The political culture of Australia.

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THE POLITICAL CULTURE OF AUSTRALIA

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ABSTRACT

Many contributions have been made to the development of the notion of "political culture" since 1956. However, the content of political cultures and the search for universal dimensions applicable to all political systems are still areas of active enquiry.

The major part of this thesis consists of an attempt to apply the political culture concept in the Australian social context. The notion of national identity is readily applicable to Australia and it is possible to relate an appreciable number of other social and political phenomena to it. These include egalitarianism, cynicism about elites and authorities, and emphasis on "mateship", collectivism and loyalty. The strong national identity is associated with identification with the political community. Australia is a relatively highly consensualized and cohesive society. Political conflict tends to be economic in basis and moderated by citizens' overriding sense of mutual identification as well as a pragmatic outlook and a willingness to compromise. Political culture theorists hypothesize that in these circumstances a political system is likely to be characterized by stable, effective and democratic government as has been the case in Australia. Australians have always maintained considerable expectations of government. Politicians have been expected to administer the complex machinery of government efficiently and yet have also traditionally been held in disdain. Australians tend to be
averse to citizens' interests being determined primarily by relative bargaining strength. However, perhaps the major element in the incongruity between expectations of government and the status ascribed to politicians is inherent in the Australian ethos. Many institutions which have been developed to give practical expression to the ethos have inevitably been markedly hierarchical in structure and have therefore tended to undermine egalitarianism. One consequence of the resulting ambivalence is that hostility has tended to focus on politicians. Although the political culture concept is readily applicable in the Australian context its utility is presently open to question.
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CHAPTER I

THE CONCEPT OF POLITICAL CULTURE

Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to attempt to apply the concept of political culture, as elaborated to date, to the Australian political system. This first chapter accordingly consists of a review of the conceptual and empirical work of the various scholars who have over recent years contributed to the growth and development of this approach.

In reviewing the literature on political culture the object is to give an account which is both as comprehensive as space permits and at the same time reasonably balanced. Therefore, even aspects of the concept which have attracted an appreciable degree of criticism and which have tended to be de-emphasized by political culture theorists in recent years are included. It should be noted also that the prime function of the review is to provide an account of contributions to the study of political culture which are potentially applicable in the analysis and description of particular political cultures. The emphasis is thus on aspects of the concept which are of practical, rather than of theoretical interest. Further, both political development and political socialization are in general excluded from the review. This is in part because they are both distinct (though theoretically related) topics and in part because of the necessity of limiting the scope of the discussion.
A brief account of the development of the concept of political culture will be followed by a discussion of the content of political cultures and the search for universal dimensions applicable to all political systems. There will then follow a section which will be concerned with "political style"; that is the way in which political beliefs are held and the informal norms of political interaction. The final section, and the one that has least application in the Australian social context, is devoted to a discussion of political subcultures.

The Development of the Concept of Political Culture

The study of comparative politics has been increasingly concerned in recent years with the search for new concepts and theories applicable to all political systems. Associated with this development has been the growth of the behavioural approach to political analysis. The simultaneous development of behaviouralism and of new macro theories of politics\(^1\) has resulted in a growing gap between microanalysis, based on psychological interpretations of individuals' political behaviour, and macroanalysis, based on variables common to political sociology. The concept of political culture represents an attempt to bridge that gap.\(^2\)

The notion of "political culture" was first suggested

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\(^1\)For example see David Easton, A Framework for Political Analysis (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1965).

by Almond in 1956\textsuperscript{3} and, despite considerable development since that date, remains a "somewhat open-ended, multi-faceted"\textsuperscript{4} and very broadly defined concept. In a later work Almond defined political culture as "the pattern of individual attitudes and orientations toward politics among the members of a political system. It is the subjective realm which underlies and gives meaning to political actions."\textsuperscript{5} In his extensive treatment of the concept\textsuperscript{6} Verba defines it as follows:

The political culture of a society consists of the system of empirical beliefs, expressive symbols, and values which defines the situation in which political action takes place. It provides the subjective orientation to politics.\textsuperscript{7}

"Empirical beliefs" refers here to people's perception and interpretation of political relationships. "Expressive symbols" refers to the nature of people's feelings toward leaders and political institutions and the patterns of loyalty, commitment and identification in the political system. "Values" are the standards by which political demands and processes are evaluated and which determine the


\textsuperscript{5}G.A. Almond and G.B. Powell, \textit{Comparative Politics} (Boston, 1966), p.50.


\textsuperscript{7}\textit{Ibid.}, p.513.
general goals of the political system.  

The study of political culture is of course not entirely new. Many items now classified under the rubric of political culture have concerned writers as far back as Aristotle and the works of Montesquieu, de Tocqueville and Bagehot represent considerable contributions to the literature of political culture. The political culture concept is, however, predicated on the development of components amenable to measurement and comparison among states and it is intended to provide a researchable connecting link between individual behaviour and the systemic level of analysis. Almond and Verba emphasize that research should utilize the best available techniques of the social sciences for data gathering and analysis. Social scientists can, moreover, no longer assume that the facts of social or political life are known or:

that they are easily accessible through casual observation, introspection or systematic reading. One questions not merely the interpretation of facts, but in the first instance the facts

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8Ibid., pp. 512-60. These categories correspond to individuals' "cognitive", "affective" and "evaluative" orientations toward politics; see Almond and Powell, op.cit., p. 50 and G.A. Almond and S. Verba, The Civic Culture (Princeton, N.J., 1963), Chapter I.


10Czudnowski, op.cit., p. 878.

11In particular the recent developments in the theory and methods of sampling and in methods of statistical analysis and the electronic equipment now available to handle large amounts of data should be utilized. Almond and Verba, op.cit., p. 43.
themselves. Most important, perhaps, the criteria by which one accepts or rejects statements about social life are of a special nature. The ultimate criterion is the method by which they are gathered. The method should be relatively systematic and relatively reliable. And it ought to be amenable to replication... of course all this implies that the methods be public and explicit.\textsuperscript{12}

The emergence and development of the concept of political culture has thus signaled the effort to apply an essentially behavioural form of analysis to both new concerns of political science and to many traditional concerns such as legitimacy and nationhood.

The Content of Political Cultures

Although a number of universal dimensions of political culture may ultimately be isolated it is possible at this stage of knowledge only to suggest certain elements and themes which appear throughout the literature on political culture. The discussion of these elements which follows utilizes Easton's suggestion that subjective political orientations may be directed toward one or more of three analytically distinct levels of the political system: The "political community", the "regime" or the "government". The "political community" refers to the totality of individuals within the political system who are involved in a common division of labour and the solution of common problems; the "regime" refers to the constitutional order and basic form and norms of the system; and the "government"

\textsuperscript{12}Loc.cit.
means the incumbents of official positions and the authorities who make binding decisions for the society. Each element of the political culture is thus categorized in the discussion which follows according to whether the object of orientation is in general at the level of the political community, the regime or the government.

(i) Orientations toward the Political Community

A political culture is characterized by the extent to which individuals identify with each other as members of the same social system. The degree of such mutual identification is closely related to the development of what is:

Perhaps the most crucial political belief... that of national identity. Of what political unit or units does the individual consider himself a member, and how deep and unambiguous is the sense of identification?

The importance of national identity, Verba suggests, cannot be overstressed. It is "the first and most crucial problem that must be solved in the formation of a political culture, if it is to be capable of supporting a stable yet adaptable political system..." The nature of a particular national identity and the extent and manner of its development have a significant impact not only on the political system but on individuals also. Indeed, in Verba's view identification

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14 Pye and Verba, op.cit., p.535.
15 Ibid., p.529.
16 Loc.cit.
with the nation is often one of the basic elements in individual self-definition and is in many ways comparable to religious identification. Hence "the question of national identity is often phrased in somewhat mystical terms - that one searches for it, that nations need it and that people fear the loss of it."\textsuperscript{17} The solution of the national identity problem is thus related to the personal problem of identity which every individual faces in life\textsuperscript{18} and Pye's study of post-independence Burma illustrates how a crisis of identity can affect elites in a society which is undergoing rapid change.\textsuperscript{19} National identity is, therefore, inextricably bound-up with self-perceptions and cultural characteristics of individuals and with the nature of "horizontal" relationships in the society. A degree of self-confidence or self-esteem are, for example, often associated with a long-established and secure national identity\textsuperscript{20} as is a well-developed sense of community in a society.

The creation of a sense of national identity among the members of a political system is the cultural equivalent of drawing the physical boundaries of the political community. However, the boundaries of the political community, like territorial borders, often remain unsettled or ambiguous.

\textsuperscript{17}Loc.cit.
\textsuperscript{18}Loc.cit.
\textsuperscript{19}L.W.Pye, Politics, Personality, and Nation-Building (New Haven, Conn., 1962).
Similarly, the feelings, attitudes and degree of commitment of the members, or of subcommunities, toward the political community vary enormously from country to country. In countries which have historically well-established and secure national identities the boundaries between members and non-members are often so clear that the subject is rarely discussed as is the case in Japan. By contrast where the historic experience has been one of incongruity between cultural, linguistic and political boundaries the resulting ambiguity can be an important factor contributing to lack of identification with the political community as in the present German Federal Republic. More parochial or traditional affiliations may be the object of primary citizen loyalties producing widespread and persistent indifference to or distrust of central institutions. Indeed the problem of conflicting and uncertain loyalties in and between subcommunities is a common one in many countries today, particularly in the "third world." Weiner suggests, for example, that in India national and parochial loyalties appear so irreconcilable that ultimately the choice may be between either accepting fragmentation or taking vigorous action to destroy the more stubborn particularisms.  

Residues of particularisms and of traditional

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21 Lewis J. Edinger, Politics in Germany (Boston, 1968) pp.85-89.

22 See Myron Weiner, "Two Political Cultures" in Pye and Verba, op.cit., pp.199-244.
cultural elements persist in most modern societies and the diversity of their political cultures reflects the great variety of societal responses to the problem of multiple identifications. The matrix and intensities of community identifications and commitments may be cleavage-tending or consensus-building. For example, in the United States a high degree of pride and loyalty to Indiana may contribute to national unity while in Canada identification with Quebec threatens the integrity of the political community. Rose suggests that the sustained political development of England has been characterized by the continued fusion of traditional and modern elements in the political culture and that, as in the United States, the "incorporative" solution has been the rule. Thus commitment to the nation rarely obliterates more traditional or parochial commitments and individuals are able to develop a multiple set of loyalties on various levels which are not, in general, regarded as being in conflict.\textsuperscript{23} Almond and Verba have argued that it is this kind of solution that is most likely to result in a pattern of orientations and attitudes among members of a political system which are conducive to the creation of a political culture supportive of democracy.\textsuperscript{24}

In political systems in which the national identity


problem has not been resolved satisfactorily considerable
time and energy is often diverted from other important
problems to the more fundamental issues of unity and
independence and such systems are also more likely to be
lacking in many elements which facilitate the development
of a stable, effective and adaptable political system. For
example, where most citizens identify relatively weakly with
the political community it is more difficult for political
institutions to gain wide acceptance or for national elites
to legitimize their activities and to mobilize commitment
and support. Such systems tend also to lack generally
accepted, affect-loaded national symbols \(^{25}\) which can play
such a potent role in sustaining social cohesion and counter-
acting centrifugal political tendencies. \(^{26}\) Further in the
absence of a well-defined national identity it is likely
that the political system will lack the kind of diffuse
support which is essentially independent of system perform-
ance and hence facilitates survival of the system in times
of dislocation and crisis. \(^{27}\) Thus so long as there is
uncertainty and ambiguity concerning members' identification
with and loyalty to the political community it will "be one

\(^{25}\) For example popular and well-established monarchies
like those of Japan and Britain.

\(^{26}\) See Fred Greenstein, "The Benevolent Leader: Child-
ren's Images of Political Authority", American Political
Science Review, Vol. 54 (December 1960), pp. 934-943 and his
Children and Politics (New Haven, Conn., 1965).

\(^{27}\) See S.M. Lipset, Political Man (New York, 1960),
Chapter 3.
of the major defining characteristics of that political culture". 28

It will be clear from the discussion in the following chapter that historically there has been a relative absence of conflicting elements in Australian society and that the Australian national identity which has evolved is both strong and pervasive. Much of the above discussion accordingly has applicability in the Australian context.

(ii) Orientations toward the "regime" and the "government".

A major aspect of a political culture is whether or not there are salient beliefs about the process by which authoritative decisions and allocations are made for the society. In some societies the beliefs on the subject are few but significant; ordinary citizens may for example conceive of governmental activity as a subject which is not in any way their legitimate concern as in Tokugawa Japan. 29 In contemporary political systems it is of course common for there to be quite extensive beliefs about how the political process should operate and for such processes to be regarded by citizens as matters of some personal significance to them.

Once it is established that there are rules in a society about how authoritative allocations should be made and that they are considered important the next question

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28 Pye and Verba, op.cit., p.533.
which must be asked is whether there is consensus on the rules, whatever they might be. Is there general agreement on the norms and constitutional forms of the "regime" and are the decisions of incumbents of official positions, that is the "government", regarded as binding? More specifically does a consensus exist in the society on the way in which demands are processed by the political system, on the mechanisms - whether elective or otherwise - by which authoritative decision-makers are selected and on the procedures that should guide their determination of outputs?  

The degree to which the rules and procedures of political institutions are explicitly defined varies markedly even among the developed countries. For example the British political system is characterized by institutions which depend to a large degree on procedures which have not been formally codified and are often also implicit while in the United States procedures are relatively highly codified both constitutionally and legislatively.

However, irrespective of whether regime and governmental processes are written or conventional, whether they are simple or complex, hallowed by tradition or sanctioned by successful popular revolution, the extent to which there is consensus in a society on such processes and the patterning of relevant differences is a major pole of differentiation among political cultures. Group differences in orientation

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to political institutions which follow regional, ethnic or religious lines of cleavage tend to be particularly salient. However it is also important to identify qualitative aspects of citizen orientations. For example, is political activity regarded as fundamentally harmonious? Do some groups consider their differences to be irreconcilable? It is, of course, also necessary to establish the configuration of the various partisan orientations in a political culture and to relate them to the other groupings. It is important to know, for example, that in the French political culture political institutions are in general accorded little respect or support (despite the fact that most citizens identify strongly with the political community) but that the degree of disaffection with the various political institutions and the extent to which groups are prepared to work within them varies very considerably according to regional, class, religious and partisan affiliation. By way of contrast in the United States there has traditionally been high support for most aspects of the political system and structural and processional controversies are few and limited to relatively minor issues such as reforms of the Electoral College system or the use of the filibuster in

31 Australian orientations toward political institutions and the political community to some degree parallel those of the French. See Chapter III, p. 81.

the Senate.\textsuperscript{33} The mapping of salient areas of consensus and cleavage in citizens' orientations toward both the regime and government is thus an essential prerequisite to the understanding of any political culture.

Expectations concerning the political system vary considerably both from country to country and to varying degrees between groups within political systems and this is a further major defining characteristic of political cultures. A basic question concerns members' conceptions concerning the proper role of the political system in the society. Is it essentially the maintenance of existing conditions or perhaps the radical transformation of society? Are system capabilities to be increased or is it considered that government activity should be minimized? To what extent is the state assumed to be responsible for social welfare and to what extent should it support and regulate the free-enterprise system?

The range of possible expectations of political systems is of course immense. However whatever expectations of performance become established, where members regard governmental output as successfully meeting those expectations it is likely that diffuse support for the political system will be enhanced.\textsuperscript{34} Conversely, a continuing failure to


\textsuperscript{34}A recent Iowa survey provides some empirical evidence in support of this proposition: Patterson and Boynton concluded that support for the political system,
fulfil such expectations will tend to inhibit the development of a generalized commitment to the political system.\textsuperscript{35}

A related question involves the scope of the political system. There tend to be generally accepted beliefs in any society about the limits of political life with certain issues being recognized as outside the domain of politics. Clearly what is considered to be legitimate political activity can vary greatly from system to system and in some systems there is a greater degree of certainty about what is political, and what is non-political, then in other systems.\textsuperscript{36}

Political culture thus sets limits and influences the nature, content and goals of the political process but it is itself only part of the wider, dynamic social system and thus not impervious to change. In general political elites tend to be under increasing pressure to meet demands for new and more extensive governmental output. In developing countries especially rising expectations have tended to remain ahead of improvements in system capability. In some societies, however, where basic needs of the members have been provided for there may be some desire to move

\textsuperscript{34} or some subsystem of it, is dependent in part on congruency in the mass public between expectations and perceptions of system performance. See S.C.Patterson and G.H.Boynton, "Perceptions and Expectations of the Legislature and Support for It", American Journal of Sociology, Vol 75 (July 1969), pp.62-76.

\textsuperscript{35} Pye and Verba, op.cit., pp.542-3.

\textsuperscript{36} Almond and Powell, op.cit., p.57.
towards a measure of "depoliticization" or "privatization" of life. This appears, for example, to be the trend in France\textsuperscript{37} and, as will be clear from the discussion in subsequent chapters, in Australia also.

