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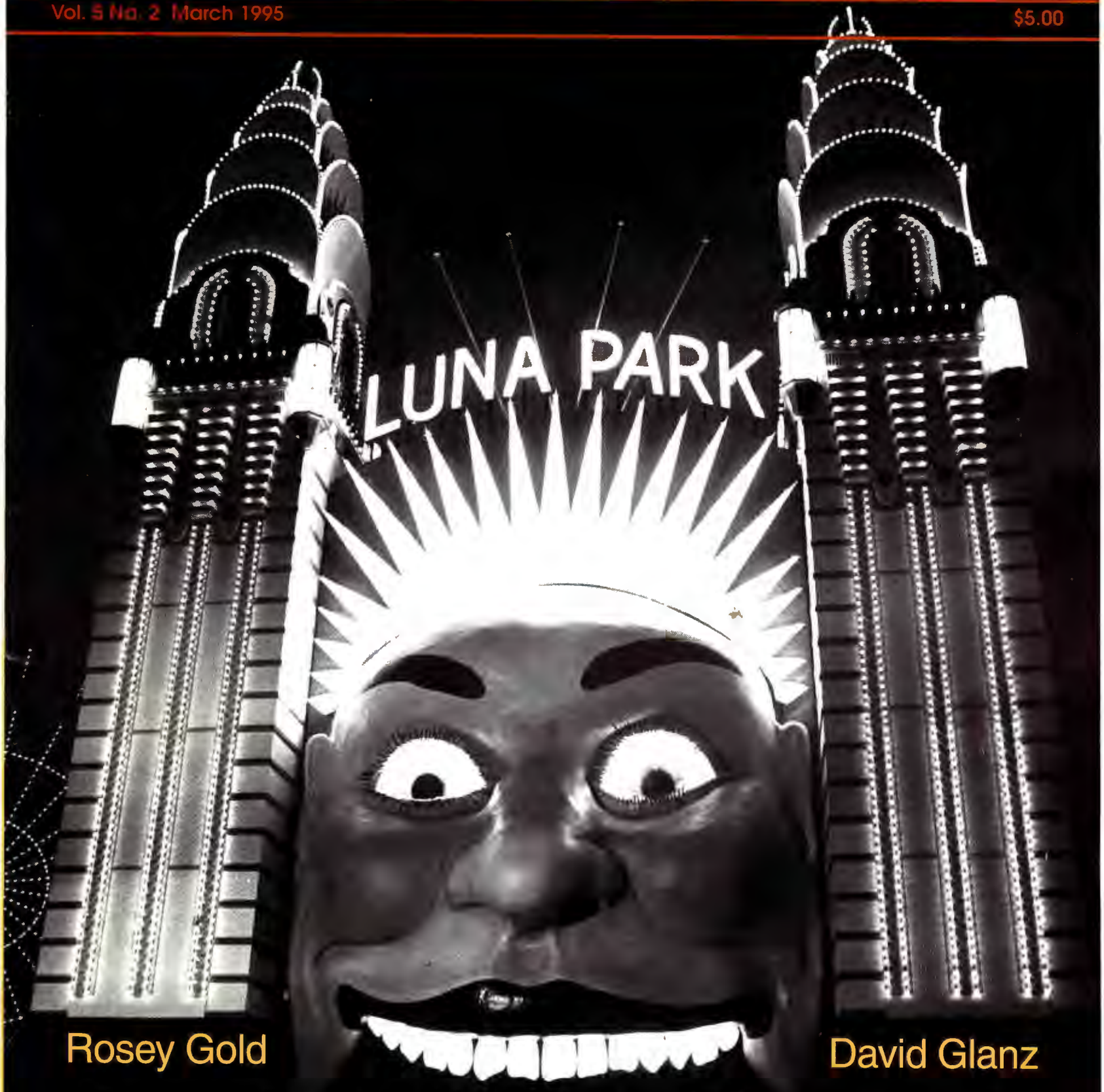

Rosey Gold

David Glanz

From Luna Park to Albert Park

This land is our land

"I've put a price on food"

"We take for granted the ready availability of food from our local shops. But in a lot of countries there are no shops. And no food.

"In those countries, millions wake up hungry every day and most are chronically malnourished.

"I've found a way to put something aside to help people who have no luck, no home and can't feed their kids. I'm giving 5 cents to Project Compassion for every can of food and every frozen food pack in my kitchen.

"Each week, we'll add 20 cents for every cup of tea, coffee or other drink.

"The way I see it, if we all put a little aside every time we do something that we tend to take for granted, we can really do a lot to help build a better world.

"It's as easy as believing that we can make a difference".

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☐ *I enclose my Project Compassion donation $*_____

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With the amount of $ _____ *Card expiry date* /

Signed _____

Mr/Mrs/Miss _____
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EUREKA STREET

Volume 5 Number 2
March 1995

A magazine of public affairs, the arts and theology

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Photographs pp3, 7, 18-19 by Andrew Stark.
Cartoon p9 by Dean Moore.
Graphics p10, 50 by Siobhan Jackson.
Graphic p21 by Tim Metherall and Siobhan Jackson.

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EUREKA STREET

A magazine of public affairs, the arts and theology

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COMMENT

MORAG FRASER

Resolution and independence

BRIAN JOHNS COMES TO HIS NEW position as managing director of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation in times that can only be called interesting.

There are serious challenges afoot to diversity and independence in journalism and broadcasting, nationally and internationally. We are seeing them at home, with Kerry Packer's most recent challenge to Australia's media cross-ownership rules. Mr Packer is able to appear on his own television network to suggest that Australia's current media laws are ridiculous and that it would be in the national interest for him, as a patriotic Australian, to own both the Fairfax print holdings and the Channel 9 network. And who will say him nay? The Government? Will the decision be made by the rules of principle or political expediency? We shall have to wait and see. The signs are not reassuring.

Newt Gingrich, Republican leader of the American House of Representatives, and increasingly influential spokesman for the radical right, wants to see the end of public funding for America's Corporation of Public Broadcasting (CPB). Public broadcasting is not a big budget item in a US which spends close to a billion a day on its defence establishment. It is not taxpayers' money that Gingrich is seeking to save—it's their sense of freedom from government interference. What is under attack is the notion of a publicly owned, government-funded organisation in an America looking for a return to individual initiative. The loss of government funding would force full sponsorship on the CPB, and thus the end of independence. Possibly even the end of public broadcasting.

AUSTRALIANS WHO HAVE HAD TO SCAVENGE for independent and unhomogenised news and analysis while living in the United States will understand what that means. The CPB is a repository of serious, independent journalism. It is the source of some of the best documentary programs and series available in the world. But it is meanly funded and vulnerable. The networks, by contrast, have vast resources and information to burn, but you don't have to be Noam Chomsky to be suspicious of their independence and wary of their national and international clout.

It is not so easy to grasp this in Australia because we take for granted the existence of the ABC. 'It's your CPB', is not a slogan that would run in the US. Americans are too suspicious of government, and too culturally wedded to a philosophy of private responsibility and enterprise to own such a collective notion. We have an opportunity to be different—culturally more diverse and yet more coherent—because we are, as a nation, more receptive to the idea of a public institution that, with astute management, will reflect us accurately and represent us critically and responsibly.

Brian Johns has taken on one of the most important jobs in the country. We wish him well. **—Morag Fraser** ■

COMMENT: 2

BRIAN TOOHEY

Super heroes

SUBSIDISING THE LIFE-STYLE OF RICH RETIREES would not seem a high priority for a government due to bring down a tough pre-election budget in May. Especially not when its senior public servants are urging it to slash programs for the long-term unemployed and to deny rental subsidies for some of the poorest people in the nation.

Nevertheless, lavish subsidies for the rich have survived the list of suggested cuts drawn up by the public servants hand-picked by the Labor government to head up the departments of Prime Minister and Cabinet, Finance and Treasury. After all the talk we've heard from these same public servants about the need to direct welfare spending to those most in need, we might have expected the superannuation tax concessions to head their list of cuts totalling $21 billion over four years. According to the leaked versions of the list, however, not a cent should be shaved from the concessions despite the fact that they are massively biased in favour of the rich.

Welfare spending on retirees takes two forms in Australia. One involves the age pension; the other, the superannuation tax concessions. Means tests are supposed to ensure that the full benefit of the age pension only goes to those most in need. The superannuation concessions, in contrast, give most to those least in need. Because superannuation is taxed at a flat rate of 15 per cent, this amounts to an extremely generous subsidy for those who would otherwise pay the top marginal tax rate of 47 cents in the dollar. But the concessions are of little value for low-income earners on a marginal rate of 20 cents in the dollar.

The upshot is that an executive earning $200,000 a year could get a taxpayer subsidy of more than $600 a week on retirement, compared to a subsidy in the form of the age pension of just under $160 a week. In the past, low-to-middle income earners could expect to retire on an age pension paid out general tax revenue. To the extent that the tax system is progressive—a feature that has been significantly reduced under Labor—the pension is subsidised by higher-income earners.

The move to compulsory superannuation is intended to diminish the call on general revenue by making low-and-middle income earners pay directly for their retirement incomes. The new system is promoted on the grounds that it lets ordinary workers have access to benefits previously regarded as the preserve of the 'big end of town'. It is a strange notion of 'benefit'—low income earners are being asked to believe that the loss of subsidy inherent in the age pension will be offset by the trivial value of the tax concessions on their superannuation tax contributions. For the well-off, however, the concessions remain a highly regressive bonanza.

The concessions, which currently cost $5.6 billion, were originally introduced as an incentive to attract voluntary contributions to superannuation. When this failed to achieve the desired boost to saving in Australia, the government introduced compulsory contributions. Even though it is deeply irrational to provide incentives for people to do something about which they have no choice, the concessions have not been scrapped on the compulsory component. The case for retaining the concessions for voluntary contributions is no better—the cost to revenue is unlikely to be offset by an additional flow of private savings.

As super-fund members are now discovering, how much money they will have for their retirement depends on how well their money is invested. Left in the high-priced hands of the fund managers, its value can go down as well as up. Worse still, the recent spate of bond market speculation by the fund managers presumes interest rates should rise to levels that will cost many workers their jobs.

None of which is to say that a modified version of compulsory super should not be retained. Fund members, however, should insist that their money is not used for job-destroying speculation in the money markets. But the tax concessions should go. If they remain in some limited form, at the very least, they should no longer be used to subsidise the consumption of the rich in their old age.

Brian Toohey is a freelance journalist.

COMMENT: 3

STEPHEN G. WHEATCROFT

Yeltsin's mire

THE CATASTROPHIC WAR IN CHECHNYA has compounded the crisis that Russia is already facing. Economic restructuring in the federation has been slow, and in some areas moves at a snail's pace. Gross Domestic Product is only 50 per cent of what it was in 1990 and, although 1994 saw a drop in the inflation rate, by the end of the year even this positive sign was disappearing.

The legislative elections in December 1993 gave the ultra-nationalists a large share of the vote, entrenching the stalemate between reformers and conservatives, and between centrists and those who want more power for the regions. Most reformist and regional groups feared that increased instability would precipitate a situation in which the ultra-nationalists would seize more power. For their part, the ultra-nationalists were prepared to allow the Yeltsin government to continue to preside over an increasingly difficult economic situation.

So it remains unclear why Yeltsin and the Russian military decided to risk so much on the Chechen adventure. Chechen rebellion, already in its third year, was beginning to collapse by itself. And the frequently heard claims that the Chechen mafia were making dangerous inroads into commercial life in the Russian capital do not appear to have much substance.

Some military leaders may have thought that the time was right to make a show of military strength in order to begin the restoration of authority. Others may have wanted to sabotage the attempts of their colleagues to restore authority. The military were clearly divided and many officers traditionally thought of as hawks in the West (e.g. Generals Gromov and Lobed) have appeared among the doves. And Defence Minister Grachev—the figure generally regarded in Russian military circles as a dangerous liberal—has emerged from a damaging financial scandal to become the superhawk.

President Yeltsin's motives are even harder to fathom. Although he managed to preserve his democratic image in spite of the shelling of Parliament in 1993, he has not emerged untarnished from the bombing and shelling of civilians in Grozny and other areas of Chechnya. Cynics argue that he was desperate to create a situation in which next year's elections could be cancelled, although he would emphasise his concern to preserve the integrity of the Russian Federation.

The main question appears to be: Who was in charge? Was Yeltsin able to control Grachev, and was Grachev able to control the army? The fact that these two quasi-liberals claim that they were always in control should not lead us to believe that they were—any more than Gorbachev was in control of the Soviet army in Lithuania in the northern winter of 1990-91. (It is ironic that Gorbachev's biggest critic at the time was Boris Yeltsin.)

But, although the causes of the latest developments remain unclear, some of the likely consequences are more obvious. The social crisis has been aggravated—especially in Chechnya, which now requires extensive humanitarian and development aid. Even if the figure of 25,000 civilian fatalities as a result of the bombing and shelling is disputed, the scale of civilian casualties remains very high. And there is no disagreement about the numbers fleeing from Grozny. The level of civilian refugees has been estimated at 200,000; they clearly face severe hardship in the northern winter.

Economic devastation in Chechnya is immense. The area will take years to rebuild, and the potential economic loss to the rest of the country has to be considered also. Direct foreign investment in Russia is now only a tenth of the low level of last year, and multilateral aid and debt relief have been imperilled. It is difficult to see how the further collapse of the economy can now be avoided.

Finally, there is the question of the political consequences. On the positive side it looks as though the attempts of the Chechens to turn their struggle into a religious war involving all the Islamic regions of Russia, and the Islamic republics of the former Soviet Union, has failed. But it is less clear whether the attempts of the hawks to enforce greater centralisation has succeeded.

For the moment both Yeltsin and Grachev remain in office, but only by claiming that they are in control of this disastrous situation. Should they fail to convince, there are figures like Generals Lobed and Gromov waiting in the wings. And although these two now appear as doves, it is difficult not to imagine them taking on a more authoritarian and repressive role should they have the opportunity. The liberals in Russia rightly consider the Chechen adventure as an unmitigated disaster, and one which will further complicate the task of political and economic recovery in Russia. ■

Stephen G. Wheatcroft is Director of the Centre for Russian and Euro-Asian Studies at the University of Melbourne.

COMMENT: 4

MICHAEL MCGIRR

The saint came marching in

THE POPE'S 40-HOUR VISIT to beatify Mary MacKillop in mid-January was a public-relations triumph. For three days he monopolised the media. *A Current Affair* ran for an extra half-hour to cover his arrival at Sydney airport and the presenter, Mike Munro, kept reminding viewers they were witnessing 'incredible scenes'. The tabloids were no less thrilled. Forty years ago a royal visit might have prompted the same response. These days it's hard to think of *anything* to compare. The Murdoch stable offered free posters one day and commemorative medallions the next. The Sydney *Telegraph-Mirror* led with 'Our welcome to a friend' and produced a special edition in order to splash 'Pope's joy' across the front page.

Joy, or at least humour, was the hallmark of the visit. When it was announced to a waiting crowd in the domain that the Pope had been held up in traffic on Oxford Street, Sydney's gay precinct, even people holding an umbrella in one hand and rosary beads in the other managed a smile. It was reported that a soup kitchen in Oxford Street put up a banner that thanked the Pope for 'coming out.'

But the humour didn't all come from offstage. If the press was infatuated to the extent of reporting that the Holy Father had flathead for one meal and chicken kiev for another, it also recorded his remark, 'So this chicken comes from Kiev?'

In public the Pope appeared to have the same daggy but thoroughly winning sense of humour. After the formalities at the domain, he changed key and said 'Enough for today, more tomorrow.' Despite all expectations to the contrary, he seemed to be enjoying himself.

Many said that the crowd of 200,000 for the beatification at Randwick Racecourse represented the diversity of the Australian population. The same could have been true of the media contingent, twice as large as for the previous papal tour in 1986. In the media room it was possible to see a journalist from a Catholic newspaper kneeling devoutly during the Eucharistic Prayer while, two metres away, a radio reporter went live to air, shouting to be heard above the din. These two individuals might have been participating in two entirely different events. Christianity is exotic to many Australians.The cameras of the ABC followed the service dutifully but when the words 'Not even Solomon in all his glory ...' were read from the gospels, they looked for a Solomon Islander in the crowd.

The international media were assisted by one of many volunteer marshals, the kind of gentleman who took up the collection every Sunday in Menzies' Australia. This marshal was nonplussed by the Aboriginal smoking ceremony that, in a superb innovation, took the place of incensing the altar at the start of Mass. 'Don't tell me the Abos are taking over,' he announced to the ears of the world. Fortunately, the international representatives were soon distracted. They suddenly realised that this was the first Mass at which the Pope had ever been served at the altar by women. Apparently the role played on the altar by sisters of St Joseph was what made news overseas. Meanwhile, a discreet group called Ordination of Catholic Women spoke with quiet dignity in the letters pages of papers, in a paid advertisement in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, and at the back of the throng in the Sydney domain.

Significant diversity is to be found in what different parties intend to make of the beatification of an Australian nun renowned for offering education to remote communities and to the poor. A Vatican official, travelling with the Pope, said that the Pope performs such ceremonies in person as a way of binding the local church more closely to Rome. Local devotions are authenticated by the same person and thereby form part of a larger whole. You might wonder if it is the Pope's ability to stretch a uniform message and a uniform language across cultures that makes him such a hero of the Murdoch press.

A wilful optimism can read things differently. The proliferation of 'blesseds' under John Paul II do lend personality and character to the local churches where they are honoured.

Water divining: Cardinal Clancy with Pope John Paul.

Photo: Andrew Stark.

Mary MacKillop's charisma, especially in negotiating authority, is readily accessible to the Australian temperament but difficult to translate. The rite of beatification, as always, commenced with the local bishop, Cardinal Edward Clancy, asking the bishop of Rome to make what is really no more than a simple announcement. This request begins with the devotion of a local community.

During the ceremony, the gospel was proclaimed from the table at which Mary MacKillop had written part of her voluminous correspondence. There were other telling gestures. The ABC agreed not to focus on politicians and celebrities in the crowd. Five hundred lay ministers of communion, many in sunscreen and sloppy hats, held bowls of bread throughout the consecration; some of the priests who helped with communion didn't return to the altar afterwards because, according to an unwritten local rubric, by that stage the ceremony had gone on long enough. The national anthem was sung at the end and the Pope stayed on to make a few off-the-cuff remarks. 'Papa today,' he said, 'Cardinal Clancy tomorrow.' One hopes that there is more than humour to this parting endorsement of the local church.

Above all else, the celebration was a reminder of the current fortunes of Christianity in Australia. In the euphoria, many suggested that the beatification was the biggest gathering in Australia since the bicentenary. It wasn't. The crowd was about a third of that drawn each year by Sydney's gay and lesbian mardigras. The media centre in the Hotel Intercontinental was under the same roof as the gallery of Charles Billich, the artist who did the portrait of Mary MacKillop presented to the Pope for the Vatican Collection. Billich's swish premises were lined with his stock in trade: cityscapes, sporting images and nudes. For a few days MacKillop was among them.

As the Pope left Mascot he quipped that the drought-breaking rain was the first gift from Mary MacKillop. The same rain was falling that Friday morning on the funeral of Thomas Mayne, a chemical engineer who, 60 years ago, invented Milo. The project took four years but the final product now earns Nestlé $550 million every year in 30 countries. Mayne didn't get a share: he was a company man. Mourners heard that he put his loyalty to Nestlé above everything else, even, at times, his family. Mayne died at the age of 94. It was marvellous, in his case, the difference Milo didn't make. A handful of people came to pay their last respects in an unprepossessing redbrick church in the western suburbs of Sydney. It was, the morning after the beatification, a sober kind of liturgy. ■

Michael McGirr SJ is consulting editor of *Eureka Street*.

Taxing questions

From G F Byrne

Eureka Street has covered the question of social welfare a number of times, in Australia and other countries. The message that emerges is that changes have seldom been for the good, even though the facts are seldom as clear as one would like them to be.

One fact that has emerged fairly clearly however is that the total taxation take in Australia is very low by world standards. (e.g. see the OECD publication 'Revenue Statistics of OECD Member Countries' 1965-1993). Many people find this news unpalatable, but I for one have been unable to track down any refutation of the OECD figures that could be taken seriously. Perhaps one of your readers might be able to help.

Until such a refutation appears we must assume that the OECD figures are the best available and that we hence have considerable resources up our sleeves to assist the needy.

Certainly, the typical response of the public to charitable appeals would suggest that many in the community are well aware of how fortunate they are. It seems as if the politicians might be missing something.

G.F. Byrne
O'Connor, ACT

Split players

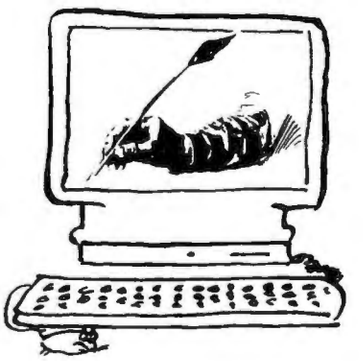
From Kevin C. Davis

Paul Ormonde's reply suggests some common ground between us on the Great Labor Split of 50 years ago. I was pleased to read his view that the motives of both myself and most of my supporters 'were entirely honourable'.

He clearly agrees there was a Communist union problem, one in which the Industrial Groups—backed by the Movement—'achieved outstanding' success against the Communists.

The success should not be attributed solely to the Movement's 'founder and guiding philosopher, Mr Santamaria.' I am sure Mr Santamaria would agree. The major Industrial Group victories e.g. in the Ironworkers, Clerks, AEU and the Miner's Federation, occurred only after NSW had been reorganised and then grafted onto the national framework of the Social Studies Movement.

Eureka Street welcomes letters from its readers. Short letters are more likely to be published, and all letters may be edited. Letters must be signed, and should include a contact phone number and the writer's name and address.



Of course, the Communists and the Groupers had sharp ideological differences, which were quite fundamental.

Did this fact make the Groupers 'fundamentalist Catholics?' Hardly. Did it make them 'dreamers' because, according to Paul Ormonde, a Communist revolution would need a military invasion to be successful?

I denied this 50 years ago. I still do and, in the brief extract from my speech to the State Library Conference, I was simply saying that the threat to Australian democracy would come, not from an invasion, but from the immense power that control of unions would give to the local Communists.

I am proud to have played a role, however small, in the Industrial Group's defeat of Communist union power over 50 years ago.

It's a pity Paul Ormonde seems unable to share my satisfaction at this Christian victory. What a difference it could have made, had the much stronger German Catholic Community fought the Nazis in defence of their freedoms in the decade prior to 1933.

One final point. Why should Santamaria be condemned for pushing Christian social order policies on the Labor Party?

Surely, any party in pluralist Australia with some social and moral values, would be a vast improvement on the Keating Government, which has no firm moral values and seemingly believes in nothing?

Kevin C. Davis
West Ryde, NSW

Abuser pays

From Michael Gorton, Equal Opportunity Commission, Victoria.

The commentary from Moira Rayner ('Bearing the Burdens of Proof', *Eureka Street*, December 1994) is a timely reminder of the prevalence and impact of sexual harassment.

In its recently released annual report, the Equal Opportunity Commission announced a 43 per cent increase in the number of complaints in 1993-94 over the previous year. Overwhelmingly, discrimination in employment continued to increase, by 68 per cent over the previous year, rising to 1414 complaints in 1993-94.

Of great concern is the increase in sexual harassment complaints in employment, which rose by 160 per cent to 416 complaints in the current year. Pregnancy discrimination complaints in employment rose by 114 per cent, to 158 complaints.

It is the philosophy of Australian discrimination legislation that complaints of this nature are sought to be resolved by way of confidential conciliation. However, for matters that are not so resolved, the remedies available under equal opportunity legislation also act as a deterrent. Ms Rayner has mentioned a recent case in Western Australia that led to compensation of $95,000 being awarded. Quite significant sums have also been paid to complainants in Victoria arising from sexual harassment or sex discrimination complaints. The legislation therefore offers both 'the carrot and the stick'.

To address the dramatic increase in complaints of sex discrimination, the Equal Opportunity Commission plans to work with employers, employees and their associations, to en-

sure that adequate information and education is available in the workplace. Employers, in particular, must be made aware of their obligations and the risk of substantial compensation payments if their obligations are not met.

