

# The goose that laid the golden egg?<sup>1</sup>

## Pluralists for a referendum (Pluralists) submission to the Federal Parliamentary Enquiry into 457 visas

### *Background - Pluralists' Press Council complaints<sup>2</sup>*

Those Australians who have a detailed knowledge of the history of media in this country are aware of the positions taken by the main 'players' in the 'immigration debate' and the stance taken by various newspapers and journalists, including the Murdoch press (eg *The Australian* and *The Weekend Australian*), the Fairfax Press and Government media (eg ABC and SBS). They are aware that there exists a powerful 'open borders lobby' (supporters of high or mass immigration) staffed by those on the extreme 'right' and the extreme 'left', and some who fall in between.

It is well known that Rupert Murdoch is a member of, and has been active in, *Partnership for a New American Economy*, and that he promotes mass immigration to the US, and immigration generally.<sup>3</sup> On a recent trip to Australia, Mr Murdoch (he wields enormous influence over Australian Government policy but does not live here) expressed his support for immigration and the use of 457 visas in Australia in a way that many Australians would interpret as clear support for the open borders lobby, and the view that opposition to open borders policies is largely racist or xenophobic. For many Australians, this would explain why the Murdoch Press is conducting an 'open borders press campaign', although its existence, and the influence of 'the Chairman', would no doubt be vociferously denied by them.

During March and April 2013, perhaps a result of a number of Labour disputes (such as at the Werribee desalination plant and others), proposed Government visa changes, the introduction by the Greens Party of legislation (*Protecting Local Jobs (Regulating Enterprise Migration Agreements) Bill 2012*) to oblige market testing of certain 457 visas, and perhaps because of the release of academic work by such as by Dr Birrell and Dr Healy (*Immigration Overshoot*), there has been considerable media attention to the issue of 457 visas and temporary workers.

Attachment A is list of articles that may demonstrate this. Readers are encouraged to read these before this paper so as to appreciate the range of views being expressed, the issues involved and the arguments being made and opposed by us. They are also encouraged to read the paper by the Federal Parliamentary Library entitled: 'Skilled migration temporary and permanent flows to

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<sup>1</sup> This comes from an article appearing in the *The Australian*, 25 Feb 2013 p 6. It is a quote attributed to Jennifer Westacott from the Business Council of Australia, not surprisingly, in support of 457 visas. Sometimes statements made in the heat of a press campaign can be very revealing. Does this reveal the true motive for support for 457 visas? Who owns the goose, one wonders? And who owns the egg? How many geese do the owners want and who will house them, feed them and look after their health?

<sup>2</sup> Mindful of the power of many of the media and other interests involved and the possibility of legal action against us, Pluralists wish to make clear that they have approached the Press Council for adjudication on whether or not professional standards of journalism have been met. They do not allege or infer any sort of improper or unprofessional behaviour with respect by anyone mentioned here or at Attachment A that could be construed as defamatory and nothing herein should be taken as such. They merely seek adjudication on these issues and make a number of theoretical contentions necessary to facilitate this process and this submission. We offer this paper to readers subject to this condition and understanding.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.renewoureconomy.org/>; <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WulPSAr9-g>.

Australia', Phillips and Spinks, 2012 and the papers by Dr Birrell and Dr Healy (*Immigration Overshoot*) and Cham and Campbell (see below).<sup>4</sup>

Elsewhere, but particularly in the Murdoch Press, a range of journalists could be said to have alleged or inferred that opposition to 457 visas is necessarily based on racism or xenophobia.

On the basis that such allegations may be seen as a transparent attempt to prosecute the case for open borders and 457 visas by labelling or pathologising (playing the race or xenophobia 'cards'), and that this may be having a serious distorting and chilling effect on the public debate and thus the democratic process of considering the merits of the Greens' and other legislation, Pluralists sought a review from the Press Council.

We sought a review of the conduct of *The Australian* and *Weekend Australian* to ascertain if they have demonstrated systemic bias and unfairness by publishing exclusively, or almost exclusively, articles and opinions favouring open borders immigration and big Australia policies in the 5 years to date.

We also sought review of a range of specific articles appearing during March this year that alleged a deliberate campaign by the PM, Minister O'Connor, the unions and the Greens Party of inciting or encouraging xenophobia and racism against 457 workers or foreign workers. We asked that, if the Press Council found that the articles in question breached Press Council Principle 1 that requires accuracy, fairness and balance, then the Press Council should order a retraction of the allegations of racism and xenophobia. Since no action was taken following the first request, and articles along the same lines continued to be published, this was followed by a second request for review

To date it appears the Press Council has not even acknowledged, let alone replied, to any of our letters which were sent by registered post. In light of this, in order to assist the enquiry, and because of our opposition to the misuse of 457 visas, we drafted this submission for the purposes of the enquiry.

*Why we made our Press Council complaint – to empower the silent majority*

Sadly, in the immigration debate generally, and the 457 visa debate specifically, both political extremes of right and left have taken to using labelling, pathologising and excessive *ad hominem* attacks to achieve their ends.

Anyone who wishes to debate the thesis that mass immigration and rapid population expansion can solve the so called 'ageing crisis'; or anyone who wishes to challenge the 'ageing crisis' thesis by pointing out that a young immigrant population can be as costly, or more costly, than an older native-born population due to their having no accrued wealth to fund their retirement, more crime and drug abuse problems, high consumption of health and welfare resources (baby bonuses, schoolchildren bonuses, family payments, child birth and early child care, maternity leave and education), and even, at times, worse rates of ill health due to lifestyle issues (many young

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<sup>4</sup> Birrell, B., and Healy, E., *Immigration Overshoot*, Centre for Population and Urban Research Monash, November, 2012 <http://www.monash.edu.au/assets/pdf/news/cpur-immigration-overshoot.pdf>; and see also Joo-Cheong Tham and Iain Campbell, Centre for Employment and Labour Relations Law, Working Paper Number 50, University of Melbourne, 2011 ([http://www.law.unimelb.edu.au/files/dmfile/CELRL\\_Working\\_Paper\\_No\\_50\\_-\\_March\\_2011\\_FINAL2.pdf](http://www.law.unimelb.edu.au/files/dmfile/CELRL_Working_Paper_No_50_-_March_2011_FINAL2.pdf)) and [http://www.aph.gov.au/About\\_Parliament/Parliamentary\\_Departments/Parliamentary\\_Library/pubs/BN/2012-2013/SkilledMigration](http://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/BN/2012-2013/SkilledMigration)

immigrants now exhibit diseases formerly only suffered by the aged such as obesity, mental illness, heart disease and diabetes); or anyone who points out that mass immigration and rapid population growth can in fact impose serious social or economic costs or can exacerbate poverty in the third world source country and poverty among the poorest in the host country - risks being labelled a racist, xenophobic, 'Hansonite', a class warrior or otherwise mentally ill. Essentially their voices are drowned out by better funded lobby groups with greater access to media often using personal *ad hominem* attacks.

Since freedom of speech is meaningless without media access, and since labelling and pathologising has a profound chilling and distorting effect on public discourse, many Australians are effectively denied their Constitutional and legal right to freedom of expression - rights that all Australians should be able to enjoy equally. They are unable properly to take part in this debate or influence Government policy. They must remain the 'silent majority' – hostage to extremists who dominate the debate and determine the future of their nation largely without their input.

### *The feeding frenzy*

When leading journalists and broadsheet newspapers lead such a debate, and when they use labelling and pathologising tactics, they often effectively 'poison' it. This encourages others to use such tactics in response. In this way an insidious atmosphere can be created where writers see themselves as sharing a sort of 'group licence' or (at the risk of exaggeration – part of a 'feeding frenzy') to make personal *ad hominem* attacks. Many Australians would probably see the plethora of articles appearing during March and April this year, outlined at [Attachment A](#), accusing the Prime Minister (PM) and her Government of xenophobia, racism or class warfare over their 457 policies, as evidence of this 'group licencing' or 'feeding frenzy' effect; others may disagree.

Even worse than that, when operating in a group, a weak, incompetent or compromised press regulator (sadly a number of Australians now see the Press Council this way) may fear holding any of the group to account, since that risks attracting political and media pressure from a large number of journalists operating as a combined force (sort of safety and power in sheer numbers), that a weak regulator would be unable or unwilling to withstand. This may explain why the Press Council appears, to date, to have taken no action concerning our request for a review. Perhaps they will take action and prove their critics wrong. We shall see.

In such a poisoned atmosphere, reasoned, informed and balanced debate becomes almost impossible, and the process of making public policy and passing appropriate legislation is severely retarded. This has had a profoundly divisive and damaging effect on our democratic system and explains many of the very expensive and damaging public policy failures of the last two decades or more, especially in areas such as refugee and immigration policy.

In short, labelling and pathologising has an important and insidious chilling effect on free speech that amounts to a denial of the right of free speech of others since it encourages many who would otherwise take part in public debate to avoid doing so - silencing their own voice through self-censorship and denying the audience an opportunity to hear their views. It is deeply ironic that press agencies that have fought so hard for their right to free speech, and to resist press regulation, should use that right, perhaps in breach of their own professional standards, to rob others of their free speech seemingly without conscience.

*Double standards - Why is the Opposition not accused of xenophobia or racism when they say the same thing?*

Further, for those readers who look closely that the articles at Attachment A, something odd appears to be happening. Many of the articles would probably be interpreted by ordinary Australians as clear allegations of wrongdoing - that PM Gillard, Minister O'Connor, the ALP, or the Unions or the Greens Party are xenophobes or racists, or encourage such views for political reasons, because they allege that the 457 visas are being misused at times, call for 'market testing', and want to put Australians first for jobs. But in the February 25, 2013, edition of *The Australian* at p 6 ('Cave in on foreign workers' – see the end) the following statement was attributed to Mr Morrison the Opposition Immigration Spokesperson: '...The coalition believes that jobs should go to Australians first..'. Why was this not seen as a vicious attack on the 457 scheme, Hansonite, class warfare, divisive, racist or xenophobic? Why no consternation over this policy statement? Why no plethora of articles in *The Australian* condemning Minister Morrison for this? Why no allegations that Mr Morrison is mentally ill or phobic?

*The 'class war card' - ordinary Australians are bored with talk of class wars or class envy*

As a people, Australians are traditionally known as egalitarian but aspirational. They do not want a massive gap between rich and poor, and the class system (or caste system) evident in some nations to be brought here. But nor do they support crude policies designed to redistribute wealth that destroy the incentive to work. Being moderate by nature they seek balance. Their natural instinct is towards self-reliance and they celebrate people who build wealth and derive generous rewards for genuine merit based achievement.

Since they are not anti-business, ordinary Australians do *not* seek to demonise the private sector, since they too benefit from a strong private sector and stable or moderately increasing real estate and share prices. As a result of structural changes in the workforce, downsizing and structural insecurity resulting from globalisation, many Australians have become private contractors and run and operate small businesses. They have a stake in share markets through superannuation and private investments.

Ordinary Australians know that that wage inflation, if severe, is not in the national interest. They are suspicious of powerful unions some of whom misuse market forces to enrich themselves excessively and provide little real value to their membership. In the last three decades Australians have demonstrated this by 'voting with their feet' by abandoning many unions – union membership has declined steeply. But they still support moderate unions that act as a counterweight to crude market forces and who properly serve their clients' best short and long-term interests.

But nor do they take an extreme, utopian, naive or overly optimistic view of market forces, and the private sector whose natural instinct is to shape public policy so as to maximise private profits. They know that the free market often fails disastrously (and that when it does Governments call on them to bail out the private sector) and that it has inherent problems or limitations that cannot be explained away simply on the basis of too much regulation or the fact that the market is imperfect because it is insufficiently free (*eg* Hayek, Friedman and others). They rely on Government to strike

the proper balance between public and private interests and constrain the free market when in the national interest.

In short, the main concern of ordinary sensible Australians is that our immigration programs for skilled workers and others are not in fact selective, or sufficiently selective. They do not want them stopped altogether. The debate about class war largely takes place between the elites, with ordinary Australians too busy to listen or otherwise uninterested.

Accordingly they look on in bewilderment and disappointment when they witness a battle between extremists in Government, the media, and unions where each side simply tries to stereotype the other and catch each other out in a game of statistics and debating tactics. Clearly Australians are aware that a genuine temporary shortage of labour may impact Governments, unions and private businesses at times. They simply want a fair set of rules applied equally to all and for the debate to be conducted sensibly, rationally and without personal insult.

*Where pluralists stand – we oppose ‘reverse colonisation’*

Pluralists strongly support free speech, and we strongly oppose anyone who uses labelling and pathologising tactics to control public discourse, especially when inaccurate. Pluralists also oppose ‘big Australia’ population policies and mass immigration, but we *do* support highly selective but non-racist immigration policies that are consistent with Australia’s overseas aid policies - on immigration generally we are ‘pro low’.

We oppose mass immigration in part because we believe it enables wealthy nations to ‘lure’ workers through their open borders immigration policies and thereby ‘rob’ poor or developing countries of their youngest and most skilled. Sadly, third world nations often now ‘colonise themselves’ by sending away their most skilled people to work overseas. Although a few migrants are enriched, and some do remit some of their wealth to their former home, this often simply amounts to a transfer of public wealth of the source country - the money invested in their education and training - into private wealth of a select few migrants, and those who profit from them here.

