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**Uneven Globalization: Neoliberal Regimes, Immigration, and  
Multiculturalism in Australia, Canada, and New Zealand**

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## **RIIM**

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**Uneven Globalization:  
Neoliberal Regimes, Immigration, and Multiculturalism in  
Australia, Canada, and New Zealand**

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**Abstract:** There has been a convergence of policies on immigration and multiculturalism in three countries that have long seen themselves as the product of immigration: Australia, Canada, and New Zealand. All developed more open immigration as well as bicultural/multicultural policies; all moved significantly in recent years towards neoliberal economic policy; and all have seen relatively sharp declines in fertility combined with larger elderly populations. Finally, all have framed immigration policy with these demographic issues in mind; that is, immigration is designed to be in the national interest. However, here the similarities stop: the three countries have pursued markedly different immigration policies designed to fix the same problems. Why? To answer this question we explore the connections between political economy, politics and public opinion, and the development of immigration policy. An explanation for policy divergence needs to acknowledge the fact that neoliberalism takes different forms in the three countries and that the concept of national interest is socially and politically contingent.

## Introduction

Australia, Canada and New Zealand are, with the USA, the major western countries to have pursued active settler immigration programs throughout most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In recent years, many other western societies—particularly in Europe—have come to face with the realities of immigration, both documented and undocumented. As these countries struggle to design appropriate immigration and settlement policies, interest in societies with a long experience of settler immigration has, understandably, increased. The immigration and settlement experiences of Australia, Canada and New Zealand therefore provide a compelling comparative study, both for government officials and academics.

Australia, Canada and New Zealand share a colonial history dominated by the British. Upon becoming independent states, all three enacted immigration legislation that sought to perpetuate their national character through continuing immigration from the British Isles.<sup>1</sup> All implemented racialized policies to deter immigrants from other parts of the world, although the details of these varied across the countries. These were dynamic policies that, through the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, gradually expanded their definition of acceptable (that is, prioritized) immigrants to include first western and northern, and later eastern and southern European groups, although New Zealand saw fewer of these latter immigrants. The policies were fundamentally changed in the postwar period and all three countries adopted some form of a points system to assess the admissibility of prospective immigrants. In all three cases, this led to profoundly greater cultural diversity, though the particular groups were specific to each country. In the 1970s, Australia, Canada and New Zealand reassessed their cultural policies and in each case, multicultural policies took on a new importance. This has gone furthest in Canada since it has been enshrined in both national law and also constitutionally since 1982. Australia has also adopted multiculturalism as an official, bipartisan policy from the late 1970s, borrowing the term from Canada though with important differences in implementation, while New Zealand has developed a bicultural policy framework with a nascent multiculturalism still ill-defined.

Given their historical similarities, we might expect that the three countries continue to develop parallel immigration policies. As noted, there is a long history of convergence, the countries

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<sup>1</sup> Eastern Canada was in the French colonial orbit until the British conquest of 1763. While French culture, law, and language were maintained, especially in the colony of Lower Canada which eventually became the province of Québec, immigration from France was not significant after Confederation. This is partly explained by the fact that the officials who managed the surge of immigration to Canada around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century paid little attention to France; however, it should also be noted that emigration from France was low in any case, especially compared with Britain.

all face similar pressures, have similarly-focused governments,<sup>2</sup> and policy makers have many opportunities to discuss possible directions for policy. All three countries share a particular challenge: declining fertility rates. The latest statistics indicate that the average Australian woman will have 1.72 children in her lifetime, while her Canadian counterpart will have 1.49 and a New Zealand woman will have 1.90.<sup>3</sup> Without additional immigration, each country will register population declines, Canada first and Australia about a decade later (McDonald and Krippen, 1999; Jupp 2002) with New Zealand not far behind; in the more immediate future, all three countries will experience labour shortages. In this age of globalization, with similar pressures, it might be reasonable to expect policy convergence. This is the principal point made on an even larger scale by Wayne Cornelius and his colleagues (Cornelius *et al.*, 1994), who posit that current difficulties in controlling immigration are leading industrialized countries in both North America and Europe to adopt increasingly similar migration policies. Although Australia and New Zealand are not explicitly included in their discussion, their logic could easily be applied to both countries. However, contrary to the expectation of continuing convergence, exactly the opposite has occurred: since the early 1990s, there has been marked divergence between the three countries in the areas of migration and multicultural policies.

Our analysis of this policy divergence is not wedded to any particular theory or model, since we believe there is no single conceptual key—whether structural or poststructural—that will explain the complex ways that immigration is embedded in the political economies of the three countries.<sup>4</sup> Each of the three political economies are structured somewhat differently despite their common colonial origins. Indigenous peoples, and in the case of Canada Quebeckers, have played unique roles in each country. Geopolitics are also significant, with Canada sharing a continent with the USA and Australia and New Zealand maintaining stronger ties with the UK over a longer period of time, especially in terms of immigration, and developing a Closer Economic Relations strategy to foster economic integration between the two countries. Finally, the rise and fall of political movements in the three countries have been contingent on many factors that, we believe, cannot be captured in a

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<sup>2</sup> This is particularly the case for Australia and Canada, and John Howard and Jean Chrétien are said to be good friends (Simpson 2002).

<sup>3</sup> These figures are drawn from the websites of the official statistical agencies of the three countries.

<sup>4</sup> The recent attempt by Jeannette Money (1999) to develop a multivariate model to predict per capita immigrant inflows for 12 OECD countries is instructive. She notes that ...national-level variables may be insufficiently sensitive to capture either the impact of immigration on the national population or the political processes by which societal preferences are translated into policy. (page 14) The only consistent finding in her study is that rising unemployment levels is weakly correlated with declining immigrant admissions; attempts to quantify other economic and social characteristics of countries did not add explanatory power to her model (Chapter 2). In other words, immigration policy is highly contingent and efforts to produce international models of policy outcomes are difficult to construct.

singular theoretical framework. In our exploration of policy divergence, therefore, we pay special attention to the configuration of political-economic forces shaping each country, and how these intersect with migration/immigration policies; we try to explain developments in each country separately and emphasize differences between them. Rather than establish or reinforce a comprehensive theory, we seek to show the limitations of this type of exercise, especially by emphasizing the distinct policy choices made by Australia, Canada and New Zealand in an age of supposed global conformity.

## **Migration and Multiculturalism**

### *Canada*

The postwar history of Canadian immigration can be summarized into three periods. The first commenced shortly after the war, with the onset of a sustained economic boom, and ended in the 1960s. Almost as soon as the war was over, there was a shortage of workers across a large segment of the industrial spectrum, including construction, manufacturing, and a number of key services (see Hawkins 1988; Pendakur 2000). This problem was resolved by encouraging immigration from Europe, including Austria and Germany, which just a few years earlier had been bitter enemies of Canada. In essence, this was just a recommencement of the prewar system of immigration, with a preference for Europeans. There was one change in the postwar period: gradually, the barriers prohibiting immigration from other parts of the world, notably China, were lifted (e.g., the ban on immigration from China was lifted for family members in 1947), though the number admitted from non-European countries was still very small. During this period, the level of immigration was medium to high when compared with norms over the past 100 years, and was closely tied to the economy. This period was defined by a tap on/tap off approach, with more immigrants admitted when unemployment was low and fewer when it was high (Green and Green 1999). Immigrants entering Canada at this time were expected to assimilate, though this was always complicated by the linguistic and cultural duality of the country (Dorais *et al.* 1992). In fact, the system of European preference was founded on the principle of assimilation and it was believed that people from European countries would blend in to the Canadian society of the day.

