The Politics of Multiculturalism

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The Politics of Multiculturalism

Raymond Sestito

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Contents

The Author vi

Acknowledgements vi

Foreword
Michael James vii

The Politics of Multiculturalism

Introduction 1

1 The Absence of Migrant Issues 3

2 A New Approach 10

3 Party Initiative 16

4 The Greek and Italian Response 23

5 The Limits of Multiculturalism 30

Notes 37

Further reading 41

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Raymond Sestito

Foreword

Michael James

For several years now, politicians of all persuasions have been telling us that Australia is a 'multicultural society'. Purely as a description, this phrase is eminently applicable. Australia's population springs from a remarkable variety of origins. Its major cities contain suburbs closely associated with specific ethnic groups, and their high streets abound with restaurants specialising in every conceivable cuisine. Many Australians have first languages other than English. But the idea of multiculturalism involves more than a recognition of Australia's cultural diversity. It embraces a set of public policies designed to ensure that this diversity persists. People of other than Anglo-Saxon origin are actively encouraged by the state to preserve their cultural heritage, and to think of themselves as not only Australians, but specifically as Greek-Australians, or Lebanese-Australians, or whatever. We are all exhorted to respect and tolerate one another's heritage and to learn to enjoy the variety of lifestyles that such mutual tolerance can provide.

There is much to commend this idea. Migration is usually a traumatic experience, and migrants should not have to endure pressure to assimilate instantly into the dominant culture. Yet there is surely a natural tendency for migrant groups to experience cultural assimilation, however gradual a process this might be. The children and grandchildren of migrants will inevitably be 'Australianised', however we want to define that term. For them, the attempt to maintain the cultural identity of their forbears is likely to be an increasingly artificial and futile activity. The question must therefore be put: Why do politicians promote multiculturalism so keenly?

This study seeks to answer that question. It does so with the help of a highly organised, yet simple and accessible, theoretical framework which has come to be known among social scientists as the 'economic theory of politics'. This framework includes a number of familiar assumptions, like the one that politicians are really out to do the best for themselves, whatever they say. At the same time, however, it is free from the disillusionment which arises from the belief that politicians ought to be wise philosopher-kings, motivated purely by considerations of the common good. Rather, it assumes simply that politicians are like other

people; that they are motivated mainly by self-interest but also by a degree of benevolence; and that they act on these motives in the ways that their occupation makes available to them. Ray Sestito articulates the theory with insight and clarity showing that multiculturalism is a specifically political response to the highly visible symbols of ethnic identity. Politicians have attempted to mobilise these symbols in order to form organised groups which they can then patronise. Multiculturalism in practice turns out to be about politicians offering favourable treatment to ethnic leaders and their associated public service activists in exchange for votes.

But this study reveals much more. It is a case study of how politics tends to operate in advanced Western societies. In the marketplace, individuals engaging in voluntary exchanges necessarily promote their own interests, and usually promote, to some extent, the interests of the general public. But in the political sphere voluntary exchanges may not have this desirable effect. In the official ideology of the West, democracy is a system designed to ensure that governments promote the common good. But where the voters are largely separated into numerous special interest groups, democracy can have the opposite result. Politicians are tempted, to the extent that the system allows it, to engage such groups in exchanges whose benefits are obtained **at the expense of the general public.** So, although there is little demand for multiculturalism in Australia, multiculturalism is what we all get. Like rural subsidies, import tariffs and quotas, and the over-protected public service, multiculturalism is a part of the great coalition of interests which politicians have created in their attempts to win elections. In the process, they have saddled us with a burden of taxation which, in the end, and despite their rhetoric, they have no real interest in reducing.

Underlying Mr Sestito's analysis is a commitment to a free society, in which such matters as culture and heritage would not be the concern of the state at all, and the individual would be at liberty to foster the identity of his choice. As things stand, it is quite likely that multiculturalism will become an arena of political conflict, as the various groups struggle against one another and against other groups in the effort to maintain and expand their political privileges. Surely it is only in a free society that the mutual respect and tolerance which multiculturalism claims to promote can be realised.

Michael James **La Trobe University**

Introduction

The political fortunes of Australia's migrants have changed over recent years. The traditional policies of assimilation and integration, in which all migrants were expected to become culturally Australian, have been abandoned in favour of policies which stress cultural pluralism.

For many years migrants had no appreciable effect in Australian politics. Neither of the major parties showed any concern over special migrant issues. In fact, observing Australian politics at this time, one would not be mistaken in thinking that migrants hardly existed in Australia.

However, by the mid-1970s all this had changed. Australia's political parties both at the Federal and State level had become highly responsive to migrant issues. They were all promoting multiculturalism, stressing the benefits to be gained from such a policy. Migrants were no longer 'New Australians' but 'Ethnics' and Australia had become a multicultural society.

This paper attempts to explain why this change came about and to examine how multiculturalism became a political issue. In order to limit the study, I have looked only at the Greeks and Italians in Victoria. I do not believe this to be overly restrictive as the issue is a national one, and there is a relationship between State politics and Federal politics which enables us to make generalisations with regard to the rest of Australia.

Chapter One outlines reasons as to why migrant politics never really emerged in Australia in the 1950s and the 1960s. It also demonstrates that the subsequent policies of multiculturalism cannot be explained in terms of changed attitudes among the Australian community, as evidence suggests that this has not occurred.

Chapter Two develops a new explanation for the rise of multiculturalism. Using the theories of Mancur Olson *The Logic of Collective Action* and Anthony Downs *An Economic Theory of Democracy*, I show that multiculturalism cannot be

seen as a result of migrants becoming more political, organising to pursue their common interests. Political parties are seen not as responding to organised pressure but rather as the initiators of the new policy.

Chapters Three and Four develop the argument and give evidence to support the theoretical propositions established in Chapter Two. They look at how parties established the issues; when they first approached the migrant communities and how they went about doing this. Chapter Four looks at the response of the Greek and Italian communities, and examines the result of the new policy. It also examines the relationship developed between Greek and Italian organisations and the political parties.

Finally, I question how far the policy of multiculturalism can go once established. While there have been benefits from this new policy, parties have in the process created strong migrant groups capable of making increasing demands. I suggest that these increasing demands may put strain on the political system and fail to create a better understanding between the various sections of the community.

Chapter One

The Absence of Migrant Issues

Italians and Greeks first began to arrive in Australia in large numbers from about 1950 onwards. By 1971 the numbers of Italians and Greek migrants in Victoria were 121,758 and 79,048 respectively.[1] But despite this numerical strength, they had, up until this time, very little effect on Victorian politics. One would expect that such a large proportion of foreign-born would have considerable say in political decisions regarding immigration and problems affecting migrants, but this was not so. In 1974 there were, as yet, no post-war migrants in the Victorian Parliament and no major party was espousing the migrant cause. In the inner Melbourne metropolitan area there were four migrant councillors out of a total of ninety despite the fact that some of these suburbs had heavy concentrations of migrants.[2]

The reasons put forward for this lack of involvement by migrants in general and southern Europeans in particular, were, firstly, apathy and unwillingness to become involved, and, secondly, the hindrance placed upon them by Australia's social and political institutions.

In 1966 Alan Davies maintained that migrants are 'people for whom politics has already failed', having to leave their own country because the political system could not meet their demands; they have remained suspicious of achieving anything by political action - they remain 'once bitten, twice shy'.[3] The Italians do, perhaps, give some credence to what Davies has said. In a study carried out by Paul Wilson among British and Italian migrants in Brisbane, he found that, in comparison with British and Australian people, Italians showed almost total indifference towards politics. They had little interest in either Australian politics or Italian politics. Wilson concluded that the Italian situation could easily be described as one of massive political apathy.[4]

However, this idea of apathy on the part of Italian migrants needs some qualification if we are to come to a better understanding of it. Firstly, the majority of Italians who migrated to Australia were from the south of Italy, from

mainly peasant backgrounds, and were, therefore, not among the politically active in Italy. Their main reason for migrating was economic, the hope of achieving a better life in a new land. Wilson's survey seems to confirm this. He found that Italian migrants were mostly preoccupied with economic policy above all else.[5]

Rather than regarding Italian migrants as apathetic, it would be better to suggest that under such circumstances they had little time to become involved in every-day political matters. They were too busy in their endeavours to create a better future to worry about issues affecting Italians or migrants in general. This behavior should not be regarded as a total rejection of politics. Once the Italians had satisfied their economic and material wants, they seemed to have more time for politics. What becomes important, then, is the length of time spent in Australia. Wilson's survey did show that the longer an Italian migrant spent in Australia the more he became interested in political issues.[6]

If the early Italian migrants seemed to spend little energy on political matters, the Greeks, on the other hand, seemed to be a more cohesive community who devoted much time to Greek politics.[7] However, this cohesiveness and the strong sense of community identity did not give them any impact in Victorian politics. The reason for this is that they became involved in internal politics at the expense of Australian politics.