Michael Gorton
Melbourne

Thank you

From Geoff Freeman

I found the group of articles in the November edition from people at the Research School of Social Sciences very interesting.

I read them in two capacities. As a general reader, a citizen perhaps, I appreciated them greatly. As a social research and planning consultant I found them useful and stimulating.

Please let there be more of that kind of thing in the magazine.

Geoff Freeman
Balywn VIC

This month, thanks to Penguin Books, the writer of every letter published in *Eureka Street* will receive a timely copy of **The Prince**, by **Niccolò Machiavelli** Penguin Classics, RRP $7.95.

Role models

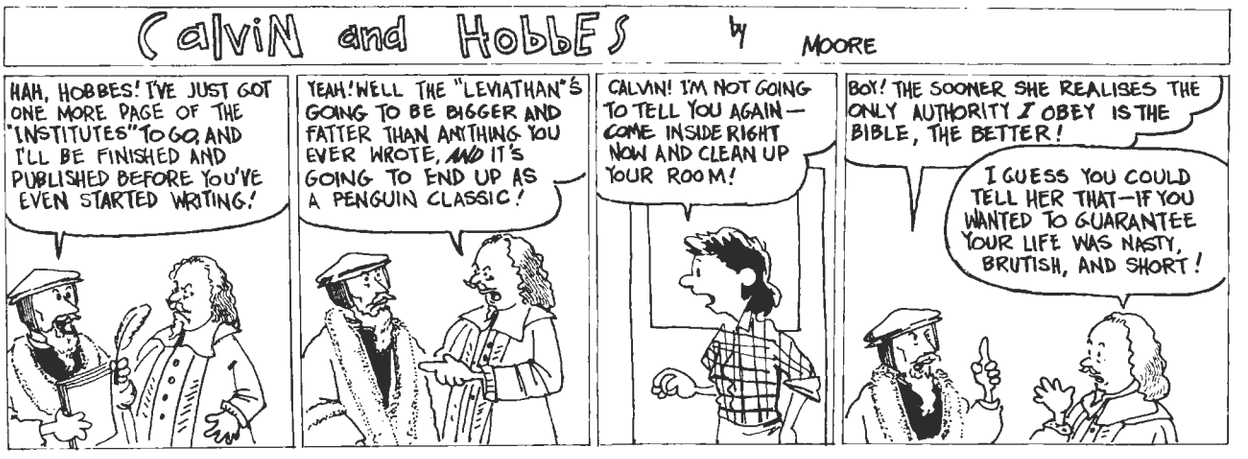
from Michael D. Breen,

If Christopher Skase can liken himself to Nelson Mandela and Terry Waite when incarcerated, it leads to some interesting speculation as to who some others may be.

Rupert Murdoch: Jesus (nourishment for the masses)
Alan Bond: Pericles (the Builder)
Brian Bourke: Martin Luther King (visionary)
John Major: Mickey Mouse (the sorcerer's apprentice)
Boris Yeltsin: W.C.Fields (inadvertently funny drinker)
Richard Court: Daisy Bates (friend of the natives)
Paul Keating: Leonardo da Vinci (humanist genius)

Perhaps your readers might like to add to or emend the list.

Michael D. Breen,
Shenton Park, W.A.



MICHAEL KELLY

James Patrick Carroll, 1908-1995

AUSTRALIA LOST AN ARCHIVE when Archbishop James Carroll was buried in Sydney on 17 January. He was a pivotal figure in the two most significant developments for the Catholic Church in this country since World War II—the growth of Catholic education, and the Labor split of the 1950s.

To say the least, the archbishop was complex. He was always seen as a solid Labor man, yet he spent much of his last week of life trying to find a job for an ostracised and unemployed former Liberal minister; Carroll would allow no celebration of his work in education, nor any event to mark his retirement as a bishop, yet he admitted to friends that his greatest disappointment was not becoming Archbishop of Sydney (and with it gaining a red hat). He was accused of dividing the efforts of Catholics in Labor politics and on the issue of state aid, but to his dying day he would write or say nothing of those events, for fear of opening old wounds.

At his death, two facts stand to the credit of his view of things: a Catholic education system whose size and competence now exceed the hopes of even its boldest advocates of half a century ago; and an Australian Labor Party in which Catholics contribute openly, without being suspected of running their own conspiratorial agenda. To these developments Carroll made an essential contribution.

James Patrick Carroll was born in the working-class Sydney suburb of Newtown in 1908. Following his clerical education in Rome, he returned to Sydney where, after a series of appointments as an assistant, he became parish priest of Enmore in 1944. But it was his appointment as auxiliary bishop to Cardinal Gilroy in 1954 that was fateful.

Among his first tasks was to advise the cardinal on how the church in Sydney should handle what was subsequently called the Split. Under the direction of B.A.Santamaria, the Catholic Social Studies Movement had been active in supporting the development of the anti-communist Industrial Groups in trade unions and, through Catholic officials, in exercising influence at senior levels of party administration. The burning issues of the day were whether to 'stay in and fight (the Communists in the ALP)' or 'get clear and fight uncorrupted (by the Communists in the ALP)'.

Carroll's advice to the bishops was that the Movement had done its work in the unions but had outlived its usefulness when it tried to take over the ALP. He concluded that it should not be supported in Sydney. For this he was lastingly berated for having 'ratted' on good and honest Catholic laymen (they were all male) by preferring what was said to be the 'Sydney line', that is, keeping power in clerical hands.

But for every Kevin Davis or Jim Macken (Movement organisers in Sydney) who wanted to keep 'the show' going in that city, and lost their jobs because of Carroll's advice, there were Joe Cahills and Jack Renshaws (both NSW Labor Premiers) who saw Santamaria as divisive. 'Clericalist' Sydney did not triumph over 'lay-activist' Melbourne. What prevailed was Carroll's advice, that is a different view of the relationship between church and state than that abroad in Melbourne, and a different estimation of how to achieve agreed goals. Its effects are felt to this day in the composition and disposition of the present Federal Government.

When James Darcy Freeman was preferred as Archbishop of Sydney in 1971, Carroll was only 63. He had a full 12 years before episcopal retirement. He had long been active in education and it was into this area of church work that he invested his considerable capacity. The election of the Whitlam Government in 1972 was decisive for the future of Catholic schools. Kim Beazley Snr was Whitlam's Education Minister and it was under him that universal, needs-based funding, particularly for disadvantaged schools, became the basis of payment to the non-government sector. This was a method of funding based on a philosophy of discrimination in favour of poorer schools rather than an across-the-board 'per capita' grant scheme followed by the Liberals at the time. That's where the fighting started again.

In August 1972, Carroll stated publicly that church authorities could work with both ALP and Liberal policies. This was attacked for being a crucial endorsement of the ALP in the lead-up to the December general election. Many of the same people who had lambasted Carroll for his stance on the Labor split joined in the attack, claiming that his statement betrayed the efforts of those who, during the '60s, had tried to cajole state aid from the Liberals.

But Carroll's record stands. Although Catholic education authorities in the 1960s had many fears of imminent failure in the system—rising costs, declining religious personnel, enlarged Catholic student populations, improved professional standards—today Catholic education is the most robust arm of the church, and the most extensive means by which church personnel intersect with the gifts and the shortcomings of the wider culture.

Archbishop Carroll lived for much of this century. What Australian Catholics make of the next century will have been greatly enhanced by what he did in this. ■

Michael Kelly SJ is the publisher of *Eureka Street*.

JAMES GRIFFIN

Bougainville corrigenda

I DARESAY IT HAD TO HAPPEN. Someone eventually told Noam Chomsky, prince of political *idiots savants*, about the secessionist strife in Bougainville; so he had to become a supporter of the Bougainville rebels. But he has been rather too dilatory: the star of the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) has already waned, even among its immediate supporters, a minority of Bougainvilleans. No matter to Chomsky: he links the rebel cause with that of the East Timorese. In the *Canberra Times* (21/1/95) he told us that Australia could be responsible for the PNG Defence Force's brutal attempts to suppress 'a legitimate movement for self-determination'. At the National Press Club (24/1/95) we were treated to an anarchistic *mélange* of contemporary history that defied the complexities of international relations and seemed to deny the protective functions of the state.

Ironically by equating the causes of the East Timorese and the BRA, Chomsky is virtually encouraging Jakarta to pressure Port Moresby to take the most repressive line and not concede provincial autonomy if that will be held up as a model for an East Timor settlement.

Linking East Timor and Bougainville is, of course, not original. Gough Whitlam's attitude to Indonesia's takeover was influenced by the possibility of secession in PNG in 1974-5. For Whitlam, East Timor was merely a corrupt and torpid remnant of Iberian (and so, fascist) empire; a cartographical absurdity; too small and poor to be viable; with too many 'half-breeds' (Whitlam's term) in its leadership to be regarded as indigenous and legitimate; quite unpredictable politically; bound to provoke the Indonesian generals and become a focus of discord in the region. Better to get it over quickly.

Whitlam was determined PNG would go to independence intact. If East Timor became independent, what arguments could be used against Bougainville's claims? Sure, it was much smaller in population (then roughly 100,000 versus 650,000), but, even without its copper and gold, it was more viable than most of Oceania's mini-states would be; it was a distinct entity geographically from the rest of PNG, although linked by traditions, ethnicity, intermarriage, local trade and missionary groups with the western part of the Solomons archipelago and the nation-state that would emerge there in 1978.

In London in April 1973, Whitlam had a slick solution to that: integrate or associate the then British Solomon Islands Protectorate with PNG! That proposal stirred up nationalism in a normally quiescent Honiara which, naturally, had not been consulted. And, if Whitlam could glibly say that Bougainville was 'a part of the Solomons both geographically and racially', was he not conceding, on the basis of 'natural boundaries' that the Solomons archipelago should be integrated, with Bougainville resources powering that new nation rather than creating longer term problems in PNG? With PNG dependent on the Bougainville mine for any semblance of economic independence, Whitlam did not raise that issue again.

The sententiousness has not all come from the left. Brian Buckley, in the *Herald Sun* (17/12/92) informed us that Indonesians had actually 'offered arms' to the BRA. Indeed, 'many observers believe Indonesia has a long-term, if not urgent policy to assist the destabilisation of PNG'. My memory rather tells me that Indonesian spokesmen have been known to suggest that 'communism' was behind Bougainville secession, and to be concerned that, if successful, it could only encourage Irian Jayanese, East Timorese, South Moluccans, sundry Sumatrans,etc.to resist Javanese hegemony. Buckley cannot distinguish between alleged Indonesian interest in 'destabilising' and real concern about 'instability'.

SOME OF THE FANTASIES WERE:

- The Solomon Islands government had spoken to Indonesia 'about support' for Bougainville secession. When?
- Other Pacific nations 'support Bougainville's UN application'. The UN has never entertained a 'Bougainville' application, since the 'Bougainville Interim Government' has no standing. But complaints have been made to the UN Human Rights Commission and the Secretary General has sent observers.
- The Bougainville rebels 'have the support of most chiefs and most of the people'. It would be interesting to know if Buckley has the faintest idea what a 'chief' means in Bougainville but, in any case, 100 'chiefs' met at Buka in April 1993 and asked for the restoration of provincial government, not the BIG.
- The Bougainville people are 'racially distinct' and the Solomonese 'are racial brothers and sisters'. Buckley does not understand the concept of 'race' or he would know that it is not defined by skin colour. Or, if he is correct, then roughly half the Solomonese could not possibly be the same 'race', even excluding the Polynesian islands. The so-called 'black spot' of Melanesia goes no further southeast than Santa Isabel. Bougainvilleans share basic cultural patterns with other Melanesians, and derive their traditional languages from similar sources. In postcontact times they have embraced the same Christian religions and modern languages (Tok Pisin and English).

The moral of Buckley's mish-mash was that Australia, through its involvement in Bougainville, was being drawn into conflict with Indonesia. Apparently there were even 'Australian mercenaries' working for PNG in Bougainville, suggesting that Buckley's 'reliable sources' may owe something to the BIG's propaganda. Its recent media release 'Australian and British Forces Now Invading Bougainville' (19/12/94), actually had a British submarine named *Conqueror* off the Bougainville coast with plans 'to capture BRA leaders' and 'orders to shoot anything that moves'. Such is BIG's credibility that the Social Responsibility and Justice Committee of the Uniting Church in Australia wrote to Stephen Loosely (20/12/1994) expressing concern that this might be true and hoping that his Senate subcommittee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade would act 'urgently to prevent further bloodshed'. Not unexpectedly the submarine has not yet surfaced.

Somehow Buckley managed to find a connection between fear of a dispute with Indonesia and the desirability of continued aid to PNG. Why, he asked should Australia 'continue to fund PNG to the tune of $300 million a year when its leaders threaten our mining enterprises with expropriation and are conducting a brutal military campaign against the racially distinct people of Bougainville'? Neither statement was true: PNG sought equity, not expropriation, and the war is against the BRA, not the Bougainville people. The only corollary I could draw from Buckley's mish-mash, is that Australia should withdraw aid and leave PNG to fragment—although this would ensure that destabilisation Indonesia is alleged to desire. ■

James Griffin is an historian and has written extensively on Bougainville.

ANDREW HAMILTON

Just a lot of hokus-Bolkus

IN DECEMBER LAST YEAR, the Immigration Minister, Senator Bolkus, announced that he would legislate to deal with recently arrived boat people from China. Among other measures, he promised that asylum-seekers would not be able to appeal to China's one-child policy to support their claim for refugee status. In fact, like other Chinese minority groups, this group of Sino-Vietnamese had not been subject to the one-child policy. The new legislation is really designed to nullify a recent decision by Justice Sackville in the Federal Court.

Public comment on the proposed legislation has generally been confused. Some have supposed it justified because Australia faces an uncontrollable inrush of asylum seekers, and most have failed to realise that the Sackville judgment is very limited in its effects. The case heard by Justice Sackville concerned a couple from Guangdong who had fled to Australia because they disagreed with China's one-child policy.

They feared that if they had a second child they would be forcibly sterilised. They provided compelling evidence that, although the Chinese government policy did not encourage such a penalty, local officials sometimes imposed it. The Refugee Review Tribunal had granted the couple refugee status, but the government appealed to the Federal Court against the decision.

Both the government and the tribunal appealed to the UN Convention on the Status of Refugees, which commits governments to protect 'any person who ... owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable, or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country'. Under the convention, asylum seekers need to establish three things to justify their claim to refugee status: first, that they will face persecution in their own land, secondly, that the reasons for which they will be persecuted are among those mentioned in the definition, and thirdly that they do not enjoy the protection of their own government.

In the case heard in the Federal Court, the second point was at issue. Both sides agreed that the threat of compulsory sterilisation counted as persecution, but the government contested the tribunal's judgment that the couple were persecuted because they belonged to a social group. Justice Sackville upheld the judgment, finding that people did not have to associate together to form a social group—it was enough that they shared common traits (such as resistance to government attempts to regulate family size) and were perceived to be a group. The fact that they could remove themselves from the group by accepting government policy was not pertinent.

THE PRACTICAL CONSEQUENCES of this decision are clearly limited. It does not entitle to refugee status all who are opposed to the one child policy, for asylum seekers need also to show that they will face persecution. Given that the fiscal measures by which China enforces the one-child policy have not been accepted to be persecution, applicants must show that they live in a region where the local officials impose sterilisation or abortion with impunity. Such cases are likely to be relatively few, and can be dealt with by existing legislation.

To make a new law is easy enough, of course, but the difficulty will arise when the government tries to give reasons for its legislation that do not compromise public positions it has adopted on other issues. The government could argue bluntly, for example, that it is not in Australia's interests to accept refugees from China. But this would contradict Australia's commitment to the United Nations Convention on Refugees.

Secondly, the government could again argue the case rejected in the Federal Court, that those who are opposed to the one-child policy are not members of a social group. The difficulty with this step is that to deny that discrimination can entitle a group to protection would also seem to weaken the case for the protection of homosexuals and other groups.

Thirdly, the government could argue that those opposed to the one-child policy are not subject to persecution. Forced abortion and sterilisation, however, have generally been regarded as an infringement of personal rights—most notably by an Australian human rights delegation to China.

Fourthly, some have claimed that the Chinese are not entitled to protection because they can remove themselves from the persecuted social group by following government policy. This argument has already been rejected in another Federal Court case. Moreover, if it were true, it could logically be extended to other forms of religious and political persecution. People should not flee, but should simply stop worshipping as they please or speaking critically about the government.

Fifthly, the government could follow critics who argue that there are different standards of human rights and dignity. What would be persecution when suffered by Australians is not persecution in China, because the Chinese have different concepts of human rights. This argument appears to be contradicted by the Chinese who are driven to seek asylum because they share Western notions of rights, dignity and persecution.

Finally, the Government could endorse the one-child policy as unequivocally good, and argue that those who violate it are criminals. Such an argument would at least be consistent, but it would not enjoy great support in the Australian community.

I shall examine this issue in detail next month. ■

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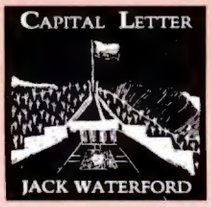


Leaders found, teams gone missing

THE LIBERAL PARTY has found no Messiah in John Howard. Most of the favourable opinion polls can be written off to the new leader's 'honeymoon', and to a bit of serendipity in taking office at a time when the Government must begin to dishonour election promises to bring the budget into line. Most of the ingredients of Liberal instability are still there, and, in Paul Keating, Howard has an opponent who is adept both at chipping away at his enemies' weaknesses and at finding the issue that will divide them.

But it is not clear that Keating has time on his side. A high proportion of the electorate yearns to be rid of him, but it is frightened of the alternatives; others have an instinctive loyalty to Labor but sense the tiredness of the Government and the vulnerability of Keating and his ministers on allegations of competence. In contrast, Howard's great strength is that he does not frighten the horses and has always seemed competent.

For Howard, the big risks are in his personality and his intrinsic conservatism. Last time around, Howard became isolated even from his natural allies, distrusting them more and more. Like Keating, he presides poorly and delegates badly. His wife Janette is an acute confidante and advise, but their closeness can serve to isolate him from his followers. He is a good speaker, with a natural dignity, but has always seemed somewhat diminished on television. he does not, however, terrify the electorate, as some of his shriller predecessors have done.

Howard's conservatism puts him at risk not so much because of his inclinations on matters such as the Queen and the flag, but because of his cautious instinct. Labor is doing enough things badly for government to fall into his lap, and the Liberals' best chance of yet again snatching defeat from the jaws of victory comes from continuing internal dissension (which Keating is skilled at stirring up). That suggests caution, keeping the focus on government performance, but Howard must also lead, avoiding the philosophical difficulties that have so long bedevilled the Liberals and projecting a sense of optimism and a vision for the future.

Keating' attack on Howard is much more cleverly focused on Howard's weaknesses than is appreciated. Hammering away at Howard the Treasurer of a decade ago, and at the supposed Lost Years, will not work: half of the electorate simply does not remember it, and both that half and the half that does remember it have plenty more reasons to remember Keating as Treasurer and his annual promises to turn the economy round by Christmas. So Keating wants to portray Howard as a second-class thinker, someone who is indecisive and lacking in vision. Keating, by comparison, is the man steering Australia into a clear future.

But he has to attend to taws as well. The Government has become a ministerial system operating without a Cabinet, without strategic or tactical leadership. Keating is remote from most of his ministers, and even more from the policy battles they are fighting. The failure to use Cabinet has two particular problems: it is important that battles should be fought out ritually, even when the outcome is clear, because it binds the participants to the outcome and helps them rehearse the arguments necessary to defend them; just as importantly, it helps inculcate in all ministers a sense of the government as a whole.

The woodchip debacle illustrates the problem, with its spectre of two silly ministers each acting at the behest of their own departments, as pure advocates for the 'clients' they serve.

But governments have clashes of interests all the time. What distinguishes the performances of Faulkner and Beddall from performances of the ministers in earlier debates is that a Richardson and a Griffiths—even lesser performers such as a Kelly and a Lee—always knew instinctively that the survival of the government was the first consideration, and that the decision ultimately taken must one that can be sold to the maximum number of the government's constituencies. Their ministerial offices provided, first and foremost, *political* advice based on views of what was best for the Government, and only secondarily advocacy for any particular constituency.

The new lot does not do this, and now there is no mechanism to hold things together, until there is a crisis. And when that occurs, the Keating style of crisis management—grenade-throwing— is hardly ever likely to restore equilibrium.

KEATING'S PROBLEM is that there are actual or potential administrative crises in all but a few of the portfolio areas. Even in some of the quieter ones, he faces substantial unrest if the expenditure review committee, as it probably must, forces big cuts in government spending in the course of drawing up the next budget.

Howard's honeymoon will wear off. But if he keeps plugging at the question of whether Keating can govern, and whether he is doing so effectively, he can probably sustain the Opposition through a period of establishing its own policy credibility, even with some active dissension about outcomes. He is no ogre, after all. Perhaps, as Keating suggests, he is boring, plodding and lacks imagination. But he has usually seemed safe. ■

Jack Waterford is deputy editor of the *Canberra Times*.

DAVID GLANZ

Marvellous (middle) Melbourne

MASS ARRESTS ON THE PICKET LINE. People perching in trees to stop them being chainsawed, or cutting down cyclone-wire fencing to invade building sites. Demonstrations in the park, demonstrations in the streets, demonstrations outside Parliament. Activists' meetings of hundreds, rallies of thousands. Welcome to the new face of 'middle Melbourne'.

None of the central figures in this campaign comes from the front ranks of Jeff Kennett's traditional enemies, the ALP and the Victorian Trades Hall Council. Most have only scant experience, if any, of political activism. The Save Albert Park campaign (SAP), which wants the Victorian government to relocate the 1996 Formula One Grand Prix from the inner-city park that has been designated for it, defies easy categorisation. But for the past year the campaign has become the most sustained, widespread fight against the Kennett government.

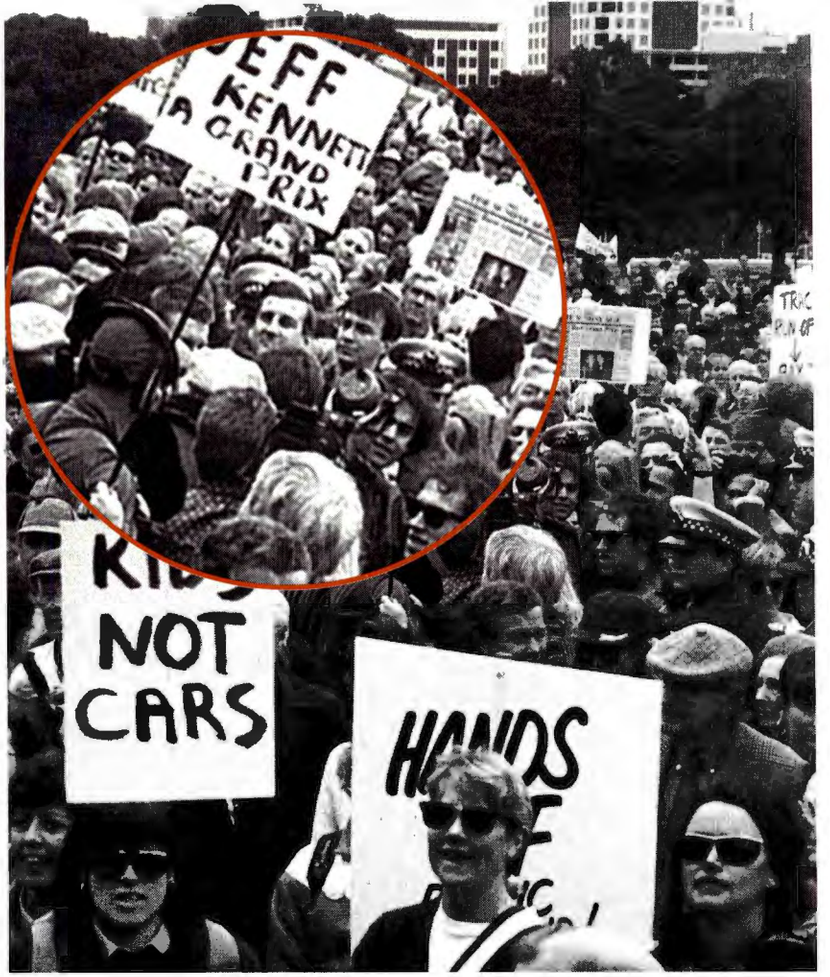
It is a sign of both the moral outrage caused by the government's plan, and of the lassitude prevailing among the conventional forces of opposition, that a movement which began at a residents' meeting beside a children's playground has become a major problem for the ruling Liberals, according to the party's own polling.

