ACADEMY OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES IN AUSTRALIA

Dialogue

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Contents

About the Academy

The Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia was established in 1971. Previously, some of the functions were carried out through the Social Science Research Council of Australia, established in 1942. Elected to the Academy for distinguished contributions to the social sciences, the 342 Fellows of the Academy offer expertise in the fields of *accounting, anthropology, demography, economics, economic history, education, geography, history, law, linguistics, philosophy, political science, psychology, social medicine, sociology and statistics.*

The Academy's objectives are:

- to promote excellence in and encourage the advancement of the social sciences in Australia;
- to act as a coordinating group for the promotion of research and teaching in the social sciences;
- to foster excellence in research and to subsidise the publication of studies in the social sciences;
- to encourage and assist in the formation of other national associations or institutions for the promotion of the social sciences or any branch of them;
- to promote international scholarly cooperation and to act as an Australian national member of international organisations concerned with the social sciences;
- to act as consultant and adviser in regard to the social sciences; and,
- to comment where appropriate on national needs and priorities in the area of the social sciences.

These objectives are fulfilled through a program of activities, research projects, independent advice to government and the community, publication and cooperation with fellow institutions both within Australia and internationally.

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President's column
Fay Gale

The Future of Research Libraries

At the beginning of March a workshop was held in Canberra to discuss the future of Australia's research libraries in the electronic age. 'Australia's information future: information and knowledge management for the 21st century' drew on a range of participants from across Australia and overseas and covered all of the major issues facing the management of research data and publications in these times of rising costs and changing technology.

I spoke on behalf of the Academy on 'Research needs for the new millennium: issues for the Social Sciences'. For fellows, ready access to research material is vital. That access is being greatly facilitated by the electronic means of communication but at the same time it is being increasingly limited by the rising costs of virtually all materials especially journals. All research libraries are trying to develop new ways of dealing with these issues at a time of diminishing financial resources for university libraries.

Australian social scientists depend upon cost effective access to global scholarly information and knowledge. On the face of it electronic access seems the answer. Indeed most of us now depend very heavily on computer technology in all areas of our research as well as our personal lives. A virtual Australian library, even if only partial, would gain some independence from the currency fluctuations that currently plague our university libraries. But the new technology can also be a mine field, particularly for those of us who developed our research skills and methods before this electronic revolution.

For all our willingness to embrace this technology, as indeed we must, there remain a number of issues of concern to scholars and many of these have not yet been dealt with adequately. One of greatest concerns is probably quality control. Anyone can publish on the 'web'. Indeed we are now bombarded with information, much of it of dubious value. The internet can be an exchange of ignorance as well as of knowledge. Discernment is more difficult on the screen than in print form. We are given the sense that all information is of equal value. How can we ensure authenticity and peer review and how do we guard against plagiarism? I cannot help but be reminded of TS Eliot's prophetic statement in 'The Rock':

Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge?

Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?

Whilst anyone can 'publish' on the web only a few can have their work published in high quality, scholarly, refereed journals. We need to ensure a system of rigorous refereeing of material that can then be given a quality label and protected against plagiarism. The

electronic means are there, via techniques such as water marking, but adapting them for the best development, evaluation and management of research still needs a lot of work.

These issues are of particular concern to social scientists who deal primarily with people. Ethics and confidentially are key factors in much of our research. How do we ensure these and protect our informants?

Social scientists also depend greatly on currently printed and archival material. As our libraries are forced, for financial as well as management reasons, to store material electronically we have good reason to be concerned about who makes the decisions as to what will be archived electronically, and what will be left to just disappear. Will the advantages that more can be archived electronically with less space outweigh the losses? The transfer from print to electronic storage is initially costly. So who decides the guide lines for what is and is not transferred?

We already see in our students an increasing dependence on secondary sources. Will this be accentuated? How do we protect primary sources when they are judged too expensive or difficult to transfer? Plagiarism becomes harder to detect with electronic referencing. There is a greater opportunity to gain credit for re-inventing the wheel. Electronic referencing can also suggest an ephemeral nature to knowledge. I have too often been given a web reference and by the time I have looked it up it has gone or been replaced. The electronic access can thus give an impression that all knowledge is ephemeral in nature. How do we ensure that quality markers differentiate the long term material of substance from the largely irrelevant?

Without questioning the enormous benefit of modern electronic means for the development and dispersal of knowledge we need to be alert to the fact that electronic networks are not only changing our access to knowledge they are also affecting the way knowledge is being created. What is not amenable to instant electronic means of analysis and dispersal is in danger of being side-stepped. Social scientists are concerned that much of the material they wish to access tends to be in ideas, arguments and discourse as much as in data collection or experimental results. With limited resources we see a danger that material which lends itself more readily and cheaply to electronic transfer will be given preference over some of the seemingly esoteric but in the long term crucial knowledge for our cultural and economic survival.

The protection of intellectual property and the copyright of Australian authors becomes an even greater nightmare. Copyright is already a nightmare for Australian authors and universities. What was supposed to protect and reward us has become costly to our universities and an inadvertent mechanism for transferring Australian educational dollars to large overseas publishers. I remember being furious the first time I discovered that   the

university had to pay copyright for me to copy sections of one of my own books for students. How much more will we have to pay to use our own intellectual property when the publication is largely in an electronic form?

Under the distribution of research funds under the so called performance based funding mechanism of the research quantum, academics must publish. To do so nowadays they are usually forced to transfer their copyright to publishers who are then the beneficiaries of the Australian government's attempt to protect Australian intellectual property. This process already has enormous inequities for Australian researchers and must become even more so with electronic publishing.

Nevertheless we are moving relentlessly towards electronic and virtual libraries. The earliest on line information for education purposes was an Australian and not an American invention. The world's first school of the air was developed by a South Australian teacher called Adelaide Miethke. She adapted the invention of the pedal powered, long distance wireless to bring education to children in the outback. It opened in June 1951 and at the time seemed a great technological revolution. I remember the time I watched two children shift for the first time from their correspondence lessons, that often took weeks to arrive, to the immediate response and interaction as they pedalled to give the wireless power. Their joy at the benefits of the new technology was infectious. For the first time it mattered not where you were or who you were. Such freedom is rapidly becoming the normal way of research. We are communicating so easily with fellow researchers at considerable distances where time zones no longer matter.

The benefits we acknowledge and use daily. This workshop was to help researchers assess the pitfalls and prepare for the inevitable and rapid changes. The workshop attempted to evaluate our research needs into the next millennium. Not surprisingly the report 'Investment in Information and Knowledge Infrastructure: A Strategic Framework for Australia's Research Enterprise', is being written interactively and distributed electronically.

Vice President's note

Ian Castles

On 17 July 1948, the Olympic torch was lit at Athens and began its 12-day journey across Europe to Wembley Stadium, borne aloft by the first of thousands of runners. The Olympic Games had not at that time achieved a high global profile, and most Australians were probably more interested in the fortunes of Bradman's team. But there was a particular symbolic significance in the torch's journey in 1948: it travelled from Greece, the cradle of European civilisation, through other great centres of European civilisation in Italy and France, and on to the country which, more than any other, had initiated and sustained the unprecedented growth of the global economy in the century which ended with the outbreak of the First World War.

Between 1820 and 1913, the population of Britain roughly doubled; the volume of its output and goods and services increased sixfold; and the volume of its exports increased 35 times.[1] In the succeeding decades, however, barriers to trade and investment had proliferated and the growth of the international economy had been severely checked.

During the War, hopes and expectations of a brighter future had been fostered by the rhetoric of the Allied leaders. In the Atlantic Charter of August 1941, President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill had pledged their countries to 'endeavour . . . to further the enjoyment by all States, great or small, victor or vanquished, of access on equal terms, to the trade and to the raw materials of the world . . .'. And in the Mutual Aid Agreements of 1942 the Allies had committed themselves to 'agreed action . . . directed to the expansion . . . of production, employment, and the exchange and consumption of goods, which are the material foundations of the liberty and welfare of all peoples . . .'[2]

By 1948, it appeared that these wartime hopes had been dashed. There was a growing consensus that the world was facing a massive food crisis. Supplies were already inadequate, and the growth of the world's population at the seemingly enormous rate of 20 million annually - the growth is now 80 million annually - raised the spectre of imminent global catastrophe.

In May, Sir John Boyd Orr, director-general of the fledgling Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), had delivered 'a last warning to the world' as he arrived at Southampton in the Queen Elizabeth:

> Pointing out that the world population was increasing by 20 million yearly, and that there was no virgin soil to bring into use for food production, [Sir John] said: -The whole human race is rumbling on to destruction. There is only a fifty-fifty chance of getting over this food problem. If it is not solved

there will be chaos in the world in the next 50 years. The nations of the world are insane . . . ' The world food shortage was only just beginning. Soil erosion was taking place all over the world.[3]

Speaking at a subsequent Press conference in London, Sir John echoed the common view that the food problem could only be solved by the direct actions of governments and international organisations:

> . . . for the purpose of increasing production there was already a good organization in the FAO. The Commonwealth should be developed within the FAO in conjunction with all other nations. . . . There were now two bodies, one a committee of 35 nations allocating food in accordance with need and the other stimulating plans of production. Never before had there been so many nations cooperating and planning together.[4]

Viscount Bruce of Melbourne, the former prime minister of Australia, was chairman of the FAO's World Food Council and a prominent figure in the international co-operative effort. A report from the Council, introduced by Bruce in the House of Lords on 16 June, demanded early and vigorous action 'from all Governments' in order to avert the likelihood that the level of health and nutrition of the peoples of the world would decline even below the standards achieved before the war.

As the debate proceeded, the Lords competed with one another in stressing the magnitude of the crisis. Viscount Addison 'hoped their lordships, whatever political appellation they applied to themselves, would not be afraid of sufficient socialism to get a rational system of price stabilization and control'; Viscount St Davids said that 'nothing short of complete cooperation between peoples, under the United Nations or a world parliament, could bring a cure'; and the Earl of Huntingdon urged that 'they must find a solution if they were not to be faced with starvation on a gigantic scale which would lead to war'.

Later in the year, in speaking to Earl de la Warr's motion 'That this House [of Lords] is of the opinion that plentiful food imports are not likely to be available in the forseeable future, and that it is desirable that the emphasis of our Empire and national economic policy and the allocation of capital resources and man-power should be adjusted to meet this change in our circumstances', Bruce asserted that 'even with maximum production Europe would require to import food, and her dependence on the United States for wheat supplies was almost terrifying.'[5]

In a letter to *The Times,* Lord Bledisloe claimed that 'the civilized world is looking to Britain for a definite and courageous lead in an active policy of greatly augmented food production'. And he warned that 'Unless the nettle of early implementation of food production policy, based upon world requirements, be more firmly grasped by all parties in the State, the gloomy forebodings of Sir John Orr and Lord Bruce will without doubt be realized, with results terrible to contemplate'.[6]

But Winston Churchill, leader of the Opposition, was now less concerned with 'world requirements' than with the need for Britain to reduce its dependence on overseas food supplies. In a speech on 14 July, Mr Churchill declared that:

> This island, and every part of it, must produce a much higher proportion than it does at present of the food to maintain in vigorous health the 47 million people of this country. . . This is not merely a temporary emergency . . . It is a programme of long-term expansion made vitally necessary by lasting economic changes at home and abroad. . . The need for home-grown food will be so great in the next 10 to 15 years that no Government, however wanton, will dare to maul or maltreat the agricultural producer. You should proceed to act in confidence because you are on a foundation which, so far as anything is stable in this changeable and precarious world, can be trusted to be solid and enduring.[7]

There was bipartisan support in Britain for the promotion and protection of domestic agriculture. Replying to Lord Bledisloe's letter, the Minister for Agriculture, Tom Williams, pointed out that 'The very first section of the Agriculture Act 1947 . . . states that the objective is to promote and maintain a stable and efficient agricultural industry by the provision of guaranteed prices and assured markets for all the principal commodities, both crops and livestock'. The Minister went on to note that the Act 'set a permanent policy for British agriculture and was followed in August last year by the four-year agricultural expansion programme with its objective of a 50 per cent increase in output as compared with pre-war years'. He pointed out that quotas for the growing of each of the principal crops were being fixed annually **for each county**, and that 'In allocating these county targets, full regard has been paid to the climatic, soil and other conditions, including the need in some areas to modify the crop production on grounds of disease . . . or soil exhaustion'.[8]

But British farmers stubbornly resisted these efforts at central planning: the area under crop declined by some 1.4 million acres between 1945 and 1947. In an effort to ensure that by 1951 the acreage would again approach the 1944 level, Minister Williams introduced an Order to empower county agricultural committees to require individual farmers to limit their acreages of grassland. He assured the House of Commons that the powers would be used sparingly, and merely to 'compel non-cooperators to keep at least to a minimum acreage of tillage'.[9]

In the event, the acreage under crop declined by a further 1 million acres between 1948 and 1951, despite Mr Williams' best endeavours. Agricultural output did not approach the targeted 50 per cent increase above the pre-war level, despite the imposition of county quotas. And employment in agriculture in England and Wales declined by more than 40 per cent between the censuses of 1951 and 1971,[10] despite Mr Churchill's assurance to farmers that they

stood on a solid and enduring foundation in a changeable and precarious world.

