

PATRIOTISM, IMMIGRATION AND THE 1996 AUSTRALIAN ELECTION

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In March 1996 there was a gap between political candidates and voters on the question of immigration and (with the exception of Coalition candidates) on the question of pride in Australia's history. On both questions Coalition candidates' opinions were closer to those of the voters. Concern about immigration is unlikely to have cost Labor the election by itself, but this concern is linked to feelings of national pride. Both attitudes are strongly associated with a vote for the Coalition and may well have swung the tide against the Keating Government.

After the 1996 election the Australian Election Study (AES)¹ canvassed the views of a random sample of voters on a range of topics: how did they vote, what influenced their vote, and what were their opinions on a range of other political and social questions. A previous article drew on this study, as well as a range of other surveys, in an examination of public attitudes to the immigration program since 1961.² That examination showed that around two thirds of Australians have been opposed to current levels of immigration since the mid 1980s, but that this opposition has not been uniformly spread across the population.

Two groups stand apart from the general trend. People with a university education are less opposed to immigration than other educational groupings and so are people who were born overseas in non-English-speaking-background (NESB) countries.³ In contrast, less educated people are in general more likely to express opposition to the intake. In the 1996 AES survey just under 63 per cent of respondents thought that the current intake was too high but the group most opposed were people with trade qualifications (or their equivalent). Here 73 per cent thought the current intake was too large, as did 68 per cent of the group with no post-school qualifications at all.

For most of its time in office Labor had pursued a high immigration policy. It also supported multiculturalism in the sense of cultural maintenance (and, of course, in the 'access and equity' sense of the term as well). Unfortunately the AES has few direct questions on multiculturalism and none on attitudes to structural pluralism. But it is possible that some of the feeling about immigration, rather than expressing an unequivocal opposition to population growth, also reflects unhappiness with the idea of emphasising cultural differences. The AES did, however, ask a range of questions about the pride respondents took in aspects of Australia's achievements and heritage which permit an exploration of the link between patriotic feelings and voting patterns.

On March 2 in 1996, after 13 years of government, the Labor Party, led by Paul Keating, lost to the Liberal-National Party Coalition led by John Howard (leader of the Liberal Party, the senior partner in the Coalition). People who are unskilled or who have trade qualifications were the group most dissatisfied with the Labor Government's immigration policy; they might also be presumed to constitute a large section of the Labor Party's natural constituency. Did some of them desert Labor at the poll

and, if they did, was this desertion linked to immigration policy?

On the face of it, a causal link between immigration and Labor's defeat seems unlikely. As far as the two major political groupings were concerned (Labor and the Coalition), immigration was not an election issue.⁴ The Coalition and the Labor Party did not

offer the voters a choice on immigration: both sides said they would keep the program much as it was, thus maintaining the long tradition of political bipartisanship between the major parties on immigration.⁵ And, in contrast to the heated exchanges sparked by Pauline Hanson's maiden speech in September this year,⁶ immigration was not widely debated during the campaign. When the AES asked its respondents to say how much various issues had affected their vote, immigration was, as Table 1 shows, a fair way down the list.

Nonetheless it was not an unimportant issue. It outranked 'privatisation' which, with the proposed sale of Telstra, was an election issue, as was the question of links with Asia. Table 2 shows that, although the two major parties appeared to offer no change on immigration, voters did believe that there was a difference; pro- or anti-immigration, 66 per cent of voters did find some dissimilarity.

Data from the 1996 Australian Candidate Study⁷ are now available. These illustrate the

Table 1: 1996 election: issues ranked by per cent of voters saying 'extremely important' (percentages)

		Extremely important	Quite important	Not very important	Total
1	Health and Medicare	68	25	8	100
2	Unemployment	61	28	10	100
3	Education	50.4	33	17	100
4	Interest rates	49.5	34	17	100
5	Inflation	48	37	16	100
6	Industrial relations	46	36	18	100
7	Taxation	44	36	20	100
8	The environment	42	42	16	100
9	Immigration	31	36	33	100
10	Privatisation	30	42	28	100
11	Defence	25	37	38	100
12	Links with Asia	21	40	39	100
13	State/Territory issues	16	36	48	100

