

AUSTRALIA'S COLD WAR UNIVERSITY

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL
UNIVERSITY'S RESEARCH SCHOOL OF PACIFIC STUDIES AND THE
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT**

1946-1975

JUDE VAN KONKELENBERG B.A. (HONS)

THESIS SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

SCHOOL OF HISTORY AND POLITICS

UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE

FEBRUARY 2009

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ABSTRACT

The impacts of the Cold War on academic-state relations in this country have been neglected in the growing literature on the Australian Cold War. There were greater similarities between the American and Australian university experience during the Cold War than have previously been recognised. The close relationship between the Australian National University and the federal government meant that Cold War tensions were particularly heightened in the case of this university, making it an ideal site for a case study of the Australian Cold War university experience. This thesis asks, ‘what was the nature of the relationship between the Australian National University and the federal government during the Cold War and was the university’s experience comparable to American Cold War universities?’

The thesis seeks to address two main themes related to the Cold War experience of universities. The first is the intrusion of government agencies into universities to identify and limit the influence of communist sympathisers and the degree of complicity or otherwise of the university in these activities. The second theme is the role of universities in providing expert advice to government and the implications of this role for academic independence.

The concept of the Cold War university has received significant attention in America in recent years. Discussion on this topic had moved from a belief that government influence over the universities was evil and coercive to a more moderate assessment which emphasises the mutual advantages to be gained in the relationship and the role of university administrators in creating it. Despite some significant cultural and local differences, the ANU conformed quite closely to this latter model of the Cold War university. The federal government and administrators of the university worked closely to create a degree of intellectual conformity and to advocate an attitude

of social utility. The US Cold War university experience may not have been directly replicated in Australia but enough similarities remain in the relationship between the government and the ANU for it to be classified as an Australian Cold War university.

DECLARATION

This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by any other person, except where due reference has been made in the text.

I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the university library being available for loan and photocopying, subject to the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This work could not have been achieved without the generous support of a number of people who devoted their time and effort in assisting with the process. I would accordingly like to express my profound gratitude to the following people:

At the University of Adelaide, my supervisor Associate Professor Roger Knight, Associate Professors Robert Dare and Robert Foster, Dr Vesna Drapac, Dr Wilfred Prest, Emeritus Professors Hugh Stretton and Trevor Wilson. Also, Drs Lynn Martin, Ric Zuckerman, Andre Lambelet, Tom Buchanan, Ms Julie McMahon and Ms Christine McElhinny, Dr Michelle Cunningham and Ms Leslie Abell and all the other Postgraduates, including Sean Turner, Julie Thorpe, Carol Matthews, Nadia Postligione, Matthew Kinsey-Trotman, John Calvert and Kristy Dermody.

Apart from those in Adelaide, I must also thank those many people in Canberra and elsewhere who contributed in a variety of ways, including: Professor James Fox, Professor Robin Jeffrey, Professor Jamie Mackie, Dr Michael McKinley and Professor Desmond Ball. ANU Emeritus Professors Robert O'Neill, J.D.B. Miller and Harry Rigby deserve particular mention for providing me with a wealth of knowledge about the RSPacS and RSSS at the time, as does Professor Gregory Clark. I would like to thank the Emeritus Faculty of the ANU and Giles Pickford for assisting in my call for submissions. Also I would like to thank the many other people at ANU who responded to my emails, even if only to say they couldn't help!

Great assistance was also provided by Michael Wenke, Tim Mifsud and the staff of the National Archives of Australia in Canberra. Cara Downs at the National Archives provided permission to reproduce the photographs shown in the text. Thanks also to Dr Graeme Powell, Donna

Vaughan and the other staff at the Manuscripts Section of the National Library, Canberra, Dr Sigrid McCausland, Maggie Shapley and the staff of the ANU Archives and Margaret Hosking of the Barr Smith Library, the University of Adelaide.

On a more personal note I must thank Dr Ron and Mrs Robyn van Konkelenberg, Tom Hamilton and finally, and most of all, Cathy for putting up with this over many, many long years and Freddie who missed me while I was away researching and writing.

INTRODUCTION

This study examines the relationship in Australia between academia and the federal government during the Cold War. It focuses on the Australian National University's Research School of Pacific Studies and its relations with the Australian federal government between 1946 and 1975. The thesis seeks to determine the nature of the relationship between the Australian National University (ANU) and the federal government during the Cold War and whether the ANU was comparable to American Cold War universities. This thesis argues that the ANU, though not a government instrumentality, was subject to government influence and Cold War pressures in a way that was similar to (but not identical with) the experience of American Cold War universities. These pressures had significant impacts on the development and evolution of the ANU.

The thesis examines two main themes related to the Cold War experience of universities. The first is the intrusion of government agencies into universities to identify and limit the influence of communist sympathisers and the complicity or otherwise of the university in these activities. The second theme is the role of universities in providing expert advice to government and the implications of this role for academic independence. Essentially, Cold War universities are defined by these two themes, that there was a coercive relationship in attempts to ensure political conformity and a relationship of mutual benefit whereby the universities received enhanced funding in exchange for making knowledge available to government. In the experience of the ANU the relationship was moderately coercive from the time of its creation in 1946 through to 1960, when the appointment of Sir John Crawford as Director of the Research School of Pacific Studies heralded a closer and more cooperative relationship with the federal government.

This thesis is the first analysis of the phenomenon of the Cold War university from an Australian perspective and one of very few which specifically examine the relationship between the government and an Australian university in the post-War period. It is also a new and independent analysis of the ANU, detailing the creation and evolution of Australia's premiere research university. This study examines the impact of the government on the university and the utility of the university to the government in the area where one would (during the Cold War) expect the closest symbiotic relationship between the government and academia in Australia.

The ANU's special relationship with the federal government meant it was particularly vulnerable to government influence. The ANU was able for the most part to minimise the impact of this influence and turn it to the advantage of the university. In spite of a certain self-imposed loss of independence (threats to which existed from both sides of the political spectrum), the ultimate result was a strong, high profile university devoted to meeting societal needs. The Cold War relationship between the ANU and the federal government, despite episodes of friction, proved to be mutually beneficial. The university's response to Cold War pressures, as with US universities such as Stanford and Harvard, actually had the effect of increasing the profile, prestige and funding of the university. It is probably no coincidence that the ANU, a research university and the Australian university most subject to pressure from the federal government, in fact ended the Cold War as the most highly ranked Australian university in world university rankings. This position was gained by compromise with the government during the Cold War.

Opposition to the argument that there were parallels between Australian and American universities in the first half of the Cold War period could come due to the perception that Australia between the 1950s and 1970s was far more British in outlook than American. Though this may be true, the fact that some of the founding fathers of the ANU preferred to use American

research universities as a model rather than Oxford or Cambridge (see Chapter 2) indicates the idea of American university systems was preferred. In fact, the ANU was not wholly either British or American in structure or attitudes; rather it was an Australian institution, one which adopted elements from both systems. Cold War pressures affected Australian institutions in similar ways to what occurred in the United States.

A similarity to the UK university situation was evident in the increasing level of governmental grants throughout the period. This was a common phenomenon in post-war universities, designed to allow for expansion and increased research capability. Increasing costs in Australia ‘forced the universities to look to the governments persistently for increased funds’, given that ‘expansion is impossible unless it has government support.’¹ The increase in state power over universities, even in the UK, is indicated by the fact that in 1920-21 the UK government provided 33.6% of the income of its universities. By 1964-65 this had risen to 79.9%.² As we shall see in Chapter 7, at the ANU the percentage was even higher.

Australia, despite a public perception of “Britishness” in the 1950s was, in fact, a unique place, whose academic institutions were developing independently of the traditions and models in place in the “mother country”. This applied especially to the relationship between universities and the government. In the mid 1950s the Australian Vice Chancellor’s Committee (AVCC) stated that ‘Australian universities have been more dependent upon governments, financially and in other ways, and more directly dependent than the universities of the United Kingdom have been’.³

¹ Partridge, P.H. “The Australian Universities and Governments” in Australian Vice Chancellor’s Committee, *A Symposium on the Place of the Australian University in the Community and Postgraduate Studies in Australian Universities*, Carlton, Melbourne University Press 1955 p.6

² Halsey, A and Trow, M. *The British Academics*, London, Faber and Faber 1971 p.63

³ Partridge, P.H. “The Australian Universities and Governments” in Australian Vice Chancellor’s Committee, *A Symposium* p.5

The issues of Cold War university and government relations in Australia have resonance with the present day. Issues of academic independence in university relations with government, and the question of surveillance and subversion implicit in the War on Terror, are comparable with the Cold War universities in the 1950s. In 2005 James McWha, Vice Chancellor of the University of Adelaide, said that universities

are not an arm of whatever government happens to be in power [and] should not be asked to peddle a preferred view of the world... when you see the word “ownership” starting to appear in documents... alarm bells start to ring... [universities should not be] instructed by government on a particular angle they have to take, not to be made to toe the line on political correctness, to follow the political line of the government that is in power. I think it is quite inappropriate for the government to... instruct universities on content and approach.⁴

In 2006 the AVCC called on the federal government to scrap the new anti-sedition laws, saying they were a threat to academic freedom. The AVCC feared that the laws would limit debate on local, national and international matters, including terrorism, and that these laws could inhibit universities from fulfilling an important social function of scrutinising and criticising government.⁵ This debate contains similarities with discussions in the 1950s about whether the teaching of communist theory was a desirable and appropriate activity for academics.

Since September 11th 2001 intelligence services in western nations, including Australia, have intensified their scrutiny of universities. As reported in *The Australian*, universities have been asked to report attempts to ‘procure items or services that could be used for weapons of mass destruction and to report “suspicious advances” by students’.⁶ The Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) and Australian Federal Police (AFP) have been involved in the

⁴ Anderson, L “University boss attacks government meddling” *The Advertiser* Saturday April 20 2005 p.3

⁵ O’Keefe, B. “Sedition threatens uni debate” *The Australian- Higher Education Supplement* Wednesday May 3 2006 p.23

⁶ Illing, D. “Campus terror crackdown” *The Australian- Higher Education Supplement* Wednesday April 26 2006 p.21

surveillance of students and academics (particularly those of Muslim background). ABC News reported in 2005 that the AFP questioned a Muslim PhD student at Monash University studying the role of Islam in martyrdom ‘because he borrowed library books about terrorism and suicide bombings’. The President of Liberty Victoria argued that these actions indicated that the security services were ‘operating as “thought police” and undermining academic independence’. The student’s supervisor said that any member of the university community suspecting a student of involvement in terrorist activities ‘would obviously work cooperatively with the authorities’.⁷ This shows a similarity with the surveillance of communist university staff and students by ASIO in the 1950s and 1960s and the cooperation of university staff with these activities.

Another similarity lies in the “chilling” effect on academic work of the anti-sedition laws introduced in Australia in the wake of September 11th 2001. In the climate of the War on Terror academic research and criticism of government is also muted. The reaction of academics in this current climate has been almost precisely the same as when a similar climate of threatened sedition existed in the Cold War. The threat of surveillance is believed to have a curtailing effect on academic debate, George Williams and Edwina MacDonald at the University of New South Wales argued that it ‘can lead to self-censorship’, making academics ‘less likely to use robust critical speech about the war on terror’.⁸ Self-censorship was also a response to the threat of communist subversion in the Cold War. Examining Cold War impacts on universities in Australia can therefore lead to a better understanding of current events and inform our responses to a situation of heightened tension between government and academia as a consequence of global threats and pressures.

⁷ Bell, L “AFP ‘targeted’ Muslim convert over library books” *ABC News Online* 26th July 2005 www.abc.net.au/news/newsitems/200507/s1422356.htm accessed 12th May 2006

⁸ Williams, G and MacDonald, E. “Fear of the Law on Terror” *The Australian- Higher Education Supplement* September 30th 2006 p.30

The ANU was the first academic institution in Australia specifically designed for meeting Australian national intellectual requirements. This analysis will focus primarily on the links between the government and public sector departments and the RSPacS. The focus on the ANU in this thesis is for three reasons. Firstly the ANU is located in Canberra and is thus physically close to the federal government. Secondly, it is also a special institution as it was set up by an act of federal parliament. In the Cold War period it was an unusual university, one that (unlike other Australian universities) did not have another stakeholder in the form of a state government. Finally the university as a whole was set up to research areas of national importance, which prescribed that ANU activities would focus on areas of direct relevance to the federal government during the Cold War. For these reasons the ANU held an unusually close relationship with the federal government and as a result the pressures and tensions in the relationship with government during the Cold War should be highlighted in the experiences of this university.

Until 1960 the ANU was the only dedicated postgraduate research university in Australia. The Canberra University College (CUC) was incorporated with the ANU in 1960 and became the undergraduate component of the university. The original ANU became the Institute of Advanced Studies (IAS), concerned primarily with research and the provision of doctoral degrees. In this amalgamation the Institute retained the special character and original focus of the university as proposed in 1946.⁹ Due to this special characteristic the focus of the study is not on the ANU as a whole, but rather on the IAS and its component, the RSPacS.

As an example of how unique the ANU was in the Australian university sector, in the Australian University Commission (AUC) reports the ANU IAS is usually considered separately from the other Australian universities (including the ANU undergraduate School of General Studies). This

⁹ Australian Council for Education Research *A Brief Guide to Australian Universities* (4th Ed), Hawthorn, ACER, 1964 p.4

is due both to its nature as a federal, not state, funded institution and, more importantly, due to its focus on postgraduate training and research.¹⁰ Similarly, the ANU was excluded from analyses of staffing levels at Australian universities by the AUC because the ANU was ‘predominantly engaged in research’ rather than teaching.¹¹

The Australian National University was created by Act of Parliament in 1946 and resides at the seat of Australian government in Canberra.¹² As a result the ANU is presumed to enjoy a close relationship with Australian federal legislative and policy creation bodies. The Pacific campaign during the Second World War had shown that very few Australians had any great understanding of the problems, peoples and geography of the region. As the Cold War progressed and western colonial powers gave independence to new nations in the region, there was a requirement for up-to-date knowledge on Asia in order to ensure successful Australian foreign policy in the post-war world. The Australian National University’s RSPacS was the result of this new awareness and an attempt to rectify this shortfall in knowledge.¹³ Despite their apparent importance in assisting the growth of knowledge of the region, the subsequent relationship between the RSPacS and the government has been largely ignored in Australian studies of the period. This is surprising, both in the light of the central importance of Asia in Australia’s Cold War and in the context of the ongoing global debates on the relationship between the academy and the state, particularly in the field of foreign policy during the Cold War.

The ANU is seen by some to have evolved into an institution whose links with government compromise its independence. A pertinent modern example of criticism of the ANU for its

¹⁰ Commonwealth of Australia *Second Report of the Australian Universities Commission on Australian Universities 1961-1966*, Canberra, Commonwealth Government Printer, 1963 p.38

¹¹ Commonwealth of Australia *Third Report of the Australian Universities Commission on Australian Universities 1964-1969*, Canberra, Commonwealth Government Printer, 1966 pp.57-58

¹² Partridge, P. H. *Society, Schools and progress in Australia*, London, Pergamon Press, 1968 p.94

¹³ Partridge, *Society, Schools and Progress* p.121 and Gungwu, W. Et al *1975 Annual Report of the Research School of Pacific Studies*, Canberra, Research School of Pacific Studies Australian National University, 1975 p.2

complicity with the government, demonstrating the long term effects of the Cold War on the university, comes from an ANU academic. Michael McKinley, from the ANU School of Social Sciences, wrote that

At issue... is the role of certain specified centres and departments in the ANU's Research School of Pacific Studies. It follows that any critical enterprise, properly conceived, focussed on security policy, necessarily requires a critique to be mounted in respect of the ANU. And it is "the ANU" which is the focus every bit as much as the contributing individuals... because they and it are consciously, and as a matter of university policy, engaged in an integrated corporate enterprise... Official error is being encouraged and authorised by a university system which has abrogated its intellectual responsibilities by giving its identity to the immediate realms of the policy process...The consequence is one which brings not so much an appropriate education to public affairs, as infiltrates the academy with the unreflective imperatives of the state bureaucracy.¹⁴

This statement indicates the development of the linkages between the ANU and the government are deserving of closer examination. A.P. Gallagher in *Coordinating Australian University Development* also suggested that the relationship of the ANU with the Commonwealth government is an important area for further research on Australian government and university relationships.¹⁵

The RSPacS is a logical place for examination of the Australian Cold War university experience due to the importance of the Pacific and South East Asia in Australia's Cold War and the consequent importance of the new field of Pacific studies to Australian international relations in the period. The RSPacS has a reputation for contributing to Australian defence and strategic policy. Finally, though relatively lacking in detail, other research does seem to indicate that the RSPacS was singled out for special attention by right-wing politicians during the early 1950s.

¹⁴ McKinley, M "Discovering the 'Idiot Centre' of ourselves: footnotes to the academic and intellectual culture of the Australian Security policy discourse" <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/atp/articles/ArticlesWord/McKinley-1996.doc> *AntePodium* Department of Politics Victoria University of Wellington 1996 (accessed 11th July 2008)

¹⁵ Gallagher, A. *Coordinating Australian University Development- a study of the Australian Universities Commission 1959-1970*, St Lucia, University of Queensland Press 1982 p.214

This needs to be examined in more detail to obtain a thorough understanding of the impact of Cold War pressures on Australian universities.

The focus on the RSPacS allows a greater degree of detailed examination than would be possible in an examination of the whole university. While other schools and departments (and especially university administration) will be mentioned at relevant stages, the primary focus will remain the RSPacS. While the focus is predominantly on the Research School of Pacific Studies, the Research School of Social Sciences (RSSS) and other schools within the university are also (though to a much lesser extent) discussed. The focus on studies on communism within the Social Sciences School also made it a central nexus for potential Cold War pressures and it has been suggested that most of the prominent communists at the university were in fact from RSSS.¹⁶ In any case a discussion of RSPacS cannot be fully rigorous without reference to RSSS as they share the same building and close links exist between the two schools. The RSPacS will act as a microcosm of the university itself, showing the pressures on the institution, both internal and external, which drove its progress during the Cold War.

Current Literature

There has been no in-depth analysis of the impacts of the Cold War on Australian universities, particularly in comparison with the US Cold War university experience. Most studies of Australian universities focus on the impact of specific changes to policy, on the coordination of higher education, or are institutional (corporate) histories — often funded by the institution and correlated to significant milestones in a university's history.¹⁷ Alternately the studies are biographies of individuals. An important example is Fay Anderson's biography of Max

¹⁶ Robin Jeffrey, Interview, Australian National University 7th June 2006

¹⁷ A key example, which will be referred to extensively throughout the thesis is Foster, S. and Varghese, M. *The Making of the Australian National University*, St Leonards, Allen and Unwin, 1996, commissioned by the University for the 50th anniversary of its creation.

Crawford at the University of Melbourne¹⁸, one of the few texts to examine in detail the impact of the Cold War on Australian academics. There is little material available specifically on the Cold War experience of Australian universities. This study seeks to redress this balance.

Fay Anderson¹⁹ shows that there is a growing body of literature on ‘the intellectual and cultural dimensions of the Cold War in Australia’, but that these works ‘neglect the experience of academics’. Stuart Macintyre and Simon Marginson in *Why Universities Matter*²⁰ have discussed academic freedom in Australia. Anderson makes a valid criticism that although Stephen Foster and Margaret Varghese had a chapter on academic freedom in *The Making of the Australian National University*²¹, ‘this was insufficiently critical and ignored... ASIO’s intense interest’. As a commissioned history, Foster and Varghese’s work is uncritical of the university-government relationship and glosses over important instances of conflict. Anderson also notes that recent histories of ASIO by Frank Cain²² and David McKnight²³ provide valuable material, but (with the exception of McKnight’s work) surveillance of academics has been neglected. Finally some controversial episodes in Australian Cold War academic history have been examined recently, for example in biographies of Manning Clark by Stephen Holt²⁴, and Cassandra Pybus’ examination of the Orr case.²⁵ Intellectual autonomy in the period of the Cold War is being increasingly examined but, as Anderson says, ‘only Brian Martin, in *Intellectual Suppression: Australian Case Histories, Analysis and Responses* gives a fuller account of university ambivalence towards

¹⁸ Anderson, F. *An Historians Life: Max Crawford and the politics of academic freedom*, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press 2005

¹⁹ Anderson, F. “Into the Night- Max Crawford the Labyrinth of the Social Studies Enquiry and ASIO’s ‘spoiling operations’” *Australian Historical Studies* vol 125 (2005) pp.60-80. The literature review that follows is derived from Anderson. Her summary of the existing literature is succinct and thorough. Unless otherwise indicated the quotes in this paragraph are hers.

²⁰ MacIntyre, S. and Marginson, S. “The University and its Public” in Coady, T. (ed) *Why Universities Matter*, St. Leonards, NSW, Allen and Unwin 2000 pp.49-71

²¹ Foster, S. and Varghese, M. *The Making of the Australian National University*, St Leonards, Allen and Unwin, 1996 (hereafter “Making of the ANU” in text and “Making of” in footnotes)

²² Cain, F. *The Australian Security Intelligence Agency- an Unofficial History*, Richmond, Victoria, Spectrum Publications 1994

²³ McKnight, D. *Australia’s Spies and Their Secrets*, St. Leonards NSW, Allen and Unwin, 1994

²⁴ Holt, S. *A Short History of Manning Clark*, Sydney, Allen and Unwin, 1999

²⁵ Pybus, C. *Gross Moral Turpitude*, Melbourne, William Heinemann, 1993

intellectual freedom.’²⁶ To Anderson’s list should be added Tim Rowse’s excellent biography of “Nugget” Coombs²⁷, a strong analysis of the upper levels of academic administration and effects of the Cold War. These works all provide valuable background material on conditions at Australian universities during the Cold War and can be supplemented by recent works on Cold War Australian culture and responses to subversion. These include Desmond Ball and David Horner’s *Breaking the Codes*²⁸ on the MVD/KGB in Australia in the 1940s and 1950s, Robert Manne’s *The Petrov Affair*²⁹, Tom Sheridan’s *Australia’s Own Cold War*³⁰ and David Lowe’s *Menzies and the Great World Struggle*³¹ though none of these works specifically examine academics per se. Anderson also observed that the paucity of knowledge on the effects of the Cold War on Australian academics ‘is in contrast to the United States, which has produced substantial literature on academic freedom, most notably Ellen Schrecker’s seminal works *No Ivory Tower: McCarthyism and the Universities*’³². There is now a significant body of literature in the United States dealing with the issue of Cold War universities from authors such as Noam Chomsky and Rebecca Lowen.

Lowen, in her history of Stanford University, argues that ‘the history of individual universities has traditionally been left to retired administrators and institutional boosters and treated as a variant of hagiography.’³³ Without disparaging their usefulness, existing studies of the ANU fit well into this category, by declining to discuss (in detail) the more controversial events in the university’s history. The *Making of the ANU*, while a useful source on the university as a whole, was funded entirely by the university and its production was overseen by a group of ANU

²⁶ Martin, B. et al (Eds) *Intellectual Suppression- Australian Case Histories, Analysis and Responses*, North Ryde NSW, Angus and Robertson 1986

²⁷ Rowse, T. *Nugget Coombs- a reforming life*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press 2002

²⁸ Ball, D. and Horner, D. *Breaking the Codes- Australia’s KGB Network 1944-1950*, St Leonards, Allen and Unwin 1998

²⁹ Manne, R. *The Petrov Affair*, Melbourne, Text Publishing 2004

³⁰ Sheridan, T. *Australia’s Own Cold War*, Carlton Victoria, Melbourne University Press 2006

³¹ Lowe, *Menzies and the Great World Struggle*, Sydney, University of NSW Press 1999

³² Schrecker, E. *No Ivory Tower- McCarthyism and the Universities*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1986

³³ Lowen, R. *Creating the Cold War University*, Berkley, University of California Press 1997 p.7

historians and former administrators, as was a recent history of the Coombs building.³⁴ These studies devote relatively few pages to political interference with the ANU and argue that this interference was not prevalent to any great extent. Government attempts to ensure the political loyalty of the ANU were more common and insidious than these studies suggest. The *Making of the ANU* does not compare these instances with overseas examples, particularly from the United States. This present study also departs from the *Making of the ANU* in arguing that the first Vice Chancellor, Douglas Copland, was far from a paragon of academic independence and was complicit in ensuring that the university remained politically reliable to the government. The *Making of the ANU*, while discussing student revolts in the 1960s and '70s, does not describe in detail the measures taken by the university to limit damage to the university and ensure demonstrations were orderly. Close relations with government departments were not just individuals acting out their wish to serve, but were progressively institutionalised during the Cold War, particularly by Sir John Crawford, the Head of the RSPacS and later Vice Chancellor of the ANU.