The small Greek community which existed in Melbourne in the 1920s came under increasing strain after the arrival of the post-war Greek migrants. The political tensions and divisions of Greece which emerged after the second world war were soon transported to Australia. Many of the post-war migrants came from a left-wing background; they had just fought a battle over church-state control and were eager to reform the Australian Greek community.[8] The matter was further complicated by the appointment of Archbishop Ezekiel, the American anti-communist who insisted on church leadership. Many of the left-oriented Greeks could not accept this. There was a resultant split in the Australian Archdiocese of the Greek Orthodox Church.[9]

Thus while we may say that the Greek community is more socially and culturally cohesive and better organised than the Italian community, many have argued that the left-right political division made them ineffective with regard to

Australian politics.[10] They were too taken up with internal politics to make effective demands on the Australian political system. Like Italian migrants, Greek migrants were hardly seen in Australian politics. While the Italians remained aloof and apathetic, the Greeks cut themselves off and turned their political energy inwards rather than outwards.

Besides apathy and concern with internal politics, there is said to be a third reason why issues regarding migrants never arose in Australian politics. This is that there existed an Australian ideology which effectively stopped issues concerning migrants from arising. More than this, it actually encouraged apathy and a concern with internal politics. The late Jean Martin argued that Australia has practised a rather subtle form of discrimination towards its migrants.[11] Australians have been able to carry out this discrimination by following policies of institutionalised 'devaluation, dispersal and non-confrontation'. For Martin, these policies were central to Australia's ideological solution to the threat of pluralism - the idea that migrants should participate in Australian politics and Australian society as migrants.[12]

Undoubtedly there is some truth in what Martin argued, especially with regard to southern Europeans. Hostility and suspicion were shown towards Greek and Italian migrants and they were generally ignored by Australians. There was the rather patronising belief that to be a good migrant one had to speak English, to forget old customs and habits, and to adopt the Australian way of life and pronounce that this was, in fact, the best life of all. To stand up and suggest that this was not really possible was too much to ask. The idea that Greeks and Italians could participate in Australian society while still retaining their native identities was alien to all.

These ideas were reflected on an official level by the policies of assimilation-integration which were pursued by Australian Governments during the 1950s and 1960s. The aim was to assimilate or at least integrate all migrants into the Australian community. Migrants would be assisted in acquiring and understanding Australia's social and cultural patterns, thereby enabling them to come to terms with their new environment. It was hoped that all migrants would blend into middle-class suburbia without making any special demands of the political system. James Jupp states that the official policy towards European immigration in the 1960s was one of 'organised assimilation'; the aim of the

Commonwealth Department of Immigration, the States and the Good Neighbour Council was to make these people 'Australian'.[13]

However, by the mid 1970s, Italians and Greeks, along with other migrants, were enjoying considerable benefits not thought possible five years earlier. The ideas of ethnic rights and ethnic participation were now becoming prominent. Governments were now telling everybody that Australia was a multicultural society. Today multiculturalism is accepted government policy. The Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs, ethnic radio and television (in Sydney and Melbourne) and many other government services for Australian migrant communities are now in existence.

The issue of multiculturalism is not only confined to government but has now become a topic of major concern throughout Australia's social and academic institutions. In the field of education, there is great importance placed on how curriculum can best be developed in a multicultural society. This has led to the development of community language programmes, bilingual schools, and ethnic community schools. In the Teacher Training Colleges and Universities, post-graduate courses have been developed in intercultural studies, inter-ethnic studies and multicultural studies.

In social welfare there is now special interest in the welfare of migrants. There is a growing concern that people who are unable to speak English and come from diverse social backgrounds may be more disadvantaged than ordinary citizens. In this regard work is being done on the problems which migrants face in relation to health care, family planning, child care, consumer protection and problems of the aged. Freely available interpreter and translation services are seen as a way of overcoming some of these problems. In this regard demands are being made to greatly improve and extend these services.

In the political field, work is being done on migrant voting behaviour. Previously, concern with migrant voting behaviour centred on the Democratic Labor Party (DLP) and the Catholic vote. It was commonly accepted that European migrants did show a special interest in the DLP. Mr James Jupp (of the Canberra College of Advanced Education) is presently doing research (on the ethnic vote) on whether it is

possible to explain migrant voting behaviour not by class or occupation but by 'ethnicity'.

Are we to assume from all this that there had been a change of values among Australian people and institutions, allowing the many migrant groups to emerge from obscurity and take their place among the many different interest groups which exist in Australian politics? Was this change in values putting an end to the alleged migrant apathy and concern with home politics?

If we examine surveys and opinion polls taken of 'Australian' people[14] with regard to the attitudes to the various migrant groups and their views of Australia's immigration policy, we see that there has been very little change. There is nothing to suggest that Australian people have generally become more sympathetic to Southern Europeans, or to the needs and aspirations of migrants in general. The idea of Australia as a multicultural society in which Italians, Greeks and Australians stand side-by-side on equal terms is rejected by an overwhelming proportion of the population.

In 1948 Italians and Greeks were near the bottom of the scale of 'most preferred migrants'.[15] The most preferred migrants were British and Northern European. By 1971 there was still no overwhelming majority suggesting that Southern Europeans should be actively encouraged to immigrate. Italians and Greeks were (along with the Chinese and Blacks) the ethnic groups least desired as neighbours.[16] The reason for this is not hard to find; they are the most 'visible' of the migrant groups, the ones who least blend into the Australian way of life and therefore are not readily accepted. Australians still prefer migrants to forget their culture and tradition and become 'Australian'. The prevailing attitude among Australians towards migrants is that they should integrate as quickly as possible. In a 1972 poll, 36 per cent 'strongly agreed' and 20 per cent 'agreed' with this.[17] In November 1972 only 29 per cent of Australian-born people were in favour of government assistance for migrants to maintain their own culture.[18]

A general survey conducted in 1971 as part of the National Population Inquiry in the Melbourne metropolitan area regarding attitudes to migrants, found that very little had changed since 1954.[19] There was no evidence to suggest that Australian society was becoming more tolerant in its

attitudes towards migrants. The report stated that much of the prejudice of the 1950s remained. The position of Southern Europeans was as it had been in the 1950s and the hierarchy of preferred migrants was similar to that found by Hammond in 1954.

With regard to immigration in general, the Melbourne survey found that there existed a conflict between those who saw advantages in immigration and those who saw disadvantages. The main disadvantage was that incompatibility of languages and cultures would lead to conflict (46 per cent of responses). The idea that immigration would benefit Australia by leading to a variety of cultures was supported by only 44 per cent of the sample. It would seem that up to 1971 the ideal of maintaining a homogeneous society was still strong and there was no outright acceptance of all migrants. British and North-Western Europeans were still preferred above others and the dominant idea was that all migrants should integrate rather than maintain a separate identity.

Racism and bigotry

If this was the case in 1971, things may have changed since then. In this respect it is interesting to compare these results with the results of a survey on the attitude of Victorians to migrants, conducted in August 1978 by the Victorian Ministry of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs.[20] The survey brought out evidence of covert but nonetheless widespread hostility towards migrants among Victorians. The survey suggested that '31 per cent of Victorians could be termed conscious bigots and a further 18 per cent as unconscious bigots'. These two groups taken together formed 49 per cent of Victorians who were hostile to migrants, critical of all aspects of immigration and totally unsympathetic to multiculturalism. The survey suggested that many of the conscious bigots could safely be designated as racists.[21]

The conscious bigot rejected all types of migrants. He generally believed that there were too many Southern Europeans in Australia. He expected assimilation and he expected it fast; ethnic radio was anathema to him since it contributed to the continuation of the use of foreign languages in Australia. The idea that migrants should be encouraged to maintain links with their country of origin and

customs was out of the question. Migrants should be able to sink or swim on their own and they should receive no government assistance. The unconscious bigot had many of the same values, the only difference being that he was more ambivalent. He perceived himself to be quite tolerant, despite his negative attitudes.