Those who came to that early protest in February 1994 had no intention of putting themselves at the head of such a campaign. Iain Stewart, one of the first residents to voice concern, and one of the few with experience in the trade union movement, came armed with a resolution: 'That was fatal—I became co-coordinator of the group. I certainly didn't foresee the fact that it would become the major political issue of the day.' Nonetheless, the meeting was to set a tone; of the 30 who volunteered to help, half are still involved.

Enthusiasm aside, the campaign nearly faltered at the start. According to Peter Cronin, who attended the first meeting and went on to become SAP's public events impresario, an amateurish organisational approach nearly smothered it. It took the quick-smart introduction of a division of responsibilities and the establishment of working parties to begin to create the professional style that has been SAP's hallmark since.

Style is not usually a word associated with protest movements. As a rule, a campaign's detractors harp on its grunge elements and alleged ratbaggery. Its supporters are too busy trying to win their aims to worry about style at all. But SAP has set out to make each protest a polished performance. As one newsletter reported: 'Save Albert Park has been making final preparations for mass protest. In keeping with all our activities, it will be well-organised, dignified, peaceful, good-humoured, and perhaps just a little different.'

So, the morning after 54 demonstrators were arrested for being inside a fence erected around them as they picketed, SAP campaigners unrolled fencing around the Grand Prix organisers' office. On the wire dangled plastic signs that mimicked those deployed the day before to declare the area out of bounds. The day after contractors felled 404 trees across the park, blindfolded SAP members stood along the park's roads, one on every fresh tree stump. The thousands



Nearly two-thirds of Labor voters, according to one opinion poll, are hostile to the idea of motor racing in the park, yet they seem under-represented in meetings and rallies. There is backing from unions representing, among others, teachers, health workers, electricians, plumbers and telecommunication workers; but the strategically important construction unions vary in attitude from indifference to hostility, effectively vetoing support from the Victorian Trades Hall Council. This is not a campaign that many on the left have embraced easily or wholeheartedly.

who came to 'reclaim the park' by breaching building-site security formed a 200-metre-long phalanx and twirled the campaign's hallmark yellow ribbons above their heads, creating a breathtaking spectacle and a surge of spirit.

The skill and speed with which some of these protests have been mounted—the 'fencing of the opposition' was carried out some eight hours after the idea was conceived—reflects the particular strengths that SAP's core middle-class membership has brought to the campaign. They tend to be professionals—actors, writers, computer specialists, the self-employed—who are used to deploying considerable resources in creating, supervising and carrying out projects. 'I've been involved in campaigns where raising $40 or $50 is a major achievement,' says Iain Stewart. 'For this campaign, $4000 or $5000 isn't a difficulty.'

WHAT IS REMARKABLE is the extent to which these people, contrary to their own expectations, have changed enormously in a year or less. Many voted Liberal in 1992, but would rather stroll across crushed glass than do so again. Others would have turned up their noses at demonstrators and 'agitators', but wear their 'Arrested at Albert Park' T-shirts with pride. Shortly before Christmas, the campaign executive donated to a western-suburbs metalworkers' strike fund. On the picket line, there are discussions between sixtysomething former Communist Party members and sixtysomething former conservatives over how to respond to police violence.

But, although the sight of an enraged, mobilised and self-professed 'middle Melbourne' in motion can be impressive, the very elements that contribute to its strength also contain potentially damaging weaknesses. Those used to acting decisively within the kind of hierarchies that typify business or administration find it difficult to adapt to the participatory democracy that is the normal stuff of protest movements. SAP's central leadership emerged early in the campaign and hugs its decision-making powers jealously. Members are consulted, but rarely allowed to make meaningful choices. Suggestions for further protests have sometimes foundered because leading figures are too tired to make them happen, and too wary of allowing others to take responsibility. There is a genuine failure to understand how a lively gathering of 200 supporters can produce ideas, energy and inspiration rather than anarchic chaos.

The middle-class, property-owning, non-political image of SAP has also cut it off from important sources of support. This is not a youthful campaign and is in no immediate danger of looking 'cool'. Nearly two-thirds of Labor voters, according to one opinion poll, are hostile to the idea of motor racing in the park, yet they seem under-represented in meetings and rallies. There is backing from unions representing, among others, teachers, health workers, electricians, plumbers and telecommunication workers; but the strategically important construction unions vary in attitude from indifference to hostility, effectively vetoing support from the Victorian Trades Hall Council. This is not a campaign that many on the left have embraced

Photograph above and p16 by Colin Bullbrook.

Peter Cronin, a founding member of SAP, lives in South Melbourne:

'I'm just a baby in terms of political activism. I was one of the crowd in the Moratorium and 1975 demonstrations, but I've never come out before in any strong way—so it's been a bit of a surprise to myself.

'I've always been an ALP voter, but I suppose it's Kennett's style of conservatism that's really riled me. That led me into the campaign as much as the concern for the park.

'I'm very fond of Melbourne—the pace, the lifestyle and the traditional things like the Botanical Gardens and the galleries, and sitting on the streets and having a coffee. And I see that under threat, a whole tradition that's going to go.

'The "event-led" recovery doesn't fit in with what a lot of people want. I just find it all very Sydney—I've always thought of Sydney as America and Melbourne as Europe.

'I think Kennett was shocked when he went to the first rally and saw the range of people there, the socio-economic backgrounds, the political allegiances.

'They mounted a campaign against us. We were branded enemies of the people who were going to rob the economy of a great deal of money, a front for the Labor Party and the International Socialists, and just a pack of Nimbys.'

Cronin has organised most of SAP's public protests and events. 'My influences have been in theatre. My family has always been very theatrical and organising concerts and shows, and I've always been directing amateur theatre.

'I like task-analysing things and I can get a picture in my head of the end look, and work out the steps to get there. Years of teaching disabled children has helped.

'A lot of people who come to our rallies don't normally attend rallies and I wanted to create a sense of safety, and I spent a lot of time making them look good—quality rallies in a way. I don't want to sound pompous, but they've been stylish and had a sense of flair about them. People like that.

'I've used middle-classness—not in the sense of mediocrity—as a campaign strategy to maintain the support and morale of the Melbourne church-going public. Sometimes you have to fight yourself—you have to be very measured in what you say.' ■

—David Glanz

easily or wholeheartedly. Despite these barriers, the fight to save the park has become a statewide issue. Part of the reason is the damage that construction work has already caused in the park. When trees came down in large numbers, hundreds of membership applications flooded the SAP office. Although Albert Park, which includes land reclaimed from a former tip, was never in the stakes for World Heritage listing, it is obvious to many that clearfelling and the laying of tarmac will not enhance one of the city's major lungs.

History tends to point to the same conclusion. Two Grand Prix races have been staged in Albert Park (the main Victorian venue over the years has been Phillip Island, with eight), but it was abandoned as a racing circuit in 1956. There is no reason to believe that problems of noise, pollution and traffic have shrunk since.

But perhaps the main reason for the campaign's prominence is that it has helped to compensate for an abdication of leadership by Labor and the Trades Hall Council. It is nearly two years since the council last called a mass rally to voice discontent at the Kennett government's agenda. And the ALP in Victoria seems more concerned to exorcise the ghosts of 'financial irresponsibility' than to mobilise those goaded by government policy. Discontent has not disappeared in the state but it has often lacked a clear and public focus, and despite SAP's in-built political reticence it has had that role thrust upon it.

'I think we were filling a void,' says Iain Stewart. 'In another climate and another time we mightn't have reached that point but when you think about what's happened since Kennett was elected—Trades Hall led a temporary flurry that collapsed after two rallies, and the Richmond and Northland secondary college disputes have both been prominent but haven't attracted wholesale support.'

FOR MANY PEOPLE, the campaign has become a metaphor for all they believe to be wrong with the Kennett government. The project is in flagrant violation of the wishes of large numbers, perhaps the majority, of people living in the vicinity of the park. There has been no consultation of any meaningful kind, and this situation has been exacerbated by the amalgamation of local councils. With government-appointed commissioners instead of elected councillors in the town halls, there is no constitutional vehicle for expressing, or even measuring, popular dissent.

The introduction of legislation to help the Grand Prix on its way fits an increasingly familiar pattern whereby State Parliament overrides the checks and balances available to citizens. More than 50 statutes passed by the Kennett government prohibit the right to take matters to the Supreme Court. At Albert Park,

residents have lost the right to sue over any damages arising from the construction of the circuit or the running of the race, and the right to protest has been severely curtailed. By the end of January, 160 SAP supporters had been arrested, thanks to the Grand Prix legislation allowing race organisers to declare parts of the park—a publicly owned open space—off-limits at any time of their choosing.

Kennett's enthusiasm for the race reflects his general approach of a 'major events-led' recovery—a fascination with the Crown Casino and showbusiness and sporting extravaganzas that jars with many who believe that the bread and butter priorities of government have been relegated to a distant second place. It has also fed whispers of cronyism: the key figure behind the Grand Prix plan is Ron Walker, federal Liberal Party treasurer, a director at the casino and an acknowledged buddy of the Premier.

Most significantly, perhaps, to many people the Albert Park plan symbolises the government's spending priorities. SAP has argued—so far without rebuttal—that the race will cost at least $250 million over 10 years, and the government's promise to cover race organisers against loss means that much of this will be at the taxpayer's expense—an expense that could largely be avoided if the race were held at an established venue, such as Philip Island or Sandown.

Not only does Albert Park need to be reconfigured in motor-friendly fashion, including the building of pit garages, run-offs and other permanent features, but much of the infrastructure will need to be reassembled and dismantled annually. As one SAP leaflet puts it, the estimated $12 million this will cost each year could put 45 ambulances and 150 ambulance officers on the road. The Adelaide Grand Prix has created fewer than 100 full-time jobs.

It was not only the founders of SAP who failed to grasp the campaign's ability to mobilise many thousands from beyond the neighbourhood of the park. It seems that Jeff Kennett made the same mistake. His appearance at SAP's first public rally—standing smiling and arms akimbo in front of the speakers' dais—was a public-relations blunder. Clearly, he had neither expected 10,000 to attend, nor the vociferous reception he received. It was arguably at that point that the campaign became a phenomenon. It was also then, it would seem, that the Premier decided that staging of the race in the park was a point of honour.

Can he be swayed? SAP's failure to date to win decisive trade union backing means that the government is still well-placed to carry out construction work, if necessary with a substantial police presence to deter protesters. On the other hand, the odds are a little more favourable to the protesters than it might seem. In the past six months the government has retreated on privatisation of the Port of Melbourne, suffered a string of setbacks associated with the campaign to save Richmond Secondary College, and seen another protest movement force the reopening of the inner-city Fitzroy Swimming Pool.

In the end, the outcome may be depend on something as simple and unexpected as, well, *attitude*. For the hundreds, if not thousands, of people who love the park and hate arrogance, autocracy and waste, too much has already been sacrificed to allow a little thing like an upstart politician to stand in their way. Middle Melbourne has set its jaw firmly, stiffened its upper lip, and resolved to fight to the finish. ■

David Glanz is a freelance journalist and a member of SAP.

Julia Hamer, a volunteer in the SAP office, lives in St Kilda West:

'I've been in the area for two years and became involved with my partner through our friendship network. It was something that was going to be across the road from us and, I suppose, opposed to my whole way of life.

'But [my commitment] fairly rapidly deepened—it isn't at all just a local issue and I've every sympathy for the broadening of the movement. There are so many things that concern me about the running of this state. There's been a reversal of the situation with Queensland. We're now the kind of state to be despised by right-thinking people around the rest of Australia.'

Hamer is the daughter of the former Victorian Liberal Premier, Sir Rupert Hamer, but diverged from the family tradition as a student in the early 1970s: 'I went with a leftwing friend to a Billy Graham event. My friend protested and was punched in the stomach by Graham's goons. That set me thinking a lot, I can tell you.

'I've always been a strong member of the teachers' union, but I've never been an organiser or instigator. I've always been one of the crowd.'

'The experience of taking part in, and taking responsibility for, the SAP campaign has begun to alter that. Me and everybody I'm working with, we've all started to talk about how we're changing. I see myself doing things I've never done before. Some people look to me for things—these are adults, not children. I feel I'm in the thick of something important.

'I think a lot about structures and how to set them up and make them work. It's very satisfying. We've got to move on and include people with lots of energy—that's absolutely essential. But there's got to be a central control. We need a balance between those two things.

'People have developed and changed and grown in this campaign in a way I've never seen before. I've seen somebody in the campaign change completely. Companionship had made him much more open and cheerful.

'People are working together for something they believe in.' **—David Glanz** ■

ROSEY GOLDS

Thrill seekers

Photograph of Luna Park ride by Andrew Stark.

SYDNEY'S LUNA PARK is open for business again. Its brilliant, grotesque beauty lights up the harbour like a great urban pantomime. Amusement parks are strange places, with their 'boulevard of broken dreams' aesthetic, their simulated pay-for-it, push-button disaster scenarios, and their hordes of hungry, prowling adolescents.

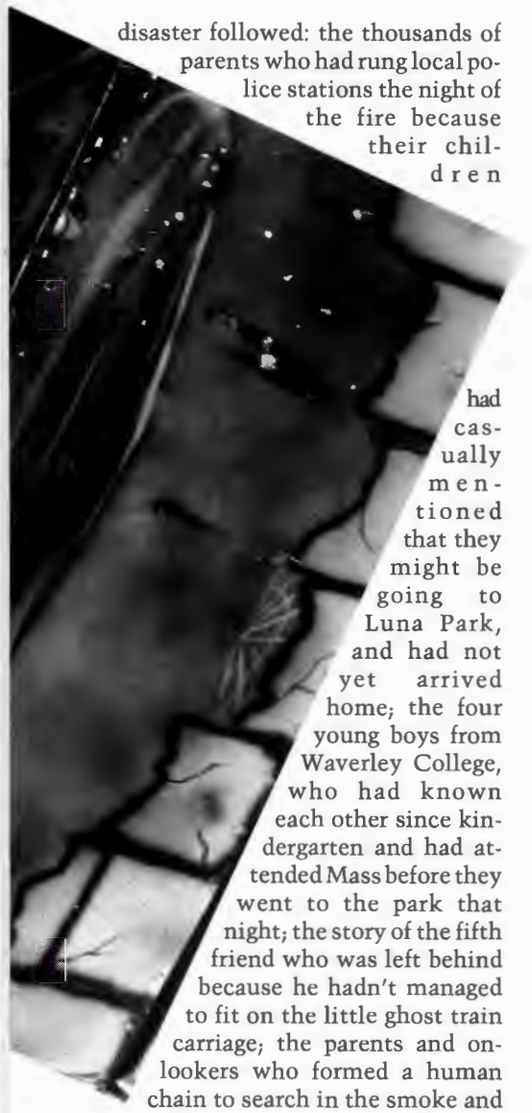
I have only visited Luna Park twice. In 1988 (the year it was closed for the second time) I was working at the Royal Alexander Hospital for Children and we took some terminally ill kids for an outing during the school holidays. Being a wussie type I was not altogether keen about going on the rides (I'm one of those people who becomes instantly terrified when the Manly ferry is rough, or when there's the slightest bit of turbulence on the plane). This time, however, I was morally obliged to accompany the kids on whatever means of mechanical mayhem caught their fancy. They were fiendishly ambitious. Their mission was to brave every ride at least once within the hour. I summoned up my courage, shut my eyes and hung on like hell. After all, I had a lifetime to avoid Luna Park; they had a year, perhaps less, to conquer it.

Yesterday, I visited Luna Park for the second time. It was a spooky experience. Without the distraction of being responsible for anybody else's welfare, I found myself lost in a kind of morbid reverie. Part of the reason for this was that I had visited the local history section of the public library earlier that day. I knew that Luna Park had a family skeleton from sometime in the late '70s, but since I was quite young at the time I had no real understanding of the events. So it was with some curiosity and a little trepidation that I reached for the huge book of news clippings which documented the various stops, starts and scandals of Luna Park over its 60-year history.

After the initial stories celebrating its sentimental stature in Sydney's cultural memory—the perfect place to go when you had everything or nothing to do—I was soon confronted with headline after headline screaming 'Luna Park Tragedy'. Seven people had been killed in a fire inside the ghost train at Luna Park in 1979. On page after page, the scattered details of the story unfolded.

The victims, their faces plastered over the front pages of every local and national newspaper, were four 13-year-old schoolboys, a father in his mid-30s and his two young sons. The faces of the four boys beamed at me from those blindingly cheerful school photographs almost all of us have tucked away in some album on top of a wardrobe somewhere. The photograph circulating in the media of the two little brothers was one of those familiar sibling pixie snaps taken when there was a spare moment in a department store or supermarket on an afternoon's grocery shopping. The kind of photograph that people proudly display on their desks at work or carry with them in their wallets. There is something chilling about the use of these domestic images for a media autopsy. It's as if the bland optimism of the photographs mocks what we now know to be the destiny of their subjects. Perhaps also, the sheer banality of the portraits, the fact that everyone has an identical version of them lost somewhere with the remnants of their own childhood, reminds us all the more painfully that it could just as easily have been one of us.

As I turned the pages of the book, the harrowing particulars of the



disaster followed: the thousands of parents who had rung local police stations the night of the fire because their children had casually mentioned that they might be going to Luna Park, and had not yet arrived home; the four young boys from Waverley College, who had known each other since kindergarten and had attended Mass before they went to the park that night; the story of the fifth friend who was left behind because he hadn't managed to fit on the little ghost train carriage; the parents and onlookers who formed a human chain to search in the smoke and darkness, for fear that if every person did not link hands some might never return. Or the letter in *The Sydney Morning Herald* from the parents of the four boys, praising the police for their gallantry and sensitivity. And, months later, the inquests, the evidence of witnesses, the police, the firemen, the management, the coroners, the electrical experts, the villains, the heroes and so on and so on. Finally, the official verdict: cause of accident unknown.

THERE HAS BEEN GREAT MEDIA excitement in Sydney over the reopening of Luna Park. The baby-boomer press has gone into sentimental overdrive, telling us all how wonderful it was to be a teenager in a simpler world. This is not surprising, for amusement parks are the perfect metaphor for adolescence. They are a celebration of the precipice, the liminal moment, the frenzied oscillation between heroism and failure. They are also about experimentation, about acting out possible selves in pseudo danger, about rehearsing for life or death. I guess that's why my young friends from the hospital were so fearless. There is a haunting anti-alcohol campaign screening on television at the moment targeting adolescents. The scene is an amusement park. A young boy finds love but throws it away by getting drunk and appalling the young woman he adores. Amusement parks are about taking risks, making mistakes but also about triumphing over them.

There is something unspeakably tragic about a simulated nightmare becoming real. It's as if some unwritten, universal contract allowing one to test the world is shockingly betrayed. As if, in response to one frail gesture of defiance, the world roared back.

WANDERING THROUGH LUNA PARK that afternoon I searched for some kind of tribute to those who had died. All I could find were some official police photographs of the ruins from the fire. The pictures formed part of a series of story boards providing a brief history of the park. The photographs and their accompanying text were displayed in a small room opposite the fast food counters.

I telephoned Luna Park management the next day to ask whether there were any plans for a memorial. It turns out there is actually a small plaque with some words by Michael Leunig on the site of the original ghost train.

There are future plans—under the creative guidance of Martin Sharpe—for a memorial garden on the same site with a Leunig sculpture a little further down the track.

Amusement parks are strange places. I guess, in some ways, there is no more appropriate place for a monument to young death. ■

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It takes all sorts

Yes, but when it comes to dictionaries of biography, some sorts might still be more equal than others. ***Jim Davidson*** *reports.*

ALMOST DAILY WE ARE TOLD THAT we live in a postmodern, postcolonial culture, and on a planet increasingly subject to the forces of globalisation. In short it's a 'borderless world', as someone said the other day, when considering the difficulty of controlling pornography on computer networks. Nevertheless computers themselves have given a new lease of life to conserving, and often conservative, projects. The first edition of the *Oxford English Dictionary* took nearly 50 years to achieve: the second, larger and thoroughly revised, took only five. And now we learn that the British *Dictionary of National Biography*, also dating from the 1880s, is also to be thoroughly revised, while its editors are coming to regard print media as a spin-off from increasingly sophisticated computer software.

Aborigines have fared poorly, as well as women. Aborigines in the early volumes are depicted essentially as obstacles, to be overcome: women are taken for granted, and so are scarcely present.

At a conference in Canberra last month, representatives of a number of dictionaries of national biography gathered to reflect on their ventures. Symbolically, proceedings were opened by Colin Matthew, editor of the *New Dictionary of National Biography*, the original being seen as the progenitor of a series around the world. The Canadian one was established by a bequest left by a person who kept the *DNB* by his bedside; there is also an American one (scarcely discussed at Canberra), and, since 1990, a New Zealand one, which runs to volumes appearing in Maori. A South African dictionary of national biography seems to have ground to a halt—scarcely surprising—while the Irish seem to have severe organisational problems. (Part of the reason for this may be a generous inclusiveness, which extends as far as President Kennedy.)

The British *Dictionary of National Biography* set a standard that the former dominions at first were in no hurry to follow—after all the work was an imperial one, rather than being strictly British. (This also explains why Boadicea was given a guernsey, but none of her Roman adversaries.) However, its collaborative nature and affirmative tone as it dealt with the greatful dead would in due course be emulated elsewhere.

Meanwhile the nation-building component in the dictionary became more explicit as the venture moved into the 20th century. Leslie Stephen, the first editor, had been happy to include thieves and murderers, probably on the grounds that these figures often had greater contemporary resonance than diplomats or barristers: but in the Edwardian period an entry was seen to confer endorsement.

When the dictionary decided in the 1980s to issue a Missing Persons volume, it was found that in addition to the categories the initial volumes had skipped over, such as 17th-century regicides (not appreciative of the monarchy) and road and railway engineers and contractors (lowly occupations), there was a surprising number of notables who had been deemed, for one reason or another, not to have made the grade. These included Mercator, Marconi and J.C. Bach (foreigners), Radclyffe Hall (a lesbian), Jane of the fighting ships, Wisden of cricket, Stanley Gibbons of stamps, Mrs Beeton of the cookbook and Lloyd and Barclay of the banks (trade). Indeed class attitudes still swirl around the issue of inclusion: people at public meetings tell the editors that the Labour cabinet minister and absconder John Stonehouse should be included, whereas colleagues at Oxbridge high tables—as befits bright boys awarded a special place in the class system—are quite uncomfortable with the idea.

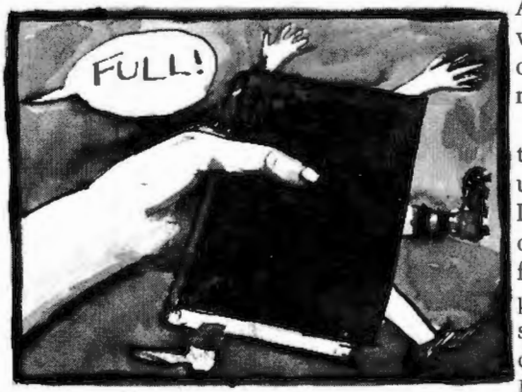
The *Australian Dictionary of Biography* in many respects follows the *DNB* pattern. It was conceived, not so much in the high noon of imperialism, but almost at its reverse, when the old dominions began to stir and to realise that cultural divergence from England might possibly be a good thing. If not quite Whitlamite, the first volumes were informed by many of the assumptions apparent in Donald Horne's *The Lucky Country* or Peter Coleman's *Australian Civilisation*. The details might be different, along with cultural parameters, but basically Australia was viewed as an Anglo-Saxon variant culture.

The early volumes of the *ADB* in particular will have to be revised one day, and already there is talk of a Missing Persons volume appearing at the end of the current series, 1940-1980. Some of the omissions are surprising. The shipwrecked Mrs Fraser is one, for when the first lists were drawn up it was just before Nolan, White and Sculthorpe began to mythologise her. And whereas early in the series most English visitors such as Trollope, Dilke, Froude, Twopeny, and Francis Adams are included, later the Hungarian Egon Kisch was not. Fortunately he has been picked up by the 1940-1980 period (which, unlike its predecessors, is centred on the date of death). And an interesting entry it should be: in Europe Kisch is famous for having exposed the spy Colonel Redl, who sold Austria's defence secrets to the Russians.