Some very poor countries now have exclusive residential areas with luxury homes occupied by dual nationals who have enriched themselves by migrating to the West then transferring money home so they can live an opulent lifestyle, sometimes, alarmingly, by continuously drawing on welfare benefits resulting from their status as dual nationals in the West, even in places they once sought asylum from. Some immigrants seek to qualify for portable aged or disability support pensions in Australia and then return home to retire in relative luxury in their former place of residence (as *per* the Greek conspiracy case in the early 1980s). Since it is embarrassing to Governments, the extent of this tends to be kept well-hidden - few investigative reporters have the patience or inclination to investigate it.

But overall, losing migrant workers often exacerbates the source nation’s poverty, adds to the suffering of that nation’s poor and often defeats the intent of Australia’s expensive foreign aid programs. Australia thus gives on the one hand with direct foreign aid (although often much of this is swallowed up in administration costs paid to very highly paid Australian firms and contractors often working tax free) but then takes with the other through its immigration and refugee policies

(often many asylum seekers are simply middle and upper class economic migrants who exploit the very broad interpretation of the 'persecution' definition in the 1951 Refugee Convention).

Accordingly, pluralists call for legislation that would oblige those employers who import or engage foreign workers (from onshore or offshore) to pay appropriate compensation to the source country particularly by funding education and training programs overseas. As moderate civic nationalists we support putting Australians first for jobs and support the engagement of foreign workers here only when genuinely necessary.

### *Xenophobia, racism and White Australia - what nonsense*

Many open borders proponents have used labelling and pathologising by alleging that Australians who oppose 457 visas for foreign workers or who want to put Australians first for jobs are racists or xenophobes. Of course many do so without understanding the meaning of these terms, are utterly careless as to meaning, or subscribe to the somewhat sinister view of the Red Queen in *Alice in Wonderland* that words simply mean what the powerful say they mean.

Xenophobia is defined in a range of dictionaries (*eg* including the Australian Concise Oxford 2<sup>nd</sup> ed 1992 - apparently Australia's best-selling concise dictionary) along the following lines: a '...deep dislike of foreigners..'. Racism is defined as '..a belief in the superiority of a particular race, prejudice based on this..'. As such, it could be plausibly argued that this is how most Australians would interpret the meaning of these terms.

Accordingly, in order to meet any reasonable standard of accuracy in journalism or otherwise any allegation that the PM, the Australian Labour Party (ALP), Ministers, or members of the Australian public who have concerns about the misuse of 457 visas are racist or xenophobic, or are encouraging such views, would need to sustain, by evidence or argument, that the those people have demonstrated a deep dislike of foreigners or believe in the theory of racial superiority (presumably of white Anglo-Saxons or Europeans) and are prejudiced against other races on that basis or wish others to be so.

Furthermore, we contend that most Australians are familiar with the term 'phobia' and understand that a person with a phobia is mentally ill. They would be sustained in this belief by the fact that a phobia is defined as an 'irrational fear' and is classified as one of a class of anxiety disorders for the purposes of professional psychological and psychiatric diagnosis and treatment by the relevant professional bodies - see for example the authoritative Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders 2000 and its Australian equivalents. Employing an accurate definition and considering the evidence of racism or xenophobia adduced in the articles in [Attachment A](#), many sensible Australians would see these allegations for what they are - transparent nonsense.

We note that since Australia is, and always will be, highly diverse, (pluralists welcome diversity but oppose superdiversity) the proposition that protecting Australian jobs is racist or xenophobic (a 'white Australia policy') is transparent nonsense. It actually infers that non-Anglo immigrants never lose their former identity so as to become Australians, or should never be considered Australians who merit such protection. It amounts to a negative stereotype against non-Anglo-Europeans to the extent that it infers only whites or Anglo-Europeans wish to secure employment by putting

Australians first for jobs. In short, it risks the inference that non-white former immigrants who are now Australians do not want to work.

Many of the articles at [Attachment A](#) that refer to the white Australia policy quote from Fisher's infamous 1901 speech about 'reserving Australia for the white man' or allege or infer that opposition to 457 visas is necessarily based on xenophobia and racism, and thereby marks a return to the white Australia policy.

But to be fair, balanced and accurate, those writers at [Attachment A](#) who allege a return to 'white Australia policies' should have made readers aware of the alternative view. They should have warned readers that their view of the white Australia policy is highly contested by Keith Windschuttle and some other experts. Mr Windschuttle (see 'The White Australia Policy', *Quadrant Online*, 13 January 2011) posits, based on original sources and quoting from the participants in Parliamentary debates, that racial superiority was opposed by many or even most Parliamentarians at that time, and that during the debate in which Fisher spoke, and before and after, many Parliamentarians, and many Australians, were primarily motivated by keeping out cheap foreign labour so that wages and conditions could be maintained, rather than any notions of racial exclusivity based on racial superiority. If, on his extensive research of original sources, Mr Windschuttle is correct, this fashionable view of Australians as racists, and those who quote Mr Fisher in support of it, may be incorrect.<sup>5</sup>

In addition, as we have noted there is an obvious practical problem. *Since Australia is highly diverse, then jobs for Australians must necessarily be jobs for a diverse range of Australians.* We note from their advocates' own submissions, that unemployment is often highest among former refugees and newly arrived immigrant communities (see the Federal Government's Multiculturalism Enquiry that Pluralists made a submission to entitled: 'How the ALP abolished itself: and how multiculturalism creates a them and us then fails us both' submissions 479 and 479(1)<sup>6</sup>) and that they often compete hardest for low skilled or low wage jobs taken by temporary workers especially such as those on working holiday visas, foreign students, and low skilled 457 visa holders.

Australians are also aware that a number of those employed on 457 visas come from Anglo and European backgrounds – hence the Editorial in *The Australian* March 9-10, 2013 referring to Britain as the 'top source' of 457 visa applicants (see [Attachment A](#)). This statement is now somewhat out of date as the latest 2013 Immigration Department report says that India has now eclipsed it with 20.3% to the UK's 20.2% of total grants, with Ireland next at around 10%. But if the larger 'skilled category' is taken into account, India, China and other countries combined are larger in total – for example, according to the Immigration Department, in 2010-11, skills stream migrants were mainly from China - 20, 441, UK – 18, 091, India – 17, 331 and Philippines - 7, 849.<sup>7</sup>

But Australians (of all races and backgrounds) object nonetheless when Anglo or European workers displace Australians, thus tending to prove to any reasonable person that fear of foreigners (xenophobia) because of the race (racism) are *not* motivating factors. For example, in South Australia recently there were loud public objections about Irish workers taking jobs in Adelaide's South Road

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<sup>5</sup> See <http://www.quadrant.org.au/blogs/history-wars/2011/01/the-white-australia-policy>.

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/House\\_of\\_Representatives\\_Committees?url=mig/multiculturalism/subs.htm](http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House_of_Representatives_Committees?url=mig/multiculturalism/subs.htm)

<sup>7</sup> Population flows: Immigration Aspects 2010-11 edition, Department of Immigration and Citizenship, May 2012 p 5 and p 8.

bypass project. Of course, once again, since this does not fit well with the xenophobia based on racism narrative, this is largely overlooked in the articles at [Attachment A](#).

### *The landscape – mass immigration and big Australia*

The issue of 457 visas in Australia is part of a broader debate about mass immigration and population size, which results in part from the ‘big Australia’ population policies (a ‘target’ of 36m or more people by 2050) of then Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd. Since the big Australia policy enjoyed only mixed electoral support and attracted considerable opposition (notably from such as Dick Smith who described it as a ‘ponzi scheme’, and partly as a result of the release of the 2008 ‘Deegan Report’<sup>8</sup> that identified a range of rorts, and instances of misuse, of 457 visas – readers are encouraged to study this), Mr Rudd’s ‘big Australia’ policy was used in part as justification his removal from office. His policy was redefined by PM Gillard so that its ostensible goal was to achieve a ‘sustainable’ population size.

However, since then, and partly in reaction to the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) where Government’s strategy was rapidly to boost GDP growth and consumer demand, arguably in a panic and with little regard for the long-term consequences, immigration was set, or left at, very high rates, at times exceeding and approaching the targets set by Mr Rudd. As *The Australian* and others have properly pointed out those immigration rates have *not* generally been adjusted downwards – hence the *Immigration Overshoot* thesis. Accordingly, PM Gillard’s policy of ‘sustainable Australia’ has rightly been criticised as a fictional policy or ‘window dressing’ (*ie* a deeply cynical and deceptive exercise in political manipulation) and could perhaps be better described simply as ‘big sustainable Australia’ (an oxymoron we believe).

We believe the word ‘sustainable’, in this context, is an ambiguous word that was chosen deliberately because of this ambiguity. Greens and environmentalists can interpret ‘sustainable’ to mean ‘environmental protection’ and can ‘sell’ mass immigration open borders policies so labelled to their constituents. Free market fundamentalists can interpret ‘sustainable’ to mean supporting open borders immigration so as to offset an alleged ‘ageing problem’ - in other words implying ‘economic sustainability’.

PM Gillard’s ‘big sustainable Australia’ policy sought to distinguish itself from ‘big Australia’ by refusing to set a population target, thus allowing ‘plausible deniability’ that ‘big Australia’ is the goal, although the current immigration quotas (see the Immigration Department quotas set each year) will necessarily achieve or exceed the 36m by 2050 ‘big Australia’ goal. Arguably, the Gillard Government simply added the word sustainable, without any real or effective process or policy to enable the massive and rapid population growth to be matched by appropriate infrastructure, social and welfare policies and employment opportunities, or funding, simply so as to make the policy marketable and attract Greens support.

The 457 visa debate is also part of the broader debate about the overall immigration intake from a number of streams. The forces of globalisation and utopian internationalism (see later) demand an open borders policy with respect to all migrant workers and foreign students. Conceding to this means that Australians face competition from a vast pool of temporary workers estimated to be in

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<sup>8</sup> <http://www.minister.immi.gov.au/media/media-releases/2008/457-integrity-review-report.pdf>

the region of 500,000 or more, thus equalling or exceeding the number of unemployed. These foreign workers arrive using a range of visas, such as holiday, working holiday and students visas. Since they have work rights (or work illegally) they compete for low skilled, casual and temporary work that would otherwise be available to local workers such as those displaced by 457 visa holders.

Given the numbers involved, the implications of this are profound and would be taken into account by any reasonable person who argues that foreigners are not taking jobs from Australians. If a foreigner secures a job, then Australians are necessarily displaced, since that is one less job they can compete for.

The student visa process in particular has been subject to intense pressure from the open borders lobby to deregulate and to offer a pathway to permanent citizenship. This demand perhaps reached its zenith in the Knight Report<sup>9</sup> that recommend essentially an almost complete deregulation and uncapping of the student visa program, followed by the almost automatic granting of visas with work rights upon completion, even to students doing relatively low value vocational courses, as well as to those completing graduate, masters and doctorate courses. Work is well underway to implement these recommendations.

A flurry of activity and a massive influx of students into low level vocational courses (often simply teaching English) after around 2008 resulted in a number of rorts. Many foreigners were found to be using student visas as a method of working here and then gaining permanent residency, with education as a secondary consideration or simply a useful vehicle to gain entry and to avoid more rigorous skills based migration processes. Foreign students were found to be getting others, sometimes course officials, to sign off on their attendance whilst they worked, getting others to sit exams for them particularly in English language or cheating in other ways, working in excess of the allowed 20 hours, and attending courses of very dubious quality.

This resulted in a temporary 'crackdown' on foreign students that involved some tightening, but also generous transitional provisions so that many of the students attending courses primarily for the reason of gaining residency were allowed to stay, and apply for permanency - that many are expected to get.

Complaints by the education industry about a reduction in the number of foreign students led to intense lobbying and were naturally followed by a range of concessions to deregulate 457 visas so as to return to the previous historically high numbers.

The foreign student education industry, often relying on very dubious Access Economics and other reports that they commission and pay for, posit that foreign students generate about \$14 billion in export income *per annum*. This figure is endlessly repeated by journalists who never take the time to read these reports or understand how the figures are derived. Dr Birrell put the figure at much less – around \$8 bn.<sup>10</sup> Although we struggle to understand how the spending of wages earned here, especially by those who later become permanent residents, can be considered an export at all - this seems like a rort.

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.immi.gov.au/students/pdf/2011-knight-review.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> Australian Universities Review Vol 52 No 1 2010: 'Exports Earnings from the overseas students industry: how much?' Birrell and Smith, Monash, 2010 [http://hedbib.iau-aiu.net/pdf/aust\\_universities\\_review\\_birrell\\_smith.pdf](http://hedbib.iau-aiu.net/pdf/aust_universities_review_birrell_smith.pdf); <http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20090807095227556> and see <http://www.aph.gov.au/binaries/library/pubs/bn/sp/overseasstudents.pdf>

Nor are the full costs of the education provided, or all the social costs of health, housing, transport, law and order, defence (*ie* all the benefits that anyone in Australia enjoys that are paid for by taxation) and so on properly deducted when calculating the figures. No attempt is made to compare the economic benefits of training foreign students against the economic benefits of training locals instead.

Of course, the refugee program has been another controversial aspect of immigration policy, with many Australians expressing the view that the definition of persecution in the 1951 Refugee Convention, as a result of political and judicial activism, is now interpreted so broadly (*eg* to include gender, racial, religious or many other forms of discrimination, domestic violence, fear of terrorism, or one child policies - thus potentially encompassing hundreds of millions)<sup>11</sup> as effectively to enable economic or 'lifestyle' migration.

Since asylum seekers found to be refugees are given permanent resident visas, this also potentially adds to the pool of available workers, although former refugees have a low participation rate, high levels of unemployment, and high rates of long-term welfare dependency, according to their welfare advocates and official sources.