The second period also lasted about 20 years, starting in the mid-1960s. There were two significant moments of change, first in 1962 when the system of European preference was revoked, and in 1967, when a points system was introduced for independent immigrants. At that time, the

family reunification and refugee classes were also more precisely defined (Hawkins 1988; Kelley and Trebilcock 1998). The points system was designed to treat all applicants equally, regardless of place of origin or culture. Above all, it represented a replacement of cultural preferences (for Europeans) with class preferences (for the well-educated), and irrevocably changed the basic characteristics of immigrants settling in Canada. The pattern, since then, has been for a group to enter Canada first either as refugees or independent skilled workers, and then to follow this with expanded movement through the family reunification system. Ironically, this momentous change in immigration policy was enacted—in large part—because Canada could not entice a sufficient number of skilled Europeans to immigrate, especially as the economy of Western Europe was gaining momentum while governments in Eastern Europe made it increasingly difficult to emigrate (Pendakur 2000; Li 2003). There was also a growing concern over the brain drain of skilled Canadians to the US (Kennedy 2001). The irony, of course, is that the boom was almost over, and the early 1970s saw a marked increase in unemployment, from an average of about 4 percent between 1946-1970 to about 8 percent thereafter.<sup>5</sup> In keeping with the tap on/tap off approach, immigration targets fell and were relatively low throughout most of this period (prominent exceptions were from Czechoslovakia in 1967 and Vietnam in the 1970s). So the initial impact of the internationalization of Canadian immigration was modest, given the relatively low number arriving from all countries in these years. Immigrant admissions hit a particularly low point in the recession of the early 1980s.

Meanwhile, Canada entered a period of cultural introspection in the 1960s that was at first motivated by the age-old, and frequently vexed, question of Anglo-French relations. During this attempt to reconsider the cultural foundations of the country, other European-origin groups (which had been in Canada for many decades) asserted their view that the bicultural debate excluded them from full citizenship. A new policy was created out of this tension, multiculturalism in a bilingual framework, which was announced in 1971.<sup>6</sup> Initially, multicultural policy called for an acknowledgement and celebration of the contributions of diverse groups in Canada's national development, but it was also associated with a shift towards enhanced services for immigrants settling in the country (Lanphier and Lukomskyj 1992). It quickly took on more potent political qualities and became the backdrop for equal rights. This link—between multiculturalism and equal rights—was enshrined in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms of Canada which came into force in 1982, giving it

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<sup>5</sup> These figures are derived from the CANSIM database provided by Statistics Canada.

<sup>6</sup> Note that Canada's francophone population is, at best, ambivalent about multiculturalism, seeing it as a threat to their longstanding status as one of the two founding nations of Canada. While official multiculturalism acknowledges the special place of French and English Canadians (recall the title is actually Multiculturalism in a Bilingual Framework), celebrating the multi-stranded cultural history of Canada can be seen as minimizing the importance of both French and Aboriginal peoples from this history.

constitutional status; later, the Multicultural Act of Canada was passed in 1988, formalizing the Charter into the legal system. At its core, Canadian multiculturalism has three defining elements: the right of individuals to retain their cultures (in contrast to the expectation of assimilation); the provision of services to enable both integration and cultural retention (e.g., language programs for immigrants to learn English and French, but also for their children to learn heritage languages); and anti-discrimination (Hawkins 1991).

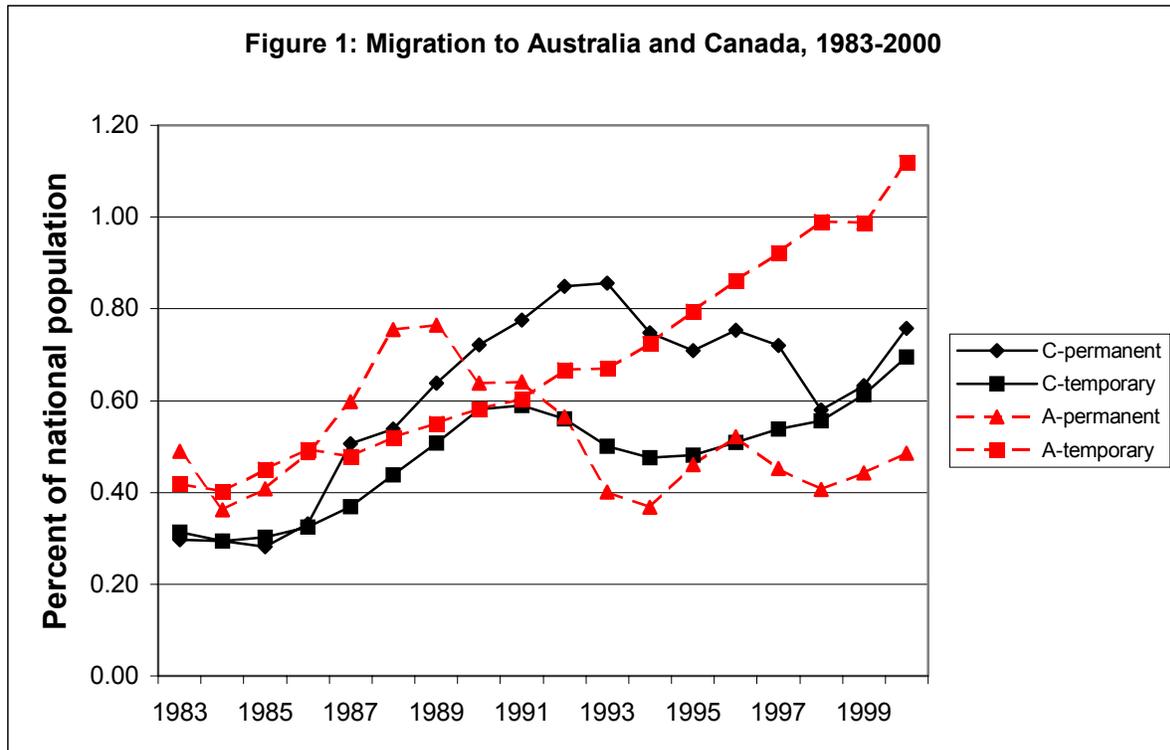
The most recent phase of Canadian immigration policy began around this time. Canada experienced rapid population growth after the war, fueled by both immigration and a high birth rate. This changed profoundly in the 1960s as fertility began to fall. At first, declining fertility was seen as evidence of modernization but gradually demographers began to voice concern for the long-term implications of an ageing population. This view entered national discourse in the 1980s, just as immigration levels were particularly low. At the same time, a new Conservative federal government led by Brian Mulroney was elected and almost immediately introduced a number of neoliberal reforms, such as privatizing the national airline system and initiating a new trade agreement with the US (which eventually yielded NAFTA). Significantly, the new government saw immigration quite differently compared to previous post-war governments: increasing the level of immigration was seen as a solution to both demographic and economic ills. On the demographic side, by augmenting the population with young adults, in their childbearing years, it was believed that the problem of ageing could be forestalled (Green and Green 1999). As for the economy, the Conservatives substantially raised the target for skilled workers and introduced a new category—Investors—to the Business Class system.