Responsibility for the administration of the supply of food to British consumers rested with another Minister: the Minister for Food, Mr Strachey. The rationing arrangements were exceptionally complex, and subject to frequent changes. Thus on 20 April Mr Strachey announced that the usual seasonal rise in milk production had made possible an increase in the non-priority milk allowance: catering establishments would now be allowed 10 pints of milk for each 100 hot beverages served. Proprietary infant milk foods would henceforth be available only to children under one year instead of two years as at present, and where proprietary foods were bought the child's entitlement to liquid milk would be cancelled. A retailer's allocation of 'canned points foods' - canned fruit, condensed milk, canned meat and canned fish - would now depend on the number of customers registered with that shop for sugar, fats, bacon or cheese. There would be an extra pound of sugar for domestic jam making during the next ration period. And all Olympic Games competitors, British and foreign, would receive rations on an increased scale during the period of the Games.

As the Olympic torch approached its destination, Mr Strachey announced a further major change. Bread and flour rationing would end, and the restrictions on the serving of bread in restaurants would be removed. But, the Minister warned, 'the quantity of wheat available in the world and our own ability to command the foreign currencies necessary to purchase it were strictly limited'. Accordingly, the Government would now introduce a scheme under which the delivery of flour from mills would be controlled administratively. As the Government did not propose to allow 'the unrestricted sale of bread and flour for any purpose . . . which the purchaser might choose' and, in particular, was determined to do everything in its power to prevent the use of bread or flour for the feeding of livestock, 'an Order would come into force tomorrow which would prohibit the sale or purchase of more than 28 lb of flour by retail at any one transaction'.[11]

The risk that purchasers of flour might use it as stock feed arose because flour, and indeed all of the principal foodstuffs, were being sold at heavily subsidised prices. The Minister told the House of Commons on 12 July that 'Fair distribution of food would be absolutely impossible without the heavy subsidy expenditure'. If the expenditure were stopped, 'The price rise which would immediately take place would sharply cut down working-class consumption of food, and therefore it would be a very attractive thing for some people because it would probably mean that very little rationing through coupons would be necessary'.

This statement amounted to an acknowledgement by the Minister that the total consumption of food was being substantially boosted by the system of subsidies, and that it was the effect of this distortion in prices, rather than any physical shortage, which made Britain's

elaborate rationing system necessary. The suspicion that the complex of government interventions was having counter-productive effects is reinforced by figures provided by Mr Strachey in response to a Parliamentary question, which showed that, in the absence of subsidies, meat and eggs would have risen in price by 35 per cent, sugar and margarine by 40 per cent, bread by 45 per cent, flour by 55 per cent, butter and lard by 65 per cent and cheese by 75 per cent.[12]

With the single important exception of meat, the historical statistical record suggests that there was no general shortage of food in Britain in 1948. Despite Mr Strachey's introduction of administrative controls on the offtake of flour from mills, flour consumption *per capita* reached its highest level in the post-war period in that year and by 1972 had declined by no less than 40 per cent. The period between 1948 and 1972 also saw significant decreases in the *per capita* consumption of other foodstuffs such as potatoes (down 10 per cent) and liquid milk (down 5 per cent), and fractional decreases in the *per capita* consumption of fresh fruit and of butter and margarine.[13]

The Government appears to have been unaware of the contradictions between its various well-intentioned policies. In the House of Commons on 13 December, Mrs Barbara (now Baroness) Castle claimed that 'our carefully planned and highly successful policy of price controls and food subsidies had been of great benefit to our people'. Mrs Castle blamed failures on 'the rising cost of imported food', and suggested that 'through OEEC the European countries receiving Marshall aid should gang up to avoid competing with each other for food supplies'.

In addition to the massive subsidisation of food prices, British agriculture was being 'assisted' by a range of other costly programs - for example, subsidies to encourage the use of fertilisers, to bring marginal land into production, to encourage the retention of calves that would otherwise be discarded for slaughter as veal and to plough up grassland.[14]

Despite the range and pervasiveness of these various inducements, the Government was under constant pressure to do more for domestic agriculture, whatever the cost. In the House of Lords on 16 June, Earl de la Warr 'blamed the Government's allocation of steel for the shortage of tractors and machinery, and asked why tractors were exported to the United States.' The Earl believed that 'It would be better to keep [the tractors] here, grow food ourselves, and save dollars'.

The saving of dollars was a primary objective of the schemes for expanding food production projects in what had until recently been called the British Empire. Some days before the Olympic torch began its journey, Food Minister Strachey drew the attention of the House of Commons to 'a very fine photograph' in *The Times* of the first ploughing at the grain sorghum project of the Overseas

Development Corporation at Peak Downs in Queensland: 'It was a good, heartening sight'.[15] Opening an Australian exhibition in London on 8 September, Mr Strachey stressed Britain's 'willingness to enter into long-term arrangements by which primary products, above all foodstuffs, were assured of a continuing and ever-expanding market in this country'.

Reciprocating the British Minister's assurances at a luncheon of the British Empire Producers' Organisation at the Savoy Hotel some weeks later, Ted Hanlon, Labor Premier of Queensland, said that 'The British Commonwealth should have no hesitation in expanding food production to the fullest possible extent'. In the Premier's view, 'the world had no chance in the next half-century of catching up with its food requirements'.[16]

Sir Henry Tizard, chairman of the Government's Advisory Council on Scientific Policy, was of the same mind. In his presidential address to the British Association for the Advancement of Science on 8 September, he held that it was 'extremely doubtful whether the supply of food could keep pace' with the growth in world population, 'even with the present low standard of nutrition'. Somewhat inconsistently, Sir Henry went on to assert that it was 'our bounden duty, and the only certain way of safeguarding our future . . . to develop our colonial territories, particularly the under-populated African colonies, where the increase in population that would follow the control of disease and the increase in food supply would open fresh markets for international trade'.

So far as domestic economy policy was concerned, the British Government's chief scientific adviser held, on the one hand, that 'the productivity of labour in this country [is] far lower than it could be if the results of past research were more resolutely and continuously applied'; and, on the other, that 'we must plan our economy on the assumption that food would be dear and scarce for many years to come'.[17]

On 8 December 1948, the perceived need for urgent governmental and inter-governmental initiatives to solve food supply problems was reflected in the passage of a resolution of the United Nations General Assembly, calling on all countries to stamp out food profiteering by distributors and speculators. In the course of the debate the British representative, Mr Ernest Davies, said that 'in the opinion of Great Britain all countries short of food should institute an adequate system of rationing, and raise the purchasing power of low income groups' (presumably by means of food subsidies).

There is no sign that there was any awareness, within the British Government or elsewhere, that the Government's food policies were major contributors to the problem rather than its solution. In fact, the complex of governmental interventions had created an impression of massive deprivation. 'Britain now finds itself literally on the verge of starvation', proclaimed William Vogt in his best-selling tract *Road to Survival*[18]. 'A half-fed Britain is a danger to Australia and indeed to

the whole civlized world' said RG Menzies, leader of the Federal Opposition in Australia.[19] These claims were based on premises which can now be shown to have been utterly false.

One major European country chose not to accept the advice given to other countries by the British representative at the United Nations. Fortunately for the future of Europe and the world, the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) decided instead to dismantle the systems of rationing which the occupying powers had set in place. In his recently-published survey of *The Changing Fortunes of Economic Liberalism*, David Henderson identifies the German economic reforms of the late 1940s as 'a landmark event in the history of economic liberalism'. And he reports the judgement of Gottfried Haberler that 'A turning point [in the restoration of economic liberalism] came with the radical economic reforms of 1948 in West Germany, soon followed by similar measures in some neighbouring European countries'.[20]

In 1948, Britain's real output *per capita* was double that in the FRG, notwithstanding Sir Henry Tizard's lament that British productivity was far below the level that it could have been if the benefits of past scientific research had been fully and resolutely applied. By 1962 - that is, in only fourteen years -*per capita* output in the FRG exceeded that of the United Kingdom.[21] Moreover, the FRG had become the largest unit in, and a strong supporter of economic liberalism within, the European Economic Community; and at the end of the century a reunited Germany is by far the largest economic unit in an expanded European Union.

Scientist Tizard told the 1948 British Association meeting that '**All** social progress, such as spread of education, promotion of health, opportunities for leisure and healthy recreation, must depend on the power of science and technology to increase the productivity of industry'. Economist Erhard, architect of Germany's 'economic miracle', recognised the vital role of another factor: effectively functioning markets. It is difficult to resist the conclusion that much of the difference in the material achievement of the two countries in the early postwar decades can be attributed to the relative influence of these mindsets.

It would be over-simple to extend the comparison, and attribute all of the changes in the relative economic performances of Britain and Germany through the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries solely to the successive movements in the relative strength in each country of liberal ideas, both in the intellectual and the political spheres. But the pervasive influence of such ideas upon the 'material foundations of the liberty and welfare of all peoples' should not be underestimated.

1   Maddison, Angus (1995), *Monitoring the World Economy*. OECD: Paris.
2   Crawford, JG, (ed) (1968), *Australian Trade Policy 1942-1966:* 9.
3   *The Times*, 5 May 1948.
4   *The Times*, 11 May 1948.
5   *The Times*, 17 September 1948.
6   *The Times*, 30 June 1948.
7   *The Times*, 15 July 1948.
8   *The Times*, 2 July 1948.
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10 Mitchell, BR (1988), *British Historical Statistics*. Cambridge.
11 *The Times*, 22 July 1948.
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13 Mitchell, BR *op cit:* 713.
14 *The Times*, 2 August 1948.
15 *The Times*, 13 July 1948.
16 *The Times*, 30 October 1948.
17 *The Times*, 9 September 1948.
18 Vogt, William (1949), Road to Survival. Victor Gollancz: London: 73
19 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 21 March 1949.
20 Henderson, David (1999), *The Changing Fortunes of Economic Liberalism: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*. Institute of Public Affairs and New Zealand Business Roundtable: 90, 10.
21 Maddison, Angus (1995), *op cit:* 195, 197.

Europe today

Aneurin Hughes

Europe today wears a Janus face: increased stability, economic well-being – a more integrated community of communities in the West, and in the Balkans black despair with the ravages of war, ethnic cleansing and man's inhumanity to man imaged on television daily.

For the European Union the current conflict underscores the greatest lacuna in European construction – a common foreign and security policy. One eventual good to emerge from this tragedy must be an accelerated push to forge a European security and defence community and an inclusive developmental strategy to embrace in one way or another the wider Europe.

The Union has suffered an internal crisis too, with the resignation of its executive, the Commission, deemed guilty in an independent report of cronyism and bad management. Here too there is a justifiable expectation that what appears to have been a systemic failure will provoke necessary change in an inter-institutional structure architectured for a community of six, a half century ago with a limited mandate, now fifteen Member States, soon to be over 25 and a set of responsibilities, grown like Topsy.

And yet 1999 has not been all bad news. In January economic and monetary union became more than a *desideratum* devoutly to be wished as Europe's single currency, the euro, was launched. Hailed as the most significant event in financial history since the break up of the Bretton Woods system, it was also greeted both as the necessary concomitant to a Single Market and perhaps the largest single step taken on the pathway of integration since Robert Schumann's 'leap into the dark' heralding the birth of the Coal and Steel Community at the end of World War II.

