medium of *The Adelaide Review*. Apparently Christopher Pearson, the monthly throw-away's editor, made an application to the Australia Council seeking grants in order that *The Adelaide Review* could make payment to two writers, one of whom was our man Les. The request was successful. It is unclear whether Les Murray stands by this 1996 analysis and regards himself as a "scab". Meanwhile the November 1999 issue of *The Adelaide Review* contains yet another Les Murray poem – made possible by yet another Australia Council handout. Perhaps all this was done so that *The Sydney Institute Quarterly's* prophesy could be fulfilled. In any event, your man Les is back writing taxpayer subsidised poetry. Just like old times.

• **Kerry Jones**

- Mrs Jones on why the Governor-General (not the Prime Minister) should open the 2000 Olympics – September 1996:

**It should be the Governor-General as our active constitutional head of state. The PM [John Howard] should in no way usurp that role (*Sunday Telegraph*, 1 September 1996).**

- Mrs Jones on why the Prime Minister (not the Governor-General) should open the 2000 Olympics – April 1999:

**The Prime Minister [John Howard] is the head of government and makes these decisions and has made the decision to represent Australia world-wide in opening the Games. It will be a great example of how our system works and show-off that the Prime Minister is head of Australian government – legally and constitutionally independent. That is our argument. (Kerry Jones interviewed by Mike Carlton, Radio 2UE, 22 April 1999).**

- Mrs Jones on why the Governor-General (not the Prime Minister) should open the 2000 Olympics – November 1999:

**I would have personally rather the Governor-General actually opened the Olympics. And our official position, in Australians for Constitutional Monarchy, when the debate was going on, was that we would have preferred the Governor-General. We believe the Governor-General, who exercises the powers of our head of state, should be recognised as our head of state. (Kerry Jones interviewed by Laurie Oakes, Sunday, 7 November 1999).**

So there you have it. Or not.

• **Jonathan King**

Writing in the Brisbane *Courier Mail* on 9 July 1999, under the heading "Forgotten heroes of the empire", historian Jonathan King praised the role played by Queensland troops in the Boer War. In particular he (retrospectively) supported the move by the Queensland government of the day (headed by the premier James Dickson) to provide military backing for the Empire's cause in South Africa. In fact Dr King waxed lyrical:

**The British were right to take such heart from Queensland's offer of support, because these were not merely ordinary soldiers. There was Harry Chauvel, who after the Boer War would go on to become Australia's first army general, leading history's last great charge of the Light Horse in 1917 when his Australian horsemen captured Beersheba in the Middle East in World War I. There was William Glasgow, another World War I general who helped turn the tide against Germany by winning the battle of Villers-Bretonneux. And then there was Reginald Spencer Browne, later a brigadier-general who led the Lone Pine charge at Gallipoli.... As history records, the British forces won the Boer War by 1902, justifying the early decision of the Dickson Government.**

Quite so. But how does the analysis stack up against the following historical account of the role played by Australian forces in the Boer War? As described, for example, in the book *Waltzing Materialism* (Harper & Row, 1978):

**Australians have shown themselves to be an extremely pugnacious nation. In our short history we have joined in eleven major skirmishes and lost nearly a hundred thousand lives before stopping to ask why. The fact that involvement was rarely needed or justified and that the campaigns were often catastrophic was apparently inconsequential. This predisposition to military adventure has been so important that a collection of myths has developed around the catastrophies turning them into victories in such a way that it rarely occurs to admiring audiences to enquire into the reasons why so many Australians should die in the first place. It matters little why the boys were there – the important thing is that they distinguished themselves...**

**The Boer War perhaps summed up Australia's willingness to contribute to**

imperial wars. Troops were sailing west within seventeen days of the outbreak of hostilities. So many Australians volunteered that recruitment centres were forced to turn hundreds away because the British had more than they required for their "restrictive force". Needless to say, the 518 lads who were killed and the 882 who were injured were seen by the historians as brave martyrs to a cause beyond question.

The answer is - not too well. According to the former view (as expressed in the *Courier Mail* circa 1999), Australian colonial governments were justified in sending forces to support the British in the Boer War. According to the latter view (as expressed in *Waltzing Materialism* circa 1978), those Australians who perished in this conflict died in vain - it was yet another example of a "pugnacious nation" contributing to "imperial wars".

So who is this historian whose views are so inconsistent with those of Jonathan King? Step forward, er, Jonathan King - author of *Waltzing Matilda*. There can be no wrong in Dr King's 180 degree turns on matters military. But surely he should have the good grace to let on that he has changed his position in so dramatic a fashion. That way, followers of Jonathan King's historical way could bet on the prospect of yet another opinion flip-flop in yet another two decades.