The shift was dramatic. At the start of the Conservative mandate, immigration accounted for a population increase of about 0.3 percent of the national total annually; by the time they lost (spectacularly) the 1993 election, the ratio had risen to nearly 0.9 percent, one of the highest per capita rates of immigration in the world (Figure 1). The number of temporary work visas also rose in these years, from 0.15 percent of the national population to a peak of 0.37 in 1990.<sup>7</sup> The fact that the increase in permanent immigrants occurred in the economic boom of the late 1980s, *and* the recession of the early 1990s, is particularly noteworthy; this was the first time in postwar history that the immigration intake was high despite an economic downturn and exceptionally high unemployment. The government ignored the previously-accepted tap on/tap off logic, believing that immigration *of*

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<sup>7</sup> There are three major, and many minor, types of temporary visas in Canada. The principal ones are for workers (including a wide range, from seasonal employees in agriculture, to IT personnel, to superstar athletes), students, and asylum seekers while their cases are under review. Together, these account for approximately 75 percent of all temporary residents admitted to Canada on an annual basis.

*the right sort* would stimulate, rather than depress further, the economy (Hiebert 1994). Immigration was not an issue in the 1993 election and the Chrétien Liberal government followed the same policy as the Conservatives before them, though there was a slight decline in immigrant intake in the mid- to late-1990s (a temporary, though prominent, drop coincided with the repatriation of Hong Kong in 1997 and the Asian flu in the closing years of the decade), and statistics for 2001 show that intake is again nearing 0.9 percent of the national population. The number of temporary visas issued by



Canada has remained relatively constant, at about 0.3 percent of the population.

However, the current government has stated an intention to raise the permanent immigrant intake further. The numbers recorded by the 2001 Census were entirely predictable: a higher proportion than ever before of the population is over the age of 65, and women have chosen to have fewer children than at any other time in Canada's history. Prime Minister Chrétien, speaking on the day the statistics were released, called for more immigration and even chastised the Department of Citizenship and Immigration for their recent performance (in the late 1990s, intake was consistently below targets set by the government; Clark 2002). As was the case in the 1980s, immigration is still seen as the magic wand to solve the demographic issues faced by Canada.

In this latest period, there have been a number of efforts to reconsider multicultural policy, though none of these has been formal (in contrast to the Australian case discussed below). The twin concepts of integration and social cohesion have increasingly been at the forefront of discourse on cultural policy with respect to immigration within Canada, but both have been rather poorly defined (Policy Research Initiative 1999). Some critics have charged that the popularity of these concepts indicates that multiculturalism is under assault. Integration can easily be seen as a retreat from a pluralist vision of multiculturalism, for example, and social cohesion can be seen to imply cultural conformity. But integration and social cohesion, like multiculturalism, can also be defined as unity in diversity and can therefore take on a pluralist cast. Given the ambiguity in the meaning of these terms, it is hard to say whether the content and significance of Canadian multiculturalism is under revision; certainly the multicultural clause in the Charter and the Multicultural Act still stand and no effort has been made to amend or remove them.

### *Australia*

Australia has the second-highest ratio of immigrants to total population of any industrialized country (after Israel).<sup>8</sup> This fact reflects the long history of immigrant settlement to the country, especially the high-migration eras during and after the gold rush of the 1850s, the 20 years prior to WW1, and the postwar period, particularly the late 1960s. Australia's history of immigration since WW2 can be divided into four periods. The Australian desire for population growth after the war was, if anything, stronger than that in Canada—as illustrated by the popular phrase of the day *populate or perish* (Jupp 1998). Arthur Calwell, the first minister of the newly created Department of Immigration in 1945, for example, was of the view that an average national population growth of 2 percent would be optimal, half from natural increase and half from net migration (Collins 1991: 20-23). Accordingly, nearly 200,000 refugees were admitted to the country shortly after the war, and Australia initiated a sponsorship agreement with the United Kingdom to facilitate hundreds of thousands of immigrants from that country (Burnley 2001). It was quickly understood that the number of British people wanting to migrate was insufficient to satisfy the expansionist desires of the government, however, and in the 1950s, additional agreements were signed with the Netherlands and Germany. In the second half of the 1950s Australia switched its search for non-British immigrants from northern to southern Europe, with large numbers of Greeks and Italians entering Australia as part of a non-assisted chain migration. In the 1960s the net was cast more widely across southern Europe as large numbers of immigrants from Yugoslavia joining continued inflows from Italy and Greece (Collins

1991: 23-25). While only few non-British migrants were assisted, all British immigrants qualified for assistance that reduced the cost of their passage by ship to Australia to 10 pounds. Throughout this period, the White Australia policy survived, though an increasing number of exceptions were made in the 1960s, particularly for Asian professionals from non-white British Commonwealth countries such as Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) (Jupp 1998; Markus 1994).

Australia ended its system of official European preference a few years later than Canada, in 1973 as opposed to 1962/67, though regulations prohibiting non-Whites from settling in the country were quietly eased in the 1960s (Markus 1994; Price 1974; Money 1999). In the Canadian case, the ending of white privilege in the immigration system reflected both moral and economic motivations, as it was done during a labour shortage. The Australian policy change was conducted under a different political-economic climate but led to a similar set of outcomes. Politically, the White Australia policy was increasingly difficult to justify after the USA and Canada had both removed the racial bias in their admission systems. There was a growing crescendo of criticism against the policy internationally as well as locally (Harris 1993). The White Australia policy served to hinder Australian economic and political engagement with its nearest neighbours in Southeast Asia, a point that former Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Quan Yu and current Malaysian Prime Minister Mahattir, made frequently and forcefully.

The election of the Whitlam Labour party (1972-5) gave Australia its first non-Conservative government in 23 years and signaled a wave of policy change and innovation, including the immediate dismissal of the White Australia policy. The impact of this change was rapid: between 1971-6 over one-quarter of immigrant intake came from Asia and the Middle East (Collins 1991: 26). Whitlam also responded to the criticism that immigration had a detrimental impact on cities by reducing admission to the lowest levels of the post-war half century (Money 1999). The Australian long boom—and the Whitlam government—ended with the international recession of 1974-5, a foretaste of the economic and political contradictions of globalization for Australia. Thus changing international economic and political interests helped bury the White Australia policy, more so than the civic rights and social justice campaigns against the explicitly racist policy (though the latter also contributed to change).

In Canada, multicultural policy arose out of a reconsideration of Anglo-French relations. In Australia, obviously, this was not the case. There, multiculturalism arose out of the contradictions inherent in the assimilation policy that had shaped government responses to earlier immigration. The

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<sup>8</sup> In 1996, out of a total of 19 million people, there were 4.5 million overseas born in Australia, plus 3.7 million with at least one overseas-born parent (Burnley 2001).

essence of assimilation policy was the central assumption that new immigrants shed their distinctiveness (cultural, linguistic, religious, dress, food) and become the same as Australians (Martin 1978; Castles *et al.* 1988). This expectation of sameness might appear enlightened when compared with the European experience (Castles and Miller 1998), particularly in that it was accompanied by easy access to citizenship (Castles and Zappala 2001). However, the fact that immigrants were not to be treated differently to anyone else meant that they were not to be aided in this assimilation process. That is, the prevailing philosophy effectively precluded and justified a lack of settlement services. Immigrants were therefore left to sink or swim, despite their obvious needs especially with respect to language. Predictably, many immigrant groups became disadvantaged according to socio-economic indicators (Collins 1991: 153-197). Unions, the Teachers' Federation, and other progressive social groups began to establish programs targeting the special needs of immigrants. Meanwhile, there was a growing recognition, as in Canada, that newly arriving groups were not abandoning their culture, and also that they represented potential voting blocs (Collins 2000).