Source: All of the tables in this article draw on the AES 1996 data file

Note: Respondents were offered a list 'of important issues that were discussed during the election campaign'. They were then asked, 'thinking about these same issues, when you were deciding about how to vote, how important was each of these issues to you personally?' The total number in the sample is 1,797.

degree to which people who ran for parliament shared the feelings of those whom they hoped to represent. They also show the extent to which attitudes to immigration (and other questions) differed between groups of candidates affiliated with different parties. Table 3 shows that there is a wide gulf between the attitudes of the voters and those of the candidates: voters were nearly five times more likely to say that the numbers of migrants had gone much too far. But while all candidates were much less concerned about immigration than were the voters, candidates standing for the Coalition were closer to the voters' feelings than Labor. (However, the two mi-

Table 2: Party whose policies come closer to respondents' own views on immigration (percentages)

Labor	Liberal-National Coalition	No difference	Don't know	Total
20	46	16	19	100

Note: The question read: 'Whose policies—the Labor Party's or the Liberal-National Coalition's—would you say come closer to your own views on each of these issues' [that is, those listed in Table 1]. The total number in the sample is 1,797.

nor parties, the Democrats and the Greens, were closer still.) The gap between the attitudes of the Labor candidates and those of the voters is striking: here voters were 10 times more likely to say that the intake had 'gone much too far' than were candidates from the former governing party.

It is possible that some voters, while they lacked explicit assurances, hoped (or feared) that the Coalition would adopt a more restrictive immigration policy and tailored their vote accordingly. It is also possible that these feelings were reinforced by the demeanour of some candidates, despite the lack of an overt policy difference between Labor and the Coalition. Of course, the fact that the Australians Against Further Immigration Party (AAFI) received a very low vote speaks against such a theory.⁸ If immigration had been a burning issue which the two major groupings had decided to ignore, the AAFI vote would surely have been higher. But if immigration had been linked to a range of other issues concerning national feeling, could it have swayed some votes?

The AES study of the voters provides some help with this question but, though it was based on a random sample of people on the electoral roll, the AES was a self-reported mail questionnaire. The research instrument consisted of a substantial booklet of 27 pages and, of the 3000 posted out, only 1797 (60 per cent) came back. While this is a very good response rate for research of this kind, it is likely to reflect a bias in favour of people who have some spare time and who are not averse to reading, reflecting and answering questions. University-educated people are over-represented in the sample (they make up 19 per cent of respondents, as opposed to eight per cent in the general population aged 15 plus) as are Coalition voters, but to a much lesser extent. In the sample 50 per cent voted Coalition in the House of Representatives and 35 per cent voted Labor. But in reality the Coalition's votes were somewhat weaker than this (47 per cent), and Labor's were stronger (39 per cent).⁹ The over-representation of university graduates and of Coalition voters means that we should be careful about making direct

Table 3: Australian Election Study — attitudes to immigration, voters and candidates (percentages)

Number of migrants allowed in has—	Total all voters	Total all candidates	Candidates by Party			
			Coalition	Labor	Dem.	Green
Gone much too far	33	7	7	3	10	10
Gone too far	29	25	29	13	33	24
About right	30	54	53	68	49	47
Not gone far enough, or not gone nearly far enough	6	11	7	16	7	15
No response	2	3	4	1	1	4
Total N	100 (1797)	100 (439)	100 (122)	100 (110)	100 (111)	100 (95)

Source: AES and Candidates' file, 1996

Note: The responses 'not gone far enough' and 'not gone nearly far enough' have been combined because of the small numbers involved. 'Dem.' stands for Australian Democrats. The figures for candidates by party only add to 438 (not 439) because one respondent did not answer this question. There is no figure for 'don't know': the written response categories did not offer this as an option.

generalisations from the sample to the wider population of voters but it does not invalidate comparisons within the sample. We can learn from results which show that some sub-groups are more or less likely to vote in a particular direction without needing to make direct extrapolations to the general population.