Foster and Varghese acknowledge that 'Cold War politics gave a sharp edge to relations between University and government'³⁵, but limit the discussion to threats to independence imposed by funding restrictions and some instances of controversy involving left-wing academics. While they imply that there was a concerted effort by the government to attack left-wing academics at the ANU³⁶, their discussion does not address in detail the specific Cold War tensions inherent in shaping the universities during the 1950s and 1960s. Their study is focussed purely on discussing the events of the ANU's history without significant contextual or conceptual analysis of university systems in the Cold War environment. The *Making of the ANU* has been described

³⁴ Foster, S. and Varghese, M. *The Making of the Australian National University*, St Leonards, Allen and Unwin, 1996 and Lal, B. and Ley, A. *The Coombs- A House of Memories*, Canberra, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies 2006

³⁵ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of* p.120

³⁶ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of* pp.120-121

by people from the ANU community alternately as ‘an asinine history of the university’³⁷ or as ‘a very fair account’.³⁸ This study re-examines the archival records used in the *Making of the ANU*, examines different and recently opened archival records and makes use of new interviews and correspondence with key figures at the ANU to create a new and independent analysis of the university’s relations with the government during the Cold War.

Theoretical Issues

There are polarised views about the ANU during the Cold War. Gregory Clark, a critic of the relationship between the ANU and the government, said that the RSPacS was ‘the right place to focus on’.³⁹ On the other hand many people who were contacted were sceptical about the idea that the Cold War university was a viable concept in Australia. After I described my research topic, a former Head of the RSPacS, Professor Robin Jeffrey asked, ‘were we involved in microbiological warfare?!’⁴⁰ But when asked whether it is viable to compare the ANU with American Cold War universities Michael McKinley noted that the ANU is the closest institution in Australia to Harvard and it is the first place that the government and the ABC call for information.⁴¹ It should be remembered that the ANU emerged and developed its relationship with the government during a particularly confrontational period of Australia’s history. The attempted proscription of the Communist Party, the Petrov affair and instances such as the exclusion of the communist journalist Wilfred Burchett exemplify the political tensions of the time. The ANU could not exist in isolation from these pressures. Those who are critical of the university maintain that its independence was compromised through dubious hiring practices and intimidation of left-wing academics during the Cold War.⁴² These actions are perceived to have resulted in the ANU effectively becoming a think-tank for the government and a mouthpiece for

³⁷ Michael McKinley, Interview, Australian National University 6th of June 2006

³⁸ J.D.B. Miller, letter 28th November 2006

³⁹ Gregory Clark, Email 29th March 2006

⁴⁰ Robin Jeffrey, Interview, Australian National University 7th June 2006

⁴¹ Michael McKinley, Interview, Australian National University 6th of June 2006

⁴² See, for example, Clark, G. “Life Story” www.gregoryclark.net/lifestory (Accessed 29th March 2006)

government policy with only the thinnest of claims to independence. Supporters of the ANU (most notably the Emeritus Faculty of the ANU) claim that the ANU was able to keep the government at arms-length and was therefore successful in maintaining its independence. This side of the argument also suggests that the ANU acted properly at all times in its relations with government. Valid judgements exist on both sides of this debate.

This thesis is designed to add to the growing body of work on the effects of the Cold War in Australia and the growing awareness of the impact of the Cold War on academics. It will do this through specifically analysing the experience of one school at the ANU, its internal and external conflicts in its relations with the federal government during the Cold War, and comparing these with the US experience. Although the major theme of this thesis — the Cold War university — has long been considered a purely American issue, the situation in Australian universities during the Cold War was similar to that in the United States.

There has never been a study of the Cold War experience of an Australian university in comparison with American Cold War universities. This study seeks to expand the discussion of the Cold War university and show that, in fact, this was not solely an American experience. Does it make sense to talk about an Australian Cold War university, seeing it is traditionally seen as an American issue? The answer is yes, though it must be acknowledged that although similar pressures existed at the time, cultural and institutional differences meant that the situation impacted on universities in different ways. Therefore it makes sense to speak of, and attempt to define, an *Australian* Cold War university experience.

My original hypothesis when beginning my research was that there were likely to have been close parallels between the American and Australian Cold War university experience and that such

parallels were likely to have been particularly apparent in the case of the ANU. In the United States, the Cold War university experience, in so far as it was homogenous, focussed above all on McCarthyism in the 1950s and domestic reactions to the Vietnam War in the following decade. At the outset of my investigation I assumed that there would be significant echoes — at the very least — of these phenomena in Australian universities, not least because Australia was an important Cold War ally of the United States. Australia was generally viewed at this time as moving increasingly in the American political and cultural orbit. However, a subsequent period of intensive research has served to modify and qualify this original hypothesis. I now concede that, although there were indeed important similarities in the Australian and American Cold War university experience, the Australian responses to the threat of communism in the universities and Australian protests against the Vietnam War were more culturally specific than I had assumed. This is an issue that will never be totally resolved (being in large part dependent on the political views of the commentators). While an exact duplicate of the American experience of the Cold War university did not come to our shores, to say that the Cold War did not shape, and shape significantly, the Australian university experience during the 1950s, '60s and '70s and to deny that there were similarities is also seriously wide of the mark.

Those people within the university who attacked the government occasionally had their careers made more difficult — often at least partially through their own efforts — but it was those who criticised *the university* as well as the government who experienced the most discrimination.

Those who merely criticised the government were retained. This means that “McCarthyism”⁴³, if it occurred here, took a different shape to the US experience. Nevertheless the 1950s were a time of great threats to the independence of the university, and the university did not always acquit

⁴³ “McCarthyism” is used in the thesis largely as a generic term to denote political persecution of communists and attempts by governments to prescribe the political ‘colour’ of appointments. It is acknowledged that the American version of McCarthyism contains elements of unfair or excessive approaches in this persecution. McCarthyism is examined and defined in more detail in Chapter 4.

itself well. By the 1960s and 1970s the university had the wherewithal and reputation to enable it to withstand these threats. However, the effects of the events of the 1950s were to establish a quid-pro-quo for academic freedom and funding: a utilitarian focus, and, to an extent, self-censorship.

Methodological Note

A difficulty of any kind of historical research is the extent to which important decisions are made in face-to-face conversations between people who are now deceased. In a town such as Canberra of the 1940s to 1970s this is especially the case, as many of the key individuals knew each other well. Oskar Spate (the Head of the RSPacS Geography Department) commented that ‘the town was still small enough for everybody to know everybody else.’⁴⁴ In most of these relationships the key decisions and discussions were not recorded on paper, and force of personality tended to be more important than political leanings in dictating the terms of the relationship. These were complicated institutional relationships and a variety of views (shifting over the years with different administrations and people) were of importance.⁴⁵

“Government” is a problematic label. The federal system in Australia has undergone several changes with successive High Court judgements altering the original 1900 model.⁴⁶ Further, the period under question was book-ended by the Labor governments of Joseph Chifley and Gough Whitlam, and though Robert Menzies was Prime Minister for the majority of the period, Harold Holt, John McEwen, John Gorton and William McMahon all contributed to higher education policy at the highest level. The relationship between the ANU and government (and tertiary education policy more broadly) was not only influenced by the varying Prime Minister’s attitudes

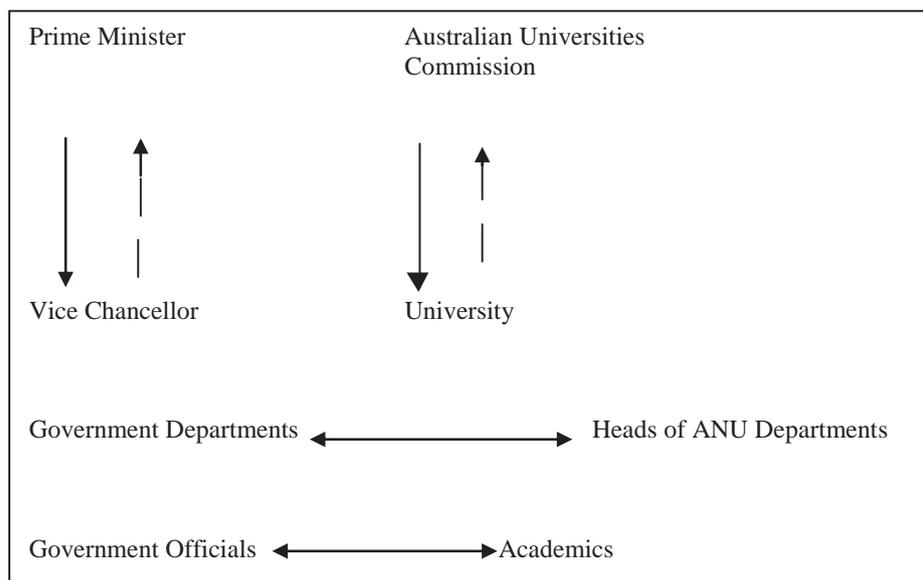
⁴⁴ Spate, *The Early Days at the ANU- an Anecdote*, NLA: “Papers of Oskar Hermann Khristian Spate” MS 7886 Series 3

⁴⁵ Emeritus Professor Hugh Stretton, Interview, the University of Adelaide, 9th of November 2005

⁴⁶ Parry, R. “Coordination in a Federal System” in Harman, G. et al (eds) *Academia Becalmed- Australian tertiary education in the aftermath of expansion*, Canberra, ANU Press 1980 p.125

to education, but also by Ministers for Education and the demands of Ministries of External Affairs, Defence, the public service and the imperatives of economic development, as well as the changing personnel within the ANU. It is a complicated relationship, influenced by many individuals each with different attitudes and agendas. The ‘complexities of inter institutional relationships’⁴⁷ are noted. The following diagram demonstrates (simplistically) in linear form the varying influences that government had on the ANU and vice-versa, in both formal and informal relationships:

Figure 1: Pathways of Government — University relationships



This diagram shows that the influences on and of the university operated in a number of ways. There were formal recommendations from the Prime Minister to the Vice Chancellor; the recommendations from the AUC in terms of funding controls over the university; the formal and informal relations between heads of government departments and heads of ANU departments and schools and finally the unofficial influences of government officials and ANU academics on each other in a small town such as Canberra. Note that the fragmented lines equate to lesser, but

⁴⁷ Parry, R. “Coordination in a Federal System” in Harman, *Academia Becalmed* p.130

existing, influence. There may have been less ability for (for example) Copland to influence Menzies, but such influence did occur and helped shape government attitudes and decisions relating to the university. The relationship was not entirely all one way or another.

The nature of the relationship between the ANU and the government during the Cold War was largely defined by the attitudes of two imposing individuals: Sir Robert Menzies, who as Prime Minister publicly espoused the virtues of academic freedom but privately sought to reduce communist influence; and Sir John Crawford, who as director of the Research School of Pacific Studies and Vice-Chancellor sought to promote service to government and society but with boundaries pertaining to academic freedom and responsibility.

The majority of research has relied on the extant documents on the ANU at the National Archives, the Manuscripts Section of the National Library and the ANU University Archives. Naturally, this creates a degree of bias in the research towards the information held by the government and the written records of deceased ANU staff. In relation to primary sources, document selection targeted key individuals, events and groups and was based on searches for the ANU in government archival records and on the names of key personnel and bodies at the ANU in the National Library and ANU Archives. The personal papers of key ANU figures and the federal government collections on the ANU proved to be valuable sources of information. Some documents (or parts of document collections) are, and are likely to remain, classified, particularly those relating to the ASIO investigation of the ANU and the reports on ANU academics provided by foreign intelligence agencies. While enough detail is available to infer broad events and trends, censorship has meant that the specifics are occasionally unobtainable.

For a baseline understanding of the issues the commissioned history of the ANU and recent literature on Cold War universities were examined. From this point open archival documents at

the National Archives were reviewed in order to establish the government perspectives and responses to issues relating to the university. Records of individuals who were at or involved with the university during the period were analysed at the National Library to gain the personal perspectives of key people. Requests for contributions were sent to more than 20 past and present ANU staff or students, several of whom agreed to participate in interviews or send correspondence. Some, however, responded that either they did not see any correlation between the ANU and US Cold War universities or felt that they were unable to provide any response to my questions. The ANU Archives were examined for the records of the ANU council, key figures among the staff and administration and documents relating to the Lindsay dispute. A number of not-yet-examined documents at the National Archives were requested to be opened for public examination. A call for submissions was placed in the newsletter of the ANU Emeritus Faculty. This new archival research and the interviews represent completely new research on the relationship between the university and the government. This thesis therefore represents both a thorough re-examination of issues touched upon in the *Making of the ANU* through the primary evidence and a new approach using documents which have recently become available to the public.

Though some current and former ANU personnel were reluctant to assist with the project, I did receive notable assistance from many members of the ANU community. Their input was extremely valuable and forced a qualification of earlier ideas which had been based predominantly on documentary records. For example, the archival records suggested McCarthyism was evident at the ANU and that ASIO surveillance had a serious impact on academic activities. Interviews with ANU staff indicated that my original impression of McCarthyism had been overstated and that while they were aware of ASIO surveillance, it did not seem to have a major constraining effect on actions.

It is hoped that this work will throw light on the relationship between the federal government and Australian universities during the Cold War, in both a national and international context.

Through this study the effects of the Cold War on Australian universities will come to be known.

It is hoped it will add to the understanding of Australian culture and society in the Cold War. As a means to examine how universities came to be as they are today, this work also intends to add to the body of knowledge which is informing current debates about academic freedom and independence.

PART ONE: THE CONTEXT OF THE COLD WAR UNIVERSITY

To determine whether the ANU can be classified as a Cold War university, or even a bastardised Australian version, a background summary of the arguments of Noam Chomsky, Rebecca Lowen, Ellen Schrecker and Hanna Holborn Gray is required. These authors describe the key features of a Cold War university and typify the debates in the literature. From this basis a comparison can begin to be made.

A Cold War university comprised a number of elements, such as attempts to ensure conformity with the political line of the day, high levels of federal funding and the application of knowledge to the Cold War effort, although all these aspects are nuanced both in the comparison between American and Australian universities and in the experience of individual universities. Much of the debates on Cold War universities revolve around academic freedom and independence, which are crucial theoretical issues and principles. Essentially, the debate is about the appropriate level of government influence over academe. Attitudes of politicians and university administration towards these principles helped shape the Cold War evolution of the ANU.

Slow beginnings contributed to early tensions in the relationship between the ANU and the government, but the ANU was to fill a void in Australian knowledge and enhance its intellectual capacity in areas of national importance. How these aims were to be achieved caused rancorous debate. The circumstances of the creation of the university and the subsequent debates laid the foundations for the strong links with government that continued throughout the Cold War and raised the possibility of an unusual degree of government influence over the university.

CHAPTER 1: THE COLD WAR AND THE UNIVERSITY

Since the 1950s a leftist critique of university relations with government has emerged in the United States. This concerned the growth of federal expenditure on defence studies at universities, the exclusion of communists from academic staff and the role of the university in the Vietnam War. Collectively, universities that benefited from government funding and conformed to government wishes became known as Cold War universities. Since the end of the Cold War there has been a re-examination of what comprised a Cold War university and the pressures on academic staff and administrators during this historical period. These new analyses go beyond a basic assumption of an “evil” collusion between the state and academia and argue that the Cold War shaped university decision-making, providing opportunities as well as challenges. In relation to this new historiography of the Cold War university it is worthwhile to explore whether similar pressures and opportunities occurred in Australia.

Australia’s Cold War — A summary

An understanding of the broad outlines of Australia’s Cold War experience is necessary to provide the contextual framework for the analysis of the ANU during the Cold War. By the late 1940s Australia was becoming increasingly influenced by American Cold War concerns. John Burton, the Secretary of the Department of External Affairs between 1947 and 1949, said that ‘By 1948, Australia was no longer prepared to make foreign policy decisions without the concurrence of London and Washington. And by 1949 “the guiding instruction was follow the United States”’¹. This statement demonstrates the growing importance of the United States in

¹ Ball, D. and Horner, D. *Breaking the Codes- Australia’s KGB Network 1944-1950*, St Leonards, Allen and Unwin 1998 p.151

Australian political affairs and the gradual subservience of Australia to the American Cold War line.

By the mid 1960s Southeast Asia had become the crucible of the Cold War. The Cold War expanded outwards into Asia from the late 1940s with the success of the communist revolution in China. During the same period, the collapse of western colonial institutions in Asia created an environment that was perceived by western analysts to be ripe for the expansion of communism outwards from the world's most populous nation.² These factors necessitated increased Australian study of the region for our security to be achieved.

The communist threat in Asia, and particularly in Indonesia, was of crucial importance to the Australian government. The rapid growth of the PKI (the Indonesian Communist Party), which became in 1963-64 the largest communist party in the world outside the Soviet Union and China, created deep concern in Australian government circles. The PKI was perceived to hold great sway over President Sukarno and to be providing a base of support for Indonesian Confrontation with the fledgling state of Malaysia.³ Certainly, Sukarno had expressed his sympathy with Marxist ideology from the late 1920s.⁴ Rather than the escalation of the war in Vietnam, it was the potential communist threat from Indonesia that encouraged the Australian government to re-introduce compulsory military service in 1964.⁵

Internationally, Australia had an important role in the Cold War, particularly in Asia. Australia's role in the Cold War was to provide material and moral support for American and Commonwealth efforts in Asia and to provide a potential base for operations for American forces

² Watt, A. *The Evolution of Australian Foreign Policy*, London, Cambridge University Press 1967 p.249

³ Grey, J. *A Military History of Australia*, Melbourne, Cambridge University Press 1999 p.225 and Mortimer, R. "The Place of Communism" in Fox, J. Et al (eds) *Indonesia: Australian Perspectives*, Canberra, Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University 1980 p.620

⁴ Soekarno, *Nationalism, Islam and Marxism*, NY, Cornell University 1970 pp.1, 53 and 59

⁵ Grey, *A Military History...* p.232

in the event of a global war. Australia's first foray into the 'hot' Cold War was in Korea when in 1950 Australian forces were committed to the US led operation to stem the North Korean invasion of South Korea. This conflict eventually brought Australia into direct conflict with China.⁶ In Malaya between 1955 and 1960 Australian troops assisted the British in subduing the MRLA communist movement.⁷ Fighting in Malaya was followed, after the formation of the Malaysian state, with Confrontation with Indonesia from 1963-1965 (though this was less a pure Cold War issue than an example of defending a new state from aggressive incursions by a larger neighbour).⁸ Between 1962 and 1972 Australian forces were committed to the war in Vietnam.⁹ Dissent against the War grew steadily from the commitment of Australian combat troops in 1965, reaching a crescendo with the nationwide moratoria in 1971.¹⁰

Australia's commitment to these conflicts resulted mostly from its treaty arrangements with the United States and anti-communist regional nations under ANZUS and SEATO. In 1951 the ANZUS treaty was signed as the Pacific counterpart to NATO, aimed at preventing the spread of communism in the region and committing Australia to the defence of the region against any armed attack by communist powers. This treaty ensured Australian compliance with the American anti-communist agenda in Asia and the Pacific.¹¹ In 1954 Australia became a signatory to SEATO, which had similar clauses regarding armed aggression, but also committed member countries to mutual assistance in combating subversion as well.¹²

China, Indonesia and Vietnam were at the heart of Australia's Cold War concerns, which meant the RSPacS had a potential utility for successive Australian governments. Percy Spender

⁶ Grey, *A Military History* pp.204-209

⁷ Grey, *A Military History* pp.216-217

⁸ Cribb, R. and Brown, C. *Modern Indonesia*, London, Longman 1995 p.86

⁹ McAulay, L. *Contact- Australians in Vietnam*, Sydney, Hutchinson 1989 pp.3-9

¹⁰ See King, P. (Ed) *Australia's Vietnam*, Sydney, George Allen and Unwin 1983 and Langley, G. *A Decade of Dissent*, Sydney, Allen and Unwin 1992

¹¹ Andrews, E. *A History of Australian Foreign Policy*, 2nd Ed. Melbourne, Longman Cheshire 1991 pp.129-130

¹² Andrews, *Australian Foreign Policy* pp.133-134 and 142

(Foreign Minister under Menzies) believed by 1950 that ‘the centre of potential aggression had shifted from Europe to Asia’.¹³ Australian studies of the region therefore assumed a new and greater importance. It stands to reason that the RSPacS would have a primary role in the growth of regional studies and strong linkages with this new government agenda.

Domestically, the Cold War had a significant impact on Australian politics, culture and attitudes. To some, the ideological struggle was an ongoing conflict between right and wrong, the benefits of the democratic way of life versus the evils of totalitarianism. For others the struggle was for the triumph of utopian socialism over the exploiting proclivities of the bourgeoisie. Australian politicians, typified by Menzies, tended towards the former proposition, but even in the ‘left’ of Australian politics these attitudes prevailed: the split in the Labor party in the 1950s was largely due to anti-communist factionalism driven by Catholic members of the ALP.¹⁴

The Petrov affair, involving the defection of two Soviet intelligence agents, exemplified to the government the threat of communist infiltration and subversion in Australia. Many in the ALP (particularly its leader Herbert Evatt) viewed the timing of the announcement of the defection and the subsequent Royal Commission as suspicious. They argued the announcement was timed to lead to the Liberal election victory in 1954 and that the commission was an attempt to blacken the names of senior ALP members.¹⁵ Russel Ward (a post-graduate scholar at ANU) like many of the left in Australia advanced the conspiracy theory, believing that the Petrov affair was engineered by Menzies and that the Royal Commission on Espionage that followed was designed purely to discredit the opposition.¹⁶ The idea that the Petrov Affair was merely a political machination by Menzies over-simplifies and under-represents the perception of the threat of communism that

¹³ Murphy, J. *Harvest of Fear*, St Leonards, Allen and Unwin 1993 p.43

¹⁴ Manne, R. *The Petrov Affair*, Melbourne, Text Publishing 2004, pp.218-221, Manning Clark *A Short History of Australia*, Sydney, Tudor Distributors 1963 p.242

¹⁵ See Manne, *The Petrov Affair* pp.xi-xii, and Manning Clark, *A Short History* p.240

¹⁶ Ward, R. *A Radical Life*, South Melbourne, MacMillan 1988 pp.221-2 and 225

existed at the time. The threat of communist subversion of the democratic way of life was linked with the fact that hanging over everything in the Cold War was the omnipresent spectre of nuclear annihilation. Robin Gollan (Head of the History Department in the Research School of Social Sciences) said of Australia during the Cold War that ‘every great issue in society, whether of political policy, ideological stance, or cultural commitment was measured and judged, in some degree, by its relation to the issues raised by the worldwide conflict.’¹⁷ The pervasiveness of the Cold War on domestic and global politics, culture, and society meant that it was impossible for Australian universities to escape its effects.