In addition, as Patricia Grimshaw pointed out, Aborigines have fared poorly, as well as women. Aborigines in the early volumes are depicted essentially as obstacles, to be overcome: women are taken for granted, and so are scarcely present. This attitude may not be quite as bad as that of one of the *DNB* editors

in the 1920s, who opined of one borderline case—in a wonderfully establishment combination of certitude and clubbiness—that 'If she had been a man, we might have considered including her.' But it is now sexist nonetheless. Of the one thousand entries in the first two volumes, only twelve are on women: for the most recently completed series, the six volumes 1890-1939, the proportion has risen to 20 per cent. The only higher proportion of women will be found, says Grimshaw, in the index category 'eccentrics', where they stand at fifty per cent (of four). Meanwhile the *New Dictionary of Biography* has decided to appoint a roving woman editor, who will comment on all articles as they come in.

People might also be struck by the corrigenda that appear from time to time. Certainly one may smile at the emendation to the Atkinson entry, where one is advised to substitute for 'died in infancy', the phrase 'lived to a ripe old age at Orange.' Such mistakes, cheerfully acknowledged, are an inevitable corollary of the *ADB* project. These articles may turn out to be the germ of full-length biographies (like *Lyrebird Rising* from Louise Dyer); it is easier to be right about these things then. But often the entry here will be the only notice that a particular life receives, especially now that the criteria for inclusion have moved more clearly towards representative lives rather than significant ones. Boxers and rabbiters will be found in the *ADB* pages, as well as criminals and theatricals, let alone judges and generals. Even Azaria Chamberlain scores an entry—a sensible inclusion given the fact that this is a work of reference which must in part be aimed at the future.



The *ADB* has become a formidable machine. Entries are determined by State working parties (there is an additional group for the military) who also determine relative lengths and find the appropriate authors. The office in Canberra gathers all the certificates of births, deaths and marriages, and checks the entries for accuracy. House style emphasises places and dates, but descriptive flourishes are permitted and to some degree encouraged. The result is an extraordinary tapestry of Australian life, and now that the volumes to 1939 have been recently completed, it will be called upon more and more as a work of reference.

NEVERTHELESS ONE WONDERS how the various dictionaries will manage in the future. Despite the disclaimer that the *ADB* does not have the word 'national' in its title—the post-war German dictionary was careful to enunciate its catchment area as the German 'cultural and language area'—the profile of a nation, or at least of all the peoples living within a designated space, seems to be crucial to such enterprises. Increasingly they also include foreign nationals, and nationals of their own who may have made their reputation abroad—so long as they were educated, and therefore initially shaped, by the dictionary's country.

The more multicultural the country, the more arbitrary the definition: quite early the editors of the Austrian *DNB* decided that, for the period 1815-1950, the dictionary's ambit would be those lands under Austrian rule at any given time. So Hungary goes out at 1867, while Donizetti is in and so is the Ukrainian Radic, who died in Stalin's purges. Both were born Austrian subjects. As if that span was not wide enough, the logic of the alphabet places Mozart next to a leading Nazi.

It would not take a great deal to blow apart the conception of a unified dictionary of biography. Increasingly the pithy, memorialising style will come under fire: in New Zealand ideas of a pre-contact Maori volume were soon abandoned when it was decided that the conventions of Maori narrative might be more properly dealt with by anthropologists than by historians. The strong contemporary interest in popular culture is also either largely ignored or steamrollered by the existing style of the biographical dictionaries; at least the group entries now being developed by the British afford a partial solution to the problem. But the simple fact is that most nations are increasingly coming to resemble a cluster of constituencies, an aggregate of publics.

Already there are some individuals—colonial governors—who crop up in two or three of the various *DNB*s. At the moment this affords different perspectives. But what will happen when, as was aired a couple of times at the conference, the different publications are all accessible on the same computer system? To increasing segmentation of the audience at home would be added a global dimension in the material. This might indeed be the next logical step, but standardisation would inevitably follow the huge proliferation of entries. It would be ironic, then, if this, in turn, were to squeeze out the original 'national' components from the one vastly-layered world dictionary of biography. ■

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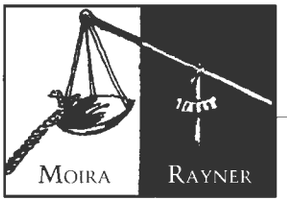
'National Biographies and National Identity' conference was sponsored in February by the Australian Dictionary of Biography and the Humanities Research Centre (both at the Australian National University), and the National Library of Australia.



Victoria waives the rules

On 22 December 1994 the Victorian Government repealed the letters patent appointing the state's Governor. Is this the end of democracy as we know it?

Governors and governors-general don't do much actual governing in modern Australia—at least, they've done precious little since the most notorious of them all, John Kerr, dismissed the Whitlam government on 11 November 1975. Before that coup, constitutional lawyers virtually ignored the powers of 'the Queen's representative'. It was generally believed that, in the states and the Commonwealth, real executive authority was vested in ministers who were also elected members of Parliament. The checks on their exercise of power were Parliament itself and the courts, and governors did not act on their own initiative: they acted on *advice*.

Now we know better. Kerr's action set in motion the final *putsch* for an Australian republic because, as Whitlam wrote in *The Truth of the Matter*, once a Prime Minister has been ambushed by the Governor-General, no Prime Minister can afford to trust a Governor-General again. The definitive steps were taken in 1986, when the Australia Act, severing this country's remaining constitutional connections to Britain, was passed by the parliaments in Canberra and Westminster,

Governors have not enjoyed many of the old substantive powers—such as granting pardons and appointing public servants—for many years. The belief that the 'reserve powers'—to dismiss an elected government or dissolve a Parliament—would not be exercised except on the advice of the Prime Minister or Premier was based on the notion that, in a system of responsible government, the political process and the courts are best placed to decide on the lawfulness of executive acts.

In Victoria, though, the power of Parliament to censure, and of the courts to inquire into executive action, is limited. The Victorian Constitution is an ordinary statute that may be altered at will. The way in which that power has been used to diminish the prerogatives of all of the institutions of government—especially the Supreme Court—without a referendum or any other recourse to the people, has been startlingly direct.

In July last year, I recorded 33 curtailments of the Supreme Court's jurisdiction. By December there were more than 90, including removal of the power to inquire into controversial projects involving private enterprise and government funding or guarantees, such the modification of Albert Park for the Grand Prix. The latter legislation removes even the right to recover compensation for destroyed property, in exchange for which the Premier indicated that he would personally consider any meritorious claims, thus neatly demonstrating his perception of the source of justice.

The government's predilection for complete control reached its worst just before Christmas, when Kennett responded to a second court order that Northlands Secondary College be reopened because its closure discriminated against Aboriginal children. In reply, Kennett cited the 'principle' that no person, and no tribunal, should impede government policy. Keeping Northlands closed was, he said, the ultimate test of a government's 'right to govern'.

It is in the nature of absolute power that its possessors will come to use it arbitrarily. Preventing this is the purpose of the principle of the separation of powers, 'checks and balances'. Without them, what inhibition would there be on abolishing local government (presently recognised by Section 74A of the *Constitution*) entirely?—the Premier has described 'local government' as a function of government, not a right of council electors. What would stop the abolition of the Supreme Court, or the removal of its jurisdiction to review any executive acts at all? Or the removal of the Constitutional prohibition on members of Parliament having any direct or indirect concern or interest in any contract entered into on behalf of the Crown (the reason why the Premier resigned his directorship of the advertising company KNF)?

Could the Governor refuse to accept advice to sign such bills?

The answer turns on three things: whether governors, as representative of the Queen (of Australia) retain any residual power to act independently of the head of 'their' government; on the effects of the 1986 (Commonwealth) *Australia Act*, and on the effects of the Victorian *Constitution Amendment Act 1994*. Certainly John Kerr thought he had such a discretion, and equally certainly the ALP premiers John Cain and Joan Kirner were of the view that they had removed such discretion by the terms of the letters patent under which the Governor of Victoria was appointed after 14 February 1986.

This is now a moot point, given that on 22 December last year those letters patent were repealed, and the office of 'Governor' became a statutory one. Former governors-general Paul Hasluck (writing in 1979) and Zelman Cowan (speaking to the National Press Club in 1982) both adhered to the view that they had reserve discretions to examine, to consider and to warn, and that they would closely examine the papers set before them to ensure that they were within constitutional power, authorised by law, consistent with constitutional convention and practice, or in conflict with government commitments or decisions. Both said, or implied, that these considerations might sometimes lead them to defer final decisions on some items.

It has been rumoured that the Victorian Governor had considered exercising, or might have actually exercised, a purported discretion in such a way, and that it might have caused a *frisson*. There is no way of knowing if this is more than wishful thinking. One does wonder why these amendments have been made at this time. In principle,

the courts would be a more appropriate place for such reflections rather than at the discretion of an unelected governor, but in Victoria the courts' very existence depends on an executive that perceives inconveniences such as international human rights instruments, equal opportunity laws and applications for judicial review to be illegitimate.

As to a Governor acting upon or contrary to the advice of the Premier, both the *Australia Act* and the Victorian *Constitution* now require that 'advice' to the Governor should be given by the Prime Minister or Premier. Conventionally, the 'reserve powers' do not require anyone's advice, if they still exist. It was certainly the intent of the previous ALP administration to remove them from the letters patent granted in 1986.

What does it all mean? Just that the Victorian Governor's authority can no longer be found in convention, tradition, public expectations, political or social developments. It is now fixed. There is no real place for conventions, anyway, in an atmosphere where the prevailing mood is that if you see a head, you kick it.

Where there are no entrenched constitutional terms, no fundamental principles about the separation of powers, no entrenched guarantees of human rights or civil liberties, it is difficult to deny that the rule of law is fragile.

There is, as Dr Jim Thomson, another constitutional lawyer, wrote a few years ago, a faint possibility—he saw it as a threat—that the Commonwealth might legislate to establish and control state constitutional law, as was suggested some time ago with respect to the 'one vote, one value' principle. Perhaps one day the Commonwealth might seek to legislate to protect the independence of the judiciary, or the rights of Aboriginal children to equal access to education, or the right not to be deprived of property without just compensation. Perhaps.There is an irony in this. In Victoria in 1994, Jeffrey Kennett has apparently completed a process begun in Australia by Kerr and Whitlam. A Governor with no power is, in all save name, an unelected president.

Vive la République! ■

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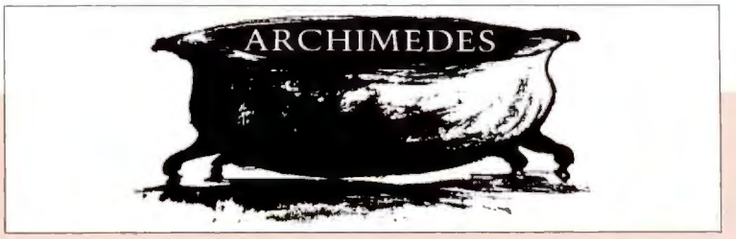


Against the grain

THE AUSTRALIAN SUMMER REALLY TESTS our knowledge of science. It doesn't take long for a barefoot child to learn that the dark bitumen of the road absorbs more heat than the concrete kerb and the white lines. Parents puzzle over the sun's path in the sky so they can park the car where it will be in shade when they return. Archimedes often ponders such summer questions as why people put the shiny side out when wrapping food in foil to cook at a barbecue. The shiny side reflects the heat away from the food within. If the potatoes were parcelled with the dull side out, not only would the foil absorb more heat, but the shiny surface inside would keep the heat in, just as in a Thermos flask.

When you consider how we learn about science, it is not surprising that a certain amount of confusion reigns. In the past 20 years, science educators have become aware that in fact we are all natural scientists. In particular, children bundle up their everyday experiences into a coherent set of beliefs about how things happen. And then they use those beliefs to predict future events. This may not seem a profound observation to anyone who has watched a toddler learning about gravity by dropping things: it means a great deal more if you are in the business of teaching science.

Before acknowledgement of this 'children's science', educators believed for the most part that they were filling empty minds with science. But, as Professor Peter Fensham at Monash University and colleagues worldwide have pointed out, educating people about science becomes a much more complex task in the face of a prior set of personal beliefs about the world. The real value of learning formal science is being able to apply it against the grain of everyday experience. But those are just the situations when children are most likely to reject formal scientific explanations or retain them only as something theoretical, useful for passing exams but of little relevance to real life.

Children grow up, and the tussle between formal science and everyday experience becomes more intense—especially if scientific knowledge argues for a course of action we don't want to take. Using a condom clearly hinders transmission of HIV. But everyday experience says only other people—'maybe homosexuals and drug addicts, none of my friends'—contract AIDS, so ... And Archimedes knows of nowhere in the world where freeways have solved traffic problems, but Australia is different, isn't it?

This sort of thing happens within science, too. When faced with something new, scientists and engineers are just as likely as the rest of us to revert to everyday experience, the science with which they are familiar rather than a new or esoteric theory.

Before bauxite is loaded into an aluminium smelter, silica must be removed. The process involves using agitators to mix finely ground bauxite with liquid in large tanks. But engineers in Queensland found that the mixing was far from uniform. Worse, the contents of the tank began sticking to the sides—to such an extent that six metres of encrustation could build up in a nine-metre diameter tank.

It took a group of researchers, led by Martin Welsh at the CSIRO division of building construction and engineering in Melbourne, to recognise the fundamental cause of what was a worldwide problem. The engineers who designed the tanks assumed the liquid in them would behave like water, which does not change its properties no matter how fast it is mixed. These engineers had had no experience with liquids such as the bauxite suspension, which become more difficult to mix at higher speeds. The solution was simple—the agitators were repositioned and operated at a slower speed. Not only did this cure the original problem but it significantly reduced wear on the agitator blades and produced a 40 per cent saving in power consumption.

A little scientific knowledge is a useful thing, and of real practical value. An appreciation of Shakespeare is considered an essential ingredient in a well-educated person—but not a knowledge of the second law of thermodynamics. That is a scandal of our technological times. ■

Tim Thwaites is a freelance science writer.

RICHARD HALL

Should you ever go across the sea from Ireland ...

Transplanted tensions between Irish and English are a well-documented part of Australian Catholic history. Less well-known is the conflict, which endured until the middle decades of this century, between Australia's Irish-born bishops and the Italian Apostolic Delegates who represented the Vatican. Australian-born clergy sometimes got caught in the crossfire.

IN AUGUST 1948, the job of being British Foreign Secretary was probably as heavy a burden as it had ever been. The Empire was passing, and many believed that a third world war was imminent: Berlin was under blockade, civil war was raging in Greece, Czechoslovakia had gone Communist, and it had been a near-run thing in Italy. In the midst of all this, Ernie Bevin, the hard-headed former union organiser who held the office of Foreign Secretary, must have been surprised and amused by a request from the Australian Prime Minister, Ben Chifley. The Australian, who was in London for what was then still called the Imperial Prime Ministers' Conference, wanted British diplomatic support for a request to the Holy See that the Archbishop of Melbourne, Daniel Mannix, be made a cardinal.

Chifley, who had something of a sardonic streak, gave a deadpan report back to Calwell, at whose instigation he had raised the issue: 'Mr Bevin had said that in a matter of this kind he would prefer not to take any positive action or express any view but gave Mr Chifley to understand that there were completely neutral feelings in regard to any such honour as might be paid to Archbishop Mannix.'

It was not the first time that Calwell had tried to pull British strings in support of a cardinal's hat for Mannix, nor would it be the last. During World War II, Australia's External Affairs Minister, H.V. Evatt, had raised the matter with the then Foreign Secretary, Anthony Eden, and in 1951 Calwell would ask Richard Casey, External Affairs Minister in the Menzies government, to try again.

These curious interactions of church and state are revealed in a file, now released by the Irish National Archives, of dispatches from T.J. Kiernan, who in 1946 became the first Irish envoy to Australia. Kiernan, an enthusiastic partisan by nature, quickly involved himself in the politics of the Catholic Church in Australia. His 'team' was the Irish clergy and their chieftain, Daniel Mannix, who were struggling against what they perceived to be vicious prejudice on the part of the Roman Curia and its Italian agents in Australia, the Apostolic Delegates.

Tensions caused by Rome's policy of encouraging the growth of a native clergy have been a familiar element of church history, in Australia and elsewhere. What makes Kiernan's dispatches unique is their rawness and rage. Doubtless the Vatican archives contain harsh reports, but they are closed. Diocesan archives in Australia, on the testimony of those who have worked in them, tend to be bland and are often sanitised. But Kiernan's dispatches report what the Irish were saying at the time, libels and all: accusations that one Apostolic Delegate habitually stole from convents, complaints from the Archbishop of Brisbane, James Duhig, about spy networks set up by the delegates, and accounts of Calwell's religious foreign policy.

The first award of a red hat to an Australian-born prelate, to Sydney's Archbishop Norman Gilroy in 1946, had aroused great passions in Melbourne. The only previous Australian cardinal, the Irish-born Patrick Moran, had also been Archbishop of Sydney, and from the Roman point of view the elevation of one of Moran's 'native' successors to the cardinalate would have been an appropriate next step in the creation of an authentically Australian hierarchy.

In some Melbourne minds, however, Gilroy's appointment was understood as a deliberate insult to Mannix, and a sign of collusion between perfidious Albion and the archbishop's enemies in Rome. By the 1940s it seems distinctly unlikely that Eden or Bevin knew the name or fame of Daniel Mannix.

Arthur Augustus Calwell, who held the Immigration and Information portfolios in the Chifley cabinet, personified the Melbourne Irish tradition, with its strength of deep loyalty and its besetting vice of envy, which James Joyce had so acutely identified

as the capital sin of the race. It was natural that, when Kiernan arrived in Australia in 1946, Calwell would see himself as the man to brief the newcomer; and any diplomat would have been happy to build a relationship with a cabinet minister so quickly.

As Kiernan was soon to discover, however, there was more at stake than a cardinal's hat. On 6 December 1946 he sent a dispatch headed SECRET to his departmental head, F.H. Boland, reporting that Calwell, as 'a Catholic cabinet minister', had written to the Holy See asking for the recall of the then delegate, Archbishop Panico, and requesting the appointment of a non-Italian as his successor. Kiernan sent Boland copies of Calwell's letter to the Papal Secretary of State, and of a similar letter addressed to the Superior General of the Jesuits.

It was not only Panico who, to use Kiernan's phrase, was 'included in the charge': Calwell claimed that all three of the delegate's predecessors had 'amassed large private fortunes in Australia'. The letters alleged that the only 'beneficial' work Panico had done in Australia was for Italians, and Calwell said he could produce letters from Panico 'asking for special treatment for wealthy Italians who were interned' during the war. Kiernan told his boss that 'underlying the whole issue is the seemingly insolent attitude which Archbishop Panico has adopted towards Archbishop Mannix', in forcing him to accept a coadjutor, Justin Simonds. Calwell's bright idea was that Simonds should be made Apostolic Delegate.

Always an attendant lord: T.J. Kiernan with Daniel Mannix.

Photo courtesy of Professor Patrick O'Farrell

BUT THE CALWELL CAMPAIGN was not to be confined to letters. He told Kiernan that he intended to ask the British High Commissioner in Canberra to report to Whitehall on the unsuitability of Italians as Apostolic Delegates, and on the importance of Mannix being made a cardinal.

Kiernan described Calwell to Boland as 'an extremely honest and sincere man'—the question of whether it was appropriate for an Australian cabinet minister to conduct a religious foreign policy on his own initiative does not seem to have bothered the Irish envoy in any way.

The first mention of Cardinal Gilroy in the file came in April 1947, when Kiernan reported on a dinner with Mannix, who told him how he had tried to rally the Australian bishops against the imposition of conscription in Northern Ireland during the war. Gilroy and Simonds had refused. After dinner Mannix raised 'the red-hat question': 'If I had wanted to be a cardinal,' he told Kiernan, 'I would have taken a different course.'

A month later, Kiernan met Archbishop Duhig in Brisbane. Both men had heard gossip that Archbishop Bernadini, who had been Apostolic Delegate in Australia in the 1930s, might be appointed nuncio in Dublin. Duhig viewed the possibility with great distaste and produced a memorandum on the question. This unsigned document, a single foolscap page, opened with: 'On Monsignor Bernadini's arrival in

Australia in 1933, he is said to have declared that he would put an end to Irish influence in the church'. Duhig wrote that Bernadini 'could not conceal his prejudice against the Irish, and showed it even in his conversation with Irish priests'.

The archbishop also castigated Bernadini's predecessor, Monsignor Cattaneo, and said that the present delegate, Monsignor Panico, had shown the same prejudices—'fanned unfortunately by a class of Australian priests.' The archbishop ended bluntly: 'None of these men deserves any consideration, much less gratitude, from Ireland or the Irish, and in my candid opinion if they get appointments in Ireland they would set up a spy system as they had here.'

In his comment, Kiernan said that 'Archbishop Duhig has a very balanced judgment', and concluded 'that something should be done in Rome to protect our priests from being belittled simply on account of their nationality'. Panico was due to make a visit to Rome and proposed to travel on to Ireland; Kiernan suggested it should be made clear he was not welcome, and this seems to have been done.

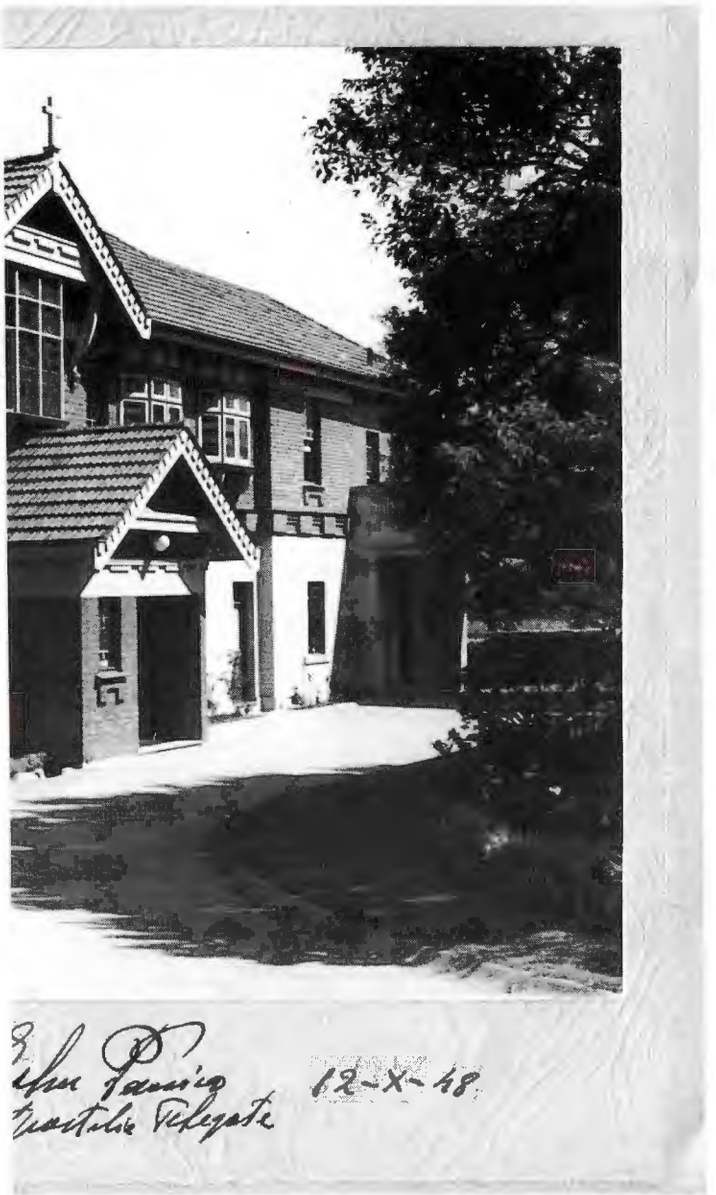
In Rome, Panico must have heard about the Calwell letters. When he returned to Australia later in the year, he met Cardinal Gilroy and several other bishops. Kiernan must have had an informant at the meeting, because he was able to report that Panico had said that he was 'in ill health and very depressed'. The delegate sought advice on what to do about Calwell, and discussion 'centred on the possibility of bringing out that Calwell was acting as an individual Catholic and not in his public capacity'. An approach to Chifley had been canvassed, so that the Vatican could be told that Calwell did not have cabinet support, but Kiernan was confident that no such approach would be made.