### *Big States and big Territories*

In line with this 'big Australia' approach, many States such as South Australia and Tasmania have set their own population targets and started a process of competitive 'bidding' for migrants to fulfil these targets. This massive, probably unprecedented, population expansion, has been justified and sold, to the extent that the local population's consent or agreement is relevant at all, on the basis of the assumed, untested and erroneous assumption that 'more people equals more prosperity'.

For example, the 'big SA' population target, (entitled 'prosperity through people' - shades of Orwell, Chairman Mao or some other Chairman?) was set, as part of the South Australian (SA) Government's official 'Strategic Plan', at 2 million people by 2027.<sup>12</sup> In many ways, the Governments of states such as SA and Tasmania, that have chronic long-term structural unemployment problems, hope simply to become 'welfare client States' of central Government by taking immigrants and refugees in accordance with central Government policy. They hope to secure migrants and then argue later that, having fulfilled their side of the bargain, central Government should provide generous funding so as to enable those immigrants to be housed, and to be provided with health, education and welfare services and employment.

Arguably, given that these States have no effective plans to generate sufficient private sector wealth (especially after BHP cancelled much of its Olympic Dam project) to support this increased population, they are in effect using population policies to establish their status as a 'welfare client' of central Government. In short, there is a danger of creating a massive long-term welfare dependency problem – the very opposite of 'prosperity through people'. This 'big SA' population policy may backfire and produce instead, 'poverty through too many of the wrong people' - which has generally been the experience of humankind throughout history.

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<sup>11</sup> See UNHCR Handbook and 2011 International Commission of Jurists Partitioners Guide No 6 'Migration and International Human Rights Law' especially pages 100-117. <http://www.icj.org/practitioners-guide-on-migration-and-international-human-rights-law-practitioners-guide-no-6/>

<sup>12</sup> <http://saplan.org.au/targets/45-total-population> (as published on the website of the SA Government on 8 April 2013).

Many residents of SA and Tasmania consider that these ‘population plans’ have been driven by powerful business interests, the Murdoch and other press agencies, and State and Federal Governments effectively conspiring, against their will, to determine the demographic future of their State without their real consultation or consent – in effect without a democratic mandate.

Evidence of this view may be found in a heated and long standing debate conducted, as allowed, through readers’ letters to the Editor in papers such as *The Adelaide Advertiser*. Readers have complained that *The Advertiser* allows some letters of protest but simply counters any opposition with a deliberate campaign of promoting multiculturalism (a policy designed to make high immigration levels palatable) and boosting high immigration and ‘big SA’ by the sheer volume and repetition of articles favouring these policies (propaganda). In short, a token effort at fairness and balance by allowing a few readers’ letters in order to avoid an official complaint about a deliberate propaganda campaign, but then blunting the impact of those letters with deliberate propaganda.

It is worth noting that perhaps because of recent negative publicity exposing the use of 457 visas, the SA Premier seems to have adjusted the SA population target downwards. In an article in *The Australian*, (‘State’s policy push on population stalls’ 8 April 2013 p 6) the Premier is quoted as saying the SA ‘..state strategic plan has set a population target of 2 million by 2050...’. It seems possible that the target appearing on the website on 8 April 2013 (2 m by 2027) may now be revised (put off for 20 years), at least temporarily until a new Federal Government reinstates ‘big Australia’.

#### *Strange bedfellows – the open borders lobby*

The open borders lobby comprises an odd mixture of both extreme right and extreme left elements.

The extreme right (free market and free trade fundamentalists) and big business interests, generally promote ‘big Australia’ policies (rapid and essentially unrestrained population growth) and lobby for open borders immigration policies and a larger refugee intake. Most Australians know of mining magnates, press barons, wealthy bankers, large retailers and real estate industry identities who fit this description (the list of articles at [Attachment A](#) often draw support from them and set out their arguments, almost without critical examination) and who are able to exert enormous political influence because of their ability to engage powerful lobby groups and mount successful media campaigns. Their influence was conceded, and their enormous power celebrated by *The Australian* when nominating its 50 most influential ‘masters’<sup>13</sup> (Rupert Murdoch was named of course - for every ‘master’ there is normally a servant or slave - who is the servant or slave one wonders?).

The extreme right free market fundamentalists draw support from general principles of international trade law (the WTO and GATT),<sup>14</sup> the flow of which in the last few decades has been to implement a broad globalisation agenda by imposing legal penalties and prohibitions on ‘trade barriers’ so as to enable the free, unregulated and largely untaxed movement of goods, services and capital. This has been achieved in part by multilateral trade agreements supplemented by bilateral trade and other agreements (eg our agreement with New Zealand for their workers to work and live here without impediment).

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<sup>13</sup> Stewart, C., ‘Masters past and new influence the nation’, *The Australian*, March 23-25, 2013, p 17.

<sup>14</sup> World Trade Organisation and General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs.

In international trade law, migrant workers are often considered a form of human capital the free movement of whom should be legally unimpeded. Where local or domestic immigrations laws prevent this, they must give way: State sovereignty must give way to internationalism and a new global order. PM Gillard's recently released white paper on the 'New Asian Century' demonstrates the impulse towards a borderless Asia.

The dream of many Asia Governments and elites is to create an Asian version of the European Union - where the Schengen agreement and rules on trade and free movement of capital and people mandates the end of, or very substantial weakening of, national sovereignty and national borders. For the citizens of many nations in Europe this has heralded a disastrous wave of immigration - largely uncontrolled and uncontrollable and partly explains the very high rate of unemployment and welfare dependency that has severely damaged their economies bringing them to the brink of economic collapse.

By contrast, the extreme left argue that since nationalism is racist, national borders are therefore racist and illegitimate;<sup>15</sup> and the West, being responsible for their poverty, owes a debt to the world's poor and should assuage its collective guilt by opening its borders to anyone who wishes to migrate here, so that the wealth of the West can be taken from its local populations and redistributed to those immigrants. They seek to replace Australia with a utopian post Australian super-diverse multicultural polity where the former cultural majority becomes another minority, Australian law and culture are no longer supreme (because racial or cultural supremacy is a form of racism) and therefore there is no national law, language, religion or culture. They call for the implementation of legal multiculturalism (sometimes wrongly called legal pluralism)<sup>16</sup> which says Australian law is no longer supreme and any other laws should be applied equally in Australia. This is commonly known as superdiversity.

Utopian internationalists advocate open borders and derive support for their views from the work of UNESCO<sup>17</sup> (see their report 'Migration without borders') who assert the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNDHR) confers a human right to migrate anywhere and in any numbers ('...Everyone has a right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country...' (Article 13-2). Curiously by referring to someone's 'own' country, the UNDHR implies rights of ownership, cultural supremacy or hierarchy, or a notion of borders and border protection, that must necessarily be denied to a host nation if open borders are mandated (unless only Western citizens are denied nationalism - a sort of reverse racism - which is what is happening in fact).

### *It ain't easy being Green*

Between these clear extremes, there exists a range of confused and contradictory views. For example, the Greens Party are caught between their natural impulses. On one hand their natural impulse is towards utopian internationalism (*eg* see Bob Brown's 'Fellow Earthians' speech - 3rd Annual Greens Oration),<sup>18</sup> wealth redistribution, third world poverty solving, and multiculturalism - which is based on cultural relativism and equates nationalism with racism. On the other hand they abhor free market fundamentalism and capitalism.

<sup>15</sup> 'Small Australia is racist', Crafti, J., Direct Action, Issue 25, 2010. [http://directaction.org.au/issue25/small\\_australia\\_is\\_implicitly\\_racist](http://directaction.org.au/issue25/small_australia_is_implicitly_racist)

<sup>16</sup> This has been partly supported by Government – see the Australian Law Reform Commissions 57<sup>th</sup> Report 'Multiculturalism and the Law' and the Government response.

<sup>17</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation.

<sup>18</sup> <http://greensmps.org.au/content/news-stories/bob-brown-delivers-3rd-annual-green-oration>

Accordingly the Greens have supported some restrictions of migrant workers in order to protect Australian jobs (*ie* a form of nationalism – a contradiction that they never acknowledge). But they generally support open borders immigration of refugees and a large family reunion program (the wealth redistribution and third world poverty solving impulse – they simply ignore the ‘reverse colonisation’ effect earlier mentioned). They also generally support, but with less enthusiasm, skilled and unskilled foreign workers, but they normally prefer them to be from the third world not the first world (a kind of reverse racism).

But, like the Trotskyist socialists (and extreme capitalists) they prefer mass permanent migration, especially for refugees. Of course, all this must necessarily result in a big Australia, but they are wary of ‘big Australia’ because of the environmental impacts. They prefer ‘big sustainable Australia’ since it acts as a neat disguise, meaning they do not need to risk the fracturing of their support base that may occur if they have to choose a clear consistent policy.

Accordingly, the Green position is best described as confused, contradictory, and hypocritical whereas the view of their uncomfortable bedfellows, the extreme right, is clear and consistent being based simply, or primarily, on personal economic gain, or some may say, simple greed.

*Now we oppose colonialism now we support it – we just want more immigrants – whatever*

One of the most obvious ironies in this debate is the hypocrisy that results from the utopian internationalist post-colonial guilt complex. Such utopians feel obliged to support open borders refugee and mass immigration policies because they feel a strong sense of guilt about the colonial history of the West, although they conveniently ignore the 1500 year history of Islamic slavery and imperialism or Chinese imperialism or any other. This drives them to support open borders policies that contradict their policies on preserving Australia’s environment. They deny that mass immigration will simply result in a form of reverse colonisation of the West by the world’s most populous nations – as it will.

They know that adding to Australia’s population adds considerably to the so called greenhouse gas footprint that they have identified and that it will have a range of other detrimental environmental effects. Further, they ignore the fact many skilled immigrants, lured here by our open borders immigration policies, leave their former homes never to return and in doing so those poor countries effectively reverse colonise themselves. They simply choose to ignore this despite their outward appearance of compassion.

Of course their bedfellows or fellow travellers, free market fundamentalists, often feel no such guilt, since their motto, ‘greed is good’, and their belief in the perfection of the free market, absolves them of any sense of guilt.

*A brave new world*

Like the extreme right wing free market fundamentalists, the extreme left utopian internationalists view mass immigration and rapid population increases (‘big Australia’) as a welcome advancement towards a utopian borderless future world or a perfect free market.<sup>19</sup> Dr Salter, ‘The Misguided

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<sup>19</sup> For the Utopian open border view see Prof. Mirko Bagaric, *SMH*, 7 April 2010 and contra see Dr Salter, F., ‘The Misguided Advocates of Open Borders’, *Quadrant Online*, June 2010, Vol LIV, Number 6 (<http://www.quadrant.org.au/magazine/issue/2010/6/the-misguided-advocates-of-open-borders>).

Advocates of Open Borders', *Quadrant Online*, (June 2010, Vol LIV, Number 6 – see below) contests the view that nationalism is racism and posits instead that national identity and kinship is a deeply important part of the human psyche the denial of which is psychologically damaging and amounts to an abuse of human rights. He denies that immigration controls are inherently racist and concludes that: '...Inviting the world into a country as prosperous as Australia would result in the displacement of the Australian people inside their historical homeland..'

It is one of the great ironies that right wing free market fundamentalists, who normally despise the extreme left and utopian internationalists, advocate for exactly the same, or very similar, open border immigration and refugee policies with the same 'big Australia' outcome. Powerful mining magnates and Trotskyite socialists stand alongside each other to advocate for mass immigration, permanent migration of economic migrants and refugees, and 'big Australia' (see [Attachment A](#)). They seek the same outcome but for different reasons.

Extremism certainly makes strange bedfellows. Sadly, they also use the same tactics – *ad hominem* attacks and allegations of racism and xenophobia - so as to prosecute their case and achieve their ends. They are happy, in effect, to deny or chill the speech of their fellow Australians so as to achieve their own preferred outcome.

#### *The open borders economic scare campaign*

The advocates in these campaigns often allege that failure to implement open borders policies will severely damage our economy leading to disastrous skills shortages, catastrophic house and property price collapses, and falling share prices (*ie* an economic scare campaign).

Many Australians have come to believe that these identities lobby for open borders, aside from any belief they may have about the national interest, because they are the primary beneficiaries of such policies - since they are able to exploit the increasing property prices and consumer demand, and lower wages,<sup>20</sup> that come from rapid population growth, so as to maximise their own private profits and wealth. Any costs of immigration and population growth are passed to the public by way of public expenditure funded through taxation ('profits privatised; losses nationalised').

Members of the open borders lobby from left (*eg* champagne socialists or bollinger bolsheviks) and right (*eg* mining magnates and retail giants), rarely, if ever, compete for public welfare services and are often able to afford private housing in safe or non-immigrant areas (as well as extensive property portfolios that allow them to benefit from house price inflation), private health and education services, and to lower their tax rates through trusts and other financial vehicles. For that reason the open borders lobby are accurately described as 'elites'.

By contrast the poorest native born, *and importantly, former immigrants who have been here longer and have become permanent residents or citizens*, often compete for such public services, and low wage jobs, against newly arrived immigrants, and cannot minimise personal or direct taxes through clever means. They often struggle to pay for a single owner occupied dwelling in a nation with some

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<sup>20</sup> Mr Callick (see [Attachment A](#)) effectively concedes this when he quotes from Saul Eslake (Chief Economist Australia of the Bank of America) who says that unlike past mining booms the current mining boom has not resulted in inflation and vastly increased mining industry wages because of the use of 457 visas enabling cheaper labour to be used or substituted - Callick, R., 'How Gillard's narrative ended up in Hanson Territory', *The Australian*, March 9-10, 2013 p 14. Note: Mr Eslake says that the union protests are primarily about wage rates '...not so much because they hate foreigners....' – although this is not highlighted since it does not fit well with the xenophobia narrative.

of the highest house prices in the world. More than 100,000 Australians, often native born, are homeless. They often live in poorer, less safe, high immigrant areas.