Just as the expectations in a society concerning provision of goods and services by government are a significant element in the political culture so too are the beliefs concerning governmental extractive and regulatory outputs. Where members' orientations to such governmental activities are based on the conviction that the political system is hostile and exploitative, incivism toward law is likely to be extensive. The belief structure in a society concerning regulatory outputs is in fact likely to be related to both the set of values used to evaluate governmental activities and the nature of the national identity. For example in the political culture of southern Italy evaluation of government activity is based on a single, narrow criterion, its impact on the nuclear family. At the same time, as we have seen, a sense of identification with broader social groupings, and most strikingly with the political community, is weak or lacking and there is persistent, widespread incivism.\textsuperscript{38} On the other hand in countries where the prevailing values promote respect for the political system and obedience to law citizens tend normally to conform to governmental regulations and extractive measures in a large

\textsuperscript{38}Pye and Verba, \textit{op.cit.}, p.540.
part because they are perceived as issuing from legitimate authoritative decision-making bodies and usually irrespective of their personal evaluation of particular measures. In these circumstances it is likely also that the government and its agencies will enjoy a considerable degree of cooperation and autonomy (but at the same time members are likely to challenge and resist governmental activities which appear arbitrary, illegitimate or oppressive in terms of the norms of the society). Obviously the effectiveness and the potential range of governmental activity are in general considerably enhanced in political systems having patterns of beliefs which are supportive of such activity, in contrast to systems in which relevant beliefs are ambiguous or negative. The dominant orientations in a political culture to regulative governmental output are, in short, of crucial significance.

The degree of trust which members feel in their political institutions and in the incumbents (and potential incumbents) of official positions is a major defining characteristic of political cultures and it is inseparable from the general patterns of trust and distrust in a society. Where the basic culture instills a profound sense of distrust and suspicion — as in Italy — an important prerequisite

\[39 \text{Ibid., p. 541.}\]

\[40 \text{Only 7\% of Italian respondents in Almond and Verba's five-nation survey agreed with the statement "Most people can be trusted" compared with 55\% of American and 49\% of British respondents. Almond and Verba, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 267.}\]
for the effective functioning of complex political and administrative structures is lacking, elites are often severely handicapped by citizens' distrust of them\textsuperscript{41} and an acceptable balance between cooperation and conflict in political life is difficult to realize. The \textit{Civic Culture} survey found, in marked contrast to Italy, considerable empirical evidence\textsuperscript{42} that "In Britain the belief that people are generally cooperative, trustworthy, and helpful is frequent, and it has political consequences.... General social trust is translated into politically relevent trust."\textsuperscript{43} Rose asserts that a sense of trust is pervasive in the British political culture and suggests that this is a key element underlying many other important characteristics of the political culture. For example, in the absence of constitutional restraints on the powers of government, it is doubtful if the system would be workable without considerable confidence in the integrity of partisan opponents. Equally, because there is fundamental trust in the good intentions of public officials they are left free to operate in considerable privacy and there are even strong cultural sanctions upholding the value of such privacy in governmental deliberations.\textsuperscript{44} However, clearly a wholly uncritical trust


\textsuperscript{42}Almond and Verba, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.222-231.

\textsuperscript{43}\textit{Ibid.}, p.228.

\textsuperscript{44}See Rose, \textit{op.cit.}, p.43 and \textit{passim}. 
in a political elite is unlikely to be either desirable or functional in a modern political system and general cultures which emphasize interpersonal trust strongly therefore may be complemented by political cultures which stress distrust of public institutions and public officials as is the case both in the United States and in Australia.

Although the degree of trust which citizens have in their public officials is a crucial element in the political culture, it is only one orientation in the matrix of beliefs and expectations which members of a political system have in relation to authoritative decision-makers.

Access to public office in a society is normally limited, whether formally or informally, by many factors such as social status, training, education, ethnicity, sex and family. Political power may thus be restricted to males as in Switzerland, to members of an upper-class oligarchy as in much of Latin America, or to a small, Westernized minority as in Liberia.

The character of the incumbents of governmental positions in a society is influenced also by the orientations in the culture toward both hierarchy and authority. Traditional societies often emphasize ascriptive, hierarchical relationships while in politically developed societies there

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45 Pye and Verba, op. cit., p. 22.
46 See for example Monsma, op. cit., pp. 27 and 38-9.
48 The universal franchise was introduced in Switzerland in 1972.
may be considerable popular support for egalitarian notions, including governmental recruitment based solely on merit. However even where recruitment practices are relatively universalistic, a degree of hierarchy is of course inevitable if the political system is to function effectively and the manner in which this dilemma is dealt with in a society is a distinctive and a significant aspect of its political culture.\textsuperscript{49} For example Ethiopia's political culture is pervaded by an arbitrary and almost absolute concept of authority and a profound respect for a long-established hierarchy while political and all other leadership is dominated by the Amhara ethnic minority.\textsuperscript{50} On the other hand in Britain the cultural mix simultaneously places considerable emphasis on many forms of social equality and on the recognition of the value of hierarchy and authority and access to public office, although nominally open to all, is in fact appreciably limited by informal practices on the basis of class, family, regional and other variables.\textsuperscript{51}

The status and prestige accorded to politicians in a society is an important component of the political culture. In traditional societies the governing, warrior and religious elites usually enjoy a very high and often a

\textsuperscript{49}Pye and Verba, \textit{op.cit.}, p.22.

\textsuperscript{50}The Amhara comprise one-fifth of the contemporary population of Ethiopia. See D.E. Levine, "Ethiopia: Identity, Authority and Realism" in \textit{ibid.}, pp.245-281.

\textsuperscript{51}See Rose, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.35-47 and 65-72.
unique social position but in modern political cultures politics is only one of a large number of prestigious occupations. Political systems, by establishing a particular combination of rewards and penalties, influence considerably the character and quality of the personnel recruited to authoritative decision-making roles. Where the pecuniary rewards of office are high, the rationale is often in part that this will encourage public officials to serve the community at large rather than favouring narrower interests and that the existence of substantial monetary incentives is preferable to the prospect of political power providing the prime attraction to office. In other societies pecuniary rewards may be kept low but political office may be invested with very high status or perhaps an attractive mystique. Again, honour systems and the distinction made in many political cultures between "statesmen" and "politicians" provide further bases for rewarding and controlling those who seek power. However suspicion about politicians' motivations and behaviour tends to be a persistent feature of many, and probably most, societies and the way in which the problem is coped with is an important aspect of the political culture.52

The final point relating to members' orientations toward political elites to be made here is the role played

by the political culture as a resource for political leadership. Political leadership may be viewed as being both shaped by and shaping political culture: A political leader, and especially the chief political executive, may have some impact on either the national leadership style or elements of the political culture but the effect of an individual leader is in practice likely to be very limited, especially in a stable democracy where the national style is accepted and approved.  

However, the cultural norms and expectations about political leadership and the particular set of attitudes toward authority which have evolved in the society, that is the national style of authority, provide the background against which leadership styles can develop and find their limits. And although political leaders must by and large work within the cultural norms and expectations and the national style of leadership available to them, these aspects of the political culture often in fact represent a wealth of resources which can be exploited by them in the pursuit of chosen objectives.

In discussing the orientations of members toward various elements of the regime and government it is easy to

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lose sight of the fact that the requirements of equivalence of meaning are probably more difficult to meet in the comparative study of political culture than in any other area of political analysis. Even where two political systems are markedly similar in structure, the same institution or practice may differ greatly in its significance from one culture to the other. For example the significance of the electoral system or ministerial corruption is likely to differ considerably between the cultures of the Netherlands, the Soviet Union and the Philippines and the orientations of system members toward the Senate in the Republic of Vietnam cannot necessarily be related readily to the orientations of Americans toward the United States Senate. It is important therefore in comparing orientations toward politics and political objects in different political systems to seek to understand the particular significance of both the orientations and the political objects in the total culture of each society.  

A very important aspect of the problem of equivalence of meaning in different cultures is the relative saliency of politics in a society. Clearly the subjective relevance of political action as an alternative to non-political action for the attainment of individual or group

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57 Ibid., pp. 878-9.
goals varies considerably between (and within) political cultures and members' orientations toward the various elements of the regime and the government are naturally to a considerable degree a reflection of such variations. Czudnowski has, accordingly, suggested a method of evaluating the relative saliency of politics. This method involves a ranking of goals and the degree to which political means are used to pursue those goals. It is thus possible to measure in a given situation the magnitude of what is undoubtedly a key dimension of political cultures.

(iii) **Orientations of Members toward the Behaviour of Non-governmental Members of the Political System.**

The discussion here concerns the orientations of members toward the behaviour of those members of a society who are not perceived to be either actual or potential occupants of governmental roles. This distinction is necessarily an arbitrary one and especially so in relatively "open" societies and in revolutionary situations.

Orientations toward popular political participation vary greatly even between markedly similar political systems. The Almond and Powell five-nation survey found that the percentage of respondents who believed that the ordinary

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58 See *ibid.*, pp. 881-88.

59 The subjective relevance of politics varies, of course, between differing individuals and groups and in different situations. Czudnowski's index is intended to be used in empirical research at any of these levels. See *ibid.*, pp. 884-8.
man should participate actively\(^6\) in his local community varied as follows:\(^6\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
<th>Number in sample (N)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1,007</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although it is unlikely that actual participation corresponds to these figures it is probable that they give an indication of the relative degree of participation in each country; in any event it is clear that the sense of civic duty to participate differs considerably in the different political cultures.\(^6\) The particular pattern and character of popular participation in a given political system is of course a function of a multitude of historical, societal and other factors. In China, for example, where decision-making processes have traditionally been very remote, the country's style of carefully managed mass political participation tends to generate support for the regime and the government and often also has significant instrumental and

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\(^{60}\) "Active" participation was defined for the purpose of the survey as joining community organizations, attending meetings and the like; merely voting and keeping informed was defined as passive behaviour. Almond and Powell, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.126-9.

\(^{61}\) \textit{Ibid.}, p.127.

expressive components.\(^63\)

The particular character of popular political participation and the general conception of the legitimate and proper role of ordinary members in the political process of a society are thus inextricably bound-up with the general culture and the place of politics and political activity in it. Hence many of the topics discussed in the preceding section also have relevance here: Orientations toward such matters as equality, authority, hierarchy, social trust, obedience to law, the saliency of politics and recourse to violence, together with the structural context, all tend to affect the patterns of participation in a society. Recourse to violence, for example, may be virtually the only meaningful way of participating in the political process in some political systems as is the case in a number of Latin American countries and for Arabs and Palestinians whose territory is occupied by Israel. Again, although a large majority of the American population approve and participate peaceably in the political process,\(^64\) the fact that the general level of violence is higher in the United States than in any comparable Western country\(^65\) inevitably

\(^{63}\)Merkl, op.cit., pp.142-3.


\(^{65}\)Merkl, op.cit., p.192.
affects the character of political activity and this is especially the case among those minorities\textsuperscript{66} who are hostile to existing institutions.\textsuperscript{67}

Highly related to the degree and character of political activity in a political system is the degree of "political efficacy" among its members. That is the extent to which ordinary members feel that they can have some direct influence upon national and local public officials.\textsuperscript{68} Almond and Verba found striking differences in political efficacy between the five countries surveyed by them as the following figures indicate: \textsuperscript{69}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage who believe they can do something about an unjust local or national regulation.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Can do something about local regulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{66}See Monsma, \textit{op.
\textsuperscript{67}Marcus' survey research on the relationship between political participation and psychopathology suggested that while there was no relationship between the latter and traditional political participation (that is voting, taking part in campaigns and so on) there was a relationship between psychopathology and participation in movements that are attempting to change the existing social order. See G.E.Maruc, "Psychopathology and Political Recruitment", \textit{Journal of Politics}, Vol. 31, (November 1969), pp.913-931.

\textsuperscript{68}See Almond and Verba, \textit{op.
\textsuperscript{69}\textit{Ibid.}, p.142.
The distribution of feelings of political efficacy, and of political powerlessness, can also vary greatly between different groups and strata within a society. The Almond and Verba survey found that political efficacy consistently increased in each higher educational group in all five countries. Working with a United States national sample Finifter found that political efficacy was positively correlated with political participation, education and being Jewish and negatively correlated with age.

Using data gathered from a sample of Lexington, Kentucky residents Fraser tested W.A. Gamson's hypothesis that the optimum combination of orientations for political participation are high political efficacy and low political trust. It was concluded however that in the Kentucky setting the efficacy and trust orientations were by themselves inadequate bases for the prediction of political participation.

Almond and Verba distinguish three important types of citizen orientation: The "parochial", the "subject" and the "participant" orientation. The "parochial" citizen does not have either interest in or knowledge of political phenomena; the "subject" has some knowledge and interest in

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politics and is aware of governmental policies and services which affect people's lives; and the "participant" has a sense of political efficacy and an activist orientation toward participation in the political process.\textsuperscript{73} A political culture can thus be characterized in part by mapping the frequency of the differing types of orientation in the population.\textsuperscript{74} Jessop's survey\textsuperscript{75} of three London constituencies lends appreciable empirical support to the Almond and Verba typology as does Gibbons' study of the political cognitions of Singapore farmers.\textsuperscript{76}

Almond and Verba suggest moreover that as political development proceeds, increasing numbers of the members of a political system progress from a wholly parochial orientation first to a subject orientation and then to the participant orientation and Gibbons' data was in general not inconsistent with their hypothesis. Gibbons also noted that many former participants had reverted to a subject orientation after Singapore attained modern political institutions and independence and are unlikely to return to activism except

\textsuperscript{73}Almond and Verba, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.15-19.
\textsuperscript{74}Ibid., p.16.
in a crisis, 77 which is in accord with Almond and Verba's view that some of the most significant differences in political cultures are related to "the way in which parochial, subject and participant orientations have combined, fused and meshed together within the individuals of the polity". 78

The co-existence of parochial, subject and participant orientations among the members of a political system are also related by Almond and Verba to the "civic culture" which underlies stable democratic political systems. 79 In a civic culture attitudes favourable to political participation by ordinary members are moderated and limited by the persistence of the more traditional subject and parochial orientations among much of the population and within participants. 80 This leads to a balanced political culture "in which political activity, involvement and rationality exist but are balanced by passivity, traditionality, and commitment to parochial values". 81 A civic culture is marked by the widespread belief in both the legitimacy of the authorities and the benefits of strong democratic government while the

77Gibbons designates this the "spectator" orientation. See ibid., pp.31-35.
78Almond and Verba, op.cit., p.19.
79Almond and Powell, op.cit., p.31.
80Verba notes however that the civic culture model may not be the only feasible pattern for democratic politics. Verba in Pye and Verba, op.cit., p.134.
81Almond and Powell, op.cit., p.31.
actual degree of political participation in it is less
important than a widespread belief in the possibility of
participation. Thus, the civic culture is a deferential
and allegiant culture as much as it is a participatory
culture. Almond and Verba concluded that, of the five
countries surveyed by them, the pattern of orientations and
values of both the British and the American political
cultures corresponded approximately to those of the civic
culture model.

Political Style

The term "political style" is used to refer to
certain important aspects of political culture: These are
the way in which political beliefs are held and the informal
norms of political interaction that regulate the way in
which political beliefs are applied in politics.

The well-known distinction between "ideological"

82 Pye and Verba, op. cit., pp. 543-4 and Almond and
84 Ibid., pp. 360-1. The data obtained by Jessop from
an intensive study of electors in North-east London is also,
in general, consistent with the model. However, he is
inclined to the view that the weight of the evidence so far
suggests that the civic culture model may be more useful for
the analysis and description of central values of stable
democracies than as a sociological model of behaviour. See
85 For an extensive treatment of the use of the term
in relation to political culture see Verba in Pye and
and "pragmatic" political styles has particular relevance to the way in which political beliefs are held. An ideological style involves a deep commitment to an explicit and comprehensive set of political values often deduced from a more general set of "first principles" and providing a Weltanschauung. A pragmatic political style, on the other hand, involves the evaluation of problems "in terms of their individual merits rather than some pre-existing view of reality. One deals with the issue at hand, perhaps in terms of some guiding principles, but not as an instance of some over-all scheme". 86 Many political parties in Western Europe conform to the ideological pattern in contrast to the pragmatism of the major British parties. 87

Three dimensions of political beliefs which have considerable bearing on the way in which they are held can be distinguished: These are whether the beliefs are held (or expressed) explicitly or implicitly; expressively or instrumentally; and rigidly or tentatively. Further, many other significant characteristics tend to be associated with these dimensions. For example the more explicit and closed the belief system the less likely is compromise or the modification of beliefs in the light of new facts or circumstances while implicit beliefs tend to be more flexible and durable. 88

Where the expressive side of politics is stressed

86 Ibid., p.545.
87 See Almond and Powell, op.cit., pp.61-2.
88 Ibid., pp.59-61.
primary satisfaction often derives from participation in
the political process and much political activity is in fact
related to the social and emotional satisfactions to be gained
from involvement rather than goal-attainment. On the other
hand, where the emphasis is on the instrumental polarity
attention tends to be narrowly focussed on pay-offs.
However the expressive-instrumental dimension of political
beliefs - like the other two dimensions - is not mutually
exclusive: Indeed some of the strongest political movements
have been those that have combined satisfaction from political
involvement per se with a deep commitment to attainment of
the goals.90

Different types of issue may be handled in any
given political system in quite different political styles.
For example certain demands may be dealt with in an open
and instrumental manner while a more closed and expressive
approach may be taken to others. French politics tend to
be relatively rigid in terms of the content of government
policy and flexible with regard to the way political
decisions are made in contrast to British politics where
the opposite is generally the case.