PANICO LASTED ANOTHER YEAR before being posted to Peru, an appointment that, measured by the size of the Catholic population, must be counted as a promotion. Kiernan joyfully reported his departure in a letter dated 11 October 1948, and told of being present at a lunch in Sydney when about 100 priests gathered to welcome the Prior General of the Carmelites. The general was an Irishman, and the event turned into a celebration at which the priests swapped stories about the former delegate's greed.

Panico was said to have established a scale of charges for his attendance at functions, from £250 for the consecration of a bishop down to £20 for receiving debutantes, and the priests claimed that when he visited convents the nuns locked away the best table settings of the house, since he was in the habit of ordering the silver to be transferred to his car. The latter story seems far-fetched. After all, how many Australian convents would have had silver? A few Loreto or Sacré Coeur communities, and one or two Dominican houses, perhaps. And in any case, the reverend mothers of Australia have historically shown a capacity to stare down bishops.

Kiernan went on to report that Panico had boasted of leaving 'time bombs' behind him. These included the appointments of Guilford Young as coadjutor to Archbishop Thomas Maguire in Canberra-Goulburn, and of Patrick O'Donnell as coadjutor to Archbishop Duhig. Each of the new bishops was a friend of Panico's, and Young had been on his staff. Kiernan advised Dublin that Young had an Italian mother, that his father was a convert, and that he had once told the envoy that 'the clergy in Ireland, having an education confined to a seminary like Maynooth, were not modern enough to keep pace with the development of the Irish people'.

The new Apostolic Delegate, Monsignor Marella, was an amiable man but the policy of favouring the native clergy did not change. At their first meeting, in 1949, Kiernan found him charming and attentive. He told the delegate that Australia was 'the daughter country of Ireland', but that he feared that some young Catholic graduates were turning away from the



Archbishop Panico outside the Apostolic Delegation. Photo courtesy of the Australian Jesuit archives.

'Catholicism of the heart' represented by Ireland, and looking to France and 'the Catholicism of the head'. The delegate turned this aside, saying that all they would get from Europe would be the 'Catholicism of the stomach', and ventured a criticism: 'I cannot understand the coldness of the Irish people towards marriage.'

1949 was a federal election year, and Kiernan's dispatches began to focus on the relationship of the church and politics. In June Mannix raised with Kiernan the Vatican's concern for the internationalisation of Jerusalem, commenting that with Evatt overseas he had written to Chifley, who hadn't shown much interest. But Evatt had since returned and Kiernan promised to raise it with him in Canberra the next day. Evatt assured Kiernan of his continuing support for internationalisation and was confident that Israel would compromise. In those years Evatt generally showed a desire to cultivate the Catholic vote, but Calwell believed that he, and not Evatt, would succeed Chifley as leader of the Labor Party.

In July 1949 Calwell told Kiernan that if Labor won the next election Chifley intended to retire about halfway through the next Parliament and 'that as matters stand he will almost certainly be Mr Chifley's successor'. The only other candidate, reported Kiernan, was Dr Evatt, who had lost support on account of his 'pusillanimous attitude towards the Soviet, the official labour(sic) attitude here having hardened against the Soviet, and also because of his long absence overseas—always fatal to an Australian politician.'

To Calwell, the path to the Prime Ministership seemed clear, but his hopes were to be crushed by one of the Irish clerics he had done so much to extol. During the election campaign Archbishop Duhig issued a number of warnings about Labor and socialism, and the Liberals made extensive use of these statements in paid advertisements. On election day Labor lost heavily in Queensland, and went out of federal office for 23 years.

Calwell's response was to go to Sydney to see Marella, and he told Kiernan that he had protested strongly about Duhig's behaviour. Four years earlier, Calwell had wanted no more Italian delegates because of what they had done to Irish priests; now he went to an Italian to complain about an Irishman. In the same dispatch, sent just before Christmas, Kiernan recorded the view of Archbishop Maguire of Canberra-Goulburn that he was not unhappy at the election result, since 'a cabinet nearly all of whom were Freemasons will feel more free to show fair play to Catholic schools'.

Mannix, however, was uneasy when he saw Kiernan in January. He was worried that the Liberals would be less friendly towards Ireland, and that they might close Australian representation in Dublin. Kiernan said that 'on the surface' the new government had been nice to him. The change of government had put the archbishop in a thoughtful mood on a number of topics. He told Kiernan that it was unwise of the Liberal government to want to ban the Communist Party, since he feared that 'the persecution' of Communists would cement trade-union support for the party.

Kiernan referred to how Mannix was financing a scheme inside the unions, aimed at withdrawing 'the main body of trade unionists from support of Communists or pseudo-Communists'. It was this sort of cavalier claim to personal ownership of The Movement that antagonised so many of the other bishops over the years, culminating in the the division between Sydney and Melbourne at the time of the Split. In fact the whole hierarchy, and not just Mannix, was financing the organisation (Kiernan was not, it seems, well briefed) and in theory, at least, it was under the control of a committee of the bishops' conference. The file contains only one passing reference to Santamaria. Apart from the secrecy surrounding

his activities, there was a good reason why Santamaria would have kept Kiernan at a distance: Calwell was a critic of Santamaria's, so a friend of Calwell's was not to be trusted.

The January meeting revealed Mannix's differences with his colleagues over proposals for a Catholic university, although 'he, along with other bishops will give it his public support'. One topic was to echo in Dublin. Mannix's diocesan paper, *The Advocate* , had a new Irish correspondent who, the archbishop thought, 'exaggerated the darker side of Irish social life'. Could Kiernan do something? (A characteristic Mannix ploy, getting someone else to do the censor's job.) Kiernan obliged by writing to the External Affairs Department in Dublin, and the file contains a reply from Conor Cruise O'Brien, saying that the journalist was not such a bad fellow.

In April, Kiernan met Marella, and the delegate said that he thought Calwell had been 'emotional' in his criticism of Duhig. Kiernan and Marella talked about the partition of Ireland, and the envoy managed to equate British policy in the north with that of the Soviets in Hungary and Czechoslovakia. Kiernan's report of this meeting mentions with approval a 'reversal' in Marella's attitude toward the Irish clergy. Perhaps because of this reversal, for a time there were few additions to the file. The next significant dispatch, in August the following year, throws light on what Evatt thought about the church and politics long before the open clash of 1954. The referendum on Menzies' anti-communist legisation was only a month away, and Evatt was in mid-campaign. At a private lunch at Kiernan's house, Evatt cited the case of a priest in his electorate who had preached against him. 'He is incensed against Cardinal Gilroy,' Kiernan told Dublin, 'for permitting, and in Evatt's opinion encouraging, an intrusion into politics by the Catholic clergy.'

Evatt reminded Kiernan that he had been thanked by the Vatican for his support for the internationalisation of Jerusalem, and that he had been criticised by the Communists for his protest at their treatment of Cardinal Mindszenty. 'He said that the Catholic Church in Australia is in a minority and in putting itself against the Labour (sic) Party is asking to be hurt ... he said he would inform the Pope of the damage being done by certain priests, particularly Cardinal Gilroy and Archbishop Duhig, to their own cause, by taking one-sided action in favour of the Menzies party.'

Kiernan commented unsympathetically: 'Being free of any settled principles, his political actions are those of an out-and-out opportunist.' Here Kiernan shows the influence of Calwell. Evatt may have been an opportunist with regard to Mindszenty and the status of Jerusalem, but the same cannot be said of his stance on the Communist Party Dissolution Bill.

In September 1951 Kiernan again had reason to deplore the attitude of certain bishops towards the Irish clergy. Guilford Young, who was still coadjutor in Canberra-Goulburn, spoke of the difficulty of persuading Irish priests to come to Australia because of a misunderstanding about prejudice against them. Matthew Beovich, Archbishop of Adelaide, who had been in Ireland, had also noticed the same misunderstanding. But after this soft opening Young blotted his copybook by observing that Irish priests were not as well-read as Australian priests, and suggesting that elocution be taught in Irish seminaries: 'Many of the young priests coming here from Ireland speak almost unintelligibly.'

Kiernan noted: 'Both Bishop Young and Archbishop Beovich are underneath the skin, hostile to the Irish priest. If they could avoid getting them, they would.'

In October 1951, Calwell confided to Kiernan that he had asked the Liberal External Affairs Minister, Richard Casey, to enlist the support of Anthony Eden in a renewed push for a red hat for Mannix. Kiernan took the unusual step of writing directly to Frank Aitken, the Irish External Affairs Minister, to suggest that Ireland should make its own approach to Rome in support of the Mannix cardinalate. Ireland's support would be valuable because the Australian church still depended on Ireland for servants in the mission fields.

He told Aitken that a red hat for Mannix would give great joy to all Australians, including the Prime Minister, Robert Menzies, who regarded him 'as the outstanding churchman in Australia'. Then he added: 'As a background, it is to be realised that the Australian Liberal Party feels grateful to the Catholics of Australia—or rather to the hierarchy and the priest-

Conor Cruise O'Brien, who worked with Kiernan in the Irish Department of External affairs, remembers him as 'a timid man, very cautious about making a decision, certainly obsessed with church politics.' Kiernan's postings, to Australia and afterwards to the Argentine, were deliberately chosen to keep him far from Dublin. Kiernan, joining the department in the 1930s, had been a protégé of the departmental head, Walshe, who after the fall of France in 1940 had written a memorandum to de Valera outlining the need for Ireland to co-operate with the New Order in Europe and to act, along with Catholic Portugal and Spain, as a steadying influence on Germany and Italy. De Valera, however, stuck to strict neutrality. The Walshe memorandum was widely known, and in 1943 when the tide turned, the US and British ambassadors in Dublin delivered a joint démarche to de Valera that they would have no communication with Walshe, and the department was effectively taken over by his deputy and Walshe's protégés were dispersed.

—Richard Hall

hood—for widespread support at the last elections and in the referendum on Communism.' The next consistory, however, did not see Mannix's promotion and the pious hope disappears from the file.

In Melbourne for the St Patrick's Day procession in 1952, Kiernan dined at Raheen with Mannix and Marella. After some gloomy discussion about the possibility of a Communist win in the forthcoming Italian elections, and whether the subsequent papal martyrdom would be swift or slow, talk turned to *The Call to the Nation*, a pompous bit of rhetoric promoted by the government at the instigation of Paul Maguire, a friend of Santamaria's and at that time one of the few Catholics who had Menzies' ear. It was signed by Gilroy and the leaders of other churches, but Mannix rubbished the whole thing as 'vague and useless ... one key gain in one key trade union was of immensely greater practical worth than vague pronouncements.' Ecumenism was not popular at Raheen.

In August that year came a report of a meeting with Gilroy, the only one in the file. The cardinal spoke of the need to encourage more Irish nuns to come to Australia, and said he would impress this on the Archbishop of Dublin, Dr McQuaid, who was soon to visit, by taking him around the convents and bush schools. Kiernan commented bleakly: 'If Archbishop McQuaid is a simple man, he will no doubt be impressed by the happiness of emigrants in convents in Australia. He may notice, however, that the reverend mothers are almost all Australians.'

That was the envoy's last word on the church in Australia. Perhaps at the end he was giving up. One extraordinary omission in the file is his failure to recognise that the tensions over promotion and preferment were not simply between the Irish and the rest. The Australian-born clergy had their own conflict, between the home-trained and the Rome-trained, but this doesn't seem to have penetrated the ambassador's mind. To have attributed papal policy on the appointment of bishops to the villainous prejudice of a succession of Italian church diplomats was wishful self-delusion—though, on Kiernan's evidence, this view was passionately held by the Irish clergy in Australia. Ultramontanists to a man, though, they shrank from blaming the Pope: it was all the fault of his evil advisers.

Kiernan appears to have been what used to be called 'a lay clerical'—someone in many ways more priestly than the priests and happy to have been made an honorary member of that exclusive male club. After the lunch celebrating Panico's transfer in 1947, Kiernan reported with evident pride that he had been the only layman present. Soon after his appointment to Australia, Kiernan's departmental head, F.H. Boland, wrote a tactful letter to him, using as a peg a conversation he had had with some Australians at a conference in London. The gist of Boland's advice was that Kiernan should mix beyond Catholic and Irish circles; the recipient's response was to denigrate one of the people Boland had met.

Kiernan's friendship with Arthur Calwell locked him into a similarly distorted view of Australian politics, though it has also given us the odd story of an Australian cabinet minister conducting an independent religious foreign policy. But within a few years Calwell was to be divided forever from Daniel Mannix, the man in whose interests he had so tirelessly laboured. When the chips were down, Mannix chose the Italian-Australian, B.A. Santamaria, over the Irish-Australian, Arthur Calwell. ■

Richard Hall is a Sydney journalist and author. In 1994 he was the inaugural Guinness/James Joyce Foundation Fellow at Trinity College, Dublin.

PETER PIERCE

Right back where I started from

In search of a beer, I found that Cascade is banished in its home town. Only the anodyne products of race sponsors CUB were on tap. Food provided a happier outcome. The unexamined saveloy is not worth eating, and I savoured the sight and then the taste. I was reminded of a mate whose favourite soup is made from the dixie water in which savs have been boiled.

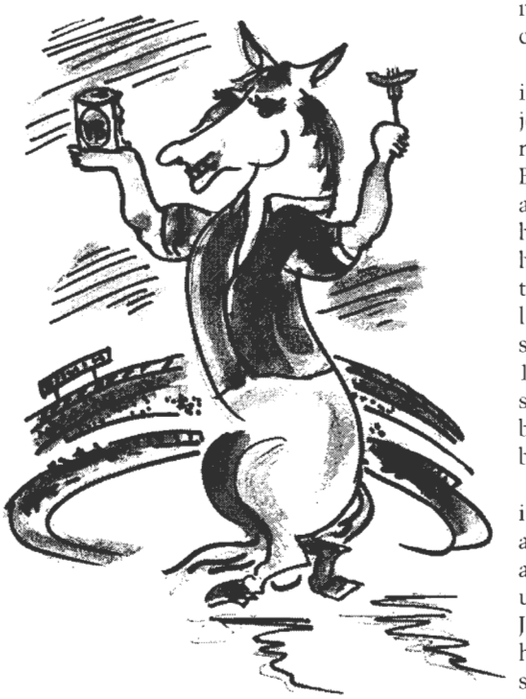
IT WAS NEARLY 20 YEARS AGO THAT I met W.A. (Bill) Neilson at the gates of the Elwick Racecourse in Hobart. After saying 'G'day', he tipped me Aparangi in the two-year-old. I took four to one and the colt romped home. This suggests that Elwick welcomes a better class of urger. It also happens that Bill Neilson was then Premier of Tasmania. Imagine getting a tip from any of the present bunch, let alone backing it with confidence. Aparangi, by the way, went on to win the 1978 Tasmanian Derby.

Elwick, to the north of Hobart and with Mount Wellington as a backdrop, enjoys one of the loveliest of Australian racecourse settings. In the 19th century, racegoers often arrived after a boat ride up the Derwent.

When I was a child, the inside of the track was disfigured by a drive-in cinema. That has gone, together with large race crowds. Only in the spirit of nostalgia can we speak now of a drunk as being 'full as two race trains', let alone 'full as a state school'. The last time Elwick was packed was for the visit of Pope John Paul II in 1986, when the 'Bridgewater Jerry' blew so hard down the river that the Pope had to be grasped by attendants, lest he levitated.

After a long absence, I came back to Elwick on Christmas Eve. An ancient, loitering by the gate, gave me a free admission ticket. Once inside, I found that the betting ring was now under glass. No longer could I expect to be hit on the head by a bottle thrown from the top of the grandstand while on the punt, as had happened one luckless, long-ago afternoon.

Other fixtures of the course had not changed. Still fielding, if now in a modish lilac shirt, was 'Increase Your Roll, Bet With Noel' Coleman.



I mentioned the old days in the (legal) Murray Street off-course betting shop. In an unexpectedly sentimental gesture, Noel gave me over the odds on Velvet Rose, an unfortunate tip heard in a bank. It ran third last. Noel is in his 50th year as a bookmaker, standing up steadfastly as the crowd in front of him ebbs away.

More than any other Australian state, Tasmania cossets the vulnerable members of its 'racing fraternity'. This is not to denigrate the state's support for women jockeys. They obtain regular rides, not as fleeting fashion but because racing is so much a family affair. Beverley Buckingham gained her break while riding for her father, Ted. In the 1981-2 season she became the only woman to win a senior metropolitan jockeys' premiership in Australia. An attempt to crack the mainland scene (as we Tasmanians think of it) was unsuccessful.

Now Buckingham is back in Tasmania, at the top of the jockeys' table. In the second race she gave Peg's Pride (by St Briavels, sire of the Tasmanian-bred champion Sydeston) a beautiful run in front, only to be caught on the line by Shinto. Beaten by a total of 40 lengths in his two previous starts, Shinto was friendless at 155/1 on the tote. After the scratching of Chastity, I had backed Just Take Care instead, but without profit.

Shinto's jockey had the indignity of being led back by a clerk of the course dressed in a Santa Claus suit. Sweating under the disguise was Bill Joiner, a former jockey who has held his present position since 1962. He was enthusiastically introduced by Milton Pettit, who has been course commentator at Elwick for what seems as long.

AFTER RACE THREE, Santa Claus brought Fun in the Chateau back to scale. This was the first of five winners for Stephen Maskiell, and one of three for trainer Charlie Goggin. Yes, he is the brother of Geelong footballer Billy and husband of cham-

pion amateur golfer Lindy. Tasmania, you see, is only Australia writ small. I'd backed Fun in the Chateau, which won narrowly from Bill's Preference, owned—among others—by a Mrs Pros, Miss Crack and Miss Bush.

In search of a beer, I found that Cascade is banished in its home town. Only the anodyne products of race sponsors CUB were on tap. Food provided a happier outcome. The unexamined saveloy is not worth eating, and I savoured the sight and then the taste. I was reminded of a mate whose favourite soup is made from the dixie water in which savs have been boiled. He is the fellow who won so much one day at Elwick that he put the money out of temptation's way in my mother's teapot. Sadly, he retrieved it next-morning and left the lot at the casino.

It was nearly time to travel back up the Midlands Highway to Ross, but not before a nine-year-old gelding called Quicken had led them in the St Nicholas Handicap, only to be beaten in class record time by Maskiell on Danby Road. I left a time warp, where I had encountered familiar faces, gently aged; the unconvincing pretences of gentility among those in the small members' enclosure; gallopers better bred than two decades ago, but pluggers still.

No gentility, affected or otherwise, was to be found a week later at the St Mary's Pacing Club New Year Meeting. For this occasion I headed north-east, rather than south, to the races, through some of the most parched land in the whole country, where the top soil on hillsides blew away in dust.

St Mary's lies at the head of the valley of the Break O'Day River. Glover painted here. Along the road one passes the gates of grand properties—Ormley, Malahide and Tullochgorum, which once had its own railway halt. Last century, Cornish miners came to the valley after coal and tin, leaving the names of their native places around the region. One of my great-grandfathers died of miners' phthisis at nearby Mathinna. Some scrabbling for ore still goes on in the hills behind St Mary's, but this is farming country now. At St Mary's 109th Cup meeting, one parked on the golf course. The spacious dirt pacing track lay beside it. Inside the track was a football ground. In other parts of Australia this might be called a multi-functional sports complex, but not at St Mary's. Instead this is a venue for family reunions, many of which are interrupted by would-be state Labor politicians canvassing for far-distant votes. Every year schoolteacher Simon Hirst turns racecaller, thus becoming a dignitary for a day. The climb to his tower is so exacting that he wouldn't descend for a beer until after the fourth.

WHAT OF THE RACING? Well, it's not called the 'red hots' for nothing. In the first, Scribe Hanover won with authority from Paleface Jane, trained nearby at Fingal. The second event was for pacers that had never won. Attracted by their names, I plunged cockily on Ima Eagle and Dumpy's Dream. The former hit the running rail, the latter galloped and each lost a furlong at the start. This left Roo Star to beat Tears of Joy in a photo. After the judge had used his putter to push out the board with the placed horses' numbers, the sister of the winning driver accepted his trophy from a local businessman. It was a set of glasses. Mr J. Kiddle expressed the hope that her brother drank plenty, while recalling that when he had driven a winner here four decades ago, his sling had been two bottles of home brew.

As the windy afternoon wound on, my selections found invigoratingly creative ways to lose. Perhaps, following traditions of rural hospitality, I was being warned off. Accordingly, and before I'd done the lot, we headed into the sinking sun. Other Tasmanian carnivals were due along the north-west coast, in cycling, wood-chopping and running (where Cathy Freeman was impossibly handicapped). The folk ideal was alive in my native island, but its advocates were ageing, were fewer in numbers, had come in support of cultures surely if almost imperceptibly dying. ■

Peter Pierce is *Eureka Street's* turf correspondent.

Aftershock

1. The city, burning

Filmed from the night sky
the city is burning. The whole city
burning. I've switched on in mid-
newsbreak. While I wait for a name it's
London and Singapore
SF and Rome and
my city. The whole city.
A name comes, a place
where I know no one. The lungs
empty. Relief? The city. All
the cities.
The earth quakes. The earth
shakes the child. For us
it was bombs. We huddled in shelter.
The earth shook, the air
howled and flamed.
The city burned.

2. Richter 6.9

The earth rocks
the child

the earth rocks
the sleeping child

the earth rocks
the house
engulfs the child.

3. Palpitations

My heart shakes the blood in my chest,
an unkind unpredictable beat that takes tomorrow
from my mind and throws it on the floor. Only
too much coffee yesterday.

But feels like fear.
Sandbags piled against the wall, half the room
taken by a corrugated-iron shelter, a dark
tunnel into dangerous night where
the oldest mother waited as the earth shook,
the air howled and flamed. We were to sleep
while our young petrified mother calmly kept watch.

In the morning we went out, a small gang
whose toys were guns we made of sticks and hands,
and picked up after the dogfights overhead
brass cartridge cases to blow across for whistles,
sort by their markings, theirs or ours.
And throw both in the sack for salvage.

My grandparents were unearthed alive
from the dug-out between their apple trees.
Some of the trees lived to fill their house
every winter of my later childhood
with the scent of peace and future, the fruit
stored for a tomorrow after all. And
the bombsites grew green and flowered,
were built and disappeared into the past.

4. Sky shot

From here you can see
everything
film everything
hear nothing but the rotor.

The earth shakes
the houses fall
the city burns.

The pilots hear only
their own engine and the rattle
of the fighters' guns. The pound
of their own fear.

The earth shakes
the air howls and flames
engulf the sleeping child.

Aftershock

5. Sunset across Westernport Bay

Mother you are burning my city. Across the water
under the dark hands of cloud our towers are on fire
engulfed in your dangerous life.
Mother, why are you burning my city?
I have put it away for the night,
there is no need to burn through my dreams.

Mother, leave me my city across the water
under the hands of sky, cloudsky, moonsky. Tomorrow
let me find it there, city of towers and wasp-cell houses
across the bay's long weeds and quick fishes, fouled by our leakings,
my city humming with wax-making and stinging,
baptized to innocence by your new light.

6. Kyoto

A small heading to the side:
Ancient shrine
1300 years
national treasures
sacred artefacts
broken
knocked
lost
ancient
treasures
artefacts
1300 years
sacred
A small story to the side.

7. Kobe

The earth rocks
the child

the city engulfs
the child
the mother
the city

burns
All the cities

Aileen Kelly

Aileen Kelly grew up in England. A collection of her poetry, *Coming up for Light*, was published last year by Pariah Press.

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENCE

ALLAN PATIENCE

Postcard from Kobe

WE AWOKE TO THE HOUSE LEAPING and twisting. Glasses and plates smashed against the walls and on the floor. I screamed to my son as I struggled to get off my bed. A bookshelf fell across my path, hurling books all over the place. I was so shocked I hardly noticed and crawled, unhurt, from beneath it. My son was sitting up in his bed wondering whether to be scared like me.