In Australia, then, multiculturalism from the outset was motivated by an increasing acceptance of the permanence of cultural diversity and of the need to reduce immigrant disadvantage, though some see it as a clever method of *containing* increasing ethnic diversity, of de-powering its most radical elements (Jakubowicz 1984), and of withholding immigrant access to the citadels of power in Australian society (Hage 1998). In any case, multiculturalism provided the philosophical underpinning for the establishment of immigrant services. Although settlement practices evolved considerably in the 1960s, the first key statement advancing what was eventually to be called, after Canada, multicultural policy occurred in 1973, announced by Minister of Immigration, Al Grassby (Collins 1993). The report, *A Multi-Cultural Society for the Future*, set out the concepts of ethnic heterogeneity and cultural pluralism and stressed the contribution of immigrants to Australian society and the need to recognize their distinctiveness (Grassby 1973). But it was not until the election of the Conservative Fraser government in 1975 that multiculturalism really gained momentum. Under the rubric of multiculturalism, a whole range of programs and services across government institutions was introduced. As in Canada, the scope of multiculturalism evolved over time toward access and equity of immigrants in all areas of economic, social and political life in Australia (OMA 1992; Hawkins 1991).

The third phase of Australian postwar immigration policy began in the 1980s, as in Canada. Initially, both countries made roughly the same choices, though for somewhat different reasons. As noted earlier, Canada raised its targets considerably for a combination of demographic and economic

reasons. Fertility rates in Australia did not fall as rapidly or fully as in Canada and there was no sense of a looming population crisis in that country. Instead, the rationale for increasing Australia's intake was primarily economic, reflecting the boom years of the late 1980s and the fact that economic restructuring was associated with heightened demand for skilled workers, especially in the emerging technology industries (Castles *et al.* 1988). As in the case of Canada, Australia also introduced and refined programs to entice successful business elites to the country in an effort to spur entrepreneurial development, though they differed in detail with Canada establishing an 'investor' category (Wong and Netting 1992; Borowski and Nash 1992). In the late 1980s, Australia's relative level of permanent immigration was higher than Canada's, peaking at around 0.8 percent of the national population in the final years of the decade (Figure 1). With the recession that began in 1990, however, the Labour government did as they had done before: move to lower immigration admissions, which plummeted by nearly half between 1989 and 1995. The right-of-centre coalition government elected in 1996, led by John Howard, maintained modest levels of permanent immigration even though the economy improved in the later half of the decade (a time when Australia led western economies in economic growth). Australia seemed to lose its appetite for immigration in the 1990s, though the government plans to increase these numbers slightly in the new decade, but not to the extent contemplated by Canada.<sup>9</sup> This rise is predicated on and, from the government's view, justified by, econometric analysis showing that immigrants are economically beneficial to the country. According to Minister Phillip Ruddock (in DIMIA 2001):

Because the program uses rigorous selection criteria and is highly targeted to Australia's labour market needs, it can now be used to achieve major productivity improvements and enable stronger economic growth in both the short and long-term. ... Econometric modeling done for my Department by Access Economics also suggests that there will be a net benefit to the Commonwealth budget of around \$3.7 billion over the next four years if the Program is maintained at the 2001-02 level and structure.

The research underlying these conclusions is based on the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Australia, which examined the economic participation and performance of the cohort of immigrants entering the country in 1993, a year with a relatively low level of admission and a high ratio of business and skilled workers.

Meanwhile, despite existing unemployment, there are areas of the Australian economy with shortages of workers. How has the Australian government managed to furnish an appropriate workforce for the country? This has been accomplished by raising, considerably, the number of

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<sup>9</sup> Minister Ruddock announced an increase from around 95,000 to 105,000 for 2002/03 and expected the latter number to be used for the next four years (Ruddock 2002a). This compares with 300,000 or more for Canada

temporary migrants admitted to the country, a decision that represents a considerable break from the longstanding Australian aversion to European-style guestworker programs (Collins 1993). In the 2000/01 immigration year, for the first time in Australia's history, more working visas were issued than all of the permanent immigration and refugee categories *combined* (Hugo 2003). Together, student and working visas exceeded 1.0 percent of the national population, more than twice the size of the permanent immigration program. Temporary work visas entitle individuals to reside in Australia for between 4 and 48 months, provided they remain employed. As in Canada, there are several major types of temporary migrants in Australia, but workers (including senior management) constitute the largest of these. As in Canada, this is essentially an example of a just-in-time system of delivering workers for the country's economy, but at a much larger relative scale.

It is worth remembering that the 1996 election that brought in the Howard government was not characterized by particularly sharp differences on immigration between the Labour and Coalition sides. Howard had spoken out in 1988 against the Asianization of Australia through immigration but had been vilified for these comments. In 1996, he took a different tack and ran a campaign that said little about immigration. However, Pauline Hanson, an independent senatorial candidate from the state of Queensland, placed immigration and race relations at the centre of her successful campaign. Her views were radical and challenged the orthodox understanding that associated immigration with nation-building. She called for a substantial drop in the number of immigrants admitted to the country and, particularly, a reduction in the rate of immigration from Asian countries, arguing that the rapid growth of minority populations from that region was damaging Australian culture. She also advanced the opinion that official multicultural policy was misguided and rendered a unified Australian culture impossible. She therefore called for an immediate abandonment of the policy and a return to the idea of a single national culture. She and a group of like-minded colleagues established the One Nation Party shortly after the election and continued to act as a prominent (actually *the prominent*) critic of immigration and multiculturalism within the country.

In response to the popularity of One Nation, and also widespread misgivings about immigration and multiculturalism revealed in opinion polls,<sup>10</sup> the coalition government established the National Multicultural Advisory Council in 1997, which was to review multicultural policy. It was specifically charged with the task of outlining how multiculturalism could be ...aimed at ensuring that cultural diversity was a unifying force for Australia (DIMIA 2002). This was clearly a response to the charge made by Hanson and others that multiculturalism divided the nation. The

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and 45,000 for New Zealand.

<sup>10</sup> Some 53 percent of Australians agreed with Hanson's views that immigration should be curtailed (Murphy and Watson 2002).

Council released its influential report in 1999 (*Australian Multiculturalism for a New Century: Towards Inclusiveness*) and its recommendations were almost immediately adopted, in the form of the government's policy statement later that year (*A New Agenda for Multicultural Australia*). Prime Minister Howard's Foreword to the report spoke volumes about the latest reformulation of the policy: Our diversity is a source of competitive advantage, cultural enrichment and social stability. The order of the terms is significant, and the ethical/moral grounds for multiculturalism appear to be superseded by pragmatic ones. This logic is made particularly clear by two phrases that permeate the report: productive diversity and the diversity dividend. The first reflects the government's view that the linguistic and cultural diversity of Australia represents a key economic resource in an era of global business. The second is associated with the idea that, if harnessed properly, diversity will provide an economic bonus. To facilitate these developments the Commonwealth government initiated, in 2000, the Government's Productive Diversity Partnerships Program, a tripartite network of policy makers, business managers, and tertiary educational institutions offering business degrees. It is instructive to consider how these positive interpretations of diversity answered the challenge mounted by Hanson and the One Nation Party, which portrayed cultural diversity as a quality that weakened Australia. Instead, the revised multicultural policy presented the opposite perspective but, crucially, *within the language and logic of neoliberalism*.<sup>11</sup> Peter Murphy and Sophie Watson (2002) label this emerging policy strategic multiculturalism, emphasizing its connection with economic development.