There existed only a small percentage (22 per cent) of Victorians who were strongly in favour of immigration and the ideas of multiculturalism. This percentage was termed 'the cosmopolitan', who felt that their lives were enriched by the presence of migrants.[22] The remaining 29 per cent of Victorians took a middle path; they seemed to be far removed from the views of the conscious bigot, but neither were they wholehearted champions of migrants.

We can say, therefore, that about 50 per cent of Victorians were unsympathetic to the ideas of cultural pluralism. Multiculturalism is embraced by only a small percentage of the Victorian population. Yet the major Victorian political parties are telling us that Victoria is a multicultural State. If Victorians are not generally in favour of such a policy, how did it become an issue at all? Under such circumstances it would be incorrect to argue that the political parties are merely reflecting the changing attitudes of the people.

But if there has been no change, then how did multiculturalism arise? Are we to assume, as Taft does, that the favourable policies towards migrants have been possible because of the apathy and passivity of the general Australian public?[23] But this hypothesis does not tell us why political parties would want to promote multiculturalism in the first place. Perhaps the explanation for the emergence of multiculturalism as an important political issue lies elsewhere.

Chapter Two

A New Approach

The problem with the previous hypotheses as to why the interests of migrants were never fully articulated is the assumption that a group of individuals who share the same interests will successfully organise to promote these interests.

Mancur Olson, in *The Logic of Collective Action*, argues that it is not correct to believe that a group of individuals who share the same interests will always voluntarily organise to promote those interests.[24] Olson seeks to demonstrate that not all groups are able to rely on voluntary action as a means of achieving a collective benefit. Large groups, in contrast to very small groups, must rely on coercion or selective benefits to encourage their members to work for their common aims. Groups which have no recourse to coercion or selective benefits fail to organise at all, even though as a group they have vital common interests.[25]

This can be explained by the fact that the achievements of groups can be regarded as public goods. The very fact that a goal is common to a group means that no-one in the group is excluded from the benefit or satisfaction brought about by its achievement. The taxpayer is in a similar situation with regard to the state. Benefits which the modern state provides, such as defence, police protection, law and order and the host of welfare services, cannot be denied to any one individual. These benefits are public goods and must be freely available to all citizens. In this case taxation must be compulsory, for the state could not restrict these basic services to those citizens who voluntarily pay. Similarly, voluntary organisations, since they seek to further the common aim of their members, are in the process of supplying public goods. These benefits cannot be denied to any one member of the group whether he actively participates or not.

Under such circumstances one would expect voluntary action to fail. It would not be rational for the individual to become involved if he can enjoy the benefits without any

action on his part. It would be rational in such a case for the individual to pursue his own personal interest at the expense of the group interest. We would not expect a union member to fight actively for higher wages when whether he does or does not makes no difference to the outcome. The rational course is for him to promote his private interests.

The success of groups in achieving their aims will depend upon the role of the individual in providing the collective good. In large groups the role of the individual in supplying the collective good is negligible. In a large group no single individual contribution makes any perceptible difference to the group as a whole. Whether the individual actively participates, or whether he withdraws completely, his action will not be noticed by the other members of the group. Thus while all members of a large group have a common interest, as has been shown, it is not rational for them actively to seek to promote it. While all have a common interest in obtaining the collective benefit, no single member has enough incentive voluntarily to pay any of the cost. In this respect, the larger the group the less likely it is to achieve its collective aim.

This is in marked contrast to small groups where the role of the individual is much more important. Here there is greater interest in the achievement of the public good by the individual member. There is then a great likelihood that the individual member would gain so much from the implementation of the public good, that he is prepared to pay all the cost himself if necessary. We may say, therefore, that the greater the interest in the collective good by any single member, then the greater the chance of its being provided.

It is thus possible to maintain that not all groups are in this respect the same. If groups are to be successful in promoting the interests of their members, then they should be small rather than large. Small groups in which individuals gain a great deal are certain of success. Large groups, in which the individual makes no noticeable contribution and receives a minimal amount of the collective good, are bound to fail. The only way in which such large latent groups can achieve any amount of a collective good is by means of coercion or special incentives for their members.

If voluntary action is no guarantee of success then this raises some important questions about the implementation of public policy. Since we can regard Italians and Greeks as forming large latent groups, then are we to assume that their

interests go unrepresented for ever? Using Olson's theory, we could predict that individual Italian and Greek migrants would follow their private interests only, since the achievement of better conditions for all migrants can be regarded as a public good. In this instance no individual migrant would have the incentive to participate to attain collective benefits. The common welfare of migrants in Australia would be secondary to the welfare of each individual migrant. However, Italians and Greeks as groups have vital interests in common. If they have no power to lobby or exert pressure as groups, then how are they to attain a measure of representation and political power enabling them to articulate their needs?

The answer to this question can be found in the actions taken by political parties. In this instance, one can combine the theory used by Olson with a modified version of Anthony Downs's model of party competition,[26] to arrive at a new explanation as to why the interests of migrants, as expressed in the policies of multiculturalism, have emerged as political issues.

In Downs's model there are only two classes of agents in society - voters and political parties. The model assumes that voters seek to maximise their utility. Parties also seek to maximise their utility, but since their aim is to gain office they have to maximise their votes. Rational behaviour entails that individuals seek to gain as much income from the parties as possible and parties seek to win the elections. Thus, each individual must evaluate party policy to see which benefits him the most, and parties must create policies which please a majority of voters, thereby ensuring that each actor achieves his goal. Since electors have definite preferences concerning policy, parties must implement them if they expect to win the elections. This then forms a guarantee that voters usually obtain the most favourable policies, since rational voters will vote for the party which best supplies them with what they want.

Political competition and the free market

This competitive model between parties which Downs builds is very similar to the economic model of the free market. In a market system producers are never quite certain if their product will be accepted by the consumers, and so compete with each other in producing a product which is suitable to a

vast majority of the population. The more able a producer is at achieving this, the more he sells. Political parties can be regarded as being in the same position as producers. Since parties are uncertain about which policies will always win, they are in constant competition with each other to produce policies which will appeal to as many citizens as possible.

Downs concludes that such a situation will produce a state of equilibrium. Just as classical economists believed that the operation of the market would produce a state of peace between consumers and producers, each being able to satisfy his own interests, a similar result would occur in politics through party competition. In their endeavour to please as many people as possible, parties - in a two party system - would cluster around the majority since extremist positions would only lose them votes.

However, the Downsian model of party competition has to be altered if it is to remain effective. Downs assumes that competition between parties for the votes of individuals would bring about a collective good and that a position of equilibrium would emerge. This is not entirely correct. The idea that parties compete for votes remains valid; the conclusion that needs to be questioned is that such behaviour leads to a benefit for all and a position of equilibrium.

Olson, who also starts from the premise of self-interested behaviour on the part of individuals, shows that this does not lead to any implementation of a collective goal for the whole of society. Olson, as has been argued above, maintains that a collective good can only be provided by small 'privileged' groups, or through large groups which use coercion or selective benefits in order that their members will act collectively. In these circumstances, we could see the formation of public policy as the result, not of bargaining between voters and parties, but more and more as a result of the bargaining between special interest groups and the parties. It could be argued that parties seek to please various interest groups and also political groups that have not been able to articulate their needs, rather than individual voters. Thus instead of having Downs's model of society in which there are only two classes of agents, voters and parties, we can, with the aid of Olson, add a third - special interest groups. Each party, then, seeks not only to attract votes of individuals as individuals, but of individuals as members of these special interest groups.

Such an approach will allow us to overcome the problem which Olson pointed out with regard to the effectiveness of different groups in relation to size. If small groups are always more successful than large groups and if some large latent groups fail to organise, then competition between parties for votes can compensate for this inequality between groups. By appealing to these large, latent, and, for the most part, unorganised groups, the parties may increase their votes. Both parties in a two party system will compete to attract the votes of these large latent groups. Political parties will seek actively to promote the interests of these latent groups once they realise that there is something to be gained by doing so.

My thesis is that the promotion of multiculturalism by both parties can be explained by reference to this combination of Downs and Olson. By the early seventies a great deal of Italian and Greek migrants who had arrived from the mid-1950s onwards had become citizens and so gained the vote. Between January 1965 and June 1979, 188,640 Italians and 150,208 Greeks were granted Australian citizenship.[27] This was too large a group of votes to be ignored by the major political parties. The migrant vote would become especially important to the Victorian ALP since there was a heavy concentration of Greek and Italian votes in the inner suburban area of Melbourne; attracting the migrant vote would be a way of keeping these seats.