Political stability is frequently related to a
pragmatic political style stressing open, implicit and

89 See S.R.Brown and J.D.Ellithorp, "Emotional
Experiences in Political Groups: The Case of the McCarthy
Phenomenon", American Political Science Review, Vol.64

instrumental political beliefs since it facilitates bargaining and compromise and tends to prevent political conflict from becoming overly generalized. However a wholly pragmatic political style may leave too much open to compromise for a stable value system to remain and Verba argues that:

It is only when some basic beliefs remain implicit and "primitive" and when the commitment to them is heavily expressive that one can have the underlying stability that allows a more pragmatic approach in relation to other beliefs.91

The simultaneous questioning of many beliefs and goals may therefore undermine and weaken the political system rather than contribute to stability and this problem tends to be particularly acute in developing countries.92

A further major element of political style is the extent to which a distinction is made between politics and other areas of social life; that is the range of interactions to which a political belief system is considered applicable and the degree to which interpersonal relations generally are affected by political criteria. The Almond-Verba survey indicated, for example, that in Italy it is normal for partisan political criteria to be applied to personal relationships while in Britain friendship and close family ties across partisan lines appear to be common.93

91 Verba in ibid., p.548. See also "The Secularization of Political Culture", in Almond and Powell, op.cit., pp.57-63
92 Almond and Powell, op.cit., p.63.
Rules of civility governing political interactions are a closely related aspect of political style. Political disagreement is often dampened, to a varying degree, by the development of norms of courtesy which set limits to political attacks or prescribe rules of political debate as is the case in the legislative bodies of the United States and Britain where the formal and informal rules and conventions considerably influence the behaviour of members.\textsuperscript{94} The existence of such norms enforcing political civility, together with those limiting the degree of politicization of personal relations, tends to facilitate accommodation and the maintenance of channels of communication between opponents and to regulate the intensity of political conflict.

The discussion of political style as a distinct element within political cultures does not imply that political style and basic political beliefs are independent aspects of political culture. On the contrary "The most important characteristic of a political culture is that it is a patterned set of orientations toward politics in which specific norms and general values are mutually related"\textsuperscript{95} and certain patterns of political style are much more likely.

\textsuperscript{94}A recent study of Californian legislators indicated that freshman legislators are rapidly socialized by the legislature into an understanding of its unwritten rules and that a sophisticated knowledge of the rules is an important factor affecting the progress of legislators. See C.M.Price and C.G.Bell "The Rules of the Game: Political Fact or Academic Fancy?" Journal of Politics, Vol.32 (November 1970), pp.839-855.

\textsuperscript{95}Verba in Pye and Verba, \textit{op.cit.}, p.550.
than others to be associated with a particular kind of belief structure. For example, a non-ideological political style with relatively high civility in political interaction and little politicization of personal life is in general likely to develop, Verba suggests, where there is "a strong sense of national identity and where the horizontal ties of political integration are strong."\(^{96}\) It will be clear from the discussion in the following chapters that this is in fact the pattern in Australian political culture.

The Homogeneity of Political Cultures: Political Subcultures

Political cultures are not conceived as being entirely homogeneous and thus where recognizable sets of orientations can be distinguished from other sets of orientations in the political system they are referred to as "political subcultures". What is, or is not, defined as a subculture depends in large part on the nature of relevant concerns and problems. A student of Spanish politics may be concerned with various regional subcultures while from the stand-point of a comparative analyst they may be merely an element of the more general national political culture which do not merit separate designation.\(^{97}\)

The degree to which basic political attitudes are widely shared in a political system and the patterning of

\(^{96}\) Loc. cit.

\(^{97}\) See Almond and Powell, op.cit., pp.63-4 and Pye and Verba, op.cit., p.525.
the differences in political beliefs among the various groups are thus a major pole of differentiation among political cultures. However political systems not only differ considerably in the degree to which orientations are shared among members but also in the nature of the shared beliefs. In general the degree to which political beliefs are shared is a good indicator of the cohesiveness of a society but consensus on certain orientations - an ideological political style for example - can be divisive. The areas of homogeneity of belief in a society and the pattern of differences are matters for empirical investigation. Prothro and Grigg have shown that is is unwise to presume consensus in a society even on apparently fundamental values and Milbrath has concluded from his research on popular belief systems that scholars should make as few assumptions and pre-conceptions as possible about political beliefs when they are investigating them.

98 This is, for example, true of Australian society which is both highly consensualized and cohesive.


101 Hardgrave has proposed the use of projective techniques to "tap the latent political orientations from which opinions are formed" and as a means of obviating the problem that opinion surveys, by eliciting a response, often serve to structure and form opinions where none existed before. See R.L. Hardgrave, "Political Culture and Projective Techniques", Comparative Political Studies, Vol 2 (July 1969), pp. 249-255.
The small elite who have responsibility for governmental decisions and deal with power tend to develop different political orientations to the rest of the population and the relationship between the mass and the elite subcultures is an important aspect of political cultures. Indeed the relationship between these two subcultures, and in particular the character of each subculture and the extent to which they contain complementary sets of values, is a critical factor both for the performance and for the orderly development of political systems. A particularly significant element in the relationship between the two subcultures which should be mentioned is the manner in which recruitment to the elite subculture takes place. In stable modern political systems individuals are usually socialized into the mass culture before being recruited into elite roles and they are therefore likely to have an understanding of ordinary members' values and to respond appropriately in terms of them. On the other hand, in traditional and transitional political systems those destined for elite positions frequently have separate educational and social experiences and career lines from those of the masses and this inevitably tends to limit understanding and communication in either direction. Ottoman Turkey provides an example

where many important political and social values were shared by both elite and masses despite the rigid social structure and the wide gulf which separated them. By contrast although a measure of social mobility exists in contemporary India there is little common ground between the relatively homogeneous elite culture and the backward and extremely heterogeneous mass culture and as a result considerable difficulty is experienced in mobilizing or gaining the cooperation of the masses.

A political subculture can of course be associated with almost any grouping in a society. However subcultures related to geographic location, level of education, ethnicity, religious faith and economic and social position tend to be especially common and salient. In recent years a body of empirical research on subcultures has begun to accumulate. The concept has also seen some development in relation to geographic location. Patterson has for example pioneered the study of the political cultures of the various American

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104 See Myron Weiner, "India: Two Political Cultures" in ibid., pp.199-244.

105 For example an appreciable amount is now known about orientations and values in the black subculture of the United States. See Monsma, op.cit., pp.29-31 and the studies cited there.

states and a study by Elazar focussed on regional subcultures in America. Overall, however, the dearth of studies on subcultures remains a striking feature of the literature of political culture.

Conclusion

The discussion of the notion of political subcultures concludes this review of the various conceptual and empirical contributions of scholars to the development of the concept of political culture. The following chapters attempt to apply political culture concepts to the political life of Australia and in doing so to give an account of some salient aspects of political culture in Australia. It will be clear from the discussion in subsequent chapters that extant political culture concepts vary both in their applicability and in their usefulness in the Australian social context. For example, the notion of the national identity as a major aspect of the political culture is readily applicable in the Australian case and an appreciable number of political phenomena can thereby be related. Other political culture concepts, such as the sense of civic duty and political efficacy, obviously have considerable potential utility in the Australian context but their application is at present greatly hampered by the lack of relevant comparative empirical data. Finally, a number of political culture

concepts appear to have limited applicability in the Australian context as is the case, for example, with the notion of political subcultures. The question of the varying utility of political culture concepts will be discussed further in the concluding chapter of the thesis.
CHAPTER II

THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL IDENTITY

Introduction

It has already been noted in Chapter I that, in Verba's view, the importance of national identity cannot be exaggerated. The question of what political unit, if any, a citizen considers himself to be a member of and how deep and unambiguous his sense of identification with it is constitutes what is "perhaps the most crucial political belief..."\(^1\) Verba asserts moreover that the development of a national identity is "the first and the most crucial problem that must be solved in the formation of a political culture, if it is to be capable of supporting a stable yet adaptable political system..."\(^2\) The problem of national identity is related also to individuals' personal identity and self-esteem and to the nature of "horizontal" relationships in the society. In short, the manner in which the national identity problem has been resolved, the degree to which a sense of national identity has developed and the nature of that identity are theoretically crucial to the comprehension of a political culture.\(^3\) This chapter accordingly consists of a discussion of the development and the character of the Australian national identity with particular emphasis on those aspects which historically have been

\(^1\) Verba in Pye and Verba, op.cit., p.529.
\(^2\) Loc.cit.
\(^3\) See above pp.6-7.
politically significant. An important theme which runs through much of this chapter is the relationship between Australian political culture and the manner in which the national identity evolved. The question of the degree to which Australia conforms in this respect to political culture theory elaborated in Chapter I is discussed in the concluding paragraphs.

At this point it may be helpful to the reader to indicate some of the main themes in the account of the development of the Australian national identity which follows. From the late eighteenth century onwards ideas, values and institutions were transmitted from the United Kingdom to Australia by an unceasing tide of immigrants. The overwhelming majority of the immigrants were lower class in origin, and approximately one quarter were Irish, both of which were to have an appreciable impact on the evolving political culture. Further, the major period of settlement of Australia coincided with the industrial revolution in the United Kingdom, with long periods of acute social and

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4 See above pp.6-11.

5 A basic difficulty in discussing the phenomenon is that of definition. Hans Kohn's definition has gained wide acceptance and will be followed here. Kohn maintains that most nationalities possess certain objective factors distinguishing them from other nationalities such as language, territory, political entity, religion, culture and traditions. However none of these factors is essential to the existence of nationality. The essential element is a "living and active corporative will". Hans Kohn, Nationalism - Its Meaning and History (Princeton, N.J., 1955), pp.9-10.
economic distress and attendant greatly heightened class antagonisms in Britain and also with Britain's emergence as the principal, and apparently unchallengeable, world power. However despite the immense impact of Britain on Australian society it became apparent as the nineteenth century progressed that a considerable degree of social adaptation and modification was taking place in the alien Australian environment. The isolation and the brutal geographic and climatic conditions of life on the continent tended inevitably to foster and encourage orientations which were functional there and a large number of distinctively Australian values and social patterns emerged. A distinct Australian identity thus developed and with it the Australian political culture. Among the major elements of the political culture are: a pervasive egalitarianism; a marked emphasis on loyalty, "mateship", collectivism and mutual aid; a distinctive Australian nationalism and associated with it considerable attachment to, and confidence in, things Australian; and a high degree of class consciousness.

**The Australian National Identity**

The influence of the United Kingdom\(^6\) on Australia is difficult to exaggerate. As late as 1945 over 98 per cent of the Australian population had originated from the United Kingdom and for at least a century and a half the

\(^6\)Until 1922 all thirty-two Irish counties were of course within the United Kingdom.
overwhelming majority of Australians took great pride in being "British". The development of Australian society dates from the arrival from Britain of the First Fleet at Botany Bay in 1788. Six British colonies subsequently grew up on the continent and all of them were greatly influenced in their ideas, aspirations, culture, life style and political and social institutions by those of the United Kingdom. Each colony attained responsible self-government long before they were federated in 1901 and all six colonial governments were inevitably modifications of the Westminster model. The Australian colonists were among the most ardent supporters of the Imperial Federation movement in the late nineteenth century and federation of the colonies to form the Commonwealth of Australia was seen as a great imperial occasion there. Further, a multitude of personal, institutional, economic and sentimental ties linked Britain and Australia and the relationship was kept very much alive by the continuing flow of immigrants to Australia. Indeed native-born Australians remained a minority in the population until as late as the 1870's. However, despite the pervasive British

7 New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania, Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia.

8 Each colony became a State of the Commonwealth of Australia at Federation and the Commonwealth and State governments were based on the same model.

9 "Commonwealth" is used in this thesis to refer to the Commonwealth of Australia. The international association of that name is referred to as the "Commonwealth of Nations" except where the meaning is clear from the context in which it is used.
influences, as the nineteenth century progressed the Australian colonists nonetheless developed a distinct national identity of their own.

The growth of the Australian national identity was noteworthy in several respects. It was surprising, for example, that a common identity, rather than a regional or colonial identity, developed in a population geographically dispersed in isolated settlements across a sparsely populated continent and fragmented between six administratively distinct colonies. In fact although the various colonies acquired characteristics which marked them off sharply from British society they tended to develop on parallel lines rather than to diverge; thus each became a peculiar amalgam of British and native elements but at the same time they remained remarkably similar to one another. It is noteworthy also that, in comparison to Canada for example, a pervasive national identity developed so strongly and rapidly in Australia. Richard Preston comments that:

The Commonwealth was merely a formal and political recognition of an established fact. During the last third of the nineteenth century, when Canada had already become a single country but Canadians were still deeply divided and unsure of themselves,

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10 Western Australia voted for secession in 1933 but most authors do not regard the event as particularly significant. Gordon Greenwood for example remarks that it "...was in actuality a lever to prize concessions from the Commonwealth government rather than a genuine bid for independence". Richard Preston (ed.), Contemporary Australia: Studies in History, Politics and Economics (Durham, N.C., 1969), p.431.
Australians were already in their own eyes a single people ... the concept of a distinctive Australian character which accompanied the development of a sense of national identity had already emerged ... there is a prolific literature about the Australian national character of kind that would still be inconceivable for Canada. 11

Australians, furthermore, apparently had in general little difficulty in reconciling their own nationalism with their strong and continuing identification with Britain. 12 Even Irish immigrants, Serle suggests, manifested "Not only a stronger than normal sense ... of Australian patriotism but also a developing loyalty to the British Empire as distinct from perfidious and diabolical Albion." 13

A phenomenon which is illustrative of the long, complex interaction between elements derived from Britain and the Australian environment is the "bush culture" of the large rural itinerant proletariat. Most rural work was pastoral and intermittent 14 so that a large number of men were obliged to move around in the bush 15 in search of work.

11 Ibid., p.561.
12 For a more detailed account of the context in which the Australian national identity evolved see Geoffrey Serle, "Australia and Britain" in ibid., pp.1-17.
13 Ibid., p.16.
14 Typically a grazier would only require two or three labourers for about ten months in the year but at shearing time and for fence-building for example he would need a large number of men.
15 The term "bush" is used to refer to the peculiarly desolate, largely arid and extremely intractable countryside of Australia.
These circumstances and the brutal geographic and climatic conditions had much to do with the emergence among bush workers of a distinctive pattern of values and behaviour. Bush workers moved around in teams in which each man would share both possessions and work with his "mates" by whom he was honour-bound to stand in any adversity. They thus depended heavily on one another for both companionship and survival. The "bush culture"¹⁶ of the itinerant workers ultimately came to have a lasting impact on Australian society and a great many basic Australian values are traced to it and especially the emphasis on solidarity, mutual aid, "mateship" and militant egalitarianism.¹⁷

Australian egalitarianism is undoubtedly the most important and pervasive of these values and it has accordingly attracted the attention of many writers during the last century. For example, Trollope's¹⁸ description of the aggressive egalitarianism which characterized bush workers and gold miners has been echoed in many subsequent accounts of Australian society. The gold attracted a very

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¹⁶ The bush culture and its ethos have been extensively celebrated in song and verse in Australia since the 1880's. A very influential scholarly account of its effect on Australian society is Russel Ward, The Australian Legend (Melbourne, 1958).

¹⁷ See ibid., especially pp.221-242.

large number of prospectors from all over the world\textsuperscript{19} and
they varied in status from ex-convicts to adventurous young
aristocrats. Trollope noted, however, that on the gold-
fields men treated each other without distinction and that
every man was deemed to be of equal value and to have equal
rights. Trollope was also surprised to find that, although
he was merely an inquisitive gentleman, he was treated with
neither deference nor abuse but as an equal and that wherever
he went on the goldfields he was received with the same
courteous, if rudimentary, hospitality which miners accorded
to one another.\textsuperscript{20} Lord Bryce and D.H.Lawrence recorded
similar impressions of Australians' egalitarianism\textsuperscript{21} while
Hancock's classic \textit{Australia}\textsuperscript{22} was the beginning of a very
considerable scholarly literature on the subject. The
influence of the egalitarian ethic is to be seen everywhere
in contemporary Australian life. Income differentials have
long been among the narrowest in the world. They are for
example smaller than those of Britain, the Western European

\textsuperscript{19}In the decade following the discovery of gold in
1851 Australia's population tripled. J.D.B.Miller and B.
Jinks, \textit{Australian Government and Politics} (London, 1971),
pp.30-31.

\textsuperscript{20}For a vivid account of the remarkable spirit and
camaraderie of the goldfields see Trollope, \textit{op.cit.}, especi-
ally pp.82-92, 289-90 and 404-5. The only group of any size
who did not conform to the goldfield conventions were the
Chinese.

\textsuperscript{21}See James Bryce, \textit{Modern Democracies Vol.II} (London,
1921); D.H.Lawrence, \textit{Kangaroo} (Toronto, 1955).

\textsuperscript{22}First published in 1930. See W.K.Hancock,
\textit{Australia} (Brisbane, 1961).
countries, Canada and the United States. The relative homogeneity in material standards of living throughout Australian society is paralleled moreover by the considerable homogeneity in Australians' style of living, patterns of consumption, tastes and leisure-time activities. For example, over seventy per cent of the population own or are buying their own homes. Eighty-two per cent of Australians live in a one-family bungalow and contrasts between the housing of differing income levels tend to be relatively slight. Indeed, even the homes of the wealthy are usually neither very big nor very elaborate. Thus an American sociologist has commented:

Differences in income and wealth divide Australians quantitatively but not qualitatively. Money does not afford a different kind of life... they spend their leisure in much the same way. They go to the same films and beaches, they play the same games and they drink the same beer.

The nature of Australian egalitarianism is often compared to American egalitarianism but, as Truman has

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25 Ibid., p. 45.

26 An important limiting factor on housing is the fact that it is virtually impossible to obtain domestic servants in Australia. J.D. Pringle, Australian Accent (London, 1958) p. 32.