A new president has been named. A new Parliament will be elected in June and a new Commission confirmed in September. The Council of Ministers will have a new post, a high representative for foreign and security policy and the Commission is likely to appoint a vice-president with overall responsibility for foreign affairs. A new treaty, that of Amsterdam, entered into force in May and will considerably abet progress towards a more coherent and muscular foreign policy.

The treaty also addresses matters of pressing concern such as unemployment, consumer affairs, justice and human rights, enlarging on the so-called 'third pillar' issues of the Maastricht treaty and lays the groundwork for a further Intergovernmental Conference to take decisions on structural reform. This latter question takes on a new note of urgency as negotiations with candidate countries from East and Central Europe advance.

Reform packages not only relate to the inter-institutional fault lines which have deepened greatly in recent years. The renewed Parliament and Commission will have to address quickly further reform of the agricultural policy, agree a package of measures for further trade liberalisation to advance at the Seattle WTO ministerial meeting and concur on a new deal for the third world. Already the largest aid and development donor in the world, the Commission has proposed a fundamentally new approach in this regard to make its aid operations more effective and relevant.

Our relations with Australia are basically in fine fettle and we can chalk up a number of successes in recent years: – a political declaration, a Science & Technology Agreement with 37 joint projects up and running, a Mutual Recognition Agreement for conformity assessment, a Wine Agreement and growing cooperation in other areas.

We could do much more however if we had a legally binding agreement which would give us a legal base to fund projects in areas of common interest and concern. In the absence of such we will pursue further sectoral agreements with one on education training and exchange, the next to come off the drawing board.

Willy Brandt once wrote 'we must dare more Europe'. In similar terms we must dare more Australian-EU relations.

Aneurin Hughes is EU Ambassador to Australia.

Two conferences, two continents and a question

RJB Bosworth

FROM 5 to 9 July this year, the Australasian Association for European History is holding its XIIth biennial conference in Perth. Our draft program is exciting indeed, with eighty papers presently listed. Most of those working in the fields of European studies in Australia and New Zealand are making their way across the Nullabor. They will be joined by more than a score of colleagues from overseas. Our focus is to be on twentieth century Europe, which, as I write, is going out as it came in with war and massacre in the Balkans. We shall explore the present meaning of fascism, of the Holocaust, and of national rivalries in our new world order as it exists after the 'end of history' and beneath the overwhelming hegemony of contemporary liberalism. Aware, too, that we exist after the linguistic turn, we shall review representations of these matters in film, literature and memory. Our keynote speaker, Sheila

Fitzpatrick of the University of Chicago, has claims to being the greatest Australian historian of her generation, though her concentration on the history of Stalinism means that locals are unlikely to admit her achievement. She will review Russia's twentieth century in history and historiography.

It is ten years since the last AAEH conference was held in Perth. We then entitled it 'The Real Bicentennial'. In 1989, having barely endured the rampant parochialism of the sellebrations of the year before, our hope was, in our tiny way, to call the Old World into existence in order to redress the balance in the New. At least we could proclaim in echo of the ghost of the early Manning Clark that Australia, too, had known much of the Enlightenment, its discontents and contents, and that we therefore shared in considerable part quite a few 'European histories'.

In 1999, our task seems more taxing. At university meetings, in consultation with the endless teams of strolling quality reviewers, let alone in the discourse of our media, it is hard indeed to own up to working on Europe, let alone to admiring the place in large degree. The newest Australia, which, but for its doubts about the Queen, is so like the one of my reluctant memories of the 1950s , wants to *fare da sè*. Except when we hear how much we are 'part of [an undefined] Asia', Australia has a fervent desire to look inward. As the most portentous of local Australianists is fond of remarking, any dealing with 'Europe' amounts to a surrender to 'recolonisation'. His is scarcely a single voice. If I really want to be a good Australian, I am time and again told, I must slaughter my 'European' cats, uproot my 'European' roses, cut down my 'European' trees and use only 'Australian' ingredients when I plan a meal. All things considered, it is probably time that I took pride in national 'unity' and became a devoted paladin of a timeless 'One Australia'.

But here of course is a rub. The words 'One Australia' now have a special meaning; they bespeak a red-haired Queensland woman of limited vocabulary or a smoother ex-Manly-Liberal, just elected to the NSW Upper House on an 8% vote. They invoke a political movement which appeals to mateship, rural egalitarianism, protectionism and Australian race patriotism. A Europeanist might say 'don't worry too much', the Le Pens and Finis of Europe have a 'natural' vote of up to twice that level and the varieties of liberal democracy in France and Italy survive comfortably enough. But there is another problem about 'One Australia'. The ideas which eddy around it are not confined to the minds of Hanson and Oldfield. After all, our present Prime Minister in the 1980s used exactly the same phrase when he was joining Geoffrey Blainey in expressing paranoid fears about the excessive heterogeneity which 'Asian' immigrants were allegedly bringing to our shores. Similarly it is hard to imagine the ghost of Arthur Calwell and many an old Labor 'man' altogether renouncing the spirit of 'One Australia'.

But, in my Europeanist way, I find another matter still more troubling when I track the rise of nationalism in contemporary Australia.

Before I turn to these my worries, let me come clean about my own preferences as made from my knowledge of twentieth century Europe and in my own self-interest as one who would like to see an understanding of that distant continent flourish in the one in which I live. I am afraid of the power and the tragedy of nationalism. Ex-communist Yugoslavia ties post-'Auschwitz' history to the Europe which went to Auschwitz. Keeping liberalism and nationalism united is a sisyphean task — did not every post-Versailles European state outside the USSR start as the 'democratic' child of Woodrow Wilson but soon abandon that heritage? In October 1938, every European state, away from the Scandinavian and Anglo-French fringe, from Portugal to Finland, had opted for authoritarian nationalism and had donned the shirts of some version of 'fascism'. In hard times, the liberalism withered and the nationalism grew. I know, too, that nationalism especially appeals to 'the lesser examination-passing classes', as Eric Hobsbawm, *haut en bas* in the way that only a cosmopolitan Marxist would have the effrontery to manage, wonderfully denominated them. Finally I know that nationalism has, as it were, a green side — Stanley Payne, a curmudgeonly old Reaganite historian in the US, has taken pleasure in his recent (not very convincing) study of fascisms in pointing out the greenness of Nazism. Nationalism, it might almost be said, turns into fascism when rhetoric grows untrammelled about 'blood' and 'soil', when the good members of the nation are wholly united (now is the time to expel or kill the disloyal) and when they are in organic communion with a primordial past and with their natural environment.

So much for my own bias or knowledge; but what happens when I transport this understanding to Australia? What does it do to my commitment to the local political left? — I have been thus committed ever since, aged 8, I for some reason decided to favour the touring West Indies cricket team over the national squad in 1951-2.

In answering these questions I shall have to tread on very delicate ground. I want to discuss Australian left liberals' response to the Aboriginal question. No doubt I must start by saying that I fully favour Aboriginal land rights and would be delighted to see beneficent laws and attitudes transported from such admirable countries as Canada to Australia. I am also appalled by the social deprivation of Aboriginal Australia and agree that it is a deep stain in our national history. Anything which can bring greater material wealth and spiritual comfort to Aboriginals should be favoured by all Australians and by our governments.

On the other hand, the sceptical historian in me knows that the deprivation has a long history. I also know that longstanding historical problems have a way of reconstituting themselves; the Italians quite often thought that they had found a means to resolve the Southern problem and the English the Irish problem and they were wrong. But, before I become too sententious, let me shift my focus and ask a different question. Two days before the NSW state elections, I read the distinguished Melbourne Aboriginalist historian

Bain Attwood advocating in an article in *The Australian* 'biculturalism', that is a nation united in two parts, an Aboriginal and a presumably 'European' one. What, I wondered as I scanned his words and froze at their implications of the renunciations of the marvellous texture of so many imported histories which actually reside here in this continent, was in it for him and in it for so many of our intelligentsia when they advocate similar ideals? What, apart from a doubtlessly praiseworthy but at time frighteningly missionary moral impulse to end the suffering of the Aboriginal peoples through the gift of a past, were they gaining from a discovery and an assertion of Aboriginal history? What self-interest does the left-liberal Australian intelligentsia have in being quite so convinced of the virtue of adopting an 'Australian' past before 1788 and in thus rewarding Australians, too, with a primordial contact with 'our' land?

Here my fragile and potentially biased knowledge from Europe gives me an answer and a very disturbing one. We live in dangerous and uncertain times. It is hard to discern the future (always the most proper object of study for historians). The present appears to leave us perhaps alone in the Southern oceans, cut off from the great blocs of the world as they constitute themselves after the collapse of communism and the utter ruin, at least for the moment, of the socialist project. In this loneliness, why not find comfort in time and place, and so in an allegedly eternal Australia? A succouring identity may spring from Australian soil. With some sleight of hand but no more than usual in the historical distortion which always accompanies the invention of a nation, all Australians can be attached to '60000 years' of 'history'. Thereby, at a stroke we can renounce the cultural cringe because we shall own 'more' history than anyone else. Certainly we shall excel all those patronising 'Europeans'. When we have kangaroos as pets or as dinners, when we root up our 'foreign' lawns and replace them with 'authentic' 'native grasses', we, too, will be original and will be united in this originality. We might even be able to market this our nation to the wider world. Throughout time and space we shall have become one Australia.

Where have I heard these words before I ask myself? The answer is plain, in inter-war Europe and its antecedents. Then, lots of European intellectuals, especially once liberal ones, turned to blood and soil as their answer in the face of the menacing global system being demanded in that era by the onset of 'modernity' and the crises unleashed by the First World War and Russian Revolution. Then, too, nationalism was the cheap and effective way out for many an intellectual and politician. Then, too, it was proudly proclaimed that there was going to be one Germany, one Italy, and one Romania, just as, in the 1990s, Balkan nationalists have worked their murderous ways towards one Serbia, one Croatia and only three or so Bosnias.

Our present Western Europe is a more beneficent place, ready to accept the many Italies, Spains and Belgiums and so tolerant of the

fact that the nation is only one of the many factors which help to craft the changing identities of humankind. Now even the Germans contemplate the possibility of turning immigrants into citizens and the resolutely imperial English seem all but ready to curb their domination of the Celtic fringe. In 1999, cannot we, too, opt for a similar modesty? In contemporary Australia, my small voice thus says, beware those who demand we nationalise ourselves, our pasts and our futures. Can we not instead celebrate our multiplicity and our changeability in time and space as in everything else?

Our nation is new, not old; anything but primordial, it began with federation in 1901 and doubtfully then. Since 1788 and probably before, our lucky continent has always been a place of immigration of people and ideas, and of an infinity of contacts with the world. From outside have come cats and roses and jacaranda trees and wheat and sheep and engineering skills and Shakespeare and Marx and Verdi and Dostoevsky and Garcia Marquez and Duccio and jazz and cricket and cities and feminism and post-modernism and 'identity politics' and universities and the Westminster system and religions and law and ideas about land rights and much that we can critically treasure (or reject). It may be becoming harder and harder to make the world listen to an Australian version of the Enlightenment and modernity, but, in that partial sense that each of us is an Australian, let us retain that wonderful imported ideal of an optimism of the will and a pessimism of the intellect as we learn more about the latest new world order and humbly seek to retain a presence in it. Let us deploy our intelligence to praise disunity, the Australias and the multiplicity of chains which thankfully bind us to so many worlds and especially to Europe. Let us cherish difference, and endeavour to deny the 'terrible simplifiers' who seek to nationalise our discourse as once they did in other societies and at other times and with such appalling results.

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Corruption in Europe

Leslie Holmes

FOR many, the March 1999 revelations of various types of corruption within the European Commission – part of a political scandal that was described on the front page of *Le Monde* (17 March 1999), in somewhat exaggerated fashion, as the most serious political scandal ever in the EU's history[1] - came as a shock. It should not have done, for at least two reasons.
First, the very structures and processes of the EU are well suited to corruption. One reason is the sheer scale of the EU; *ceteris paribus*,

the larger and more complex an organisation, the more the opportunities for hiding improper behaviour. Another is that the EU is a relatively undemocratic organisation, whose 'democratic deficit' has often been noted. Moreover, the anti-market 'protectionist' elements of the EU are conducive to corruption. In a 1993 article on what is now the EU, for example, Michael Clarke wrote that, 'By the beginning of the 1980s most Europeans probably knew of the existence of EEC fraud'[1]. Clarke explains in detail why and how the various subsidy schemes have been ripe for fraud by farmers and others, which in turn can create opportunities for corruption by officials.