Beleaguered by political naiveté and inexperience, the One Nation Party has drifted into insignificance—Pauline Hanson lost her federal seat and is contesting the New South Wales March 2003 election. But to some extent the decline in support for One Nation can be explained by the fact that the Howard government adopted many of the policies of One Nation with respect to refugees and multiculturalism. In the 2001 election, the issue of unauthorized boat people seeking refuge in Australia was a decisive factor in the re-election of Howard and his coalition government (Markus 2001). In the months before the election, Howard sent the navy to intercept the MS Tampa and its cargo of boat people; they, and those on the boats that followed, were not allowed to land on Australian shores and were sent to Pacific neighbours such as Nauru and New Zealand.

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<sup>11</sup> It is important to acknowledge that the government, in framing diversity as an economic asset, encourages employers to value the talents and skills of immigrants. In stressing that employers should engage in diversity management that involves assessing the skills of the workforce to determine how those skills can be best used for commercial benefit, the government is indirectly instructing the private sector to recognize the qualifications brought by immigrants from abroad. The source of this point, and the quotation in this note, is DIMIA 2002b.

### *New Zealand*

New Zealand shares a number of the policy and political developments seen in Canada and Australia, but there are also important points of difference.

From the initial settlement of New Zealand and the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840, immigration policy was based on narrow racial preferences for immigrants from the United Kingdom with the effect that more than 90 percent of those arriving came from this source. This was reinforced from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century by anti-Asian politics and immigration policies. A total of 28 acts were passed to restrict Asian (Chinese and Indian) immigrants, led by Liberal and Socialist political leaders from the 1890s. Small groups of Dalmatians and Scandinavians arrived, but the politics of WW1 reinforced the racial preferences embedded in immigration policy and shared by all parts of the political spectrum. The first signs of any waning of this came with the election of the first Labour government in 1935, and their relaxation of the rules concerning welfare eligibility for Asian residents in New Zealand. However, it was not until the post-war period that family reunification for these communities began, and those of Chinese descent could not become New Zealand citizens until 1951, despite the fact that these communities had first arrived in the 1860s (McKinnon 1996). Immigration had been used to reinforce the colonial and transnational links with the UK, and reflected the role of New Zealand as a privileged supplier of primary products to Britain.

There were some lessening of the restrictions imposed on Asians in particular after the war but this was rapidly altered as labour shortages increased with a burgeoning urban-based manufacturing sector in the post-war period. Initially labour was provided by Maori migration from a rural and provincial hinterland, but by the 1960s this was insufficient. An agreement between the Netherlands and New Zealand governments provided assisted passages for Dutch people, alongside an ongoing recruitment of the required skills from the UK. Increasingly, a new source of semi- and unskilled migrant labour was provided by the Polynesian Pacific, both from those countries which fell within the control of New Zealand (Cook Islands, Niue, Tokelau) and those who had some connection (Samoa, Tonga). Many from the latter group (the former were New Zealand citizens and had free access to New Zealand) entered New Zealand illegally but the pressure for labour was such that the government of the day largely ignored what was happening.

The entry of the UK into the European Economic Community and the oil crises in the early 1970s, combined with populist political concern about employment, law and order issues and the decline of certain urban areas, all encouraged a re-evaluation of immigration policies and immigrants. The 1972-75 Labour government began to move against overstayers, a term that was racialised as involving primarily Pacific Island immigrants, and the police and immigration service targeted

suspects, especially through the notorious dawn raids on homes to try and apprehend illegal immigrants. By the 1975 election, the issues had been thoroughly politicized and something of a moral panic further emphasized the racialized nature of Pacific immigration. From 1973 through to 1986, immigration policies again reverted to a whites/British only basis, the obvious exception being refugee flows from South America, notably Chile, and South-East Asia. Overstayers and Pacific Islanders became synonymous with problematic immigration, by taking resources that should be for New Zealanders and providing a generalized threat to the New Zealand way of life and public safety.

The most recent phase began with a review of immigration brought about by a reforming Labour government in 1986, and policies which echoed the focus on skilled and business migrants that Canada and Australia had adopted a decade or more earlier. But it also involved the abandonment of the white New Zealand immigration policy that had prevailed since first settlement by Europeans. Immigrants were to be selected according to the economic needs of New Zealand, regardless of origin and ethnic/racial background (Trlin 1997). A subsequent conservative government that was elected in 1990 continued these policies, and indicated a desire to become more aligned with Asian economies as part of a significant re-orientation in terms of geo-political interests—away from Europe and towards Asia. The result of these policies is reflected in the shift of immigrant origins, and the period from 1990 to 1996 saw the arrival of significant numbers from Asia, specifically Korea, Hong Kong and Taiwan. By 1995, 60 per cent of those approved for residence were from Asia, and there had been a five fold increase in the numbers between 1989 and 1994. The departure from long-held views about who was, and was not, a desirable and appropriate immigrant did not go unacknowledged, and by 1985 significant anti-Asian sentiments began to appear in the media and amongst both fringe and mainstream political parties. In the latter case, a New Zealand equivalent to Pauline Hanson appeared in the form of Winston Peters, a politician who had left the conservative National party to form New Zealand First, and who has made anti-immigrant politics a central policy platform from the 1986 election. By the 2002 election, of the three central policies articulated by New Zealand First, two were the major curtailment of immigration and the abandonment of Treaty of Waitangi commitments.

By the late 1980s, New Zealand had adopted many of the same immigration policies of Canada and Australia, with a concern to recruit those with skills in short supply, especially in areas such as health professionals and IT, those who had access to desirable markets, specifically in Asia, and those with significant capital assets. Immigration policy was economically driven and intended to contribute to New Zealand's international competitiveness, to offset the ageing of the population and net migration losses, and to encourage affluent and skilled migrants (Trlin 1997). By this time New Zealand had the highest per capita immigrant intake among OECD countries (Money 1999: Table

1.1). The one important difference between Australia and Canada on the one hand and New Zealand on the other is the ambiguous and ill-formed nature of multiculturalism in the latter country. The migration of Maori in the post-war period had implications for the maintenance of cultural institutions and attributes, such as Maori as a language. A growing political movement from the early 1970s politicized these concerns, along with the need to recognize the compact represented by the Treaty of Waitangi (1840). By the early 1980s, these politics were not confined to the radical expressions of a younger, urbanized Maori but were also supported by major iwi (tribal) organizations. The significance of these concerns was recognized by the 1984-1990 Labour government via a series of legislative and policy changes. There were a number of aspects to these developments, including a Treaty settlement process to address historical grievances arising from colonization, a requirement that social service agencies and public institutions generally should be much more sensitive to Maori as client groups, and support for the retention and promotion of Maori culture and language. The policy framework is best described as bicultural, involving Maori as the indigenous peoples (tangata whenua) and Pakeha (descendants of European settlers). Marginalized in this binary discourse were non-European immigrants and the vacuum in the culturally diverse New Zealand of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is the presence of an appropriate multiculturalism. By 2002, the Skills Category approvals were dominated by those from India (24 percent followed by Britain at 14 percent) and the Investor Category by mainland Chinese (64 percent followed by Taiwan at 16 percent). Asian migration first peaked in 1996 at 23,489 leading to a political reaction and then again in 2001/2002, but now dominated by migrants from China (14,400) and India (6,300). Trade with Asia constituted \$NZ21.5 billion, reinforcing the significance of the region for New Zealand. In addition, some 500,000 tourists and 73,000 students were expected to arrive from Asia, contributing to the politicization of migration, and a now more aggressive set of anti-immigrant views and policies being expressed by Winston Peters and New Zealand First. The debate about the nature and size of immigration, and what a multicultural framework would look like, had become a central policy issue by the 2002 election.