The Historiography of the American Cold War University

The most well-known advocate of the existence of the Cold War university phenomenon is Noam Chomsky. Although he may not have coined the phrase ‘Cold War university’ he advocates the notion, in the sense that he explores the dynamics of the relationship between intellectuals and the state. He promotes the view that the university-state relationship was fundamentally flawed and contradicted both the principles of academic independence and the essential roles and functions of academics. To Chomsky, the most important aspect of an intellectual’s role was that ‘intellectuals are in a position to expose the lies of governments.’¹⁸ Chomsky argued that the Cold War had a significant impact in forming the modern university-state relationship.¹⁹

The military-industrial complex is seen, especially by left-wing authors, as a central component in understanding the nature of a Cold War university. The need for defence against communism saw the American federal government investing enormous amounts of money into universities for the conduct of research and training related to the defence industry. National security was

¹⁷ Lowe, D. *Menzies and the Great World Struggle*, Sydney, University of NSW Press 1999 p.23

¹⁸ “The Logic of Withdrawal” in Chomsky, N. *American Power and the New Mandarins*, London, Chatto and Windus 1969 p.256

¹⁹ “Introduction” in Chomsky, *American Power* p.8

integrally linked with a well-educated citizenry²⁰ and (as Yale professor Robin Winks says) research was ‘harnessed to the service of the State’.²¹

US Senator J. William Fulbright described the universities as having joined with the military-industrial complex, ‘adding greatly to its power and influence’.²² Chomsky expanded on this view, saying there were ‘growing dangers to [scholarly] integrity’, and society in the United States was ‘maimed through the systematic corruption of its intelligence’ which led to universities ‘betraying a public trust’. Chomsky blamed ‘access to money and influence... a highly restrictive, almost universally shared ideology, and the inherent dynamics of professionalisation’.²³ Chomsky thought that intellectuals in the United States accepted the dominant US viewpoint and had a prominent role in shaping foreign policy. Therefore intellectuals in the US conceived and developed the Cold War US posture and enabled the mobilisation of US intellectual resources for warlike purposes. This created the confluence between academics and the military-industrial complex.²⁴

During the years of the Vietnam conflict the relationship between the academy and the state was the subject of considerable controversy. The academies were regarded by some as being intimately connected with the CIA and the State Department.²⁵ Many students during this period were antagonistic towards peers and professors being involved in policy because they seemed to represent the twin evils of the war in Vietnam and bourgeois society.²⁶ This attitude has continued to be deeply held by some commentators. The relationship was complicated and

²⁰ Holborn Gray, H. “Cold War Universities: Tools of Power or Oases of Freedom?” *Foreign Affairs* March/April 1997 pp.147-151

²¹ Winks, R. *Cloak and Gown- Scholars and the Secret War*, New York, William Morrow and Co. Inc. 1987 p.35

²² “Objectivity and Liberal Scholarship” in Chomsky, *American Power* p.23

²³ “Objectivity and Liberal Scholarship” in Chomsky, *American Power* pp.23-24

²⁴ “Objectivity and Liberal Scholarship” in Chomsky, *American Power* pp.25-26

²⁵ Treisman, D. “The CIA and Student Politics” in Cockburn, A. and Blackburn, R. (Eds) *Student Power*, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, Penguin 1970 p.141

²⁶ Stedman Jones, G. “Meaning of the Student Revolt” in Cockburn and Blackburn, *Student Power* p.32

varied according to context, as was demonstrated by Cornell University's Southeast Asia Program which was at loggerheads with the State Department for more than two decades over the direction of American policy in Southeast Asia.²⁷ Cornell's conflict with the State Department was not replicated in the experience of the ANU and the Australian federal government. The perceived immediacy of the threat of Asian communism suggests a closer, more congenial relationship between the two institutions.

The idea of the Cold War university has, until recently, been seen as an invention of left-wing academics and authors such as Chomsky and has not received serious contemplation among mainstream historians as a valid area for study. This view is beginning to change as historians begin to examine the short and long term effects of the Cold War on their institutions. A more objective picture is emerging of the Cold War university. According to David Engerman (Professor of History at Brandeis University) while often still critical, the recent studies of the Cold War university are focussed mainly on the 'sometimes contradictory' ambitions surrounding those institutions. These include 'faculty members seeking an escape from the classroom through external funding, administrators hoping to enhance their university's prestige and balance sheet and government agencies promoting cutting-edge research with practical (usually military) applications'.²⁸

Hanna Holborn Gray, a former President of Yale and the University of Chicago, critiques the traditional view of the Cold War university in her review of *The Cold War and the University: Towards an Intellectual History*, observing that left-wing intellectuals tend to share a critical attitude towards the academy, resulting from viewing universities as an element of 'the power structures that control the world and one that perpetuates its oppressions and repressions'. The

²⁷ Kahin, G. And Lewis, J. *The United States in Vietnam*, NY, Dial Press 1967 p.272

²⁸ Engerman, D. "Rethinking Cold War Universities: Some Recent Histories" *Journal of Cold War Studies* (2003) Vol. 5 No. 3 pp.80-95

belief that universities were complicit in the Cold War is widely held as is the view that, despite protestations of academic freedom, the universities served the conservative agenda.²⁹ This is the traditional view of the Cold War university and it has remained remarkably prevalent in the years since. When people think of the Cold War university it is this left-wing, Chomskyesque view of a coerced and complicit university system that comes to mind. The issue of whether the universities themselves needed or wanted to act in such a manner given the zeitgeist and the potential opportunities provided by government service is a more contentious issue.³⁰ Whether the imperative of service was not forced onto the universities by the government but was rather a manifestation of the universities' desire for utility is a topic deserving of more objective examination.

Holborn Gray criticises the left-wing view of the Cold War university by saying that it is questionable that 'intellectual activity is essentially controlled by the State' and therefore the corollary that the supporters of the state 'make war on intellectual and social freedom while propagating programs that advance their selfish interests' could be argued to be a flawed assumption about universities during the Cold War. Secondly, other vital factors such as the growth and transformation of universities and the fact that education was perceived to be vital for the promise of democratic societies play an important role in the changes of the period. Similarly, population growth and demographic change, economic recessions and the civil rights movement also had profound impacts. Finally, the changes to universities have elements stretching back to well before the Second World War which help to explain the self-perception of roles, mission and relationship to the larger world.³¹ The Cold War university therefore was not simply an example of the government dominating universities and forcing them into accepting their evil machinations. Rather, the Cold War university was a manifestation of broader social

²⁹ Holborn Gray, "Cold War Universities" pp.147-151

³⁰ Holborn Gray, "Cold War Universities" pp.147-151

³¹ Holborn Gray, "Cold War Universities" pp.147-151

trends which had long been in development and intellectual activity during the Cold War was more diverse and less rigidly controlled than left-wing commentators would assume.

Across the western world in the 19th and 20th Centuries, pressure from economic development increasingly linked universities to economic imperatives, particularly in the fields of applied research and professional training. The demands of the modern industrial age meant that education and expertise needed to be developed so people would be able to confidently command the machinery of modern industrialisation. This change brought university activities (as opposed to graduates) into the political arena as governments sought to ensure an appropriate skill base for the workforce and enhance the research needed to support growing industry. This meant that government created imperatives for research and training and those universities that responded to these demands would be rewarded with increased funding and government support.³² The involvement of government in research and training was not a sudden development of the Cold War, but rather a long term and world-wide phenomenon. Certainly there was an *expansion* of governmental interest in the universities during the Cold War, but the trend had begun long before. As Oxford Emeritus Professor A.H. Hasley and M.A. Trow of the University of California state, during and after the Second World War ‘a conscious attempt [by policy makers] to plan and manage economic growth and military efficiency’ led to ‘universities everywhere attracting increasing governmental interest and control’.³³

Rebecca Lowen’s *Creating the Cold War University*, a study of Stanford from 1930 to 1960, is now regarded as a major analysis of the issue. Arthur Morin at Fort Hays State University summarised Lowen’s view that the Cold War university was one which received military-related research funds at a time when the national government was caught in an ideological war which

³² Hasley and Trow, *The British Academics* p.34

³³ Hasley and Trow, *The British Academics* pp.34-35

(at least partly) shaped its relationship with universities. In essence, a university that ‘attempted to make itself the knowledge component of the military-industrial complex became a Cold War university.’³⁴ Lowen’s broad thesis is that ‘university administrators, responding to internal pressures (financial exigencies) and external conditions (the dynamics of the larger socio-economic environment) and believing in the role of experts, played a major role in remaking universities into Cold War universities’.³⁵ University administration rather than the government was the key instigator in the creation of Cold War universities.

Morin believes Lowen was correct in the waxing and waning of financial difficulties for universities, the university’s need for patrons as a corporate body, the increased importance of research at the expense of undergraduate education, the increased role of universities in providing expertise to the military and the market-place and the influence of the Cold War mentality on dampening certain view points. Morin sees the weakness of Lowen’s argument lies in the fact that it concerned only one university and that comparative studies need to be made with other research universities before it can be said with a degree of certainty that it was the university administrators that created the Cold War university institution.³⁶ In a sense this present study is even more limited, focusing on only one school within a larger university. However, the study builds on the work of Lowen through examining another research university on the other side of the world, which will demonstrate not only that the experience of Australian universities was comparable, but also that the experience was multi-national. This study also goes further than Lowen’s argument (which finishes its examination in the early 1960s) by examining the ANU during the years of student and academic revolution from 1965 to 1975. Here the key texts are primarily the written memoirs of left-wing intellectuals and are biased towards a critique of

³⁴ Morin, A. L. “Let Us Pause a Moment and Consider—an analysis of Stanford’s Ascendancy” *H-Review* March 1998 <http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.cgi?path=10434889206960> (accessed 11th July 2008)

³⁵ Morin, “Let Us Pause...”

³⁶ Morin, “Let Us Pause”

academia due to its complicity with the military-industrial complex. Was such complicity (even if it occurred in the shape described by these authors) a bad thing in the long term given the changes to academia that occurred during this period? Did universities even have a choice if they wanted to retain funding and prestige?

Holborn Gray argues that the left-wing authors of *The Cold War and the University* see their counter-culture movements during the Cold War as remaking the academic world to a higher political standard rather than genuinely celebrating academic freedom for all.³⁷ Holborn Gray thereby points out a contradiction in the arguments from the left relating to the lack of political autonomy in the Cold War university, in that it is regarded as wrong when universities become instruments of outside powers and interests but right when universities become agents for change and reform of policy. This implies a close-minded view of academia which perceives only those who are radical and opposed to the status quo as morally correct. Universities are generally averse to the imposition of political correctness and control over research from outside the university. Those within the university who serve government interests are as important as those who oppose the government for the maintenance of objectivity.³⁸ Academic freedom demands the *right* to support government activities as well as to oppose them. The narrow worldview of those who strictly oppose the politicisation of universities by the government leads them into the intellectual trap of denying this right and duty to academics whose tendency is to act for the government of the day. By viewing the world in “black and white” or “right and wrong” (with the government and university administrators on the “wrong” side), the leftist critique of the Cold War university would have universities act as divorced, remote institutions which have no utility for, or relevance to, the broader issues of society and national interest as determined by the democratically elected government of the day through their mandate. It is important to note that

³⁷ Holborn Gray, “Cold War Universities” pp.147-151

³⁸ Holborn Gray, “Cold War Universities” pp.147-151

the issue is not simply one of “black and white”. Government interference and machinations can occur with the best of intentions. The issue is not a simplistic one (good versus evil, right versus wrong, left-wing versus right-wing).³⁹ While there is a common assumption⁴⁰ that investigation of a Cold War university necessarily implies a radical viewpoint, this is not the case. A reasoned and balanced examination of the effect of the Cold War on universities is possible and applicable in the Australian context.

Features of a Cold War University

A Cold War university was not necessarily one *created* during the Cold War, but rather was one that prospered from the increases in government spending under the Cold War imperatives for research.⁴¹ US university research received a massive influx of federal funding during the Cold War. Donald Kennedy, a former President of Stanford University, said

A huge windfall came to the research universities [in the US] in the period following World War II... a decision was made to relocate the elaborate machinery for supporting military science in the nation’s universities... [not just science but also] the social sciences benefited directly, as did even the humanities.⁴²

R. Claire Snyder from George Mason University noted that this funding was implicitly and explicitly linked with the Cold War agenda.

These universities, buoyed by a historically unprecedented influx of federal funding, became central players in the fight against communism... First, although academia’s massive, federally funded, post-war expansion led to the largest democratization of higher education in the history of the world, this expansion was justified by the Cold War imperative to ward off the “ideological appeal of communism” by spreading

³⁹ Emeritus Professor Hugh Stretton, Interview, the University of Adelaide, 9th of November 2005

⁴⁰ Many ANU correspondents implied this.

⁴¹ Emeritus Professor Hugh Stretton, Interview, the University of Adelaide, 9th of November 2005

⁴² Kennedy, D. *Academic Duty*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press 1999 p.28

prosperity throughout the populous... Second the Cold War universities continued to focus on the practical application of higher learning, but the focus became serving economic and military needs...⁴³

For many authors on the Cold War university there is an attractive notion of intrigue in the Cold War campus activities of intelligence and counter-intelligence organisations. Radical left-wing academics and student groups were kept under surveillance and there is speculation that the CIA attempted to influence the outputs of universities through grants from organisations such as the Ford Foundation and through the funding of international student groups.⁴⁴ The compliance of university administrators was vital to the success or otherwise of these initiatives. Lowen observes that the most recent American works on the Cold War university have ‘stressed the role of top university administrators in collaborating with congressional committees or intelligence agencies in the establishment of intellectual conformity on the nation’s campuses’.⁴⁵

A key feature of the Cold War university was an acceptance of the political status quo by university administrators. Holborn Gray cites evolutionary biologist Richard Lewontin’s view that ‘the greatest direct enemy of the left in the academy was not a coherent policy of the state, but the opportunism and cowardice of boards of trustees and university administrators’. These groups accepted and encouraged federal spending on defence related projects, while failing to protect the autonomy of their institutions and the intellectual freedom of the individuals within the universities.⁴⁶ Lewontin is quoted as saying that

Too many university leaders bent before McCarthyism... and proved spineless in the matter of loyalty oaths or on the question of offering a home to Marxist scholars. Potentially more insidious was the influx

⁴³ Snyder, R. C. “Should Political Science Have a Civic Mission?” *Political Science and Politics* (2001) Vol 34 No 2 p.304

⁴⁴ Treisman, D. “The CIA and Student Politics” in Cockburn and Blackburn, *Student Power* pp.141-142 and Brandt, D. “Philanthropists at War”, NameBase NewsLine, no 15, Oct/Dec 1996 @ <http://www.namebase.org/news15.html> (last accessed 11th July 2008)

⁴⁵ Lowen, *Creating* p.10

⁴⁶ Holborn Gray, “Cold War Universities” pp.147-151

of federal funds for research that was often narrowly targeted, with many regulations attached, and sometimes classified.⁴⁷

The ‘carrot and stick’ evident in university relations with governments during the Cold War meant that there was much to be lost by challenging the government and conversely much to be gained through conformity.

University administrators removed or muzzled potentially controversial teachers to avoid alienating the patrons of the university. The channelling of intellectual efforts to meet the concerns of patrons occurred in part through coercion of individuals (e.g. from the FBI or by firing ideologically unsound individuals). Lowen argues, however, that a larger role in meeting this aim was played by the administrators themselves in their power over hiring, promotions and salaries.⁴⁸ Individual motivation (for academics who conformed) was directly linked to the imperatives of ‘observable institutional pressure’.⁴⁹ Administrators preferred ‘self-policing’ to overt attacks on their institutions when it came to removing communists and refused to take strong public stands in favour of academic independence.⁵⁰

Lowen believes that individual social scientists, in response to the ‘climate of repression’, attempted to adopt ‘apolitical’ approaches to the study of society, ‘to protect themselves from political controversy and possible accusations from red-baiters’.⁵¹ Academics were therefore forced to alter their behaviours as a consequence of the pressures of the Cold War. Lowen says that many academics who were not communists but favoured more left-wing policies took refuge in ‘nominally objective, apolitical rhetoric’ and that the atmosphere led to ‘a feeling of insecurity

⁴⁷ Holborn Gray, “Cold War Universities” pp.147-151

⁴⁸ Lowen, *Creating* p.11

⁴⁹ Lowen, *Creating* p.11

⁵⁰ Lowen, *Creating* p.206

⁵¹ Lowen, *Creating* p.10

within the faculty' which 'curtail[ed] discussion of highly controversial issues in the classroom.'⁵²

The Cold War university could be viewed as a misnomer to some extent, in that the trend towards support for university research by government began in the United States during the Second World War, and indeed has continued since the end of the Cold War. However there are certain distinguishing features which were particular to academic life in this period. Defence spending *in peacetime* saw universities seeking to increase their funding through contributing to the aims of the government. The research conducted during the Second World War saw the universities already prepared for this role and it was natural to carry these abilities over into the post-war environment when there were so many potential gains to be realised. Another key distinguishing feature is that the government took steps to protect universities from subversion and infiltration. This led to the era of McCarthyism and surveillance of academics by the security services. The final key distinguishing feature of the Cold War era university is the eventual rebelling of students and academics against government policies and the actions taken by universities to minimise the damage this could cause to their relations with the government.

Lowen chose Stanford as the model Cold War university because throughout the Cold War it was one of the leading recipients of Defence Department patronage and she argues that Stanford's rise to prominence was directly related to the university's defence contracts.⁵³ Morin points out the 'great irony' which is made clear in Lowen's book, that it was

Federal funding related to the military, which increased dramatically due to the Cold War, which made possible the really successful development of industry patronage. How, then could administrators and others at Stanford argue that Stanford had maintained its autonomy? In two ways. First by claiming that faculty members should be allowed to pursue any research project they wished, even if it was related to the

⁵² Lowen, *Creating* p.207

⁵³ Lowen, *Creating* pp.6-7

military, second because of the kind of relationship the university had with the federal government... the ability to decide whether or not to [work for government] rested in the hands of both parties; no dependency was created, and both parties acted autonomously... Administrators at Stanford actively sought to foster these kind of connections with the federal government. Administrators also solicited the interest of private foundations which meant that certain kinds of research (and certain kinds of scholars) were preferred over others... in short the drive toward elite status, in response to the kinds of patronage available, and reflecting or agreeing with the mainstream ideological abhorrence for certain opinions less favoured during the cold war, the administration sought to influence the types of research done and the nature of the relationship between the university, industry and the government, as well as who was hired, who was tenured and who would be allowed to teach. As a consequence the autonomy of the departments suffered... In other words, Stanford became a Cold War University.⁵⁴

Although Lowen did not go beyond 1960 in her study, other features of the Cold War university after this date include criticism of the role of the university in assisting and supporting the Vietnam War, protest against the Vietnam War (and other issues) by students and academics, and adherence to Robert McNamara's rationalism — that everything, including even war, can be reduced and understood through the application of knowledge. This final point is especially evident in studies of US universities during the Cold War; following John F. Kennedy's appeal to the 'best and brightest' there was a heady rush, a feeling that academics could solve the problems of the world. Once these same people led America into the stalemate and quagmire of the Vietnam War this feeling was rapidly replaced by disillusionment which turned to a questioning of the role and place of academia in society.

A Cold War university was one where there was an attempt by the government to enhance the knowledge base available to it. This involved government patronage of the university and the direction of research into areas of benefit to the government in the Cold War. The government

⁵⁴ Morin, "Let Us Pause"

sought to protect this source of knowledge by influencing the university to remove academics of left-wing persuasion and attempting to prevent the dissemination of communist thought. As such, a Cold War university should contain aspects including:

1. Significant funding from the federal government;
2. Government funding is seen as beneficial so the university places expertise at the call of the government;
3. An encroachment of government influence over the university, both in attempts to determine the activities of the university and in attempts to exclude communists from the staff of the university;
4. The university administration is reluctant to poison the golden goose so there is a degree of collaboration, with only limited support for academics accused of communist affiliation;
5. There is some self-censorship within the university and attempts to define acceptable academic activities within the political context of the time;
6. The academy is a place of protest from the mid-to-late 1960s.

These elements are not set in stone, they evolve and greater importance can be attached to one aspect or another at various stages of the Cold War according to the events occurring at the time, the relative importance attached to academic freedom, the work of universities, and processes of expansion or contraction of political liberalisation. The following chapters will show the ANU's compatibility (or otherwise) with these aspects.

CHAPTER 2: GENESIS OF THE ANU

The Australian National University was designed as an exercise in nation-building in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War. It was to form an academic institution unique in Australia, focused on postgraduate training and research. This was a significant departure from the prior experience of Australian universities and the British model that had previously dominated Australian academia. The creation of the ANU along the lines of American research universities makes the comparison with American Cold War universities more plausible. The circumstances of the creation of the university, its governance structures and the debates on the role of the university created a situation which prescribed strong links with government and a focus on public utility. Despite this, the slow beginnings of the university created a degree of tension between the university and its patron, the federal government.

The Need for Regional Knowledge

During the Second World War's Pacific campaign, the dearth of Australian knowledge about its region became dramatically evident. Peter Ryan, an Australian soldier in Kanga Force demonstrated the paucity of Australian knowledge of the Pacific. Operating behind the Japanese lines in New Guinea, Kanga Force was not issued with maps as 'survey maps of the area were unknown'. They had to create their own sketch maps and teach themselves pidgin in order to communicate with the indigenous people.¹ It has been asserted by W.G. Walker (a former Dean of the Faculty of Education at the University of New England, Australia) that 'the entry of Japan into the war in 1941 rapidly stimulated the interest of the Australian government in the work of

¹ Ryan, P. *Fear Drive My Feet*, Sydney, Duffy and Snellgrove 2001 pp.14and34

the universities and this interest grew further under pressure from the demands of post-war reconstruction'.²

P.H. Partridge (Professor of Social Philosophy at the ANU) noted that prior to the end of the Second World War Australian universities were developed on the British model and taught a 'euro-centric curricula', which led to 'little attention being given to Asia or the Pacific'.³ The weakness demonstrated by the British Empire during the fall of Singapore demonstrated to Australians that they would have to rely on their own efforts and knowledge to project influence in the region. Australians became keenly aware of their proximity to Asia and that future inter-state relations would be increasingly embroiled in regional political, economic and cultural issues. This was a dramatic shift in Australian intellectual conceptualisation of the importance of Asia and its place in Australia's political thought, as previously Asia and the Pacific had been regarded as alien to all that Australia stood for.⁴ Australian knowledge of the region needed to improve in order to provide a basis for the development of policy and to further the understanding of the peoples and geography of the region. The ANU interim council (charged with establishing the university) reflected this focus in their agenda for the activities of the RSPacS. They believed that the focus for political studies should be on South West Pacific nations (particularly Papua New Guinea) and South East Asia.⁵

Australian attitudes to Asian and Pacific countries took longer to develop beyond the recognition of the role the region was to play in the future. Included in the initial plans for the schools were studies of 'psychological ranking of native peoples' indicating that social darwinism had not yet

² Walker, W. "The University in Australia" in Stephens, M and Roderick, G (eds) *Universities for a Changing World*, Newton Abbot, David and Charles 1975 p.58

³ Partridge, *Society, Schools and Progress* p.121

⁴ Partridge, *Society, Schools and Progress* p.125

⁵ Australian National University Conference on Pacific Studies- statement on research in political affairs, ANU Archives: Interim Council, 2001/03, Box 1 Basic Papers 1946-1951

completely died out.⁶ The council's report for 1953 reflected both this paternalistic view and the new acknowledgement of the importance of the region:

We are surrounded by ancient civilizations. But we also stand in the sobering relation of guardian to some primitive civilizations of the Pacific whom we have to guide to a new way of life that will enable them to prosper in a scientific age. It is a condition for the well being of Australia that we should know and understand the people who surround us in Asia and the Pacific.⁷

Beyond the British Tradition

Although the regional focus of the RSPacS was a development of the Second World War, the idea of a national university dated back to Federation and the establishment of Canberra as the national capital. The original competitors for the plan of the city were asked to include a site for a university.⁸ Crawford noted that between the First and Second World Wars, T.H. Laby (Professor of Physics at the University of Melbourne) remarked that there should be a 'national research and residential university in Canberra' which 'might become for Australia what Oxford and Cambridge were for Britain'.⁹ The Oxford and Cambridge comparison represented not simply the desire to emulate the mother country but also to establish a world class centre of learning in the antipodes.