Second, corruption has been rife in both European institutions and individual states for decades, and much of it is well-documented in the academic literature. The case of the corrupt former Belgian defence minister, Willy Claes, who made his way to the topmost position in NATO before being discovered is well known. So is the Italian corruption scandal of the 1990s usually called Tangentopoli. Somewhat less famous is the case of the former French prime minister who committed suicide while being investigated for alleged corruption, Pierre Bérégovoy.

Even countries that long enjoyed a reputation for being 'clean' have been subject to various corruption scandals in recent years. The January 1997 'book of the month' in Germany, for example, was a somewhat popular analysis of German corruption entitled 'The Swamp' (Der Sumpf). Other Northern European countries have also experienced more corruption (although it must be acknowledged that, in the 1998 Transparency International 'corruption perception ranking' of 85 countries, Denmark emerges as the least corrupt[2].

Corruption is by no means limited to Western Europe. While the pervasive corruption in Russia is widely reported in the Western media, research soon reveals numerous cases of corruption throughout Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). Among the many instances of high-ranking officials being charged with (and often found guilty of) corruption are several former prime ministers – including Albania's Fatos Nano, Lithuania's Andras Slezevicius and Ukraine's Pavel Lazarenko.

In short, corruption can be found right across Europe (and indeed the world – but that is not the concern here), and in all types of system. This brief article will focus on just two dimensions of corruption. First, why does it appear to be increasing? Second, does it matter? The conclusions will consider the prognosis.

Corruption on the increase

Anyone who has researched corruption knows that it is impossible to provide reliable data on its magnitude. There are three main reasons. One is the nature of the beast. Most crimes have a perpetrator and a victim; the latter usually reports the crime that has been committed against him/her. Corruption is different. Often, it is

committed by one person, with the 'victim' being amorphous, such as the state or society. Where more than one person is involved, as in bribery situations, a corrupt official is typically involved with others who, for various reasons, have as much vested interest as the official in not reporting the criminal act.

Second, a comparison of the inadequate data available from different countries is problematic, since countries have their own ways of classifying corruption. Such differences can be exaggerated by those wishing to emphasise cultural difference and even uniqueness; some actions (and non-actions) are considered corrupt in virtually all societies. Officials demanding bribes are condemned almost universally for instance, even if tolerance levels of bribery vary. Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that attitudes towards cronyism and 'gift-giving', to take but two examples, vary from culture to culture. Third, many countries produce few if any data explicitly on corruption.

Given all this, it might appear inappropriate to refer to an increase in corruption. After all, no-one can be certain there really has been an increase. But, in this area as in so many in the social sciences, 'reality' however defined is not necessarily what matters. Of greater importance is perception, and there can be little doubt that corruption is perceived to have increased substantially in recent years. While the European countries in general (some of the CEE countries are exceptions) fare better than most developing countries in terms of perceived levels of corruption, there is a widespread sense of a deteriorating situation.

The reasons for the apparent increase are many, and it is not possible in an essay of this scale to elaborate or even list them all. Rather, the focus here is on one particular factor and its ramifications. A variable that is likely to be controversial has been selected, since it is important to foster debate on this topic. That factor is the impact of economic rationalism (neo-liberalism).

As the Thatcherite approach to economics gradually spread to the Continent, so, according to some analysts, did corruption increase[3]. Assuming this correlation is correct, there are at least five explanations.

First, economic rationalism – with its emphasis on competitiveness, out-sourcing, reducing direct state involvement in the economy, etc – creates new opportunities for corruption. One is during the privatisation phase, when officials involved in the sale of state assets can be offered bribes and kickbacks by tenderers in a situation that simply does not exist when the state is not selling. Admittedly, this is usually a non-iterated situation; once the privatisation process has been completed, the opportunities dry up. But if outsourcing is to be both another plank of a neo-liberal program and effective, it provides ongoing opportunities for corruption. This is because officials can be offered bribes and kickbacks every time a contract comes up for reconsideration. When a local council runs its own garbage disposal

service, such opportunities do not exist in the way they do when such services are outsourced.

Second, and related to the first point, the moves towards commercialisation and outsourcing of functions and responsibilities that were once considered the state's typically increases secrecy. Commercial-in-confidence laws often apply in cases where, had the state been performing the tasks now performed by private agencies, freedom of information acts would have rendered processes potentially more transparent.

Third, economic rationalism discourages loyalty, in that public sector jobs that were once considered continuing tenured are no longer secure. If public servants may lose their positions in the process of downsizing and alleged efficiency, even though they may have been effective and diligent state employees for many years, why should they remain loyal to their employer and retain an *esprit de corps*?

Fourth, the ideology of economic rationalism encourages selfishness. It places its primary emphasis on the individual rather than the group or organisation, and ends (ie 'bottom lines') become more important than means. Such an ideological climate is conducive to corruption.

Finally, the state has typically sought not to appear too irresponsible in the era of neo-liberalism. Hence, particularly when the costs to the state (never mind society) are relatively low, governments have increased the amount of regulation of all sorts of activities. Other things being equal, the more state regulations there are to be broken, the more scope there is for corruption.

Proving the above points requires considerably more evidence and elaboration than is possible here. Moreover, it should not be assumed that this argument alone can explain the perceived increase in corruption throughout Europe. Such reductionism would be absurd and dishonest. But it is argued here that economic rationalism constitutes a significant part of the explanation for the apparent recent rise in venality.

Is the rise of economic rationalism also part of the explanation for corruption in the CEE states? The answer is yes, but it requires unpacking. It has often been observed that the CEE transitional states were unlucky in the timing of their anti-communist revolutions. The latter occurred as the West was entering a recession, so that there were fewer funds available, and more wariness about investing, than might have been the case in an economically more buoyant period. A somewhat similar situation pertained in the case of the Southern European transitional states of the mid-1970s, in that their transitions from authoritarian dictatorship temporally coincided with the aftermath of the 1973 oil crisis. However, there were three important differences between them and the CEE states. First, the scope of transition being attempted in the Southern European states was much more modest – essentially 'just' a political transition, unlike the multiple transitions attempted by the

CEE states. Second, there were only three Southern European transitional states; given the disintegration of Czecho-Slovakia, the USSR, and former Yugoslavia, the states that used to comprise communist Eastern Europe and the USSR now number twenty seven. Finally, the Southern European states did not start life when economic rationalism was at its peak.

One implication of the post-communist states starting life in an era when neo-liberal ideology was dominant was that the scale of the attempted leap from 'communism' to 'capitalism' was greater in some countries than might have been the case had they attempted to move to a less radically different social democratic model. This more radical approach is more destabilising (in various ways), and hence conducive to corruption.

The above argument might suggest that 'economic rationalism' is, despite the caveats included here, essentially being blamed for everything. It is not. As emphasised, many other factors help to explain corruption, which has always existed, and in all types of system. For instance, there was no shortage of corruption in the communist states. Rather, the argument is that neo-liberalism as actually practised has been a major factor in the perceived (and probably actual) increase in European corruption in recent years. By this I mean that pure economic rationalism would not have been accompanied by the increase in regulation that has been a feature of so many European institutions in recent years. This hybrid renders the corruption situation worse than would have been the case had countries been closer to the ideal type of rationalism. Moreover, even if the CEE states had wanted to move from communism to a social democratic welfare type arrangement, their economic situations and communist legacy would not have permitted this.

Does corruption matter?

Despite the apparent increase in recent years, corruption is not yet a serious problem in most of the countries and institutions of Western Europe. Certainly, corruption there has not in recent times been associated with the collapse of long-standing régimes and systems as has happened in the 1990s in Asian countries such as India, Japan, Indonesia, South Korea and Thailand, and may yet occur in China.

The situation in CEE is more serious, since the so-called transitional post-communist states are still fragile. While the consolidation processes have advanced further in countries such as Poland and Hungary than in Russia or Slovakia, in none of them is market economics, liberal democracy and the rule of law firmly entrenched, and excessive corruption can undermine the consolidation process.

Yet corruption can have a corrosive effect in all European states. While some analysts have long argued that corruption can sometimes have a beneficial effect, especially in oiling a malfunctioning or developing system[4], the evidence is overwhelming that, in the long term, any possible short-term advantages of

widespread corruption are outweighed by the drawbacks. Again, space limitations forbid a proper analysis of this. But a few general points about disadvantages can be made.

First, there are economic drawbacks of numerous kinds. Two of the most significant are loss of tax revenue to the state, and the impact of potential foreign investors not investing because of a perception of excessive levels of corruption.

Second, excessive corruption – and especially toleration of and involvement in this by political elites and law enforcement agencies – undermines faith in democracy and the rule of law. Of particular concern is where corrupt officials are seen to be collaborating with organised crime. There is no question that numerous social problems in Europe – including drug trafficking and prostitution – are even worse than they already would have been because of corruption among state officials, notably customs and police officers. The problem is compounded in countries where democracy and the rule of law are still being established or consolidated anyway, as in the CEE states.

Space limitations preclude consideration of survey data that reveal widespread concern about corruption. All that can be said here is that they confirm that corruption is a major concern, and that too much of it undermines democracy itself.

Prognosis

It is possible that the current perception of growing corruption is actually because we are living in more open times – that we are simply more aware than we were of a problem that has long existed. By most criteria, this would be a positive development, since the perception is being accompanied by growing condemnation.

But let us continue to assume that there really has been an increase. While the current situation regarding corruption in Europe is unquestionably of concern, there are good grounds for assuming that the tide may be turning. Once again, the identification of factors has to be highly selective.

When the EU produced its individual assessments of ten CEE states that had applied for membership, only one political problem common to all applicants was identified – corruption. Since all these states seek to join the EU, they will have to work hard on bringing corruption down to manageable levels (it is unrealistic to assume it can be eradicated altogether). There is thus a major incentive for them to address this problem, and most post-communist governments are now seriously doing so. Moreover, as their economies gradually improve, these states will be able to remunerate their officials better, which should take some of the pressure off the tendency towards corruption.

The EU itself is also introducing both structural and procedural changes that should reduce corruption. There is likely to be less scope in the future for abusing subsidisation funds, while the EU is

also clearly addressing charges of a 'democratic deficit' by proposing to increase transparency and accountability (see eg its Agenda 2000).

Most of Western Europe is currently moving away from the hard-nosed economic rationalism that, albeit in polluted form, typified the approach of so many governments for much of the 1980s and 1990s. While current theories of the so-called 'Third Way' or 'New Centre' emphasise that there can be no return to earlier Scandinavian or Rhineland models of social democracy, there is nevertheless an attempt to retrieve some of it. Moreover, the disadvantages of excessive 'downsizing' and multi-skilling are increasingly being recognised, which could in time reduce the sense of insecurity felt by many state officials.

As a finishing (and debate-starting) point – it is clear that many of the problems and causes of corruption observable in Europe are very familiar to us here in Australia!

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[1]   Clarke, M (1993) 'EEC fraud: a suitable case for treatment' in (eds) Pearce F and Woodiwiss, M, *Global Crime Connections.* London: Macmillan:162.

[2]   This information was downloaded from the Transparency International homepage.

[3]   See eg Della Porta, D and Mény, Y (1997) 'Conclusion: democracy and corruption; towards a comparative analysis' in (eds) Della Porta, D and Mény, Y, *Democracy and Corruption in Europe.* London: Pinter:166-80.

[4]   Eg Leff, N (1964), 'Economic development through bureaucratic corruption', *The American Behavioral Scientist*, 8, 4: 8-14; Nye, J (1967) 'Corruption and political development: a cost-benefit analysis', *American Political Science Review*, 61, 2: 417-27.

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Persistent inequality in Communist Eastern Europe: the effects of parental cultural and political capital

Paul Nieuwbeerta

IN the socialist countries of Eastern Europe, over forty years of official government policy was designed to reduce social inequality. Marxist governments in all the Eastern European countries underlined the importance of a 'just' and 'equal' allocation of material wealth and living conditions. To achieve this egalitarian distribution, several de-stratifying policy measures, such as income redistribution, and expropriating the property of farmers and the nobility were implemented. In addition, Marxist policy makers were aware that the allocation of scarce goods does also involve the transmission of goods between consecutive generations. For that reason, socialist policy makers placed influencing the intergenerational transfer of resources within families high on their agenda and it became a main target of their destratification policies, through, for instance, the abolition of large-scale private ownership, the right to inherit several forms of private goods, and giving limited access to schooling for children from bourgeois backgrounds to higher education. The efforts to reduce social reproduction went far beyond the policies of redistribution common in Western societies since the 1960s.