The initial quake stopped. Then the aftershocks started. They rolled in relentlessly, seeming to come horizontally from the sea and Awaji Island in Osaka Bay. The building where my flat is situated also accommodates several other foreign professors and a dozen international students. It was groaning and shuddering with each aftershock and I started to fear for its safety.

It was pitch black. My son and I inched our way out of the flat. Miraculously, our bare feet didn't even sustain a scratch from the broken glass and crockery on the floor. Someone was screaming below. People were calling anxiously to each other. We felt our way down the stairs. My son was reassuring; I was frantic. Everyone in the building assembled at the entrance, rugged up in coats and pyjamas. No one had shoes. This being Japan, shoes were kept in lockers at the entrance. These had fallen face down and we couldn't move them in the dark.

As dawn came on we began to realise the size of the quake. In every direction, roofs were devastated. Huge, ugly cracks radiated out through the roads. A big old traditional stone barn had simply seated itself down like a great dowager, her grand dress made of rubble spreading out about her. Smart Honda Preludes peeped from piles of smashed bricks and tiles like chickens secure in their mother's feathers.

Our neighbours were stunned like us. Many of them were too afraid to go back into their creaking houses and sat instead in their cars with engines running to make the heaters operate. It was bitterly cold and a few wisps of snow were falling.

Unbelievably, no one in our building nor in the immediate vicinity seemed hurt. We were the lucky ones. An old woman who had shunned the foreigners in the past came by with some hot tea for us. Another man wanted to know if he could telephone families overseas for us (though this would not have been a lot of help, even if he could get through, given that he can only speak Japanese). The kindness of strangers started our recovery.

After a couple of hours sitting in the common room, rugged up against the awful cold, we decided to go to the main University campus to see what was happening. We had expected some official to call in to see us, but apparently things were bad at the central offices ten minutes away. Three of us went. Men in passing cars shouted *Geijin* (*Foreigners!*) at us. Used with the correct inflexion it can be a sharp insult and the insult was clearly intended on this occasion. We felt a bit nervous as we remembered the thousands of Korean labourers who had been butchered by angry Japanese looking for scapegoats after the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923.

The main campus was deserted. A few laboratories had caught fire. Windows were smashed. The gates were closed and no one was available in the International Affairs Office to tell us what to do. In fact it wasn't until the next evening that the senior professor in charge of International Affairs came by to tell us that they thought our building was safe. When pressed he admitted he could not guarantee this to be the case.

We decided it would be best to try to get out of the country. All trains, buses and other forms of transport were paralysed by the fallen freeways and huge fires that had broken out in central Kobe. With the help of several Japanese students we worked out that we could take a ferry to Awaji Island—the epicentre of the quake. Then we could take a bus (if it was operating) across the island to another ferry that could drop us at the new Kansai International Airport.

We found a public phone which was still operating and began calling airlines. Although the students were on cheap and therefore restricted air tickets, nearly all airlines agreed without hesitation to let the students fly out at once. The only difficult one was Japan Air Lines (JAL).

The next morning we got ready to set out. A mother of one of the Japanese students arrived in a van to transport us—another wonderful example of the kindness of strangers. A Japanese professor arrived and told us that it was too dangerous to go over to Awaji Island, that we should stay and work as volunteers. We conferred and agreed that we should nonetheless try to get out, but expect the worst. Some had already inquired about voluntary work but had been turned down, on the grounds that everything was under control. The Japanese professor said he would join us, to help us on the way.

Our trip could hardly have been smoother. The first ferry ran on time. A father of another Japanese student met us on Awaji Island with another van. He took the women, including Ulla (from Finland) with a sprained ankle. We men caught a bus. We traversed the Island, the seat of the earthquake's epicentre. Destruction was horribly evident, but it was the haunted look in people's eyes that was most awful. The second ferry left on time and we scudded across the sea to the huge artificial island off Osaka which is the Kansai International Airport.

At the airport we had an insane argument with an official who didn't want us to use one of the several unused wheelchairs to get Ulla mobile. His case was ridiculous—he thought an airline should supply a chair. The fact that there were wheelchairs there, not being used, was, he declared loftily, quite irrelevant. Besides, we hadn't filled out the requisite forms in advance. It was only after our Japanese professor refused to give ground that we were allowed the use of a chair. Normally one accepts this mindless and endless bureaucracy in Japan. It is everywhere. But since the earthquake it has got worse.

One by one the planes left and our students headed off to safety. I came back to Kobe to pack up at least some of my papers and to check on a final group of students. I found that one of my Japanese colleagues and his wife had been crushed to death by their falling house. Two of our Chinese students were dead. They were housed in cheap student digs in one of the most congested and worst-hit areas in Kobe. One week after the quake, about 200 Japanese students were still not accounted for.

I ESCAPED FOR A COUPLE OF DAYS in Tokyo, a blissful shower, and I was able to wash my clothes. This time it was the kindness of friends. It was such a relief to see a city still intact, buildings upright, cars travelling on orderly roads. But now they are talking about what it will be like when a big one hits Tokyo—and it most certainly will. Much of Japan is zigzagged by treacherous fault lines, many of which converge under Tokyo.

The bureaucratic inertia and breakdown was infuriating. An offer of specially

trained dogs from Switzerland, to sniff out people trapped in the rubble, was at first turned down, then accepted two days later. In the meantime people died. Some mindless official didn't think the dogs would be any use. They have in fact performed wonders in locating people. Offers of help from overseas soon got bogged down in the interminable red tape that Japanese bureaucrats love.

Disagreements between the Self Defence Force Agency and labour unions have held up the delivery of urgently needed food and medicine. There is no single coordinating agency to oversee the government's relief work. The politicians are dithering and grandstanding. As a result two or three groups of relief workers would turn up to the same place while other places remained without assistance. Essential services—especially the water and gas supplies and garbage removal—have broken down completely. Flu and stomach disorders set in.

Some officials in my University here seemed to think that my departure a month before I was due to finish will entail a loss of face. I have argued and been polite. But I've had enough. Nine days after the quake, my airline agreed to let me fly out. I couldn't wait. The aftershocks continued to roll in, weakening my apartment building and scaring me witless.

I heard that the bureaucrats were locked, at long last, into some really serious decision making. The question on the agenda is what to name the quake. Should it be the Great South Hyogo Earthquake? Should it be the Great Hanshin Earthquake? Should it be the Great Kansai Earthquake? They are like a pack of postmodernists arguing about the Holocaust. At least they agree on the 'great'— because central Kobe (which now looks like Hiroshima after the Atomic Bomb) experienced what the experts tell us was the strongest recorded earthquake in history—on Tuesday, 17 January at 5:36 in the morning.

The very memory of it turns my stomach. And the bureaucrats are having the same effect on me. ■

Allan Patience has just spent five months as a visiting professor at Kobe-Gakuin University. He is looking forward to returning to geological stability at the Victoria University of Technology.

Profitable examples

Saints Popular & Relevant, Emmet P Costello SJ St Pauls Press, Homebush, Sydney 1994, ISBN 1 875570 43 8 RRP $6.95

IN MY SALAD DAYS, both as a student and as a member of a religious order, I was stuffed to the gills with hagiography—the records, true or mythical, of the lives of saints.

As a result of this over-feeding, I developed an active dislike for this form of history or myth. Biography of any kind is a treacherous endeavour. Biography plus the interpretation of the nature of sanctity and the relations between creator and creature is an even more difficult endeavour. When you add, as you must, the ingredient of miracles and the proof thereof, then you are in deeper difficulty both as writer and reader.

People who write about saints are writing about personages of 'heroic virtue'. Heroes, male or female, are hard to understand and harder still to cope with. In wartime, we used to tell ourselves that the best way to stay alive was to stay away from the heroes.

All this, of course, is irony but sometimes a touch of irony is necessary to keep our sense of proportion in things spiritual and well as temporal.

Father Costello's small book on the lives of ten saints has several important merits. First, it's brief. The writer has forced himself to focus on the characters and on those elements of their development which raised them out of the ruck of humanity. He has avoided most of the cliches of traditional hagiography and has managed to inject an element of life and reality into each of his sketches. The figures in his portrait gallery are diverse and each one is worth a bedtime reading or meditation in a quiet hour.

If I can enjoy the book without indigestion, the generality of readers will make a pleasant meal of it. **—Morris L. West** ■

Hammer of heretics

Irenaeus, Denis Minns OP, Outstanding Christian Thinkers Series, Geoffrey Chapman, London 1994, ISBN 0-225-66600-6, RRP $29.00

AVID AND ELEPHANTINE READERS of *Eureka Street* will remember the learned debate between Denis Minns and his fellow Dominican Christopher Dowd about the right interpretation of a crucial passage from Irenaeus' *Against Heresies*.

For those may have asked themselves who Irenaeus was and why he was so important, Denis Minns has now written a splendid short presentation of Irenaeus' ideas. His account is as simple as it can be for a writer as far distant from us as Irenaeus, and is livened by wit, realism and good sense.

Minns has an eye for the way in which people live and write in the church, and a sardonic appreciation of the gap between rhetorical style and real intention in any author's work. He is also liberal in the best Catholic sense of the word, in his interest in all the ways in which people have tried to understand the mystery of the Gospel, and in his tolerance for those from whose errors later generations have learned.

In this respect, Minns' book echoes the breadth of the Outstanding Christian Thinkers Series as a whole, in which other authors introduce the thought of people as diverse as Rahner and Von Balthasar, Congar and Bultmann, Handel and Anselm.

Denis Minns' book meets the hopes and matches the accomplishment of the series. **—Andrew Hamilton SJ** ■

MICHAEL MCGIRR

Ronald Frank Henderson, 1917-1994

WHEN THE ITALIAN FILM DIRECTOR, Federico Fellini, died a little more than a year ago, his stature was often measured in the fact that he had bequeathed to ordinary speech such words and phrases as *la dolce vita* and *paparazzi*. In the early '70s, Professor Ronald Henderson gave Australia a phrase more disturbing than anything Fellini might have created. The phrase was 'the poverty line.' Henderson was a realist. The phrase wasn't the product of a bleak imagination. It simply made visible a sharp division in society that most citizens of the Lucky Country had failed to see.

Henderson was born in Scotland and studied economics at Cambridge University, where he was influenced by John Maynard Keynes. At Henderson's memorial service, Dr Davis McCaughey found occasion to quote from Keynes: 'the political problem of mankind is to combine three things: economic efficiency, social justice and individual liberty'. For Henderson, such thoughts were crystallised by his experience at the age of 17 of organising summer camps for children in a Welsh village with an unemployment rate of 40 per cent.

He migrated to Australia in 1962, to take up the post of Foundation Director of the Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research at Melbourne University. Sometimes it takes a fresh pair of eyes to recognise patterns to which local people have become habituated: Henderson was almost immediately caught up by the lack of any serious local research into poverty, and began his seven-year-study *Poverty in Melbourne* (1970).

In 1972, the McMahon government established a 'Commission of Inquiry into Poverty' and appointed Henderson to the chair. The inquiry's terms of reference were broadened under Whitlam. The final report, *Poverty in Australia* (1975) identified a number of basic principles:

That every person has the right to a basic level of security and well-being and all government action should respect the independence, dignity and worth of every individual.

That every person should have equal opportunity for personal development and participation in the community. To achieve this, government intervention will be required not only to redistribute income but also to ensure a fair distribution of services and of power to make decisions.

That need, and degree of need, should be the primary test by which the help given to a person, group or community should be determined.

Sadly, Henderson's detailed and humane analysis of the living conditions of a whole range of people beneath the 'poverty line' was largely overlooked in the political turbulence during 1975. In 1984, he spoke of the 'conspiracy of silence' that had blanketed his findings for the previous nine years.

The Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research continues to describe the 'poverty line.' Currently, it claims that a couple with two children and having to pay for housing needs a weekly income of $401.66 to stay out of poverty. A single parent with one child needs $274.54. The poverty line remains one of the less-well- publicised of our economic indicators.

Hayden Raysmith worked with Ronald Henderson on the poverty inquiry and again in the early '80s, when Henderson was on the board of the magazine *Australian Society*. He remembers him as intellectually rigorous, astute, confident of his ability yet 'I can't recall any situation in which he was driven by ego.' One of Henderson's eulogists, Bishop Michael Challen, spoke of his ability to identify the skills of others and to set them working confidently in the sphere of social economics and social research.

Davis McCaughey said 'he brought to the Australian scene a fresh and powerful mind, he also brought a quickened conscience.' He put Henderson in a broader context:

'Every age has its superstitions on which it depends in uncertain days. In the time of the prophet Micah, if things went wrong, you sacrificed some precious calves or an excessive number of rams or poured out a river of oil, but to no effect for all the time what was required of the human race was to do justice, to love kindness and to walk humbly with its God.

'There were and are no automatic or mechanical ways of putting matters right, only the exercise of the human will, with the informed mind, to do justly and to love kindness. So too in our day, Ronald knew how the world works, what adds up and what does not, and he had no use for nostrums, pet theories, even if widely held as ideologies. Indeed, he could be extremely impatient, not least with fashionable jargon or with indecision when the issue was clear.

'Once he had done his work it could no longer be deemed that we did not know the size or nature of the problem. We did know. To a large extent we still know. What we lacked as a community, what we still lack, was the will to do enough about it.' ■

Michael McGirr SJ is the consulting editor of *Eureka Street*.

• *Eureka Street* is grateful to Dr Davis McCaughey and Bishop Michael Challen for making available the texts of their eulogies of Professor Henderson.

ALLAN PATIENCE

The public good

HUGH STRETTON IS A GIANT in Australian social science. But he is too infrequently read by his colleagues, and by bureaucrats, politicians and journalists (apart from Peter Ward who does appreciate Stretton's immense intelligence). His wisdom, blunt style, and humility (e.g. he doesn't have an Australian honour and travels on none of the gravy trains which are crowded by lesser intellectuals) make him an outsider in the Australian academy. This is despite his having written on more themes than many of his peers put together. His writings address issues in social and political theory, historiography, the epistemology of the social sciences, the history and development of Australian cities, urban planning, environmental policy, housing, social welfare, ethics, economics, and politics.

Now we have another major work from Stretton which is co-authored by Lionel Orchard, a former doctoral student, now academic, who displays similar virtues to his mentor. The volume covers at least three domains, one explicit and two implicit. The explicit domain is the most detailed and brilliant defence of a mixed public/private economic policy yet attempted in contemporary public policy analysis. The two implicit domains are a passionate defence of the human capacity for altruism (which acknowledges and accounts for human selfishness) and a stinging and devastating critique of the epistemological and methodological foundations of modern economics. All three domains play into each other, informing and enriching a complex, erudite and subtle piece of scholarship.

Part One of the book is didactic in the best sense, laying out clearly the values guiding the argument. It also provides a literature review of public choice theory that is both scrupulously fair and unequivocally engaged. Part Two looks at the ways in which public goods and public enterprise have been politically compromised by the ravages of public choice theory. Part Three offers an outline of a synthesised political theory of public goods and public enterprise in a mixed economy oriented to social justice and a range of other civilised and humane ends. The parts can be read separately to advantage; together they make a seminal contribution to the contemporary political theory of public policy.

Public Goods, Public Enterprise, Public Choice: Theoretical Foundations of the Contemporary Attack on Government, Hugh Stretton and Lionel Orchard, London, Macmillan, 1994. ISBN 0333607 252 RRP $39.95

Parts One and Two cover great tracts of post-War scholarship—economic theory, public policy, political theory, management theory—with a lucidity unmatched even by the authors in those fields. This post-War scholarship is perilously neglected in so many recent silly adventures in post-modern analysis. These adventures have been as effective as the 1970s' doctrinal rows on the left at taking people's minds off the real issues. How else can we account for the way in which intelligent citizens have been morally and intellectually sandbagged by the bullies of the New Right into voting down great public institutions and vandalising public policies which can be made to contribute to everyone's welfare?

Part Three is of necessity tentative. But the authors must ultimately confront the metaphysics of the post-liberal communitarianism with which they are challenging political philosophy. It is not enough to demonstrate empirically, and admire, human altruism and civic virtue. If they are not going to be blown away on the first economic rationalist wind that blows chillingly down the corridors of power and academe, communitarianism has to be grounded metaphysically in a theory of ethics. In Part Three we are brought up to the very wire dividing the authors' version of communitarian realism from metaphysics. The realism they seem to cling to—like all realisms, including positivistic economism—contains a range of largely unexplored but influential ontological and epistemological assumptions. The great positivist error is to believe that you can escape metaphysics. You can't. In a later volume they should step over the wire. They have brilliantly prepared the ground for doing so.

A reviewer of Stretton's 1969 book *The Political Sciences* thought it might be a work of genius. It is tempting to use similar language for aspects of this volume. It will of course be as a red rag to a bull as far as many hard-line economic rationalists are concerned. But this is the rationalists' problem, not Stretton and Orchard's. The book mounts a formidable—probably overwhelming—case against the attacks on government that the rationalists have engineered with such crudeness and cruelty.

IT ALSO EXPLORES the possibilities of a post-liberal theory of social and political democracy, going way beyond the fashionable exercises in interest-group peddling (e.g. feminism, environmentalism) that have held the centre stage of late. The volume ends with sketches of how a communitarian theory holds out new possibilities for thinking about a socially responsible, just and hopeful democracy.

As the authors note: '... our social experience does much to constitute our individuality, reasoning powers and ideas of good, which in turn constantly reshape our social arrangements and the ideas of good which they incorporate' (p. 276). It's been an awfully long time since we heard such good sense in public policy analysis and political theory. The book should be read by every bureaucrat, politician, voter and student of public affairs all over the world. ■

Allan Patience teaches Political Science at the Victoria University of Technology.

FICTION

JIM DAVIDSON

Our lady of the lamps

COUNCILLOR ROGAN LAID DOWN HIS IVORY PAPER-KNIFE, along with the gas bill. The mail had brought little that day. 'What I need', he sighed, 'is a cause.'

Somewhat astonished by this rare moment of insight, he looked around the room. Mustapha was licking his paws. Sunlight gleamed insolently on the couch. The Second Empire clock ticked on, its bronze youth in straw hat gazing back at him vacantly.

Picking up the local paper, the Councillor allowed himself a slight cough. He had not been well. Nothing serious, the doctor had said, but too much weight for a man of your age. Palpitations, my dear Thomas, are a warning sign.

He began to turn the pages. There was the usual highly-coloured account of a Town Hall bunfight, and Cr Rogan did have to agree that, even if the *Innerpendant* cocked things up—no doubt intentionally, he humphed while dismembering an adjacent croissant—there was the inescapable fact that, when he assembled with all the other crs, a great deal of bickering and infighting went on. At least he could turn the page on it now. And did so—somewhat imperiously.

Suddenly the eye of Cr Rogan was caught by an item about a foundry. It seems there was still one operating within the bounds of the borough—he rather liked this phrase, the bounds of the borough, and savouring it, said it out loud. And (he noted as he read on) they still had the mouldings of the original lamps used throughout the City.

The Councillor's domain was never a suburb, as it was for ordinary folk; and in a flash he suddenly saw (amidst the remnants of his late breakfast) how Light could be made to shine upon the City.

✦

The Councillor was not entirely happy with Exhibition, gratified though he was that the citizenry of East Ward had elected him to represent them. There were so many ... disparate elements. Trendies, Koories, yuppies, musos, garbos, accas, alkies, plus a sprinkling of ethnic hundreds and thousands—the City had the lot. And running down the middle of it was Randwick Street, not so long ago gloomy and cavernous, with high Victorian buildings tattily looking down, as though wondering what they were doing there. But now it was buzzing ... developing ... a restaurant centre for the whole city.

Councillor Rogan dropped his arms; he had become quite expansive. But there was no audience. Only Mustapha's tail, receding down the passage like a distant trampole.

The street needed beautification—tastefully, of course. There could be special paving, cast-iron seats ... that sort of thing. Perhaps some trees, and lovely Victorian lamps, in clusters, like cauliflowers. Mother would have said hydrangeas, he suddenly thought. Having brought himself to the mirror, Cr Rogan stopped, adjusted his collar and gave his scheme (and himself) an approving nod.

✦

Dirty cottonwool skies dabbed irritably at everybody's consciousness the day Cr Rogan turned up at Lollard's. He did not, of course, simply turn up; a secretary had rung from the Town Hall to make an appointment. Although the massive doors were wide open, there was no sign of life inside. The councillor ventured a discreet 'Hello'. No reply.

He stepped inside, and looked around. Pieces of machinery of all shapes and sizes, united only in an intimidating obscurity of function, beckoned and dangled from all directions. The councillor noted the distant furnace, closed, and then a nearby door, which opened.

—Whaddya want, mate, said the silhouetted figure.

The councillor explained his purpose, or rather mission, for he fell into the tone he readily adopted with tradespeople, one of patient explication. The man listened, and when it dawned on him that the mouldings that some journalist sheila had gushed over were what had brought this coot, took him out into the yard. Might be some money in it.

Cr Rogan was ecstatic. Over by the wall, with timber, iron and mouldings all around, deep and crisp and even, lay the spindly shafts of a number of lamp-posts. Stuck in a corner close by, were what he was told were the mouldings for the cast-iron. They had probably lain there, the Councillor deftly computed, since the reign of His Late Majesty King Edward VII. To whom, he found himself speculating, he bore no little resemblance.

✦

Tripping along next day to the local Parthenon, the centre of governance for the City, Cr Rogan faintly resembled a fox terrier in a park on a bright spring morning. The Mayor, Nino Nabarro, received him amicably—something which could not always be guaranteed. They were, of course, on the same side, but the cloak and dagger politics of Exhibition Town Hall were such that the paranoid gestures of the characters in Eisenstein's *Ivan the Terrible* (usually mere flickers on a screen) here took on new meaning.

—It does seem a good idea you have there, said Nino, not unwarily, as he stirred his tea.

Cr Rogan clinked his cup. An ancient memory stirred, of the J. Arthur Rank man sounding the gong. This was going to be his production.

It appeared that, under the Local Entertainment and Employment Resuscitation scheme (LEER), funds were available from the state government to promote constructive diversions for the populace—and, Nino explained (for his legal versatility far outpaced his English), the lamps concept was certainly a construction, contained just enough fashionable flounce (as the councillor took him to mean) to be regarded as an entertainment, and would certainly provide employment. In exchange for Cr Rogan's support on the great Garbage Question—aimed at eliminating the City's involuntary Garbage Festivals—Nino promised his support. His sponsorship, even—while acknowledging, of course, the project as Cr Rogan's initiative. It was agreed that the government would be approached by His Worship the Mayor for a sum of ... (say) $350,000.

The first employment the scheme provided was for journalists: STRIKE A LIGHT!, screamed the *Innerpendant* headline. The Councillor, attacked yet again as Bogan Rogan, was furious. The paper took the view that Randy—as it loved to abbreviate Randwick Street—should not be interfered with, as it smirkingly put it. Indeed—so these layabouts argued—the street could *not* be improved. It was working perfectly well, and was best left alone.

Typical!, the Councillor snorted as he threw the paper down. 'Victorian tizz' indeed! And anyway, what was wrong with creating another Burgoyne Street? That had, at long last, become clean and tasteful. But in Randy (for Cr Rogan hadn't really noticed that he too would slip into the familiar form) you could still be approached for money, could still see people freaked out on drugs, or ... hear some smart-arse journalist swearing at the next table. He poured another whiskey to calm himself down. There was a great deal of room for improvement as far as he was concerned.

Two days after the *Innerpendant* appeared, there were rumours of shopkeepers calling a meeting. Then graffiti appeared overnight in Randwick Street: NO VICTORECTOMY FOR RANDY ... BOGAN ROGAN, TOM FOR SHOGUN.

Cr Rogan was becoming anxious.

✦

A few days later the Councillor found himself walking past St Teresa's. He stopped. He had not been to church for a very long time.

Noticing that the building was open, he ventured in before he had really thought about it. There was a wonderful smell of polished wood, and a hint of incense. He made his way to a pew and, crossing himself, fell on his knees.

Now he was there it was as though he did not know what to do next. He went blank, absorbing the peacefulness.

He decided to pray. But who to? Not having been to confession for three years, he had some timidity in approaching the Almighty. There was, of course, Our Holy Mother, a plaster likeness of whom outstretched her arms towards him.

Then he thought of another Mother Mary, Exhibition's own. He would pray to her.