The arguments employed by the open borders lobby generally proceed as follows: a massive 'ageing problem' (those who have worked hard and paid taxes to build this nation are thereby vilified because of their age, and portrayed as a burden to a new post-modern multicultural Australian society) exists and will reach catastrophic proportions in future; mass immigration must occur so as to address this economic tsunami; mass immigration is always economically beneficial; our skilled immigrant intake is highly selective and lucrative and will therefore address the ageing problem; there are no or few economic, social or other costs associated with mass immigration and rapid population growth and no better policy alternatives; immigration never damages the job prospects of Australians, and mass immigration never exacerbates unemployment (or underemployment or underutilisation), or our housing, transport, environmental, education or health problems (*ie* mass immigration is 'all gain no pain' or 'far greater gain than pain').

### *Immigrants age too*

There is ample evidence that many of these assumptions are incorrect or flawed. Work by the Canadian conservative think tank, the Fraser Institute, analysed the economic impact of immigration (welfare payments received less taxes paid) and reported that it costs Canada between \$16-23 billion annually.<sup>21</sup> The UK House of Lords investigated whether mass immigration can solve the so called 'ageing problem' and concluded that it could *not* because immigrants add very little if anything to real *per capita* economic wealth, *and they age too*.

Waves of mass immigration, especially low skilled people who often have poorer long-term health outcomes and a higher birth rates than previous generations or the native born, and, in accordance with multiculturalist policies, who demand expensive culturally specific age care services, produce an even larger and even more costly ageing problem later on, when they and their children age, as everyone does.<sup>22</sup> If our current 'ageing problem' is a 'time bomb', as it has been described by open border advocates, what will the next 'ageing crisis' be called - 'a thermo nuclear time bomb'?

Despite the shock and awe campaign mounted by some open borders advocates often relying on the Government's own 2010 *Intergenerational Report*<sup>23</sup> and earlier such reports, there is a plethora of academic work, starting from the 1990's challenging all these assumptions and the thesis that the Western 'ageing problem' amounts to an economic disaster. For example, see Mullan Phillip, *The*

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<sup>21</sup> <http://news.nationalpost.com/2011/05/17/immigrants-cost-23b-a-year-fraser-institute-report/>. Grubel and Grady, *Immigration and the Canadian Welfare State*, Fraser Institute, 2011. See for example briefing papers from Migration Watch UK, especially 1.29 'Economic impacts of immigration to the UK' (July 2012) at their website <http://www.migrationwatchuk.org/briefingPapers#Economic>; or in the US see the work by the Centre for Immigration Studies (<http://www.cis.org/>) and there numerous reports and Congressional briefings. Of course this area is highly contested because vested interests are easily able to fund research from economists willing to produce pro-immigration reports that paint a false but rosy picture of the economics of immigration. In a 2005 Report, the Productivity Commission (Economic Impacts of Migration and Population Growth 2005) disputed that immigration was a substantial positive economic benefit to Australia and would solve our ageing problems ('...changes in migration flows are *unlikely* to have a significant and lasting effect on the ageing of Australia's population...population growth and immigration can magnify existing policy problems and amplify pressures on 'unpriced' entities, such as the environment, and urban and social amenity...') and leading economists like Ross Gittens described the additional demand created by adding to the labour supply as being offset by greater demand for labour caused by their consumption of public goods and demand for housing ('Beware Gurus Selling High Migration', *Sydney Morning Herald*, (SMH) 20 December 2010)(<http://www.smh.com.au/business/beware-gurus-selling-high-migration-20101219-19201.html>). This prompted a flurry of activity from open borders lobby groups who commissioned a range of economists to contest these findings.

<sup>22</sup> See 'The Economic Impact of Immigration', House of Lords Select Committee on Economic Affairs, First Session, 2007-8 <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200708/ldselect/ldeconaf/ldeconaf.htm>).

<sup>23</sup> [http://archive.treasury.gov.au/igr/igr2010/report/pdf/IGR\\_2010.pdf](http://archive.treasury.gov.au/igr/igr2010/report/pdf/IGR_2010.pdf)

*Imaginary time bomb: why ageing is not a social problem*, Tauris Press, UK 2002 or *The overselling of population ageing: apocalyptic demography, intergenerational challenges and social policy*, E Gee and G Gutman, Oxford University Press, UK, 2000. A simple wiki search using 'pensions crisis' as a search term highlights (under the heading 'criticism') some criticisms of the dominant 'demographic catastrophe' theory. Sadly, since the open borders lobby dominate our public discourse the general public are rarely able even to consider such arguments.

Given the extraordinary imbalance in the superannuation savings of Australians (11 million people have less than \$100,000 presently) and the massive amount of revenue lost by effectively subsidising a small number of wealthy elite Australians' superannuation savings (\$32bn *per annum* of more in lost revenue and rising - paid mainly to around 90,000 people with balances above \$1m or those with high balances), many of the economic impacts of ageing could be easily addressed by reforming superannuation. For this view - see for example the work of the *Australia Institute* and their address to the National Press Club in Canberra 10 April 2013 - see 5:20 in for costs.<sup>24</sup>

### *Lies, damn lies and statistics – the headline rate of unemployment*

Caught between these extremists, the Australian population, when properly informed, generally support moderate civic nationalism and low level highly selective immigration policies.

Sensible people are generally pro-growth (provided it produces real *per capita* wealth not simply GDP<sup>25</sup> growth which is a misleading indicator of true prosperity), but support healthy and vibrant public and private sectors balancing each other. They simply seek to balance the need for some skilled immigration with polices that properly address unemployment as well as underemployment and underutilisation (the latter according to the ABS (13.2%) approaches almost treble the 'headline rate' of unemployment of about 5.4%).<sup>26</sup>

As Attachment A suggests, many open border advocates allege a general skills shortage exists presently or will necessarily result from the so called ageing problem. They rarely seek to prove this but instead simply rely on the headline rate of unemployment that, compared to other struggling Western economies, appears low.

But many Australians are aware from practical experience that the serious dimensions of Australia's economic problems and the oversupply of labour in many areas are hidden by misleading statistics using the headline rate of unemployment but ignoring underemployment and underutilisation. It is called the 'headline' rate because it is the rate Governments most often choose to use so as to appear to be competent economic managers and the newspapers routinely and uncritically report in their headlines. The 'headline rate' of unemployment is very misleading for a number of reasons but primarily because it does not count a very large number of people who want work, or more work, but do not count as unemployed or part of the workforce as it is measured and expressed in that statistic.

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<sup>24</sup> <http://www.abc.net.au/news/programs/national-press-club/>

<sup>25</sup> Gross Domestic Product.

<sup>26</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 6202 Feb 2013 and ABS 1301 Year Book Australia 2012 - extended underutilised labour 13.2%.

For example, since *one hour of work in the relevant fortnight* means a person is no longer counted as unemployed,<sup>27</sup> the headline rate makes the massive shift over the last three decades from full-time to casual or part time work, or to self-employment, appear to solve Australia's unemployment problems. This has profound implications.

Large classes of people who claim welfare payments but who wish to work and can work (invalid pensioners, carers and so on), or others not counted as unemployed because they do not claim welfare (students, stay at home mums and dads and retirees) are *not* counted as unemployed, nor are those who have stopped looking for work but would work if offered work. The headline unemployment rate does not count those who are part-time or casual workers or self-employed but want more work. All this can be easily confirmed by visiting the ABS website and looking at the respective definitions, or by looking at Wikipedia under 'unemployment' - see the section on 'limitations on the unemployment definition'.<sup>28</sup> Readers should also look at the work of Roy Morgan Research and their efforts to express the true nature of unemployment which they put at around 1.1 million – see their website and for discussion see the 2009 ABC Radio National Program 'Measuring Unemployment'.<sup>29</sup>

As a result Australians are concerned about economic modelling based on the headline rate of unemployment such as that used by the 2008 'External Reference Group' (ERG) (see below) that recommended and supported very high rates of so called skilled immigration, and the further deregulation of 457 and other such visas – essentially policies that we have today.<sup>30</sup> Since the general 'skills shortage' the ERG identified or assumed was based on the headline unemployment rate then it considerably overestimated any such shortage.

### *The economic efficiency of employing locals*

Ignoring 'real unemployment' (unemployment + underemployment + underutilisation), and failing to offer work for those people, has produced a large welfare dependency problem (many have simply migrated to disability support pensions making that class reportedly around 820,000 or more, over and above the 600,000 or more unemployed). Such welfare dependency has severely damaged the economies of Europe, and it is very damaging here – it risks the same outcome. This is clearly *not* in the national interest. It severely damages the nation, as well as the people involved.

Ironically however the extreme right free market fundamentalists who normally espouse self-reliance (at least for the poor) say little or nothing about the fact that their own open borders policies may be the cause of, or a major contributor to, our unemployment and welfare dependency

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<sup>27</sup> See eg ABS 6105 2009

(<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/featurearticlesbytitle/F711033AD22EB48BCA2576A40014FA02?OpenDocument>)

<sup>28</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unemployment>

<sup>29</sup> 10/9/2009 ('Measuring Unemployment') <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/breakfast/measuring-unemployment/3051822>

<sup>30</sup> Instead of an open and transparent public process, the Immigration Minister appointed a Departmental Reference Group made up of leading businesspeople (Mr Shanahan - CEO of the WA Chamber of Minerals and energy), Melinda Cilento (Business Council of Australia) and Chaired by Peter Coates (past head of the Minerals Council of Australia). Their task was to respond to the perceived need for mass 'skilled' immigration so as to address a 'skills shortage' based upon the need for workers to supply the minerals boom, the 'ageing problem', and the Government's 'big Australia' policy. Unsurprisingly, they recommended further deregulation of the 457 visa process. This and other reports put Australia on its current trajectory, and according to Dr Birrell, this trajectory that has not been adjusted following the financial crisis, with resulting unemployment and underemployment (see Dr Birrell *et al Immigration Overshoot*). Their April 2008 report is entitled 'The Final Report to the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship', Visa subclass 457, External Reference Group.

problems. This profound contradiction is simply ignored. Perhaps their solution is simply to cut welfare to such people whether there is work available to them or not?

Accordingly, ordinary Australians prefer to address skills shortages by training and engaging locals whenever reasonably possible.

The 'sensible middle' believe in nation, and accept and welcome a diverse Australia, and feel a sense of loyalty to Australia, and those people who identify as Australians, *from whatever background they come*. They simply wish to secure the economic efficiencies involved in employing some, or many, of the 1.1 million unemployed, underemployed, and underutilised Australian workers of *all races, colours and creeds*.

They prefer this because they wish to enjoy the benefits of the increased revenue from taxation paid by those put to work, increased economic demand resulting from wages spent here rather than exported overseas (the economic 'multiplier effect' works far better if wages are spent here), and savings in welfare payments and the additional costs of unemployment such as crime and ill-health, that employing Australians would provide. These savings would allow money to be spent on more productive wealth building projects here.

However, they concede that a need for very highly skilled people in very high demand occupations may sometimes necessitate immigration (*eg* specialist mining engineers, medical specialists and other such workers) and are comfortable with that and support it, provided locals are trained as well.

*The 457 skills category is so broad as to be almost meaningless*

Central to the media campaign by open borders advocates has been the portrayal of 457 visa holders as a single highly skilled and highly paid class of people who are uniformly a very valuable asset to Australia. Some of the advocates even described them, and the 457 program in general, as the 'goose that laid the golden egg'.

But ordinary Australians take a particularly critical view of the skilled immigrant category and see inherent corruption (rorting) in the very process itself when occupations that could easily be done by unemployed or underemployed Australians with appropriate training are classed as 'skilled', enabling employers, in an uncapped program, to import foreign workers without numerical limit and without establishing a compelling need to do so, then sponsor them for permanent migration.

Most ordinary Australians having looked at the CSOL list (that has broad categories that can include such as retail sales, hairdressing, catering and hospitality, aged care work, nursing, and semi-skilled building work - see the consolidated sponsored occupations list at the Immigration Department website or below for the very extensive and very permissive number of so called 'skilled' occupations) would be shocked and would probably ask: is there anything that is *not* classed as 'skilled'?<sup>31</sup>

Dr Birrell and Dr Healy describe the process as follows: '...The only occupational limitation for the 457 visa (or permanent entry nominated visa) is that the applicant must have an occupation listed

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<sup>31</sup> <http://www.immi.gov.au/skilled/skilled-workers/sbs/eligibility-nomination.htm> and <http://www.immi.gov.au/skilled/pdf/sol-schedule1-2.pdf>

on the Consolidated Sponsor Occupations List (CSOL). This is an indiscriminate listing of a vast range of occupations which takes no account of the state of the Labour market. It includes such as...cook and gardener. As a result there is nothing to stop employers sponsoring persons for a 457 visa (or permanent entry sponsored visa) where there is a surplus of workers in the occupation ..' (*Immigration Overshoot*, p 12)

Those wishing to understand the debate properly should read such as Joo-Cheong Tham and Iain Campbell, Centre for Employment and Labour Relations Law, Working Paper Number 50, University of Melbourne, 2011 and Birrell, B., and Healy, E., *Immigration Overshoot*, Centre for Population and Urban Research Monash, November, 2012.<sup>32</sup>

The former point out that: 457 visas can be repeatedly renewed making the term 'temporary' misleading; a large number of 457 visa holders apply for a visa extension; the largest number of applications each year comes from those already onshore under another visa; many 457 visa applicants later apply for permanent residence (48% or more said they intended to apply); there has been a shift in recent years away from highly skilled applicants towards applicants from the third world with lower levels of skill (trades)(p 7) with average wages rates falling; that many applicants are nurses; that the main skilled occupations are chef, cook, welder, metal fabricator and motor mechanic; that the scheme will inevitably impact upon the employment opportunities and working conditions of Australian workers working in such areas; and that India, China and the Philippines now 'match or outpace' the US and UK as source countries for skilled migration generally. All this is confirmed by Dr Birrell and Dr Healy.