In spite of these egalitarian policies, the persistence of social and economic inequality in Eastern Europe has been widely acknowledged. Previous analyses hardly suggest that the destratification experiment has accomplished its goals in all respects, and certainly not with respect to educational and occupational attainment. Inequalities in access to higher occupational positions continue to resemble the structure of opportunities in other industrial societies: the social status of parents determine the careers of their offspring quite strongly. There seem to have been not much change in this respect, even taken over an extended period of several decades.

Several explanations have been suggested for the apparent failure of egalitarian socialist ideology or its reversal into a contradiction of its basic tenets. One explanation of why equality policies in communist countries did not live up to expectations might be that destratification measures taken have created new social forms. In this light various 'New Class' theories have been proposed by several students of state socialist societies. These theories postulate that the traditional opposing classes (owners vs non-owners) have been replaced by new contrasts in socialist societies. These theories found their best-known exponent in Djilas (1957). His 'New Class' thesis postulates that under socialism, political resources have replaced other determinants of social stratification. The ruling political class constitute a status group with its own cultural devices

to establish social rank. This is accomplished by direct discrimination against others and by exercising control over indirect channels of social mobility. If this were the case in Eastern Europe, one could expect membership of political elite to be of major importance in gaining access to better life chances.

Whereas Djilas still identified the members of the new class with a proletarian vanguard that entrenched its position inside the state bureaucracy, two decades later, Gouldner (1979) and Konrad and Szelenyi (1979) argued that the leading groups in state socialist societies are not proletarian at all, but more of an intellectual breed. They claim that education and culture play a large role in distribution and reproduction processes in state socialist societies. The idea that cultural differences have replaced the earlier forms of social inequality, and constitute a pivotal element of distribution has existed for a long time in Eastern European stratification research. It is assumed that individuals under circumstances that prevent them from transmiting their material resources will tend to concentrate their socially distinctive and reproductive behaviour on the accumulation of cultural resources. Those who can successfully accomplish this will be best off in the distribution of cultural and material goods.

If this is indeed true, this idea is in accordance with the ideas of Bourdieu (1984) and DiMaggio (1982). They argue that cultural factors constitute an alternative reason for the inheritance of social inequality in all societies; a specific cultural environment at home makes for inequalities. More specifically, children from a high status background are more often exposed to high brow cultural values and activities at home, and thus acquire cultural capital. Cultural capital is an asset in life because it enhances a person's capacities to master academic material, and develop a taste for learning abstract and intellectual concepts. Children from high culture background are consequently more likely to reach higher levels of education and occupational status. Because of the limited options for direct social reproduction in socialist Eastern Europe, cultural reproduction could function as a major alternative route for the transmission of inequalities.

Until recently, theories about the role of cultural and political reproduction in Eastern Europe were never adequately empirically tested. Now, a group of researchers from the Netherlands have published the results of such a project*. To test claims with respect to the role of cultural and political capital in intergenerational transmission processes, data were analysed from six large scale surveys held in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia in 1993. In each country about 5000 respondents, being a representative sample of the general population, were interviewed. The surveys were organised within the project 'Social Stratification in Eastern Europe after 1989' (SSEE), supervised by Donald J Treiman and Ivan Szelényi (1993), in conjunction with researchers from the countries in the survey.

The SSEE data go far beyond the usual stratification and mobility surveys in several ways. Firstly, their quality lies in the fact that the SSEE data contain explicit measurements of the cultural, material and political environment in the parental home during childhood (around age 14). Second, the SSEE data are comparable between the nations under investigation. In all five Eastern European countries, questions were asked in the same fashion. In addition, the data are unique since they contain life-history data. During the interviews, in addition to questions about relevant background characteristics, respondents were asked to give information about their full marital, fertility, residential, educational, and employment history.

Using these survey data the role of intergenerational transmission of inequalities in socialist countries were examined. The results of the research project clearly endorse the ideas discussed above. First, the results confirm the conclusions of some earlier studies that socialist regimes in Eastern European nations have not been very successful in reducing levels of inequality. Children from high status background do much better at school, during their work-life and in private-life than children from lower status background. Moreover, the project clearly shows that parents in the (post-) communist societies used alternative ways to transmit their advantageous positions to their children. Instead of using their economic resources, higher status parents used their cultural and political resources to provide their children with better chances to have a successful educational career, a prosperous occupational career and a more luxurious cultural and material life-style later in life. For example, in Bulgaria and Slovakia, having a parent who had been a member of the Communist Party was shown to substantially increase the levels of educational attainment and of cultural participation and material consumption in later life. This is in line with the important role of the ruling Communist Party in these countries under Communist regimes. Furthermore, the results reveal for all six Eastern European nations surveyed strong support of the Djilas's and Konrad and Szelenyi's claim that in (post-)communist countries cultural and political resources play a large role in intergenerational reproduction processes. We found that effects of parental cultural practices were even stronger than those of individual resources, even education. This is rather different from Western countries.

In conclusion, these findings support the 'New Class' theories, which assume that intellectuals and party members tend to benefit considerably under a state socialist regime. It is of interest to examine how this former 'elite' manage to maintain their position of advantage now the communist regimes have collapsed in Eastern Europe.

* References to publications in English stemming from this project are:

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How the GDR survived for 44 years

John A Moses

THE recent commissioning of the re-designed Reichstag building in Berlin has graphically marked the transition from the era of the Bonn Republic of once divided Germany to the Berlin Republic of the now re-united Germany. It is a good ten years since the wall came down as the consequence of massive popular and largely peaceful demonstrations in German Democratic Republic (GDR) against the atrociously incompetent communist regime. Berlin is once more the seat of government of Europe's most influential country if economic power and financial clout are the criteria of judgement. The big question for the future is whether there will be a Germanised Europe or a Europeanised Germany. All the current signs indicate the latter option. The most urgent domestic political priority for the Berlin Republic is to dispose of the legacy of decisions made in 1989/90 and to integrate the former Eastern provinces not only politically but economically and culturally. This is an on-going task which Chancellor Helmut Kohl's government in 1990 willingly assumed. One tends to forget, though, that there was, at the time, a real choice. How that choice was made is recalled here.

At the crucial *Volkskammer* election in East German of 18 March 1990, 40.9 % of the 93.2% who voted preferred the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) led by Lothar de Maizière who became the German Democratic Republic's first democratically elected head of government. He promptly applied for the constitutional integration of East Germany into the Federal Republic. The territory was subdivided into five historic provinces now known as the new *Bundesländer*.

German commentators on the re-unification of their country, regardless of party-political allegiance, agree that what led to the massive support for the CDU was the illusion of instant Deutschmark prosperity that Helmut Kohl had so cleverly projected if the East German population voted CDU instead of for the Social Democrats (SPD). Indeed, the choice before the East Germans at that time was whether to persevere with reforming their own state and merely to enter a loose confederation with the western big brother (something which the SPD had recommended) or to seek full membership in the Bonn Republic. Frankly materialistic considerations decided the issue.

People in the East had suffered far too long from the deprivation of consumer goods. Access to West German television made awareness of the contrast between the lack of goods in the East and the superfluity of the West widespread. As well, the cultural and political openness of the Federal Republic beckoned irresistibly. Helmut Kohl read the mood of the underprivileged East Germans with unerring accuracy.

If Chancellor Kohl's expert advisers warned of the burdens that would have to be borne by the Federal Republic's social service system through absorbing a population of 17,000,000 potential pensioners, he did not heed it. The temptation to play the role of the beneficent latter day Bismarck overrode all other considerations. 'Buy now, pay later'; and the Federal Republic is still paying some ten years after the wall came down.

But most Germans would think it was worth it; few would want to return to the old division. The GDR was an industrial waste land that only functioned within the command economy of the Soviet bloc. It proved totally non viable in a free market situation. The problem of bringing the living standard of *Ossias* (ie former GDR citizens) up to the level of the *Westies* (ie citizens of the old Federal Republic), has been of far greater magnitude than originally estimated, but it is gradually being surmounted.

When the *Treuhandgesellschaft* was set up, (ie the agency to transfer former state managed East German enterprises into the free market economy) it was discovered that there were none that could compete on the world market, so inferior was the quality of products. It was a case of either closing down uncompetitive industries (such as the textile branch) or selling essential industries (such as gasoline production and distribution) to Western firms or international consortiums. In the case of 'hi-tech' the East was decades behind the West. The East German telephone system had not been upgraded since the Third Reich. The catalogue of East German inefficiency, incompetence and neglect in practically all spheres of life is endless though they did have very good pre-natal and child care services.

Lack of controls meant that poison industrial effluent has polluted vast regions of the country for years to come. As far as most historic buildings were concerned it was official communist policy to let them deteriorate. Life for ordinary folk in the GDR was by Western standards monotonous and bleak. Only the *Nomenklatura*, the 'fat cats' of the regime of *real-existierender Sozialismus* – actually or real existing socialism – enjoyed better consumer goods and the right to travel within the Soviet bloc and occasionally to the West.

Still, for four decades, the GDR functioned after a fashion. Lothar de Maizière summed it up by quoting in an article he wrote after leaving office the following example of sardonic political humour:

> Although there are no unemployed citizens, only half of them are working. Although only half actually have work, all economic objectives are being over-fulfilled. Although all objectives are over-fulfilled, there is nothing to buy in the shops. Although there is nothing to buy, the population have more than they need. Although they have more than they need they still grumble and criticise the government. And although they criticise the government they still give it 99.9 % support at elections.

Historians and sociologists have pondered just how this society could reproduce itself for over four decades, especially in view of the fact that increasingly even members of the ruling Socialist Unity Party (SED) themselves were becoming disillusioned. Above all, the GDR was firmly integrated in the Soviet economic as well as military imperium. Its fortunes waxed and waned with the rise and fall of Soviet power as was evident when Michail Gorbachev announced in East Berlin 7 October 1989 that the SED would have to make the reforms now seen to be necessary in all socialist countries: 'Whoever comes too late, life will punish'.

The warning had, of course, itself come too late. The GDR had long ceased to be a self-perpetuating 'civil society' which could nourish, house and employ its population and guarantee a standard that most had originally expected would result from an economy which was supposed to be managed in the interests of the masses. Once the outside props were removed there was nothing to prevent the internal 'implosion' that quickly occurred.

Now that the dust has settled it is clear that none of the countries of the former Soviet bloc would have stayed communist had it not been for the enforced integration of their respective economies that were ruthlessly managed according to the principles of real existing socialism. Wherever there had been attempts to experiment with less centralisation in economic management, these were savagely countermanded even when actual results looked favourable. And political deviations such as the East German uprising of June 1963 provoked the most drastic Soviet military intervention. Under Walter Ulbricht (1945-1971) and then Erich Honecker, the GDR remained firmly wedded to the Stalinist model of socialism. Opposition from all quarters, especially from within the Protestant Church, was closely monitored. Here the role of the *Stasi* (the secret state police) – the surveillance instrument of the Ministry for State Security – was central. It was the self-styled 'sword and shield' of the party. The principle of unquestioned SED party leadership in all spheres: economic, defence, cultural, educational, had to be upheld rigorously. Indeed, the party exerted *totaler Wahrheitsanspruch*, ie 'claim to total truth'. Dissent was *ipso facto* wrong. Everything was subjected to state censorship and *Stasi* infiltration, not just in the Churches, but in all university departments as well. No institution was exempt.

The peculiar result of the invisible omnipresence of the *Stasi* created the *Nichengesellschaft*, literally 'niche society'. After work everyone retreated into his or her niche at home and strenuously avoided social contact for fear of being overheard saying something in public that might be considered subversive. The psychological damage inflicted by the system on many people is still being repaired.