In the initial debates of the interim council Sir Keith Hancock, later the Head of the Research School of Social Sciences, said 'what we want is the twentieth century equivalent of that medieval institution, the Oxford college'.¹⁰ Euro-centrism, it seemed, still prevailed even in this instance of the expansion of the Australian national intellectual identity as the references to these

⁶ Pacific Studies in a National University- a practical charter (undated), ANU: 2001/03, Box 1 Basic Papers 1946-1951

⁷ The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia *The Australian National University: Report of the Council for the Period 1st January 1953 to 31st December 1953*, Canberra, Government Printing Office 1954 p.6

⁸ Crawford, J.G. *The Australian National University: Its concept and role- Address to the Convocation of the University of Melbourne 26 March 1968*, Canberra, ANU 1968 p.4

⁹ Crawford, *The Australian National University* p.4

¹⁰ Hancock to Mills 16th July 1947, NAA: M448/1 260 "ANU Miscellaneous Correspondence"

British institutions were common. Despite these references, Hancock and other members of the interim council had other aims for the university. The university itself might never have been known as the Australian National University, if it were not for the insistence of the Interdepartmental Committee that the university should be open to all Australians and be an object and symbol of national pride and identity. At a meeting of the Advisory Committee of all the schools in May 1946 it was agreed unanimously that the name of the university should be the University of Canberra and not the Australian National University in order to reflect the British practice of naming a university after the town it resides in.¹¹ Following British practice would have meant the ANU would have been insular and parochial rather than devoted to the national interest and open to all Australians, precisely the opposite of what its patrons intended.

The main challenge for the idea of naming the university according to British traditions came from Frederic Eggleston, a former diplomat and member of the interim council, who said ‘I certainly do not believe that the use of the word “Canberra” is any advantage to the university. The university will confer distinction on Canberra rather than the reverse.’ Eggleston cited French and American universities as examples of alternate naming systems.¹² Despite the conflict over British traditions in terms of naming the university and continual references to Oxford and Cambridge, in Australia, as Walker has said, ‘there were fundamental differences [to the UK] in experience and outlook which... marked off Australians as unique... Nowhere are these differences more marked than in approaches to formal education’.¹³ The ANU was to represent a departure from British traditions.

¹¹ Minutes of Advisory Committee Meeting 2nd-3rd May 1946, NAA A9874/1 64 “Correspondence- Australian National University”

¹² Eggleston, Notes on the Proposed Establishment of the University, NLA: MS 423 “Papers of Sir Fredric William Eggleston” Series 12 Box 23

¹³ Walker, W. “The University in Australia” in Stephens and Roderick, *Universities* p.52

In England in the late 18th Century the philosophers Edmund Burke and Samuel Taylor Coleridge spoke of the ‘spirit’ of institutions having merit. Utilitarians such as Jeremy Bentham, argued against this “set in stone” view, believing that the test of an institution’s worth was whether it served the general interest and satisfied public opinions.¹⁴ The ANU had a strictly utilitarian outlook, but the creators of the university were seeking to adopt a tradition as well as create an institution to serve the national interest. The university’s founders would hope to emulate Oxford and Cambridge, but would also adopt features from American and German universities.

Despite the Oxbridge comparisons, a report commissioned in 1926 had recommended the establishment of a national research university in Canberra along American lines. In the report ‘the suggested model for the project was Johns Hopkins University in America, the graduates and staff of which were seen to have given a distinctive shape to American intellectual and political life.’¹⁵ From its original conception, the national university was to conduct research in a manner clearly based on an American model, in accordance with an aim of developing Australia through helping to meet national priorities. Increasingly, US-style universities began to be seen as more suited to the Australian context than the British model. As A. Boyce Gibson, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Melbourne said, ‘Our natural models, I imagine, are the universities of the USA... our town and gown problems are more like those of the USA than those of the United Kingdom’.¹⁶

Eggleston and Keith Hancock as key members of the interim council forged a strong belief that the ANU should be based more on the American model than the British. Hancock said that ‘the [entry] requirements of the American graduate schools, so far as I understand them, are

¹⁴ Rothblatt, S. *The Modern University and its Discontents*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press 1997 pp.5-6

¹⁵ Brown, N. “Aspirations and Constraints in Australian Universities in the 1950s” in Smith, F.B. and Crichton, P. eds *Ideas for Histories of Universities in Australia*, Canberra, Australian National University 1990 p.75

¹⁶ Boyce Gibson, A. “The Australian Universities and Public Opinion” in Australian Vice Chancellor’s Committee, *A Symposium* p.39

absolutely on the right lines, and I hope... they will be followed in the new university.’¹⁷

Eggleston concurred: ‘I favour more the idea of the graduate university, of which Harvard, Yale and Chicago supply very good instance.’¹⁸ The ANU was a fore-runner in adopting US models in structure, and the AVCC noted that this was unusual in Australia: ‘it is quite unlikely that the Australian universities outside Canberra will follow the American pattern and separate undergraduate from graduate schools’.¹⁹

The ANU was similar to US research universities in attitude and role, but a significant and fundamental difference remained between Australia and the US. Historian Hugh Graham and political scientist Nancy Diamond have noted that in the US the classical liberal’s

...fear of centralised State power, created a system that limited and fragmented national authority and reserved education policy for state and local governments. The early Congress, by rejecting the appeals of President Washington and five of his successors that a national university be established, thereby removed the threat that more stringent national standards might pose to proliferating local colleges.²⁰

Australia was much more federally inclined than the US. Australians could accept the concept of a national university as there was less fear in Australia of ‘big government’. The Australian National University would form part of Australia’s grand liberal experiment.

A New Australian Model

The ANU’s establishment was in part a reflection of larger trends in higher education which were occurring in Australia. The ANU was to help enhance and reform Australian society by increasing its intellectual basis. Colin Symes, a lecturer in the School of Education at Macquarie

¹⁷ Hancock to Eggleston 7th October 1946, ANU Archives: Sir Keith Hancock, 2002/15, Box 1 Sir Keith Hancock Papers

¹⁸ Eggleston to Hancock, 9th September 1946, ANU: 2002/15, Box 1

¹⁹ Boyce Gibson, A. “The Australian Universities and Public Opinion” in Australian Vice Chancellor’s Committee, *A Symposium* p.47

²⁰ Graham H. and Diamond, N. *The Rise of American Research Universities*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press 1997 p.15

University has observed that higher education in Australia changed significantly after the Second World War.

In the second half of the Twentieth century, Australian higher education underwent a “long revolution”, which was focused on the generation of increased cultural, social and human capital... in a fast changing labour market, the paucity of university-educated Australians was retarding economic growth. University participation was seen as a key predicate of national prosperity.²¹

A key element of increasing national prosperity was enhancing postgraduate education.

Postgraduate education was almost unknown in Australia prior to the development of the ANU.

Foster and Varghese have stated that ‘Postgraduate training scarcely existed before the war and it was not until 1945 that the PhD degree was introduced at the University of Melbourne... In 1950 there were only a dozen PhD graduates from all Australian universities.’²²

From the outset, the ANU was viewed by its progenitors as a unique institution among Australian universities in its research and postgraduate focus. Sir Marcus Oliphant (the great Australian physicist, a member of the interim council and first director of the Research School of Physical Sciences) is quoted by Tim Rowse as saying that he believed that the university ‘would flourish... to the extent that it would be insulated from the ethos of Australian universities... academic development in Australia was constrained by the emphasis on undergraduate teaching’.²³ Departing from the Australian emphasis on undergraduate training would enhance Australia’s capacity by producing high-quality research and postgraduate training, attracting and providing opportunities for Australia’s best minds which were being lost overseas through the brain-drain. Describing the history of the university, the 1990 Committee to Review the Institute of Advanced Studies stated that

²¹ Symes, C. “Revolting Campuses: Novel Impressions of Australian Higher Education” *Teaching in Higher Education* Vol 9 No 4 (2004) pp.395-401

²² Foster and Varghese, *The Making of...* p.84

²³ Rowse, T. *Nugget Coombs- a reforming life*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press 2002 p.175

A major element of its role would be to provide training of students for the doctor of philosophy degree, at that time unusual in state universities. It was also intended to attract back to Australia some of the Australian researchers who had achieved distinction overseas, to give Australia a high reputation in the international research world and to raise research standards in the state universities. The new university was to meet national needs... directed to post war economic and social problems.²⁴

Among the British traditions previously adopted by Australian academia had been a resistance to the establishment of higher research degrees. John Newman (author of *The Idea of a University* in the 19th Century) preferred the teaching model of universities to the model of professional education and endowment of research which emerged as a competing focus for universities at the time of his writing. He was against the pressures that were affecting Cambridge and Oxford to shift to a more “Germanic” model of teaching based on investigation, rather than focusing on character formation (i.e. creating good, Christian gentlemen).²⁵ It could be argued that Australia in the 1950s was a very British place, and that Australian universities owed much to the British model. However a fundamental shift in Australian approaches to academia resulted in a new type of university emerging in the immediate post-war period: the specialist post-graduate research university, which was a shift away from both the British model and tradition and prior Australian experience.

After the Second World War a major shift occurred in the Australian academic approach to research. An awareness of the importance of university research for industry and government gradually supplanted the focus on ‘pure’ or theoretical research. Utility of research began to take pride of place. By 1955 the AVCC recognised a perception that universities were out of touch with societal needs, lamenting that “‘Ivory tower’ is becoming a term of opprobrium rather than of pride.’ Although Australian universities ‘tended to follow the British tradition [of confining]

²⁴ “Report of the Committee to Review the Institute of Advanced Studies of the Australian National University November 1990” Canberra, Australian Government Publishing Service 1990 p.12

²⁵ Rothblatt, *The Modern University* pp.12-15

themselves to fundamental research and to leave investigations of direct practical significance to outside bodies' the AVCC argued that the wartime experience of practical university work and the increasing need for funding should lead to the adoption in Australia of an American model of 'carry[ing] out a great deal of their work under research contracts, originating either in private industry or in government instrumentalities'. This idea of emphasising useful research 'might well be studied by all those concerned in the future planning of Australian universities'.²⁶

The AVCC observed major differences in community attitudes to universities in the UK and Australia. In Australia in the 1950s (unlike in the UK) few politicians and civil servants were university graduates. Even those leaders who were graduates saw the universities more as a place for vocational training rather than respecting universities as a place of learning and discovery in their own right. The egalitarian nature of Australian society meant that the universities 'have not enjoyed great prestige or respect among members of our governing class'.²⁷ The perception that universities were remote from the real world and the democratic tradition in Australia encouraging equal access (with universities focussing on producing large numbers of places for undergraduates) meant that governments in Australia were suspicious of university professors' 'academic snobbishness interfering with the university's service to democracy'. This produced a 'definite tendency to subordinate research, really advanced scholarship and postgraduate studies to the more elementary functions of making it possible for large numbers to earn degrees'.²⁸ The ANU was created in recognition of this and designed to bridge these shortcomings in the Australian university system.

²⁶ Myers, D.M. "The Australian Universities and Industry" in Australian Vice Chancellor's Committee, *A Symposium* pp.32-33

²⁷ Partridge, P.H. "The Australian Universities and Governments" in Australian Vice Chancellor's Committee, *A Symposium* p.11

²⁸ Partridge, P.H. "The Australian Universities and Governments" in Australian Vice Chancellor's Committee, *A Symposium* p.11

The creators of the ANU deliberately shied away from undergraduate training. The ANU was therefore not just a departure from the British system, but also from the prior Australian system focussed on undergraduate training — in effect becoming a postgraduate research institution similar to the American model. Raymond Firth (the Advisor on Pacific Studies to the Interim Council) stated:

It appeared that in a post-war flush of enthusiasm the Australian Commonwealth Government had decided to found a new research university in Canberra... it was clear that [the other Advisory panel members] were all strongly research oriented... we were of one view that at that stage at least there should be no link with Canberra University College, with its undergraduate teaching and career orientation... [we felt that] research in our fields must be linked with postgraduate teaching of seminal order, and research training.²⁹

Tim Rowse quotes Hancock as saying ‘what is alarming at Canberra is the juxtaposition of undergraduate work at its very worst... and a research university which aims to achieve the best.’³⁰ The interim council was not just creating a new institution; they were creating a fundamentally different institution. They viewed the university as ‘essentially as an institute of advanced studies... concerned primarily with research and training in research.’³¹ This was a significant departure from both the British ‘teaching’ model and the Australian egalitarian undergraduate focus, and created a university which was in form and function comparable with American Cold War universities.

The ANU Act

The ANU Act prescribed close links with government and a focus on activities supporting governmental aims. The Act was the result of two inter-departmental committees established

²⁹ Firth, “The Founding of the Research School of Pacific Studies” *The Journal of Pacific History* Vol 31 No 1 (1996) pp.3-7

³⁰ Rowse, *Nugget Coombs* p.176

³¹ Commonwealth of Australia, *Report of the Australian Universities Commission on Australian Universities 1958-1963*, Canberra, Commonwealth Government Printer 1960 p.2

during and after the Second World War.³² The Walker Committee in 1943 recommended that ‘immediate steps be taken to establish a national university in Canberra and to develop therein postgraduate studies and research in government, Pacific affairs, international relations and Australian history and literature’.³³ John Dedman (Minister for Post-War Reconstruction), with Prime Minister Chifely’s support, then set up the Mills Committee which produced the basis for the 1946 legislation creating the ANU. Already the special nature of the ANU’s relations with government was becoming evident, (as Crawford noted) the Mills Committee went beyond traditional academic concerns and specified that ‘while maintaining its independence, the university should make arrangements with government research institutions for joint research and exchanges of staff.’³⁴

It was envisaged in the ANU Act that the university would act as a centre for the advanced training of public servants. The Act allowed for ‘specialist training in such subjects as are considered desirable for the purposes of members of the public service or the staff of any public authority’.³⁵ The interim council took the view that teaching of public servants was to be by no means the only direct contribution of the school to government. At a meeting of Combined Committees on Pacific Affairs and Social Sciences on the 1st of March 1946, the Committees made a statement that there should be three major objectives for the Pacific studies school:

1. Research on economic, political and social development and problems, cultural studies, administration of colonial territories and geographical studies;
2. Teaching, including general research teaching and training of colonial administrative officers, diplomatic cadets, central administrative officers, teachers, missionaries, foreign public servants and students; and

³² Crawford, *The Australian National University* p.6

³³ Crawford, *The Australian National University* p.7

³⁴ Crawford, *The Australian National University* p.7

³⁵ ANU Submission to the Committee on Australian Universities, June 1957, NAA: A10663/1 CAU/ANU/3A Submission- the place of the Australian National University in the Australian University System

3. An advisory function, to provide skilled and independent advice to the Australian government, to international conferences and to international organisations.³⁶

It was hardly surprising that the members of the interim council took such a strong view of the requirement for a close government/university relationship. Almost all the members of the interim council were members of the public service rather than career academics. Its Head, Herbert ‘Nugget’ Coombs, had been the Director-General of the Department of Post War Reconstruction.³⁷ All the members of the interim council had served as members of government departments and authorities apart from the Secretary, R.D. Wright, who was the only member to have a purely academic background.³⁸

On the 19th of June 1946 Dedman introduced to Parliament the Bill that would establish the Australian National University.³⁹ The Act formally created the ANU and established the close links with government and objective of utility that were to be the defining features of the ANU. Dedman noted that the university would not merely ‘be a duplicate’ of other Australian universities, but would instead be a post-graduate institution, which would conduct research into areas ‘of special importance to Australia’.⁴⁰

Australia’s federal system meant that constitutionally there was no provision for the federal government to act on higher education. Grant Harman, a specialist on Australian academia, has noted that on Federation ‘it was assumed that education would be a state rather than

³⁶ Meeting of Combined Committees on Pacific Affairs and Social Sciences 1st March 1946, NAA A9874/1 64

³⁷ A. Cameron to ANU Registrar 27th September 1948, NAA: A10315 SA 1946/564 Australian University Act 1946 (1) proclamation, (2) Appointment of Council

³⁸ Press Statement (undated), ‘Australian National University- Members of the Interim Council’, NAA: A10315 SA 1946/564

³⁹ The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, *ANU Report of the Council for 1973*, Canberra, The Government Printer of Australia 1975 p.1

⁴⁰ The Commonwealth of Australia *Parliamentary Debates Session 1945 Third Session of the 17th Parliament (1st Period)* 9 Geo. VI vol. 184 19th July to 14th September 1945, Senate and House of Representatives p.4627

Commonwealth responsibility. Consequently, the constitution made no reference to education at all and so, by implication, education came to be regarded as a power reserved for the States'. In 1946 there was a constitutional amendment which enabled the Commonwealth to 'make laws "with respect to the provision of benefits to students"', which since then has enabled the federal government 'to develop for the Commonwealth a major role in Australian education'.⁴¹ The creation of the ANU was an important step in this process.

There was some humour in the discussions in the House, which demonstrated the bi-partisan support for the creation of the university. Dedman said:

The leader of the opposition may be particularly interested to hear that it has been suggested to me that, because the Commonwealth Government has no powers in relation to education, it might not have the power to establish a university with authority to confer degrees. I do not know whether that constitutional point has occurred to the Leader of the Opposition.

Demonstrating that there was a strong desire to overcome any obstacles to the creation of the university, Menzies replied, 'I hope that it never will.' Dedman went on to say: 'If a constitutional problem of that kind does arise, perhaps the right honourable gentleman will assist me to overcome it.' Menzies responded, 'I shall, with the greatest pleasure.'⁴²

Dedman stressed the contribution the university was to make in order to ensure Australia's future greatness and explicitly noted the link between informed citizenry and good governance, especially in relation to Australia's regional interests:

Our people should have available everything they need to permit their decisions to be made wisely and [with] full understanding of the issues involved... innumerable problems await solution if the future is to be made safe... We have also greatly increased responsibility to shoulder in relation to other people, particularly to those with whom we are associated as a Pacific power. The whole field of Pacific studies

⁴¹ Harman, G. "Australian Experience with Co-ordinating Agencies for Higher Education" *Higher Education* Vol 13 (1984) pp.501-515

⁴² The Commonwealth of Australia *Parliamentary Debates Session 1945 Third Session of the 17th Parliament (1st Period)* 9 Geo. VI vol. 184 19th July to 14th September 1945, Senate and House of Representatives. p.4627

awaits fuller development than it has previously received in Australia. Our relations [with the region] must be carefully studied in order that they may become friendly and fruitful as they must be if our future is to be safeguarded and if we are to make our full contribution in the councils of the nations... with the establishment of an Australian National University liberally endowed, properly housed and staffed with men of world repute, Australia will have taken one more step to align [sic] itself with the great and enlightened nations of the world.⁴³

Manning Clark (the noted Australian historian at the CUC and ANU), in commenting on the creation of the ANU stated that

as in so much of what the Labor government did, the note on survival was tucked away amongst the idealism ... For Labor [in creating the university] was just as preoccupied with the old nationalist aim of what the Minister called “our proper place in world affairs” as with the advancement of learning.⁴⁴

On the 1st of August 1946 the Australian National University officially came into being by Act of Parliament.⁴⁵ The ANU Act 1946 codified the purpose of the university, which was to

Encourage and provide facilities for postgraduate research and study, both generally and *in relation to subjects of national importance to Australia* [emphasis added]... The council shall have the entire control and management of the affairs and concerns of the university and may act in all matters concerning the university in such manner as appears to it best calculated to promote the interests of the university.⁴⁶

The Act thereby formally denoted that the institution was to have independence through the council, but it was to act largely in the national interest. The prescription to pursue subjects of national importance was the most significant element of the ANU Act not only because this prescription differentiated the ANU from State universities but also because, as a result, the question of how best to balance independence and utility was to loom large in the years to come.

⁴³ The Commonwealth of Australia: Parliamentary Debates (Hansard) Session 1945-46, 3rd Session of the 17th Parliament (2nd Period) 10 Geo. VI, Vol. 187 (11th April 1946 to 23rd July 1946) Senate and House of Representatives pp.1567-1569

⁴⁴ Manning Clark, *A Short History* p.235

⁴⁵ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of...* pp.18-19

⁴⁶ ANU Act, 1st reading 11th April 1946, NAA A9874/1 64

University Governance

While the United States research universities were shaped over time to act largely in the interests of government, for the ANU this role was prescribed from the outset, through its Act and structures of governance. The structures of governance of the ANU were established in a manner which would ensure close cooperation and coherence with the national interest. Despite official independence, the structure and processes of university governance at the ANU meant government influence on the university's members (administrative and academic) operated on a number of levels. An understanding of university governance is important as it forms a basis for the structural factors that mitigate for or against government influence on an institution.

Universities in Australia and overseas have a number of administrative and governing bodies that determine the conduct of the institutions. In the English tradition of university governance, self-governance by universities has primacy of place. However the expansion and increasing size of universities throughout the 1950s and 1960s denoted a shift in power from the academics to the university administrators. This represented a change to a more American model of control in the universities, as in the US system administrators have more power and say in governance of the university than academic staff. Increasing levels of government funding and control over funding also mitigates in favour of administrators, rather than academics, having the dominant position.⁴⁷

“Administration” in US universities includes the Board of Trustees (in private universities) or government appointed or elected bodies (often called ‘Regents’) in public universities. These bodies are vested with legal ownership of the university. Their role is generally fiduciary — owning the university's assets and being responsible for their sustainable management. Kennedy has said that the administration ‘run the place in one sense...[but] the faculty retain the

⁴⁷ Hasley and Trow, *The British Academics* pp.100-101

fundamental academic functions [e.g.] admitting the students, planning and delivering the curriculum [etc.]'.⁴⁸ In both the British and American systems there is a separation between academic staff and the administration. The administration determines university policy and has overall control while the academic staff run the operations of the institution.

Australian universities are managed by a number of different branches. The senior governors of the university are the Chancellor and Vice Chancellor. The Chancellor is the chairman of the governing body and titular head of the university. Usually the Chancellor is a 'distinguished citizen' and holds the office in an honorary capacity.⁴⁹ The Vice Chancellor is the chief executive officer of the university and works full time on the development of university policy. Vice Chancellors are responsible for the smooth running of the university and are the liaison between the governing and academic bodies.⁵⁰

The role of Vice Chancellors is central in the English and Australian system. They are extremely influential in the conduct and operations of the university and in terms of its outside influences.

Hasley and Trow in *The British Academics* emphasised the importance of Vice Chancellors:

Vice Chancellors are distinguished from the rest of the university professions by the extent of influence they can exert both on developments within their own institutions and on the general pattern and direction of higher education in the country as a whole... they have a voice in all decisions to do with the administrative and academic affairs of their university.⁵¹

Vice Chancellors help shape relations between the university and the state 'through their own personal acquaintances with politicians and civil servants', thus serving as an informal link between policy makers and the university.⁵² Their influence is often linked with the relative

⁴⁸ Kennedy, *Academic Duty* p.25

⁴⁹ Australian Council for Education Research, *A Brief Guide* pp.6-8

⁵⁰ Australian Council for Education Research, *A Brief Guide* pp.6-8

⁵¹ Hasley and Trow, *The British Academics* p.161

⁵² Hasley and Trow, *The British Academics* p.161

forcefulness of their personality.⁵³ Sir John Crawford, the Head of RSPacS from 1960 and Vice Chancellor between 1968 and 1973, Hugh Stretton remembers as an ‘imposing individual’.⁵⁴

The governance of a university is conducted through the council. University acts and statutes define the powers of the governing body.⁵⁵ Most Australian university councils have representation from academic staff and graduates. While there may be specific representation from industry or commerce, a usual feature of the governing bodies is the presence of parliamentary members or members of the public service. The degree of parliamentary representation corresponds with the degree of government influence and public interest in the conduct of the university. At the University of Adelaide parliamentary members comprise one fifth of the council, as opposed to two fifths at the ANU.⁵⁶

In Australian universities the power of council over university development, appointments and activities is significant, but with important qualifications. The councils of universities will ‘typically’ include government officials, in part to provide community representation.⁵⁷ P.H. Partridge stated that the senate or councils of universities generally have

...full powers in the government of the institution. In practice the exercise of its powers by the governing body is restricted by important conventions, the most important of which is that the council or senate does not seek to exercise control over academic matters. Matters which are clearly and purely academic are decided by academic bodies... These include such things as appointments to the academic staff, the composition of courses and like matters.⁵⁸

In later years parliamentary appointees to the ANU council viewed their job in slightly different terms. As representatives of parliament on the council, some focused on preventing political

⁵³ Hasley and Trow, *The British Academics* p.161

⁵⁴ Emeritus Professor Hugh Stretton, Interview, the University of Adelaide, 9th of November 2005

⁵⁵ Australian Council for Education Research, *A Brief Guide* pp.6-8

⁵⁶ Australian Council for Education Research, *A Brief Guide* pp.6-8

⁵⁷ Partridge, *Society, Schools and Progress* p.118

⁵⁸ Partridge, *Society, Schools and Progress* pp.118-119

undesirables from attaining positions at the university (see Chapter 4). This represented a threat to the traditional role of the council in preserving academic independence.