The second generation

Moreover, we must not only consider the first generation migrants, but also the second generation. It was commonly believed that the children of migrants born in Australia would easily integrate into the existing culture and would somehow forget their past origins. Ruth Johnston maintains that it is wrong to believe that second-generation migrants are 'arrived' citizens. Children of migrants are not fully assimilated into the receiving community and many are caught between two cultures.[28] The second-generation migrants also would then be responsive to multiculturalism and the idea of ethnic rights.

This, I argue, is the explanation for the current growth in the policies of multiculturalism which both Australia's major parties now espouse. Multiculturalism is so appealing to the parties because there are votes to be gained by promoting

it. In this case we can say that Australia's political parties have been the initiators of multiculturalism, rather than responding to group pressure.

However, even though party competition did give rise to migrant issues, issues that had been ignored for such a long time, we are still left with problems. In Downs's model, we were confronted with the problem of how individual action could best achieve a benefit for all. This problem does not disappear, even though we have expanded our model to take into account three classes of agents - individuals, parties and groups. If it was not rational for an individual to forgo his short-term gains in order to produce a long-term gain for all, then it is not rational to expect groups to do so. The benefits which result from group restraint can, as Samuel Brittan points out, be regarded as public goods and the costs must be incurred by the groups which exercise restraint.[29] Once a political party promises to deliver the goods to one group, it is under pressure to keep doing so.

Once an issue is established, the bargaining process begins. This is where parties are caught in a political bind. Once they have articulated the needs of groups, then it becomes hard for them to pull back. Groups which were previously unorganised become stronger and make increasing demands which the parties cannot ignore if they are to gain their vote. Political parties become locked into a situation where one tries to outbid the other in the promises each makes. Thus while in the 1960s one would not be mistaken in thinking that migrants hardly existed, we now have a situation where parties compete to see who can promise the most to migrants.

Chapter Three

Party Initiative

It was in trying to tap this new source of votes, that Australian political parties first approached the migrants. The Greek and Italian migrants, the two largest communities, now had electoral strength and could no longer be disregarded. The parties hoped to gain their vote by promising special benefits to these communities and stressing that Australia was a multicultural society. Whether all migrants believed in multiculturalism was not at issue. What was needed was a policy by the parties to show that migrant interests could best be guaranteed by voting for a particular party in preference to the others.

Before this, immigration was of political interest only in terms of expanding Australia's population. The idea expressed by Arthur Calwell in 1946, that immigration would mean security, development of untapped resources, greater production and wealth and a better, more prosperous life for every Australian, was not challenged by either party.[30] For Phillip Lynch (Minister for Immigration, 1969-71), growth and economic development would be the end results of Australia's immigration policy - the same picture was painted by the previous Immigration Minister, (1966-69) Billy Snedden.[31] This was the emphasis which all governments placed on immigration: that in the long run it would be beneficial for Australia. Neither party placed any emphasis on, or showed any concern for, the migrants once they arrived here. And, of course, there would be no need to since it would take the migrants quite a while to become economically established and gain the vote; provided the economy was prospering the migrants could safely be ignored. Any idea that migrants had special needs, or that Australia should develop as a multicultural society, was alien to both major parties. There was nothing political to be gained by this. In 1969 Mr Snedden, as Minister for Immigration, was able to state that Australia

> must have a single culture, those of different ethnic origin must integrate and unite into our community so

> that it will become a single Australian community . . . If immigration implied multicultural activities then it was not the type Australia wanted.[32]

Victorian political parties had very little to do with either Italian or Greek migrants. The Victorian ALP did set up the 'New Australian Council' in 1956. But the aim of this council, like the sub-committee of the central executive established in 1960, to replace the 'New Australian Council', was never to create separate national groups within the ALP or to give prominence to the different needs of migrants. The official policy was to bring the different migrant groups together and participate as 'New Australians' rather than allow them to form separate groups.[33] Multilingual party propaganda was hardly used by the ALP and rarely, if at all, by the Liberal Party. The migrants were looked upon with suspicion. In 1950 the Fitzroy branch of the ALP resolved that 'no New Australian be allowed to own or purchase property until such time as they are naturalised'.[34] Attitudes like these were not uncommon in the 1950s and 1960s.

The first move to buy into the ethnic vote was made by the Federal ALP Government and its Minister for Immigration, Mr Al Grassby. Mr Grassby came out strongly in favour of a multicultural Australia or what he referred to as the 'family of the nation'.[35] While one does not doubt Mr Grassby's sincerity, with the Greek vote already solidly behind the ALP and the Italian vote in its favour, such a policy could only strengthen this vote.[36] The Whitlam Government established migrant interpreter services in Melbourne and Sydney, set up ethnic radio in the same two cities, and set up committees for the promotion of bilingual education. Mr Grassby was pointing out that Australia was a cosmopolitan country and it was time that such a trend was encouraged and developed even further. He set up task forces in all States to examine, as quickly as possible, the problems facing migrants so that government action could be taken. A Committee of Community Relations was set up to enquire into all aspects of discrimination against migrants and to investigate exploitation of migrants.[37] All these activities were described by Mr Grassby as part of a national stock-taking of immigration.

If the ALP Government was first off the mark, the Federal LCP coalition was quick to follow. In August of 1975 the coalition issued a detailed policy on immigration and

ethnic affairs which was not only an extension of the ALP policy, but was also radically different from previous coalition policies in this field. Introducing the policy, the shadow Minister for Immigration, Mr Michael MacKellar, said he 'did not believe that Gough [Whitlam] had the migrant vote all tied up'.[38] The new Liberal policy was to:

* extend ethnic radio to all capital cities;
* further develop a culturally diversified but cohesive society;
* establish bilingual and multilingual language and cultural courses in schools, with co-operation from the States;
* establish ethnic sections in the teacher-training courses;
* support ethnic communities in their own programmes of language education;
* ensure that government information be available in a variety of languages; and
* establish a separate department of immigration and ethnic affairs.[39]

Not only was this policy new but, considering past action, quite radical. During the Federal election campaign which followed the Liberal Party used multilingual propaganda on a very large scale to put its policy across.

While the issue was first raised at the Federal level, it soon spread to the State parties. All State governments were also beginning to promote the idea of a multicultural Australia. Greeks and Italians were now resident communities in Australia. Up until 1973 the Victorian political parties did not really think about migrant concerns. In May 1970 Victorian Premier Sir Henry Bolte was still arguing that it was essential to attract more migrants to further Victoria's industrial expansion. There was no talk of a multicultural Victoria.[40] There did exist the Victorian Office of Immigration but its role was merely to liaise with the Federal Government in attracting British migrants to Victoria.

The real battle for the migrant vote at the State level began in 1974. Before this the Victorian division of the Liberal Party maintained some rather vague notions about preserving a homogeneous society, and encouragement for the full participation of migrants in the 'economic, social and political life of the community'.[41] The Victorian ALP had some policies in the area of migrant education, promising special grants to schools with a high percentage of children

from migrant backgrounds. There was also mention of providing social workers and contact workers.[42] While this was more than the Liberal Party's policies, the idea that migrants should be encouraged to keep their own culture had not yet fully surfaced.

By the end of 1974 things were beginning to change. In 1975 the Liberal Party dropped from its platform the idea of maintaining a homogeneous society in favour of maintaining a cohesive society. Stress was beginning to be laid on the need to consider the particular needs of migrants when formulating government policies. The realisation of the importance of the ethnic vote had filtered through to State politics.

It is interesting here to compare the NSW Liberal Party's thoughts about the importance of the ethnic vote. The Liberal Party of NSW realised that the ethnic vote was too important to be left solely to the ALP.[43] A State Executive Report in 1977 urged the Party not to be left behind. The document argues that the post-war population of Australia has changed; Sydney has 25 per cent of its population born outside Australia and Melbourne 30 per cent. 52 percent of all blue-collar workers are migrants. It argues that while the Liberal Party has achieved much, establishing the Earlwood-St George Hellenic Branch, and having Senator Misha Lajovic, the only European post-war migrant in the Federal Parliament, it must do more. The Report goes on to say that:

> Despite these successes, however, the Liberal Party has not captivated the hearts and minds of most non-British migrants.
> The ALP in recent years has made a determined and very successful effort to woo ethnic voters. Leaders of the ALP such as Gough Whitlam, Al Grassby, Neville Wran, George Paciullo and others have cultivated contacts with ethnic groups in a much more effective fashion than have most leaders of the Liberal Party.[44]

The Party saw that this failure (on its part) to appear attractive to non-British migrants, especially the large ethnic groups, could cost votes and be a threat to the future prospects of the Liberal Party.