Given the concentration of power in the SED, and the traditional subservience of Germans to the 'powers-that-be', one would have thought that the administration of the GDR would have been unproblematic. However, there was always one section of society

that could not be could not be ideologically bullied into submission, and that was, paradoxically, the Protestant Church. From the beginning, it was Soviet occupation policy in East Germany to allow the Churches to co-exist with the state and even retain their own real estate and to maintain traditional social welfare functions such as hospitals, homes for the aged and children. Obviously, the state was loathe to assume the burden of running these essential services. But it was in the ideological sphere that the Churches functioned effectively to prevent the communist socialisation of the youth and thereby frustrated the SED goal of winning the hearts and minds of the entire population.

As well, the Churches constituted the only legally free space in which people could assemble and listen to an alternative view of the world. This fact alone accounts for the amount of effort mounted by the *Stasi* to infiltrate the pastorate and Church adherents generally.

From the mid 70s most dissenters in the GDR, both secular and clerical, were using the free space of the Church to express their views, especially the peace movement. An intense and widespread culture of peaceful protest against the regime and its policies began to develop in the Churches across the country. And by October 1989 the Churches had become the bases for the largest political demonstrations in German history.

This is what happened when the fear of Soviet intervention had been dispelled. For forty-four years East Germany endured, for the most part patiently, the imposition of a regime which promised paradise on earth but delivered only oppression, censorship, enforced ideological conformity, the stifling of free speech and cultural creativity, and which above all, could not manage an economy which allowed the population to live at a standard commensurate with human dignity. The question is, if the SED had evinced sufficient ideological maneuverability to allow the growth of something approaching a modern consumer oriented economy, whether the regime would have survived. But that is posing the ultimate of counter-factual questions for a party dominated by such incorrigible Stalinists as Ulbricht and his confreres were.

John A Moses taught German history at the University of Queensland from 1966 to 1993. He is currently Adjunct Professor in History at the University of New England and is completing a study of Church-State relations in the former East Germany.

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Academy News

The *1998 Directory of Fellows* is now available on the Academy's website. The Directory has been designed to provide easy access to specialists in the wide range of fields of the social sciences. Additional information and Fellows' contact details can be obtained from the Academy.

Other Academy information, including the most recent edition of *Dialogue*, is also available on the website. The address is http://coombs.anu.edu.au/~assa/.

The inaugural meeting of the Public Affairs Committee of the Academy was held on 19 March 1999. Chair, Professor Bob Holton, outlined the strategic directions and future activities of the Committee. Immediate priorities include the development and implementation of an internet strategy for the Academy which will be a crucial component of a draft communication strategy.

In the last issue of *Dialogue*, newly elected Fellow *Professor Richard Pomfret* was mistakenly placed at the University of Melbourne. Professor Pomfret is Head of the Department of Economics at the University of Adelaide.

Professor Sydney Dunn AO, formerly Dean of Education at Monash University and Chair of the Commonwealth Government Education, Research and Development Committee, died late last year.

An obituary will appear in the *Annual Report*.

The National Academies Forum and the National Library of Australia will hold a seminar on 'Scholarship, Intellectual Ownership and the Law' 15-16 July at the National Library of Australia, Canberra. Further information is available from Nancy Lane at 02 6247 5777 or email nancy.lane@science.org.au.

In February the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) entered into an agreement with the Australian Vice Chancellors' Committee (AVCC) which will enable university researchers to make much more effective use of the results of ABS social and labour household surveys. Unidentifiable unit record data will become available on many subjects of special interest and value to social scientists, including literacy, families, housing, care for the disabled and elderly, child care, labour mobility, education and training experience, health and nutrition, household expenditure and the distribution of income. The need for arrangements of this kind was identified by the Academy's Strategic Review of the Social Sciences, and gives effect to one of the recommendations of the Review: see Australian Research Council (1998), *Challenges for the Social Sciences in*

Australia, volume 1: 37. Further details are given on the AVCC website at www.avcc.edu.au/avcc/mediarel ('AVCC in Historic Deal with ABS').

ACADEMY PROJECTS

'Creating Unequal Futures?'

The final workshop for this ARC-funded project took place on Thursday 27 May 1999 when final chapter drafts were reviewed. Discussions are at contract stage with a major publisher and subject to a satisfactory outcome, arrangements will be made for final editing of the work for publication.

People of the Rivermouth

The major research component of this project, ie the presentation of the texts with glossary and explanatory notes, have now been finalised. Major work still to be undertaken will then be mainly in the direction of larger contextualisations, including textual and visual images of what has happened to the traditional society over the last fifty years.

Postgraduate Training in the Social Sciences

In March 1999, ASSA was advised that Dr David Kemp, Minister for Education, Training and Youth Affairs had approved the recommendations of the ARC regarding Special Project Funding for the Learned Academies for 1999, including an offer of $82,000 to ASSA for its Special Project, entitled Postgraduate Training in the Social Sciences.

ACADEMY WORKSHOPS

Conveners of the workshop **Representation: Theory and Practice in Australian Politics** held 10-11 December 1998 at the Australian National University, Professor Marian Sawer and Dr Gianni Zappalà, of the Political Science Program, Research School of Social Sciences at ANU, have submitted the following report.

First, we wish to thank both the Academy of the Social Sciences and the Reshaping Australian Institutions (RAI) project at ANU for funding the workshop. This enabled us to bring together participants from around Australia and New Zealand. Unfortunately, Professor Anne Phillips, from London Guildhall University, who had prepared a keynote paper for the workshop was unable to attend. Professors Stuart Macintyre and Geoffrey Brennan, represented respectively the Academy and RAI at the workshop, while six other Fellows of the Academy participated in different roles.

The workshop examined contemporary challenges to the concepts of representation which have underpinned parliamentary democracy. Challenges include the weakening of party identification, increased distrust of parliamentary institutions, the decreased relevance of the geographical basis of representation and the need to accommodate

multiple forms of political identity. Papers and discussion at the workshop focused on three main themes:

- Traditional concepts of representation and current challenges
- Presence and diversity in Australian parliaments
- Representation beyond parliaments

The workshop was structured to maximise discussion and critical comment on the papers. The papers were circulated to all participants ten days in advance of the workshop. At the workshop, session chairs briefly summarised the papers in their session, rather than papers being presented by the authors. Session chairs at the workshop included: Helena Catt, Murray Goot, Barry Hindess, Stuart Macintyre, Ann Curthoys and John Warhurst.

The summaries were followed by more critical comments by session discussants. Session discussants at the workshop included: Wayne Hooper, Bob Goodin, Barry Hindess, James Jupp, Brendan Gleeson, Christina Ryan, Mike Kennedy, Barbara Sullivan, John Braithwaite, Carmen Lawrence, Will Sanders, John Uhr and Adrienne Stone. Authors then had a right of reply before open discussion and questions.

This format worked particularly well in drawing out unifying themes in the 11 papers discussed and will strengthen the coherence of the ensuing book. The workshop also benefited from having participants from a range of disciplines (political science, philosophy, economics, history, law) as well as practitioners of representation from the federal parliament and community-based peak bodies.

Traditional concepts of representation and current challenges

Four papers related to this theme. Anne Phillips' paper, 'Representation renewed', summarised and developed ideas first put forward in her influential book, *The Politics of Presence* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), and provided a point of reference for further discussion at the workshop. Phillips contrasted the 'politics of ideas' with the 'politics of presence', arguing that members of previously marginalised groups need at least a threshold presence in parliament. The representation of 'ideas', the traditional approach to representation, is not sufficient to ensure that the perspectives of groups such as women and ethnic minorities are heard. The question of who does the representing, Phillips reminded us, is particularly important if we believe political representatives should have a greater degree of autonomy from parties and constituencies.

Marian Sawer's paper, 'Concepts of parliamentary representation in Australia', also provided a useful framework and background for workshop participants. The paper reviewed the various concepts of political representation which have been influential in Australia. These included trusteeship, property-based and geographical representation, symbolic representation, the delegate model, the role of political parties, the concept of mandates, populist distrust of representation, constituency casework, voteless constituencies,

mirror representation and extra-parliamentary forms of representation. Methodologies of community consultation have expanded older concepts of political representation and given a significant role to community-based peak bodies. The paper drew on empirical work conducted by the author while a Senate Fellow to illustrate how such concepts influence the current practice of representation by Federal politicians.

Sir Anthony Mason's paper, 'The constitutional principle of representative government', surveyed the emergence of the implied principle of representative government in the Australian Constitution, with particular reference to High Court cases in the 1990s. The paper examined the nature of the concept which the Court has distilled from the provisions and structure of the Constitution.

George Williams' 'Distrust of representative government: Australian experiments with community initiated referenda', argued that the Australian community has a long history of distrusting the people they elect to their parliaments. This distrust of politicians has been heightened and challenged recently by the emergence of populist movements and parties such as *One Nation*. CIR is often advocated by such parties as a means of circumventing political elites. His paper examined proposals for CIR in Australia, pointing out that advocates for CIR have existed at State and federal level since before Federation. The paper expressed reservations about the introduction of CIR in Australian jurisdictions, highlighting conflicts with the doctrines of representative and responsible government.

Presence and diversity in Australian parliaments

While most of the papers addressed diversity issues, three in particular focused on the politics of presence. Gianni Zappalä's 'Political representation of ethnic minorities: moving beyond the mirror', highlighted the problems of talking about ethnic representation in a multi-ethnic country like Australia, with large numbers of relatively small ethnic minority groups. The paper gave several reasons why, notwithstanding, the 'presence' of ethnic minorities in Australia's legislatures is important (legitimacy, responsiveness to ethnic constituents, symbolic reasons). A framework was offered for understanding how and where ethnicity interacts with the system of political representation. Studies suggest the ethnicity of the electorate and the ethnicity of the elected representative influence representational attitudes and behaviour in both the Parliament and the constituency.

Extra-parliamentary forms of ethnic representation, such as consultative bodies and community-based peak bodies also have an important representative role, although constrained on the one hand by co-option and on the other by questions concerning the relationship between representatives and their constituencies. The final part examined three possible alternatives to improving ethnic representation in Australia: reforming political parties, reforming the

electoral system, and enhancing the democratic role and accountability of ethnic associationalism.

Marian Sawer's paper, 'Parliamentary representation of women: a matter of simple justice?' noted that women have, in the 1990s in particular, successfully politicised their absence from parliaments and brought international pressure to bear on this issue. Sawer observed how the claims being made by women draw on the rich ambiguity of political language, often blurring distinctions between different concepts of representation. The paper then examined the practical strategies which have been adopted to increase women's representation in parliaments, in particular, those based on identifying forms of direct and indirect discrimination which have prevented women playing an equal role in public decision-making. Reform strategies include those based on the electoral system, political parties, parliamentary practice and empowerment through separate institution building. As well as highlighting extra-parliamentary forms of representation and accountability for gender impact, the paper examined the different representational expectations and roles that women inherit. Who does the representing may affect how representation is done, not just whose perspectives are taken into account.

Tim Rowse's paper, 'Representing Indigenous Australians', posed the question of the relevance of embodied parliamentary representation to the articulation of Indigenous interests. Two arguments of 'irrelevance' were considered: first, that legislatures are structurally unlikely to provide political leverage to Indigenous Australians; second, that the very notion of 'representation' is alien to traditional Indigenous culture and inappropriate to Indigenous self-determination. The latter view, deriving from ethnographic studies, was associated with the proposition of 'two political cultures' among Indigenous Australians: the urban and the traditional. The paper then showed how competing ideologies of representation, those based on election and those based on the legitimacy of local Indigenous organisations, have played out in the development of ATSIC in sometimes surprising ways. Lois O'Donoghue, for example, found in her consultations that a popular vote, without the role of mediating organisations, was preferred in more traditional parts of Australia.

Representation beyond parliaments

The main focus of four of the workshop papers was on issues which went beyond parliamentary representation. John May's 'The challenge of poverty: the case of ACOSS', focused on how the interests of the poor have been and are being represented in political discourse, institutions, politics and decision-making. His starting point was Arend Lijphart's observation that representation is systematically biased in favour of more privileged citizens, those who are better educated and wealthier. Those who lack the resources to participate effectively themselves in the political system are instead represented by those who provide services to the poor

and advocate for them – the 'welfare industry'. The paper highlights the role of ACOSS as a peak organisation in the policy process, and the problematic role of representing the poor in current political institutions and arrangements where critics are defunded. It raises the question of whether there is a relationship between the institutionalised representation of the poor and the fact that an anti-poverty social movement has failed to emerge.