## **Discussion**

To summarize the previous section, for nearly 100 years Australia and Canada have taken parallel paths in immigration and settlement policy, with the latter frequently adopting the policies of the former a few years later. New Zealand, with some exceptions, has followed a similar path. This long-term pattern appears to have ended as the policies of the countries have diverged considerably since around 1990. Recent statements by the Prime Ministers provide a strikingly clear illustration of the different trajectories. As noted, upon the release of the demographic statistics collected in the 2002

census, PM Jean Chrétien immediately called for increased immigration. In contrast, PM John Howard, who heard essentially the same story of declining fertility and associated ageing for Australia, called for policies that would induce Australian women to bear more children. In New Zealand, PM Helen Clark has tended to echo the comments of her Canadian counterpart. In Canada and New Zealand, raising the level of permanent immigration is instinctively seen as a solution to pressing national problems, while this is less the case in Australia at the moment (especially when compared with both the recent and distant past). How can we account for these differences? The answer reflects the specific configuration of political and economic forces in each country, and the local assessment of the country's place in global developments.

As we have seen, there is a widespread consensus in Canada—probably more so than in any other country—that immigration is the best way to resolve the problems that could arise from declining fertility. There is remarkably little discussion of the growing body of reports, in Canada and especially in other high-income countries, which conclude that raising the level of immigration will have at best a modest effect on demographic structure (unless the increase is massive; see Health and Welfare Canada 1989; Münz 2001; McDonald 2002). It is worth noting, however, that immigration can provide an efficient solution to one problem associated with population ageing, labour market shortages. But this issue is only just beginning to be widely understood. Why is the public generally convinced of the long-term demographic benefits of immigration? In the first place, in complete contrast to the Australian or New Zealand situations, no credible political voice has emerged to challenge the decision to continue the relatively high rates of immigration or, indeed, to raise them further. All of the Canadian political parties have adopted pro-immigration policies, including the right-of-centre Alliance Party, which advocates more stringent procedures for refugee claimants and a rebalancing of immigrant admissions towards the entry of more skilled workers and fewer family members—but still supports immigration in principle. There is absolutely nothing like One Nation or New Zealand First on the Canadian political horizon.

Another point that critics frequently raise is the fact that the impacts of immigration in Canada (as in Australia and New Zealand) are tightly focused in a few large cities and barely felt elsewhere. Many, therefore, call for more effective attempts to spread settlement more widely across the country. The federal government has responded to these concerns by, first and foremost, allowing provincial governments to directly sponsor a small number of immigrants (there is no parallel to this devolution of immigrant selection in Australia or New Zealand) and, more recently, by outlining new proposals to require certain categories of immigrants to stay in one place for three years. These initiatives may silence criticism based on regional imbalances, which leads to a second reason why

immigration is widely accepted: the Canadian government has made a number of efforts to respond to perceived problems associated with immigration. Of course these efforts may be real or just symbolic, but the point is that they tend to lend credibility to the immigration program.

Why are all political parties in Canada supportive of immigration? There appear to be two reasons for this. In the first place, all of the parties are highly aware of the importance of electors in multicultural urban areas. Simply put, criticizing immigration is likely to lead to a political backlash in a large number of electoral districts.<sup>12</sup> Politicians of every stripe acknowledge the relevance and immediacy of immigration issues in these ridings. Secondly, it should be noted that there is a large and well-organized set of advocacy groups, immigrant serving agencies, and other institutions in Canada that are politically active. Ironically, the Canadian government helped create this network when it chose to fund many settlement services indirectly through non-governmental organizations (Hawkins 1988). These groups are now at the forefront of lobby efforts and any statement by a politician, bureaucrat, or public personality critical of immigration is quickly denounced, usually with a charge that it is tinged with racism. That is, in public discourse, anti-immigration sentiments are equated with anti-immigrant and therefore racist sentiments. This connection is easily made since most of Canada's politicians and public figures are white, while most immigrants are not. Here we see the significance of the specific configuration of Canadian civil society and the ways that it influences political parties.

Finally, there is a voluminous amount of research on immigration in Canada that explores its impact. Much of this is conducted by researchers who are in some way aligned with the Metropolis project, a consortium of four centres of excellence funded by the federal government. Studies using econometric modeling have shown that the overall impact of immigration on the economy generally and the public finance system particularly is either benign or slightly positive (Li 2003). These findings give critics little ammunition for criticizing the program. Significantly, a similar Australian program, the Bureau of Immigration Research, was disbanded when the Howard government came to power in 1996 (Fincher 2001).

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<sup>12</sup> A scan of 1996 census data, based on federal electoral boundaries, reveals that more than 30 percent of the population was born abroad in approximately 15 percent of Canadian electoral districts. All are in major metropolitan centres. It is highly unlikely that a political party could form a majority government without at least some of these parliamentary seats.

Conversely, Australia demonstrates a completely different political climate than that seen in Canada. To begin with, there was an organized party that set itself against immigration and multiculturalism. For example, a 1998 policy statement of the One Nation Party asserted that:

Economically immigration is unsustainable and socially, if continued as is, will lead to an ethnically divided Australia...on current demographics our population will exceed 23 million even if immigration is cut to zero net immediately. ... To aim for population sustainability in Australia, [if this party is elected] the immigration intake will be restricted to zero net migration. (quoted in McDonald and Krippen 1999)

It hardly matters that the mathematics presented here are wrong (this is convincingly demonstrated by McDonald and Krippen 1999; also see Fincher 2001); the more salient fact is that One Nation rallied rural and conservative urban voters around anti-immigrant sentiments. Moreover, as mentioned above, their frequent pronouncements linking immigration with declining living standards, and multiculturalism with social division and conflict, ignored what had previously been accepted codes of conduct in the Australian media and public debate. Howard distanced himself from Hanson's extreme views, but was adamant that they were part of a legitimate debate. In fact, according to Andrew Markus (2001), he saw the statements of Hanson and the One Nation Party as evidence that Australia was open to free speech on highly sensitive topics; he believed this was a major improvement over the political climate existing in the 1980s, when he and Geoffrey Blainey experienced so much criticism for voicing a less extreme version of the same views. Markus argues that in defending the rights of One Nation to speak out against immigration and the Asianization of Australia, Howard legitimized their views. Since the rise of One Nation, there is no longer a politically correct climate surrounding immigration debate in Australia, despite the demise of the One Nation party, and it is considered acceptable to call for reductions to the program in contrast to Canada.

Secondly, it is worth noting that public opinion in Australia was mildly against the high-level immigration of the 1980s, and particularly so in the 1990s recession (Holton and Lanphier 1992; Betts 1999), though it is difficult to show whether this was the result of Hanson and her colleagues. The lack of public support may not have dictated the government's decision to reduce immigration, but certainly enabled it. Note that public opinion in Canada was also mildly against high immigration admissions in the early- to mid-1990s, but that this did not lead to a reduction in numbers (Simon and Lynch 1999; Aubry 2002).<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> While there has been a lack of support for immigration in Canada in a number of opinion polls, a 2002 survey of public opinion conducted in 44 countries reveals that Canadians have by far the most positive attitude towards immigration and immigrants (The Pew Research Center, 2002). Unfortunately Australia and New Zealand were not part of the study.