It was against this background that the executive recommended to the State Council that the Party adopt changes in structure and policy with regard to migrants. The

recommendations centred around the establishment of ethnic branches, the formation of a Liberal Ethnic Council and development of policies directly related to migrants and their families.[45]

While the NSW Liberal Party was busy establishing internal party structures for migrants, the Liberal Party in Victoria (governing at the time) was also taking bold initiatives. In a 1976 election policy speech, Liberal Party leader and Premier Mr Rupert Hamer promised to establish a State Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs. This was, in fact, a bold step, as Mr Walter Jona, who was to become the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, pointed out. The legislation setting up the State Ministry was the 'first in Australia to give statutory recognition to a ministry whose specific tasks and objectives were concerned with ethnic groups'.[46]

The aims of the ministry were, firstly, to deal with immigration, working in conjunction with the Commonwealth to expand Victoria's population; secondly, and more importantly, the ministry would concern itself with ethnic affairs. This meant the development of community awareness of all the cultures and their benefit to Victorian society. Mr Jona hoped that the department would establish valuable and essential communication with the various ethnic groups and provide a means by which ethnic groups could attain full expression and identity.

The Labor Party, however, did not agree with Mr Jona. While congratulating the Government on finally recognising that ethnic communities do, in fact, exist, more positive action was needed. The Opposition leader in the Legislative Council, Mr Bill Landeryou, said that the Government action did not go far enough:

> The proposed legislation is shamefully inadequate, it is a mere token gesture, a public relations exercise as a sop thrown to our ethnic communities. It has of late become fashionable to bandy the word 'ethnic' about and waffle in praise of multiculturalism. So much so that many members of our ethnic communities have become extremely suspicious of these new-found champions of their cause.[47]

Mr Landeryou pointed out that if a policy of multiculturalism

was to work and if migrants were to become equal members of society, then the Government had to spend much more than was being allocated to the Ministry of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs. The Government was merely indulging in a 'publicity exercise', telling people what a good job it was doing - but without adequate funds the bill would remain an empty gesture.[48]

Mr Landeryou pointed out that a Labor Government would give first priority to an Interpreter-Translator Service to be available to all State government instrumentalities and departments. As well, the education system would be made to reflect the composition of Victorian society by ensuring that the teaching of community languages and cultures would be established in all primary and secondary schools. Mr Landeryou also said that if the Government was really interested in the welfare of migrants, then perhaps it might consider a policy of positive discrimination.

The debate did not stop here but was carried even further in the 1979 election campaign. The ALP policy on ethnic affairs promised to spend three times the amount that the Government had spent on cultural and welfare grants to the ethnic communities. A State Labor Government would establish an Ethnic Education Advisory Council, composed of representatives of the ethnic groups, to advise the Minister on the special needs of the migrant child. The most challenging proposal was to establish a central pool of Interpreter-Translators initially in Melbourne and then throughout the State.[49] A Labor Government would also establish an ethnic information resources centre to supply speakers, films, cassettes and other material about ethnic communities to government bodies and community groups.

This policy was criticised by the Minister, Mr Jona. He said that the ALP's ethnic affairs policy constituted

> a poorly researched, unrealistic, out of date, 'babes in the wood' attempt to buy votes with some sleight of hand financial trickery . . . The ALP plan is a disastrous attempt to undermine the successful integration programmes of the past three years, which have been designed to foster a truly multicultural society.[50]

Mr Jona defended the Government's position and said that many of the Labor policies would lead to costly duplication of

services which were already undertaken by the Commonwealth Government.

Not only were the two parties making promises, but the ALP in particular was making organisational changes. The Victorian ALP (especially the socialist left) was giving support to the establishment of ethnic branches. The first one was formed in the Batman electorate which was based, before the 1977 electoral re-distribution, on the city of Northcote, a city with a high proportion of Greeks and Italians. Two branches were formed, one Italian (Croxton) and one Greek (Westgarth). Ethnic branches now operate in two other Labor-held Victorian Federal seats, Wills and Scullin.[51] Both these seats are centred in the North and North-Western area of Melbourne and have a high proportion of Greek and Italian migrants. Lyle Allan suggests that the organisation of the ethnic vote is the means by which Labor will preserve its stranglehold on seats which were formerly the preserve of the Anglo-Irish working class.[52]

Whereas in the 1960s there was a bi-partisan policy of ethnic assimilation and integration, it seems that multiculturalism has now become the policy of both major parties. The idea promoted at both Federal and State level is that Australia is now a multicultural nation. The Federal Government and most State Governments agreed with the Galbally Report and all its recommendations.[53] Mr Malcolm Fraser said that his Government would implement all the policy recommendations of the Report so as to foster and encourage a multicultural society. New South Wales, following Victoria's lead, also established legislation which specifically recognised ethnic minorities, setting out proposals to ensure that they gained the fullest participation possible.[54] The political question, then, is increasingly becoming one of which party can appear to do more for the migrants.

Chapter Four

The Greek and Italian Response

The political parties succeeded in making multiculturalism an issue and in this respect it is interesting to analyse the response of the Greek and Italian communities. Our theory predicts that once an issue has been developed by the parties, groups which were unable to organise previously will now emerge. With the Australian political parties committing themselves to a policy of multiculturalism we would expect members of the Italian and Greek community to form pressure groups to secure and increase the benefits promised by the parties.

It would not be wrong to suggest that before the parties started promoting multiculturalism, few migrants had thought about it. In a survey conducted by June Hearn among 400 migrants in Melbourne in 1970, she found that migrants were not really concerned with a policy of multiculturalism.[55] Few migrants showed any direct concern with migrant issues but rather tended to think of themselves as ordinary citizens. The two biggest issues which concerned them rather were nurturance (health, education, pensions) (36 per cent) and living standards (wages, prices, housing, taxation) (15.5 per cent). Ethnic issues were thought important by 9.7 per cent of the sample.[56] Hearn argued from the basis of her survey that migrants did not generally consider themselves separate from the Australian political scene, and there was no real evidence to suggest a strong migrant force in Australian politics. In a further article Hearn stated that it would be wrong to talk about the impact of migrants on the Australian political scene:

> 'Migrant politics', then, is a totally inappropriate and misleading term. It has encouraged the expectation of mass migrant pressure or, at least, mass nationality group pressure on the part of many studying the scene.[57]

Up until the mid-1970s there were no effective migrant organisations promoting the rights and needs of migrants in

Australia. The percentage of Greek and Italian migrants who belonged to any ethnic organisation was very small.[58] Those that did usually belonged to a sporting or social club. There seemed to be a total absence of groups promoting the political interests of migrants. There were of course quite a few individual migrants who spoke out for their own ethnic group and for migrants in general, but their efforts, for the most part, went unnoticed.

At this early stage political parties took no special notice of migrants and migrants carried on with their own private lives. The problems of settlement in a new land were much more important than ethnic rights and they tried to settle in as best they could. The Italian and Greek migrants seemed to disregard the official policy of integration and carried on with their usual customs and traditions. In the areas of family life, social values, language and food preference, Italians and Greeks managed to retain their own identity. Italian and Greek organisations which existed at this time sought to promote, not the rights of migrants, but their welfare. The Italian Assistance Association (CoAsIt) and the Australian Greek Orthodox Society kept migrant problems 'within the family' so to speak. There was no way in which these organisations could promote the rights of migrants and push for more participation, equality and less discrimination since no major political party was interested in this. Political parties were attached to the idea of integration, working on the assumption that ethnic identity would disappear.

CoAsIt started off in 1967 as a purely welfare organisation. It was established by a group of volunteers with a grant from the Italian Government to help with the settlement problems of Italian migrants.[59] CoAsIt helped with interpreting problems in hospitals and places of employment, and with family and social problems of Italians living in Australia. In 1968, with a further grant from the Italian Government and some help from the Commonwealth Government, they were able to appoint a full-time social worker. There was at that time no talk about defending the political rights of Italian migrants.

CoAsIt first became involved in ethnic issues and rights of Italian migrants in 1974.[60] At this time there were more government funds available and they were able to devote much more time and effort in this area. CoAsIt obtained funds to employ a resource officer and a youth worker. The

organisation as a whole began to write articles about the political and social needs of Italians and ways of making them an integral part of Australian society. By 1978, CoAsIt had expanded, employing ten full-time staff, and while still providing welfare services, it was increasingly regarded as the representative of the Italian community.