27 Kurt Mayer in Mayer, op. cit., p. 47.

recently pointed out, there are some very significant differences between the two.\textsuperscript{29} In both Australian and American political cultures equality of political and legal rights, equality of opportunity and egalitarian manners are stressed. However, in America equality of opportunity is to a considerable degree conceived in terms of equality of economic opportunity and of upward status mobility and this emphasis is reinforced by many other dominant cultural values such as competitiveness, "getting ahead", individualism and the pursuit of wealth.\textsuperscript{30} The broader and more thorough-going Australian conception of equality involves a much greater emphasis on equality of income and standards of living and on equality of status. This is reflected in Australian life styles, as has already been noted, and also in Australian social welfare provisions which are considerably more comprehensive and advanced.\textsuperscript{31} In Australia the impact of the egalitarian ethic on interpersonal behaviour, including that of politicians, is also very marked. Australians are, in fact, highly perceptive of affectation and superciliousness and quick to censure them\textsuperscript{32} and the


\textsuperscript{32}Kurt Mayer comments that: "It is significant that...cont."
egalitarian ethic may be somewhat aggressively asserted in
the social sphere. Many other important elements in
Australian political life are bound-up with the egalitarian
ethic. For example, Australians' egalitarianism and their
attitudes to elites are clearly related and when politi-
cians pointed to the necessity of "cutting down the tall
poppies" they were expressing a very popular sentiment.
Egalitarianism is, in short, both a pervasive and a very
important element in Australian political culture.

The value placed in the "bush culture" on solidarity,
mutual aid, mateship and loyalty are also still evident in
Australian society. Collectivism remains the characteristic
approach of Australians to social and practical problems,
particularly in dealing with government and on matters re-
lating to individuals' economic interests. The emphasis
placed on loyalty in Australia is, in fact, difficult to
exaggerate and the same is true of solidarity which is
"the key-note in every field of life where concerted action

\[32\text{cont.}\] in Australia the custom of tipping with its
connotations of servility has been traditionally absent.
For the same reason single passengers, whether male or
female, often sit beside the driver in the front of a taxi,
not in the back. To sit alone in the back would imply the
master–servant relationship ... an impression which most
Australians are anxious to avoid." Mayer, \textit{op.cit.}, p.47.

33See C. McGregor, \textit{Profile of Australia} (Harmondswor-

34See above, pp.10-11.

pp.49-50.
is called for... Not only trade unions, but associations of manufacturers, traders, farmers, and such specialized groups as commercial radio stations expect solidarity from their members."36

The impact of the bush culture on Australian society was reinforced by economic conditions in Australia in the nineteenth century. Small-scale family land settlement rarely succeeded because of the adverse conditions and almost the entire population remained propertyless, and mainly rural, wage-earners. In contrast to the American frontier, the Australian bush was the "big man's frontier".37 In the 1860's, for example, in New South Wales ninety-six people had managed to acquire eight million acres and in Victoria one hundred men acquired eleven and a half million acres. Further, the small minority of large-scale pastoralists such as these succeeded in maintaining their virtual monopoly of the cultivable land throughout the nineteenth century.38

The bush culture ethos tended also to be reinforced by Australians' class consciousness and their attitudes to authority. The overwhelming majority of the immigrants to Australia were lower class in origin and they brought with them from the United Kingdom an abiding hostility to the

36 Miller and Jinks, op.cit., p.18.
37 See Kurt Mayer in Mayer, op.cit., pp.30-56.
38 Ibid., pp.35-6.
upper classes. In the Australian colonies these attitudes were if anything exacerbated by extent economic conditions and inevitably came to focus on the small minority of landholders and on local authorities. However, the shortage of labour, which persisted throughout almost the whole of the nineteenth century, together with the solidarity of the workers\textsuperscript{39} made it possible to routinely treat both employers and the authorities with a marked lack of respect and these have remained characteristic Australian orientations to this day.\textsuperscript{40} Class consciousness thus became deeply rooted in a society which at the same time is relatively lacking in status and class divisions and distinction.\textsuperscript{41}

The paradox is explained in part by the nature of Australian egalitarianism which is characterized by two Australian social psychologists as having:

\begin{quote}
...taken the form of militant attempts to eliminate the material and prestige liabilities of the working class...Thus a high value is placed on activities aimed at protecting and promoting the standing of the "underdog" by abusing privileged or would-be privileged persons. Although middle-class Australians avoid identifying themselves as workers, they nonetheless typically share the militant egalitarianism and are equally suspicious of authority and prestige figures.\textsuperscript{42}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{39}See Encel, \textit{op.cit.}, p.50.
\textsuperscript{40}Ward, \textit{op.cit.}, p.6.
\textsuperscript{41}See Kurt Mayer, "Social Stratification in Two Egalitarian Societies: Australia and the United States" in Mayer, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.43-7.
Clearly the combination of a pervasive egalitarianism and of this kind of orientation toward political and economic elites has significant consequences for the political process and their effect is compounded by the widespread existence of class consciousness. Each of these closely related elements in the Australian political culture is accordingly discussed further at appropriate points below.

Australians' hostility to their "upper class" and their marked suspicion of authority and elites tended to be reinforced by the radicalism which became increasingly influential towards the end of the nineteenth century. Although working class immigrants kept Australians closely in touch with developments in British working class politics, the main source and the stronghold of Australian radicalism was again in the bush. In the 1880's the social ethos of

44 Rosecrance applies Hartz's theory to argue that Australia was a radical social "fragment" which became detached from the United Kingdom and that, because of the society's isolation and the relative absence of checks on them, immigrants were able to create something approaching the kind of society they had sought in the United Kingdom. See Richard N. Rosecrance, "The Radical Culture of Australia" in L. Hartz, The Founding of New Societies (New York, 1964), pp.275-318. However, Hartz's theory is rather less applicable in the Australian case than in the case of the United States because of the close and on-going communication between Britain and Australia. In fact, Australian radical and Labor politics continued to be influenced to some degree by British political thinking until mid twentieth century. See Truman, "A Critique...", op.cit., pp.520-523.
the bush culture suddenly took political shape and began to have a significant impact in the cities. Bush radicalism was markedly eclectic in character. It owed something to Syme, something to Chartism, something to Henry George, something to Irish dissent and a great deal to the democratic ethos of the outback. The radicalism was also

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46 The Sydney Bulletin which circulated widely in the bush gave vigorous expression to bush radicalism in the "Australian National Policy" which it printed from time to time. The version of the Policy printed in the issue of 25 June 1892 included the following demands:

One person, one vote.
Complete Secularization and Freedom of Education.
Reform of the Criminal Code and Prison System.
A United Australia, and Protection against the World.
Australia for the Australians – the cheap Chinaman, the cheap nigger, and the cheap European to be absolutely excluded.
A State bank, the issue of bank-notes to be a State monopoly.
The direct election of Ministers by Parliament, instead of Party Government or rather Government by Contradiction.
A new Parliamentary system – one House to be elected by Constituences as at present, the other to be chosen by the whole country voting as one Constituency.
A Universal system of Compulsory Life Assurance.
The entire Abolition of the Private Ownership of Land.
The Referendum.
The abolition of Titles of so-called "nobility".

Cited in Miller and Jinks, op.cit., p. 37.

47 Syme was a prominent Victorian newspaper proprietor who in the latter half of the nineteenth century propounded the view that Australia should reduce her dependence on other countries by reducing her dependence on the sale of raw materials and building up local industries through protectionist policies. Syme maintained that Australian industry, with high wage costs, should not have to compete on unprotected terms with the goods produced by so-called "sweated labour" in countries whose workers had not the economic and political bargaining power that the Australian workers had. These ideas gained widespread support throughout Australian society. Miller and Jinks, op.cit., p. 34.
closely associated both with nationalism and trade unionism.\textsuperscript{48} It was soon to become apparent that the basis existed for popular radical politics when the depression of the 1890's triggered off widespread hostility to the \textit{status quo} and the old parties. During the depression improved pay and conditions could no longer be negotiated and strikes failed. Union leaders therefore turned to the idea of getting a Labor Party into Parliament. In 1891 in New South Wales the Australian Labor Party surprised everyone by capturing a quarter of the seats in the first election it contested and it formed the Commonwealth government in 1904.\textsuperscript{49} Radicalism continued to be influential in the Australian Labor Party at least until 1914 and during this period Labor governments in Australia attracted an appreciable amount of attention overseas,\textsuperscript{50} not least because of the considerable amount of novel legislation which they enacted. For example, Commonwealth Labor governments legislated compulsory arbitration of industrial disputes in 1904,\textsuperscript{51} invalid and old

\textsuperscript{48}By the 1880's large numbers of workers, including the unskilled and semi-skilled, were organized into unions. (Significantly, some of these unions were already operating throughout the whole of Australia reflecting the growth of a sense of community throughout the continent.) \textit{Ibid.}, pp.33-37.

\textsuperscript{49}\textit{Loc.cit.}

\textsuperscript{50}Australia had Labor governments even before the Labour Party was formed in the United Kingdom and many members of the British Labour Movement travelled out to Australia to observe the Labor parties and governments at first hand. \textit{Encel}, \textit{op.cit.}, p.54.

\textsuperscript{51}Arbitration Courts currently determine the income of over 90 per cent of employees. See Miller and Jinks, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.115-119.
age pensions in 1906 and maternity allowances in 1912.\textsuperscript{52} The radicalism of the Australian Labor Party has become greatly attenuated with the passage of the years. Many of Labor's objectives have long since been realized, other objectives have been ruled unconstitutional and the unbroken period of affluence and full-employment since 1940 has not been conducive to radical politics.\textsuperscript{53} However, the radical tradition is a continuing, though minor, feature of the Australian political culture. The heirs to the bush radicals are still to be found on the Left of the Australian Labor Party\textsuperscript{54} and, of course, in the Communist Parties.\textsuperscript{55} However, whether or not popular radicalism comparable to that of the period from the 1880's until the First World War will surface again in Australia in changed circumstances is a moot point.

The nature of the Australian national identity has also been shaped by the continent's patent military vulnerability and the related sense of threat under which the society has developed. Australian fears about aggression date back at least to the movement of the French and the Germans into the Pacific in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

\textsuperscript{52} McGregor, \textit{op.cit.}, p.333.
\textsuperscript{53} T. Truman in Preston, \textit{op.cit.}, p.279.
\textsuperscript{54} See \textit{ibid.}, pp.289-291 and T. Truman, \textit{Ideological Groups in the Australian Labor Party and Their Attitudes} (St. Lucia, Queensland, 1969), pp.92-123.
\textsuperscript{55} These are the Moscow-oriented Communist Party of Australia and the Peking-oriented Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist).
At other times it was the Russians and after the Sino-Japanese War of 1895 Japan became the focus of concern for fifty years. In latter years Indonesia and China have been seen as the main threats but unease about Japan still lingers in Australia. Horne suggests that the possibility of catastrophe has, in fact, been a persistent undertone of Australian life since the arrival of the First Fleet and that even today some Australians have doubts about the country's future.

Goot's recent study of Gallup Poll data for the period 1940-1970 indicated "widespread Australian pessimism over the chances of avoiding another world war ... [respondents gave] an almost unbroken line of pessimistic forecasts." The notion of a threat to national survival has, in short, historically been a pervasive element in Australian thought. For example, when Prime Minister Menzies broadcast to the nation on 26th April 1939 he asserted, inter alia, that for Australia the basic issue in international affairs was "our survival"; in T.B. Millar's authoritative work *Australia's Foreign Policy* a similar reference is made in the closing sentence:

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60 (Melbourne, 1968), p.256.
the notion recurs frequently in both parliamentary\(^{61}\) and popular usage. Moreover the theme is not by any means limited to Australian literature for foreign writers commonly proceed from the same premise:

For Australia more than any other country the choice might be between annihilation or submersion but it might not be in a position to choose.\(^{62}\)

The widespread awareness of the continent's military vulnerability has inevitably had an appreciable impact on the political process. For example, a great deal of inter- and intra-party conflict centres on this theme\(^{63}\) and considerable political mileage is always to be gained by skillful manipulation of facts, fears and symbols relevant to national security.\(^{64}\) The sense of threat has clearly also been a major factor in shaping the Australian tradition in international affairs and in particular the emphasis on pragmatism, continuous careful assessment of the realities of power and the acceptance of the necessity of military alliance.


with a major hegemonial world power.  

A related threat under which Australian society has developed is that of being partially or wholly submerged as a result of migration from populous areas of Asia. The discovery of gold in 1851 resulted in a great influx of immigrants to Australia from all over the world. (The population tripled in the decade 1851-1861). Among the immigrants attracted to Australia by the gold were a very large number of Chinese who soon were one of the largest single ethnic groups on the goldfields. However, in marked contrast to virtually every other group on the fields, Chinese prospectors lived and worked more or less exclusively in their own racially-bound communities and in some areas these became effectively Chinese enclaves. This early experience of the very rapid development of communities so antithetical to the Australian ethos and patently intent on making the very minimum of adjustment to Australian ways tended to reinforce the value which Australians have traditionally attached to the preservation of a homogeneous population. As the century progressed a

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66 The population was 400,000 in 1851 and 1,200,000 in 1861. Miller and Jinks, op. cit., pp. 30-31.


68 There have nonetheless been a number of periods, other than that of 1851-1861, when substantial numbers of aliens have immigrated to Australia. Preston, op. cit., pp. 226ff.
number of factors combined to make concern about the "Yellow Peril" a continuing and an emotive element both in colonial politics and in Australian thinking generally. The Labor Movement became a vigorous and persistent opponent of immigration on any scale per se. Labor was, however, especially opposed to Asian immigration because it presented a direct threat to Australians' hard-won living standards. Asian immigrants were usually willing to work for much lower wages than Australians and thus tended to undermine the bargaining position of unions. As the Labor Movement's influence increased and Labor governments began to come to power towards the end of the nineteenth century the pressure for systematic restriction of Asian immigration became considerable. Pressure for exclusive immigration policies was also intensified by the growth of Japanese power in the Pacific since Australia's military vulnerability would

69 For a graphic record of popular Australian concern about the "Yellow Peril" from the 1850's onwards see P. Coleman and L. Tanner, Cartoons of Australian History (Melbourne, 1967).

70 Primarily because immigration tended to depress wage levels and to exacerbate working class hardship in times of recession.

71 The prolonged periods of labour shortage during the nineteenth century, combined with the solidarity of the workers, had enabled unions to gain pay and conditions which compared very favourably with those in the United Kingdom. Miller and Jinks, op.cit., p.36.

72 McGregor, op.cit., pp.311-313; Encel, op.cit., p.55; Miller and Jinks, op.cit., p.75.
clearly be compounded if a potential "fifth-column" were allowed to develop on the continent. Further, although Australian society was becoming less like that of the United Kingdom as time passed, Australians' self-definitions were fundamentally related to their British roots. Indeed the immense distance separating Australians from the United Kingdom and their cultural and racial isolation tended if anything to add to their pride in being a "British" people. Hence the presence of a significant number of Asians in Australia represented a visible threat to Australians' identity. By the turn of the century exclusion of Asians from Australia had become a settled policy supported by virtually the entire population. Defensiveness about admission of Asian immigrants remains a significant feature of the Australian national identity today and Australia's strategic problems are now much more complex in the wake of the withdrawal of the European colonial powers from Asia. The potential threat posed by overpopulated Asian states to

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74 Australians' general antipathy to aliens was particularly acute in the case of Asians because they were also, in general, unassimilable.

75 Australians saw themselves as "Independent Australian Britons" in the words of Alfred Deakin. (Deakin was a prominent politician about the time of Federation and subsequently became Prime Minister.) Cited in Preston, op. cit., p.12.

76 One of the first pieces of legislation of the Commonwealth Parliament in 1901 was an Act designed to exclude Asians.
the Australian way of life and culture is still an important element in the outlook and attitudes of contemporary Australians. 77

The Australian nation is conventionally regarded as having "come of age" in the First World War when for the first time very large numbers of Australians from every part of the continent were brought together. As they moved about overseas it became apparent that they had a distinctive character of their own which was quite different to that of either the British or the other Dominions. 78 The Australian troops also earned an outstanding reputation for their discipline under fire and for their efficiency and resilience. 79 Australians thus came out of the ordeal with considerable confidence and with a highly developed national consciousness. 80

The experiences of the Australian troops overseas also served to confirm the prevalent self-images and identity of Australians who "...regarded themselves as British as well as Australian. In fact they were said to


79 Ibid., pp.20-23.

think of themselves as more truly British than the British people themselves who were thought 'too English'\textsuperscript{81}. For a few years in the late nineteenth century "bush nationalists" had in fact been inclined toward utopian isolationism\textsuperscript{82} and this remains a minor but continuing feature of Australian political thought, particularly on the extreme Left of the Australian Labor Party.\textsuperscript{83} However, for the overwhelming majority of Australians for several generations allegiance to Australia and to Britain were synonymous. Australians reacted positively to both their "Australian" and to their "British" identity\textsuperscript{84} and, moreover, there has been minimal conflict between the two as the emphasis has progressively shifted to the Australian identity. Thus Australians have never had to ask themselves who they are as their separate national identity evolved.\textsuperscript{85} And since, unlike Canada and South Africa, institutions and values derived from Britain are by definition as much "Australian" as they are "British" they have in general not been the objects of divisiveness

\textsuperscript{81}Richard Preston in Preston, \textit{op.cit.}, p.561.

\textsuperscript{82}This movement collapsed with the movement of European powers into the Pacific, the rise of Japan and as the implications of the change from sail to steam became clear. \textit{Ibid.}, p.10-11.

\textsuperscript{83}See T.Truman, \textit{Ideological Groups in the Australian Labor Party and Their Attitudes} (St.Lucia, Queensland, 1965), pp.92-115.