First he asked for strength, in the face of that insupportable graffiti and the likelihood of further personal attacks. And, as he had been taught long ago, he prayed for his enemies, trusting that they would become ... enlightened. (The pun encouraged a benign smile.) Emboldened now, Cr Rogan laid his scheme for the improvement of Randwick Street, and the City, before the Blessed—and stopped.

Pause.

—Has it occurred to you, Thomas, a voice suddenly declared, that I might consider lamps dating from my time—unprogressive?

Cr Rogan looked around. And about. But there was no one there. He tried to continue, but no words came.

Puzzled, the councillor sat up, crossed himself, and then got up from the pew and began to walk out, throwing nervous glances over his shoulder.

✦

Cr Rogan had, it must be said, expected much more enthusiasm for his project. It was so patently an initiative for improvement. All he seemed to have secured was the enthusiastic support of real estate agents, suggesting a drink in the pub. But the Councillor did not like having his back slapped. Or beer.

As he went to the Town Hall for the meeting his eye caught a new flicker of graffiti: ROGUE'N.

It was quite preposterous.

—Surely you can see, he said addressing a particularly vociferous interjector, that if we improve the street it will bring tourists, and custom?

—Yeah? replied the pert haberdasher, who took out a pouch to roll her own. Rates and rents will go up first, but.

The brevity of this reply caught the Councillor quite off guard. But at least there was the satisfaction of seeing the haberdasher's friend tap her on the arm, and point to the No Smoking Sign.

Then up stood a history lecturer. You can never trust these accas, thought the councillor. Even when they spiral on to reach a conclusion somewhere near yours, they're so long-winded and argue with such misplaced emphasis that no one else lasts the journey. Listen to this one now ... Talking about the first land sales, the boom, droning on about the last depression (or is he still droning on about the one before that?), and how development will help us to avoid the next ... Aah, the lamps. *Lux in tenebris* indeed ...

—What I have striven to do, ladies and gentlemen, is to place Cr Rogan's splendid proposal in the broad stream of progressive measures (not all of them welcome at the time) which have characterised the advance of our community.

Gravely Dr Mortlock sat himself down.

—Middle class wankers, came a voice from the back.

—Order, said the Mayor.

Nice to hear from you tonight, Nino, thought the Councillor. The least you can do.

Another councillor (of the Labor persuasion) was now on her feet, speaking against the proposal. Cathy Spalding was one of the better ones, Cr Rogan conceded, though he didn't care for all these jokes about dogs and lamp-posts ... foul play. Still, she had a point. Randy on a Sunday had become a puppy dog's paradise.

Then up got Emma Stopforth. There were hisses from the back, and a cry of 'Pommy, go home!' Briskly she turned in the direction of her attacker, like the primary school teacher she once had been. In coolly articulated tones that carried across the room, she announced that 'At least I was brought up properly *in* one, unlike that bastard over there'.

—Oooohhh, moaned a section of the crowd. The touch of viciousness had been unexpected.

Appealing to them all now as Exhibition people, as Exhibitioners—exhibitionists?, someone helpfully volunteered—Emma began to advance the argument (a favourite of hers) that as Exhibition was Melbourne's oldest suburb, it behoved its present residents to make themselves worthy of it.

Groans greeted this idea. The lamps would add to the place's ... charm, she declared, amidst ironic cheers. Emma was a figure that Exhibition lefties loved to hate, thought the Councillor; they loathed her regular appearances in the letters column of *The Age*.

It was while the next speaker was talking that Cr Rogan realised that if the issue were put to the vote, it might very well be lost. And since the City professed to be a democracy (albeit a guided one), Council—now more or less on side—would find it difficult to pursue the matter if that should happen. The Councillor sent a note along the table to Nino, and caught his eye as he opened it. DO NOT PUT TO VOTE, read Nino, and nodded.

Cr Rogan then got to his feet to make the final speech. He made great play of the fact that this was not, as had been claimed, an inauthentic restoration; of course Randwick Street had had Victorian lamps. (He would simply pass over the concept of clusters.) More to the point, it had had these very lamps—brought to his attention by the *Innerpendant*—and as he spoke he nodded to the reporter as if to alert the man to this rare bouquet; his brain though could not help subtitling the remark 'pearls before swine'.

—Thanks to the paper, he cheerily continued, I was able to go along to the original foundry, still operating within the bounds of our City; it could do with the work that casting a new set of street lamps would provide. As could other people, setting the lamps in place ...

The Councillor sat down after a ringing peroration—mercifully free from interjections (Good old Emma! She'd drawn their fire ...), and marinated himself in exhaustion until he heard the word, Vote.

Nino—having made no attempt to catch his eye—was putting the motion. Whether the Council should go ahead with the lamps project.

The crowd, having had its fun earlier in the evening, was now fairly quiet. The vote was taken calmly, and the motion lost: 83 votes to 46.

Cr Rogan was ashen. When the meeting ended, he made straight for the door in great strides. He did not want to stop and talk with anyone.

—Bastards, he thought, as he tripped down the steps on the way to his car. I won't give up. In fact, he suddenly thought as he started up his engine, there is one way to stymie them, including that Nino, the local Benito. I could ... *donate* some lamps to the City. Very-hard-to-refuse. Four lamps on the main intersection would make the point, and stick in their craw. We have ways ... and fortunately, some means. As he turned the corner into his street, the Councillor hung a voluptuous wheelie.

✦

A few nights later, Cr Rogan pulled up his eiderdown. Get off, Mustapha, he instructed. The cat jumped off, signifying with a meow that it had every intention of bounding back under cover of darkness. But for the moment it would graciously leave the good councillor to his slumbers.

And so it did. The Councillor, having slept, woke with a start. A sudden pain around the heart. But just as speedily it vanished, and with a sense of puzzlement and then a resigned groan, he pulled the blankets up tightly once more.

Perhaps he had had lights on the brain. Whatever the case, Cr Rogan was soon aware of a luminosity at the foot of his bed, a sense of ineffable presence, something infinitely greater than anything he could aspire to. It was hard to focus on at first, but it was much, much larger than the agate of a pussycat's eye. Rather, the form of a woman dressed in sober brown and white seemed to hover, snapping into sharp definition the moment the councillor realised he was being addressed in the sweetest voice he had ever heard.

—Thomas, she said. You're dutiful, friendly. You have *tried* to be a good man, haven't you, Thomas?

Tom Rogan was more perturbed than reassured by this kindly interrogation. Nor did he care for the suggestion of finality. The prone councillor's first impulse was to recite his CV. But on second thoughts that didn't seem to answer.

—Ye-es, he said, somewhat nervously.

—Well then, Thomas, imagine my concern at what is happening to my birthplace. The poor are being shunted out. Many of them have nowhere else to go.

Thomas immediately thought of Resolution 296 on lodging houses (for which, miraculously he had voted). But he might have to do better than that.

—Faith, hope and charity, Councillor. That's what's needed. There's still faith and hope at my end of the street, what with the cathedral and the mission; but down the hill, there ain't no charity. You increasingly concern yourselves with disparity. The Visitor paused, bestowing on Tom a beatific smile.

—This restoration idea is not a very good one, Thomas, she sighed, her tone ever so slightly suggesting she was addressing a small boy. The councillor was increasingly feeling he had become one.

—Where will it end? If you insist upon heritage colours, and the original lamps, should you not also insist upon the original streets that went with them? Should you not tear up the asphalt, bring back the horses, and see the street littered with dollops of manure?

—Surely not, My Lady, Cr Rogan ventured rather bravely.

—Well, Thomas, you are a man of the world, concerned with making things work. We, on the other hand, deal primarily in principle. Principles can always be drawn out from practice and stated or restated any time; that's why, apart from questions of morality, they must never be ignored. Why, somebody might come along and wish to restore things as they were even earlier.

—But that's ridiculous, Your ... Worship.

—Ever heard of Mabo, Thomas? Randwick Street is well-sited; there was a Koori track there for hundreds of years. Claims might be made, and receive support from unexpected ... quarters.

—Good Heavens! exclaimed Cr Rogan. But, Your Grace, we have never really seriously claimed to be absolutely, totally interested in authenticity. It's just really to enhance the buildings that are still there, to make them ... nice.

—Nice! exclaimed his interlocutor, with a touch of annoyance. This niceness of yours has nasty consequences, Thomas. In dear old Exhibition, always a redoubt of the poor, it creates conspicuous consumption. It privileges the fashionable. You lot have virtually repackaged the suburb for niche marketing.

Cr Rogan was surprised by the Visitor's mastery of the latest terminology. Perhaps she had picked it up while browsing in Randwick Street bookshops. At any rate she seemed annoyed. Perhaps he should not mention the Council's Strategy Plan for Tourism.

—That filtered light of yours, Thomas. A nice period touch, I'm sure. But it's not a dim, religious light, is it?

Cr Rogan tried to look contrite, and was going to confess it wasn't, when he had an idea. Like should be countered with like.

—Let your light so shine before men ... began the Councillor, a little smugly.

—Thomas, that is *our* light, she said, raising her hand. Let's not have a demarcation dispute about this. It's not yours, and it's not the Council's—as I believe you now have every reason to know. It is *our* light, she repeated, and it shines through *you*. Verily. See ...?

The Councillor looked at the end of his bed. Above his toes the blankets had become faintly luminous. His arm was ... golden. Looking up again at the Visitor, he saw her arms outstretched towards him. 'Come', she said, smiling sweetly. With an almost involuntary gesture, and an incredible sense of lightness, he threw back the bedclothes. It was as if he were being borne ... upwards, ever upwards.

Mustapha was puzzled. The Councillor had given one almighty snore, and then there was nothing.

POETRY

The News and Weather

I smoothed the pelt of the hills with my long looking
And the hills rose up and stretched in the early light.
In the home paddocks, along the river-flats
Black cattle doubled their height with morning shadow.

I heard the currawongs' cry as they swooped above me
The news they told was You can't change the weather
And who would want to, walking out very early
With pink and grey galahs tumbling for grass-seeds.

I picked a fig from the laden tree in the garden
And heard a voice that spoke in a tongue of flame
From the fiery sun behind the trembling tree-top:
You are lucky to be alive in these terrible times.

I peeled back the green of the fig breaking into its centre
Galah-coloured, pink and grey its thousand flowerlets,
And ate of the fruit of the garden and understood
The voice that seemed to flash in the air above.

The message must be received, taken into one's being
As knowledge is taken, biting on apple or fig—
Terrible times in the world that will not be changed—
And I walking out on such a morning early.

Rosemary Dobson

GEOFFREY MILNE

It's that star quality, y'know

I hate a sunburnt country,
A land of sweeping plains;
That's why I live in
Melbourne,
Where it always rains.

I SAW THIS BIT of doggerel spray-painted on the wall of a flooded suburban underpass many years ago, as I was fleeing a Melbourne beset by summer rains for a warmer and drier holiday in Adelaide. Apparently few of Melbourne's theatre entrepreneurs have either seen such graffiti or experienced the city's classic summer weather, for about half of the professional theatre offered there in summer nowadays takes place in the open air.

Big-ticket items like *Hello, Dolly!* and the Melbourne Theatre Company's twin offerings, *Oleanna* and *A Flea in her Ear*, remain sheltered behind their proscenium arches. But an increasing number of producers are going *al fresco* to make holiday money for themselves and for an ever-increasing number of theatre artists and technicians, and there is no doubting the popularity of the current wave of open-air drama.

Performing Arts Projects, for example, are doing prodigious business with an adaptation of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* in the gardens at Rippon Lea. Whether patrons are attracted solely by the full-frontal nudity of this play in particular, or whether they have become attached over the years to the company's portrayals of English literary figures and their sexual antics, is hard to fathom; but there has certainly been a dramatic increase in attendances at Performing Arts' Rippon Lea performances each year since they began.

Encouraged by the success of these titillating evening shows for adults, the company's director, Rob Chuter, and its indefatigable veteran playwright, Julia Britton, last year began churning out kids' shows as well. Using the same locations, adaptations of Frances Hodgson Burnett's *The Secret Garden* (in 1993-94) and *Little Lord Fauntleroy* (this summer) were added to the adult repertoire by day.

Most practitioners of *al fresco* theatre rate Glenn Elston, co-director of Elston, Hocking & Woods, as the inaugurator of Melbourne's vogue for open-air theatre. Certainly it was his vision that got the city's Royal Botanic Gardens onto the theatrical map nine summers ago. Ironically, Elston was seized by the idea to do open-air theatre in Melbourne while living in dank London; his instinct, not surprisingly, was to try Shakespeare out of doors but his first production for the erstwhile Melbourne City Council's Fabulous Entertainments in Public Places was a children's show, an adaptation of the evergreen *Wind in the Willows*, using several locations of the Botanic Gardens.

Elston's production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* quickly followed and it has been going round more or less ever since. The *Dream* had a break in 1992-93, when it was replaced by a not-so-effective *Twelfth Night*, but returned again in 1993-94, and this summer is sharing the gardens with *Romeo and Juliet*, thus giving us a double whammy of Elston Shakespeare for the first time.

The Elston, Hocking & Woods domination of the outdoor scene doesn't end with Shakespeare and Kenneth Grahame. The company also did a garden adaptation of *Alice in Wonderland* for a couple of years and this year partnered its mandatory *Willows* with a buy-in of Performing Arts Projects' *Secret Garden*, first staged at Rippon Lea last year but transferred this summer to the Botanic Gardens, thus adding twin children's shows by day to the twin Shakespeares by night.

Elston, Hocking and Woods also presented yet another Shakespeare play, *A Comedy of Errors*, in the splendid Northcote Amphitheatre on the other side of town. This highly physical and heavily cut adaptation by Melbourne Maskworks, performed in Commedia dell' Arte half-masks and with irreverently chosen modern songs, added a different dimension to Shakespearean interpretation.

Encouraged by the huge successes achieved by the various Shakespeare and Bloomsbury Set shows, other companies have jumped onto the great bandwagon under the stars. A highly enterprising group calling themselves Hungry Ghost have just completed their third season of spooky tales in an atmospheric city alley, Commerce Way. Always performing on the stroke of midnight, they began in 1993 with an adaptation of *The Goose-Girl*, followed last summer with a superbly gruesome version of Grimm's *The Blue Beard*. This year's chilling story was *The Sandman*, adapted from the Tales of Hoffman.

Not to be outdone, La Mama chimed in with a production, in its lovely little courtyard, of David Britton's monodrama from the 1988 Festival of Perth, *Save Suvla Street*. This was actually a production by a group called Soup Kitchen Theatre, which usually does indoor productions for the City of Melbourne's FEIPP program at lunchtimes.

Children's theatre has long been a favourite target for *al fresco* artists, and as well as the Performing Arts and Elston, Hocking and Woods productions already mentioned, Melbourne has recently had masked *Cinderellas* occupying the gardens in St Kilda, and any number of outdoor pantomimes and clown shows. These were joined two years ago by a new children's theatre group, Tusk Productions, who have done two slightly different—but equally energetic and splendidly swashbuckling—productions of *The Adventures of Rob-*

in Hood on the banks of the Yarra in Studley Park, Kew.

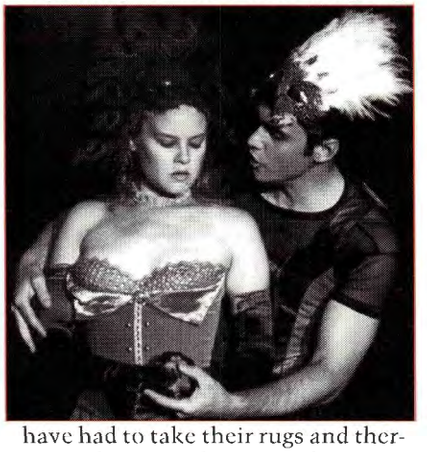
These are perambulatory performances in which the adventures take their course along the riverbank, involving scenes in which Robin actually hits a bullseye with an arrow at 60 paces to win the heart of a genuinely blushing Maid Marian, and in which Little John tumbles into a real river and Robin's Merry Menne (often played, politically correctly, by female swashbucklers) swoop onto the dastardly Sheriff of Nottingham's wicked followers from a magnificently real oak tree. Here is one instance where reality beats art—even the highly decorative artistry of the indoor proscenium-stage pantos of the likes of Garry Ginivan, whose holiday productions at the Alexander Theatre at Monash University are second to none.

Among the plethora of outdoor (and, for that matter, indoor) theatre for young people nowadays in Melbourne, there is at least one interesting show that is a kind of hybrid. This is JAM Theatre's adaptation of E.B. White's *Charlotte's Web*, now in its fifth season in the barn of the Collingwood Children's Farm. The show is performed inside the barn, but real animals from the working farm outside (such as chooks, pigeons and the occasional wandering peacock or possum) occasionally mingle with the make-believe spider, rat, pigs, cows and humans of the enacted story. Similarly, the lowing of cattle and the baaing of sheep encroach on the play's live soundscape in a way that young audiences find quite beguiling.

ANOTHER NEWCOMER to the open-air children's theatre this year is *Peter Pan*, performed in the suburban Princes Gardens of Prahran by Arthouse, a group better known for its nocturnal (adult) interests in the kinkier works of Genet *et al*. Everybody's jumping on the bandwagon!

The amazing thing about all this is that the shows actually manage to go on at all, given Melbourne's notoriously fickle summer weather. In fact, very few performances are lost because of the weather. A spokesman for Elston Hocking & Woods, and Jason Buesst, production manager of Performing Arts Projects' open-air productions at Rippon Lea, both confirmed that fewer than one performance in ten is rained out. At the time of writing, *Romeo and Juliet* had been rained out only six times since its December 8 opening; day shows in the Botanic Gardens were down by only five.

Hungry Ghost has failed to deliver only once in its three seasons (perhaps fluking better weather conditions in its more limited three nights per week seasons); day shows can suffer more than night shows because of the tendency for daytime showers to clear away by nightfall, thus allowing adults to enjoy their nights out with picnics of chardonnay and pâté when their offspring have had to take their rugs and thermoses home without satisfaction.



None of the companies I spoke to take out 'rain insurance', all preferring to offer patrons the option of exchanging tickets for an alternative performance in the event of a cancelled show. (In my younger days in Perth, where Festival productions almost invariably went on out of doors, we always worked on the brutal principle that if it rained before interval, you got your money back; if it rained after interval—tough!).

Open-air theatre companies (like concreters and sporting entrepreneurs) depend heavily on the Weather Bureau's forecasts; as well as warning ticket-holders to bring rugs, cushions and mosquito-repellant, both Performing Arts and Elston, Hocking and Woods also advise them to dial a weather hotline before turning up. Open-air theatre is becoming a very organised sub-industry.

And, at the end of the night, it is a broadly 'cultural' rather than a narrowly 'artistic' experience that patrons are flocking to, especially for the adult productions. What is on offer here is mainly an idyllic BYO picnic under the stars with entertaining theatre as a backdrop, rather than the subtleties of acting and interpretation. It is bizarre, for example, in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, to hear a line like 'I love to have someone to talk to, someone to share my intimate moments with' bellowed at about 100 decibels (against the prevailing wind) in the most public manner imaginable to a huge crowd of browsing gourmets.

The bottom line here is that the location is the thing; the aim is mainly entertainment (even in a *Romeo and Juliet*, where every vestige of humour is wrung out of every moment), although other productions want us to take them more seriously. What really works best in these shows is the interaction between character, location, audience and story: I have seen first-time Shakespeare spectators following the plot of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with the same eagle eyes as readers of Agatha Christie thrillers. But it is, ultimately, the effectiveness of the use of the location that wins or loses the public. You tend to come out singing the trees, the gardens or the buildings rather than the subtlety of plot or character.

Still to come is a production of Gilbert & Sullivan's *HMS Pinafore*, 'with a company of 50 on a million dollar set', commencing mid-February 'under the stars' on the open-air decks of the museum ship *Polly Woodside*, moored on the banks of the Yarra.

Will it never end? Jason Buesst agrees that theatre under the stars is here to stay, and that there is room for open-air theatre to maintain (and increase) its hold over an obviously charmed summer public, though there is still the chance for it to get overdone. In the meantime, out with the Aerogard, the Onkaparinga and the picnic basket, and get on down to the gardens for an evening of theatre magic *al fresco*. ■

Geoffrey Milne is Head of the Department of Theatre and Drama in the School of Arts and Media at La Trobe University.

Nadine Garner as Juliet and Jack Finsterer as Romeo in Glenn Elston's production of Romeo and Juliet *at the Old Melbourne Observatory.*

Photograph: Robert Colvin.

TIM STONEY

Life on the edge

'We're telling interesting stories, and stories that people want to hear': filmmaker Ana Kokkinos.

Photo: Courtesy New Vision Films.

AFTER SEVERAL WEEKS promoting her award-winning short film *Only the Brave,* Ana Kokkinos might have been expected to look a bit jaded. However, despite finishing an hour-and-a-half TV interview only minutes before, she was only too happy to tell her story all over again.

'My interest in film started when I was 14 or 15. I remember going to Melbourne University Union, which used to run a lot of arthouse films in those days, and seeing European films for the first time. From then on I wanted to be a film maker—a writer director—but had absolutely no idea how to go about it. I was a working-class Greek kid from the western suburbs of Melbourne, and the idea of doing something like that was totally bizarre, so my way out was to do law.'

After graduating from Monash University in 1982, Kokkinos worked as a solicitor for eight years, specialising in industrial law and working predominantly in the western suburbs. Despite finding the work worthwhile, it didn't satisfy her creativity.

'I didn't find law allowed me to express myself as a person. So, in 1990, I thought, what I've always wanted to do was be a film maker and if I don't have a go now then it's never going to happen. So I took the plunge and applied to Swinburne film and TV school— did that for a year, decided I was going to make a commitment to film making—and here I am.'

Only the Brave tells the story of Alex and Vicki, two young Greek girls living in Melbourne's highly industrialised outer suburbs. Although insisting the story is fictional, Kokkinos admits there are strong parallels with her own experiences growing up on the fringes of Melbourne.

'When I looked back on my teenage years growing up in the western suburbs what I experienced was cultural deprivation. There were kids much worse off than I was—my parents were factory workers—we didn't have a lot of money but we certainly didn't starve. The thing was though, you didn't have access to ideas, or interesting things going on in the rest of the world. You were cut off. You felt alienated from the pulse of the world. A real sense of abandonment, which is a very strong emotional theme in the film.

'Unfortunately things haven't changed. The girls I spoke to while researching for the film couldn't understand why I'd want to make a film about them. They don't feel part of anything, they're alienated from their own communities and by and large they feel like they're not really taken very seriously and no one really cares about them.'

Despite this bleak picture, Kokkinos points out the film is mainly concerned with exploring the development of personal identity through issues such as class, ethnicity and sexuality, as well as the whole question of friendship.

'We wanted to tell the story totally from the teenage girls' perspective, the primary focus being the relationship between Alex and Vicki, the betrayals that happen and the whole question of being able to emotionally connect and relate to people under those social circumstances.

'Young women of that age are bitchy—the shifting allegiances that go on are quite extraordinary. I was talking to a teacher who felt the fight scene really captured everything for her because boys fight very publicly. Girls fight away from view; the machinations going on are much more complicated.

'The minute you are perceived to be slightly different and that could be right from one's emerging sexuality to whether you've got four fingers or not, the minute there's something different there's going to be a reaction against you. There's a lot of energy expended at that age in being part of whatever's going on, and if you're different you're gonna cop it.'

Even though the film has been a huge success—winning 3 AFI Awards and a number of international awards—Kokkinos is still finding her way in an industry she believes offers enormous opportunities.

'I don't see cinema as this vehicle for social change, I didn't go into it for that reason. But at the same time I do want people to come along and see *Only the Brave,* which I think has a lot of interesting issues within it, and be affected on a particular level—film should be able to do that.

'We're pretty lucky in Australia and I'm very optimistic about the future of our film industry because we have a reasonably good government funding structure that encourages new talent. Within that there are a lot of very interesting filmmakers emerging and being supported. There's also a really good representation of women and I think that's because we're telling interesting stories, and stories that people want to hear.' ■

Tim Stoney is a *Eureka Street* staff writer.

Only the Brave *is screening at the Kino, Melbourne, during March.*

The big question

Quiz Show, dir. Robert Redford (independent cinemas). In June 1962, *Truth*'s front page pictured a bemused and fresh-faced Dandenong schoolteacher watching himself win Pick- a -Box on television. The headline blared QUIZ RUMPUS—DYER BLASTS 'RIG' CHARGE. There was nothing to it, but who remembers now, and who in Australia cares, except perhaps Barry Jones?