The professorial boards, faculty and board of studies form the lower levels of university governance and administration, controlling academic matters. The professorial board is the chief academic body and advises the council on academic matters. Many matters of university governance are dealt with at this level, or by the faculties or boards of studies. Faculties are usually subdivided into departments. The Departments of the RSPacS are shown at Appendix 1. Boards of studies often exist to deal with areas that do not fit neatly into one, or overlap between, faculties.⁵⁹ For the RSPacS the Board of the Institute of Advanced Studies (BIAS) was the overarching professorial body, one which at times aligned itself with the interests of the administration (see Chapter 9). In the Australian context “administration” could be said to comprise — with some overlap with the academic staff — of heads of departments, boards of studies, council and the Vice Chancellors.

Although the ANU council was to govern the university independently, acting in the interests of the federal government was to be a major focus. The ANU Act stated initially that two members of the university council should be appointed by the Senate and that the Governor General had the right to appoint up to eight members of the council.⁶⁰ At any one time at least four members of the council were directly appointed by (or from) Australian government bodies. Two members of council were sitting members of the House of Representatives and two were sitting members of the Senate.⁶¹ This meant that between 30 and 40% of the council of the university were to be political appointees. This percentage stayed fairly constant. In 1970, when council had 41

⁵⁹ Australian Council for Education Research, *A Brief Guide* pp.6-8

⁶⁰ ANU Act, 1st reading 11th April 1946, NAA A9874/1 64

⁶¹ The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia *The Australian National University: Report of the Council for 1959* Canberra, Commonwealth Government Printer 1961 p.3

members, 12 were appointed by the Governor General and 4 were sitting members of parliament, a total of 39%.⁶² Crawford, though careful with his words, believed this composition strongly influenced the university:

...the Government... through its constitutional and financial powers, influence[s] Council in its conduct of the University's affairs. I have used the word 'influence' advisedly: there is no question of interference in any way with how our affairs are run but the university is not and cannot be "an island entire unto itself... Council has a duty to see that our policies and practises are compatible with the best interests of the nation.⁶³

Revisions to the ANU Act relating to composition of council were frowned upon by the government. In 1970 Crawford was disappointed by the government's rejection of a proposed amendment to the ANU Act to allow the increase of the number of undergraduate representatives on council from one representative to two. Crawford argued that council was disproportionately weighted to ensure conformity with governmental interests, as the council had 17 'university members' and 24 'non-university' members.⁶⁴ The design of the ANU council carried important implications for academic autonomy and freedom. As Rowse observed, 'Intellectual freedom is a problem of institutional design, as much as it is a matter of principle.'⁶⁵ The design of the ANU council ensured governmental interests would be at the forefront of ANU agendas and activities.

⁶² Notes for Vice Chancellor's meeting with non-professorial academic staff: HC Coombs lecture theatre, 2nd September 1970, ANU: Sir John Crawford 2000/16 Subject Files and personal material c1922-1986 Box 1 item 4 meetings with non-professorial staff 1971

⁶³ Notes for Vice Chancellor's meeting with non-professorial academic staff: HC Coombs lecture theatre, 2nd September 1970, ANU: 2000/16 Box 1 item 4

⁶⁴ Vice Chancellor's report to Council 1970, ANU: 2000/16 Box 1 item 4

⁶⁵ Rowse, *Nugget Coombs* pp.257-259

Initial Debates on the scope and role of the School

In 1948 the members of the interim council of the university met to decide on the scope, nature and operating structure of the university. As a new institution and the first of its type in Australia there was much to be determined, not least due to the fact that academic research on Asia and the Pacific was largely a new area for Australian academics. Foster and Varghese noted that ‘[At the 1948] Pacific Studies Conference [anthropologist] Ian Hogbin described Melanesia “as virtually a *terra incognita*”, while one of his Sydney colleagues remarked that the study of linguistics in the Pacific was in its infancy.’⁶⁶ The lack of knowledge on Asia was recognised by politicians: the Minister for External Affairs R.G. Casey believed Australia was in ‘a fools paradise of ignorance about the east’.⁶⁷ Rectifying this shortfall was why the RSPacS had been created, the question was about how this could be achieved, and to what end.

There was some difficulty in determining the nomenclature to be used to define the parameters of the schools and departments of the university, and their specific roles and areas of responsibility. In Pacific studies this was particularly contentious. Foster and Varghese observe that while the recently finished Pacific War had given the Pacific a similar connotation to Europe in terms of theatres of war it could also be seen to limit the scope of investigations to the islands of the Pacific. Deciding on the broad focus, the subcommittee decided to suggest ‘School of Pacific and Asian Studies’ as the name of the school (which was the title adopted by the school in the 1990s), but ‘R.M. Crawford from the University of Melbourne, thought this limited rather than widened the scope of the school... [he argued that the scope of the school should be defined as] “somewhere ranging from the Americas to India”’.⁶⁸ This broad interpretation of the scope of the

⁶⁶ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of...* p.84

⁶⁷ Murphy, *Harvest* p.40

⁶⁸ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of...* p.17

school was eagerly taken up by the school's departments which refused to be confined to a narrow definition of their field.⁶⁹

The problems of the definition of "Pacific studies" were to persist for many years, though most ANU academics chose to ignore any perceived limitation and adopted broad definitions of the scope of their research area. Sir John Crawford, who advocated the broadest possible interpretation, wrote in the 1961 annual report of council that:

The school is sometimes in difficulty over its name. There is no formal definition of its regional interest. Nor would this be wise or practicable. It can be assumed that the school will emphasise Asia and the Pacific in its work... In all departments however, work on theory knows no particular geographical bounds. Moreover, even in empirical studies full understanding is often not possible without reference, for example, to European and North American experience, policy and interests.⁷⁰

Crawford tended to prefer a policy of keeping issues and limits loosely (or not at all) defined, viewing rules and official policies as — by definition — limiting to the activities of academic staff (this also had implications for the outside work of ANU academics – see Chapter 8). By 1963 research had been done in 'an area stretching from India in the west to Japan in the north and the United States in the east.'⁷¹ The broad scope had been adopted.

The most crucial debate about the focus of the School was between the provisional appointee as head of the RSPacS and Academic Advisor Sir Raymond Firth who was an anthropologist, and Sir Fredric Eggleston who was a geographer and a noted Australian public servant. Firth, in recalling the creation of the RSPacS, said:

The issue of values at which the new University should aim soon arose. In founding such a research institution the Australian Commonwealth Government doubtless had some practical ends in view... I was

⁶⁹ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of...* p.107

⁷⁰ The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia *The Australian National University: Report of the Council for 1961*, Canberra, Commonwealth Government Printer 1961 p.54

⁷¹ The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia *The Australian National University: Report of the Council for 1963*, Canberra, Commonwealth Government Printer 1964 p.54

much concerned that the scholarly research of the new Pacific school should not be hampered by a commitment to political and administrative aims such as training of public servants... The issue of government-initiated research was of wider import. The view shared, I think, by all academic advisers was that there was no reason for us to stand aloof from government interest and suggestions, but the people who should determine the character of research projects and have responsibility for their implementation in the new university should be the academic personnel and not government officials. It was always at the back of our minds that "he who pays the piper calls the tune".⁷²

Firth was strongly committed to the school conducting theoretical research as a major part of its activities rather than practical, utilitarian research as proposed by Eggleston. Firth continued:

Here I encountered some difficulty. An influential member of the Interim Council Sir Frederick [sic] Eggleston, took a rather different territorial view. As a former diplomat he wished for a strong Asian component in the work of the Pacific school and appeared to regard research in the Pacific islands as of much less significance... (Eggleston would probably also have preferred a political scientist rather than an anthropologist to direct the policy of the Pacific School).⁷³

Eggleston was a man with impeccable credentials in foreign affairs, having served under the Menzies and John Curtin governments as ambassador to China and in several other important posts in External Affairs during the crucial period of Australia's history between 1941 and 1945.⁷⁴ He took a broad view of Australia's position in the global sphere. Eggleston was instrumental in ensuring the ANU had a regional focus. Oskar Spate recalled that

I think F.W. Eggleston planned and put forward RSPacS as a ploy; a ploy to sell the idea of a national research university in Canberra. And post-war reconstruction was on, you know, and our relations with our neighbours to the north bulked very largely in our political consciousness, and Eggleston said very reasonably, well, we'd better know more about them, and so have a research school of Pacific studies... I

⁷² Firth, "The Founding" pp.3-7

⁷³ Firth, "The Founding" pp.3-7

⁷⁴ Evatt cable to Bruce, Casey and Eggleston, 3rd December 1941 in Hudson, W. and Stokes, H. (Eds) *Documents on Australian Foreign Policy 1937-1949 Vol. 5*, Canberra, Australian Government Publishing Service 1982 p.265

think he was thinking New Guinea, Indonesia, South East Asia rather than Pacific in the sense of Pacific islands and all that, but we'd just come out of the Pacific war, and Pacific was a good word.⁷⁵

The clash between Firth and Eggleston was probably more than a mere manifestation of academic rivalry between anthropologists and political scientists as implied by Foster and Varghese.⁷⁶ Firth believed that the school presented an opportunity to advance the theoretical knowledge of his discipline. Eggleston, on the other hand, suspected that the tide was beginning to turn against empire and that the political future of Australia would be increasingly determined by events in Asia and the Pacific. In this context he believed that the school should necessarily provide research of direct relevance to the formulation of Australian policy. Essentially the debate was on the role, usage and function of the university and its utility to government.

Academic rivalry was certainly a factor in the dispute. Douglas Copland stated that Eggleston had emphasised to him that 'special reference [in RSPacS] should be placed on political, geographic and demographic influences in the area. Hitherto rather too much emphasis was given to anthropology.'⁷⁷ Eggleston did want a geographer to head the RSPacS.⁷⁸ However, the crucial element of the debate was the role the ANU was to have in serving Australia's national and international interests and the best way in which this could be done. Eggleston stressed that

the international situation of Australia must be considered in relation to the various forces which may be brought against it... quite apart from the world complex, Australia has a special relation to the peoples occupying the territory around the Indian and Pacific oceans... an enquiry into the circumstances of these peoples and the conditions in which they live should give some idea of the forces which may be brought to

⁷⁵ Transcript of Interview with Emeritus Professor O.H.K. Spate 15 May 1990, ANU Archives: ANU History project, UA 2001/20, Oral History Project Records Item 04

⁷⁶ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of...* p.40

⁷⁷ Copland to Committee 18th February 1949, NLA: MS 423 "Papers of Sir Fredric William Eggleston" Series 12 Box 25

⁷⁸ Eggleston 8th May 1946, NLA: MS 423 Series 12 Box 23

bear upon us from them or upon them from us. Such an enquiry should be undertaken as essential to the formulation of Australian policy.⁷⁹

Eggleston's notes on the proposed establishment of the university stated explicitly: 'In the External Affairs Department especially, work would have been very much facilitated if there had been more adequate data and knowledge on questions relating to the Pacific area.'⁸⁰ Eggleston was therefore concerned about the lack of knowledge on Asia and the Pacific which had been made evident during the Pacific War and firmly believed that effective Australian defence and foreign policy relied on improving the knowledge base available to it. This reveals Eggleston wanted the school to provide good, relevant and independent knowledge from the Australian point of view to assist in the formulation of policy.

Eggleston clearly saw the increasing need for self reliance in the development of Australian policy for the region, as the establishment of post-colonial societies in Asia and the Pacific had direct impact on Australia. He wrote that

Most of this area [Asia and the Pacific] has been held by several European empires who are now relaxing their hold, and new governments are being set up to control the area... Thus a large number of political and sociological problems will arise for solution in the near future... The political approach to these problems will be fumbling and opportunist unless there is a body of research which elucidates, first, the facts and, then, speculates on the way in which they may be dealt with.⁸¹

Eggleston believed the ANU was essential for enhancing Australia's knowledge base and enabling it to become a more effective force on the global stage.⁸²

⁷⁹ Eggleston, Discussion on the Creation of the ANU Political and Resources Atlas, NLA: MS 423 Series 12 Box 25

⁸⁰ Eggleston, Notes on the Proposed Establishment of the University, NLA: MS 423 Series 12 Box 23

⁸¹ Memorandum by Eggleston on the Research School of Pacific Studies 22nd March 1949, ANU: 2001/03, Box 1 Basic Papers 1946-1951

⁸² Eggleston's notes on Hancock's letter of 16th July 1947, 8th September 1947, ANU: 2001/03, Box 1 Basic Papers 1946-1951

In contrast with this utilitarian view, Firth had written that ‘museums’ could do well out of Pacific studies.⁸³ His narrow emphasis on anthropological research and a desire to focus on theoretical rather than practical research shaped Firth’s view of how the university should develop and focus its activities. Firth wanted to create a “pure” anthropological studies unit focused on the Australian colonies, rather than take the broader view of Asian and Pacific affairs which Eggleston was promoting. Firth was also worried about the potential negative implications for academic independence inherent in policy oriented research. He wrote that:

The school of Pacific Studies, as a specialist institution housing a number of people who may be regarded as “experts” on the region, may come to be looked upon as a place to which to apply for information on current topics. One can hardly suppose that it would be thought of as a source to which parliamentarians could apply for material, but while no member of the school should be hampered in making his special knowledge available, it should be clearly understood that the school is to be a place for Pacific research and not an information bureau on Pacific affairs.⁸⁴

Eggleston said that he was ‘disappointed with the microcosmic approach’ which had been adopted by Firth. Eggleston also recognised the potential threat to academic independence caused by a practical focus, however he believed that this fear of loss of independence was linked with fear of potential threats to funding and prestige rather than simply a desire to avoid utilitarian work, stating

One difficulty is the fear... that [the school] may be required to advise on political questions... The fear, I presume, is not that their work will become useful in the framing of policy, but that, if the advice they give is not palatable, the school will diminish in public esteem. A suspicion may be created that the advice given is affected by the policy of the government.⁸⁵

⁸³ Firth, memorandum on School of Pacific Studies, Jan 30th 1948, NLA: MS 423 Series 12 Box 25

⁸⁴ Firth, memorandum on School of Pacific Studies, Jan 30th 1948, NLA: MS 423 Series 12 Box 25

⁸⁵ Eggleston, letter 23rd February 1949, NLA: MS 423 Series 12 Box 25

Eggleston regarded school's role of supporting government as being of utmost importance and reasoned that it had formed the central reasoning behind the government creating the institution. He implied that opposition to the government's plan for the school would reinforce ivory tower stereotypes and miss the best opportunity Australian universities had yet had to directly serve the interests and needs of Australian society, through informing government about Asia and the Pacific:

Professor Firth's ideas do not accord with my own...as I have always said, and I understand the whole council agrees with me, it would be a great mistake to have this school concentrated on anthropology and one or two allied subjects...Frankly I look upon the school of Pacific Studies as providing a research background on *all* the subjects which will be important for the *Australian role in the Pacific world of the future*. I am sure this is expected of the school. It will be of tremendous assistance to the departments of the government which are concerned with these matters. Possibly, the last factor would be looked upon as a disadvantage but that seems to me to be a *piece of academic unreality*.⁸⁶ [emphasis in original]

This debate neatly encapsulates the conflict about its function that has been evident at the ANU since its earliest days. Is the national interest best served by advancing knowledge for knowledge's sake, or is it better served by focussing research to fit the political needs of the government of the day? Eggleston's view also demonstrates the concept of *service to the government* that formed the basis of the university's relations with the federal government during the Cold War.

Eggleston's biographer, W.G. Osmond, asserts that the primary conflict of the time was actually between Eggleston and Hancock, who had a falling out and argued quite vehemently about the content of the curriculum of the schools (RSPacS and RSSS) and their respective roles. Hancock was particularly concerned that the schools should not overlap in their fields of study. For

⁸⁶ Eggleston to R.G. Osborne 21st Jan 1948, NLA: MS 423 Series 12 Box 25

Eggleston, the conflict stirred up ‘an assertion of “nativist” feelings’.⁸⁷ In fact, the conflicts between Eggleston and Firth and Eggleston and Hancock were exacerbated by Hancock’s siding with Firth in the debate on the role of the RSPacS. Hancock stated that he wanted to collaborate with Firth and proposed that this would overcome the difficulties posed by the overlap and ‘inter-penetration’ between the two schools.⁸⁸ Eggleston had strong views on how to deal with the over-lapping roles of the two schools. His view, which he put forward ‘with some stubbornness’, was that Social Sciences should be a ‘rather theoretical Australian studies school’ while Pacific Studies would be ‘practical’.⁸⁹

So close were the relations between RSPacS and RSSS that not only were they to be eventually housed together in the H.C. Coombs building, but Hancock also suggested that it would be good to combine the two schools into one institution within a few years of their initial development.⁹⁰ Despite Hancock’s suggestion, it was considered by the committee to be undesirable to amalgamate the two schools, mainly due to the desire to place special emphasis on the development of Pacific studies rather than have these subsumed under the ‘more general studies in the social sciences’.⁹¹

The arguments came to a head in 1949, when Vice Chancellor Copland gave Hancock an ultimatum, which led to him resigning his position on the Academic Advisory Committee. Problems over who was to direct Pacific Studies and Social Sciences were not resolved until the late 1950s when Crawford and Hancock were finally appointed.⁹² Firth also resigned from the

⁸⁷ Osmond, W.G. *Frederic Eggleston, An Intellectual in Australian Politics*, Sydney, Allen and Unwin 1985 p.269

⁸⁸ Hancock to Mills 16th July 1947, NAA: M448/1 260

⁸⁹ Osmond, *Frederic Eggleston* p.267

⁹⁰ ANU: 2001/03, Box 1 Basic Papers 1946-1951, Hancock to Copland 21st March 1949

⁹¹ Report on the Committee on the School of Pacific Studies 11th March 1949, ANU: 2001/03, Box 1 Basic Papers 1946-1951

⁹² Osmond, *Frederic Eggleston* pp.272-273

Academic Advisory Council and declined to be the Director of RSPacS in 1949.⁹³ Explaining why he did not want to take up the post as Director of the RSPacS, Firth said he was a researcher at heart and the position would not allow sufficient time for research. Secondly, he felt deeply concerned about the potential for political direction over the school interfering with the way he wanted the school to be run. Firth described to Copland his reasons for his refusing the position:

The danger of having the work of the School of Pacific Studies prejudiced by claims that might be made from outside, especially from political circles, that it should be oriented towards Australia's practical interests in the Pacific [and that it was doubtful whether the council would] safeguard a Director in the event of such claims being pressed. At the same time there is a set of legitimate expectations that the Pacific School will not operate out of relation to the many urgent problems which confront not only those concerned with policy and administration but also those who are trying to think out the implications of modern times.⁹⁴

He felt that his war work had been devoted to the practical application of social science research and he wanted to 'rescue more time' for his academic [i.e. theoretical] work. This argument and attitude not only was the basis for his refusing the post, but also shaped his view of the university as a whole.⁹⁵

Firth did have a significant impact on the staffing of the RSPacS: 'On my recommendation S.F. Nagel, J.W. Davidson, O.H.K. Spate and W.R. Crocker were appointed to professorial posts and W.E.H. Stanner to a readership in the main disciplines of the School. C.P. Fitzgerald was also appointed to a post in Chinese studies.'⁹⁶ Many of the original appointments of the ANU were formed through a semi-nepotistic arrangement defined by the personal friendships of those within the interim council, centring around the political scientists of the Department of External Affairs and the economists of the Department of Post-War Reconstruction. Copland had succeeded

⁹³ Rowse, *Nugget Coombs* p.254

⁹⁴ Firth to Copland 17th January 1949, ANU: Australian National University, University Records, 2001/16 Personal Files Box 3, 3.4.0.3 Part 1 Professor Raymond Firth

⁹⁵ Firth to Copland 17th January 1949, ANU: 2001/16 Box 3, 3.4.0.3 Part 1 Professor Raymond Firth

⁹⁶ Firth, "The Founding" pp.3-7

Eggleston as ambassador to China⁹⁷, and when Copland accepted the appointment as the first Vice Chancellor of the university, close collaboration between Eggleston and Copland ensured that many of Eggleston's views on the creation of the school would be accepted. Copland often turned to Eggleston for advice during the formative years of the university.⁹⁸ H.C. Coombs said in 1957 that 'the present structure of the School is based largely on a memorandum originally written by Sir Frederick Eggleston.'⁹⁹ This statement reveals that a compromise had been reached. Firth clearly saw that political issues would predominate over the school's research agenda and as a result was unable to continue his relationship with the university. Eggleston had been successful in his argument but Firth had largely shaped the personnel of the school. Utility to government was to form a major emphasis of the activities of the school — a role which would be strengthened later under Crawford.

Laying the Foundation — slow beginnings

Despite high expectations, the ANU got off to a decidedly slow start. This contributed to early tensions in the university-state relationship. Quite apart from the problem of individuals disagreeing over the future course of the schools was the problem of attracting noted scholars to a new university situated in the nation's capital. Canberra was still a small town at that time, so initially the expedient measure of appointing to the interim council intellectuals from the ranks of the public service was adopted. Once Hancock had been brought in from Oxford to advise on the development of the School of Social Sciences he flung himself whole-heartedly into the problems of obtaining appropriate personnel for the university as a whole. Hancock believed the major obstacles to the successful formation of the ANU were a lack of library resources and the poor standard of the existing resources, the fact that even with school staffs of 20 for each school 'the

⁹⁷ ANU: ANU History project, UA 2001/20, Oral History project Records Item 19: Transcript of Interview with Emeritus Professor C.P. Fitzgerald 2 May 1991

⁹⁸ Osmond, *Frederic Eggleston* p.267

⁹⁹ Coombs to Melville 16th September 1957, Barr Smith Library (BSL), Oliphant Papers, Series 3: Correspondence

local opportunities for discussion... will remain, by comparison with opportunities elsewhere, limited' and the 'peculiar environmental limitations of Canberra itself — an over-specialised community of less than 20,000 people', which meant that Canberra was 'not a good place' for academic stimulus.¹⁰⁰

By 1950 the medical school had begun operations, but officials of the Department of the Interior noted that it was 'functioning with difficulty in London, Dunedin, New Zealand and Melbourne. The university's difficulties in accommodating staff in Canberra can only be solved by making it possible for the interim council to acquire or erect dwellings concurrently with the government's normal programmes.' These problems were affecting all schools and departments. Ironically the initial appointments were seen to 'represent a successful bid by the University to attract to Canberra Australian scholars and scientists of high distinction who have hitherto only found the proper atmosphere and facilities for their work overseas.'¹⁰¹

The Commonwealth was concerned that the university should not become too extravagant in its capital expenditure. In 1947 the Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works wrote to Chifley that 'it is essential in the view of this committee that, as Commonwealth money is to be used for these buildings, someone with expert knowledge of architecture should be included on the interim council of the university to watch the progress from a departmental point of view.'¹⁰² This indicates that the role of the interim council, in the view of parliament, included an oversight role for the government rather than providing an independent assessment of needs for the new institution.