Tables 4 and 5 provide an overview of the votes recorded in the AES by education, birthplace and attitudes to immigration. They show only two educational groups: those with university degrees (postgraduate as well as undergraduate) and those with trade (or equivalent non-trade) qualifications. This

selection has been made to simplify the presentation of the data and these two educational groups were chosen because, in almost every case, they represent the two extremes. In both the House of Representatives and the Senate vote, people with trade qualifications were the educational group with the highest Coalition vote and the graduates were the group with the lowest. The Labor vote showed less variation by education, but in the House of Representatives it reached 33.6 per cent both for those with trade qualifications and those with non-university diplomas (the lowest figure) and at 37.6 per cent, was highest amongst graduates.

Table 4: Voting in the House of Representatives by education, birthplace and attitudes to immigration (percentages)

	Voting, whole sample and by education			Immigration too high, voting in total sub-group and by education		
	Total	Trade...	Uni...	Total too high	Trade...	Uni...
Coalition	50	52	45	55	55	59
Labor	35	34	38	30	31	22
Dem.+ Green	9	8	11	8	7	12
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100
N	(1,797)	(524)	(343)	1,113	376	137
	Immigration OK, voting in total sub-group and by education			Voting by birthplace		
	Total OK	Trade...	Uni...	Australia	Overseas	NESB
Coalition	42	46	36	50	49	46
Labor	43	40	49	33	40	44
Dem.+ Green	10	11	11	10	5	5
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100
N	(652)	(140)	(200)	(1,342)	(384)	(203)
	Immigration too high, voting by birthplace			Immigration OK, voting by birthplace		
	Australia	Overseas	NESB	Australia	Overseas	NESB
Coalition	55	57	59	42	41	36
Labor	29	31	27	41	48	56
Dem.+ Green	8	6	7	13	4	3
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100
N	(878)	(198)	(88)	(440)	(180)	(110)

Notes: People who did not answer the question on voting for the House of Representatives or who voted for other parties or informally (8 per cent of total sample) are not shown separately. 'Education' is highest post-school qualification, 'trade' includes equivalent non-trade qualifications, and 'uni' includes both undergraduate and postgraduate degrees. 'Immigration too high' consists of the responses immigration has 'gone too far' or 'much too far'. 'Immigration OK' consists of the responses immigration is 'about right' [the majority in this category] or has 'not gone far enough' or has 'not gone nearly far enough'. 'NESB' is people born overseas in non-English-speaking-background countries. 'Dem.' is the Australian Democrats.

(In the Senate, graduates' support for Labor was reduced by their support for the Democrats and the Greens and this meant that Labor's Senate vote varied little by education.)

The first panels in Tables 4 and 5 show the voting pattern for the whole sample and by education. They reveal high levels of support for the Coalition among people with trade qualifications (especially in the lower house) and low levels of support for the Coalition from graduates. They also show the low level of support for Labor amongst people with trade qualifications, but here the general pattern does not vary very much by education. If people with trade qualifications are unhappy with the Labor Party, they are not very much more disaffected than the rest of the sample. But

the situation is different when we divide the sample into those opposed to immigration and those who are not opposed, and we look at voting by education within these two sub-groups.

Amongst the critics of immigration the vote for the Coalition is five to six per cent higher in both houses while amongst those who are comfortable with immigration or who want more, the vote for Labor is seven to eight per cent stronger in both houses. Unfortunately for the Labor Party, the people in the latter camp were outnumbered nearly two to one by those in the former. Nevertheless, university-educated people who were happy with immigration gave Labor solid support in the House of Representatives (their Labor vote was a full 14 per cent higher than the average for the sample as

Table 5: Voting in the Senate by education, birthplace and attitudes to immigration (percentages)