## BOB ELLIS'S FICTION

Author Bob Ellis spoke to *The Australian* just before the Federal Court issued its judgment in the appeal by Random House against Justice Terrence Higgins' decision in the ACT Supreme Court in the now famous Abbott and Costello case. Ellis told journalist Murray Waldren: "This will show whether we live in a tyranny or not."

Soon after, when the Federal Court announced that it had upheld Justice Higgins's judgment, Ellis went quickly into Ellis-speak. He commented:

**Class divisions, as the referendum showed, were vivid in this case too...You get more for less if you are rich, litigious and powerful. You can either have laws of defamation like this or democracy - you can't have both...I must now consider if I write journalism, memoir or history again. Or whether by this I am forever silenced.**

Really. According to Bob Ellis, the fact that Random House will have to pay damages and costs awarded by Justice Higgins for the defamations in *Goodbye Jerusalem* (Vintage, 1997) means that we "live in a tyranny". Moreover he has threatened not to write journalism, memoir or history again. How about that? But, hang on a minute. When was the last time that Mr Ellis wrote anything other than fiction? It

was the blurring of real fiction and alleged fact that got *Goodbye Jerusalem's* publisher Random House into difficulties in the first place. It is a matter of record that Bob Ellis was not sued in the *Goodbye Jerusalem* case and paid not one per cent in damages or costs. And yet Ellis reckons he now lives in a tyranny and will be "forever silenced". More fiction.

## A TROUSERED OBSESSION

Christopher Pearson shares one thing in common with Bob Ellis. Both were once monarchists. The author of the novel *Goodbye Jerusalem* jumped (the monarchist) ship shortly after the publication of his book. But Christopher Pearson remained loyal to the monarchist cause and played an important role in the republic/constitutional monarchy debate of recent memory.

So it came to pass that Christopher Pearson (and others) lined up against Malcolm Turnbull (and others) at *The Australian's* republic debate in Adelaide on 15 October 1999. The next day *The Weekend Australian* reported the following exchange as having taken place at Norwood Town Hall on the previous evening.

Malcolm Turnbull commented ironically that he was getting a "little moist, teary" following Pearson's speech about the monarchy's ability to bring "order and value" to a difficult world. To which Pearson responded: "I can't tell you how I feel about succeeding in giving you a moistness." Good joke, that.

Whatever could he have meant? On 19 October 1999 *The Australian's* "Melba" column reported that - shortly before the devastatingly witty exchange in Adelaide - it had asked Turnbull what he thought about Pearson. The Australian Republican Movement chairman recalled that, at the Constitutional Convention in Canberra in February 1998, Pearson had proffered the view that he (Turnbull) would look good in skin-tight, blue satin pants. Really.

Quizzed about such bizarre personal behaviour, Pearson maintained that, when this exchange took place, Turnbull reminded him of Robespierre. Get it? You know, the late 18th Century French revolutionary. Still struggling? Perhaps it might help that, according to reports, your man Robespierre liked nothing better than to dress up in skin-tight satin pants. But, then, perhaps not.

Maybe Christopher Pearson has an obsession with trousers. In his weekly *Australian Financial Review* column on 25 October 1999 he opined that John Howard "is probably the only occupant of the Lodge among those still living who'll leave it as same as when he moved in" He then honed in on former Liberal Party prime minister Malcolm Fraser:

**Malcolm Fraser, "the crazy grazier" as he was dubbed, was more deracinated than**

most. At heart he was a patrician of the “what I tell you three times is true” school. Lately his instrumentalism has been as plainly on display as his nether regions were during the pantless-in-Memphis episode, and it’s high time someone told him its been even more unbecoming.

Well, yes, circa November 1975 Malcolm Fraser was dubbed the “crazy grazier”. Apparently by the leftist Mungo MacCullum and his mates in the Parliamentary Press Gallery in Canberra. Despite having a weekly spot in the respected *AFR*, Christopher Pearson seems to believe that it is appropriate to substitute abuse for analysis. Why else the reference to Malcolm Fraser “nether regions” and his being “pantless-in-Memphis”? Was this meant to be funny? Or is the *AFR*’s star columnist merely obsessed with tights, pants, nether regions and the like? How curious.

### C. PEARSON’S PREAMBLE

Writing in *The Bulletin* in the wake of the republic referendum defeat, Laurie Oakes reflected on the rout of the second constitutional alteration proposal – namely the proposed Preamble:

**[John] Howard would have been very shaken by the humiliating rejection of the second referendum question – whether to include a preamble in the Constitution. This was the prime minister’s baby. He took credit for the authorship. He did the deal with Aboriginal senator Aden Ridgeway to get Democrat backing for it in the Senate. It was John Howard’s preamble, designed to give him something positive to advocate so that his negativity on the republic question would be less obvious. It was also intended to make him look less hardline, particularly on matters concerning Aboriginal Australians. The country did not buy it. It polled so poorly, it made the republic vote look good. This was a very personal rebuff. Howard’s reaction was to say those who voted against it were ignorant. The truth is that putting up the preamble in the first place was a major strategic error. The faithful [Tony] Abbott, according to Liberal sources, was one of those who had advised him to do it.**