Helen Meekosha's 'The politics of recognition or the politics of presence: the challenge of disability', showed how people with disabilities are effectively excluded from parliamentary participation, from having recognised interests that they can promote within political parties or bureaucracies, and from political mobilisation. The paper outlined two discourses of representation, apparently dissimilar, but tied together through social relations of disability. The discourse of cultural representation allows us to see the representation of disability as a crucial part of the process of power and knowledge. Emerging disability movements, in resisting the imposition of dominant meaning systems, are identifying positive and negative images, appropriating language and behaviours and challenging control over cultural production in media and public life.

The second discourse of representation refers to the way in which particular groups gain access to the formal political institutions of a society. Questions include: Who is entitled to speak? Who is empowered to participate? How authentic are the voices speaking 'on behalf of'? What range of participation is permitted by political institutions? The paper highlights the challenge posed by disability movements, and their evolving politics of recognition and presence, to representative institutions based on assumptions of normalcy.

Sue Wills' paper, 'The challenge of sexualities', posed the question of why groups seek political representation. She answered in terms of seeking to avoid disadvantage; seeking advantage relative to previous status; entitlement; and seeking to make a contribution that derives from a distinctive identity. In relation to the first two purposes of representation Wills pointed out that non-homosexual representation is often more effective. She also used a case study of an electoral contest in the State seat of Bligh, where a 'straight' Independent member of parliament was seen as more likely to be responsive to the gay constituency than a gay candidate beholden to a major party.

The concept of entitlement is complicated by the choice to be out or closeted. However the last purpose of representation, enriching public life by contributing perspectives different from those of the dominant group, remains important. Presence in the public eye may also raise the status of and affirm the identity of gays and lesbians in the community, but it is problematic to ask parliamentarians to take on this particular role model duty. Less problematic is the increased number of consultative bodies through which gay and lesbian groups can participate in policy development and the possibility of extending such outreach through parliamentary committees.

Dennis Altman's paper, 'Representation, Public Policy and AIDS', made the point that once the study of representation is broadened beyond the scope of parliamentary institutions, it is precisely in areas of emotionally charged single-issue politics that some of the most difficult questions become apparent. The paper outlined three points in the Australian experience in dealing with AIDS: the problem of having to negotiate with groups whose behaviour was illegal; the high dependence on peak bodies in the Australian system of representation; the symbiotic relationship between governments and the communities with which they negotiated and helped create, for example, sex workers and intravenous drug users.

The paper examined the government's relationship with the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO), and a series of challenges to the 'representative' nature of AFAO, arising both from issues of embodiment and issues of accountability to constituencies. Issues of embodiment included the authenticity of representation by those not themselves HIV-positive, or by service-providers rather than people living with HIV-AIDS, representation by 'experts' rather than volunteers, gays rather than representatives of user groups or sex workers, and the basing of user groups on 'ex-users' for purposes of external legitimacy. Altman also addressed issues of representation within bureaucracies, representation at the international level, and cultural representation, suggesting that the latter was of particular importance in the USA in lieu of political representation.

The discussion at the two day workshop was lively and constructive. Topics and issues which arose included:

- changes in the nature and social make-up of political parties;
- the role and interpretation of 'mandates';
- the purpose(s) of representation;
- tension between the politics of presence and politics of absence; wanting difference sometimes to be recognised and sometimes to be ignored as irrelevant;
- issues concerning 'mirror representation – we don't want to remove all distortions, only those which produce undesirable effects;
- presence ensures representatives attempt to 'speak to' those who are different;
- the role of peak bodies as agents of representation;
- the distinctiveness of Australian institutions and processes of representation;
- for most purposes representation begins with community consultation;
- the dangers of incorporation and co-option;
- the role of political culture in identifying groups to be represented;
- parliament should oversight the consultative regimes of government;
- the touchstone issue of normalising disability within representative institutions;

- link between the media and representation;
- who can represent others?

All participants agreed that the workshop was an interesting and useful opportunity to exchange ideas and assist in the process of revising and improving papers. In summing up, Professor Geoffrey Brennan stated that the Workshop discussions had stretched traditional concepts of representation in new directions. Co-summariser, Helena Catt suggested that the Workshop had addressed the 'four W's of Representation': Where, Why, Which and Who. The answers to these 'w' questions are essential to understanding political representation, the link between citizens and government. Without such understanding we cannot reshape institutions better to meet needs and aspirations of citizens.

We envisage that the revised papers from the Workshop will be published as an edited book as part of the RAI series with Cambridge University Press. This will provide a useful and much needed resource on political representation for students of political science in Australia and elsewhere.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Australia-Netherlands Exchange Scheme

Francis Regan, Senior Lecturer, Flinders University of South Australia has reported on his visit to The Netherlands on 1-19 December 1998.

The visit had two purposes. First, I undertook data collection for the project 'The Politics of Family Law Reform in the 1990s'. In order to do this I met and interviewed relevant parties involved in the policy making process in order to identify the content, origins and impact of 'family' law reforms. In the process I gained detailed knowledge, statistics and documentation about the reforms. The trip was primarily organised around meetings in Den Haag, the centre of government and administration in the Netherlands, and a visit to the Katholiek Universiteit Nijmegen.

This trip was also part of a longterm research project for which my colleague, Dr Jenny Burley and I have received a small amount of funding. Second, I examined recent legal aid reforms in the Netherlands (and Sweden in November) as part of my ongoing comparative legal aid research. Needless to say the two parts of the project, while distinct, were closely related. Meetings with court officials inevitably involved discussion of both family law and legal aid reforms. Similarly Ministry of Justice officials also invariably connected the two types of reform.

I gained wonderful access to relevant personnel in the Netherlands, who provided me with detailed information, data and publications about recent family law and legal aid reforms. I have no doubt this sort of visit is required in order to gain access to this volume and complexity of information because unfortunately, the international

English language journals publish very little research about developments in the Netherlands.

However, this trip was in practice exploratory rather than final. In practical terms, I expect to visit the Netherlands at least twice more over the next 2-3 years to gather further data. This will include interviews with policy makers and key individuals, including politicians and community members, who have helped shape reforms. Finally, I believe I now have sufficient contacts in government, universities and the community to allow further trips to be easily arranged.

The visit was a solid foundation for our Politics of Family Law Reform project. We planned to include comparison of the Netherlands and Scandinavia and this visit will contribute strongly to that work. Over time it will allow our comparative work to include a richness that would not have otherwise been possible. In particular I expect to find that no other society's 'family' law has been influenced to the same extent by the gay and lesbian movement as the Netherlands.

My ongoing comparative legal aid research will also benefit from the recent visit to the Netherlands. Previously I had very little knowledge of legal aid in that society, nor did I appreciate the nature and extent of the 1994 reforms or their impact. I had also not realised the degree to which the Netherlands is one of the few legal aid bright spots around the globe not just in terms of funding levels but also by encouraging innovations that are very different to other societies. While this material cannot be included in my forthcoming book of essays comparing legal aid schemes to be published this year by Oxford University Press, it will be certainly be included in future publications.

In many ways the trip was only the success it was because of the assistance from dutch colleagues Dr Leny de Groot and Dr Albert Klijn. I must record my appreciation for the assistance I received from these two very generous people.

Drafts of papers have been prepared on the politics of family law reform in the Netherlands and the impact of the Netherlands 1994 legal aid reforms and will be completed on receipt of aditional materials arriving in translation. In the longer term the materials I gathered will also contribute to comparative publications of 'The Politics of Family Law Reform in the 1990s' project.

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Books
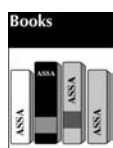
A Books section now forms an integral part of *Dialogue*. Publishers and individuals are invited to contact the Editor with suggestions for books which might be considered for review in these pages.

UNSW. A Portrait. The University of New South Wales 1949-1999, by Patrick O'Farrell. UNSW Press: Sydney, 1999.

Some years ago I toyed briefly with the idea of offering to undertake a history of The University of New South Wales for its 50th anniversary myself, however, soon realised that I didn't really have enough sympathy with the place to do it properly. I was however enthusiastic in supporting Patrick O'Farrell as the author, and as the acknowledgements in this volume show, read and discussed drafts with him. So this is by no means an ordinary review, more the response of an employee who in thirty years has never felt she really belonged.

O'Farrell's book comes, not unlike the UNSW itself, at an intersection in our educational history. The UNSW was founded 50 years ago as a response to the failure of the older universities to provide the technological training needed for postwar Australian development. It has always had a vocational orientation and much of its modern success derives from the fact that it has of necessity been responsive to both governments and employers for skilled staff. How successful it has been, however, in producing the kinds of educated citizens needed to give leadership and direction – as opposed to mere technicians – is a question which it is still too early to answer. One of the themes of this book is the tension between excellent training in a technical sense and the experience of education which is self-sustaining – hence the chequered career of the idea of general education at UNSW. Only in recent years have there been successful graduates in a position to decide whether they wish their own children also to go out into the world bearing the letters UNSW after their names. Their verdict is part of the on-going debate about the quality of life at UNSW.

By the 1970s UNSW was neither one of the old nor one of the new generation of universities in Australia. O'Farrell's account of the financial and management problems it faced as its government funding receded but without the cushioning in bequests, endowments, and alumni influence available to the older universities, or the innovatory attractions of the new ones, foreshadows the situation today in most of our universities. For two decades now the UNSW has lived with financial constraints and determined management. That it has survived, and indeed has appeared to prosper, he rightly observes was due in part to the vigour and hard work of its staff. (He also notes the export of managerial talent trained at UNSW to other Australian universities, not least Gilbert to Melbourne and Brown to Sydney). So it is hardly surprising that UNSW staff have begun to feel tired, even betrayed

by government's parsimony and its short-sighted misundertanding of the role of higher education in a modern society. Indeed the launch of this book was boycotted by staff for whom the future is more important than the past regardless of the lessons good history can provide.

Despite or perhaps, because of, its sometimes flip style, this portrait is easily read. Illustrations culled ruthlessly from a superb archival collection are dropped into the text with subversive intent. Because of UNSW's somewhat different purpose and trajectory it provides a perspective on university education of great relevance to the dilemmas we face now. O'Farrell is not sanguine that the experience of UNSW yields the answers we need, but his account merits the kind of thoughtful attention he gave to its research and writing.

Beverley Kingston

Women in Early Modern England 1550-1720 by Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford. Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1998.

Reconstructing the lives of women in early modern England during the 'long' 17th century of the Tudors and Stuarts, requires vigorous and sustained scholarship and imaginative structures. Mendelson's and Crawford's distinguished joint investigation has ranged deeply into tantalisingly varied sources to produce a vibrant and significant monograph focusing on the lives of ordinary women, although the élite and middling ranks of womanhood are also well viewed. Within a broad chronological framework encompassing life-stages, culture, work, and politics, the authors have analysed and added valuable dimensions to our understanding of the complex interrelationships between generations of women and the diverse cultures of early modern England.

'Ordinary' women made up the vast majority of women in the early modern era and, in seeking them out, the authors set themselves the task of examining a range of materials to illuminate life experience. Their evidence emerges from diaries, autobiographies, correspondence, manuscripts, printed works, tangible objects and illustrations. All these offer insights into women's perceptions and interactions with the world. Wills and bequests provide women's testaments and, external to women's pens, are the official (male) records of church and secular courts, which reflect society's laws and preoccupations as well as women's direct experiences.

Case studies probe individual lives, and pictorial glimpses of women's public and private lives give some privileged views. From street vendors to young ladies with maids, queens and whores, old and young, virgins and matrons, in childbirth and on deathbeds, praying, suckling, travelling, courting, marrying, divorcing, singing and sewing, sowing and reaping, in gardens and gaols, murdering and loving, the authors have searched for the 'ordinary' female.

Seven richly woven and well argued chapters-contexts, childhood and adolescence, adult life, female culture, the makeshift economy of poor women, occupational identities and social roles, politics – with 50 illustrations, a geographical cornucopia of relevant holdings in record offices, archives and libraries, with a bibliography of primary sources which stretches the imagination, makes this work an invaluable contribution to scholarship.

In 436 accessible pages, the authors present new visions and understandings of women in the 'long' century. As they state in the Epilogue, this account is not the definitive answer to questions about women's lives, but one which invites and welcomes the rich diversity of further contributions to an ongoing inquiry. As a joint study, Mendelson's and Crawford's efforts have seamlessly complemented women's history in the most generous fashion.