This is also confirmed by the latest subclass 457 report by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (to February 2013)<sup>33</sup> that that the total number of primary visa holders to 28 February 2013 is 107, 510 (a 21.5 % increase on the same date in previous program year) and (Report p 2) that *cooks were the number one ranked occupation for primary visa grants* (p 4).

#### *Average rates, broad categories, single descriptors – how to make 457 visa statistics look good*

One way to make 457 statistics look good is to use average wage rates, rather than median wage rates or specific rates for specific jobs, as Mr Callick and others do (see Attachment A),<sup>34</sup> so as to portray the total 457 visa holder as a single highly skilled class. This is misleading, since the wage rates of the few very highly paid highly skilled professionals tends to mask the greater number of those who are lower skilled and paid far less (eg cooks). If the average wages rates of the total number of 457 visas holders are reported (which are coming down, as Mr Callick concedes, due to the changing nature of the intake towards those with lower skill levels), this also masks the shift in later years to the less skilled, since some highly skilled and highly paid workers may have come here 8 years ago or longer when the scheme was quite different, and renewed their visas.

It is also misleading to portray 457 visa holders as highly skilled class by using broad undefined categories such as 'professionals' or 'managers' and then sweeping them together to make a single class (as Mr Callick does in his 1 March 2013 article by saying '66% of 457 visa holders are

<sup>32</sup> [http://www.law.unimelb.edu.au/files/dmfile/CELRL\\_Working\\_Paper\\_No\\_50\\_-\\_March\\_2011\\_FINAL2.pdf](http://www.law.unimelb.edu.au/files/dmfile/CELRL_Working_Paper_No_50_-_March_2011_FINAL2.pdf) ; <http://www.monash.edu.au/assets/pdf/news/cpur-immigration-overshoot.pdf>.

<sup>33</sup> (simply type '457 visa statistics latest' into google or go to the statistics section at the immigration website) <http://www.immi.gov.au/media/statistics/statistical-info/temp-entrants/subclass-457.htm>

<sup>34</sup> Callick, R., 'The Labour war escalates', *The Australian*, March 1, 2013.

professionals or managers') because this does not reflect the true position as reflected in the actual work done.

For example, contrast the 'nominated occupation' chart at p 5 of the February 2013 Immigration Department Report on 457 visas (which uses broad categories), with the more detailed chart on page 9 which shows the type of work actually being done by looking at the 'sponsor industry', and the picture becomes much clearer – 'professional' or 'manager' are very broad and misleading terms that can easily be used to mask the actual work done. At the risk of appearing flippant, it has become a subject of general amusement that, in the post-modern workforce, what were once known as 'garbos' are sometimes now known as 'professional waste and refuse operatives' or such like.

Another method of making 457 visa holders appear to be highly skilled is to sweep them together into a single class and then merge their qualifications. For example, in *The Australian*, 5 April 2013 under the headline 'States rely on job visas' p 4 the author says in support of the proposition that 457 visa holders as a class are highly skilled: '...The report shows that, of the 107, 510 workers on 457 visas in Australia about 85,000 are highly skilled *holding at least a degree or diploma qualification.*' (my emphasis). The mere holding of a degree would not be considered by most Australians today as evidence of being 'highly skilled'. Sadly, the credentialism that has infected Australian teaching institutions has produced a plethora of Australian graduates of dubious quality who are now out of work – many have a number of higher degrees.

But even if a single degree is a marker of being highly skilled, most Australians would consider that holding a mere diploma is not. There are many, many thousands of unemployed Australian diploma holders. The proposition that foreign diploma holders are so skilled as to merit their mass immigration displays breathtaking ignorance of the suffering of Australians (many from immigrant backgrounds – see evidence to the Federal Government's Multiculturalism Enquiry) who are highly qualified and seeking work without success, partly attributable to the vast number of foreign workers being imported daily.

Many refugees and immigrants complain bitterly of racism when they cannot find work but have obtained diplomas and degrees. The sad truth is that there are simply insufficient vacancies because of the massive number of foreign workers (working holiday makers, students, those coming on special worker schemes, as well as 457 and other visa holders) constantly being brought in.

#### *The requirement to put local workers first is a sham*

Importantly, the Cham/Campbell paper gives a clear eyed view of the real world situation, confirmed by anyone who has actually worked in these areas, that there is no requirement to put Australian workers first: '...the 457 visa scheme since the 2003 removal of the labour market testing requirement can be characterised as an undemanding attestation scheme. In most cases, the individual employer is not required to demonstrate, or even state, that they have explored the availability of suitably skilled local labour. There is not even a prohibition against replacing local workers with 457 visa workers. The individual employer has to do little more than offer assurances that they need migrant labour....Employers speak freely and often of skills shortages in Australia. Though such talk is sometimes apt, it often merely alludes to the fact that employers are reluctant to offer wages and conditions at rates needed to attract local workers...' (p 20).

They point out the failure of the ALP amendments to ensure that migrant workers are not exploited and used to undercut local wages and conditions and ominously conclude that: ‘...critics seem right to accuse it (the 457 scheme) of being an extreme example that is unfairly biased towards employers and neglects the interests of local workers and migrant workers..’ (my words in brackets).

*No need real to offer jobs to Australians first*

The removal of the 2003 ‘market testing requirement’, mentioned by Tham, Campbell, Birrell and Healy, refers to the fact it was once necessary to show that proper steps had been taken to advertise for workers in Australia and interview them for suitability. This involved, among other things, placing prominent advertisements in Australian newspapers, interviewing Australian applicants and justifying why they were not suitable.

*The decision to change this so that market testing was no longer necessary was a profound change.*

The process of deregulation commenced in 1996 with respect to certain visa categories and was achieved in stages by 2003. The ERG was able to announce proudly in its 2008 report p 34 ‘...there are no formal market testing requirements for the 457 visa..’. In other words, there is no need to demonstrate that there is a real need for foreign labour at all - all that needs to be demonstrated is that the sponsor or business thinks that *they* need foreign labour, as opposed to local labour, for their own operations. In short, where once the interests of all Australians including the unemployed, (the national interest), was important or paramount, instead the interest of each business became paramount, with the assumption that Australia will derive some benefit in the process. The relative economic efficiency of employing locals (more taxes, wages spent locally, savings achieved by minimising welfare outlays) as opposed to foreign workers became effectively irrelevant.

From the workers’ perspective, the cases of Filipino workers being used on desalination plant projects allegedly instead of suitably qualified local workers (see [Attachment A](#)), or on oil rigs at very low wage rates, may be cases in point. In order partly to remedy this, the Greens introduced legislation. However, this would only apply to enterprise migration agreements, a subset of 457 and skilled visas.

*Migrants do high skilled jobs and are paid more proving we need them – no, they work harder for less doing unskilled jobs that lazy locals won’t do proving we need them - whatever immigrants are cool*

For many ordinary Australians, Mr Penberthy’s article at [Attachment A](#) would epitomise the open borders approach of some young elites in the so called ‘intellectual’ class. Instead of adducing facts and offering analysis in support of their argument that a skills shortage exists so as to prove that Australians are not denied work and that the problem is lazy locals, they instead make lazy arguments by propagating negative stereotypes of local workers and the Australian population and then idolising foreign workers and immigrants

Their post-modern university education has often taught young Australians to aspire to becoming utopian internationalists and to dream of transcending class, race and culture, and joining a brave

new borderless world inhabited by intelligent fashionable exotic global citizens living in multicultural peace and harmony.

As a result, sadly, many university-educated Australians now seek to appear sophisticated by labelling and pathologising ordinary working class Australians who do not share this dream, or cannot participate, and whom they see as an impediment to the multicultural transformation of Australia (will the ageing problem now be followed by the 'white' problem?). They often call them bogans, yobbos, white trash, lazy or 'dumb, drunk and racist'. Ironically, many of those who allege 'class warfare' against those who are critical of some aspects of 457 visa policy, themselves seem to engage in a post-modern form of 'class warfare' based on labelling and pathologising of ordinary Australians in support of globalisation or utopian internationalism.

As discussed when it suits the open borders lobby, and when faced with allegations of foreign worker exploitation, they posit that foreign workers are more skilled, paid more and are only used where there are genuine skills shortages here. They never take Australian jobs. But they nonetheless describe as racist, and resist, market testing that could result in cheaper local workers being engaged - thus guaranteeing that locals are not being disadvantaged or put out of work.

But if that argument proves problematic, they employ the opposite contradictory argument, that foreign workers are paid less and work harder than locals, adding to the overall efficiency of the economy and preventing general wage inflation.

Australians know from real world experience that many industries, such as hospitals and aged care, use immigrant labour, in part, to keep wages depressed. The recent case of the Filipino oil workers paid a very low wage may demonstrate this.<sup>35</sup> But this does not establish that foreign workers are somehow better or more hard working than their lazy Australian counterparts.

Immigrant workers are often willing to work in low wage industries (but only short-term until they gain permanency or can leave for jobs that pay a fair wage just like everyone else) for unfair wages and in harsh conditions so as to gain all the welfare and other benefits they would otherwise *not* receive such as free child care, education, health and other social services, and especially sometimes public housing which is a very valuable for many. These are things they *do* receive when granted permanent residency, or later, citizenship. Working here enables foreigners to apply to gain permanent resident status, then citizenship status, which entitle them to these benefits - this is a crucial factor in their decision to work for low wages in poor conditions temporarily. These are rights which Australians already enjoy, and which they have paid for through taxation for many years, naturally making them less willing (but not necessarily unwilling) to work for low or unfair wages in harsh conditions. It is that simple.

In summary, if immigrants temporarily work harder for lower wages in poor conditions until they can move and be replaced by the next wave of immigrants that arrives, it is because they have more to gain in terms of future entitlements from Government programs and welfare programs that they have *not paid for*, or contributed to, through their work and by paying taxes *to the same extent as*

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<sup>35</sup> Perhaps due to the recent controversy a number of alleged abuses of 457 visas have come to light – *eg* misuse on the NBN project 'Immigration Probes Syntheo NBN row', *The Australian*, 9 April 2013 p 9 and '\$3 an hour working while working overtime and holidays on oil rig', Macrae, M., *Mining.com*, April 2, 2013) Of course these reports are often conveniently hidden away in the back pages.

native born Australians or those who have been here longer. Immigrants are no worse, but nor are they any better, than ordinary Australians.

*When families and family reunion are accounted for immigration is very costly*

Informed Australians also know that the economic benefits of skilled immigrants are often offset by the family members that they are entitled to bring in with them, and the family reunion (chain migration) that often takes place later. In his article for *The Australian* recently (see [Attachment A](#)), Mr Kelly concedes that 105,325 primary 457 visa holders resulted in 189,784 immigrants when family members were accounted for, since family members are entitled to a visa and work rights, *but blithely overlooks the profound implications of this.*

It is politically difficult or impossible, particularly when the open borders lobby is so powerful, to deny or control family reunion and chain migration. Many of the family members accompanying skilled immigrants, or those who later join them (fathers and mothers, sisters or brothers), are older or unskilled and this tends to offset, or reverse, any economic benefits from the younger skilled 457 or student primary visa recipients.

Detailed analysis of the Australian experience may very well prove that because of the family and family reunion component, even skilled immigration (let alone refugees whose rates of long-term welfare dependency are very high according to the Department of Immigration and Citizenship's own reports and reports from refugee advocates when bidding for greater Government welfare assistance)<sup>36</sup> can never be a substantial net economic benefit to Australia. This is in line with the UK House of Lords Committee findings and those of the Canadian Fraser Institute, US Centre for Immigration Studies and many others. This is a proposition that the open border lobby is likely vociferously to deny, and muster all their available media forces to dispute or discredit, whether true or not.

*Jobs for Australians includes jobs for former immigrants – this is not about race*

What many of the authors in the articles referred to in [Attachment A](#) seem to fail to appreciate is that Australia is a very long way now from the days of white Australia. In fact, Parliaments and board rooms, where many of the decisions about Australia's immigration and population future are made, are perhaps the last bastions of racial and cultural uniformity. It is wonderfully ironic that, if the white Australia policy now exists anywhere, it probably exists in these places – from where many of the allegations of racism are currently being made.

Australia is and always will be highly diverse and is heading rapidly towards superdiversity. Australia left 'white Australia' behind long ago. Accordingly, outside of academia and the rarefied air of the offices of the broadsheet newspapers, ordinary Australians are aware that unemployment is often highest among former immigrant groups and former refugees, and that these groups often compete hardest for low paid and low skilled work that many newly arrived immigrants who arrive on 457 visas (or accompanying someone who has) or who arrive as students with work rights (or accompanying some who has) often take up instead of them.