\textsuperscript{85}Davies and Encel, \textit{op.cit.}, p.3.
and ambivalence nor has their appropriateness or legitimacy been challenged on the basis of their origin. 86

Australian nationalism has thus become a pervasive force affecting virtually the entire population and matters relating to the national identity are among the few which can readily raise Australian passions. Patriotism and national symbols feature prominently in political rhetoric and their manipulation plays a very important part in the inter-party battle. 87

Hans Kohn suggests that "... everywhere nationalism differs in character according to the specific historic conditions and the peculiar social structure of each country." 88 A significant aspect of Australian nationalism is that it developed in isolation and that it was not fostered by conflict with another ethnic group. 89 Moreover its development was spontaneous. Few, if any, systematic attempts were made to encourage its growth. 90 This is, as A.F. Davies points out, in marked contrast to the attempts to create a national consciousness in Canada. 91

86 The very significant aspects of the manner in which the Australian national identity developed discussed here are related to the formulations of the political culture theorists in the concluding paragraphs of this chapter.

87 See H.S. Albinski, Politics and Foreign Policy in Australia (Durham, N.C., 1970), pp. 31-76.

88 Kohn, op. cit., p. 89.


90 Ibid., pp. 555-563.

91 Davies and Enzel, op. cit., p. 3.
nationalism is thus essentially a "social not a governmentally or state-oriented phenomenon". It relates to the Australian people themselves, to their "way of life", to the national territory and to little else. The character and temper of Australian nationalism is perhaps comparable to that of some of the new-old states of Europe - Norway or Finland for example. Australian nationalism does however have a very considerable impact on the political process. It greatly affects members' expectations of government, for example, and this question will be discussed further in the following chapter.

Australians' attitudes toward Australian ways, values and beliefs are a significant element of the national identity which constitutes both a major conservative force in Australian politics and, as Verba suggests, tends to facilitate the continuity and stability of the political culture. Thus, as in the United States, a great many values and beliefs are unquestioned assumptions. In Almond and

92 Albinski, Politics and Foreign Policy., op.cit., p.3.
93 Ibid., p.170.
95 See above pp.33-34.
97 For example, the egalitarian ethic, the collectivist orientation and attitudes to the Australian way of life.
Powell's terminology\textsuperscript{98} beliefs tend to be held expressively, are relatively "closed" and are often also implicit. Deviations from them readily elicit strong censure and tend to be perceived by Australians as criticism of Australia, that is as a kind of symbolic disloyalty. There are thus a great many "givens" in the Australian political process which, when they change, do so relatively slowly.\textsuperscript{99}

Many of the orientations of Australians discussed above are illustrated by the attitudes and beliefs concerning the "Australian way of life".\textsuperscript{100} It is significant that Australians tend to be very conscious and take pride in the basic facts of their history: That they have succeeded in taming a desolate continent and wresting from it a high standard of living; that this progress has been achieved wholly by their own labour and without any social group being exploited. Most Australians believe, furthermore, that the way of life which they have created is both

\textsuperscript{98}See Almond and Powell, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.59-61 and p.36.


\textsuperscript{100}To render a definitive account of such a nebulous concept is clearly an undertaking of appreciable difficulty and magnitude and it is not our concern to attempt one here. There is nonetheless an extremely extensive literature on the subject. See H.Wolfssohn, "The Ideology Makers" in Mayer, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.70-81; C.McGregor, \textit{Profile of Australia} (Harmondsworth, England, 1968), pp.15-28; Miller and Jinks, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.207-214 and the works cited there.
distinctive and exceptionally pleasant. In fact a pervasive theme in national life is that the Australian way of life is both unique and the best in the world.\textsuperscript{101} McGregor comments for example that "Australians are convinced of the uniqueness and superiority of their way of life over all others."\textsuperscript{102} Australians' rather euphoric view of their way of life is reflected in their responses to surveys of life and conditions in Australia. For example a recent study\textsuperscript{103} found that "job satisfaction" is high in Australia. Most respondents were content with their occupation and the minority who envisaged a change in occupation in the following five years had plans which were in general markedly realistic (i.e. achievable). Another survey\textsuperscript{104} indicated that "residential immobility is striking"\textsuperscript{105} in Australia. Very few respondents were proposing to make any change of residence in the foreseeable future. Oeser and Hammond's survey found that Australians were in the main optimistic, happy and satisfied with their lives.\textsuperscript{106} There is even some cross-national empirical evidence in this area. In a Gallup Poll

\textsuperscript{101} For example see F.W. Eggleston in Caiger, \textit{op.cit.}, p.16; Douglas Pike, \textit{Australia} (Cambridge, 1970), p.229; McGregor, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.15-16.

\textsuperscript{102} McGregor, \textit{op.cit.}, p.15.

\textsuperscript{103} Davies and Encel, \textit{op.cit.}, p.40.

\textsuperscript{104} \textit{Ibid.}, pp.39-40.

\textsuperscript{105} \textit{Ibid.}, p.39.

carried out for UNESCO in six Western countries Australians responded significantly more positively than those in any of the other countries to questions concerning "how happy" they were in life: 107

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Australian society is thus characterized by appreciable general attachment to an extremely broad category of elements which together make-up the "Australian way of life". There is, in short, a marked tendency for whatever is regarded as Australian to be perceived as "good". 108 Clearly this is an important element in the political culture and has far-reaching consequences for the political process. Some of these have already been canvassed 109 and others are

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107 Cited in McGregor, op. cit., p. 41.

108 In some respects these sentiments appear to be comparable to the strong and generalized attachment of Americans to things "American". See S.V. Monsma, American Politics (New York, 1969), pp. 41-42.

109 For example, the traditional concern to preserve the extent culture through immigration restrictions.
discussed below.

The Australian political culture is markedly assimilative in character and the orientations of Australians towards Australian ways, values and beliefs canvassed above represent an important factor contributing to assimilation. Despite the general homogeneity of the Australian population historically there have always been an appreciable number of aliens in the community. Furthermore, in at least three instances there has been an influx of immigrants which has been large enough to present a serious challenge to the Australian ethos. The first major challenge was the immigration boom associated with the goldrushes in the 1850's. The second major challenge was presented by the Irish and the post-war influx of the "New Australians" from Continental Europe represents the third major challenge to the Australian ethos.

The absorption of the tremendous influx of population between 1851 and 1861 was the first demonstration of the assimilative capacity of Australian society. During

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110 The aboriginal population represents a major exception. Official policy toward the aborigines is integration into Australian society, rather than assimilation, and the preservation of aboriginal culture wherever possible. The number of aborigines is estimated to be about 80,000 and the majority of them live under tribal conditions and relatively remote from the general population. Thus far "Aborigines have not been of political consequence in Australia, although their increasing numbers and growing awareness could make them a minor force in a decade". Miller and Jinks, op.cit., p.7. See also L.R.Hiatt, "Aborigines in the Australian Community" in Davies and Ensel, op.cit., pp.274-295.
the decade not only did the population of Australia triple
but the immigrants were extremely varied in their origin.
However, the newcomers adjusted very rapidly to Australian
ways and to an extraordinary degree (as has been noted above)
the continuity of the Australian ethos was maintained. 111

The long draw-out tension and conflict which centred
on the presence of the large number of Irish immigrants in
the Australian population was different in character and the
outcome far less decisive than the influx of 1851-1861.
Irish immigrants introduced to Australian society a number
of distinctive elements and notably their antipathy to
authority and more especially to the "British". 112 By the
First World War the Irish problem had, in general, become
rather minor in Australia. The strain of sectarian conflict
between Irish Catholics and Protestants had by that time
substantially abated and Australians of Irish origin, in
general, no longer identified themselves (or were disting-
guishable) as a separate group in the community. 113 Austr-
alian political culture still, however, contains some
significant residues of the Irish migrants. For example,
despite the fact that the occupational distribution of

111 See F. Lancaster Jones, "Ethnic Concentration and

112 Encel, op. cit., p.52.

113 Encel points out that the integration of the
Irish immigrants contrasted with the course of events in
many other places including the United States. See ibid,
pp.165-178.
Australians of Irish descent parallels that of the general population the traditional association between Catholism, Irish origin and the Australian Labor Party continues. Further, when Catholic Labor supporters switch party allegiance it is usually to the Democratic Labor Party rather than to one of the other two major parties. Both voting patterns, furthermore, have a very significant impact on elections and on the political process generally. The ultimate impact of the enormous number of post-war immigrants from Europe remains to be seen. However, they have to date had remarkably little effect on the Australian political process. Furthermore, such few studies of their assimilation which have been made so far suggest that they also may have relatively little long-term impact on the Australian ethos.

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114 The Democratic Labor Party is essentially a Catholic centre party.


116 In 1945 the Australian population totalled about seven million of which ninety-eight per cent had originated in the British Isles. By 1971 the population had risen to twelve and a half million. Two and a quarter million of this increase had come from immigration and of these sixty per cent were from Continental Europe. Major groups among the Continental immigrants are: Austrians 23,000; Dutch 100,000; Germans 140,000; Hungarians 31,000; Italians 270,000; Maltese 40,000; Polish 62,000; Ukrainians 14,000; Yugoslavs 72,000. See Millar, op.cit., Appendix B; Miller and Jinks, op.cit., p.23; Preston, op.cit., p.227.


It is appropriate in concluding this chapter to draw together the discussion (which has necessarily been somewhat discursive in nature) and to relate the development of the Australian national identity more closely to political culture theory as elaborated in Chapter I. The development of Australian society has been characterized by the "incorporative" solution to multiple identifications of citizens.\textsuperscript{119} Thus primary commitment to the nation has generally not wholly obliterated residues of traditional cultural elements or more parochial commitments since the various loyalties are not conceived as being in conflict.\textsuperscript{120} Many additional factors have, of course, contributed to the evolution of a secure and stable Australian national identity. For example, Australia has been fortunate in having unambiguous territorial boundaries. It has also in general lacked alienated groups or minorities of doubtful allegiance. The vast majority of the population has always been unmistakeably "Australian" and the political community and the nation were from the beginning virtually synonymous.\textsuperscript{121}

\textsuperscript{119}See above pp.8-9.

\textsuperscript{120}Almond and Verba suggest that it is this kind of solution to the problem of citizens' multiple identifications which is most likely to result in a political culture conducive to political stability and democracy. See G.A.Almond and S.Verba, \textit{The Civic Culture} (Princeton, N.J., 1963), Chapter 15.

\textsuperscript{121}According to political culture theorists each of these factors contributes toward the creation of a secure sense of national identity. See above pp.7-8.
creation of the Australian political community at Federation simply gave political expression to an existing national consciousness.

The continuity and manner of the development of the Australian national identity appear therefore to be related to Australians' contemporary orientations toward the political community which are almost universally strong, positive and unambiguous. 122 Orientations related to the Australian national identity tend to be heavily expressive and there are widely recognized, affect-loaded national symbols. For example the Monarchy is held in very high regard. Indeed in McGregor's view Australia "remains more Royalist and less critical of the Throne than Britain itself ..." 123 Australian orientations toward the political community thus appear to accord with political culture theory. 124

The Australian political culture is overall markedly homogeneous. A great number of political beliefs and orientations are widely shared throughout Australian society and the differences in orientation which are present are slight even in comparison to other Anglo-American democracies. In fact the more or less total absence of divisions which could reasonably be designated as political subcultures is

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122 This is also in conformity with political culture theory. See above pp.9-11.

123 McGregor, op.cit., p.55.

124 See above pp.9-10.
one of the most striking features of Australian political culture. For example, even regionalism has been of remarkable little political significance in Australia. In terms of political culture theory, therefore, the national identity problem appears to have been satisfactorily resolved. Time and energy are, as hypothesized, not diverted from important problems to the fundamental issues of unity and independence, citizens identify with the political community and their commitment and support for the political system or given objectives can be fairly readily mobilized. Many major elements of the Australian political culture may thus be related to the development of the national identity and among them are the generally adaptive and effective functioning of the political system.


\[126\] See above pp. 8-10.

\[127\] loc.cit.
CHAPTER III

AUSTRALIAN ORIENTATIONS TOWARD THE "REGIME"

This chapter is concerned with the orientations of members of the Australian political community toward the "regime"; that is Australian orientations toward the constitutional order, the norms and the basic form of the political system. The "regime" is to be distinguished from the "government" which refers to the incumbents of official positions and authorities who make binding decisions for the society.¹ Easton's distinction between "regime" and "government" is an analytical rather than an empirical distinction and, although the categories are very useful, their use can also result in some confusion since many elements of the popular notion of government fall into both analytic categories.

In practice the sense in which the term government is employed tends to be clear from the context in which it is used. However, to obviate any unnecessary ambiguity in this thesis when the term government is used in the narrower, strictly Eastonian sense it is enclosed in quotation marks (i.e. "the government") and when it is used in the broader sense it is not enclosed in quotation marks. This chapter is, of course, mainly concerned with the latter, popular usage of the term since it in fact encompasses many important elements of the "regime".

It was suggested in Chapter I that a major aspect

of a political culture is the degree to which there is general agreement on and support\(^2\) for the "regime".\(^3\) In the Australian case there are a considerable number of indications that there is, in general, an appreciable degree of consensus on and support for the "regime".\(^4\) It has already been noted that Australians have traditionally shown a high degree of consensus on basic political norms and values. There has also been a marked lack of controversy over the structures and processes of the political system.\(^5\) One of the few controversies concerning an important aspect of the regime relates to the Upper Houses in State parliaments which the Australian Labor Party is officially committed to abolishing. In practice, however, whenever Labor Parties have been in a position to do so their interest in abolition has invariably waned.\(^6\) It is noteworthy also that despite the considerable social stress associated with Australia's pattern of alternating periods of rapid economic expansion and serious depressions\(^7\) the basic features of the regime

\(^2\)Ibid., pp.32ff.

\(^3\)Pye and Verba, op.cit., pp.541-3; see above p.12.

\(^4\)Australian orientations in this respect apparently do not vary appreciably between differing levels of government. See Miller and Jinks, op.cit., pp.104-181 and 209-212.

\(^5\)Albinski, op.cit., p.164.

\(^6\)The only exception is Queensland where the Upper House was abolished in 1922. See Miller and Jinks, op.cit., pp.86-8.

\(^7\)For example the economic depressions of 1891-5 and 1929-33 were more severe in Australia than in almost any other Western country. See J.W.McCarty, "The Economic Foundations of Australian Politics" in Mayer, op.cit., pp.3-21.
have never been seriously challenged, political violence
has remained virtually absent and political stability has
in general been maintained. 8 Indeed a recent study concludes
that "Since World War II Australian politics, both at Federal
and State levels, has shown remarkable stability" 9 and that
the long-term trend is toward enhanced system stability. 10
Among other indications of a generally high level of support
for existing regime norms and structures is the fact that,
of the many disident and protest parties which have emerged,
only the Communist Parties challenge important elements of
the regime. Moreover, the total vote for all minor parties
in the 1963 Federal Election was only 0.01 per cent of the
votes cast. 11 Furthermore despite the fact that voting is
compulsory the percentage of spoiled ballots is no higher
than in other Anglo-American democracies where it is volun-
tary and over eighty per cent of Australian voters say that
they would vote even if it ceased to be compulsory. 12 Again,

8 See Albinski, op.cit., pp.101-4; Preston, op.cit.,
p.431.

9 C.A. Hughes et al., "The Decline of Inter-Party
Competition in Australia", Australian Quarterly, Vol.40
(September 1968), p.72.

10 Ibid., pp.68-72.

Elections were somewhat atypical on account of the Vietnam
involvement and the re-introduction of conscription. How-
ever, even when controversy was at its highest in the 1966
Election the total vote for all minor parties was only 1.04
per cent of votes cast and of those 1.03 per cent were cast
for candidates running specifically on the Vietnam issue.
Albinski, op.cit., p.205.

12 See Colin A. Hughes. "Electoral Behaviour" in
Mayer, op.cit., pp.164-76.
decisions of regime institutions are almost universally regarded as legitimate and binding.\textsuperscript{13} It is very unusual for authorities to have to resort to coercion even where decisions are extremely unpopular and run counter to long-standing traditions.\textsuperscript{14} It is noteworthy also that since 1904 over ninety per cent of employees and their employers have been prepared to accept the settlement of disputes over wages and conditions by the Arbitration Courts. It would seem reasonable, therefore, to conclude that in Australia there is an appreciable degree of consensus on and support for the constitutional order, political structures, processes and norms which together constitute the "regime". Australia thus appears to accord with the political culture theorists' view that diffuse support for the political system is likely to be associated with the development of a well-defined national identity.\textsuperscript{15}

The difficulty in achieving equivalence of meaning when comparing the orientations of members in differing political cultures has already been noted in Chapter I. Even where two political systems are markedly similar,

\textsuperscript{13} The Australian political culture may thus be contrasted with that of southern Italy where, it has been noted, there is widespread and persistent incivism. See above p.16.

\textsuperscript{14} Albiniski, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.31-44. This orientation is itself an important theoretical element in a political culture. See Pye and Verba, \textit{op.cit.}, p.540; pp.16-17 above.

\textsuperscript{15} See above p.10.
parallel institutions may differ greatly in their significance and meaning from one culture to the other.¹⁶ Australians' orientations towards regime institutions are a case in point. In contrast to the United Kingdom, governmental and political institutions are in general invested with relatively little mystique¹⁷ and symbolism and have low saliency in Australian culture. Indeed, a distinctive aspect of Australians' orientations is that they tend to lack interest in, and are unaware by, regime institutions which have nonetheless historically been accorded considerable support and legitimacy. There is in fact some parallel between Australian and French orientations to the political system in that in both cases although most citizens identify strongly with the political community, a comparable attachment to regime institutions is lacking.¹⁸

The distinctive character of Australians' orientations to governmental and political institutions is related to a number of other politico-cultural elements. Support

¹⁶See above pp.22-23.

¹⁷One of the few exceptions to this generalization is the Australian Labor Party which, unlike other Australian political parties, has bestowed on its organization a considerable mystique, attributing to the "movement" a life and goal of its own greater than that of any of its members. See J.R. Williams, "The Organization of the Australian National Party", Australian Quarterly, Vol.41 (June 1969), pp.41-51.