	Voting, whole sample and by education			Immigration too high, voting in total sub-group and by education		
	Total	Trade...	Uni...	Total too high	Trade...	Uni...
Coalition	44	46	38	50	48	54
Labor	30	30	29	25	27	16
Dem.+ Green	15	14	23	13	15	19
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100
N	(1,797)	(524)	(343)	(1,113)	(376)	(137)
	Immigration OK, voting in total sub-group and by education			Voting by birthplace		
	Total OK	Trade...	Uni...	Australia	Overseas	NESB
Coalition	36	43	29	46	41	39
Labor	37	36	38	29	34	38
Dem.+ Green	15	13	25	15	14	9
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100
N	(652)	(140)	(200)	(1,342)	(384)	(203)
	Immigration too high, voting by birthplace			Immigration OK, voting by birthplace		
	Australia	Overseas	NESB	Australia	Overseas	NESB
Coalition	50	49	53	38	33	30
Labor	25	26	22	35	41	51
Dem.+ Green	13	13	14	21	14	5
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100
N	(878)	(198)	(88)	(440)	(180)	(110)

Note: People who did not answer the question on voting for the Senate or who voted for other parties or informally (11 per cent of the total sample) are not shown separately. For other notes see Table 4.

a whole). In the Senate graduates were eight per cent more likely to vote Labor than the sample as a whole and 10 per cent more likely to vote Democrat or Green.

What of the immigrants themselves? The fourth panel in Table 4 shows that migrants voting for House of Representatives' candidates are less likely to vote Democrat or Green than are the Australian-born and that this tendency boosts their support for Labor. But their general level of support for the Coalition varies very little from that of the Australian-born. However, the sub-group of immigrants who were born in NESB countries was less likely to vote Coalition and nine per cent more likely to vote Labor than the sample as a whole.

So far Tables 4 and 5 support the hypothesis that immigration (or some other issue closely related to it) did matter in the vote for the mainstream parties. If voters were making the assumption that the Coalition was likely to take a more rigorous approach to immigration control and that Labor was likely to be rather more relaxed, the direction of the vote follows. Groups who are known to be favourable to immigration are inclined to vote Labor and those who are known to be sceptical about immigration are inclined to vote Coalition. This is the broad overview. But the details contain some surprises. University-educated people do tend to favour immigration and to vote Labor, but graduates who are sceptical about immigration provide strong support for the Coalition. The same is true for NESB migrants. A majority of these migrants favour immigration and vote Labor but amongst the sub-group of NESB migrants who are opposed to current immigration policy, a large majority vote for the Coalition.

Both of these groups, university graduates and NESB migrants, have

produced active participants in the immigration debate provoked by Hanson's speech. A majority within them are happy with immigration (and support Labor) but a substantial minority are opposed to immigration (and support the Coalition). Perhaps this underlying political polarisation within the two groups helps explain some of the passion? But it is also possible that Tables 4 and 5 provide an overly simple picture. Can it really be true that the immigration sceptics somehow guessed that the Coalition was on their side, even though they had not been told about it, and tailored their vote accordingly? This is, of course, a possibility. In 1993 the then Liberal leader John Hewson did argue for a smaller intake (breaking the post-war tradition of bipartisanship) and in 1988 John Howard had been the focus of an extraordinary assault by opinion makers in the press after he said that it would help social cohesion in Australia if Asian immigration 'were slowed down a little'.¹⁰ So even though the Coalition went into the 1996 election with the policy of maintaining the intake at about the current level, immigration sceptics may have hoped that it would set lower immigration targets than its opponents. But this hypothesis is undermined by the low vote for the AAFI.

An alternative hypothesis starts from the position that immigration itself may have been an issue of only medium importance for most electors. Opinions about immigration may have produced the strong patterns shown in Tables 4 and 5 because they were working as a part of group of cognate attitudes, including patriotic feelings, economic anxiety, a yearning for stability and a desire for a stronger sense of national community.

Previous research suggests than an outlook focussed on a positive view of the national community combined with

doubts about the benefits of internationalism is more prevalent among less educated people. In contrast, a blasé attitude to national borders, and enthusiasm for economic globalism and cultural cosmopolitanism, are more prevalent among university graduates.¹¹ These are the people who help constitute Alvin Gouldner's 'new class'¹² (and Robert Reich's group of 'symbolic analysts').¹³ Some of them may feel themselves to be either insulated from global economic competition, or well placed to meet it, and a number are not only confident about their own abilities and their own values, they are openly contemptuous of their less sophisticated compatriots.¹⁴

Recent Australian research has provided further empirical evidence for this split in Australian public opinion by showing that people without a tertiary education are more concerned about economic protection than are graduates.¹⁵ Table 6 shows that the AES confirms this pattern. Less educated people continue to be more in favour of protection than university graduates but the difference between them on this question is not as marked as it is on the question of immigration.