With all the major political parties competing for the ethnic vote CoAsIt was now in a position to bargain with parties and governments. CoAsIt recognised that perhaps the political parties were interested only in the Italian vote, but, nevertheless, they were also providing the services that CoAsIt wanted and needed.[61] Federal and State grants were freely available and this enabled CoAsIt to employ more staff, build a library and to establish a women's refuge centre for migrants.

CoAsIt was now an effective force in defending and further promoting ethnic issues. CoAsIt was actively engaged in all government inquiries relating to ethnic affairs, and was one of the first ethnic organisations to suggest that migrants should have their own television programmes.[62] The manager of CoAsIt agreed that while multiculturalism was quite a new phenomenon, there was now constant liaison between governments, political parties and their organisation.

It was also around this time that a few individuals, led by George Papadopoulos, began to organise a Greek action group. In September 1972 the Australian Greek Welfare Society (AGWS) opened up. While being part of the Orthodox community, AGWS was set up as an independent body to defend the interests and political rights of Greek migrants in Victoria. Unlike the more traditional church organisation, the people of the AGWS saw their role as a Greek pressure group, aimed at ensuring that Greeks and migrants in general received a better deal.[63]

When the office was opened up in 1972 it was run by a group of volunteers with Nick Polites in charge. They began making submissions to governments, establishing relationships with other groups such as FILEF, CoAsIt, Jewish Welfare and the Ecumenical Migration Centre, and continued to ask for government funds.[64] With the political parties taking a greater interest in migrants, such work was beginning to pay off. In February of 1973 Federal funds were available to appoint a social worker. The Society was also managing to attract politicians. The then Minister for Social Security, Mr

Bill Hayden, held discussions with them, and Mr Malcolm Fraser, then a member of the shadow cabinet, also paid them a visit to see what was needed and what could be done. The Greek vote was too important to be disregarded by either party. In the 1972 Federal election it was estimated that the Greek vote was 60 per cent in favour of the ALP.[65] The Liberal Party had to buy into this vote as best it could and the ALP had to defend its position.

Such interest by the political parties further strengthened AGWS. In 1974 the Federal Labor Government increased its funds to all ethnic organisations and the AGWS was a recipient of a large proportion of these funds. Like CoAsIt, the AGWS was able to appoint a welfare rights officer, a community development officer and a youth worker.[66] These funds enabled the AGWS to open its present office in Lonsdale Street with a full-time welfare rights officer.

Since the Federal and State Governments had taken the initiative in providing services to migrants, the AGWS was now in a position to demand that these services be further extended. In 1975 the Society held discussions with the State Education Minister concerning the establishment of community languages in Victorian schools. It organised a seminar on the 'Injured Ethnic' and it gained more funds to establish a child care and family centre for Greek migrants in Richmond, which was opened by the Social Security Minister, Senator Margaret Guilfoyle, in February 1977.[67]

By 1979 the AGWS was quite successful in defending and expanding the rights of migrants in general and Greeks in particular. With governments and parties competing to provide services to migrants and defending the policies of multiculturalism, such organisation was easy: the money was flowing freely, AGWS could provide services never thought of before and therefore its existence was justified and its future assured.

The next step would be to call for further government action to ensure that a policy of multiculturalism would really emerge. In April of 1979 the Society put forward a list of proposals which it thought all governments should consider when formulating policy with regard to the needs and priorities of migrants. It called for:

* the further strengthening of community organisations which are essential for the development of multicultural

society;
* improved interpreter facilities;
* further government action to make the public aware of the implications of living in a multicultural society;
* increased budget allocation, so more ethnic welfare officers could be employed;
* on-the-job English classes and provision of interpreters by employers;
* more funds to establish care of the ethnic aged, to establish Greek Meals on Wheels;
* multilingual health and welfare officers;
* members of all advisory bodies to governments to be elected or appointed by their respective ethnic communities; and
* education policies which would reflect the cultural diversity of Australia.[68]

I asked an official at the AGWS if such success could have been achieved without the active support of the political parties. The reply was that it was not they who needed the parties but rather the parties needed AGWS. In many respects this is quite true, but one wonders how far AGWS would have got without the interest of political parties in the migrant vote. By 1979 it was possible to organise a Pan-Australian Greek Welfare Conference and the AGWS was able to get Mr Fraser to attend one of its meetings. Such action could not be achieved by a group of individuals acting alone to defend migrant interests.

It was also this change in political climate which gave rise to the Federation of Italian Immigrant Workers and their Families (FILEF) in Melbourne. FILEF is a worldwide organisation based in Rome, with branches in countries of high Italian immigration. In the late 1960s there was an attempt to establish a branch of FILEF in Melbourne by a few Italian migrants active in the Italian community.[69] But these efforts had very minor results and it was not until 1974 that FILEF really became established. In that year, with a grant of $20,000 from the Federal Government, FILEF opened its present office in Coburg.[70]

Unlike CoAsIt and AGWS, FILEF is expressly political. Its aim is to organise the Italian workers and to protect and advance their rights.[71] It publishes a fortnightly paper, *Nuovo Paese*, in opposition to what it considers the more conservatively-controlled Italian press. FILEF hopes to

create an awareness among Italian workers, thereby enabling them to defend their own rights. In this respect FILEF is quite involved with Australia's Trade Unions.

While defending the rights of Italian workers, the policy of multiculturalism is also very important to FILEF.[72] If Italian culture is to continue in Australian society, then it is necessary to involve second generation Italians and further develop the ideas of multiculturalism. An official at FILEF said that they were interested in a policy of real multiculturalism not the present 'window dressing' by the Federal and State Governments. He went on to say that the Fraser Government's abandonment of Radio 3ZZ and its current policy towards ethnic television were totally unacceptable, for it did not allow migrants to participate. The policy of Total Australian Community which the former State Minister for Immigration, Mr Jona, espoused, was too vague to have any meaning. What was needed were policies in which Italian migrants had a real say.

The policies advocated by FILEF lay stress on the need for further government action and more migrant participation if multiculturalism is to work.[73] There is a great need for interpreters and bilingual staff; education policies should reflect the cultural diversity of Australia. FILEF advocates the formation of Italian Trade Union committees, publication of union meetings in Italian, and more resources directly available to Italian organisations so that they may fully articulate their needs.[74]

While FILEF is different in that it has Trade Union support and, unlike CoAsIt and AGWS, has not, of late, received large government grants, it would not have achieved its present position without the parties making an issue of multiculturalism. The official with whom I spoke at FILEF stated that it was action by the Whitlam Government to help Australia's migrants which was the real break-through. Such government action led to a situation where things could be achieved. With the political parties talking about multiculturalism, FILEF, like other groups, had a valid reason for existing. FILEF and the other groups could now achieve benefits not thought possible in the 1960s.

Party competition for the ethnic vote has given rise not only to effective Greek and Italian groups, but also to migrant politicians. Theo Sideropoulos, who is active in the Orthodox Society and is the former Mayor of Collingwood, is

now ALP member for Richmond. In 1979, Giovanni Sgro successfully contested the seat of Melbourne North Province for the Victorian Legislative Council and became the first post-war Italian migrant in the Victorian parliament. In the 1980 Federal elections Dr Andrew Theophanous entered Parliament as the ALP member for Burke, after being endorsed for one of the ALP's safest seats in Victoria. This was the first time that the ALP endorsed migrants for safe Labor seats. Before this, non-British migrants, if endorsed at all by any one of the major parties, were usually put up for seats they could never win.[75] The Liberal Party also got into the act. In the 1979 State elections Tony De Domenico (former private secretary to Mr Jona) was endorsed for the seat of Prahran by the Liberal Party, and he just failed to win the seat from the ALP.

The change has now become complete. With major political parties legitimising the ideas of multiculturalism, Greek and Italian groups have organised to receive the benefits. Groups like CoAsIt, AGWS and to a lesser extent FILEF now have something to organise for and they can now provide benefits which they were incapable of providing before. They are now in a position in which they can bargain with the political parties. Just as these groups need the parties to promote the issue, parties now rely on these groups to provide the vote. One does not mean by this a process in which specific promises are made for specific votes, as the Australian political system does not make this possible. Ethnic groups cannot guarantee the vote. But these groups can act as a communication link between the parties and first-generation migrants. More importantly, in a two-party competitive model in which the ethnic communities have come to represent a large section of the vote, neither party can afford to ignore these groups. If one party seeks to attract the migrant vote, then the other must follow.