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<sup>36</sup> <http://www.menzieshouse.com.au/2011/05/diac-report-shows-more-than-80-of-refugee-humanitarian-migrants-on-benefits-after-5-years.html>

Dr Birrell and Dr Healy reportedly discovered that the 200,000 immigrants that had found work here over the last two years equalled the number of jobs created here in that time.<sup>37</sup> Notably, and curiously, this was reported in the so called 'right wing' press, but was not generally greeted by jeers of racism or xenophobia when it appeared there. One wonders if this is because the reporter was apparently from an ethnic background (thus tending to confirm that putting Australians first for jobs is not based on racism) or because the paper itself, *The Herald Sun*, is often described as 'right wing'?

*Bigger nations and states are not always more prosperous – bigger is not always better*

Ordinary Australians place a premium on practicalities, and common sense. Many would be shocked to know that State and Territory Governments are negotiating 'regional migration agreements' with the Federal Government (largely in 'secret' ie with the public largely unaware), and using 457 visas to import large numbers of foreign migrants. They would also be shocked to know that states (such as South Australia and Tasmania) that *have the most serious and long-standing unemployment problems and a general oversupply of labour*, should be targeted for the importation of large numbers of so called 'skilled' migrants.

Perhaps this explains the statement by the SA Premier recently apparently revising downwards the SA population target of 2m by 2027 (appearing on the SA Government website on 8 April) to 2m by 2050 (20 more years) following recent the recent controversy about the use of regional migration agreements.<sup>38</sup> Those with experience in these matters would probably predict that this is a temporary revision and will probably be put back again if the Liberals take office after the next election, when the borders are likely to open even wider in compliance with the demands of the business sector.

These regional migration agreements are negotiated on the spurious basis that increasing population size will necessarily make those States richer - more people means more wealth for everyone. Since their heads are not muddled by complex but convenient economic theories, ordinary Australians know from personal experience, and knowledge of the real world, that bigger does not always means richer or better.

If bigger populations were richer, then such as India, Africa, the Middle East, and China would be uniformly rich and their citizens would not be leaving in droves to become immigrants to the West and Australia.

Citizens of those countries are leaving whilst the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of some of those countries, especially China, has been growing rapidly. Why? This is because GDP growth is not an accurate measure of real prosperity. And yet we are told by the open borders lobby (or not told, since these programs are negotiated largely away from the glare of publicity and public scrutiny) that, on their arrival, these migrants are very productive and will create GDP growth that will make Australia as a nation, and the States receiving them, richer. But if this were so, then there must be a net loss to India or China or elsewhere making those nations poorer and making our expensive aid

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<sup>37</sup> Birrell B and Healy E, *The Impact of Recent Immigration on the Australian Workforce*, Monash Centre for Population and Urban Research, 2013, and *Immigration Overshoot*, CPUR Research Report Monash November 2012, and as reported, 'Locals losing out on jobs because of high immigration', Masanouskas, J., *Herald Sun*, 4 Feb, 2013. <http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/victoria/locals-losing-out-on-jobs-because-of-high-immigration/story-e6frf7kx-1226568163500>

<sup>38</sup> 'State's population push on policy stalls', *The Australian*, 8 April 2013.

programs there less effective. If these immigrants are an economic asset to us because they are so young, skilled, and productive, they must be an economic loss to the nations they leave.

Real prosperity is based on wealth measured by the total real prosperity of a nation divided by its population size. This gives a true measure of how wealthy or prosperous each individual citizen actually is per person (*per capita*). Gross Domestic product or GDP does not measure true wealth or prosperity per person, it measures the amount of economic activity in a nation as a whole. Economic activity is a crude measure because it takes no account of what that activity is for, how that activity will be funded, the relative efficiency of the use of those funds on that activity, and what the results of that activity will be in future.

For example, when a major flood or disaster happens, or a massive crime wave like the London riots occurs, followed by a clean-up and rebuilding, or when economic crises occur and Keynesian programs are used to address them (*eg* \$900 welfare cheques are issued and school building projects commenced here) Governments draws on savings or borrowing to fund expenditure and there is a surge in GDP growth. If Australia increased the refugee intake to 200,000 people tomorrow, there would be a surge in GDP growth since expensive welfare programs would be needed for their resettlement, housing and so on, and the consumer demand created by their spending of welfare payments provided to them would stimulate the economy. The nation would appear richer using GDP statistics.

But in fact the nation, especially *per capita*, would be poorer. The future liability of interest payments on the borrowings would make the nation poorer in the longer term. The fact that refugees have been shown by the Immigration Department's own data to have high levels of long-term welfare dependency means they are much less productive as a class, even over a long period. This is a long term economic liability.

Much depends on the quality and productiveness of the capital created or funded by the Government borrowing or expenditure. People are not units of economic consumption and production and many Australians would be very reluctant to treat or discuss them this way. But since this is precisely how they are being presented by those who seek to import them, and since economists refer to people as human capital, Australians who are not blinded by political correctness, insist on the right to ascertain if these claims are true or not.

Not surprisingly, ordinary Australian people on internet discussion groups and blogs routinely express the fear that if Australia imports a large third world population of unskilled or low skilled people that become welfare dependent in future then Australia too will become third world over time, and we will leave a bitter legacy to future generations, *no matter what their racial or cultural background*.

It is a sad fact of life that some people are more able to produce wealth than others – those who work harder, are more talented or more skilled, who have smaller families that they can support without Government welfare, and who have a strong work ethic, are more likely to produce wealth than those who do not have these qualities. If the argument is being presented that importing immigrants will make States wealthier no matter who they are or where they come from (the sheer number of bodies is all that counts – 'human fodder'), then whether there are available jobs for them, and whether they are displacing local labour, is still highly relevant.

Dr Birrell and Dr Healy examine this issue in detail and conclude: ‘..One might imagine that States/Territories sponsoring a migrant are confident that there is a relevant job opening within their jurisdiction for those invited. But no such job offer is implied or guaranteed, nor is there any legal obligation on the part of the migrant to stay in the particular State or Territory for the main visa subclass 190 within the State and Territory category of visas. There is a residence requirement for the smaller 489 visa subclass .. There is a wide variety of occupational skills being selected, few of which are vital to the resource industries. Very little information has been put into the public arena as to the occupational plans proposed by the States and Territories, nor is the rationale for the overall quota of visas allocated to each State and Territory explained. The program is heavily political, with South Australia and Victoria being enthusiasts, mainly because both States see population expansion as a key element in their prosperity, because of its effect on aggregate GDP... These two states have been issued with large quotas...We do not know what the quotas are for 2012-13 because DAIC has not yet released them..’.

Sadly, ‘more people equals more prosperity’ is arrant nonsense. That Governments should plan their population and immigration policies upon this assumption shows how incompetent and unaccountable they have become. Of course many ‘open borders’ right wing economists know this, but they also know that they can make large profits from mass immigration no matter what the future public cost or the consequences.

*Now we oppose Keynes - now we support him - whatever*

It is another of the great ironies that open borders lobby, many of who are so critical of the ALP Government’s crude Keynesian policies, should advocate Keynesian policies when it comes to mass immigration.

*The Australian* newspaper performed a great public service and led the way in this criticism - and rightly so. In many ways the ALP stimulus programs in response to the GFC - \$900 cheques, pink batts, solar panels, and school halls - were a highly irresponsible waste of taxpayers’ money with serious and damaging long-term consequences. The Treasury advice at the time of the GFC - ‘Go early, go hard, go household’ (welcomed by *The Australian* at the time – something they will never acknowledge) deserves to be considered the worst piece of public policy advice ever given in Australian economic history.

That those who oppose central planning on principle, or see protectionism as racism or a wicked distortion of the free market, should embrace central planning when it comes to developing Australia’s North, or ‘failing States’ such as SA and Tasmania, by wholesale immigration directed, controlled, subsidised and funded by Government, shows the shallowness of their feigned commitment to market principles. For many Australians it shows how willing they are to put private gain ahead of even their love of perfect unregulated free markets. Or course, pluralists being moderate civic nationalists (not free market fundamentalists or purists) to not take an extreme position on Government planning and control – they simply want it done properly and efficiently in the national interest.

A cynic may conclude that the only difference is that many of the open borders lobby are the primary beneficiaries of the GDP stimulus that mass immigration provides and are able to avoid the

losses, whereas they were not so easily able to benefit to the same extent from the \$900 cheques and crude environmental programs used in the Governments 'stimulus' programs.

It should be said in defence of Keynes however, that many people misunderstand or deliberately misquote him or misuse his ideas. He never advocated the misuse of public funds to finance wasteful non-productive assets; instead his policies were properly applied when used to stimulate recessed economies by spending wisely, carefully but generously, on infrastructure and programs that would increase future economic capacity such as health programs, scientific research, roads, rail, dams and factories and skills based education and training.

*Now we fear inflation - now we support it - whatever*

Of course if the objective is simply to enrich oneself no matter what the cost to the public then truth or consistency is immaterial – all that counts is the result. Many free market fundamentalists who support open borders use economic scare tactics to argue that mass immigration of skilled or low skilled migrants, is needed to address a generalised skill shortage and that failing to import them *en masse* could drive up wage rates and prices generally. They use the threat of wage inflation to support open borders immigration, although curiously they are generally unconcerned when highly paid executives demand ever increasing wages, then they often employ the 'pay peanuts get monkeys' argument and vigorously defend such wage increases.

But when presented with the argument, made by such as the Greens and some union officials, that foreign workers are being exploited and paid low wages (taken to extremes - human slavery and trafficking), they argue that foreign workers on 457 visas as a single class are highly skilled and highly paid *and are paid more than local workers on average*. Of course using averages is an age old trick to manipulate statistics. As shown, averages wages statistics can be used to mask the low wages of some low skilled 457 visa holders behind the very high wages of the very highly skilled. But assuming it is true and 457 visa holders are paid more in most cases – then this raises a problem.

If foreign workers are paid more than local workers, surely this adds to business costs and the importation or more expensive foreign workers would drive up wage inflation risking general inflation. Open borders advocates' counter argument would likely be that inflation resulting from foreign workers cannot be avoided because they fill a genuine shortage in the local market. But if they do, then why would free market fundamentalists who advocate for open borders protest so vociferously at the introduction of legislation that mandates market testing so as to ensure that this is so? Surely they would prefer to engage cheaper local workers? Well yes and no.

Sometimes the engagement of foreign workers is simply not a matter of choice, or sometimes employers perceive greater benefits from employing foreign workers even when they are more expensive. For example, many large foreign investment agreements, that are highly lucrative, have clauses whereby the foreign investor demands that its foreign staff be engaged in preference to locals sometimes simply so that they can seek Australian citizenship rights which are considered highly desirable. In effect, the Australian company 'sells' Australian citizenship rights as part of the contract and gains thereby. In other cases where foreign investment is needed in order avoid bankruptcy, or so as to enable expansion and so on, the cost of more expensive foreign workers is considered a minor cost of doing business in proportion to the overall gain.

In such cases, the fear is that obliging the employment of cheaper local workers may jeopardize foreign investment or reduce overall private profits. But this assumes that the foreign worker clause in such contracts is a major impediment. If cheaper local workers are available, the foreign company should be willing to trade off the opportunity of Australian citizenship for cheaper labour. Of course it may be that foreign companies seek a double benefit, cheap foreign labour and citizenship rights – but this exposes the fallacy of the open borders advocates' argument that 457 visas are not used to drive down wage costs or as a gateway for foreign residency.

Common sense people who live in the real world can see that the argument that foreign workers are paid more often defeats itself. But free market fundamentalists pursue these arguments in the face of such obvious inconsistencies because they stand to profit personally from the importation of foreign workers, or because they have an extreme utopian belief in the perfection of the free market. The main objective of such fundamentalists is simply to manipulate public opinion so as to achieve their preferred outcome no matter what the truth is.

*457 visas are not a gateway to permanent residency – now they are – whatever*

One of the most obvious inconsistencies in this debate is the how 457 visa workers are presented by the open borders lobby as temporary, but also presented as permanent. The fact is that many, or most, of those who come to Australia on 457 visas, student visas and other visas, are now no longer temporary. Many come with the deliberate intention of remaining as long as possible or gaining permanent residency here, rather than to work or study temporarily then leave. Open borders advocates both accept and welcome this, or deny it, as suits the dynamics of the debate. This clear incontinuity is simply overlooked in the hope that readers will be confused or fail to detect the obvious inconsistency when swamped with data or argument.

For example, in an article appearing in *The Australian* in late February 2013, the authors quoted heavily from the Business Council of Australia, Mines and Metal Association Chief Executive, and Australian Industry Group (Mr Innes Wilcox), one of whom described the 457 visa process as the 'goose that laid the golden egg'. Mr Wilcox, responding to the allegation that low skilled workers were exploiting 457 visas to gain permanent residency responded: there was 'no evidence' of systemic rorting or such visas being used as '...a gateway to permanent residency. *That's a scare campaign..*' (our emphasis).

But in a later article by Mr Kelly (appearing in *The Australian* March 9-10, 2013, '457 reasons Labour has lost the plot') and quoting the same person, Mr Wilcox (but this time in support of the proposition that 457 visas were not being rorted) Mr Kelly conceded to some rorting ('...Are there rorts in the program? Yes at the margins...') and then described the skilled and temporary worker program as a welcome 'revolution' in immigration with '...temporary long term arrivals (overseas students and visa holders) outnumbering permanent migrants..'

Mr Kelly relies heavily on, and quotes from, a pro open borders academic, Mr McDonald (as many of these articles do) who said the 457 visa process '...has now become the major pathway to skilled residence..'. This appears to contradict the earlier 25 February 2013 article and state the true situation, that 457 visas and student visas are now the main gateway to permanent residency and that many so called 'temporary arrivals' are expected to become permanent residents making the

type and number of temporary workers and students perhaps the most important factor in Australia's future immigration intake, population size and demography.