A clearer test of the hypothesis that attitudes to immigration are linked to a broader set of values concerning feelings

about the Australian nation can be drawn from the AES questions on national pride. Respondents were presented with a list of attributes concerning Australia and asked to specify how proud they were of each. Table 7 sets out the results for each attribute by the per cent in each educational group saying that they were 'very proud' of this attribute.

Table 7 shows a high proportion of people prepared to say that they are 'very proud' of Australian sport, and quite a few with similar feelings about Australian science, literature and history. In general, less-educated people express more pride. This is consistent with the hypothesis that people who are less-educated hold a more parochial, Australia-centred view and that graduates are more attached to cosmopolitanism. Nonetheless, the rankings of the attributes are relatively uncontroversial. While the university-educated may be more restrained than the rest, they rank the attributes in more or less the same order. But there is one exception. One attribute in Table 7 is controversial and that is pride in Australian history.

If it were left to people with no post-school qualifications, or with trade certificates, Australian history would have ranked third (or equal third) among the aspects of Australia of which people

Table 6: Attitudes to economic protection by highest qualification

Per cent who strongly agree or agree	Total sample	no post-school qualification	trade and other non-trade	undergrad. diploma or associate diploma	bachelor's degree or post graduate
(1) Continue tariffs	57	56	60	62	49
(2) Limit imports	70	70	77	68	59
(3) Stop foreigners buying land	48	50	51	40	41
Total in category	1,797	706	524	140	343

Notes: The respondents were offered the following statements and invited to say whether they 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'neither agree nor disagree', 'disagree', 'strongly disagree'.

- (1) 'Australia should continue to use tariffs to protect its industry'.
- (2) 'Australia should limit the import of foreign products in order to protect its national economy'.
- (3) 'Foreigners should not be allowed to buy land in Australia'.

Table 7: 'How proud are you of Australia in each of the following?', per cent saying 'very proud', total sample and by highest post-school qualification

Rank	Attribute of Australia	Total very proud	no post-school qualification	trade and other non-trade	undergrad diploma or associate diploma	bachelor's degree or post graduate
1	Its achievements in sports	67	71	72	62	53
2	Its scientific and technological achievements	44	46	45	46	41
3	Its achievements in the arts and literature	38	40	40	42	33
4	Its history	37	44	40	27	22
5	The way democracy works	29	29	27	34	32
6	Its social security system	15	16	14	20	13
7	Australia's economic achievements	10	13	12	7	5
8	Its political influence in the world	9	11	8	9	5
	N	(1797)	(706)	(524)	(140)	(343)

Note: People who did not answer the question on qualifications (n = 84) are not shown separately. (There were four possible responses: 'very proud', 'fairly proud', 'not very proud' and 'not proud at all'.)

were very proud. But graduates show only half their enthusiasm and if they alone had been questioned, it would have ranked fifth. John Howard has several times criticised what he refers to as the 'black armband' school of Australian history, where, in his opinion, too much attention is given to the darker episodes in Australian history at the expense of pride in our forbears' achievements.¹⁶

While Keating made the running in the debate about the republic, his support for Mabo, for closer integration with Asia, and for multiculturalism, may have made it seem as if he had less respect for the old Australia. (Of course if patriotism were an uncomplicated issue the republic should have been a plus for Labor among more parochial Australians. The AES shows that

59 per cent of voters favoured a republic, but the issue does not seem to have played a part in the election.)¹⁷

From this it is possible that Howard was perceived as a more patriotic leader than Keating. Such a characterisation of the two leaders may or may not be fair, but Table 8 presents data from both the AES and the candidates' survey which show that (like immigration) pride in Australian history is an issue which separates the voters from the candidates. And like immigration, it divides the candidates themselves: there are marked