¹⁰⁰ Hancock to Mills 16th July 1947, NAA: M448/1 260

¹⁰¹ Department of the Interior memo, 5 April 1950, NAA: A 431/1, 1949/535 "Australian National University. Establishment of, in Canberra"

¹⁰² Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works to Chifley, 1st December 1947, NAA: A 431/1, 1949/535

The university buildings took a long time to be erected and until that time the difficulties of operating in a university without facilities continued. The Physical Sciences and the Medical Schools took priority in the development of buildings and obtaining equipment. The RSPacS had fewer requirements for specialised equipment and facilities and it was not until 1955 that plans were put forward for the creation of permanent buildings for the school. It was not until 1962 that the first stones were laid for the permanent residence of the RSSS and RSPacS¹⁰³ and not until 1964 that the H.C. Coombs building was officially opened and the RSPacS had a permanent place to study.¹⁰⁴

Figure 2: The ANU, Circa 1951



University House, Australian National University, Liversidge Street — Canberra, March 1951
(NAA: A7973, INT188 11713732 Photographic negatives and reference prints, multiple number series with 'INT' [Department of the Interior] prefix)

¹⁰³ Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia *Australian National University: Report of the Council for the Period 1st January 1955 to 31st December 1955*, Canberra, Commonwealth Government Printer 1956 p.5 and, see illustrations in *Australian National University: Report of the Council for 1961*

¹⁰⁴ The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia *The Australian National University: Report of the Council for 1964*, Canberra, Commonwealth Government Printer 1965 p.5

The Coombs building was not finished until quite some time after the opening and not without delays and what the government considered to be an excessive request for further funding. D. Dexter, Secretary of the Australian Universities Commission, wrote in 1966 that ‘the Commission is concerned with the relatively high cost of this building, compared with the cost of similar projects at other universities.’¹⁰⁵ The Prime Minister’s Department took the view that the university should sort out its own difficulties without resorting to excessive requests for capital expenditure. In 1965 the department noted that the university was unwilling to fund excesses on the cost of the building and that the university continued to be unwilling to propose the abandoning of the project for the remainder of the triennium. The department took a dim view of this perceived recalcitrance: ‘am not in favour of *our* [emphasis in original] initiating proposals to solve problems the university has created for itself. Let it settle down to a common sense solution.’¹⁰⁶

The financial pressures (examined in more detail in Chapter 7) acted in two ways. Some members of parliament began to feel the ANU was reckless in its expenditure, whereas the ANU felt that financial constraints were hampering development and impeding the production of useful research. The academic activities of the school got off to a slow start, exacerbated by the problems of obtaining staff and bringing in students at a time when there was not sufficient housing or buildings. Oskar Spate, Head of the Department of Geography, described the situation in his annual report for 1951 which

practically consisted the recording of the assumption of duty by Professor Spate, the rest of the Department consisted of a prismatic compass and 1/6th of a secretary... At the beginning the staff/student ratio was 3 or more to one in favour of the staff; as Geoff [Sawer] put it, “the professors here lecture each other”.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ D. Dexter, Secretary of the Australian Universities Commission, 3rd November 1966, NAA: A463/50 1965/3659 Australian National University- HC Coombes building

¹⁰⁶ Prime Minister’s Department memo, 28 September 1965, NAA: A463/50 1965/3659

¹⁰⁷ Spate, The Early Days at the ANU- an anecdote, NLA: “Papers of Oskar Hermann Khristian Spate” MS7886 Series 3

In 1954 the RSPacS contained only 25 students.¹⁰⁸ The small size and slow growth of the university is indicated by the following table, showing the number of students in the university *as a whole* between 1955 and 1963:

Table 1: Number of Students 1955-1963

<p>NOTE: This table is included on page 71 of the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.</p>
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(Source: Australian Council for Education Research *A Brief Guide to Australian Universities* (4th Ed) Hawthorn, ACER 1964 p.49)

The council was not optimistic about the immediate production of important research by the university. In their report to parliament for 1953, the council pointed out that: ‘The odds that any particular piece of research will be fruitful are in fact quite small and often the least promising investigations will prove the most dramatic in results... [however] discoveries of great importance can be expected from time to time.’¹⁰⁹ The council was advising the government not to expect immediate results, but rather to expect a gradual development of both research capability and product. The ANU was wary of expectations about the production of major research outputs in the early years. Council emphasised that ‘it is natural to hope that the national university will prove fruitful in discoveries of the first order, but great minds are very rare and the university will be fortunate indeed if it ever produces an Einstein, a Rutherford, a Darwin or a Pasteur.’¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸ The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia *The Australian National University: Report of the Council for the Period 1st January 1954 to 31st December 1954*, Canberra, Government Printing Office 1955 pp.30-31

¹⁰⁹ The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia *The Australian National University: Report of the Council for the Period 1st January 1953 to 31st December 1953*, Canberra, Government Printing Office 1954 p.6

¹¹⁰ ANU Submission to the Committee on Australian Universities, June 1957, NAA: A10663/1 CAU/ANU/3A

As a result of the slow start tensions between the government and the ANU began to increase.

Asked whether Menzies got a 'bit impatient with the ANU in the '50s', Geoffrey Sawer

(Professor of Law at the ANU) speculated that

He may have disliked some aspects of it, or perhaps was disappointed with the slowness with getting the sort of people they wanted... State's people were [opposed to the university] because they thought the government was better advised to spend its money on increasing the postgraduate possibilities and research facilities and so forth in the existing state universities, and that it was a maniacal thing to do to try and set up a first rate institution of this sort starting from scratch in this godforsaken place, Canberra.¹¹¹

The research that did emerge was topical in nature. Of the ten research projects referred to in the council report of 1955 in the Department of Anthropology, five focussed exclusively on Papua New Guinea.¹¹² PNG was a natural topic for Australian research as it was an Australian colony about which comparatively little was understood.¹¹³ In 1959, Dr Wurm of the Anthropology Department wrote a manual for use in the field by missionaries, administrators and anthropologists for recording languages in New Guinea.¹¹⁴ Between 1959 and 1962, while Anthropology continued to be focused primarily on New Guinea, other departments diversified their research interests. Far East History focussed on China and Japan and International Relations focused on SEATO, nuclear defence and disarmament, Australia's interests in West New Guinea and South East Asia and NATO strategy. The Department of Economics focussed on the food supply for the expanding population in Asia, Australian economic relations in Asia, cash cropping in New Guinea and the South East Asian village economy. Geography ranged widely across its discipline.¹¹⁵ As has been noted by Foster and Varghese, once work began on

¹¹¹ ANU Archives: ANU History project, UA 2001/20, Oral History project Records Item 06: Transcript of Interview with Emeritus Professor Geoffrey Sawer May-June 1990

¹¹² The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia *The Australian National University: Report of the Council for the Period 1st January 1955 to 31st December 1955*, Canberra, Government Printing Office 1956 p.36

¹¹³ *Australian National University: Report of the Council for the Period 1st January 1955 to 31st December 1955* p.7

¹¹⁴ *Australian National University: Report of the Council for 1959* p.66

¹¹⁵ *Report of Council 1959* p.7, *Report of Council 1960* p.74, *Report of Council 1961* p.79

research within the RSPaS, the tempo rapidly increased from its somewhat tentative start.¹¹⁶ By 1969 the council was finally able to state that: ‘the school plays a not insignificant part in bringing informed judgment to bear on the practical problems of the region.’¹¹⁷

In the late 1940s and 1950s the structure and focus of the Research School of Pacific Studies and the university as a whole were defined. Although debates about whether close links with government were desirable were to continue throughout the history of the ANU, from the earliest days the concept that the university was to serve the national interest was enshrined in the character, charter and attitudes of the university. Outside (particularly governmental) interests were to play a significant role in shaping the broad topics for research within the university. The university itself formed a different sort of institution, departing both from the traditional Australian focus on undergraduate education and the traditional British model of universities, instead adopting an American style, postgraduate, research-focused institutional identity. The ANU was an Australian institution focused on Australian needs. The exercise in nation-building in the post-war world created an opportunity for focused academic research designed to serve the national interest. The ANU was developed, designed and structured to serve the aims of the government, particularly in assisting in the enhancement of regional policy. As a result service to government became a primary focus — as it did in the American Cold War universities. Nevertheless, from very early on in the relationship, tensions were beginning to emerge.

¹¹⁶ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of...* p.107

¹¹⁷ The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia *The Report of the Council of the Australian National University for 1969* Canberra, Commonwealth Government Printing Office 1971 p.94

CHAPTER 3: ACADEMIC INDEPENDENCE

Academic independence and academic freedom are important elements of western academic systems, enabling universities to operate without fear of political interference and allowing academics to research and discuss findings objectively. These principles are of fundamental importance in discussion of the academic-state relationship during the Cold War. As such, elaboration on the history and basic elements of the principles is required to support the general contention that the ANU in the 1950s and 1960s was more comparable to US Cold War universities than has generally been recognised. The early fears for academic independence and attitude of politicians to these principles translated into a situation where the ANU was more sensitive than other established universities to Cold War pressures from the federal government.

The ANU's close relationship with the federal government led to a heightened perception of threats to academic independence. From the creation of the university some ANU academics have felt that their close association with the government would be a hindrance to academic freedom but others felt that close links would be beneficial. The ANU has had difficulty dealing with the apparent contradiction between the national importance clause in the ANU Act and the concept that academia should be free from government interference.

The development of relations with the government at the ANU during the Cold War produced long-term threats to the independence of the university. Michael McKinley, a modern critic of the university-state relationship, argues the ANU and RSPacS has essentially prostituted its independence at the whim of the government to which it is beholden for its existence. McKinley dismisses the rationale of the birth of the university and the 'national importance' clauses in the University Act for a much baser appreciation of the motives of the university. His central

argument, though of recent origin, is worth discussing as it is the quintessence of any attack on the ANU from the basis of its lack of independence from the federal government. He states: ‘The university, of course, has, in a consummate example of a genuinely well-adjusted, but adequate betrayal, allowed itself to be used this way as though it was practicing virtue. But any, even superficial, examination of these practices suggests a less than proper activity.’ McKinley regards the ‘exchange relationship’ as a cynical, self-serving one on the part of both parties.¹

McKinley says that the university can not be perceived as the ‘site of rigorous disinterested research and analysis’ and that its scholars are less concerned with ‘basic theory’ and theoretical concerns than is the norm for universities. Also of concern to McKinley is that the relationship threatens the notion that examination by universities is, by its independent nature, able to detect flaws in government policy and that the relationship results in the university being less inclined to employ ‘radicals’, unconventional intellectuals who are predisposed to questioning and challenging all subjects which they come across. He argues that the ANU does not understand its role in terms of these benefits of academia, and that ‘the defence and foreign policy communities, and the relevant departments and centres are at one in their hostility to any rigorous, theoretically critical project being undertaken’. McKinley asks why the university would actively pursue such a relationship at the cost of their independence and his answer is simple: ‘for the worst of reasons...there is money, power and status in it’.²

McKinley’s argument also appears to be pertinent to the ANU during the Cold War. Attempts to limit academic independence at the ANU during the Cold War led to some individuals being reluctant to produce conclusions from research which were contrary to those expected by the

¹ McKinley, “Discovering the ‘Idiot Centre’”

² McKinley, “Discovering the ‘Idiot Centre’”

government.³ Of central importance in any discussion of academic independence is the extent to which the guiding force of a university is principles such as academic freedom or, conversely, the objectives of the financiers and beneficiaries of research. McKinley's argument indicates that the problems of independence that emerged during the Cold War have not yet been solved. The conflict between the level of theoretical and applied research and the degree of governmental input that is healthy for the university continues to this day.

What is Academic Independence?

Academic independence is related to the societal functions and responsibilities of universities. Defining the basic features of the principle and relationship of the principle to academic activities is important to gain an understanding of the nature of the relationship between academia and government. The Cold War highlighted longstanding issues of academic freedom and independence dating back to the 19th Century. In the German Confederation the notions of *lehrfreiheit* and *lernfreiheit* — freedom of teaching and learning — were combined with the notion of *wissenschaft* — the pursuit of science and knowledge for its own sake — to form the basis of the notion of academic freedom⁴. Governments have challenged the concept of academic freedom since its inception. In 1819 the Carlsbad Decrees allowed the Confederated governments to remove from universities

All teachers who, by obvious deviation from their duty or by exceeding the limits of their functions, or by the abuse of their legitimate influence over the youthful minds, or by propagating harmful doctrines hostile to public order or subversive of existing governmental institutions shall have unmistakably proved their unfitness for the important office intrusted [sic] to them.⁵

³ See Chapter 9 for a deeper discussion of this issue

⁴ Davis, R. "The Unbalancing of Australian Universities"

<http://www.uow.edu.au/arts/sts/bmartin/dissent/documents/sau/Davis.pdf> (accessed 11th July 2008)

⁵ "The Carlsbad Decrees" in Sherman, D. (ed) *Western Civilization: Sources, Images and Interpretations Volume II: since 1660*, New York, McGraw Hill 1995 p.129-130

Governments have, to a greater or lesser extent, held this view about controversial academics ever since.

Harman has noted that discussions of university independence are concerned with interrelated, but separate issues of autonomy, accountability, independence and freedom. The phrases academic independence and academic freedom are used interchangeably to represent all these concepts. Autonomy is the principle that universities have a right and ability to conduct self-governance and to control their 'internal life' (including recruitment of staff, admission and grading of students and determining degree requirements and curriculum). Independence has two aspects: effective independence in the freedom of the university to govern its own affairs; and legal independence in the degree of institutional autonomy granted through university acts. Accountability relates to the demands of those who fund higher education that their funding be spent appropriately, to know how the funds are used and to 'monitor the effectiveness of programs'. The final aspect is the concept of academic freedom, which is concerned with the ability of individual academic staff to 'speak and write without interference from external authority.'⁶ All these issues are relevant to the experience of the ANU.

Academic freedom therefore refers to the right of students and professors to, as the American philosopher Edmund Pincoffs said, 'pursue the truth unhindered'.⁷ This definition of the term implies that academics have the right (and concurrently the duty) to pursue knowledge unimpeded by intellectual restrictions imposed by governments, university administration, corporations or public opinion. A major difficulty in any discussion of academic freedom is that the term is often poorly defined. Its use ranges from the right of academics to reach unpopular

⁶ Harman, G. "The Erosion of University Independence: recent Australian experience" *Higher Education* Vol 12 (1983) pp.501-518

⁷ Pincoffs, E. "Introduction" in Pincoffs, E (ed) *The Concept of Academic Freedom*, Austin, University of Texas Press 1975 p.viii

conclusions in their research, to the defence of public statements made by academics in their private capacity, to the involvement of students and academics in protests against government policies. In America the issue of academic freedom during the Cold War was complicated by the argument that the rights of academics in terms of academic freedom were merely part and parcel of the rights enshrined in the Bill of Rights. When a university or government restricted a professor's right to take part in political activity it infringed upon that individual's civil liberties.⁸ In Australia there was in-principle recognition by governments of the importance of academic freedom, but the principle itself did not negate the obligations imposed upon citizens by the law. In other words, academic freedom did not confer any greater advantage to academics than any of the freedoms enjoyed by other citizens of a democratic society.

Harman emphasised the importance of universities to society as a whole when he said that higher education provides 'one of the important checks and balances in a democratic society'. This function of universities not only requires freedom of speech and research for members of the institution, but also a relative degree of independence for the university itself.⁹ To enable the rigorous and objective creation of knowledge, institutions which are critical of policy should not be prejudiced against in terms of funding and recruitment should not be directed in a way which ensures non-critical views predominate. Nonetheless, there is a 'tangled web of relationships' linking universities and government. Harman observed that

It is doubtful whether anyone has a comprehensive view of all the varied exchanges that take place both regularly and intermittently between universities, their governing bodies, their administrations and their staff and students on the one hand, and government departments, agencies, Ministers, parliamentarians and local government officials and leaders on the other. From the government side there are numerous requests for information, for research work to be undertaken, for advice, for persons to serve as consultants or members of committees, for courses to be developed or staffed, and for other sundry services. There are

⁸ Pincoffs, E. "Introduction" in Pincoffs, *The Concept* p.xviii

⁹ Harman, "The Erosion..." pp.501-518

also directives, policy guidelines and statements of government policy and expectations. From the university side, there are submissions for capital and recurrent financial support, approaches for funding for research projects, requests for access to information, and pleas for government encouragement and help with particular projects.¹⁰

The university-government relationship is therefore one of mutual dependence, though the dependence is more pronounced (for funding) on the university side. Universities therefore need a formalised tradition of independence to ensure they are able to reject government influence over the outcomes of their research and reduce the level of political domination over their activities.

In return for public funding, universities perform several important social duties. They train labour for industry, provide cutting-edge research on economic, industrial and social matters, and provide advice to government and specialists to assist government enquiries. However, even when universities are public institutions, they can also be a place of refuge for dissident thought. This dissent is an important part of the role of universities in shaping society and providing informed advice to government. Independence is therefore a crucial part of academic life, but the expense and importance of universities creates strong interest from government in university performance. These factors create tension in the university-government relationship and produce threats to the independence of academia.¹¹

Limits and challenges to Academic Independence

Direction of research agendas by governments and the suppression of certain types of thought in the Cold War was a challenge to the principle of academic independence and an extreme example of the limits to that independence which are always present. The reliance of universities on

¹⁰ Harman, "The Erosion" pp.501-518

¹¹ Harman, "The Erosion" pp.501-518

federal funding (a situation which was pronounced at the ANU) creates challenges for academic independence. It is difficult to accept funding but not direction over how that funding is to be used, or the outcomes to be achieved with it. Funding from the government raises a central issue of academic independence, one that had particular resonance for the ANU in the Cold War: as Kennedy queried, ‘does the sponsorship threaten other academic duties by opening the door to an undesirable level of external influence or control’?¹²

Universities have never been entirely free of government interference. Throughout the history of western academic institutions there has been a degree of dependence on governments for funding, and consequently a degree of government control over their activities. Universities can not be entirely divorced from the needs and requirements of government, but there is an ideal that universities should be independent and objective institutions, able to be critical and to determine ‘truth’. Academics traditionally expect freedom from government interference with their work but there are limits to academic freedom. Kennedy noted that ‘freedom of research is important, but research cannot be entirely free’. Governments regulate both the conduct of research (eg. through ethics requirements) and also perhaps the outcomes of research through ‘the rationale that since the government is supplying the funds it can set conditions on the recipient institution’.¹³

In relation to the Cold War, the issue of academic freedom was of particular relevance to western universities in the limitations imposed on, and suppression of, left-wing academics. These restrictions paralleled the Carlsbad doctrines in that communist professors were held to be harming the youth of the nation and were potentially involved in the subversion of government and the propagation of hostile doctrines. The restriction or removal of known communists from

¹² Kennedy, *Academic Duty* pp.176-177

¹³ Kennedy, *Academic Duty* pp.177-178

positions of influence at universities in America was challenged as being an antithesis to the concept of academic freedom. The events of the 1950s and 1960s posed a severe challenge to academic freedom. Political scientist John Chapman said that universities had failed to protect ‘professional merit against political ambition or personal security... the attractions of power and political ideology also weaken respect for intellectual objectivity and individual rights... to blur the line between political and academic activity is fatal to the case for university autonomy.’¹⁴ Philosopher and President of the University of Munich Nikolaus Lobkowitz believed these challenges to the autonomy of western universities posed a threat to their purpose as an ‘intellectual and moral community’ capable of making objective value judgments about society.¹⁵

It must be realised that the independence of universities is limited by the laws of the land, by the specific acts under which the university is incorporated and finally by the dependence of universities on public funds. Harman observed that governments have ‘legitimate rights to exercise some say over how universities pursue their work; they have an obligation to ensure that public funds are being carefully and properly spent, and that universities are attempting to meet the broad needs and interests of society.’¹⁶ Balanced against these rights are those of academics. Soren Egerod, Professor of East Asian languages at the University of Copenhagen, noted that academic freedom is especially important when the state provides a large proportion of funding:

Traditionally, academic freedom has been primarily the right of the teacher to present his views without interference or fear of persecution from inside or outside the university. But freedom within the university also involves the right of the scholar to control his research... as well as freedom for scholarly bodies or the institution as such to publish opinions and criticism, even of the state, and even if the state is its sponsor.¹⁷

¹⁴ Chapman, J. “Introduction: The Western University on Trial” in Chapman, J. (ed) *The Western University on Trial*, London, University of California Press Ltd. 1983 p.22

¹⁵ Lobkowitz, N. “Man, Pursuit of Truth and the University” in Chapman, *The Western University* p.33

¹⁶ Harman, “The Erosion” pp.501-518

¹⁷ Egerod, S. “Freedom and Equality in the Universities” in Seabury, P. (ed) *Universities in the Western World*, New York, The Free Press 1975 p.12

To maintain independence, academics need to have a form of freedom of speech and ultimate control over the topics and outcomes of their research. This is particularly the case when significant funding comes from the government. If limits are placed on the potential outcomes of research, if criticism of government is muted, or if there are topics which researchers are prohibited from examining this is a serious challenge to academic independence. Nonetheless, it should be remembered that academia contains both rights and responsibilities. The Cold War tested the boundaries of both.

Academic Independence in Australia

Australia has a long tradition of academic independence, but the encroachment of federal control over universities led to challenges to academic independence. The attitude of Crawford to academic independence denoted a departure from the traditional Australian view of the principle. In part this was due to the close links with the federal government which made it more difficult to maintain independence but it was also due to Crawford's awareness of the crucial importance of academic accountability and social utility. Early Australian universities evolved from their own struggle for academic independence. For example, in the 1850s and 1860s, the University of Melbourne had been wary of encouraging academic freedom for fear of alienating the community which funded it.¹⁸ Administrators of new universities commonly were apprehensive about courting controversy too soon as this could potentially threaten chances for expansion, a pressure and vulnerability the ANU felt all too keenly in the 1940s and 1950s.¹⁹

¹⁸ Blainey, G. *A Centenary History of the University of Melbourne*, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press 1957 p.197

¹⁹ See P.H. Partridge's views on the impacts of government financial controls on the independence of new universities on pp. 215-216.

Australia's tradition of academic independence is derived from the British model.²⁰ However, as noted above, the importance of academic independence is based on more than tradition; it is related to the core functions of universities. Harman says that

the tasks of the creation of new knowledge through scholarship and research, the transmission and preservation of culture, the development of the capacity within students for critical and independent judgment... are performed best in environments which are free from direct government and bureaucratic controls, or political domination.²¹

The freedom of academics to choose their own topics and examine them without interference is a kernel of freedom in a wheat-field of dependence. The governments (state and later federal) in Australia have traditionally provided virtually all recurrent and capital funds for universities.²² This dependence on governmental largess means that universities must be wary of producing findings that are too controversial in order to secure future funding. The withholding of funds for specific research projects is an effective way to direct research into areas needed and valued by government and away from more controversial topics. While academics believe they have the freedom to choose, and in principle they do, in practice funding bodies are able to dictate areas for research. The ANU accepted this situation. In many cases the ANU not only sought out funding for projects that would benefit government and society, but would also directly seek input from government and public service as to what kinds of projects would be valued (see chapters 7 and 8). This led to elements of the research agenda potentially being dictated by government interest.