Thirdly, the demographic justification for increasing immigration, so prominent in Canada, has no purchase in Australia. In general terms, Phillip Ruddock, the current Minister of Immigration, believes it would be wrong for the Australian government to establish a policy that set a particular target for the future population size (Ruddock 1999; also see Ley and Hiebert 2001). But more specifically, he is convinced by the argument that immigration cannot solve the problems associated with declining fertility. This position was most recently stated at an influential conference, organized by DIMIA, by McDonald (2002), who demonstrated that, in the context of low fertility rates, immigration (unless massive) will have little bearing on the ageing phenomenon. This point was reiterated by Minister Ruddock in the closing remarks of the event (Ruddock 2002b).

But there is a fourth vital ingredient in the Australian polity that is almost entirely lacking in Canada: a link between environmentalism and an anti-immigration position. Prominent environmentalists in Australia have fastened much more strongly than in Canada on the idea of zero population growth (Collins 1991: 313-319; Fincher 1992). For example, Harry Recher, Professor of Environmental Management at Edith Cowan University, stated in 1997 that: I would stop immigration—adding more people from any source is an ecological error. Australia also needs a one-child policy. (quoted in McDonald and Krippen 1999). The New South Wales Premier, Bob Carr, is perhaps the strongest advocate of the environmental critique of Australian immigration, particularly as it impacts on Sydney. The Greens and the Australian Democrats have also, with One Nation, argues for zero net migration on environmental grounds. At its extreme, this means that every single newcomer is a problem since he or she adds to the demand for housing, roads and, most crucially, water. There is considerable debate about this position. In particular, some commentators on the left (e.g., Fernandez 1994; Castles *et al.* 1998) identify zero-population-growth environmentalism as a displaced form of racism, noting that most of the potential immigrants who would be barred from settling in Australia are non-white. Nevertheless, several points follow from the link between environmentalism and anti-immigration advocacy: as in the case of the One Nation Party, it enables public criticism of immigration; it also means there can be alliances against immigration across the political spectrum, linking right, centre and left; and it serves to split the left between environmentalist and pro-immigration factions. This is quite unlike the situation in Canada where the left is almost uniformly supportive of immigration as part of a broad spectrum of political support in favour of immigration.

This configuration of political forces also helps explain Australia's recent enthusiasm for temporary migrants. Some 100,000 are admitted annually to supply labour in a variety of industries. These migrants are easily justified politically, as they fill economic gaps, are expected to leave if their

employment is withdrawn, and do not have full access to Australian social services yet pay income and consumption taxes. It is worth noting that temporary migrants are entitled to apply for permanent status and many do so. This can be interpreted as an efficient means of selecting immigrants who have already succeeded in adapting to the Australian labour market. Canada also approves of a large number of working visas, and also allows temporary migrants to apply for permanent status, but maintains a larger permanent immigration program.

This configuration provides a context for Australia's reframing of its multicultural policy. In Canada, multiculturalism is enshrined in both national law and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The most recent definition of the term, available on the government's website (Canadian Heritage, n.d.), is:

Canadian Multiculturalism is fundamental to our belief that all citizens are equal. Multiculturalism ensures that all citizens can keep their identities, can take pride in the ancestry and have a sense of belonging. Acceptance gives Canadians a feeling of security and self-confidence, making them more open to, and accepting of, diverse cultures. The Canadian experience has shown that multiculturalism encourages racial and ethnic harmony and cross-cultural understanding, and discourages ghettoization, hatred, discrimination and violence.

Through multiculturalism, Canada recognizes the potential of all Canadians, encouraging them to integrate into their society and take an active part in its social, cultural, economic and political affairs. The principal characteristics of this definition are: equality; acceptance; belonging; understanding; reduction in discrimination; integration; and participation. The equivalent, most recent, Australian web page (DIMIA, n.d.), states:

Australian multiculturalism recognizes and celebrates Australia's cultural diversity. It accepts and respects the right of all Australians to express and share their individual cultural heritage with an overriding commitment to Australia and the basic structures and values of Australian democracy.

It also refers specifically to the strategies, policies and programs that are designed to:

- make our administrative, social and economic infrastructure more responsive to the rights, obligations and needs of our culturally diverse population;
- promote social harmony among the different cultural groups in our society; and
- optimize the benefits of our cultural diversity for all Australians.

The basic principles illustrated here are: celebration of diversity; acceptance; and an expectation of a commitment to Australia. In addition, the definition outlines the government's responsibilities to the needs of diverse peoples; i.e., to promote harmony and ensure that all

Australians (as opposed to just some groups) benefit from diversity. At first glance, these appear to be similar to the features of the Canadian definition, but there are some key differences. Both statements highlight a desire for inclusiveness, but the Australian one stresses the responsibility of all citizens to the nation and its values, which implies, on some level, a singular political culture. In essence, multiculturalism is inserted into a particular form of nationalism. The second part of the Australian definition, as already noted, carries with it the responsibilities of the government to ensure a diversity dividend that all share.

This definition of multiculturalism in Australia hints at a larger problem at the core of the Coalition government's political agenda: reconciling the contradiction between nationalism and globalization. Howard and his colleagues are convinced that opening Australia's economy to the world is the best way to ensure economic growth. Immigration, especially of skilled workers (temporary as well as permanent), is an integral element of this project, as it furnishes the economy with needed employees and also successful entrepreneurs. Moreover, immigrants provide essential knowledge of world markets and are able to communicate in relevant languages (and, it could well be added, using appropriate cultural codes of conduct; see Hsing 1996). Finally, as Murphy and Watson (2002) show, multiculturalism has increasingly been used as a marketing device to attract tourism and investment to Australia. Sydney, for example, characterizes itself as the world within a city and highlights its cosmopolitan, vibrant, and tolerant character in an effort to situate itself as a leading financial centre in the Pacific region.<sup>14</sup>

But there are two primary difficulties associated with this strategy. Inevitably, opening an economy to global investment and trade implies economic adjustment, that is, losing jobs in uncompetitive industries while (hopefully) gaining them in others. This problem is exacerbated by the neoliberal desire to reduce the size of government and social programs, such as unemployment and retraining programs. Under these circumstances, economic adjustment can quickly lead to a disgruntled electorate. Secondly, there is the issue of incorporating newcomers into Australian society, which has shown deep misgivings about immigration and multiculturalism, especially since the mid-1990s (Murphy and Watson 2002). Andrew Markus (2001) argues that the Howard government actually fanned this discontent in the months leading to the 2001 election campaign, by reintroducing the politics of race in their response to asylum seekers arriving by boat from Southeast Asia. He believes this was done to deflect concern from the substantial economic reforms under way, that, in effect, nationalist fervour, once ignited, would blind the electorate. This may be true, but the

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<sup>14</sup> For example, Sydney's cosmopolitanism was portrayed as an asset during the city's bid for the 2000 Olympics, leading the *Australian Muslim Times* to print a front-page story entitled 'Multiculturalism wins the games for Sydney' (quoted in Murphy and Watson 2002).

reorientation of multicultural policy can also be seen as a means to, on the one hand, blunt the change associated with the immigration of people from other cultures (by emphasizing their responsibility to adopt core Australian values) and, on the other, sell immigration and multiculturalism as an economic bonus that everyone in the country will share. In this way, nationalism and globalization can be seen to coexist, tied together with a neoliberal agenda justified with the promise of future prosperity.