Chapter Five

The Limits of Multiculturalism

The political fortunes of Greek and Italian migrants have come a long way since the early 1950s and 1960s. Australia, so we are told, is no longer a homogeneous society but a multicultural society. The issue of multiculturalism is now echoing throughout Australia's social, political and academic institutions. Ethnic relations have become a topic of common interest. Within this changed climate, Italians and Greeks along with all other migrants are no longer 'New Australians' but 'Ethnics'.

I have shown that this change cannot be attributed to the action of the ethnic communities. The Greek and Italian communities formed large latent groups and were unable voluntarily to organise to pursue their common interests. They remained among what Olson refers to as the 'forgotten groups', those who suffer in silence with no ability to voice their needs.[76] However, using the theory of Downs we noted that parties, in a two party competitive model, eager to maximise their votes, took up and promoted the issue of multiculturalism.

In this instance parties approached the ethnic communities with specific promises hoping to gain an increasing share of the ethnic vote. Once this occurred it became easy for ethnic groups to emerge, to gain the benefits which the parties were providing. Multiculturalism can be seen, then, as a creation of the political parties. If this is the case it is possible to question just how serious the parties are in their commitment to multiculturalism. It is easy to promote multiculturalism at the level of faith or ideology, but in the final analysis multiculturalism must also entail changes to the social structure of Australian society.[77] The question still remains: how far can the issue, once developed, proceed?

If by multiculturalism we mean a society in which the majority group and all the various minority groups are to co-exist equally side by side with mutual respect and tolerance, then this would entail structural changes. Multiculturalism in this case means more than policies which stress that

Greeks and Italians should retain only the symbols of their culture. Such policies look only at the 'pretty' things associated with multiculturalism: ethnic dancing, music, craft and food. These policies avoid the reality that multiculturalism also implies the maintenance of ethnic languages, literature and customs as viable living wholes. This would imply a fragmentation of Australia's predominant Anglo-Irish culture: for, as a consequence, Australia would have to become multilingual and her social, political and economic institutions would have to reflect the ethnic composition of its society. Such a policy may require positive discrimination on the part of governments.

There is no doubt that neither the Liberal Party nor the Labor Party is as yet prepared to go this far. The reason for this is not hard to find. As shown previously, multiculturalism is not readily accepted by an overwhelming majority of the population even in the loose fashion in which it is promoted today. If parties tried to implement policies which would require structural changes, they would probably lose more votes than they would gain. While they might please some of the ethnic groups, they would run the risk of alienating other sections of the community. Many Australians still remain suspicious of any large-scale ethnic organisations or structures. Foreign languages are still looked upon with disapproval, though perhaps not to the extent that they were when migrants first arrived.

In this case multiculturalism increasingly becomes a fine balancing act. It is a good catch-cry to attract the ethnic vote, but it is not taken to the extent of antagonising other sections of the community. The statement by the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, Mr Michael MacKellar, in May 1977 seems to bear this out:

> We have enjoyed in Australia and can continue to enjoy the best of both worlds. It is therefore, somewhat disturbing to see, from time to time, suggestions that the maintenance of separate cultural identities of our various ethnic groups necessarily is dependent on the establishment of tight and exclusive ethnic institutions.[78]

This idea of getting the best of both worlds enables parties to maximise their utility. They can attract more migrant votes without losing the votes of the other members of the

community.

The response to the Galbally Report serves as an illustration of a commitment to multiculturalism at the level of faith. Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser regarded the Report 'as the most thorough review of services to migrants that this country has ever undertaken', and committed his Government to the full implementation of its recommendations.[79] One year after the tabling of the Report, Mr MacKellar said that the Government had already implemented many of the proposals in areas in which the Commonwealth has sole responsibility.[80] The most interesting point, however, is that throughout the report multiculturalism is never defined, even though its policy recommendations are centred around the creation of a multicultural society. This should not be seen as a fault of the review committee, but of the terms of reference set by the Government. Since the Report can be seen as a political document, as a means of handing out benefits to attract votes, it serves the Government's purpose to be vague. This superficiality and vagueness is again seen in the actions taken by the Victorian Government. The Victorian Ministry of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs spends a great deal of time and energy in publicising the fact that Victoria is a multicultural State. It sponsors many ethnic festivals and sees its function as being that of making people aware of the benefits of a multicultural society.[81]

The establishment of ethnic television can be seen as a further example of the promotion of multiculturalism at the level of faith. The idea of establishing ethnic television was an election promise made to migrants by Mr Fraser during the 1977 election campaign. This was one promise which Mr Fraser - accused of breaking many election promises - did not break.

The Government hoped to achieve its aim by establishing a new broadcasting corporation, the Independent Multicultural Broadcasting Corporation (IMBC) to run ethnic television. However the legislation allowing the Government to establish the IMBC was held up by the Senate. A report from the Senate Standing Committee on Education and the Arts in August, 1980, ruled out the Government plan for the immediate establishment of the IMBC.[82] The Senate Committee suggested that the Government take time to reconsider the issue to establish whether ethnic broadcasting could be provided by the ABC. But this action by the Senate

did not deter the Government. Mr Fraser's response was that the IMBC was not necessary and that the Government could achieve its aim through the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS), the body established earlier by the Government to run ethnic radio in Melbourne and Sydney.[83] Mr Fraser maintained that the Government hoped to have ethnic television on air before the election which was scheduled for October of that year.

Throughout the whole episode the action by the Government appears merely as a public relations exercise with the specific purpose of attracting the ethnic vote. The Government gave very little thought to the purpose of ethnic television, in what form it could best be achieved, and for a government concerned with the level of spending, paid very little attention to the cost of the programme. Do multilingual programmes with English sub-titles really make Australia a multicultural society, or is ethnic television a show-piece, a method by which the government can gain the ethnic vote without, at the same time, losing votes from other sections of the community?

One wonders however whether this policy of having the best of both worlds is really sustainable. Having given rise to the issue of multiculturalism, parties have in the process created strong ethnic groups capable of making increasing demands. In such a situation, as pointed out previously, group restraint can be regarded as a public good and as such the cost of restraint must be borne by the group which shows restraint. In this case ethnic groups will continue to ask for more and neither party can afford to ignore these demands. The opposition party will respond to these demands in the hope of increasing its ethnic vote, and the government party must join the auction if it is not to lose ground to the opposition. This competitive process, according to Samuel Brittan, leads to a situation of excessive expectations, expectations which are increasingly difficult to fulfil.[84]

It is possible to argue that ethnic groups will lose support as migrants eventually integrate into the existing society.[85] However this might not be the case, as ethnicity has a way of persisting. While descendants of migrants may change in habit and customs, they may not necessarily change in values and ideas. In the United States it was the third generation which gave rise to claims of separateness:

> In the third generation, descendants of the immigrants confronted each other, and knew they were both American, in the same dress, with the same language, using the same artifacts, troubled by the same things, but they voted differently, had different ideas about education, sex and were still in many ways, as different from one another as their grandfathers had been.[86]

In this case ethnic groups will not easily lose support. Ethnic rights and ethnic identity will still be important. It will be harder then, to avoid the question of structural pluralism by referring to multiculturalism in vague cultural terms. More positive action will be demanded.