Crawford acknowledged the limits to academic freedom that existed at the ANU and other Australian universities:

²⁰ Walker, W. "The University in Australia" in Stephens and Roderick, *Universities* p.53

²¹ Harman, "The Erosion" pp.501-518

²² Harman, "The Erosion" pp.501-518

Academic freedom within a university means freedom on the part of faculty members to “teach according to their lights” and to follow lines of inquiry in research. Both activities require independence from external forces of religion or politics. It takes little imagination to observe that these freedoms are likely to flourish better in a democratic society such as ours than in ideologically-directed societies illustrated in the *extreme* by Stalinist Russia, Hitler’s Germany or Mao’s China. But this does not mean that they are free from pressures; we need only think of the McCarthy era in the United States for an example.... Freedom in teaching and research is never absolute... academic freedom is not to be identified with unlimited freedom of choice of method of public utterance or protest whether within or outside the university. Here the faculty member has no more or less right than any other member of the community.²³

But, he said, ‘universities must have the right to select staff, formulate curricula and academic standards, to make final decisions about research standards, to select students and within wide limits [allocate] financial resources among the claimants within the university’.²⁴ While Crawford argued that in Australia university autonomy ‘is considerable’²⁵, he referred to the ‘problem of accountability as the *quid pro quo* for autonomy’; that in return the government must see value for money in its expenditure.²⁶ This meant that in Crawford’s view the ANU’s research should in some way serve the public interest.

According to Crawford, governments expect universities to be ‘practically minded’.²⁷ Although he was a supporter of close links between the university and the government, Crawford was occasionally compelled to make statements opposing government direction over academic affairs when he felt that the government was pushing too hard for control over the direction of study. In 1965, at a time of intense government interest in the region, he was obliged to state in his report as Director of the School that:

²³ Sir John Crawford’s Buntine Oration *University Accountability* Draft, ANU: Sir John Crawford 2000/16 Subject Files and personal material c1922-1986 Box 2 item 9 Buntine Oration papers folios 117-147

²⁴ Sir John Crawford’s Buntine Oration *University Accountability* Draft, ANU: 2000/16 Box 2 item 9 folios 117-147

²⁵ Sir John Crawford’s Buntine Oration *University Accountability* Draft, ANU: 2000/16 Box 2 item 9 folios 117-147

²⁶ Sir John Crawford’s Buntine Oration *University Accountability* Draft, ANU: 2000/16 Box 2 item 9 folios 117-147

²⁷ Crawford, *University and Government* p.5

In the University Act it is implied that the University will assume special responsibilities for research and study in subjects of national importance to Australia. This prescription has particular relevance to the Research School of Pacific Studies which is the only research school with an explicit regional emphasis. I regard it, however as vital to the academic progress of the school that it should attain a balance between study of the South-East Asian region and the more general theoretical aspects of its work.²⁸

While defending academic freedom, Crawford was highly cognizant of the limits to this principle. This awareness meant that, while he would make every effort to preserve the independence of his institution, he believed that political and social pressures had a place in the life of his university and that working to meet societal needs was the most effective way to ensure a harmonious relationship.

Early Fears for Academic Independence

Foster and Varghese observed that the issue of independence was particularly important for the Research School of Pacific Studies due to its nature and potential for studies of strategic importance. Its close relationship with government had the potential to compromise academic independence and facilitated the creation of an Australian Cold War university. The attitudes of ANU academic and administrative staff are significant because they would define the degree to which academic independence would be defended and upheld.

From the initial creation of the ANU, the interim council and, later, some senior academics in the RSPacS were concerned about maintaining independence from government interference. The debates about academic independence at the ANU were a result of differences of opinion as to the role of the ANU in its relation to the government. Many ANU academics saw the 'national interest' clauses as the primarily reason for the existence of the university, and debated how this

²⁸ The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, *The Australian National University: Report of the Council for 1965*, Canberra, Commonwealth Government Printer 1966 p.61

interest could best be served with greater or lesser degrees of political domination. Some viewed government interference as a natural consequence of the particular circumstances surrounding the establishment of the university. On the other hand, other ANU academics opposed any attempt at government interference on general principles. According to Foster and Varghese

The academics gathered in Canberra for the Easter conferences in 1948 needed reassuring. Would the Australian National University degenerate into an arm of federal government and bureaucracy? Public servants had been prominent among its makers and it owed its existence to an Act of the federal parliament. If the circumstances of its birth were not sufficient liability, growing up in such close proximity to politicians and public servants surely would be.²⁹

The circumstances of the birth of the university created a significant debate among the interim council on the place of academic independence at the new institution. This was most notably exemplified in the debate between Firth and Eggleston described in Chapter 2. Significantly, Foster and Varghese submit that Eggleston was confident the university would not be used in an untoward manner by the government and that ‘heads of government departments would not be allowed to ask the National University questions’. The debate between Firth and Eggleston would seem to indicate Eggleston had a much stronger preference for practical research than this statement would suggest. Noting concerns that political pressures could ‘potentially influence research planning’ and that the university would have to be careful not to make any promises concerning the production of results, Foster and Varghese also and more perceptively assert that J.G. Crawford thought that these anxieties represented a ‘phobia’ among academic circles about producing work which was useful to governments and that too much emphasis on academic freedom would ‘end up with research so pure and rarified as to be altogether pointless’.³⁰ The debates on utility to government had more long-term significance in shaping the university’s

²⁹ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of...* p.113

³⁰ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of...* p113

activities and attitudes to independence and freedom during the Cold War than Foster and Varghese suggest.

In 1947 Keith Hancock expressed concern that ANU staff might be invited to do jobs for the government. Hancock believed that the answer to such requests should be ‘in times of great emergency or in exceptional cases, yes. In normal times, no’.³¹ He also argued that the ANU should not make too many political statements as this would be harmful for the ‘prestige of a research university, particularly in Australia.’³² Hancock was assured that: ‘only in times of great emergency or in quite exceptional circumstances will requests be entertained from governmental or other organisations for *ad hoc* work from the research schools and the university.’³³ This stricture seemed to solve the issue but as time went on only lip-service was paid to this advice.

Robin Gollan also warned that the university was in danger of losing its independence, less through the actions of the government and their requests for information, but rather through the university administration consistently entertaining those requests. Gollan was concerned that if the university accepted such requests through a sense of ‘obligation’, the volume of requests would multiply and the university would be unable to determine when they should be refused. The university would be caught in a trap of its own making: while seeking to conduct work of national importance for the government, it would sacrifice its own independence in order to do so. Gollan argued that the nature of universities as places of ‘real freedom of enquiry’ was an important tradition that needed to be maintained at the ANU. He said that research schools were ‘exposed to pressure to meet the short-term research needs of governments’ and that there was a threat to independence emerging from ‘self-imposed obligations to government [rather] than

³¹ Hancock to Mills 16th July 1957, NAA: M448/1 260

³² Hancock to Mills 16th July 1957, NAA: M448/1 260

³³ Minutes of Interim Council Meeting 8th August 1947, NAA: M448/1 260

pressure from it'. He added that if this obligation was entrenched in the university it would 'create a dangerous tradition' and precedent.³⁴

According to Foster and Varghese, the ANU had no need to worry as its first Vice Chancellor — Douglas Berry Copland — was the champion of, and standard bearer for, academic freedom.³⁵ He told Menzies how he hoped to build up a tradition of academic freedom at the new University, adding that "the establishment and maintenance of academic freedom is more important than the actual research and teaching done inside the walls of a university".³⁶ As Foster and Varghese say, 'surely he was exaggerating'. While others at the university used the term academic independence to represent freedom for scholars to pursue their own research and for the university to act without interference from the government³⁷, Copland's position was more complex and seemed to grow from a different standpoint. Copland's view was that the university and its officials should not publicly interfere in the affairs of government. He regarded providing unsolicited advice to the government as being potentially detrimental to the university, but at the same time desired to avoid making it known to the public that this was his view.³⁸ As we shall see in Chapter 4, Copland's approach to academic freedom and independence did not extend to protecting his staff from political interference. He was hardly a standard bearer.

In the years since its founding ANU academics have had contrasting views about academic independence at their institution. Robert O'Neill, Head of the ANU Strategic and Defence Studies Centre between 1971 and 1982, stated that the relationship between the federal government and the ANU was

³⁴ Gollan, Comments on Sir Alexander Carr-Saunders' Reflections, 1959, NLA: MS 9372 "Papers of Robin Gollan" Boxes 9

³⁵ Chapter 4 completely disabuses this notion

³⁶ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of...* p.113

³⁷ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of...*p.113

³⁸ Copland to Menzies 12th May 1952, NAA: M2576/1 100 "Personal papers of Prime Minister Menzies Correspondence re Cabinet and overseas matters"

...generally a good one. The relationship was not tense. There was an atmosphere of mutual cooperation. The government used the output from the sciences and applied social sciences and the university knew its funding came from the government. The relationship did become tense at times when the government felt itself to be criticised, or when the university felt that research projects were not receiving sufficient funding. Overall the relationship was a cooperative one. The people in senior positions had close relationships. Sir John Crawford — who had long experience in the public service — smoothed over any difficulties that arose, but could (and would) be tough and stand up for academic independence if he felt it had been threatened.³⁹

By contrast, in 1955 Oliphant wrote to Vice Chancellor Leslie Melville suggesting the interim council's fears had been realised and complaining that the 'government regards the ANU as just another minor department...'⁴⁰ It appears (with some exceptions such as Clark and McKinley) that those who were at the university from the late 1960s were more inclined to believe independence was maintained, while those who were there earlier were more willing to view the situation as compromised. The threat was more evident in the early days.

The ANU's Special Relationship

The ANU's difficulties in relation to independence arose due to the loose definition in the ANU Act of service to the national interest. Unlike other Australian universities, close links with the federal government had been defined in the University Act. It had always been intended that the ANU would form an adjunct to federal policy creation. The strength of this symbiotic relationship is shown by the February 1946 statement by the Interdepartmental Committee of the Interim Council that provisions should be made

for research work [by the University] to be carried out within the government departments or authorities, or within the university for a department or authority [and] for joint positions to be established whereby

³⁹ Robert O'Neill, Telephone Interview, 1st May 2006

⁴⁰ Oliphant to Melville 17th August 1955, NAA: M448/1 249 ANU Working File 4 (1951-1965)

members of the university staff would at the same time carry out work in and for the department or authority.⁴¹

The ANU's submission to the Committee on Australian Universities in 1957 acknowledged the problem of defining national importance and relating this to the tasks and role of the university: 'The legislature did not desire the university to conceive its research task at all narrowly, even if in referring to "subjects of national importance" and in setting up a School of Pacific Studies it expressed its wish that the university should have a certain regional emphasis'. There was controversy over what subjects should be considered to be 'of national importance'. Such a phrase could be interpreted in numerous ways. Potentially, any research whatsoever could be of national importance in that it helped Australia to become a better educated nation. On the other hand, a narrow interpretation of the phrase could be that only work of 'immediate and obvious relevance' in formulating economic or foreign policy or assisting in Australia's defence or economic development would be of national importance. This created controversy about the 'character which should be assumed by [the university's] departments'.⁴²

The submission argued that the university would attract criticism through any definition it applied to national importance. If the university discussed matters of public controversy 'they will be accused of taking a political stand, if they do not they will be accused of turning aside from matters of public importance to devote themselves to academic frivolities'. The submission concluded that the university must be able to conduct its activities in an atmosphere of academic independence, which included 'the freedom to be academic, as well as the freedom to speak out on controversial issues'⁴³. The submission neatly sums up the dilemma faced by the ANU since its inception. The controversy surrounding what was considered 'national importance' and how

⁴¹ Extract from the Report of the Interdepartmental Committee on the University at Canberra, NAA: A9874/1 64

⁴² ANU Submission to the Committee on Australian Universities, June 1957, NAA: A10663/1 CAU/ANU/3A

⁴³ ANU Submission to the Committee on Australian Universities, June 1957, NAA: A10663/1 CAU/ANU/3A

it was to be met by the university was such that, whether a broad or narrow approach was taken, the university would be criticised.

The solution was to openly embrace utilitarianism and the special relationship with government, but also to allow theoretical work to proceed. The ANU was willing to appoint postgraduates who were to look at areas of national importance notwithstanding their academic credentials. The selection criteria appeared to be more closely linked with the social importance of proposed research than prior academic attainment. In discussing the potential appointment of a PhD scholar it was noted

Mr Wilson may not be of an academic standard comparable with that of former successful applicants for National University Scholarships [but] this is a matter which does not concern me. I would like to emphasise, however, the importance of the field of research proposed by Mr Wilson... I am sure that the work would be of substantial assistance to public authorities concerned with development.⁴⁴

Crawford, as an astute academic politician, was well aware of the link between being seen to address the concerns and issues of society and increased funding, saying ‘the claim for autonomy is a big one especially against the background of virtually complete dependence on public funds... [Universities] should at all times seek to improve the value of money invested in them [through working to address public concerns].’⁴⁵ Crawford placed special emphasis on accountability and utility and believed that academic independence was secondary to the purpose of university service to the government.⁴⁶ He wondered:

Why do universities insist on autonomy despite their financial dependence on governments? Here is a possible conflict. Autonomy for the universities could be thought to promote irrelevance to life in our

⁴⁴ G. Rudduck to M. Brown 1 March 1951, NAA: A995, OJ/2/1, Australian National University

⁴⁵ Sir John Crawford’s Buntine Oration *University Accountability* Draft, ANU: 2000/16 Box 2 item 9 folios 117-147

⁴⁶ See Chapter 8 for a more detailed analysis of this issue

times, if not irresponsibility towards the community. I attach high importance to social responsibility, which however, in my judgment, requires the related conditions of autonomy and academic freedom. Crawford believed that there should be (as well as teaching and research) a third function for universities, that being ‘service to society or public service function’.⁴⁷ As will be discussed further in Chapter 8, though independence was to be maintained as far as possible, the balance was strongly toward service in the national interest. The evolution of the special relationship had implications for the independence of the university.

Maintaining Independence — the Thai Affair

In the early 1960s an instance where Menzies attempted to dictate terms to the RSPacS demonstrated the university had the ability to maintain its independence in the face of interference from the highest level. Menzies had insisted the RSPacS grant the King of Thailand an honorary degree. Spate described the incident as follows:

We were called together rather suddenly and mysteriously and informed that the King of Thailand was visiting the ANU and Prime Minister Menzies wanted us to give him an Honorary degree. We didn't like this and sat around glumly... So we sat and waited, not knowing what to say in face of this high handed Diktat from Menzies, and then Trevor [Swan] spoke, very quietly and incisively. He argued that monarch had no claim to an LL.D or a D. Litt; as a leading Jazzman in Southeast Asia he might warrant an honorary in music but we didn't have a faculty of music... So we turned the King down flat... the King came to lunch. Everybody was very nervous but the King ignored the slight the University had given him and bestowed a scholarship on the University.⁴⁸

The ANU's refusal to offer the King of Thailand an honorary degree almost caused an international incident. Menzies was forced into damage control, distancing himself and his

⁴⁷ Crawford, J. G. *The University and Government*, Canberra, Royal Institute of Public Administration 1969 p2

⁴⁸ Spate, *The Early Days at the ANU- an Anecdote*, NLA: MS7886 Series 3

government from the decision made by the university. The Prime Minister of Thailand wrote to Menzies in August 1962:

Much as we regret the unwarranted disclosure by the Australian National University of its decision not to invite His Majesty the King to accept an honorary degree from that university, we realise that both the University's decision and its disclosure do not involve in any way the Australian government which has all along shown a friendly attitude towards this country. The Thai Government and myself have now been reassured by your kind message that the Australian Government and people are prepared to accord an appropriate welcome to Their Majesties the King and Queen. On that basis, my Government has recommended to His Majesty the King to proceed with the projected Royal Visit as planned and His Majesty has graciously agreed.⁴⁹

The visit to ANU had almost been called off as a result of their actions. Officials in the Australian Embassy in Bangkok reported that 'Thanat said, however, that his main concern now was the personal embarrassment for the King in having to sit down at lunch with members of the university.'⁵⁰ It was not only the Thais who were concerned about potential embarrassment. James Scholtens (Head of Ceremonial and Hospitality in the Prime Minister's Department) was informed by the Australian ambassador in Thailand that 'there is still a doubt in my mind whether they will be suitably treated during their visit to the ANU. If this is not carried out with every courtesy — and due pomp — might it not be better to omit it? Can we be sure, for example, that no ill-natured public comments will be made by members of the faculty?'⁵¹ The ANU had also had a recent explosion at the Research School of Physical Sciences and the ANU was not only to ensure that their staff behaved themselves but also that efforts would be made to ensure that there was not another explosion during the King's visit.⁵²

⁴⁹ Srisdi Dhanarajara to Menzies 16th August 1962, NAA: A6706/36 King of Thailand- Letter from the Prime Minister of Thailand re. ANU Degree

⁵⁰ Cable Australian Embassy Bangkok to Menzies 17th August 1962, NAA: A463/63 1962/5153 King and Queen of Thailand- Visit to ACT 1962- Visit to Australian National University

⁵¹ Booker to Scholtens 19th July 1962, NAA: A463/63 1962/5153

⁵² A. J. Kenney to Hohnen 16th August 1962, NAA: A463/63 1962/5153

Despite the perceived insult, as a gesture of international goodwill, Menzies and the King collaborated to create an ANU fellowship for Asian students. The King decided that the fellowship would be announced at a lunch at the ANU and that it would be a surprise — a message to trump the public opposition of the ANU's staff to his visit. Thanat (the Thai Foreign Minister) wrote to Sir Garfield Barwick (then Minister for Foreign Affairs)

regarding the matter which you discussed with me at the airport, I am pleased to inform you that there will be no objection on our part to the offer. However it would seem advisable not to have it planned in advance and if it were to be made spontaneously on the occasion of the Royal visit, the offer will be agreeable to his Majesty.

Sir John Bunting, the Head of the Prime Minister's Department, commented to Menzies that 'this means the announcement of the fellowship at the luncheon will go ahead.'⁵³

Menzies may in fact have been well pleased by the refusal of the ANU to offer an honorary doctorate as it would influence the king's decision to grant the fellowship. It may have been an example of skilful political manipulation. The fellowship would enable a teaching fellow from Asian universities to undertake research and teaching in Australia and would strengthen Cold War ties through Australian-Asian academic exchanges. At the formal announcement at the luncheon at the ANU, Coombs said that the fellowship would enable increasing knowledge of Asian affairs. The King replied briefly referencing the Cold War imperative by saying that 'closer relations between all the people of the region including Australia' was necessary as 'in these times of great danger we must be together.'⁵⁴

This episode had a significant impact on the ANU. J.D.B. Miller, Head of the RSPacS International Relations Department, cited it as a reason for a defensive attitude at the ANU,

Not long before my arrival in 1962, several people from ANU had been severely criticised in the press and Parliament [due to] certain academics protesting publicly at the proposition to award an honorary degree to

⁵³ Bunting to Menzies 27th August 1962, NAA: A463/63 1962/5153

⁵⁴ Cable to the Australian Embassy Bangkok 27th August 1962, NAA: A463/63 1962/5153

the King of Thailand. They regarded this as a concession to SEATO, then being stigmatised as a home for anti-Chinese propaganda and a hindrance to Australian relations with Asian countries.⁵⁵

Years later, when Menzies was the Chancellor of the University of Melbourne, Crawford put a different spin on the affair to that of Spate. He said:

Perhaps we did put relations rather unwisely to a severe test on the occasion of a certain visit by a highly placed person from Thailand. Sorely tried though he was, the Prime Minister of the day nevertheless passed the test in a manner befitting a future chancellor of Melbourne University! One highly beneficial by-product was the creation by the university of an Asian fellowship under which we and other universities enjoy the presence year by year of an outstanding Asian scholar.⁵⁶

While Spate viewed Menzies' request as an unwarranted interference in the affairs of the university which the university refused with a just sense of outrage, Crawford viewed the incident as a successful test of the university's ability to maintain independence and an example of skilful political manoeuvring. Menzies' 'diktat' is not mentioned in Crawford's account, instead the responsibility for the conflict lies with the university. The visit of the King of Thailand and the ANU's refusal of Menzies' request have significance, in that they demonstrate that the ANU was able to pick and choose the occasions when they would submit to, and when they would oppose, government interference. They would act in a manner that could appear to compromise independence *when it was in their interest to do so*.

Academic Freedom — the politician's view

How Australian politicians regarded the principles of academic freedom and autonomy would be crucial in the development of the university-state relationship during the Cold War. The most

⁵⁵ J.D.B. Miller, letter to the author 28th November 2006 (See also Chapter 9 for a more detailed discussion of the controversy over Miller's appointment)

⁵⁶ Crawford, *The Australian National University* pp.18-19

influential politician for the ANU would be Sir Robert Menzies, who argued that the Australian conception of academic freedom ‘has been somewhat confused for some Australian minds... by the great masses of litigation and debate which have occurred in the United States which are... largely peculiar to the United States itself.’ In justifying this remark, Menzies noted that much of the controversy surrounding academic freedom in the US was created by disputes over the Bill of Rights. The US Supreme Court had spoken out in defence of academic freedom, Justice Harlan stating: ‘When academic teaching freedom and its corollary, learning freedom, so essential to the well-being of this nation, are claimed, this Court will always be on the alert against intrusion by Congress into this constitutionally protected domain.’⁵⁷ As Australia did not have a Bill of Rights, the power of government to restrict freedoms was much greater in times of perceived national emergency. In Australia, there had been no such legal confirmation of the rights of academics to speak their mind.

Menzies believed that ‘freedom to write was consistent with, and therefore protected by, the law; not that it was superior to the law’ and that universities were subservient to government through control via government representatives on university councils. Menzies had said:

in a democracy, Parliament, acting within its constitutional jurisdiction may, under some circumstances, pass legislation which limits the right of expression. Such circumstances may arise in time of war or other special times where national security may require, under appropriate law, some limitations upon freedom of expression or of individual activity.⁵⁸

It is obvious that by ‘other special times’, Menzies was referring to the Cold War and what he saw as the threat of communist subversion.

Menzies in public was a strong proponent of academic autonomy and independence, in the sense of academics freedom to write according to their ideas and inclinations, but Menzies’ public

⁵⁷ Menzies, R. G. *The Universities- Some Queries (The Inaugural Wallace Wurth Memorial Lecture 28th August 1964)*, Sydney, The University of New South Wales 1964 p.19

⁵⁸ Menzies, *The Universities* pp.15 and 14

statements on the issue of academic independence are often contradictory. He described the ‘crucial importance’ of academic independence, and almost in the same breath says that the issue has been overstated. Menzies said that:

I have at all times been careful to maintain my own belief in the autonomy of universities and in the utter undesirability of governmental executive direction to the universities as to what they are to study and teach... It will be agreed that I have at no time sought to interfere with university autonomy... A good deal of what has been said in the press and otherwise about academic freedom has been over-emotional; it has, I fear, promoted more heat than light.⁵⁹

Menzies used academic independence as part of his rhetoric about the benefits of democratic principles as opposed to totalitarianism: ‘I would prefer to think of academic freedom as a precious and shining example of that kind of freedom which all thinking men and women in our community want for themselves and will not abandon without a struggle’. Menzies contrasted western academic freedom with repression in the Soviet Union. Though stating clearly where he stood on the contradiction between communism and academic freedom, Menzies shied away from taking the idea to its logical conclusion — whether or not communists should be barred from teaching in universities in democratic states, although he certainly implied his point of view:

Some responsible and liberal-minded people have queried the employment of practicing Communists in a university, for the intelligible reason that the whole philosophy of Communism and the whole discipline of the Party are opposed to that complete freedom of thought and objectivity of mind which it is one of the functions of a university to maintain. I will not try to pursue that argument to its conclusion, because, as in all these contentious matters, the boundary line is very hard to define.⁶⁰

In the light of other actions taken by Menzies in relation to the ANU, it is difficult to agree that he had ‘at no time sought to interfere with university autonomy’. As we shall see, several

⁵⁹ Menzies, *The Universities* p.12

⁶⁰ Menzies, *The Universities* pp.22 and 21

incidents gave the ANU reason to doubt the legitimacy of his claims to being the defender of the virtue of academic independence (as with the episode of the Thai King and others described in Chapter 4). Menzies often acted unilaterally in attacking communists at universities from the executive level, as if his attempt to ban the Communist Party had been successful rather than defeated at referendum. His justification that in certain 'special' circumstances academic independence needs to be restricted has a greater resonance as a motivation for his actions. Menzies believed that Australia was involved in a global conflict against a subversive and insidious enemy. He therefore felt justified in acting against the tradition of academic freedom from government direction as part of a war exigency.