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New Zealand shares a number of the elements that have characterized Australia in the 1990s, but there are also some significant differences which have become even more profound in recent years. The similarities include the appearance of anti-immigrant political parties in the form of New Zealand First which gained 10 per cent of the popular vote in the 2002 election and 13 MPs. The departure from the racially selective immigration policies which had prevailed until 1986, and the arrival of significant numbers from Asian source countries was reflected in growing levels of public concern and opposition through the mid-1990s. New Zealand First, along with some minor fringe political parties, articulated this concern during the 1996 election and have continued to provide a forceful and often misleading anti-immigrant position. This provided some interesting options for other conservative parties. The main conservative party, the National party, which had been a chief proponent of the new immigrant policies, had adopted a somewhat different position by the 2002 election where it stressed the common citizenship of all New Zealanders. The other centre-right party, United Futures, and the right wing ACT party were both in favour of the new immigration policy regime although both had liberal views on issues around nation-building and social cohesion. Unlike New Zealand First, they did not demonize immigrants as being at fault.

The differences with Australia, and with Canada, have become more pronounced in recent years in a number of aspects. The most obvious difference has been the centrality of bicultural politics and policies involving Maori and Pakeha, and the settling of historical grievances and attempts to reduce social and economic gaps between Maori and other New Zealanders. Multiculturalism, of whatever hue, has yet to find a space in national debates and policy, although the growing cultural diversity of New Zealanders, especially in Auckland, has increased the pressure to develop policies that address such diversity. However, the dominance of indigenous and bicultural issues are such that a major challenge will be how to explore such options without being seen as diminishing or marginalizing biculturalism (Fleras and Spoonley 1999).

Another issue is the diverging approach towards immigration that has become apparent between Australia and New Zealand, compounded by trans-Tasman agreements that provide easy access to the other country for citizens or those with permanent residence. The latter has seen significant numbers of New Zealanders migrate to live in Australia. It was estimated that 400,000 New Zealanders live in Australia at any one time. However, Australian politicians see the threshold for access to New Zealand for non-Australian immigrants as being less demanding than for Australia, and once immigrants have qualified for residency in New Zealand, they can then enter Australia under the Trans-Tasman Agreement (1973). This backdoor entry for immigrants who might not have got direct access to Australia, especially for certain Pacific and Asian migrants, has become something of a tension point. This has been compounded by the approach to refugees, most obviously in the case of the Tampa when New Zealand offered to take 123 of those involved whereas Australia has a policy of interment (cf Woomera) or of paying Pacific countries to take these refugees (cf Nauru) (Jupp 2002). New Zealand, at least outwardly, has a more lenient attitude towards the entry of immigrants generally and refugees in particular.

There are two reasons for this. One is the fact that New Zealand has become a country of emigration as well as immigration. In 2001, 800,000 New Zealanders (500,000 New Zealand residents and 300,000 of their children) were resident outside New Zealand, forming a kind of diaspora. These are significant numbers when compared with the New Zealand resident population of around 3.9 million. Immigrants provide a replacement population with approximately the same numbers of overseas born resident in New Zealand (700,000) as New Zealanders resident outside the country (Bedford 2001). By September 2002, the annual net gain in the previous year was 37,120, almost 1 percent of the population. While the immigration policies concerning skills and the allocation of points for preferred categories are broadly similar to Australia, and Canada, the level of outmigration has escalated the debate around skill loss (the brain drain) and the need for population replacement. Furthermore, the largest group of emigrants are in Australia, and New Zealand, by virtue of these dynamics, must operate a more relaxed approach to the constant flow of people both in and out of the country.

The second point is that there is a less nationalistic ethos than in Australia. There have been clear expectations from some quarters of the need for immigrants to assimilate to New Zealand, but the development of biculturalism has had a major impact on the significance of an undifferentiated citizenship (Maori can exercise two different forms of citizenship), and it has challenged the sense of a single nationalistic narrative (Fleras and Spoonley 1999). Notions of nationalism and the project of nation-building have taken a somewhat different course since the 1980s, in sharp contrast particularly

to the Australians. The overall effect has been to see major new forms of transnationalism amongst both the New Zealand diaspora and those arriving as immigrants, and softer and more ambiguous forms of nationalism. This is also true in Canada, with the polity fragmented into several distinct forms of nationalism—the strongest, of course, are those advanced within the francophones population of Québec and indigenous peoples throughout the country. As a result it is impossible to define a singular Canadian identity and, as in New Zealand, it is difficult to define precisely the cultural and social conventions to which immigrants to which immigrants might be expected to assimilate.

## **Conclusion**

Australia, Canada and New Zealand have shared a history of similar immigration and settlement policies, at times borrowing from one another. For a number of reasons outlined at the outset of this paper, we could expect this parallel development to continue during the 1990s, but it did not. Canada increased the level of temporary migrants in the early 1990s and has maintained the same relative number since. The government of that country has raised its numerical targets for permanent immigrants and all indications suggest this trajectory will be maintained for the foreseeable future. While some have suspicions that the Canadian government has downgraded its commitment to multiculturalism, there is little definitive evidence for this allegation. Conversely, Australia has decided to reduce permanent immigration in favour of temporary, and substantially reframe multicultural policy. New Zealand has opted for significant levels of permanent migration but this has been influenced by the large on-migration from immigrant communities and the emigration of New Zealanders on a policy terrain that is dominated by biculturalism, rather than multiculturalism.

There are complex reasons behind these choices, but the governments of each country are pursuing policies that they believe will enhance the economic future of their respective countries. In Canada, this is defined as a need for permanent immigration, with labour shortages and the long-term viability of social programs seen as the fundamental concerns (though a case can be made that immigration will not solve long-term demographic problems). Permanent immigration is part of the Australian strategy for economic gain also, but in more modest numbers, and allied with a settlement policy that encourages a more active form of integration. New Zealand is also pursuing economic gains, and because of emigration, will have to adjust levels of approvals for permanent migrants upwards.

These different choices demonstrate several important things. First, there is no inevitable convergence of immigration policy across high-income countries. Policies may be *similar* in that each country has entry rules that differentiate between permanent and temporary settlers, all may be engaged in a global game of enticing the best and brightest to immigrate, and so on, but distinct choices are being made—and will continue to be made—on the number, composition, and status of immigrants. These choices are difficult to predict, since they are the outcome of complex political-economic processes. Secondly, governments intent upon facilitating globalization do not make the same policy choices. Neoliberalism can be variously defined, depending on economic, demographic, and political circumstances and, crucially, how governing parties *interpret* those circumstances. Thirdly, policy choices are usually framed and justified in a rhetoric of the national interest. But there are pronounced differences between Australia, Canada, and New Zealand in the ways that national interest becomes articulated in the political arena. In Canada, demographic concerns occupy centre stage and are at the core of debates about immigration, while they are all but ignored in Australia. In fact, issues of demography tend to be raised only mainly by environmentalists in Australia who are alarmed at the ecological consequences of population growth generally. This is simply not part of the debate in either Canada or New Zealand. In other words, national interest is a flexible concept that can be construed/constructed differently depending on the specific, contingent forces at play.

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