True. But Tony Abbott did not act alone. He was backed by his good mate Christopher Pearson who, from the start, thought that the preamble concept was a you-beaut idea. As indicated by a reading of his weekly column in the *Australian Financial Review* :

#### ● 1 February 1999.

CP tips that the promised constitutional alteration referendum might include “a possible change to the Preamble to the Constitution acknowledging prior Aboriginal occupation”. He opined that if “John Howard wants to convey an apology and yet to define its terms himself...the Preamble may be the perfect medium”. CP criticised Peter Costello, Malcolm Turnbull and Kim Beazley for opposing simultaneous referendums on the republic and Preamble. He asserted that Messrs Costello, Turnbull and Beazley were “mindful of the *Herald* AC Nielsen poll which suggests the Preamble question would be carried in all States with over 60 per cent support and fear we might feel one big change was quite enough”. In other words, according to PC, the Preamble was almost a certainty to succeed at a referendum while the republic was likely to fail.

#### ● 15 February 1999.

CP praises John Howard for backing the Preamble idea “in advance of party room discussions”. But he bagged Opposition leader Kim Beazley: “Beazley’s argument that the transition to an Australian republican head of state is a simple matter but that an amendment to the Preamble is too hard to be managed before the end of the year is feeble”. In other words, it’s right on with the Preamble.

#### ● 23 March 1999.

The inaugural Preamble is drafted by the Prime Minister and poet Les Murray with a little help from some others. Around this time CP told radio personality John Laws that he had been in communication with Les Murray concerning the Preamble. CP declared in the *AFR* that those “sneering at Murray’s handiwork...were pleading guilty to major changes of Philistinism”. With a capital “P”, no less. He also asserted that “there’s much more widespread popular interest in the Preamble than the Australian Republican Movement has ever managed to generate for its cause”. We will see about this.

#### ● 26 July 1999.

CP includes a Postscript to his column. He reminds *AFR* readers that “during the debate in March over the wording of the Preamble’s acknowledgement of the Aborigines” he had predicted that “if a compromise is to be brokered, the notion of stewardship will prove pivotal”. CP praised Senator Aden Ridgeway’s acceptance of stewardship as a description of the relationship of Aborigines to land. This facilitated the Howard/Ridgeway agreement on the second – and final – Preamble draft.

#### ● 1 November 1999.

It’s just five days to referendum day – and the Preamble has hardly been mentioned by John Howard, Tony Abbott and Christopher Pearson for

yonks. CP now warns: "The Preamble runs the risk of being neglected on Saturday, largely as a result of media indifference". In other words, it's the fault of the media. It is not clear how this can be the case. Because the republic is faltering in spite of media support. So, presumably, the media is not that important when constitutional change is proposed.

● **8 November 1999.**

CP commences his column with a report that "the atmosphere at Kirribilli House on Saturday night was one of relief and encouragement". Presumably the reference here was to the republic (not the Preamble) result. CP bagged Liberals Peter Costello and Amanda Vanstone - along with Kim Beazley. He declared that in opposing the republic, John Howard "kept faith with genuine conservatives". All republican conservatives are, according to CP's definition, not "genuine". Or not "genuine conservatives". Or something like this.

CP reflected that, on the republican issue, "scepticism and common sense had won over millennial enthusiasm, the power of the press and the elites...". He made no mention whatsoever of the fact that the Prime Minister's Preamble had suffered an even greater defeat. Some 45 per cent of Australians supported the republican model on offer. But only 39 per cent of Australians were willing to back the Preamble. What can be the message here? That Christopher Pearson and his mates were out of touch with mainstream Australia on matters Preamble. That, in supporting the Preamble, CP and company were millennial enthusiasts who were mugged by the reality of scepticism and common sense. Say it isn't so.

PHILLIP KNIGHTLEY AND THE DBE

While on the topic of the unbelievable, consider the following scenarios.

Let's say it was revealed in 1999 that X, a British citizen, had spied for Adolf Hitler and the Nazis in the 1930s and 1940s. He/she was in possession of, say, state of the art radar technology and had passed this on to Nazi Germany - in the belief that Nazism needed a little help in an air war over Europe. Can anyone imagine that the person concerned would receive praise for their treachery? Not really.

Now, let's say it was revealed in 1999 that Z, a British citizen, had spied for Josef Stalin and the communist dictators in Moscow from the 1930s to the 1970s. She/he was in possession of, say, nuclear technology and had passed this on to the Soviet Union - in the belief that Stalinism needed a little help in creating a nuclear stock-pile. Can anyone imagine that the person concerned would receive praise for such treachery? Well, yes. Particularly if you read the leftist *New Statesman*.