Table 8: Australian Election Study — pride in Australian history, voters and candidates (percentages)

	Total all voters	Total all candidates	Candidates by Party			
			Coalition	Labor	Dem.	Green
Very proud	37	22	45	26	10	3
Fairly proud	41	37	43	44	42	17
Not very, or not at all, proud	18	38	9	31	46	73
No response	4	3	3	-	2	7
Total % N	100 (1797)	100 (439)	100 (122)	100 (110)	100 (111)	100 (95)

Source: AES and Candidates' file, 1996

Note: The last two responses, 'not very proud' and 'not proud at all' have been combined.

Table 9: Voting by pride in Australian history

	Total sample	House of Representatives			Total sample	Senate			
		Very proud	Fairly proud	Not very or not proud at all		Very proud	Fairly proud	Not very or not proud at all	
Coalition	50	54	51	41	44	48	47	35	
Labor	35	34	35	37	30	30	29	30	
Dem. + Green	9	6	9	14	15	9	16	24	
Total	% N	100 (1,797)	100 (664)	100 (735)	100 (329)	100 (1,797)	100 (664)	100 (735)	100 (329)

Note: People who did not answer the question on pride in Australian history (n = 69) are not shown separately; nor are those who did not respond to the question on their vote or who voted for other parties than those listed (8% of all respondents in the House of representatives and 11% in the Senate).

differences between the two main political groups and between them and the minor parties. In general the candidates were less proud of Australia's history than the voters but this was not true of the Coalition candidates, nearly half of whom were 'very proud'. Labor candidates, however, had black bands well fastened to their left sleeves, while Democrats wore them on both arms and the Greens were in full mourning.

Pride in Australian history is certainly correlated with voting patterns. Table 9 shows that in both houses people who are very proud of Australian history disproportionately voted Coalition, while those who are not proud avoided the Coalition. But lack of pride in Australian history has little effect on the Labor vote. Those who are not proud do not flock to

the Labor Party; they hear the call more clearly from the Democrats and Greens, especially in the Senate.

Pride in Australian history is linked to the way in which a person votes but, as Table 10 shows, it is not linked as closely to it as are attitudes to immigration. However, the two attitudes (to pride in Australian history and to immigration) are strongly correlated. Table 11 shows that three quarters of those who are very proud of their country's history think immigration has gone to far and that more than half of those who are not proud think that the migrant intake is about right or too small. The association between these two values suggests that, important though concern about immigration is, it reflects part of a broader orientation than worries about

the number of new arrivals and competition for jobs on the one hand, versus indifference to such anxiety on the part of those who feel economically secure. Rather it suggests that some Australians feel that their sense of national identity

Table 10: Voting by pride in Australian history and attitudes to immigration

	Total sample	House of Representatives		Total sample	Senate		
		Very proud of Aust'n history	Immigration too high		Very proud of Aust'n history	Immigration too high	
Coalition	50	54	55	44	48	50	
Labor	35	34	30	30	30	25	
Dem. + Green	9	6	8	15	9	13	
Total	% N	100 (1,797)	100 (664)	100 (1,113)	100 (1,797)	100 (664)	100 (1,113)

has been under attack and have changed their vote accordingly, while others are quick to find such feelings narrow and intolerant, and to reaffirm their rejection of ethno-centric parochialism at the ballot box.

This collection of values may have won some cosmopolitan votes for Labor (and for the Democrats and the Greens) but it

appears to have directed more votes from the parochials and the patriots to the Coalition. This pattern could have swung the balance against the Keating Government; such a conclusion is in harmony with the post-election report presented by Barry Jones to Labor's national executive in September. The report was based on the Party's own research and it suggested that immigration, multiculturalism and attitudes to integration with Asia all played a part in the defeat. Glen Milnes reports Jones as saying:

Losing the election was the second worst consequence of March 2 ... The worst was the realisation that we deluded ourselves that there was a national consensus on issues of race, sexuality, gender and tolerance, and acted accordingly ... Howard's statement about wanting to make Australians feel 'comfortable and relaxed' seemed ludicrously limited, but it actually captured the community's mood very accurately. The Coalition slogan, 'For All Of Us', had a coded meaning picked up by many alienated Labor voters. ... There was deep uneasiness about some aspects of multiculturalism. ... Tolerance is one thing, but to many battlers multiculturalism was seen as 'special pleading' or a 'free kick' not available to everybody. There was a disturbing degree of community misinformation about this.