The trend of increasing demands is already taking place in Australia. The Galbally Report was criticised by the ethnic press for not supplying enough money and for being a political gesture without adequate action.[87] The Ethnic Communities Council also had some reservations about the Report, pointing out the lack of positive innovations in English courses in industry and of financial support for the ethnic self-help groups, and that the Council itself should be given more resources to tackle the task of migrant advocacy and advising governments.[88]

Ethnic television is also attacked for not going far enough. George Zangalis, a member of the Media Committee of the Ethnic Committees Council of Victoria, has recently criticised government policy over ethnic television for not allowing ethnic participation in the policy and programme making bodies. This criticism is supported by the Federal Opposition, which maintains that the Government has abandoned the principle of ethnic community involvement. The Government has sought to maintain what Senator Button refers to as a 'patrician structure', whereby the ethnic communities are not entitled to do their own thing as other Australians are, but must have government regulation forced upon them.[89]

There have been stronger attacks than this with regard to the current policies of multiculturalism. Theo Sidiropoulos has stressed that Greeks must become more involved in Australian society:

> We must ensure that our society recognises us as equal citizens with equal rights and also recognises our right

> to maintain ourselves as an ethnic minority retaining our language and our culture and giving this opportunity to our children.[90]

Such demands cannot be easily ignored and there is evidence to suggest that they have gained a hearing within the ALP. There have been suggestions within the ALP that a national language policy be established: a policy in which the people, from whatever background, can have equal rights and opportunity to realise their full potential. This requires the maintenance of ethnic languages and the abandonment of unilingual education. Children should have access to bilingual education either through language schools within the present school structures, or by the establishment of ethnic bilingual private schools alongside the state system.[91]

In 1979, Moss Cass, the then ALP Federal spokesman for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, called for policies which would allow migrants to participate equally in all the decision-making processes of Australia and not to have 'token ethnics' in 'token positions':

> Migrants should not be forced to abandon their cultural identity or native language as a price to community resources or better participation . . . we must learn to live side by side and in harmony with Australians whose traditions, attitudes and religions differ from our own . . . Culture means more than leisure, recreation or entertainment facilities such as 'cultural centres' and 'ethnic cultural festivals'. Culture encompasses a way of life, the habits, the mores, traditions, customs and aspirations of all Australians regardless of origins.[92]

It would seem that party competition to attract the migrant vote further expands the issue of multiculturalism. Multiculturalism is now promoted as a way of creating harmony but there is a distinct possibility that it may create more conflict between the various sections of the community. If multiculturalism is only political expediency - a way of gaining the migrant vote - then parties must decide whether they will try to gain more votes from the migrants or lose votes from other sections of the community. Either way such action seems to promote discord, and such a result would not really suit any of those concerned. If we are to stop this, then perhaps some changes are needed in the way public

policy is implemented.

Downs saw public policy as the result of competition between parties for the votes of individuals and he believed that this would provide benefit for all and a state of equilibrium would emerge. But this is not the case. This study has shown that public policy is a result of the competition for the votes of individuals as members of groups. Parties seek to appeal to groups rather than individuals, for by doing so they can increase their vote. However in the process they create a situation whereby strong groups, capable of making increasing demands, emerge. In such a situation public policy becomes a matter of ad hoc concessions to diverse interest groups. If we are to overcome this, then perhaps we should look more seriously at the idea of placing restrictions on the promises made by political parties to the various interest groups. What may be required are legal limits to what a government can do in the interest of the general public.

Notes

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1. Australia Department of Immigration, *Australian Immigration Consolidated Statistics*, 1972.
2. P. Stirling and B. Patterson, 'Migrants in Politics', *The Age* 26 April 1971, p. 9.
3. Alan Davies, 'Migrants in Politics', *Dissent*, Winter 1966, p. 6.
4. Paul R. Wilson, *Immigrants and Politics*, Australian National University Press, Canberra, 1973, p. 20.
5. *ibid.*, p. 21.
6. *ibid.*, p. 70.
7. By 'cohesive' I mean that socially they are more united. It makes sense to talk about the Greek community as they do retain a sense of separate identity, whereas the Italians are more diffuse.
8. George Papadopoulos, 'Social Organisation and Ethnic Power: A Greek Perspective', in Des Storer, (ed.), *Ethnic Rights Power and Participation*, Ecumenical Migration Centre, Melbourne, 1973, pp. 43-45.
9. *ibid.*
10. Des Storer, 'Ethnic Groups and Political Participation', in *Ethnic Rights Power and Participation*, p. 78.
11. Jean I. Martin, 'Migration and Social Pluralism', paper presented to Australian Institute of Political Science, 37th Summer School, in *How Many Australians? Immigration and Growth*, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1971, p. 103.
12. *ibid.*
13. James Jupp, *Arrivals and Departures*, Cheshire, Melbourne, 1966, pp. 147-156.
14. I use this term often and have defined it as, Australian born whose parents and grandparents were born in Anglo-Saxon countries.
15. P. Stirling and B. Patterson, *op. cit., loc. cit.*
16. Age Poll, *The Age*, 19 July 1971, p. 6.
17. Age Poll, *The Age*, 4 August 1972, p. 7.
18. Age Poll, *The Age*, 9 November 1972, p. 7.
19. M.E. Buchanan, *Attitudes towards Immigrants in Australia*, National Population Inquiry, Research Report No. 3, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1976.
20. Victoria, Ministry of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, 'Attitudes of Victorians to migrants', August 1978.
21. *ibid.*, p. 4.
22. *ibid.*, p. 32.
23. R. Taft, 'Australian Attitudes to Immigrants', in *Australia's Multicultural Society*, La Trobe University, Meredith Memorial Lecture, 1978.

Chapter 2

24. Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge (Mass.), 1965.
25. *ibid.*, Chapter One. This chapter contains all the theoretical constructions used to explain the fundamental differences that exist between small and large groups. Rather than refer to it endlessly I have attempted, within the following three paragraphs, a summary of the argument.
26. Anthony Downs, *An Economic Theory of Democracy*, Harper and Row, New York, 1957. Here also I have presented a summary of the argument.

27. Australia, Department of Immigration, *Australian Immigration Consolidated Statistics*, 1980.
28. Ruth Johnston, *The Assimilation Myth*, Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1969.
29. Samuel Brittan, 'The Economic Contradictions of Democracy', *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 5, 1975, p. 145.

Chapter 3

30. A. Calwell, 'Immigration - Government Policy'. Statement to the House of Representatives, *Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates*, Vol. 189, 1946, pp. 502-512.
31. P. Lynch, *Immigration the Story of Nation Building*, Canberra, Department of Immigration, Canberra, 1970; and B.M. Snedden, *Immigration and Australia's Future*, Commonwealth Government Printer, Canberra, 1969.
32. *The Australian*, July 26, 1969, p. 2.
33. Australian Labor Party, Victorian Branch, 'New Australian Council reports to the central Executive', 1955-1960.
34. James Jupp, *Arrivals and Departures*, Cheshire, Melbourne, 1966, p. 107.
35. Al Grassby, *A Multicultural Society for the Future*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1973, p. 3.
36. There have been various suggestions that the Italian vote is close to 50 per cent in favour of the ALP and the Greek vote ranges from 60 - 80 per cent in favour of the ALP. More accurate research has recently been carried out and initial results show that there is some relationship between ethnicity and voting behaviour. See James Jupp, 'The Ethnic Vote: Does it Exist? A Case Study of Melbourne', *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, Vol. 2, No 3, 1981.
37. Al Grassby, *Australia's Decade of Decision*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1973.
38. *The Australian*, 29 November, 1975.
39. Liberal and National Country Party, *Immigration and Ethnic Affairs Policy*, Canberra, 1975.
40. Liberal Party of Australia, Victorian Division, *Election Policy Speech*, 30 May, 1970.
41. Liberal Party of Australia, Victorian Division, *State Platform*, March 1973.
42. Australian Labor Party, Victorian Branch, *Election Policy Speech*, May 1973.
43. Liberal Party of Australia, NSW Division, *A New Structure for the Liberal Party in NSW. Proposals for the State Council from the State Executive.* Sydney, April/May 1977.
44. *ibid.*
45. *ibid.*
46. W. Jona, second reading of the Ministry of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs Bill, *Victorian Parliamentary Debates*, Vol. 328, 1976, pp. 3752-3757.
47. Ministry of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs Bill, statement by Bill Landeryou, *Parliamentary Debates*, Vol. 330, 1976, pp. 5340-5356.
48. *ibid.*
49. Australian Labor Party, Victorian Branch, *Ethnic Affairs Policy*, 1979.
50. News Release by the Minister of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs (W. Jona), 'Confusion and Ignorance in the ALP Ethnic Affairs Policy,' 21 March, 1979.
51. Lyle Allan, 'Ethnic Politics - Migrant Organisations and the Victorian ALP', *Ethnic Studies*, Vol 2, 1978, p. 26.
52. *ibid.*
53. Report by the Review Committee on post-arrival programmes and

services for migrants, *Migrant Services and Programmes*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1978. Widely known as the Galbally Report and I refer to it as such.

54. New South Wales, Ethnic Affairs Commission Act 1979.

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55. June M. Hearn, 'Migrant Political Attitudes', Thesis (MA), University of Melbourne, 1971.
56. *ibid.*
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58. June M. Hearn, *op. cit.*, p. 48.
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61. *ibid.*
62. *ibid.*
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67. *ibid.*
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70. *ibid.*
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77. Jean I. Martin, 'Ethnic Pluralism and Identity', in S. Murray-Smith, (ed.), *Melbourne Studies in Education*, Melbourne University Press, 1976.
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