The story so far. The publication of Christopher Andrew's *The Mitrokhin Archive* revealed that Melita Norwood, now aged 87, had spied for the USSR. When secretary of the British Non-Ferrous Metals Research Association, she provided top secret information on British nuclear technology to the Soviet Union. At the very least, she made it possible for the USSR to develop the atomic bomb earlier than would otherwise had been the case. At the time of her spying - which was undertaken for ideological, not profit, reasons - Melita Norwood was a member of the British Communist Party.

No problem really. For, according to Phillip Knightley, Melita Norwood's activities were motivated by a desire to bring about nuclear equilibrium and, consequently, were a plus for world peace. He told *New Statesman* readers on 20 September 1999:

**We are still in the dark about whether Norwood really made a contribution to establishing this [nuclear] balance. But if she did, you could say that she deserves a medal - and not just a Soviet one.**

There is no evidence that Melita Norwood spied for Moscow because she wanted to prevent war. In fact, she remained a Stalinist throughout the Nazi-Soviet Pact - at a time during which the Soviet Union supported Nazi Germany's war against Britain and her allies. At age 87, Melita Norwood is still making excuses for Stalin, mass murderer extraordinaire. And yet Phillip Knightley reckons she deserves a medal. Arise Dame Melita Norwood DBE - as in Dame of the Bolshevik Empire.

GODZONE SAVES THE QUEEN

Without question, the BBC *Question Time* program was a highlight of the Australian republic/constitutional monarchy debate. Co-chairs David Dimbleby from the BBC and the ABC's very own Kerry O'Brien presided over a five blokes (Bob Hawke, Bill Hayden, Simon Heffer, Aden Ridgeway, Geoffrey Robertson) and one female (Sophie Panopoulos) panel. There was also a studio audience, consisting principally of monarchists and republicans.

There were many "highlights" along the way. Including:

- British *Daily Mail* commentator Simon Heffer's assertion that the republic of United States is "an international laughing stock". Mr Heffer turned up at the filming with lotsa red hair but no hard evidence to support such a wide-sweeping generalisation.
- The claim by Australian born (but British based) lawyer Geoffrey Robertson that Canadians have no humour and New Zealanders are a "joke". Funny, that.
- Bill Hayden's comment that "Jefferson also said from the people, by the people, for the people". What did Abe Lincoln say at Gettysberg, then?

• *Daily Telegraph* columnist Miranda Devine who, from the audience, asked what would be the headline of *The Sun* in London the day Australia voted “No” on 6 November - presuming that the republic referendum was defeated. Ms Devine thought that this was such a good question that she raised it again in her *Daily Telegraph* column on 19 October 1999. And again when on the panel of the Channel 4 ITV program (which aired in Australia on SBS). At the ABC/BBC gig, Robertson misheard the question and Simon Heffer proffered the suggestion “God Saved The Queen”. The appropriate response surely was - who cares? Especially since the Australian referendum result was known very early on Sunday morning (London time) and *The Sun* does not publish on Sunday.

But the stars of the night were two Australians - one monarchist and one republican - both of whom exhibit that frightfully plumb-in-the-mouth (acquired) upper class Brit. accent.

John Paul, a retired University of New South Wales academic, made a moving statement from the floor to the effect that it was okay for Australia to have a British resident as head of state because, in the 17th and 18th centuries, Britain’s head of state resided outside Britain for lengthy periods. Let’s go to the video tape to hear John Paul in full flight:

**On the question about Britain and an absentee monarch, people seem to think that they’ve never had one. But, of course, they had more than once (sic). King George I and King George II spent large periods of their reign in Hanover...It was understood that they should do so because they were Hanoverian monarchs. King Henry II, perhaps the greatest of English kings, spent most of his reign in his French dominions and died there.**

Thank you, John Paul. How frightfully interesting, dear boy. Especially re Henry II (1133-89) - without doubt a constitutional model for Australian in 2001.

There followed Geoffrey (“I write constitutions”) Robertson’s equally asinine comment:

**Look, you don’t need to be a lawyer. And that’s the great thing about this change. The question is...do you want a republic? Or do you want Australia to be consigned to a system that is racist, that is sexually discriminatory and is religiously discriminatory? That is the question.**

Oh, yeah. Soon after Kerry O’Brien wound up proceedings. And not a second too soon.



# HON. JOE HOCKEY MP

*(Minister for Financial Services & Regulation)*

## DATE

Monday 21 February 2000

## TIME

5.30 for 6.00pm

## VENUE

BT Training Room, (Room 401)  
Level 4, 2 Chifley Square, Sydney

FREE TO ASSOCIATES/ASSOCIATES' PARTNERS \$2  
STUDENTS \$5/OTHERS \$10

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