When the quiz fraud documented in Robert Redford's very fine *Quiz Show* became public in the 1958, America was horrified. 60 million addicts of the TV game, 'Twenty One', discovered they'd been duped. A congressional enquiry followed, scapegoats were lined up, lives were ruined, reputations wrecked, and a generation lost faith in the flickering screen.

Quiz Show is based on part of Richard Goodwin's *Remembering America*. Goodwin (astutely played by Bob Morrow) is the legal terrier who reveals the fraud. His ruminations on the experience are the film's moral pivot: Goodwin goes after network television; individuals are convicted but television still wins. The lines between money and power, commerce and government, are firmly drawn.

Redford's film deserves its Academy Award nomination for Best Picture. It is a convincing and sobering analysis of the motive forces of America. Beautifully shot in Manhattan, it will make America lovers ache with the weird blend of nostalgia and alarm that the city (and the country itself) engenders.

The performances are outstanding, some as good as you'll see—Martin Scorsese, as the invincible sponsor of the show, Paul Schofield as Mark Van Doren, the silvertail, ethically impeccable east-coast academic whose son Charles (Ralph Fiennes) is at the centre of the scandal. And John Turturrow, as Herbie Stempel, the fall guy from Queens, is irresistibly repellent.

—Morag Fraser

Eureka Street
Film Competition

One can only wonder what is running through the uncharacteristically leather-clad David Niven's mind? Tell us in 25 words or less and we'll award two tickets to the film of your choice for the answer we like best. Send entries to: *Eureka Street* film competition, PO Box 553, Richmond 3121. The winner of December's competition was Madeleine Sparrow, of Evandale, SA, whose reply to the question 'What does Lassie's love mean to you' was 'Love's a bitch, ain't it?'

Angels of death

Heavenly Creatures, dir. Peter Jackson (Greater Union), has been touted as a study of sexual repression and homophobia, the slippery border between sanity and insanity, and the corrosive snobbery of jaded cosmopolitans living among philistine provincials.

Jackson's film, which won a Silver Lion at last year's Venice Film Festival, is indeed about all these things. Mostly, however, it is about how friendships formed between unhappy people can sometimes tragically compound their unhappiness—especially, if the individuals concerned share that blend of naïvété and desperate intensity peculiar to adolescence.

In 1954 Pauline Reiper (Melanie Lynskey) and Juliet Hulme (Kate Winslet) were a pair of teenage schoolgirls in Christchurch, New Zealand. Their murder of Reiper's mother (Sarah Pierse) became one of that country's most notorious crimes, and *Heavenly Creatures*' account of the events leading up to the murder, based on Pauline's diaries, manages to make the perpetrators seem pitiable without ever suggesting that they are admirable.

In the course of the film this sympathy is gradually extended to their victim and her ineffectual husband, but is withdrawn from Hulme's parents; although superficially more 'enlightened' than the Reipers, the Hulmes' hypocrisy about their own marriage and their daughter's friendship with Pauline gets credited with more than a little of the blame for the final turn of events.

Heavenly Creatures has been justly celebrated for its magical re-creation of 'the fourth world', a fantasy realm in which Pauline and Juliet take refuge from mundane anxiety. The sexual coding here is sometimes a little heavy-handed, but the fantasy scenes are much more than an exercise in pop-Freudianism. They are a reminder that creative imagination is not always an agent of liberation—sometimes it can imprison us.

—Ray Cassin

Same old slander

Disclosure, dir. Barry Levinson (Village). Demi Moore is quoted as saying she decided to do *Disclosure* (in which she sexually harasses Michael Douglas), because she wanted to stir the pot. Well she's succeeded. She's been controversial, but not as she intended. *Disclosure* doesn't deal seriously with the complex issue of sexual harrassment, rather it plays a schoolyard game, waggling its finger and saying if girls can be sexually harassed, so can boys, so there!

Disclosure works with ideas similar to those of its slicker predecessor, *Fatal Attraction*. You know the story: a good, unsuspecting man is drawn into the net of an evil whore who soon shows her true colors. As the good man struggles desperately

Nell

Specially for Victorian readers *Eureka Street* has six free passes to see Michael Apted's film *Nell*, starring Jody Foster, courtesy of the Longford Cinema (see review below). To win a double pass, send your name and address to *Eureka Street* Film Offer, PO Box 553, Richmond 3121. The passes will go to the first six entries received.

to get free of the whore he almost loses everything, but with the support of his family he wins through in the end.

We know Tom (Michael Douglas) is a decent but imperfect family guy, because he spends the first third of the film with a splodge of toothpaste on his tie, and he looks at Meredith's (Demi Moore) legs as she goes up the stairs. Moore's character gets no such sympathetic treatment. Throughout the film she is bathed in deep blue light that makes her legs, indeed her whole body, look like a stiletto, waiting to be unsheathed.

But there are two types of woman in this film: the whore, who is exposed and humiliated, and the good woman, Stephanie (Rosemary Forsyth), who through patience and feminine virtue, wins her way to the top. Instead of calling *Disclosure* a 'hot date movie', the promoters should perhaps have tried the slogan 'Missed the sexual revolution, you'll love it'.

—Catriona Jackson

Wild child

Nell, dir. Michael Apted (independent cinemas). The North Carolina wilderness is the backdrop to this tale of civilisation meets recluse. Dr Jerome Lovell (Liam Neeson) comes to inspect the body of an old woman found dead in an isolated log cabin and stumbles across a young woman hiding in the shadows.

His initial attempts to make contact are thwarted by her suspicion of an unfamiliar world and unintelligible speech, but a note left by the dead woman tells him that she is her daughter, Nell, who needs to be looked after.

Feeling responsible for her well-being he enlists the help of psychologist Paula Olson (Natasha Richardson), who wants to place her in a hospital for observation. Dr Lovell rejects this out of hand and what results is a battle between their presumptions of what is best for Nell.

Nell is a predictable story of contact and conflict between two different worlds. The issue of what is inherent and what is learnt is dealt with glibly. With little effort from the director to speed things up, the narrative plods along to the predictable conclusion that it is we who should learn something from Nell.

If the success of *Forrest Gump* lay in its homage to simple ways, then *Nell* should pull in the crowds and they should leave the cinema satisfied. In the end Jodie Foster's beguiling performance as Nell outshines all others and just about saves the show.

—Jon Greenaway

Life class

The Browning Version, dir. Mike Figgis (independent cinemas). Terence Rattigan's play about Englishness in a grand English public school was written nearly 50 years ago. Mike Figgis and his (English born) producer, Ridley Scott, have jacked up the revived play to include rich punk bullies whose shower-room reverberates with techno, and visiting American science teachers who have sensitive new-age sexual ethics. The effect is strained. But the film survives—you could say triumphs—because of the craggy and powerful stillness of Albert Finney as Andrew Crocker-Harris, the classical classics master, the 'Hitler of the lower fifth'.

Finney takes the role—and the film—beyond stereotype, and beyond the hysteria about charismatic teachers that films like *Dead Poets' Society* flirt with and *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* analyses. Finney's is an extraordinary performance. He is able, with the firming of his lip or a shift in voice pitch, to articulate repression. Andrew Crocker-Harris, in Finney's rendering, embodies the subtlety and two-way vulnerability of the sacred contract between teacher and student. It has little to do with mere friendliness. Children understand it even as they abuse it.

Finney is well supported by Greta Scacchi as his disaffected, perceptive wife, and Michael Gambon as his utterly venal headmaster. Gambon is one of those rare actors who can shine without wilfully obscuring his fellows.

—Morag Fraser

Ouch

Maitresse, dir. Barbet Schroeder (independent cinemas). This 1976 film has obviously been exhumed to cash in on some of the interest raised last year by *Salo*, but it has nothing of the profound moral and political insight of Pasolini's last film. Instead we are treated to kitsch S&M without self-irony. There is also more than a hint of *Belle du Jour*, but to talk of the two in the same breath is like comparing Jane Austen and Danielle Steele.

Maîtresse will probably attract the same audience that went to see *Salo* for all the wrong reasons. Gerard Depardieu plays a dumb bully in tight flares. Bulle Ogier plays a dumb bully in S&M gear and assorted floaty frocks and negligées to show she's a mysterious complex woman with a secret.

The ending is bathetically silly, just like the rest of the movie, so at least you might say it's consistent.

—Juliette Hughes

Odd couple

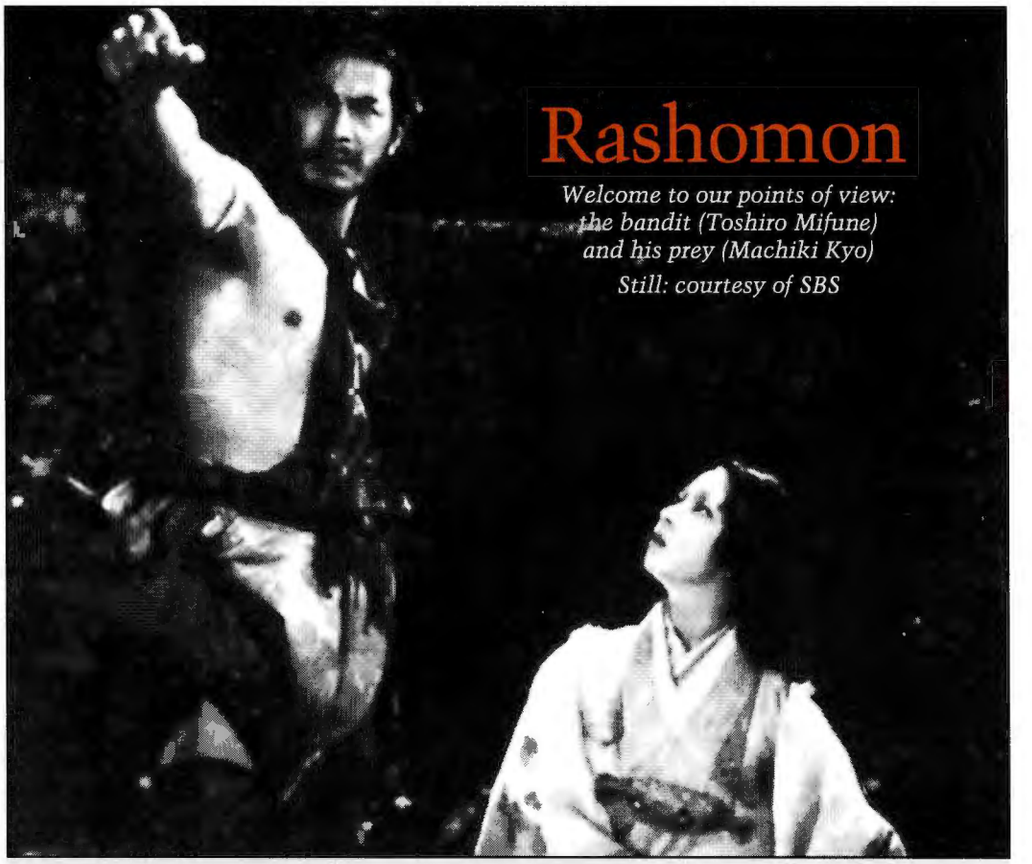
Wrestling Ernest Hemingway, dir. Randa Haines (independent cinemas), has the sort of plot that would have been easy to turn into dross of the *Grumpy Old Men* kind, but which, in the hands of a superb cast and an accomplished director like Haines (*Children of a Lesser God*), has become a very fine film indeed.

Frank (Richard Harris) is a bibulous, loud-mouthed, much-married-and-divorced Irish mariner who boasts of having once wrestled Hemingway; Walt (Robert Duvall, the world's most underrated great actor) is Cuban, a barber and a lifelong bachelor who boasts of nothing much at all. These two old men have nothing in common except the fact that both live in lonely retirement in a sleepy Florida town, but they become friends.

How their friendship progresses, and how it interweaves with impossible flirtations through which each man tries to compensate for his eclipsed virility, is all the story that the film has to tell, but that is tale enough. Walt shyly courts Elaine (Sandra Bullock), a young waitress who tolerates him, while Frank aggressively pursues Georgia (Piper Laurie), a coquettish Southern matron, and Helen (Shirley MacLaine), his landlady, who is not as hardbitten as she would like to be.

As in any friendship worth having, Frank and Walt each learns something about himself as well as about the other. It is life's-great-journey stuff all the way, but Haines and scriptwriter Steve Conrad wisely season it with enough humour to keep even the flintiest old curmudgeon in his (or her) seat till the final credits.

—Ray Cassin



Rashomon

Welcome to our points of view: the bandit (Toshiro Mifune) and his prey (Machiki Kyo)

Still: courtesy of SBS

SBS Movie Legends

THIS FILM WON THE GRAND JURY PRIZE for its director, Akira Kurosawa, when it was released at the Venice Film Festival in 1951, and the Academy Award for Best Foreign Film in the same year. It also began a vogue for Japanese films in the West, and for the work of Kurosawa in particular.

Kurosawa has sometimes been seen as the most 'Western' of Japanese directors. The label is clumsy—in 1951, few if any Western filmmakers would have used a camera in quite the way Kurosawa does in *Rashomon*—but it recognises that he shared the preoccupations of European intellectuals of the early '50s.

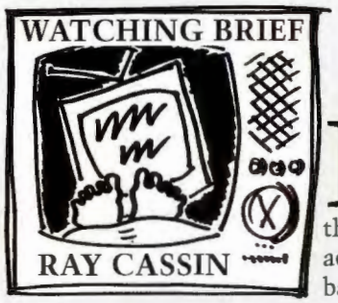
The setting of *Rashomon* ('Devil's Gate') may be medieval Japan, but its moral world is that of Beckett, Camus and Sartre: a world in which traditional beliefs and practices no longer hold firm, and in which individuals must endow their own lives with significance.

In a ruined temple—the 'Devil's Gate' of the title—a monk, a woodcutter and a tramp gather to escape a downpour. The woodcutter tells the strange story of a rape-and-murder trial in a nearby village: first the murderer's account, then that of the raped woman, finally that of her murdered husband (relayed through a medium). None of their stories agree, and the woodcutter's own version of events is different again.

Who is telling the truth? And how do we know what is true anyway? The questions leap from the dialogue of *Rashomon* as they do from that of *Waiting for Godot* or *No Exit*. But Kurosawa is never entirely the bleak existentialist, and the film concludeswith a hint that Godot just might show up after all.

—Ray Cassin ■

Rashomon *screens at 9.30pm on Friday, 10 March*



A long night's journey into daze

PRIME TIME. THE NOTION STILL means something to head counters, of course. Would-be advertisers and the networks that woo them base their haggling on the crude demarcation of the viewing day (or night) implied in the term. But it has long since ceased to suggest, as it once did, something about the content of what is watched. This is not simply a matter of whether or not it is ratings season.

Remember those coy messages, broadcast soon after the evening news bulletin (in the days when there was only one bulletin per channel), which warned parents that the rest of the night's programming might not be suitable for children? They usually involved acts of tenderness between a corpulent male in a bear suit and a girl-next-door type with the smile of a mothercraft nurse, which is one way of hinting at impending moral danger.

But this liaison between Humphrey and Fran or Jan or whatever she called herself was doomed. The advent of 24-hour programming, and the coincident collapse of the notion of a 'normal' working day, have made it impossible to speak of a time of day that is appropriate to serious, 'adult' viewing. And series like *The Simpsons*, which occupy an early-evening time slot but display a wit and allusiveness that presumes an adult audience, are an obvious result.

Consider, however, what may be seen in those hours between midnight and dawn, when, only the most deadly serious adults are awake and watching: cops, robbers, nurses, ambulance workers, truckers at truck stops, journalists writing about any of the above, and, doubtless most common of all, the parents of crying children. Midnight-to-dawn is never going to be anyone's prime time (though the providers of 0055 'contact' services evidently believe that their clients are cruising this televisual graveyard shift) but the experience of watching television in the small hours, especially in Australia, is remarkable for what it exemplifies about the medium itself.

One of the most celebrated—and notorious—clichés about Australia is that life in these Antipodes is characterised by its physical distance from anywhere that the majority of the population imagines to be culturally significant. And one of the most celebrated clichés about television is that it collapses the barriers imposed by time and space: that, more than any other medium, the box has been the agent of a global culture (though still a culture that privileges certain bits of the globe above others).

Well, yeah, of course. But put these two items of received wisdom together and what have you got? That, in a perverse but interesting sense, Australia may be the perfect place in which to *watch* television. Not because *what* one watches is markedly better here (how could it be, if there is a global culture?) but because the kind of spatio-temporal dislocation that television viewing allegedly brings about is intensified here.

At 1am daily or thereabouts (in the spirit of the exercise, one should not be too precise here), the Seven Network offers *Today*, the breakfast news-and-chat show of the NBC network in the United States. Bleary-eyed Australians watching *Today* can pick up the latest international news from people for whom it is still 6am the previous day. And it is all delivered in the same bland, folksy style that breakfast programs all over the world, including Australia, have emulated.

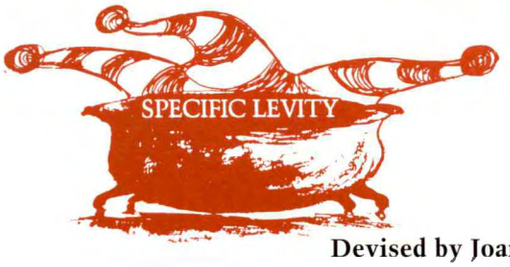
This is news you can *trust*, because the nice young male reporter, the nice young female reporter and the goofy weatherman have invited you into their pseudo-living room so that you can hear about it. The news runs into the chat, the chat runs back into the news, and if you watch *Today* (Yesterday and Forever) twice in a row you're hooked. Physically you may dwell in an Australian suburb, but culturally the daily routine starts with breakfast in New York. We are all Americans now.

Midnight-to-dawn channel surfing allows you to break time boundaries in other ways. The Ten Network shows movies, and the fare is not restricted to schlock and schmaltz. On one night in February it was possible to switch from a *Today* report on the war in Chechnya to *Mission to Moscow*, a film that has achieved notoriety in movie history because of its role in the House Un-American Activities Committee's attempt to purge Hollywood in the 1950s.

Basically, this wartime (1943) propaganda film (directed, like that much greater propaganda film *Casablanca*, by Michael Curtiz) was the only thing the committee could find that even looked like an attempt to subvert the minds of American moviegoers. And in truth *Mission* is a obnoxious film: it is impossible to watch its justification of the show trials in which Stalin forced his critics to recant their 'heresies' without reflecting on the similarities between that travesty of justice and the antics of the Un-American Activities Committee.

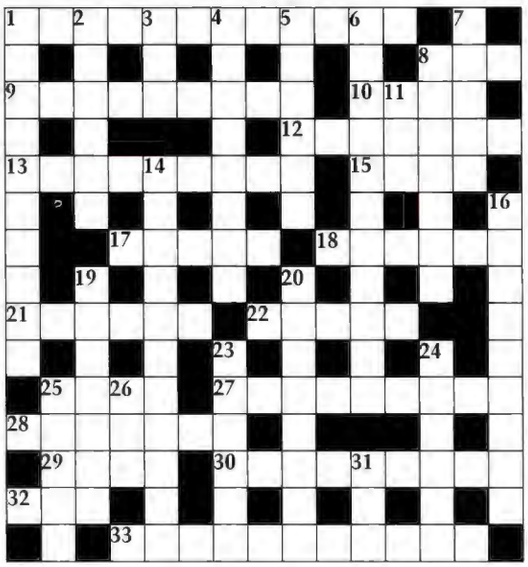
And sandwiching *Mission to Moscow* in between reports of the latest round of dismemberment of what used to be Stalin's empire means having the entire course of 20th century run past your eyes before first light in Australia. We are all Americans now. ■

Ray Cassin is the production editor of *Eureka Street*.



Eureka Street Cryptic Crossword no. 31, March 1995

Devised by Joan Nowotny IBVM



ACROSS

1 The sort of double code used by that rum alien chap, oddly enough. (12)
8 Show emotion about the beloved country, as Paton would. (3)
9 Which child has far to go? Not man-Friday's! (9)
10 You old English singular version. (4)
12 Dorian's misplaced advances! (7)
13 Thackeray's signature displays his diplomatic skills. (9)
15 Notice some cold frog leer at the girl. (4)
17 Ships in rapid transit? (5)
18 Change the mat in the ute. (6)
21 In front of him, he rolls the marbles back to allow room to bandage. (6).
22 Breathlessly composes richly evocative poem. (5)
25 I would return to a watercourse beginning to run dry. (4)
27 Everything I got once or took from the crocodilian beast. (9)
28 See, Tom in front of the journalist. Well placed! (7)
29 The list of courses for people going to university. (4)
30 Begone wet misery! I need a mediator. (2-7)
32 Twelve—the mystic number for this mediation, as long as you do without. (3)
33 Theatre company took exception to play being performed again. (11)

DOWN

1 Mechanical action—rising to a summit—a reprogrammed robot exhibited. (10)
2 Courageous but quiet. Fortunate to be so constituted. (6)
3 Fool with accomplice in crime would become a killer. (3)
4 As Warne unwinds for a start, his opponents are taken by surprise. (8)
5 To some extent, the pleas I erstwhile uttered made life simpler. (6)
6 Making the inaugural speech, his diction rung out to the rafters. (11)
7 A hundred rough yokels. How boorish! (5)
8 A talc or other chemical substance can be used to produce this one. (7)
11 Animal to be found on hedge or ground or road? (3)
14 Disturbed culprit, due happiness originally, was given beauty instead. (11)
16 Sort of decimal double-dogging! (9)
19 From the wildly flying cranes a warning came of the advance of the infidel. (7)
20 Busy Sally works on the study program without one question. (8)
23 Harass the burrowing animal. (6)
24 Goddess of Greek city looks east rather than south. (6)
25 Decapitated two men to find half the population. (5)
26 The boy went and changed. (3)
31 King Cole goes up north in search of colour. (3)

Solution to Crossword no. 30, January-February 1995

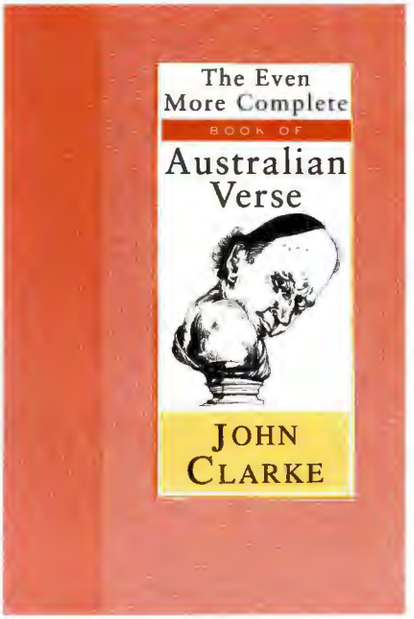
S	U	S	P	E	N	D	■	M	I	N	I	C	A	B
I	■	U	■	A	■	E	■	I	■	U	■	A	■	O
G	A	M	E	S	E	T	A	N	D	M	A	T	C	H
H	■	M	■	Y	■	R	■	I	■	B	■	C	■	E
T	H	E	Y	■	P	A	L	M	Y	■	W	H	A	M
E	■	R	■	A	■	C	■	U	■	A	■	I	■	I
D	R	O	U	G	H	T	■	M	A	G	E	N	T	A
■	■	F	■	N	■	■	■	■	■	A	■	T	■	■
W	I	C	K	E	T	S	■	P	I	T	C	H	E	S
O	■	R	■	S	■	I	■	A	■	E	■	E	■	P
R	U	I	N	■	K	N	O	T	S	■	O	F	F	A
S	■	C	■	R	■	U	■	E	■	W	■	I	■	R
T	A	K	E	I	T	O	R	L	E	A	V	E	I	T
E	■	E	■	T	■	U	■	L	■	C	■	L	■	A
D	I	T	H	E	R	S	■	A	B	A	N	D	O	N

I know I can't take my wordly goods with me when I go. But could you make an exception for my Eureka Street *subscription?*

—Brendan Behan

EUREKA STREET/Allen and Unwin

March book offer



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Rob Rob Bobbity Bobbity James Lee Hawke M.P.
Took great care of his image because he was quick to see
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