Suzanne Rickard

The social sciences: keeping in touch

In his wide-ranging, provocative book, Voltaire's Bastards[i], John Saul directs severe criticism at what he sees as basic trends in the social sciences and the humanities. In particular, he criticizes their increasing use of esoteric language and the thickening walls of separation between, and even within, the disciplines that claim membership in these categories. In philosophy, it is much easier, he suggests, to read most of the major contributors in the course of Western culture than the interpretations of their thought by some of our leading intellectuals. He claims that "the dialects of political science and sociology are increasingly incomprehensible to each other, even though they are examining identical areas", and that "the wall between these two false sciences and that of economics is thicker still". The specialized rhetoric gives an air of scholarly depth but, in fact, obstructs the basic purpose of language, which is to communicate.

According to Saul, the main villains are the academics. They have diverted universities from their integrating cultural role into "temples of expertise" dedicated "to the prevention of integrated thought". The academics "have become the official guardians of the boxes in which the educated live".

Saul no doubt exaggerates in his effort to defend an unqualified diagnosis of what he takes to be a radical distortion at the heart of contemporary Western society and culture. But he is raising challenging questions about the current state of intellectual disciplines, and the role of universities. It would be highly desirable, I believe, for members of the Academy of the Social Sciences to take up the claim that its constituent disciplines have developed into isolated and esoteric enterprises cut off from one another and the general life of our culture. For example, to what extent does

psychological theory inform the work of economists, or ethics and social philosophy that of political scientists and sociologists?

There is the further issue of the distinct intellectual disciplines within the university. In particular, what interaction is there among them in teaching and research? Have universities become sites on which insulated disciplines pursue their own teaching and research?

The objectives, methods of inquiry, key concepts and theories, and other basic features of each social science discipline should be carefully examined with particular attention to its boundaries and the points at which it can, and should, relate to other disciplines (humanities - and, in some cases, natural sciences - as well as other social sciences). The main consequences for the social sciences, including appropriate institutional forms, should be set out. Among these would be their place and organization in the work of a university. The last would obviously require attention to the features that should distinguish a university from other educational institutions. But we need to keep in mind that there are other suitable contexts in which the work of the social sciences can proceed. The first step is to review the question of how the nature of these intellectual disciplines should be understood.

In *Challenges for the Social Sciences and Australia[ii]*, I contributed a chapter entitled 'The Structure of the Social Sciences'. In what follows, I shall refer to various points raised there, and add several other comments. My main purpose is to encourage Fellows of the Academy to engage in a discussion of the nature of their field of study, with an eye to the kinds of criticism that Saul has made.

A key issue is the extent to which the social sciences fit with the general methods and objectives of the physical sciences On the basis of systematic observation, the latter seek to establish causal laws that explain relevant phenomena and enable accurate predictions to be made about them. These laws are related in a logically coherent system that forms the current content of a given physical science. The observations and the laws commonly involve precise mathematical measurement.

As the disciplines that make up the social sciences took shape in the last century (mainly within the universities), the dominant concern was to emulate the model of the physical sciences. Ironically, history, which was the first to establish its separate identity, was the exception. Most of its practitioners were sceptical that the course of human events conformed to a set of general empirical laws. But the other social sciences sought, for the most part, to emulate the methods and objectives of the physical sciences. At a second-order level, Comte and others attempted to justify (and prescribe) this approach in the precepts of positivism.

The effort to model the social sciences on the physical sciences has, no doubt, contributed to what Saul complains of: the esoteric style of much writing in the social sciences and their insulation from

one another in universities and other institutions. But there is, I believe, a much more basic issue. What is being studied - human beings in association - cannot satisfactorily be treated within the methods and objectives of the physical sciences. This is the case even given the relatively recent acknowledgement that physical systems display some degree of disequilibrium.

I do not wish to suggest that the modes of inquiry characteristic of the physical sciences have no place in the social sciences; but they need to be adapted and related to other methods that the significant differences in the nature of the objects of study require. Although each social science is distinguished by the particular dimensions of humans-in-association on which it focuses, they are all concerned with humans as self-conscious organisms; using language and other symbolic systems in their relationship with one another and in the shaping of their own lives; able to act intentionally and exercise a range of free choice; discriminating between what they take to be true and false beliefs; guided by, or at least aware of, standards according to which they ought to regulate their lives, as well as various other kinds of ideals and values that claim to mark out what is worthwhile in human life. Social facts exist by virtue of the meanings and other functions that a group of people assign to objects, and by the rules they accept as defining a given practice.

Given these and other characteristics, any adequate study of human beings as social animals must go well beyond the objective of finding explanations in terms of probabilistic laws based on quantitative data. In broad terms, causal explanation needs to be placed in company with systematic interpretative procedures (which include empathy and other complex exercises of imagination). Account has to be taken of the purposes people have, and how they perceive themselves and their actions. Also, moral and other values are not simply objects of descriptive study in the social sciences; they are important ingredients in any substantial social scientific theory This is particularly so in policy studies and wherever the main purpose is the application of theory to practice. Even those social (and physical) sciences whose object is to maintain and restore health cannot take it as a value entirely beyond dispute (as the moral arguments over abortion and euthanasia vividly illustrate).

Isaiah Berlin's comments on political theory apply to all the social sciences[iii]. In summary, he points out that, although we may be conditioned by cultural circumstances to hold particular beliefs, we can still critically reflect on and assess these beliefs. So, political theory is not restricted to finding causes, functional correlations and statistical probabilities. It is also concerned with justifying and explaining moral and political beliefs in terms of motives and reasons.

The interpretative and normative aspects of research in the social sciences bring them into close association with the humanities. Thus, in varying degrees, they share common ground, in their

methods and objectives, with both the physical sciences and the humanities. As a 'social fact' is so much dependent on human intentions, the connection with the humanities would seem to be somewhat stronger. However, just where any particular social science stands in relation to these other broad areas of systematic inquiry depends on what is the main focus of its study. The relationship is also affected by whether the research is pure or applied, and on the extent to which it is multidisciplinary. A recent survey of psychologists in this Academy indicated that a majority probably had closer affiliation with the physical sciences than the social sciences, much less the humanities. Some contemporary philosophers, in their account of mind or consciousness, are in a similar position. They dismiss the self as a illusion, and explain consciousness as simply a function of nerve impulses and chemical activity in the human organism, especially the brain. One wonders whether the study of human experience as strictly an object of physical science allows for any difference between , for example, the feeling of pain from a decayed tooth and of suffering from racial discrimination.

The drawing of boundaries is a complex task that needs to be done at several levels: within each of the social sciences; between one social science and another; between each social science and related disciplines in the humanities and the physical sciences. The foregoing comments suggest that the boundary lines should allow for broad and flexible interaction. As examples: historians and sociologists need to draw on one anothers' work, economists need to be informed by psychology and history, all applied theory in the social sciences involves at least some elements of moral and social philosophy.

It seems an appropriate time to reflect on the distinctive features of each social science, how it fits into the broad scheme of disciplined inquiry, and what the organizational consequences are for its engagement in teaching, doing research, and contributing to the public 'conversation'.

Brian Crittenden

[i] John Ralson Saul, John (1998), *Voltaire's Bastards: The Dictatorship of Reason in the West.* Toronto, Canada: Penguin Books: 475- 477. The first quotation in on p 475, and the others on p 476.
[ii] Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia (1998), *Challenges for the Social Sciences and Australia.* Canberra: AGPS. Vol 2, Ch 10.
[iii] Berlin, Isaiah (1997), in Hardy, Henry & Hansheer, Roger (eds), *The Proper Study of Mankind, An Anthology of Essays.* London: Chatto and Windus: 89.

Letters to the Editor

Universities of the future   April, 1999

Millicent Poole has given her essay on higher education (*Dialogue* 18/1, 1999) a suitably ambiguous sub-title: 'Mind the Market'. We are told that universities must look after the market or perish; at the same time, they must beware of dangers inherent in getting too close. The problem, in short, is to placate the beast without being eaten alive.

The coda to Professor Poole's solution is that the model of the ivory tower is no longer appropriate. Isolated contemplative scholarship must give way to incorporation into electronic discourse networks, while at an institutional level universities must forge links, strategic alliances with other universities, with schools, businesses, professions, and commercial organisations. Through such alliances universities will re-assert their role as an integral element of society, enmeshed in an array of linkages with other strong institutions.

The view that Australian universities are or were once ivory towers is open to question. As Professor Poole herself notes, the ordinary citizen has generally regarded them as institutions where students gain qualifications in remunerative professions. There is nothing new about the proposed alliances, though no doubt they would all be subject to strengthening and manipulation.

The myth of the university as aloof from or indifferent to the concerns of its host society is a red herring. What is really at stake is its claim to autonomy. Powerful interests are colluding as never before in this country, both outside the universities and within their own ranks, to deliver an ultimatum articulated in the language of rationalist economics (which Professor Poole has learnt to speak fluently). In plain English it says:'We are your paymasters; serve us or we will dissolve you'.

Now suppose such a message was sent to the judiciary. In order to survive into the next century, the courts must become part of international business. To gain the greatest advantage for the nation, the judiciary must co-operate with commerce and industry. Judges must become 'justice managers', 'justice brokers', 'justice navigators', and so on. As a *quid pro quo*, business could shoulder a greater share of running costs. The 'Lang Hancock Chief Justice of the Northern Territory' perhaps, or the 'Kerry Packer Supreme Court of New South Wales'.

The law, of course, is an integral part of the market, and the courts are necessary for its orderly operation. But any suggestion that the judiciary should lighten the taxpayers' burden by soliciting and accepting fees from business interests in return for privileged treatment would be properly dismissed as the product of an impaired intellect.

If citizens want institutions to dispense justice, they must pay for them. The same applies if they want institutions with charters to discover the truth and proclaim it without fear or favour. In both cases the best (though not infallible) way to promote disinterest and impartiality is to guarantee security of tenure to properly qualified incumbents of office.

Professor Poole quotes Clark Kerr's questions: 'Will the university be swallowed up by business and government? Will company training and company laboratories simply take over the role of the university?'. If the role is conceived to be merely that of undertaking research and development for industry and commerce, the answer surely is that they may just as well.

But in that event, on what institutions will the citizenry rely for statements of scientific truth? We have recently seen, in the case of Arpad Pusztai and his research into the effects of genetically-modified potatoes on the health of rats, what happens when a scientist publicly discloses findings that run counter to his company's market interests. He loses his job.

Although Professor Poole endorses social criticism as a *sine qua non* of a university, she gives little indication of understanding the conditions in which it flourishes. How free thought will survive in universities governed on behalf of business and government by a Vichy managerial elite is not explained.

It is never easy to convince citizens that a privileged locus of disinterested inquiry is a necessary component of a free, enlightened and civilized society. The betrayal of science (including social science) by post-modernism has made the task harder than ever. Professor Poole's deliberations make it clear that unless rank and file academics defend the autonomy of their institutions more vigorously, the scenario she has scripted for the servile university of the future will be a reality long before 2050.

Les Hiatt

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Panels:

A *Anthropology, demography, geography, linguistics, sociology.*
Chair: Professor RG Ward
B *Accounting, economics, economic history, statistics.*
Chair: Associate Professor Sue Richardson
C *History, law, philosophy, political science.*
Chair: Professor Stuart Macintyre
D *Education, psychology, social medicine.*
Chair: Professor RAM Gregson

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1999 Calendar

1	July	Closing date for nominations for Academy Award
15-16	July	NAF/NLA Seminar: *Scholarship, Intellectual Property and the Law*
28	July	Meeting of Executive Committee
29	July	Meeting of Membership Committee
30	July	Meeting of Workshop Committee
1	August	Deadline for *Dialogue* 3/1999
1	September	Closing date for nominations for election to Fellowship
2-3	September	Academy Workshop: *Social Security and Social Development in East and Southeast Asia* (Sydney)
9-10	September	Academy Workshop: *Psychology and Health* (Melbourne)
22	October	Meeting of Workshop Committee
1	November	Deadline for *Dialogue* 4/1999
7	November	Meeting of Executive Committee
8	November	Annual Symposium
7-9	November	Annual General Meeting

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