¹⁸However, the legitimacy of French regime institutions has frequently been challenged and significant sections of the community accord them little support. H.W. Ehrmann, Politics in France (Boston, 1968), pp.1-18 and 43-80; see above p.13.
for and legitimacy of Australian regime institutions are to a very considerable degree rooted in their relative effectiveness. They are also, as in Britain, rooted in the long tradition of successful evolutionary development. The institutions have:

...been built by Australians from the ground up, with the help of British tools and materials which could be adapted or discarded according to the special conditions of the country.... Australians are, on the whole, satisfied with their political and governmental system because it is Australian.

On the other hand, Australian traditions are both shallower and very much shorter than those of the United Kingdom. The Federal structure tends to contribute further to the low saliency and lacklustre quality of regime institutions in Australian culture. Government powers and responsibilities are divided between two main levels of government. The State government and its instrumentalities are highly visible in the day to day affairs of citizens while the national government has less visible impact and is spatially remote from the bulk of the population. Again, the "provincial" and artificial character of Canberra does not enhance the symbolic potential of the national capital or tend to focus attention there. Whereas the State capitals have been natural population centres for a century or more, Canberra remains a city inhabited mainly by bureaucrats in which

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20 Ibid., p.212.
even members of parliament and ministers spend a minimum of time.\textsuperscript{21} There are, furthermore, the countervailing traditions in Australia of hostility to government and authority and these are in turn associated with the egalitarian ethic and Australians' persistent cynicism concerning elites.\textsuperscript{22} Australians are, in fact, markedly ambivalent about government but antipathy tends, in the main, to find expression in their orientations towards politicians\textsuperscript{23} rather than in opposition to, or obstruction of, governmental activity.

The scope and the nature of members' expectations of government is a further major defining characteristic of political cultures.\textsuperscript{24} In the Australian case government has historically played a very extensive role in society and in this respect there are close parallels between Australian and Canadian development.\textsuperscript{25} From the beginning the harsh conditions in the Australian colonies necessitated government intervention and aid if settlement was to succeed. Long before Federation the colonial governments were involved in land settlement schemes, irrigation, transportation and communication. Although many Australians prospered greatly

\textsuperscript{21}See Encei, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.\textsuperscript{387-9}.

\textsuperscript{22}Lipset, "Value Differences...", \textit{op.cit.}, pp.\textsuperscript{478-493}.

\textsuperscript{23}This is the subject of much of Chapter IV.

\textsuperscript{24}See above p.14.

by entrepreneurial activity and wages in the nineteenth
century were very high compared to those in the British
Isles, laissez faire "was in any full-blooded sense a non-
starter in Australia". The tendency to widespread
government involvement arising out of geographic and climatic
factors was reinforced as the nineteenth century progressed
by social and political developments in Australia. The
Australian ethos, particularly the emphasis on mutual assis-
tance, solidarity and egalitarianism, was augmented by the
growth of radicalism so that by the beginning of the
twentieth century governments were already also heavily
involved in the provision of social welfare services.
One of the first acts of the Commonwealth Parliament in
1901 was to provide subsidies for the Queensland sugar-
growers, thus initiating what has become an extensive system
of price supports and subsidies for primary producers.
Secondary industry has from the 1870's onwards taken for
granted the heavy protection afforded to it by a complex
system of tariffs. Thus the prevailing political climate

26 A.F. Davies, *Australian Democracy* (Melbourne, 1958),
pp. 8-9.

27 See Miller and Jinks, *op.cit.*, pp. 35-7; Gollan,
*op.cit.*, pp. 153-87.


29 New South Wales was an exception to this. Overt
tariff protection was not instituted there until the power
to regulate foreign trade passed to the Commonwealth
has come to be one which assumes a very extensive governmental role in society.\textsuperscript{30}

Members' expectations concerning the kind of role which government should play in society are a related and important element of a political culture.\textsuperscript{31} Australian governments tend to be administrative rather than legislative in character. Their prime concern is, in general, the

\begin{itemize}
\item Acquisition and export of farm products
\item Air transport
\item Aircraft design and manufacture
\item Aluminium production
\item Bakeries
\item Banking
\item Brick and pipe making
\item Broadcasting
\item Clothing manufacture
\item Coal mining and briquette manufacture
\item Electricity generation and supply
\item Fisheries
\item Home building
\item Insurance
\item Manufacture of engineering equipment
\item Meat production and distribution
\item Oil refining
\item Port administration
\item Postal communication
\item Railways
\item Shipping and ship building
\item Telecommunications
\item Timber milling
\item Tourism
\item Urban transport
\item Whaling
\end{itemize}

However the contrast between Australia and other Western countries in this respect has, of course, become far less marked in recent years. See Encel, op.cit., pp.58-9 and 64.

\textsuperscript{30}One indication of the extent of governmental activity in Australia is the range of enterprises established by State and Commonwealth governments, mainly in the form of public corporations. These have included the following:

\textsuperscript{31}See above p.14.
effective administration of existing laws, particularly the "settled policies", \(^{32}\) rather than enacting novel legislation:

In a great many ways, government in Australia is like any other Australian enterprise. The elements of efficiency, practicality, impatience with abstract theory, and determination to get things done are to be found in every sphere.\(^{33}\)

However, governments in Australia are expected to play a very active role in society. In fact, administration of the settled policies necessitates continuous and very considerable governmental activity and intervention in a great many areas.\(^{34}\) The Australian notion of "national development", for example, places central responsibility on government to ensure the rapid general development of the country's resources to strengthen it as a national unit.\(^{35}\) "All Australians want their country developed quickly by means of roads, water conservation, power supplies, and other additions to its economic base and government is

\(^{32}\)These include organized marketing of primary products, social services, "national development", restriction of coloured immigration, protection for secondary industries, full-employment and compulsory arbitration of industrial disputes. They are "settled" policies in the sense that there is tacit agreement between the parties on them and the main areas of legislation have been covered. Where the parties differ on these policies, it is, in the main, on the way existing legislation is administered, altered or extended; that is on question of emphasis, pace and detail. See J.W. McCarty in Mayer, op.cit., pp.18-21.

\(^{33}\)Miller and Jinks, op.cit., p.162.

\(^{34}\)See McGregor, op.cit., pp.332-5.

\(^{35}\)Mayer, op.cit., p.19.
the principal agency for carrying this out." 36 Again, Australian political culture is characterized by a strong emphasis on collectivism and on interest group activity. 37

Almost all Australians belong to one or more groups 38 which seek to advance members' interests and to protect and improve their conditions and standard of living. The groups generally expect government to take positive action to effect any necessary changes and in doing so reflect Australians' "limitless confidence in the power of government to make their interests secure." 39 In fact in contemporary Australia few indeed are the occupational, business or social groups that are not closely involved with and/or dependent on government or governmental activity and enterprise. 40

The expectations which differing groups entertain in relation to government are inevitably extremely diverse. Manufacturers, whether they are immense corporations or

36 Miller and Jinks, op.cit., p.208.

37 Significantly, since its inception in 1904 the compulsory arbitration system has pre-supposed that both employees and employers are collectively organized.

38 Such groups are very numerous. Although most of them are based on a common economic interest, there are many that have non-economic objectives or a diversity of objectives and functions. See W.A. Townley, "Australian Pressure Groups" in H.W. Ehrmann (ed.), Interest Groups on Four Continents (Pittsburg, 1960), pp.9-32; Trevor Matthews, "Pressure Groups in Australia" in Mayer, op.cit., pp.181-220.

39 Miller and Jinks, op.cit., p.209.

small firms having a monopoly in the manufacture of a specialized product, expect that the Tariff Board will continue to adjust tariffs to maintain the very considerable degree of security which they have enjoyed for so long.\textsuperscript{41} The rural population expects that the main burden of maintaining and developing rural roads, railways, postal and telephone services, electrification, hospitals and medical services and education will continue to be borne by the State and Federal governments and that the amount paid by them for such services will bear little relation to their immense cost. Again, when primary producers are affected by either falling world commodity prices or natural disasters such as drought or swarming locusts they unhesitatingly look to government for both immediate practical relief and financial recompense. War veterans and their dependents have since the First World War enjoyed a remarkably elaborate system of welfare and other provisions which is perhaps unequalled elsewhere.\textsuperscript{42} Finally, almost the entire Australian population, with the exception of sections of the business community, expects the government to maintain "full-employment" conceived in terms of British rather than American standards so that an unemployment rate in excess of 1 - 1.5 per cent is widely regarded as unsatisfactory and requiring


\textsuperscript{42}These include, for example, housing and land-settlement schemes and preference in employment. Encel, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 431.
urgent remedial action. All the political parties have therefore been committed since World War II to a policy of maintaining full employment as a first priority. Thus, when the number of unemployed rose to three per cent in 1961 the Liberal-Country Party Government's majority in the House of Representatives was abruptly reduced from thirty-two to two in that year's election. Australians' expectations of government are, in short, numerous and extremely diverse. Furthermore, the already very extensive involvement of State and Federal governments in Australian society is tending to become progressively larger and more complex as expectations of them continue to increase. "While the political parties may differ marginally about the financing and distribution of social services, they are now all committed to a wider scope and range for them ....No end can be seen to the demand of Australians for more social

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43 F.H. Gruen in Preston, op. cit., p. 69.


45 The registered number of unemployed has averaged one per cent since 1945.

46 The 1961 election was concerned almost exclusively with domestic issues with unemployment the main issue. Most authors interpret the election result as suggested here. J.W. McCarty comments for example: "...the policy of full employment has been accepted by both the Labor and Liberal parties since 1945: they have little choice, for the 1961 Federal election, in which the Liberal government was almost defeated owing to a temporary increase in unemployment, showed that the electorate now demands the maintenance of full employment." Mayer, op. cit., pp. 19-20; Albinski, op. cit., pp. 26-28.
provision." Sir Robert Menzies has aptly summed-up the orientations of Australians to government as follows:

The sturdy individualists in the country who resent any political interference apply for it every week. The manufacturers who [are] ... such sturdy believers in private enterprise and think the Government ought to keep out of it are with us every week or with the Tariff Board every week or with something or other every week. There is hardly a section in the community today that doesn't in one breath protest its undying hostility to Government activity and in the next breath, pray for it.

It was noted in Chapter I that an important defining characteristic of a political culture is the relative saliency of politics in the society. A distinctive feature of Australian political institutions is the fact that a great deal of "politics" has effectively been removed from areas of public controversy by the institutionalization of conflict which is so characteristic of Australian society. A.F. Davies has noted the marked depreciation of politics vis-a-vis administration in Australia. Hence a large number of quasi-judicial boards and commissions have been established with statutory power to resolve the kinds of jurisdictional, organizational and employment issues which are fought out in open conflict by the interested parties in other countries.

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47 Miller and Jinks, op.cit., p.115.
48 From the Prime Minister's address to the National Press Luncheon Club on 14th September 1964 in Mayer, op.cit., pp.367-377.
50 A.F. Davies, Australian Democracy, op.cit., pp.3 and 153.
For example federal subsidies to competing State governments are determined by the Commonwealth Grant Commission, federal grants to the various universities are allocated by the Universities Commission and electoral boundaries are fixed by statutory commissions.\(^{51}\)

Instead of collective bargaining, public debate, or direct action, the characteristic style of decision-making, firmly established in Australia since the turn of the twentieth century, rests on a broad public willingness to delegate the power to decide to rule-making bodies of an administrative or quasi-judicial character. Some of these... provide a legal-administrative framework for adjudicating and enforcing the demands of organized interest groups... A prime example is the Tariff Board, sustained by the ideology of government protective action, established by law in 1921 and operating in a semi-judicial manner, which exercises a determining influence on the structure of Australian industry. Another area where this legal-bureaucratic system operates, with profound consequences for the whole pattern of social relations in Australia, is that of industrial arbitration, where the processes of collective bargaining and employer-employee confrontation over the distribution of rewards are replaced by a legal-bureaucratic hierarchy of tribunals.\(^{52}\)

To a considerable extent Australian legislatures, and especially the Commonwealth Parliament, aid and abet governments in minimizing the degree of public political conflict both by their acquiescence in the limitation of real debate\(^{53}\) and by their continuing readiness to create

\(^{51}\)See Kurt Mayer in Mayer, *op.cit.* , p.39.

\(^{52}\)Encel, *op.cit.* , p.59.

\(^{53}\)McGregor comments, for example, about the proceedings of the Commonwealth Parliament that "The overall impression is one... of sham conflict". McGregor, *op.cit.*, p.223.
further such quasi-judicial bodies and to refer difficult issues to them for resolution.\textsuperscript{54} There are occasional protests about the cavalier manner in which so many vital issues are dealt with by Parliament and about the domination of it by executive Ministers of State.\textsuperscript{55} However, in practice "the party oligarchies find a wide area of agreement in suppressing politics."\textsuperscript{56} Similarly, the recent modification

\textsuperscript{54}Whereas Britain relies heavily on "government by committee", Australia relies even more heavily on recommendation by royal commission. In the eighty years up to 1939 an average of six or seven royal commissions were in session in Australia in any one year. The rate has slowed down somewhat since then but royal commissions remain a major feature of Australian political life. Encel, \emph{op.cit.}, p.60.

\textsuperscript{55}For example H.B. Turner (Liberal Member for Bradfield, New South Wales) asserted inter alia that: "I find, when speaking with people...throughout the country, that there is a great concern about the future...There is a sense of disquiet and veiled unease. Great matters are, they find, too seldom identified by out political leaders and still less often debated...in this Parliament, or at all in the public forum...Let us look at one or two examples of the way in which government is conducted in this country at the present time...This is government by subterfuge, by pulling th wool over our eyes,...by never really debating the issues here, and by never giving the public an opportunity to be educated on the great issues that face us as a nation confronted with great problems of survival...the fault is our own. In this Parliament, seldom is an amendment accepted in the committee stage of the passage of a bill. The first reading stage has, for a long time. been simply a formality. The second reading stage is conducted with reasonable propriety. The committee stage also has become a farce. The third reading stage is formality." Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, (House of Representatives), Vol.48, 1st September 1965, pp.692-693.

of the redistribution procedure for the House of Represent-
atives electoral boundaries to allow publication of arguments
submitted by interested parties to the Commissioners and
providing opportunities for comment to the Commissioners
on the submissions has had little effect on the behaviour of
the interested parties. Aitkin and Hughes' study of the
1968 redistribution showed that relatively few of those
concerned, political parties, party branches, sitting
parliamentarians, interest groups, local authorities or
electors, chose to participate in the redistribution
procedure.\textsuperscript{57} There is, then, a tendency in Australian pol-
itical culture for open political conflict to be eschewed
and a long-standing practice of institutionalizing quasi-
judicial procedures as a means of resolving conflicting
interests.

The tendency to minimize political conflict and to
prevent authoritative decisions from being determined
primarily by the relative political strength of interested
parties is a reflection of a number of other important
orientations, attitudes and values in Australian culture.
In marked contrast to the United States,\textsuperscript{58} there is a rela-
tive disinclination in Australia to accept conflict as the

\textsuperscript{57}D. Aitkin and C. A. Hughes, "The Federal Redistrib-
ution of 1968: A Case Study in Australian Political Conflict", 
Journal of Commonwealth Political Studies, Vol. 8, (March

\textsuperscript{58} Lipset, Revolution, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 50.
"normal" method of resolving disputes. Moreover, the particular character of Australian egalitarianism, and especially the emphasis on protecting and promoting the interests of the "underdog", has meant that Australians have traditionally been unwilling to allow bargaining strength to be the arbiter in disputes. Australians have tended to prefer the pursuit of reasonable standards for all to the possibility of considerable affluence for those who happen to have a strong bargaining position, are favoured by market conditions or are otherwise advantaged. The pursuit of group interests in Australia is also contained and moderated by a system of assumptions which are markedly

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59 The notion of the "underdog" has played an important part historically in Australian thinking. "The national hero is not the success merchant, ... but the 'battler' who's tried hard all his life and never made the grade, the swagman who went 'Waltzing Matilda' across the dry countryside looking for work ... and drowned in a billabong. Australians have fashioned their most potent national myths out of Ned Kelly, son of a poor Irish family who had the dice loaded against him from the start and died on the gallows ... the Australian's instinctive sympathy with the underdog remains a potent sentiment today. McGregor, op.cit., p.43; For an illustration of the persistence of the theme of the "underdog" in contemporary popular literature see John O'Grady, Aussie English: An Explanation of the Australian Idiom (Sydney, 1968), pp.14-15 and passim.

60 There is some parallel between Australian orientations in this respect and the notion of "fair play" which Gillin identifies as one of the dominant values in American culture. See Gillin, op.cit., p.109.