Table 11: Attitudes to immigration by pride in Australian history, percentages

Immigration has	Total sample	Very proud	Fairly proud	not very, or not proud at all
Gone too far or much too far ('is too high')	62	75	59	46
About right or has not gone far, or nearly far, enough ('is OK')	36	25	41	54
Total % N	100 (1,797)	100 (654)	100 (728)	100 (324)

Note: People who did not answer the question on pride in Australian history or on attitudes to immigration (n = 91) are not shown separately

There were damaging accusations that we cultivate elites and sectional interests, and put less emphasis on the mainstream [And, as far as immigration was concerned] [f]ailure to address the issue of population policy — numbers versus resources — [was] a subject which would have received strong support from environmentalists. The risk of alienating some ethnic lobbies would have been minor.¹⁸

Milne goes on to say that 'Jones singled out Paul Keating's claim during the campaign that Asian leaders wouldn't deal with Howard as particularly damaging in the context of a climate of intolerance and prejudice'.¹⁹

Jones understandably puts his own interpretation on his findings, implying that people who deserted Labor in 1996 were inclined towards racism, sexism (and homophobia). Tony Abbott, the Liberal Member for Warringah, presents a similar analysis of the outcome on March 2 (and the Hanson phenomenon) but expresses it differently:

Howard's election was in part the result of a widening gap between the mind-set and attitudes of the political classes and the rest. Hanson has struck a chord among people who think that their only prejudice is to like the Australia in which they grew up. Of course, creating a 'comfortable

and relaxed' Australia means re-educating the mainstream about the challenges and opportunities of integration with Asia. But it also means re-education the elites about the traditional strengths of the Australian people...²⁰

If a split between parochials and cosmopolitans really did contribute to Labor's defeat, the language which Jones is reported to have used in his address to the Party is a symptom of the problem. If some less-educated Australians feel that the Labor Party not only ignores their concerns but holds these concerns in contempt they will be slow to return to it. But Jones' eminently sensible advice on the need to develop a population policy offers a way forward for both parties. A population policy (be it partisan or bipartisan) would provide a way for all political élites to move on from the present round of dispiriting polemics about race and multiculturalism. It would allow them to focus on the real issue of demography and the way in which conflict over access to scarce resources in this country is to be managed.