Why would the open borders lobby deny the use of 457 visas as a gateway to permanent residency but later contradict themselves and then promote it? This is because of the profound public policy implications. Since 457 visas are uncapped (there is no limit to the number that can be issued), and since onshore visa holders are able to reapply for a 457 visa, or another visa, thus extending their stay for a very long period, and since employers, family and Governments can then sponsor them for permanent migration and very many do, then the borders to Australia are essentially open. This is likely to have profound economic, cultural, security and other implications over time given the very large numbers involved.

If the 457 visa process, instead of attracting highly skilled people who are likely to be a clear net benefit to Australia, is used as an effective disguise to import low skilled workers, who are entitled to bring their family and then later bring over others using the family reunion program (chain migration), then the profile of Australia's immigration intake will be exactly the opposite of the profile used to 'sell' it to the Australian public. Essentially the idea that we have a carefully targeted skilled program will be shown to be a fraud.

As it currently stands, rather than importing a small but necessary number of skilled self-reliant people we are likely import a very large number of people many of whom may prove to be welfare dependent and a severe long-term drain on our economy.

*Now 457 workers are highly paid - now they are low paid - whatever*

At the risk of repetition, perhaps one of the starkest inconsistencies in the arguments used by open borders advocates relates to the wage rates of 457 visa holders. Most Australians would probably treat with scepticism the allegations by some left wing extremists that use of foreign workers on low wage rates amounts to 'human trafficking' or an 'abuse of human rights'. They know that many workers remit their wages back home to an economy where their money goes much further and they welcome what we may consider low wages. Since their choices are poor, the wages paid to such foreign workers are comparatively high to them, and that they welcome any work even at wages slightly below those paid to Australians who spend their wages in Australia where costs are higher. However, ordinary Australians object to the misuse of foreign workers and strongly oppose their exploitation or mistreatment. They simply seek to ascertain the true position in each case.

But perhaps as a result of campaigns alleging human rights abuses, open borders advocates have denied that 457 wages are low, and claim in fact that they are paid more than locals. Of course this tends to defeat their arguments as to the benefits of foreign workers to keep down wage inflation and general inflation resulting from the wage shortages they allege.

This contraction was made particularly apparent in a range of articles published in *The Australian* during March and April making the open borders case (see [Attachment A](#)). For example, Mr Kelly, Mr Callick, Mr Shanhan, and Mr Dusevic ('457 wages higher than average', *The Australian*, 6-7 April 2013 p 2) all argued that the average wage of 457 workers was higher than local rates or there was no evidence that they were used to keep wages low.

However, on closer examination bold catchy headlines often give a misleading impression, and data in the same articles or elsewhere reveals the opposite. For example, appearing on the same page below Mr Kelly's March 9-10, 2013, article in *The Australian* ('457 reasons Labour has lost the plot') vociferously denying that 457 visas are being used to depress local wages rates ('...O'Connor ...says ...that employers are using foreign workers because they'll be compliant.....that there is a risk employers are using foreign workers to depress wage rates for foreign workers (a claim that the Government has not substantiated)...') there appeared an article by Mr Callick which boasted proudly about how wage rates are in fact being kept low and that this is one of the chief benefits of 457 visas.

Mr Callick quotes from Mr Eslake (Chief Economist Australia at the Bank of America) who says in effect that 457 visas have been instrumental in preventing wage inflation in the mining industry, and general inflation, by keeping wages in that industry low. Of course this completely contradicts the 457 high wages thesis.

Another good example is the article by Mr Dusevic in *The Australian* on April 6-7 2013 at p 2. Below a very large headline in bold entitled '457 wages higher than average' there appears data that shows the picture is in fact mixed. To be accurate the headline should have read 'Some 457 workers are paid more some are not' but that would have defeated the purpose of the exercise.

Importantly, in the industry perhaps most widely accepted by Australians as meriting occasional special treatment and the importation of temporary foreign workers, the mining industry, we are told that visa holders are paid \$118,600 against the industry average of \$122,767 (but not when superannuation is taken into account - here the maths gets very confusing and is not clearly explained) – *that is 457 visa holders are paid less on some measures*. This tends to confirm the Eslake thesis. Then we are told that they are paid less in the media and telecommunications sectors but no data is given. Then we are told that in the ACT average wages rates of 457 visa holders (\$76, 200) were below the ACT average of \$85, 545. In short, the picture is a mixed one, but of course only a careful reader would appreciate this and very many readers would simply be taken by the bold headline, perhaps as intended.

*457 visas are short-term and temporary – now they are long-term and the gateway to permanent residency – whatever*

Again, especially when rorts or problems are exposed, open borders advocates often deny that many 457 visas holders, students and others come to Australia with no primary intention of studying or working and then leaving, but come instead to stay permanently. This is often openly denied by open borders advocates because they fear that if the public awakes to the profound implications of this given the massive numbers involved, they may object and seek to restrict immigration. Accordingly, on very many occasions the articles at [Attachment A](#) present 457 visas as temporary and short-term implying that most or all are expected to go home. They repeatedly refer to 'temporary' workers and point out that the 457 visa is for 4 years.

Of course 457 visas are not a 'one off' visa of 4 years duration maximum: they are not 'one off' at all. Another 457 visa can be issued when one lapses; or another type of visa can be obtained onshore. As Dr Birrell and Dr Healy point out there is a good deal of 'churn' where one type of visa is followed

by another and then another. Many then simply apply onshore for employer, Government or family sponsored permanent residency, and very many are then granted it.

When selling mass immigration on the basis of its ostensibly temporary nature becomes impossible or embarrassing, open borders advocates go on the offensive and advocate instead for a borderless Australia so that we can take our place into the modern borderless world economy, the 'new Asian Century' and so that our ageing crisis can be forestalled - or sadly, they simply recommence labelling and pathologising by playing the race or xenophobia cards.

### **Conclusion**

Australians are not racists or xenophobic. They have welcomed wave upon wave of immigrants to this country. People vote with their feet. If Australians were racists, immigrants would not come here, and many thousands seek to do so. Australians are by nature moderate sensible common sense people who abhor political or religious extremism.

Australians know that, just like the citizens in the nations that immigrants come from, they have a right to a national identity and to protect it. These rights are derived not from race but from commitment to a set of values. But these rights are hierarchical and are acquired over time. Those who have been here longest, such as Indigenous people and others, have a right, as a result of long continued occupation and expression of culture, hard work and payment of taxes, to protect their culture, to protect their right to work and to put Australians first for jobs. As migrants come here, work, pay taxes and acquire these rights over time, they too become Australians and have a right to work and to be put first for jobs.

But Australians also seek to balance their right to work and to be put first for jobs against the needs of the nation. Therefore they agree to, and support, skilled immigration when genuinely necessary. Whenever possible, they prefer to train and engage locals because this is fair and because this is often more economically efficient in the long-term.

Australians know that their Prime Minister, Opposition Leader, political parties, unions and journalists are not racist or xenophobic. The silent majority of ordinary decent hard working Australians has grown weary of listening to extremists and elites from left, right, and in between, using political correctness, labelling, and personal attacks (alleging racism, xenophobia, misogyny, or class warfare) to silence others, to dominate public discourse and distort the democratic process.

The common sense of ordinary Australians tells them that more people and a bigger Australia, does not automatically mean a more prosperous and better Australia. It all depends on the people who arrive, whether they subscribe to Australians values, are willing to obey Australian law, and are willing and able to work hard and contribute through their skills to our economy. As a result, Australians support skilled immigration only when it is genuinely so, generally at low levels. They know that statistics and data can be misused to create a false impression and that sophisticated arguments can be employed by clever advocates and well paid lobbyists so as to achieve an outcome that is not in the national interest. That is why they want an open honest debate about these issues.

They want the skilled immigration program reformed so that foreign workers do not displace local workers and foreign workers are engaged only when genuinely needed. If properly consulted, ordinary people in most, if not all, nations in the world express the same preferences. This has nothing to do with a 'white Australia policy' - such policies are long gone. Australia is highly diverse and heading towards superdiversity.

The simple truth is that the private sector has, as its central concern, the maximisation of profits for its shareholders. This is as it should be. The private sector, in line with its profit imperative, will only train or engage local workers when it is profitable or beneficial to do so; when it is more profitable or beneficial they will import foreign labour. Since training takes time and costs money, in many instances they will import workers rather than face those costs or pay a price to wait. Although perhaps they should, they do not (and cannot be relied on to), have regard to the impact that employing foreign workers will have on a growing population of welfare dependent Australians. Only when obliged by or incentivised by Governments to do so, will the private sector sacrifice profits so as to train or engage locals.

The private sector cannot be expected to, but Governments *must* be expected to, consider the needs of unemployed and underemployed Australians, unless they are willing to be honest and admit to the population that they have abandoned all considerations of nation and national loyalty. If they seek to open the borders and dissolve the nation, then they should seek a democratic mandate by referendum.

If the Federal Government enables the private sector (or public or any other sector), by deregulating and uncapping immigration programs, to import foreign workers simply to suit their own needs then they will do so in whatever circumstances or numbers suits them, and Australia's borders are effectively open and insecure. *In short, 'they will determine who comes to this country and the circumstances in which they come'.*

This amounts to a complete abrogation of Government responsibility and is deeply undemocratic and unconstitutional. Ironically, it is a betrayal of the sentiments once expressed by a Prime Minister who is still idolised by many in the business community.

Just as they demand control of the borders when it comes to asylum seekers and deny that it is racist or xenophobic to do so, ordinary Australians demand control over the borders when it comes to skilled immigration, or any other form of immigration, and deny that it is racist or xenophobic to do so.

Good immigration policy necessarily requires Governments to be firm but fair and to work in close partnership with business and every other stakeholder. But ultimately democracy dictates that the people must be in control of their nation's borders, unless and until their nation is dissolved and becomes part of any new utopian borderless community.

**Pluralists for a Referendum April 10 2013**

### Attachment A (our emphasis)

'Dispute costs water project \$300,000 per day', Drill, S., and Gillett, C., *Herald Sun*, February 12, 2013 ('... The industrial site of the troubled Wonthaggi desalination plant has spread to another water project, forcing an employer to use a helicopter to get workers on site to beat the picket line...the Herald Sun understands that the ..Union demanded four former desalination plant workers replace specialist Filipino workers at a City West Project in Weribee...the union says the blockade, which began last week, was a community protest of unemployed tradesmen who were concerned about the hiring of Filipino workers...').

'Philippines: Socialist party supports Australian workers' blockade', *Links: international journal of socialist renewal*, Feb 12, 2013 ('...A Philippine socialist party has thrown its support behind the Australian workers blockading the Werribee Water treatment plant south west of Melbourne...on Monday a group of 12 men, including Filipino workers were helicoptered into the water treatment plant to avoid the blockade,...Sony Melencio has told Radio Australia's Asia Pacific Program that he's concerned Filipino workers are being used to break picket lines...'That is unacceptable among unions here in the Philippines and we do not do it here and we don't want to be seen as breaking picket lines in any areas...This actually is not only for us a case of probable scabbing but also a case of putting the lives of Filipino workers at risk...there's a threatening situation where you have picket lines and workers protesting against the area where they are going to be put...').

'Complaint puts Filipino workers at risk of early exit' Ferguson, J., *The Australian*, February 25, 2013. ('..Four Filipino workers subject to racial attacks for working under 457 visas are at risk of being ejected from Australia as part of Julia Gillard's crackdown on foreign workers....members of the blockade were accused of threatening contractors at the site, allegedly including warnings in Spanish that they would have their throats cut...').

'Cave in on foreign workers slammed as visa rules tightened', Crowe D., and Hepworth A., *The Australian*, 25 February, 2013.

'Skilled migrants a success story', Editorial, *The Australian*, February 26, 2013, p 13 (...Such *economic sabotage* would be intolerable...Despite the *unedifying race to the bottom* over population during the 2010 election campaign, the reality facing Australians is that as baby boomers retire the nation will face *lower living standards* without a larger more productive population. We must think long and hard before turning away skilled migrants ...whatever the *protectionists* may say...').

'The Labour war escalates', Callick, R., *The Australian*, March 1, 2013, p 9 (see earlier and '...blogs and websites that touch on this subject are full of *barely disguised racism*..').

'Foreigner row boils over', Kelly, J., and Shanahan, D., *The Australian*, March 6, 2013, p 1 (the Prime Minister's announcement of a *crackdown* on temporary visas..) and see Sloan, J., p 5. *Note: many Australians would derive grim amusement in the fact that the best example The Australian (see the pictures of Indian chefs and their story, used as an illustrative example of the profound benefits of 457 visas) can apparently find of the dangers of the economic Armageddon posed by a more selective immigration policy or the 457 'crackdown' they allege, is that we may lose the benefits of a plethora of Indian chefs! Hardly the economic collapse their writers warn so passionately about. Clearly they are unaware of, or don't care about, what is happening at street level, and how many Indians, already permanent residents or citizens, are qualified or able to open such restaurants and cook, and how many Indian food supply businesses have struggled or collapsed over the last decade because of excess market supply.*

'Visa polices smack of xenophobia', Shanahan, D., *The Australian*, March 8, 2013, p 10 (Julia Gillard has shown this week...that she is prepared to completely distort the reality for short-term political gain..her *megaphone politics on 'foreign workers'*.. the Prime Minister's *strident anti-foreign worker rhetoric*...the Prime Minister's

handling of 457 visas is *damaging the national interest*...There is a widespread view that Gillard's inflated criticism of the 457 visa program is not directed at a policy outcome...there are some low level problems with 457 visas...hardly a justification for the Prime Minister to launch a xenophobic campaign against foreign workers...*our community services will collapse* without them. Attacking foreign workers is no substitute for dealing with illegal boat arrivals..'. )

'457 reasons Labour has lost the plot', Kelly, P., *The Weekend Australian*, March 9-10, 2013, p 13.