62 See the discussion of the nature of Australian egalitarianism on pp.48-52 and 54 above.
nationalistic in character and in particular by the influential notion of the common good. "It is not the common good of mankind, but the common good of Australians that they try to secure..." The emphasis on the principle of fair and reasonable conditions for all, irrespective of individuals' bargaining position, is also a reflection of other major elements of the national ethos, especially those of mutual aid, solidarity and mateship. Thus when in 1907 Mr. Justice Higgins established the principle of a basic wage sufficient to cover "the normal needs of an average employee" having a family of about five and went on to comment in the Judgement that "Unless great multitudes of people are to be irretrievably injured, unless society is to be kept perpetually in industrial unrest, it is necessary to keep this living wage ... beyond the reach of bargaining" he was giving expression to many of the fundamental assumptions of Australian society. The compulsory arbitration system has grown steadily since that Judgement to become a key instrument by which the demands of an egalitarian social philosophy are enforced by

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63 Miller and Jinks, op.cit., pp.210-11.
64 Spate, op.cit., p.71.
65 Then President of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration.
66 Cited in Preston, op.cit., p.166.
67 Ibid., p.167.
68 See Encel, op.cit., p.50.
a network of authoritative, legal-rational controls. 69

Australians' inclination to opt for rule-making and adjudication, rather than for open political bargaining, is probably a reflection also of their marked lack of regard for politicians. 70 There has thus been a tendency to prefer that issues, whether of group or national interest, be decided by non-political, relatively independent and disinterested bodies. The high degree of institutionalization of political conflict in Australia is undoubtedly also related to Australians' rather negative conception of politics. In the United States politics tends to be thought of as a game 71 and it is a pervasive feature of American life 72 while the British orientation is that politics is, in general, both a necessary and a fundamentally worthwhile activity. 73 Australians, on the other hand, tend to emphasize the capacity of political activity to generate conflict (rather than to resolve it) and to assert that political activity is in general both unnecessary and unproductive. 74 Such qualitative aspects of citizens'

69 Ibid., p. 60.
70 This question is discussed at some length in Chapter IV.
orientations are, as was noted in Chapter I, an important pole of differentiation among political cultures.

The relative de-emphasis of political conflict and bargaining in Australia is in large part a reflection of the character of the society, as is the efficacy of the extensive quasi-judicial system which has developed as a result of the tendency. The comparative social and political homogeneity of the Australian society and the absence of serious religious, ethnic, regional and economic conflicts in the community makes it fairly easy to enunciate general rules and to enforce them through the quasi-judicial system. Further, the working of the system is facilitated by its

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75 See above p.13.
77 Australia is for example more cohesive and homogeneous than the United Kingdom since it lacks the class and other divisions which split the community in Britain. See Preston, op.cit., p.563.
78 See L. Mayer, "Federalism and Party Behavior in Australia and Canada", Western Political Quarterly, Vol.23 (December 1970), pp.795-807. Regionalism is of course also considerably less marked than in Britain. The standard and style of living is virtually uniform throughout the continent and even accent does not vary regionally. Moreover, although the States were deliberately made strong in the Commonwealth constitution provincialism did not gain ground except where it was expressed by State political machines in State capitals. Regional economic conflict has never seriously affected Australian politics and State governments, apart from their administrative functions, are tending to be of diminishing significance as the long-term trend towards a unitary state continues. See Encel, op.cit., pp.287-9; Preston, op.cit., pp.563-65.
openness to feedback. Indeed disputes about the allocation of values, both material and non-material, are so readily directed into the system that public controversy on such issues is effectively dampened and the need for interest groups to present their case publicly is correspondingly reduced.\textsuperscript{79} Also, the overwhelming majority of Australians are markedly pragmatic\textsuperscript{80} in outlook. Non-economic conflicts are relatively few and unimportant. Hence the area of conflict tends to be relatively limited and the basis for compromise to be assured.\textsuperscript{81}

The fact that this extensive quasi-judicial system is, in general, both workable and acceptable is in part a reflection of the lack of interest in politics in Australia. There are a number of indications of Australians' remarkable lack of interest in politics which may be cited. Wilson and Western concluded from interviewing a sample of 456 urban Australians that "Australians do not participate with any degree of vigour in almost any form of political

\textsuperscript{79}Encel, op.cit., p.60.

\textsuperscript{80}The French socialist Mélin was an early commentator on the aversion of both workers and employers for theory and their marked concentration on practicalities and specifics. Mélin suggested, further, that one should not be misled by the class-conscious postures struck by the Labor parties which "In appearance ... are what we would call a class party, carrying on a struggle against the bourgeoisie. In reality, they include employers and salaried workers and are concerned simply with obtaining good working conditions in the world as it is." Albert Mélin, Le Socialisme sans doctrines (Paris, 1901). Cited in Encel, op.cit., p.201. See also Alibinski, op.cit., pp.4-5.

\textsuperscript{81}Parker, op.cit., pp.92-6.
behaviour."\(^{82}\) Hughes found from his study of political party workers in Brisbane that barely one per cent of the electors participated in any way in the 1963 election campaign there and he estimated the comparable figure in the United States to be five per cent.\(^{83}\) These findings contrast strongly with Van Loon's study of participation in the 1965 Federal election in Canada in which it was found that 20-25 per cent of the population took some active role in the campaign.\(^{84}\) Again, Aitkin and Hughes' finding that few of the groups affected by the 1968 redistribution of House of Representatives electoral boundaries choose to present briefs to the Commissioners, when given the opportunity,\(^{85}\) suggests the same conclusion. Among other indications of Australians' general lack of interest in politics is the fact that only three per cent of the population listen regularly to the Australian Broadcasting Commission's broadcasts of federal parliamentary debates.\(^{86}\) Again, a


\(^{85}\) Federal legislation enacted in 1968 provided for the first time for groups affected by the redistribution to participate in the procedure. Aitkin and Hughes, \textit{op.cit.}, pp. 18-39.

1961 study undertaken at the University of New England, in New South Wales, disclosed that only about one per cent of the second and third year students were members of any political club.\textsuperscript{87}

An interest in politics is in fact somewhat "unnatural" in Australian culture.\textsuperscript{88} For Australians politics does not have any of the attributes of the spectator sport as Mitchell suggests is the case in American political culture\textsuperscript{89} and Van Loon suggests in the case in Canada.\textsuperscript{90} Indeed, the trend, noted in Chapter I,\textsuperscript{91} for societies in which basic needs of members have been provided for to move towards a measure of "privatization" of life is apparently the case in Australia.\textsuperscript{92} Politics tends, in short, to be a distinctly unusual interest in Australia and few beyond the vocationally involved are much interested most of the time.\textsuperscript{93}

The political quiescence which prevails for much of the time in contemporary Australia is a reflection in

\textsuperscript{87}Cited in \textit{ibid.}, p.153.

\textsuperscript{88}For a speculative discussion of some of the factors underlying Australians' aversion to politics and political life see John Power, "Family and Polity: A Socio-Cultural View of Australian Federalism" in Mayer, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.109-116.

\textsuperscript{89}Mitchell, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.116-18.

\textsuperscript{90}Van Loon, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.396-399.

\textsuperscript{91}See above pp.15-16.


\textsuperscript{93}Davies, \textit{Australian Democracy}, \textit{op.cit.}, p.151.
part of the general lack of serious differences between the
principal political parties, notwithstanding some convention-
al political rhetoric to the contrary. 94 As Albinski com-
ments "Australia is a well aggregated and consensualized
society, and one whose party system has generally reflected
these qualities." 95

Another factor which contributes to the general
political quiescence is the tendency to regard the prime
role of government in society as administrative in character. 96
Australians have a marked tendency to look upon government
as a "service" industry, like any other, 97 or as F.W. Eggleston
has put it "as a vast public utility, whose duty it is to
provide the greatest happiness for the greatest number." 98
For example, one of the major themes which emerged from
Mayer et al's 99 study of the content of "letters to the
editor" was the prevalence of "managerial" thinking. Mayer
et al concluded that Australians tend to regard the

94Albinski, op.cit., p.164.
95Loc.cit.
96This tendency is of course complemented by the
existence of the major "settled policies", discussed above,
on which party differences are in the main on questions of
detail, emphasis and pace.
97See G.M. Bryant, "The Work of the Federal Member"
in Mayer, op.cit., pp.407-422; Miller and Jinks, op.cit.,
p.103; Encel, op.cit., p.214.
98Cited in Encel, op.cit., p.58.
99Henry Mayer et al, "Images of Politics" in Mayer,
government as being responsible for the management of a very large concern with the Prime Minister as its chief executive.\textsuperscript{100} So long as the service is reasonably satisfactory Australians prefer in general to leave the "government and politicians to carry on the business ... in their own way."\textsuperscript{101} Indeed, Mayer \textit{et al.'s} study indicated that the common view is that politicians are paid, and paid well, to do just that.\textsuperscript{102} If they fall down on the job they can be voted out.\textsuperscript{103}

It was noted in Chapter I that the particular character of popular political participation in a political system is inextricably bound-up with the general culture and the place of politics and political activity in it.\textsuperscript{104} Hence many of the elements canvassed above are closely related to the pattern of popular political participation in the Australian political culture which can be characterized as generally relatively slight and very instrumental.\textsuperscript{105}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{100} \textit{Ibid.}, p.429. \\
\textsuperscript{101} Albinski, \textit{op.cit.}, p.4. \\
\textsuperscript{102} Mayer, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.425-31. \\
\textsuperscript{103} See Power in \textit{ibid.}, pp.114-116. \\
\textsuperscript{104} See above p.26. \\
\textsuperscript{105} Australia conforms to the pattern hypothesized in Chapter I that where the instrumental polarity is stressed attention tends to be focused on pay-offs. Relatively few Australians look to political activity for social and emotional satisfactions and there is thus a sharp contrast between the Australian and American political cultures in this respect. See above pp.32-33; S.R.Brown and J.D.Ellithorpe, "Emotional Experiences in Political Groups: The Case of the McCarthy Phenomenon", \textit{American Political Science} ...
\end{flushright}
and pragmatic in orientation. In Australia, as in the United Kingdom, the "participant" orientation\textsuperscript{106} tends to be less emphasized, and the "subject" orientation\textsuperscript{107} more emphasized, than in the United States. The level of popular participation in Australia has not, however, historically been uniformly low. In fact there was widespread interest and participation during the period 1880-1920 and the depression years of 1929-34, while re-introduction of conscription and involvement in the Vietnam War resulted in a more limited quickening in activism and interest in the latter half of the 1960's. An interesting fact about the people who involved themselves in movements protesting conscription and the Vietnam involvement is that (although they were in total a very small minority of the population) the vast majority of them had no history of previous political involvement and no formal party connections. Moreover, socially and politically the protesters were a remarkably broad and varied cross-section of the Australian population.\textsuperscript{108} There are thus indications of the persistence of a widespread belief in the possibility of participation which, according to Almond and Verba, is more important than the actual

\textsuperscript{105} cont.\textit{Review}, Vol.64 (June 1970), pp.349-366; Mitchell, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.116-118.

\textsuperscript{106} See above pp.28-29; Almond and Verba, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.15-19.

\textsuperscript{107} \textit{Loc.cit.}

\textsuperscript{108} Albinski, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.101-121.
quality and quantity of popular participation\textsuperscript{109} and is likely to be associated with the persistence of a stable democratic political system.\textsuperscript{110}

This discussion of Australian orientations to popular political participation will close by making brief reference to voting and interest group activity since it is there that the citizen generally has most regular, important and influential contact with regime institutions.\textsuperscript{111} The extensiveness of interest group activity in regime institutions has been canvassed above and it will suffice to say here that most members of the political system have at least one such group which is in contact on a continuing basis with whichever regime institutions are relevant to its interests and concerns. Aside from participation through these collectivistic secondary associations, the major role of the citizen in the political process tends, in general, to be confined to voting in highly structured electoral situations.

\textsuperscript{109}Since any shortfall between behaviour and such beliefs is viewed as functional for the political system. Almond and Verba, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.480-1.

\textsuperscript{110}See above pp.30-31; Almond and Verba, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.230-1 and passim.

\textsuperscript{111}There is no data available on the Australian's sense of civic duty. In the Almond and Powell five-nation survey this dimension was explored by asking respondents if they believed that the ordinary citizen should participate actively in the politics of his local community. Although there is no way of knowing how Australians would respond to this question it would seem reasonable to infer that, if a parallel survey were conducted in Australia, Australians would be recorded as markedly lacking in a sense of civic duty. See above pp.24-25.
This role in the political process is apparently very widely accepted. In any event, there is little or no pressure for more direct or increased participation in government.
CHAPTER IV

ORIENTATIONS TOWARD THE "GOVERNMENT"

The subject of this chapter is the orientations of Australians toward the incumbents of official positions and authorities who make binding decisions for the society. That is Australians' attitudes, expectations and beliefs concerning the "government" in Easton's usage of that term.¹

This account of Australians' orientations toward the "government" will of necessity be more of less confined to a discussion of Australians' orientations toward their politicians. This is unavoidable since the information available on the orientations of Australians toward the other major groups who make binding decisions for the society is in general both very meagre and substantially irrelevant to the Australian political culture. However, before proceeding to a discussion of orientations to politicians it would be useful to make some general comments about Australians' orientations to these other groups of authoritative decision-makers. The major quasi-judicial bodies which are so important in Australia are overwhelmingly made up of members of the judiciary, the legal profession and Commonwealth and State government officials.²


²For example, of the fifty-three judges who sat on the Commonwealth Arbitration Court between 1905 and 1961 twenty-one came from the bench, eleven from the bar and fourteen had been Commonwealth or State government officials. Enel, op.cit., pp.76-77.
legal profession in Australia has yet to be the subject of scholarly investigation. It is worth noting however that, in Miller and Jinks' view, "the legal profession enjoys high social status and considerable public esteem; it has achieved this position by a consistently high standard of conduct." Encore comments "It is clear that the universal prestige of the law ... is as strong in Australia as elsewhere..." Australians' attitudes toward the civil servants, so far as they are documented, appear to be somewhat less straightforward and positive than attitudes to the legal profession. It has been noted above that Australians have shown a marked tendency to resort to bureaucratic structures to deal with all manner of problems. Among the consequences of this tendency is the considerable scale of bureaucracy in Australia and the proliferation of quasi-judicial bureaucratic structures. Popular attitudes toward the public services are probably broadly similar to those in other Western countries. The general

3 Ibid., p.74.
4 Miller and Jinks, op.cit., p.167.
5 Encel, op.cit., p.74. It will be clear from the subsequent discussion that there is a striking contrast between Australians' orientations to the judiciary and the legal profession and their orientations toward politicians.
7 Prime examples of which are, as has been noted above, the boards and commissions which control marketing of primary products and the Tariff Board.
tone of press and public comment leaves the impression that Australians are mildly hostile to\(^8\) and have an unfavourable image of public bureaucrats.\(^9\) Overall, however, the prevailing attitude to bureaucrats, in Encel's view, is one of ambiguity rather than one of overwhelming antipathy.\(^10\)

The prestige and status accorded to politicians is an important component of a political culture\(^11\) and it is significant that for at least one hundred years attitudes of hostility and disdain for politicians has been widespread in Australian society. A.F.Davies\(^12\) remarks on the "traditional low valuation of the M.P.'s role" and P.H.Partridge that "somewhat contemptuous or patronizing attitudes towards politics and politicians ... are pervasive and, until recently at least, have affected even writers, scholars and thinkers."\(^13\) Mayer's analysis of letters to the press

\(^8\) See Encel, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.73-4.

\(^9\) A study conducted on a group of three hundred and fifty first year students at the University of Sydney suggested the existence of a double image of government employees consisting of "an undifferentiated mass of routine desk-workers whose functions are ill-understood and part of an impersonal machine" directed by "its powerful masters, whoever they may be." See R.N.Spann, \textit{"The Commonwealth Bureaucracy"} in Mayer, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.435-72.

\(^10\) Encel, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.73-78.


\(^12\) A.F.Davies, \textit{Australian Democracy} (Melbourne, 1958), p.151.

also strongly corroborates this conclusion. In March 1959 the Richardson Committee's recommendation of substantial increases in the remuneration of members of the Commonwealth Parliament was made public and immediately became a matter of great controversy. Mayer analysed the subsequent flood of "letters to the editor" to determine what stable attitudes to political matters they revealed. Only 1.5 per cent of correspondents favoured the proposed increases and Mayer comments that:

Most of the writers seemed to value politicians for what can be called a "negative reference group" - that is, while wishing on the one hand to make comparisons between themselves and politicians as to pay, pensions, activities etc., they also wanted to make it clear that they did not wish to emulate politicians, but wished to stress the differences between "them" and "us". This was probably the reason why few of them made direct comparisons between their own pay and that of politicians. The comparisons in respect to pay were made most frequently through a third group - the various types of pensioners .... both were widely conceived of as "unproductive". The pensioners were usually viewed as a group which had once been productive and should be rewarded for it ... while the politicians had never been productive.\(^\text{14}\)

It is noteworthy that Davies' study\(^\text{15}\) of five contrasting types of political activists detected similar attitudes towards politicians even among people who are themselves deeply involved in politics. For example, a Liberal

\(^{14}\text{See Henry Mayer et al, "Images of Politics" in Mayer, op.cit., pp.423-31.}\)
\(^{15}\text{A.F.Davies, Private Politics (Melbourne, 1966).}\)
activist's conversation was punctuated with a "remorseless depreciation of professional politicians" (especially those of his own party) who were described, inter alia, as inept, timid, smug, overbearing, lazy and as drunkards and social climbers\textsuperscript{16} while a Democratic Labor Party parliamentary candidate disliked and distrusted all politicians, including the Democratic Labor Party leadership.\textsuperscript{17}

The traditional antipathy between public and politicians is reflected also by the Press which maintains a constant stream of attacks on politicians and political parties while its parliamentary reporting tends to be almost wholly limited to "freakish" aspects of parliamentary proceedings.\textsuperscript{18} Politicians, for their part, make frequent complaints about their treatment by the Press. For example, a member of the House of Representatives charged the Press with "trying to bring members of Parliament into the contempt of the people" and the Premier of New South Wales has commented that "In no other country in the world are papers so vitriolic against Cabinet Ministers and the Government as they are here."\textsuperscript{19} Australian orientations towards politicians are, therefore, characterized to a very considerable degree by hostility and disdain.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{16}Ibid., pp.224-50.
\item \textsuperscript{17}Ibid., p.45.
\item \textsuperscript{18}H. Mayer, The Press in Australia (Melbourne, 1964), pp.181 and 186.
\item \textsuperscript{19}Cited in ibid., p.181.
\end{itemize}
The denigration of politicians in Australia is related to a number of basic elements in the national ethos and in particular to the egalitarian ethic and the associated tradition of cynicism and antipathy towards individuals or groups who seek a special and particularly an elite status in society.\textsuperscript{20} It was noted in Chapter II that militant egalitarianism has often involved, \textit{inter alia}, "abusing privileged or would be privileged persons"\textsuperscript{21} and that Australians are inclined to assert the egalitarian ethic somewhat aggressively in the social sphere.\textsuperscript{22} Lipset comments for example that Australians have an "instinctive desire to 'cut down the tall poppies'."\textsuperscript{23} The verbal attacks on politicians are to a considerable degree an expression of this tradition (but it should be noted that they also involve a ritualistic element). Albinski comments that Australian political meetings are "not generally reputed to be soporific ... The barbed, hostile question is expected, and so is the cutting riposte."\textsuperscript{24} During electoral meetings in 1966 and 1967, Prime Minister Holt was "confronted with placards and jeered mercilessly, sometimes to the point where he could not be heard over the uproar. Cries of 'murderer',

\textsuperscript{20}Encel, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.210-222.
\textsuperscript{21}See above pp.54-55.
\textsuperscript{22}See above pp.51-52.
\textsuperscript{23}Lipset, "Value Differences...", \textit{op.cit.}, p.492.
\textsuperscript{24}Albinski, \textit{op.cit.}, p.60.
'fascist' and 'only political prostitutes go all the way'\textsuperscript{25} were common...\textsuperscript{26}

Hostility to politicians based on egalitarian sentiments and Australians' dislike of those who seek an elite status in society tends to be reinforced by a number of other factors. The politician's role runs counter to other important elements in the national ethos and especially the traditional emphasis on mateship and solidarity. A recurrent theme in the seven hundred and eleven "letters to the editor" analysed by Mayer et al\textsuperscript{27} was the marked distinction between "them" and "us". M.P.'s were frequently portrayed as arrogant, greedy and a "race apart" who had betrayed the electorate's trust.\textsuperscript{28} Again, when politicians are in office they inevitably become the focus of Australians' traditional resentment of governmental authorities and officials.\textsuperscript{29} Further, since the pioneering days of the colonies Australians have placed a high value on practical ingenuity and utilitarian activities.\textsuperscript{30} Hence involvement

\textsuperscript{25}This is an allusion to Holt's oft-quoted remark that he would go "All the way with LBJ" on Vietnam.