Acknowledgment

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References

- ¹ The study was conducted by R. Jones, I. McAllister and D. Gow. See Australian Election Study [computer file], Social Science Data Archives, The Australian National University, Canberra, 1996. The original researchers bear no responsibility for the analysis and interpretation of their data in this present article.
- ² K. Betts, 'Immigration and public opinion in Australia', *People and Place*, vol. 4, no. 3, 1996, pp. 9-20
- ³ *ibid.*, pp 15-18; K. Betts, *Ideology and Immigration: Australia 1976 to 1987*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1988, pp. 74-78
- ⁴ For an outline of all of the parties' population and immigration policies see S. Newman, 'Population policy of Australian political parties — explicit and implicit', *People and Place*, vol. 3, no. 4, 1995, pp. 49-51.
- ⁵ The theory that there has been a pact between the major parties to facilitate high migration in the face of public opposition through an implicit bipartisan agreement to keep immigration off the political agenda, a pact which has been supported by the Australian Council of Trade Unions, is developed in Betts, 1988, *op. cit.*, pp. 120-140. McAllister has reached a similar conclusion independently. See I. McAllister, 'Immigration, bipartisanship and public opinion', in J. Jupp and M. Kabala (Eds), *The Politics of Australian Immigration*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1993, 161-2, 168, 170. Bob Hawke, Labor Prime Minister from March 1993 to December 1991, confirmed McAllister's 'startling' and 'extremely perceptive hypothesis' about this implicit pact in his 'Address' to the Politics of Immigration Conference, Bureau of Immigration Research, Brisbane 24 May 1993, pp. 3-4.
- ⁶ Pauline Hanson, an Independent, won the former Labor seat of Oxley in the 1996 election. On 10 September 1996 she said that Australia was 'in danger of being swamped by Asians'. She also said that Australia's membership of the United Nations should be reviewed, that we should cease paying foreign aid, that special welfare provisions for Aborigines promoted inequality and that national service should be re-introduced. G. Windsor and A. McGarry, 'Hanson targets blacks, immigrants', *The Australian*, 11 September 1996, p. 2.
- ⁷ This study was also conducted by R. Jones, I. McAllister and D. Gow. See Australian Candidate Study [computer file], Social Science Data Archives, The Australian National University, Canberra, 1996. Again, the original researchers bear no responsibility for the analysis and interpretation of their data in this present article. Mailed questionnaires were sent to 672 people who had stood as candidates in the 1996 election: responses were received from 439.
- ⁸ In 1996 the AAFI won 0.67 per cent of the vote in the House of Representatives and 1.26 per cent in the Senate. (In 1993 the figures were 0.64 per cent and 0.44 per cent respectively). The AAFI has however done much better in a number of by elections; Economou reports results ranging between 6.8 per cent and 13.6 per cent. See N. Economou, 'A new constituency or a glitch in the system? A note on recent AAFI Federal by-election results', *People and Place*, vol. 2, no. 2, 1994, pp. 30-35. In the Lindsay by election on 19 October 1996 the AAFI candidate won 6.1 per cent of the vote (*The Australian*, 21 October 1996 p. 4).
- ⁹ See the *CDROM. The Parliament Stack*, the Parliamentary Education Office and Interactive Multimedia Pty Ltd, Canberra, 1996
- ¹⁰ This episode is described in K. Betts, 'Public discourse, immigration and the new class', in J. Jupp and M. Kabala (Ed), *The Politics of Australian Immigration*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1993, pp. 230-239. See also P. Kelly, *The End of Certainty: The Story of the 1980s*, Allen and Unwin,

Sydney, 1992, pp. 420-433. (Kelly played an important role in the 1988 media campaign against Howard. See Betts, 1993, op. cit., p. 233.)

- ¹¹ See C. Bean, 'Determinants of attitudes towards questions of border maintenance in Australia', *People and Place*, vol. 3, no. 3, 1995, pp. 32-40; Betts, 1988, op. cit., pp. 81-119, 142-147, 163-169.
- ¹² A. Gouldner, *The Future of Intellectuals and the Rise of the New Class*, Seabury Press, New York, 1979, pp. 19-27
- ¹³ R. B. Reich, *The Work of Nations: A Blueprint for the Future*, Simon and Schuster, London, 1991, pp. 177-180
- ¹⁴ See examples in Betts, 1988, op. cit., pp. 104, 106, 110-119.
- ¹⁵ See Bean, op. cit.; M. Wilson, 'Australian motorists' attitudes — to their cars, the environment, public transport, and to the maintenance of an Australian automobile industry', *People and Place*, vol. 3, no. 4, 1995, pp. 28-31.
- ¹⁶ 'I profoundly reject ... what others have described ... as the black armband view of Australian history.' J. Howard, 'A united front: what our leaders say', *The Australian*, 31 October 1996, p. 6
- ¹⁷ ALP, *Report by the National Consultative Review Committee to the ALP National Executive, August 1996*, mimeo, 1996, p. 4
- ¹⁸ G. Milne, 'Labor's challenge is to restore tolerance', *The Australian*, 30 September 1996, p. 9. Most of this material is in the written report, but Milne's account of Jones' speech is more direct than the document itself. See ALP, 1996, op. cit.
- ¹⁹ Milne, op. cit.
- ²⁰ T. Abbott, 'Divisive debate overcharged by media frenzy', *The Australian*, 4 November 1996, p. 13