'How Gillard's narrative wound up in Hanson territory, *The Weekend Australian*, March 9-10, 2013, p 13.

'No knock out blows by ALP in Sydney's West, just a lack of detail', Crow, D., *The Weekend Australian*, March 9-10, 2013, p 14 (..the Government's *crude rhetoric on skilled workers*..').

'Pandering to vested interests', The Editorial, *The Weekend Australian*, March 9-10, 2013, p 21 '..Government has *rolled over obediently* to the union movement by agreeing to a *crackdown* on 457 temporary visas... The policy flows from a *Dutch auction* Julia Gillard...and Minister...Bill Shorten...are conducting with their trade union power base...the *attack on 457 visas* is too cosy by half...the *dangerous flirtation* with unions will win no friends in Western Sydney...Ms Gillard's' pledge ...won't wash and has *put her in the distinguished company of Pauline Hanson*. But even the small minority of *Australians with xenophobic tendencies* have little to gripe about – the top source for 457 visas holders so far this year is Britain..'. *Note: India not Britain is currently the top source according to the latest Feb 2013 report. (ID BR 0008)*

'Labour blunders into realpolitick', Pearson, C., *The Weekend Australian*, March 9-10, p 20 ('..Denis Shanahan put it in a nutshell in Thursday's edition of *The Australian*. Labour is seeking to exploit concerns about asylum seekers in densely populated under serviced urban Australia...*Gillard may have briskly accepted an endorsement of her latest policy by Pauline Hanson*...The smartest of them know that it is a patronising way to deal with voters they hope to woo most of whom aren't mulish xenophobes...Gillard's line is an invitation to *the politics of envy*...the resentment of unskilled or underskilled workers and unemployed for workers whose skills are in demand. Another is an invitation to nostalgia for a *vanished world of full employment*...').

'PM punches below the belt and misses' Savva, N., *The Australian*, March 21, 2013, p 10 '...*Under her leadership the Government has declared a war on foreign workers*...Once upon a time Hanson's endorsement would have been seen as the ultimate insult, now the rulers of modern labour seem to resent the insinuation that Hanson got there first. MPs who would once have expressed their abhorrence of language which *pitted Australians against migrants*...now stay silent.. ).

'For Labor's sake PM must drop the words that divide' Shanahan, D., *The Australian*, March 23-24, 2013, '..Kim Carr derided the divisive language and policies and cited his *shock at seeing Pauline Hanson endorsing Labor's xenophobic rhetoric* over some fairly simple changes to temporary visas for foreign workers..*It wasn't Rudd who launched the class war, the gender war or the religious war; and it wasn't Rudd who latched onto work visas for foreigners to whip up xenophobia*..'. *Note: Sadly, many modern Australians are now very familiar with the playing of the 'race card'. They see it as divisive whether it is played by affirmative action elites or powerful vested interests for financial or political reasons. Most ordinary Australians, including Pluralists, think it improper for the politically correct left and extreme left to label the Murdoch Press as 'hate media' in order to control it and thereby control public discourse (they stand up for the free speech of all people equally). But they also think it is improper for anyone in the so called hate media to use the same tactic to control the public discourse on behalf of vested interests.*

'Tactician defeats strategist again, Sheridan, G., *The Australian*, March 23-24, 2013, p 14 ('If Gillard resembles Labor leaders of the past, then they are Ben Chifley and Arthur Calwell...Calwell as opposition leader devoted himself to defending old Labor orthodoxies – especially the White Australia policy...)

'Labour swamped by that sinking feeling', Savva, N., *The Australian*, March 28 2013, ('..On Tuesday when the ABC's Sabra Lane asked about class warfare, Gillard responded by seeking a definition of it, as if she could explain away or excuse what she and the Treasurer had been doing by reducing it to an exercise in semantics. Those who had been listening knew exactly what they were hearing: *an attempt to pit people against each other on the basis of class, or sex, or race in the case of foreign workers, for base political gain...*') *Note: since professional journalism requires accuracy, one would expect that defining terms would be welcomed. The Australian newspaper made much of PM Gillard's refusal to define terms, and called for greater accuracy of definition, over her misogyny speech and allegations against Leader Abbott – and rightly so. Minister Abbott is not a misogynist – the allegation is clearly false. But is this evidence of a lack of appreciation of the need for journalistic and definitional accuracy, or simply convenient in this case?*

'Even Gillard's xenophobia is fake' Bolt, A., *Herald Sun*, Bolts Blog, 5 March 2013 (*Note: what else could one expect?*).

'Our sordid triangle of xenophobia over 457 visas', Keane, J., *Crikey*, 6 March, 2013 ('..If you are going to play in the space of bigotry and xenophobia its best to come prepared. At a media conference yesterday, Immigration Minister Brendan O'Connor struggled to explain exactly how the 457 visa category is being rorted...the 457 visa scheme is indeed rorted – all categorises are misused...More to the point, as LBJ remarked, don't get into a contest with a polecat. If you're trying to out xenophobe someone like Scott Morrison, feels no shame at claiming asylum seekers bring in typhoid...you're wasting your time...still it targets voters that Labour hasn't paid much attention to for a decade blue collar workers who have struggled in the post-reform economy...Labour's pitch is simple: even if you think we're softer on asylum seekers than the coalition at least we'll make sure a foreigner won't take your job...For the party who oversaw the industry policy reforms of the late 80's and 90's which were all about sending jobs overseas...its quite an irony...') *Note: this is another example of labelling and pathologising. Minister Morrison is clearly not a xenophobe. The suggestion is ludicrous.*

'The First Rule that eludes leaders', Hartcher, P., *Sydney Morning Herald*, March 9, 2013 ('...Sadly, that principle has been wantonly disregarded by the Prime Minister in her extraordinary attacks on foreign workers this week. Mind you, she wasn't the first to reach for the grubby political panic button marked "x" for xenophobia...).

'Xenophobia and the fine art of politics', Carlton, M., *National Times*, March 9, 2013 ('..You can feel an election coming on when Pauline Hanson sticks her addled head above the parapet. There she was in the Financial Review on Tuesday, warmly endorsing the Prime Minister's sudden and impulsive war on the hordes of wicked foreigners on 457 work visas who are snatching the bread from the tables of modern Aussies...With friends like that it is enough to give xenophobia a bad name, but Gillard is not for turning...).

'Beattie: visa debate destructive for Australia', Griffiths, E., *ABC News*, March 15, 2013 ('...The Government's anti- 457 push has also been slammed by the business sector, with the Australia Industry Group accusing the PM of opening the way for 'xenophobic' views to infiltrate the public debate. 'What we have seen through this debate is that a platform has been allowed to be built for people with quite xenophobic views, views that are hostile to migrants quite generally. They've been allowed to crawl out of the woodwork again as a result of this debate.' AI Group Chief executive officer Innes Wilcox told ABC News Online... '..Mr Wilcox says it amounts to demonising visa holders and their employers...').

'Government's plan to slash migrant workers not very smart' Pascoe, M, *Sydney Morning Herald*, March 12 2013 ('...Brendan O'Connor was hard at it at the weekend...trying to justify *the Prime Minister's xenophobic slash at 457 visas...*as the word temporary suggests 457 visas don't last...visas have allowed a great many others to have jobs – the good ol' multiplier effect. To use an example, *the second biggest nominated occupation for granted applications this year is cooks – 1690 of them. Without cooks you don't have waiters,*

*mine sites, armies.....without temporary workers we would have been more likely to suffer inflationary pressure...that would mean higher interest rates..')* Note: *without immigrant cooks we would have no mines and no armies? And the PM is 'not very smart'? Perhaps the author would like to address Dr Bob Birrell's assertion that in fact most cooks do not end up in the mining industry at all but simply add to the numbers in capital cities such as Sydney and Melbourne. Immigration Overshoot p 31 ('..The top occupation visaed in July and August 2012 was cooks. There were 500 such grants. If they were serving up meals in the Plibara there might be less concern. But 170 were for jobs in Sydney and Melbourne. Just 30 were for jobs in WA...'). Ironically, the fact that The Australian chose to use as its case study 10 metropolitan Perth immigrant chefs tends to confirm this (and conveniently ignores Melbourne and Sydney), but that was apparently explained away by saying that they were filling vacancies resulting from the need for chefs in the mines - very convenient but is it true? And what about the vast majority of foreign cooks working elsewhere and what about unemployed Australian cooks and chefs?*

'Fight against 457 visas and fight for migrants' rights', Small, J, *Socialist Alternative*, March 21, 2013 ('...The 457 visa is a piece of racist legislation dating from the Howard years...Despite all of Tony Abbott's howling about supposedly xenophobic unions, in reality it is the employers and the government that sanction this shocking racist treatment of some of the newest and most insecure migrants...the 457 visa is used to exploit migrants...we should not only call for permanent migration to replace rip off schemes like the 457 visa. We should be calling for every single worker on a 457 visa to be given a permanent visa..')

'The 457 visa crackdown is based on racist objectives designed to appeal to Australians' base instincts', Jory, R, *Adelaide Advertiser*, March 25, 2013 ('...The 457 visa crackdown is designed to appeal to the base instincts of Australians. The Prime Minister, Julia Gillard said 'We went to put Australians first and get them into jobs'...the campaign is little more than a campaign based on racist objectives...the policy is pandering to an uneducated suspicion that overseas workers are taking Australian jobs...and it is quietly taking Australia back to the white Australia era of the 1960's..).

'The fix is in on 457 visas', Colebatch, T., *National Times*, 19 March 2013. Note: *He notes that many 457 visas are being used to supply foreign hairdressers, cooks and even shop assistants and calls for an end to the rorts but support for those aspects of the 457 scheme that work. Clearly, there is one journalist willing critically to examine what is offered and to comply with Press Council standards.*

'We used 457 workers too: MUA', Hannan, E., *The Australian*, 4 April 2013 p 4. '...Deputy Opposition Leader Julie Bishop said...' *This has exposed the hypocrisy and also the danger of Labour ramping up a racist warfare against foreign workers..'*

Editorial, *The Australian*, 4 April, 2013 p 11. '...Like laboratory rates determined to eat their cheese, Julia Gillard and her Ministers continue to go into the cabinet room and make the wrong decisions...the Gillard Government has let a dozen hares run...For years Labour has attacked the Coalition as xenophobic and even racist because of its strong support for border protection.. Yet now it is trying to ape the Coalition's tough border regime, *the Government has injected xenophobic venom into a confected controversy about foreign workers..'*

'ALP States embrace 457 visas', Martin, S., *The Australian*, 5 April 2013 p 1.

'Third union admits to hiring 457 employee', Hannan, E., *The Australian*, 5 April 2013 p 4.

Editorial, *The Australian*, 5 April, 2013 p 11.

'Wages Data Exposes flaw in visa crackdown', and '457 wages higher than average' Dusevic, D., *Weekend Australian*, 6-7 April, 2013 p 1 and 2.

'457 debate full of hypocrisy', Penberthy, D., *The Sunday Mail*, 7 April 2013 p 32. '...Mr Sami Shah ..migrated from Pakistan eight months ago...Mr Shah clearly isn't impressed with Northam and is even less impressed by the standard of debate in this country about all these darned foreigners stealing our jobs..he has excellent and earthy advice for fretful Aussies who are worried about their jobs '...be better at your job'...I'd argue instead he makes an excellent point. The calibre of debate in this country around the 457 visa issue has been beyond moronic. It is based on the flawed assumption that foreign workers are taking existing jobs from Australians...They do not. Rather they fill jobs in industries that are experiencing labour shortages. Those shortages exist for a couple of reasons...lack of training and apprenticeships...the other is that there is a small but significant number of Australians who are bone idle and would rather live on the dole and on the couch rather than make a contribution...*Yet here we are in 2013 in the middle of what is apparently the Asian century running a debate which harks back to the days when the Bulletin Magazine's masthead read 'Australia for the white man'*...I have developed an obsession with the cooking show Luke Nyugen's Vietnam. To me that show is everything I love about modern Australia. Nyugen personifies everything which I love about modern Australia...I look at Nyugen and it makes me feel kind of proud....I look at the 457 debate and it makes me feel something that is pretty much the polar opposite...'. *Note: a number of articles here, and the expert reports referred to by Birrell, Healey, Cham and Campbell and many others, would prove to any reasonable person that 457 workers are displacing Australians for jobs and that, in many cases, they are not filling genuine skills shortages.*

'Will work for food no wonder Greens offered job to foreigners' Bramston, B., *The Australian*, 8 April 2013 p 1.

'Union claims mining firm underpays 457 visa workers', Callick, R., *The Australian*, 8 April 2013 p 4.

'State's policy push on population stalls' Owen, M., *The Australian*, 8 April 2013 p 6. '...The Premier yesterday said South Australia's state strategic plan had set a population target of 2m by 2050...'

'Greens hypocrisy on 457 visas fair take the breath away', Bramston, T., *The Australian*, 8 April 2013 p 10.

'Immigration probes Syntheo 457 NBN Row', Colley, A., *The Australian*, 9 April 2013 p 29.