\textsuperscript{26}Albiński, \textit{op.cit.}, p.60.

\textsuperscript{27}See Mayer et al, "Images of Politics" in Mayer, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.423-434.

\textsuperscript{28}Loc.cit.


in any useful occupation per se is valued, there is a particular emphasis on technical skill. Engineers, doctors and veterinarians have historically enjoyed considerable prestige whereas Australians have generally been indifferent to non-specialized education at tertiary level. Politicians are widely believed, by contrast, to be of low ability, ill-qualified and lazy while at the same time enjoying considerable privileges and very adequate remuneration. They have nonetheless "little social status or prestige". There is in fact considerable ambiguity about their place in society in relation to other occupations and activities.

Politicians tend to have a number of other characteristics which run counter to Australian social conventions and cultural norms. For instance, on those


32 Kurt Mayer relates this to the "spirit of Australian egalitarianism". Mayer, op.cit., p.43.


34 James Jupp in ibid., p.236.

35 See ibid., pp.429-30. It is interesting to note that the major study of status in Australia by Congalton did not include politicians among the one hundred and thirty-five occupations which respondents were asked to status rank. See A.A. Congalton, Occupational Status in Australia (Sydney, 1963). Encel concluded from an exhaustive study of Australian politicians that the widespread belief of Australians that their politicians are, in the main, of markedly low ability and atypical is fallacious. Each party, in fact, has a social profile which is strikingly representative of the social groups that support it. Encel, op.cit., p.241.
occasions when the Australian public sees them they are usually seeking publicity and they have an unaccountable proclivity for speech-making. The fact that politicians are, by definition, publicity-seekers is undoubtedly a major factor contributing to the widespread dislike of them. Other elites normally conform to the cultural norm and do not seek to draw attention to themselves. They accordingly experience no real inconvenience notwithstanding the rhetoric of aggressive, militant egalitarianism. Politicians, by contrast, often and apparently without reason, make themselves both highly visible and audible.

Although the attitudes expressed, both in common parlance and in the mass media, towards politicians are generally unanimously and unequivocally negative, in reality


37 McGregor, op.cit., p.51.

38 It has been noted above that Australians are highly perceptive of any implication of superciliousness. Hence virtually all Australians, including the outstanding and the brilliant, generally conform to the cultural norm and are unassuming in their behaviour. See above pp.51-52.

39 The popular Australian conception of the role of the politician in society is discussed below.

the orientations of Australians to politicians are less antagonistic than they appear. The literature on Australia is replete with references to Australians' abiding hostility to politicians and yet as we have noted from the beginning Australians have shown an almost unparalleled readiness to extend government involvement and ipso facto to increase the power of politicians. Again, although popular rhetoric leaves the observer with the impression that there is a continuing and undeclared war between the Australian public and its politicians, political violence has been minimal in Australian history,\footnote{Truman, "A Critique...", \textit{op.cit.}, pp. 497-525.} governments and governmental officials normally experience a reasonable degree of cooperation\footnote{Comparable to that in the United Kingdom and Canada, for example.} from the Australian public and authoritative outputs are consensually regarded as binding. (These are theoretically important defining characteristics of a political culture.)\footnote{See above pp. 11-12 and pp. 16-17.} Furthermore, a recent extensive survey\footnote{\textit{The Bulletin} (Sydney), 7 November 1970.} of Australians' attitudes to the police, the most visible and threatening of the agents of governmental authority,\footnote{All uniformed police in Australia are members of one or other of the six State police forces.} disclosed that a large majority of the Australian public had confidence in and respect for the police although it had long been a convention of the literature that the policeman was a
detested figure in Australia. Australians appear, moreover, to be wholly unconcerned that the complex task of managing the extensive services which they depend so heavily upon is left in the hands of the politicians. It is likely, therefore, that the degree of popular disdain for an hostility to politicians in Australia is conventionally exaggerated and that there are major elements of ritual and rhetoric in popular verbal assaults on politicians.

The ambiguity, and especially the ambivalence, of Australians' orientations to politicians are related to a considerable degree to conflicts which are inherent in the national ethos. In Encel's view the main such conflict, and the major cause of Australian ambivalence toward governmental authorities, has its origin in Australians' "enormous and pervasive insistence upon authoritative action to deal with economic and social demands." The egalitarian philosophy, the emphasis on mateship, mutual aid and collectivism tended, among other things, to create very considerable expectations of government. These inevitably enhanced both the power and authority of governments and increased the scale of governmental activity to such a degree that for a long time it was almost unparalleled.

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46 For example, McGregor comments that "Relations between the police and the public are probably worse in Australia than anywhere else in the world" and Lipset goes on to relate the bad image of the policeman to the country's penal-colony origins. McGregor, op.cit., p.81; Lipset, "Value Differences...", op.cit., p.491.

47 Encel, op.cit., p.59.
elsewhere in the non-Communist world. Furthermore, the administrative and organizational imperatives of government's complex responsibilities led inexorably to a proliferation of hierarchical structures and relationships. Hence as time has gone on there has been an increasing tendency for the first objective of Australian society, the quest for equality, to become undermined. The egalitarian tradition of putting down elites which make themselves conspicuous combined with the politician's role and behaviour patterns have thus tended to make politicians the object of ambivalence which is in turn largely rooted in the conflicts inherent in the national ethos.

It was noted in Chapter 1 that the characteristic roles and the status of the authoritative decision-makers in a political system are to a considerable degree a reflection of other important elements in the political culture, especially the pattern of orientations to hierarchy and authority. This appears to be the case in the Australian political system. Politicians tend to be accorded a relatively routine and modest role in society. Australians, in general, exhibit a marked lack of interest in politicians as individuals and they are little concerned with either

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49 See above pp. 19-22.
the personalities or the private lives of their political figures.\textsuperscript{50} There is a marked absence of "strong" or "crisis" leaders in Australian political history and Australians have furthermore shown little inclination to invest their leaders with drama, charisma or mystique.\textsuperscript{51} Moreover, a reputation for "cleverness" can be a damming one for an Australian politician. It is hardly surprising therefore, especially in view of the prevailing attitudes in Australian society canvassed above, that Australian politicians tend where possible to affect a style of behaviour\textsuperscript{52} which conforms to the cultural norm of the "average" Australian\textsuperscript{53} and to maintain a posture of relatively low visibility\textsuperscript{54} by comparison with their opposite numbers in the other Anglo-American democracies.\textsuperscript{55} The major role played by most members of Parliament is as an instrument of administration rather than as a legislator. As a professional politician he is expected:

to act as a combination of complaints bureau

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{50} McGregor, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.222-3 and Mayer, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.109-116.
\item \textsuperscript{51} Ence, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.215-222.
\item \textsuperscript{52} Miller and Jinks, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.92-3.
\item \textsuperscript{53} All normal Australians being, of course, by definition "average".
\item \textsuperscript{54} Mayer, \textit{op.cit.}, p.58.
\end{itemize}
and general "fixer". . . every local council, every voluntary organization, every disgruntled pensioner or government servant in his electorate expects to have his full support; every locality expects him to use his best efforts to obtain for it the school, post office, policeman, factory or irrigation scheme which it wants, and to prevent it becoming the venue of the mental hospital or sewage farm which it does not want. 56

Australians in fact have a marked tendency to look upon the politician as essentially a constituent part of the administrative complex on which they can get a degree of leverage. 57 If the politician is a Minister, however, the prevalent assumption tends to be that his role is essentially "managerial" in character. 58 Both conceptions reflect the widespread view of government, noted above, as essentially a "service" industry or in F.W. Eggleston's words as a vast public utility. 59

56 Miller and Jinks, op. cit., p. 103.
59 Cited in Encel, op. cit., p. 58.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

This thesis has given an account of the concept of political culture, as elaborated and developed to date, and then attempted to apply that concept in the Australian social context. It is appropriate therefore to conclude with a brief discussion of the applicability of the concept to the Australian political process.

The account of the political culture of Australia given here inevitably reflects the many general difficulties which affect any attempt to apply the political culture concept. James Gregor suggests that vagueness and ambiguity characterize much of the literature. Almond's work, for example, is in his view "afflicted by a lack of clarity in the definition of basic concepts and a certain confusion in their logical interrelationships...".\(^1\) Zolberg points out in his review of _Political Culture and Political Development\(^2\) that, as with the other published results of the Social Science Research Council's Committee on Comparative Politics, "the book does not provide a definitive statement of the concept 'political culture' in relations to other aspects of political life."\(^3\) One consequence of this

\(^{1}\)A. James Gregor, "Theory, Metatheory, and Comparative Politics", _Comparative Politics_, Vol. 3 (July 1971), p. 579.
\(^{2}\)Pye and Verba, _op. cit._.
\(^{3}\)A.R. Zolberg, _American Political Science Review_, Vol. 60 (March 1966), pp. 119-121.
ambiguity is that many different constructions can be placed upon political culture concepts. The substantive literature is accordingly remarkably diverse in its content. Accounts of the political cultures of the Anglo-American democracies, and even of the same political system, tend to have relatively little in common with one another.\(^4\) It is not to be wondered therefore that the content of this account of the Australian political culture is no more comparable to accounts of other political cultures than they are to one another.

The general ambiguity of the conceptual literature does mean, however, that the concepts are fairly readily applicable. The variability in the content of substantive works is in part a reflection of the fact that the political culture concept is at a relatively early stage in its development. It remains to be seen whether in due course the objective of establishing quantifiable dimensions which are genuinely comparable among differing political systems will be realized.\(^5\) In the mean time accounts of political cultures tend to be descriptive and analytical in character and in large part to be a reflection of an extant literature.


\(^5\) See above p.4.

\(^6\) A major exception is of course Almond and Verba's work The Civic Culture, op.cit.
which is not oriented towards political culture concepts.\textsuperscript{7}

The problem was marked in the case of Australia because of the scarcity of empirical research on the Australian political process and the virtual absence of any literature on Australian political culture. In this study it was necessary therefore to depend almost entirely on material which was not organized around the concepts of political culture and was only distantly related to it. This account of Australia's political culture is thus, in short, essentially a re-ordering of existing material to fit the political culture model and it would not be wholly unreasonable to suggest that it is often basically a reiteration of facts which are already relatively well-documented.\textsuperscript{8}

Having canvassed some of the difficulties of applying the political culture concept it is appropriate at this point to review briefly the account of the Australian

\textsuperscript{7}Zolberg in commenting on the variability of the approaches taken by the ten contributors to Political Culture and Political Development notes that: "Richard Rose, for example, views his assignment as a study of 'the relationship of English society to British Government' and devotes much attention to social stratification and other structural aspects of society, while for Frederick Barghoorn, an examination of Soviet political culture requires first of all a study of the functions and structures of the CPSU, its interactions with groups in Soviet society and recruitment. There are rather fundamental differences in the conceptualizations exemplified by the approaches of Sydney Verba, whose account of the remaking of political culture in post-war Germany deals almost exclusively with political attitudes at the aggregate mass level, and of Leonard Binder, who focuses on the contribution of Egyptian elites to that country's integrative revolution." Zolberg, \textit{op.cit.}, p.119.

\textsuperscript{8}In James Gregor's view the conceptual work of Almond and his colleagues, in any event, offers little more than novel ways of describing and defining political phenomena. James Gregor, \textit{op.cit.}, p.581.
political culture given above. The notion of national identity was readily applicable in the Australian case and it proved possible to relate an appreciable number of other social and political phenomena to it. The development of the Australian national identity was associated with the emergence of a number of distinctive values and orientations which have had a continuing impact on the political system. These include: a pervasive egalitarianism; a tradition of cynicism about elites and authorities; class consciousness; and emphasis on "mateship", solidarity, mutual aid, collectivism and loyalty. The existence of a strong national identity is associated with an appreciable degree of identification with the political community and with a generalized attachment to, and satisfaction with, the Australian way of life. Australia is a relatively highly consensualized and cohesive society. In the main, political conflict is economic in basis and tends to be conditioned and moderated by an overriding sense of mutual identification between members of the political community (as well as a pragmatic outlook and a willingness to compromise). Political culture theorists hypothesize that in these circumstances a political system is likely to be characterized by stable, effective and democratic government and this has generally been the case in Australian political history.9

Australians have always maintained considerable expectations of government. At the same time politicians

9See above pp.6-11.
have been expected to administer the complex machinery of
government efficiently and yet have also traditionally been
held in disdain. It was suggested that Australians tend to
be averse to allowing citizens' important interests to be
determined primarily by relative bargaining strength and
that Australian culture tends to de-emphasize political
activity. However, perhaps the major element in the incon-
gruity between expectations of government and the role and
status ascribed to politicians is conflict inherent in
the Australian ethos. Many of the institutions which have
been developed as a result of Australian social values have
inevitably been markedly hierarchical in structure. As
such structures have proliferated and expanded the funda-
mental Australian value, the pursuit of equality, has tended
to be undermined. It was suggested, therefore, that one
consequence of the resulting ambivalence is that there has
been a tendency for hostility and suspicion to focus on
politicians and that the politicians' role and behaviour
patterns have contributed to the phenomenon.

There are a number of political culture concepts
which obviously have considerable potential utility in the
Australian context but their application is at present hampered
by lack of Australian data and especially relevant compara-
tive empirical data. Two particular instances which should
be noted here are the sense of civic duty and political
efficacy. In both cases a knowledge of how Australians
compared in relation to members of various other political
systems would be illuminating and should enhance understanding of the Australian political process. However, on the basis of the data presently available one can unfortunately do little more than speculate as to where Australians might rank on these dimensions.

A number of political culture concepts had rather limited applicability in the Australian context. A notable example of a concept in this category is the notion of the political subculture. However, the limited utility of the political subculture concept is a reflection of the homogeneous character of Australian society rather than of the potential utility of the concept. Indeed, as has been noted above, political culture concepts tend to be very broadly defined and they are therefore widely, but very variably, applicable.

In conclusion, it is suggested that this study by organizing existing knowledge around political culture concepts may to some extent facilitate a better understanding of the Australian political process. Also, utilization of the approach undoubtedly served to focus attention on a number of significant and largely neglected areas of Australian political life and the process of separating out the cultural aspects of politics facilitates their subjection to more detailed and systematic analysis. Moreover this kind of description and analysis is in any event an essential first step if the ambitious objectives of the political culture theorists are to be realized. If the very
considerable problems inherent in the operationalization of
the vague and ambiguous terminology can be surmounted, then
it is possible that the political culture concept will in
fact one day provide a "researchable connecting link"\textsuperscript{10}
between the micro and macro levels of analysis.\textsuperscript{11} Thus
far, however, the gap between aim and achievement appears
striking. For the present the usefulness of the approach
should perhaps be judged primarily on its capacity to pro-
vide the basis for convenient, parsimonious and competent
description, to illuminate the material, to redirect thinking
and to suggest new relationships.\textsuperscript{12} The writer is inclined
to the view, on the basis of this attempt to apply the concept
in the Australian social context, that the approach is not
without merit in terms of these more modest criteria. How-
ever this is not to imply that, in many areas of political
analysis which are currently within the domain of political
culture, the more traditional approaches of political science
do not provide analytical tools which are equally, and often
more, incisive than the concepts of political culture.

\textsuperscript{10}Czudnowski, \textit{op.cit.}, p.878.

\textsuperscript{11}See above pp.4-5.

\textsuperscript{12}James Gregor, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.581-585.
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