The concept of academic freedom is an entrenched tradition for universities. Academic freedom is considered to be a vital component of academic life. The national importance clause of the ANU Act has produced a contradiction in the perception of ANU academics of their role and function. While proclaiming their independence and defending it as a vital aspect of the life of the university, ANU academics have since the 1940s been unsure how best to reconcile their role in relation to the government with the principle of academic freedom. The original idea that the links with government should be limited (as enunciated by Hancock and others) gave way under Crawford to the concept that applied research was the most ideal way to ensure that the links with government remained mutually beneficial. This influenced the Cold War university-state relationship.

The critique of the university's relationship by McKinley shows that the conflict between independence and developing research of national importance has not yet been resolved. This could be viewed as an indication that the concept of academic freedom has given way at the university to acceptance of the demands of government. On the other hand, the incident with the

King of Thailand shows that the university was willing to stand up to the government on an occasion when compromise and subservience was not perceived to be in the direct interest of the university. It cannot be said that the university was exclusively subservient. Other aspects of the history of the ANU will, however, demonstrate that their independence was compromised during the Cold War to a greater extent than has previously been recognised.

PART TWO: ACTS OF COERCION

The first decade of the Menzies government coincided with a period of heightened tension in the Cold War. The Korean War, McCarthyism in the United States and the uncovering of numerous spy-rings in Australia and overseas all contributed to the emergence of an atmosphere of greater political sensitivity.

There were no public hearings of un-Australian activities or mass firings of communists in Australia but this does not mean Australian politicians were necessarily more tolerant of leftist ideology at universities than Americans. Attacks on universities did occur, and the machinations of Menzies, ASIO and vice-chancellors show attempts to limit the influence of communist and left-wing academics at the ANU. Restrictions were placed on the promotions and travel opportunities of academics with leftist affiliation. ASIO kept close watch over left-wing academics in an attempt to counter potential communist agents of influence and subversion and some academics readily informed on their colleagues. A softer form of McCarthyism existed in Australia, in the form of more subtle, and less public, discrimination than existed in the American model.

Allegations of CIA funding to the university through the Ford Foundation may be overstated as the university saw this funding merely as a benign supplement for topical research. The ANU did potentially have a role to play in Australian government cultural Cold War efforts, although the evidence for this is largely circumstantial. Not all controversial episodes of the time can be linked definitively to a form of McCarthyism. Although there were strong political overtones, episodes such as the Lindsay affair related more to internal infighting. Nonetheless, there is evidence to support the contention that the 1950s were a particularly confrontational period and that there were efforts to coerce the ANU into political conformity at that time.

CHAPTER 4: MCCARTHYISM AND THE ANU

In the early 1950s Senator Joseph McCarthy as Chairman of the Senate Permanent Investigations Committee conducted hearings on communist subversion in the United States. Later denounced as having exceeded the bounds of propriety and accused of conducting “witch-hunts”, his name has entered the English language as a metaphor for describing similar events. McCarthyism is defined by the Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library and Museum as ‘the political practice of publicising accusations of disloyalty or subversion with insufficient regard to evidence, and the use of methods of investigation and accusation regarded as unfair, in order to suppress opposition.’¹

Recent histories of McCarthyism in the United States have focussed on the extent to which McCarthy was correct in his assertions that there were highly placed communist agents in the United States and whether his actions were justifiable in the context of the Cold War. This is done as a revisionist counter to the traditional view of McCarthy as a villain who damaged personal futures and was an anathema to democracy.² McCarthy’s public attacks did incalculable damage to personal reputations and the professional futures of those who were accused, justly or unjustly, of communist affiliation and the attacks also went far beyond a moderate or reasoned approach and became excessive.³ The effect on academic administrations was a hardening in their attitudes to communists and support for the removal of communists from the teaching community.

¹ The Eisenhower Library “McCarthyism or the Red Scare”

www.eisenhower.archives.gov/dl/McCarthy/Mccarthydocuments.html (accessed 28 August 2006)

² Glazer, N. et al “Have you no sense of decency?” McCarthyism 50 Years Later” *Bulletin of the American Academy* (Spring 2004) pp.21-27

³ Glazer, “Have you no sense” pp.21-27

Although McCarthyism in the United States was not repeated in Australia (to the extent of public hearings and the firing of communists) there were similar, but culturally specific, attacks on communists and similar university responses to this challenge. The parallels between American and Australian universities during this period were closer than has previously been thought. Due to the perceived danger of communism to the democratic way of life, in both America and Australia governments attempted to control the political lives of academics through both overt and covert means. The example of the ANU shows some similarities with the history of McCarthyism at American universities during the 1950s, although they are more subtle than the American model. Instances such as the Worsley and Gluckman affairs and (in particular) the discussions between Menzies, Charles Spry of ASIO and Vice Chancellor Copland, demonstrate that there were attempts to investigate, limit and reduce the power and position of communists at the ANU.

While no committees were set up specifically to remove communists from positions of power (or academia) in Australia, this did not mean that damaging accusations of communist affiliation did not occur. Fear of communist subversion was alive and well in Australia in the 1950s and while the parallel with the American experience of showtrials and public accusations of disloyalty may be incomplete, similar pressures were acting on political leaders which encouraged public institutions (including universities) to be wary of appointing known communists.

McCarthyism and the Academy

Lowen has said that in the United States the Cold War change in universities towards collaboration with the government went mostly unchallenged. Members of faculties were concerned about their tenure and naturally disinclined to make any contrary comments to

university administrations. These pressures were exacerbated by the ‘Red Scare’ and McCarthyism, with professors being fired for their political views, faculties and employees being required to take loyalty oaths and administrators, staff and students collaborating with the FBI and House Un-American activities inquiries.⁴

By May 1949 Raymond Allen, the President of the University of Washington in Seattle, had come to the conclusion that communists were not fit to be teachers in American universities. His attitude is indicative of that taken by American university administrators in response to Cold War imperatives. Allen wrote that communists were unable to conduct free teaching and research and he believed that the responsibilities and duties of academics in the Cold War struggle outweighed communists’ rights and privileges as members of an academic community. He argued that a communist was a ‘slave to immutable dogma’, and that a member of the Communist Party ‘has abdicated control over his intellectual life’. This adherence to dogma resulted in the communist academic being unable to freely and objectively weigh facts, being able only to parrot the party line. That meant the communist academic was unable to objectively examine issues, that

he is incompetent to be a teacher... he is intellectually dishonest to his profession... because he is intolerant of the beliefs of others and because education can not tolerate organized intolerance, I hold that he is in neglect of his most essential duty as a teacher. For these reasons I believe that communism is an enemy of American education.⁵

It is an interesting hypocrisy — communist dogmatic intolerance is intolerable in the American educational system, but anti-communist intolerance is acceptable. This kind of double-think rationale enabled US academic administrators to come to terms with the denial of freedom of thought inherent in their exclusion of communists. Allen’s views were widely held in the social science community (see Figure 3).

⁴ Lowen, *Creating* p.92

⁵ Allen, R. “Communists Should Not Teach in American Colleges” (Originally published in *Educational Forum* Vol 13 No 4 May 1949) www.writing.upenn.edu/~afilreis/50s/raymond-allen.html (accessed 27th November 2006)

Figure 3: Attitudes to Communists among Social Scientists in the US (C.1955)

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 104
of the print copy of the thesis held in
the University of Adelaide Library.

(Source: Ladd, E and Lipset, S. *Divided Academy*, Berkeley, McGraw Hill 1975 p.186)

In the United States the effect of McCarthyism on the intellectual lives of academics was profound. Limitations on work, loss of employment or public allegations of disloyalty were used as weapons to ensure the allegiance of academics. This created limits on politically acceptable behaviour and encouraged a defensive response by university administrations. Lowen has said that

A number of forces acted to shape intellectual production during the cold war. McCarthyism narrowed scholarly and political discussions on campuses as universities eliminated from their faculties those believed to be or have been members of the Communist Party or fellow-travellers. University administrators... policed their institutions, acting to ward off attacks from state and national un-American committees, but also to protect their own interests... the politically repressive climate undoubtedly had a chilling effect on those in the university concerned with holding their jobs and receiving promotions.⁶

McCarthyism in the United States particularly affected Asian studies schools, which were seen as complicit in the advance of communism by continuing their studies on China after the communists took over in 1949. However, it was not just about China, any criticism of US policy could result in accusations of “un-American behaviour”. As an example, at the end of the 1940s

⁶Lowen, *Creating* p.222

George Kahin criticised American policy on Indonesia. As a result, he found his passport withdrawn for the next five years. When Kahin attempted to appeal the decision to the passport office he was told ‘Mr Kahin, the line between communists and non-communists is very clear, and you’re on the wrong side of the line’.⁷ Several letters from Indonesian officials and American academics testifying to Kahin’s opposition to communism had no effect and Kahin was placed under FBI investigation. Two of Kahin’s students turned out to be agents for McCarthy and were avidly recording every word he said in his lectures.⁸ Kahin’s career, though suffering as a result of his being unable to travel, was not seriously hampered over the long term, although hundreds of academics and public servants throughout the United States found themselves dismissed from employment or black-listed due to their real, or supposed affiliations with the communist party.

Australia’s Anti-Communism

The similarities between the experience of the American universities and the ANU can be explained by the climate of anti-communist thought that existed in both countries. During the late 1940s and early 1950s there was a significant expansion in anti-communist rhetoric in Australia. The hardening of Australian attitudes is shown by a 1947 editorial in the *Sydney Morning Herald* which said that ‘any Australian born in this country who embraces communism is a traitor. There is no half way. There has to be a choice between good and evil, and people must be either loyal or disloyal’.⁹

One of Menzies’ first actions after becoming Prime Minister in the 1949 election was to introduce the Communist Party Dissolution Bill 1950 which banned the Australian Communist

⁷ Kahin, G. McT. *Southeast Asia- A Testament*, London, Routledge Curzon 2003 pp.126-127

⁸ Kahin, *Southeast Asia* pp.126-139

⁹ Editorial, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 7th November 1947, quoted in Williams, G. “Australian Values and the War Against Terrorism” National Press Club Telstra Australia Day Address, 29 January 2003
<http://www.gtcentre.unsw.edu.au/publications/docs/pubs/australianValues.doc> (accessed 11th July 2008)

Party and anyone the Governor General declared to be a communist. The Bill was passed by federal parliament, but was struck down by the High Court in 1951. Menzies refused to be cowed by this decision and put the issue to a referendum in September 1951. The referendum defeated the legislation once and for all, though by a narrow margin.¹⁰

Historian David Lowe has argued that despite the failure of the Communist Party Dissolution Bill, the idea that the suspect had to bear the onus of proof that they were not a communist was 'carried over into government practice'. Lowe says that the government

occasionally tried to blacken the names of their opponents through evidence, often slander, of their associations with communists... though not quite resembling the extravagances and challenges to government of McCarthyism in the US... the use of the communist label had widespread consequences. Intellectual debate and literary activity... became enmeshed in often rancorous disputes about communist influence and freedom of expression.¹¹

The suspicion of communist affiliations could potentially have negative consequences, involving public accusations of disloyalty, surveillance and suspicion from Australia's internal intelligence agency and restrictions on travel. According to historian John Murphy, Australia's government, while having a 'distaste' for the 'coarser aspects of McCarthyism' was willing to 'suspend liberal democratic norms... the Cold War... marginalised dissenting views, narrowing the spectrum of acceptable opinion and attempting to place the left outside political culture.'¹² Murphy says there was no parallel to McCarthyism in Australia as the US had 'a more zealous patriotism than is found in the phlegmatic Australian political culture' but acknowledges that despite a more

¹⁰ Williams, "Australian Values..." The margin was only 52,082 people, which indicates a very significant percentage of the Australian community *supported* the Bill — see Moorhouse, F. "The Writer in a Time of Terror" *Griffith Review*, (Summer 2006-2007) p.47

¹¹ Lowe, *Menzies* pp.106-107

¹² Murphy, *Harvest* p.48

moderate response in Australia to the threat of communism, 'strict parameters [were drawn] between loyalty and political deviance.'¹³

There has been a traditional argument from the left in Australia that the events surrounding the Petrov affair in 1954 represent an example of McCarthyism in Australia. There are a variety of views on whether a comparable 'McCarthyism' occurred in Australia. Robert Manne, a former editor of *Quadrant* and Professor of Politics at Latrobe University, argues that the Petrov affair was, in fact, a poor example of McCarthyism. He notes that McCarthyism was widely regarded by Australian politicians (both conservative and Labor) as an 'illegitimate species of anti-communism' which involved the destruction of personal reputations through 'sensational and politicised hearings' that suborned 'due process of law and cool judicial sifting of evidence'. The lack of televised show trials of accused communists in Australia and that it was made a criminal offence for an employer to dismiss an employee for an appearance before the Royal Commission on Espionage Manne cites as both a reason for comparisons between American and Australian McCarthyism falling down and also as a representation of the 'superior maturity' of the Westminster system.¹⁴

It is possible to over-state the idea of McCarthyism in Australia, if a strict interpretation in terms of firing staff on ideological grounds is taken. However, the climate in the 1950s was particularly confrontational. With the Korean War in progress, there were heightened tensions and a feeling that it was necessary to maintain the political orthodoxy. There were efforts to reduce a potential communist fifth column and to remove communists from democratic societies. Menzies has been quoted as saying that

¹³ Murphy, *Harvest* pp.53-4

¹⁴ Manne, *The Petrov Affair* pp.153-154

the day has gone by for treating communism as a legitimate political philosophy... the communists are the most unscrupulous opponents of religion, of civilised government, of law and order, of national security... communism in Australia is an alien and destructive pest.¹⁵

All Australian governments were at heart devoted to opposing communism. J.D.B. Miller said 'It is difficult to imagine an Australian government [Liberal or Labor]... which was not anti-communist in sympathy, however its day to day policies might go.'¹⁶

According to Tom Sheridan, author of *Australia's Own Cold War*, the debates on communism in parliament demonstrated the intensity of feeling and vigorous conflict inherent in the political soul-searching on how to combat communism without reducing the democratic rights of Australians. Sheridan indicates that communism was at the forefront of Australian thought and ideas on how to combat communism dominated the political agenda. With the attempted proscription of the Communist Party of Australia the debate intensified. Sheridan states that

The polemics surrounding this legislation formed the dominant motif of national political debate for the next 18 months... Only the World War I conscription debates appear comparable in their passion and intensity. Half a century on, press and film archives still offer evidence of the hysterical tone of the times — but it is likely they convey only the barest flavour of the contemporary frenzy... Menzies attempted proscription of communism brought onto the central political stage the issue not just of civil rights, but also of the meaning of democracy in Australia... After the failure of the referendum McLeay led a thrust within Cabinet to find some other means of combating communists... Holt, however, was successful in urging restraint [saying] "we have made substantial gains in our fight... first the role of the Communist has been made very much more difficult. We have... stiffened the tribunals and built up public psychology to the point where we now get public approval for certain punishment of communists which we could not possibly have got before."¹⁷

¹⁵ Miller, J.D.B. "'Communism and Australian Foreign Policy'" in Miller, J.D.B. and Rigby, T.H. (eds) *The Disintegrating Monolith- papers from a conference at the ANU Research School of Pacific Studies*, Canberra, ANU 1965 pp.218-219

¹⁶ Miller, J.D.B. "'Communism and Australian Foreign Policy'" in Miller and Rigby, *The Disintegrating Monolith* p.219

¹⁷ Sheridan, T. *Australia's Own Cold War*, Carlton Victoria, Melbourne University Press 2006 pp.96-97.

Anti-communism was therefore a crucial part of Australia's *weltanschauung* during the Cold War and particularly in the 1950s. The geo-political struggle dictated that the power and influence of communists should be reduced in order to ensure the security of Australian democracy. Lowe acknowledged the strange situation of xenophobic attitudes being focussed on fellow citizens: 'Australian communists became more than anathema, their opponents argued that they had foregone the rights of Westminster democracy and accepted notions of justice, and that they had become foreigners rather than Australians.'¹⁸

The struggle was, in essence, for the hearts and minds of the global community. In this context universities were a crucial element in ensuring that the next generation of leaders were educated in such a way as to ensure the continuity of Australian democracy. The presence of communists in any Australian university, let alone one with such close ties to the government as the ANU, was perceived by some in government to be a potential threat to the continuity of the Australian way of life. Being sensitive to public opinion, politicians could hardly fail to be aware that a Gallup poll taken in 1950 had shown that Australians believed that communism was the nation's biggest problem.¹⁹ Coombs wrote to Oliphant 'these days when public attitudes on the question of security and political ideologies are somewhat hysterical they [politicians] are continuously on the defensive.'²⁰ Academics were expected to accept this situation and conform with the political status quo. Symes has said that Australian academics were meant to disassociate themselves from political views and processes: 'There [has] always been the expectation that Australian professors would be exemplary citizens, sans formal political allegiances, who would remain silent on matters of public controversy.' Novels about Australian academics from the time accurately reflect the fear that impressionable students would be corrupted by 'red' professors.²¹

¹⁸ Lowe, *Menzies* p.10

¹⁹ Lowe, *Menzies* p.69

²⁰ Rowse, *Nugget Coombs* p.168

²¹ Symes, "Revoluting Campuses" pp.395-401

Particularly while the conflict in Korea was ongoing, attacks on suspected communists were a part of Australian political life. The closest parallel between American and Australian McCarthyism — in the sense of public attacks on people accused of communist affiliation — occurred two years before the Petrov Affair with the accusations of disloyalty lodged in federal parliament against members of the ANU and the Research School of Pacific Studies in particular. Not only was there some similarity in these attacks made by members of parliament but the reaction of university administrators also contained similarities with experiences in the United States.

McCarthyism at the ANU — a contentious issue

While some Australian academics, though by no means all, shared Allen's attitude, in Australia freedom of political thought seems to have been largely defended by the academic community. This defence of free thought is seen to be a reason why comparisons with American McCarthyism are not applicable to Australia. But to fully understand the effect of the zeitgeist, it should be noted that politicians and administrative staff tended to hold a more unforgiving line towards communist members of university staff. Administration tended to view communist academics as threats to their institution, rather than threats to the free world.

In the current orthodoxy of studies of Australian academia of the period, the political climate has been noted by Foster and Varghese, though they fall short of describing the situation at the university as McCarthyism.

Cold War politics gave a sharp edge to relations between University and government... even before the first academics arrived, Hohnen was treading carefully to avoid "the Opposition zeal for witch hunting"... In

Australia too, anti-communists looked for a fifth column. Some thought they had found evidence of one at the ANU.²²

They do, however, allude to broader impacts on academic staff outside their university roles.

Members of the Research School of Pacific Studies had most to fear. In 1952 Spate, who had carried the communist card in Cambridge many years earlier, had a bitter taste of McCarthyism when Casey, after a security check, stopped his projected appointment as First Commissioner of the South Pacific Commission.²³

The choice of Spate as the prime example is a curious one. As Spate was confirmed as Director of the Research School of Pacific Studies in 1967²⁴, to describe him as a victim of McCarthyism is an overstatement. According to Robin Jeffrey, Oskar Spate was, in fact, anti-communist.²⁵ Spate said of himself 'I had been very red and left... I'm a good deal milder, but not a Tory'.²⁶ Probably this was a natural, organic, shift in ideology, but it may also have been due to a rational understanding of the relative advantages of political conformity in Australian universities during the Cold War. Foster and Varghese ultimately conclude that the university was not a McCarthyist institution.²⁷

Whether a form of McCarthyism actually occurred at the ANU is a contentious issue. Asked about episodes of McCarthyism at the ANU, J.D.B. Miller replied 'those that occur to me are the frequent attacks in press and parliament on Professor C.P. Fitzgerald for his wish for diplomatic relations with China. Perhaps the later attacks on Manning Clark from similar sources would qualify.'²⁸ But rather than any incident of McCarthyism, Robin Jeffrey by contrast recalled the 1974 hiring of David Marr, who was a communist and had been prominent in the anti-war protest movement. Professor Jeffrey did observe that this was after Australia's withdrawal from

²² Foster and Varghese, *The Making of* p.120

²³ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of* p.122

²⁴ *Report of the Council of the ANU for 1967* p.76

²⁵ Robin Jeffrey, Interview, Australian National University 7th June 2006

²⁶ ANU: UA 2001/20, Item 04: Transcript of Interview with Emeritus Professor O.H.K. Spate 15 May 1990

²⁷ See discussion of the Mason affair below, Foster and Varghese, *The Making of* pp.123-124

²⁸ J.D.B. Miller, letter to the author 28th November 2006

Vietnam and after the change in government.²⁹ Similarly Hank Nelson, who arrived at the ANU at the start of 1973 said that in his experience ‘I knew nothing of any attempts to silence people or to blight careers. None of this happened around me or in any institution I was in.’³⁰ By the 1970s, however, the situation had largely been resolved. The peak of the anti-communist crusade at the ANU was in the 1950s. Spate blamed the university members rather than the government for the tense situation, saying ‘the general atmosphere under Menzies was very conservative. It was lucky Menzies did believe in universities... John Burton was an active stirrer... [as were] Bob Gollan and Jim Davidson’.³¹ The idea that Australian universities weathered the political climate effectively relates more to the experiences of the established universities than the situation at the ANU.

The established Australian universities were in a different situation to ‘new’ universities such as the ANU. They were much less vulnerable to pressures from the government. From the 1920s at the University of Melbourne the Vice Chancellors had upheld the right of staff and students to hold radical political views.³² The historian Geoffrey Blainey argued that with a tradition of the defence of political freedom at the University of Melbourne, the

ill-informed criticism of the university as a home of communist influence didn’t frighten the council. Even when A.A. Dunstan [Premier of Victoria 1935-1945] stated in the Legislative Assembly that the University Council should see that its staff did not support communist doctrine, the university was not perturbed.³³

Without this long tradition, the ANU was less able to withstand criticism of the political affiliation of its academic staff and therefore could not weather the charges with the same degree of nonchalance. The charges, rather than being a relative inconvenience, one which the university could protest or even ignore, were instead a direct threat to the livelihood of the university itself. Protecting the reputation of universities was an important consideration in this

²⁹ Robin Jeffrey, Interview, Australian National University 7th June 2006

³⁰ Hank Nelson, Email 8th May 2006

³¹ ANU: UA 2001/20, Item 04: Transcript of Interview with Emeritus Professor O.H.K. Spate 15 May 1990

³² Blainey, *A Centenary History* p.197

³³ Blainey, *A Centenary History* p.198

political climate, as free research is not guaranteed by the universities but ultimately by the tolerance of the government and the public.³⁴ It was critical to maintain positive appearances – and the appearance of political conformity — with university patrons during the Cold War.

McCarthyism in Australia may have been less vicious than that of the United States, but the early Cold War period between 1951 and 1955 presented the greatest threat to the independence of the ANU from political interference. There is one important proviso which must be made at this point: despite some apparent instances of McCarthyism, by no means *all* ANU academics with left-wing leanings were pilloried or dismissed. Some had long and successful careers with the university. The examination that follows must occur with this in mind.

Questions in Parliament

In the early 1950s there was a well orchestrated campaign to bring the ANU into line with the orthodox political thinking of the day. The key players were back-benchers of both parties, but almost certainly the attack was developed and approved by the head of ASIO, Charles Spry, and Menzies. Comments about the extent of communist influence within the ANU were often of a petty nature, but they exemplified the paranoia on the part of government officials. In 1951 Wilfred Kent Hughes (one of the more outspoken anti-communist parliamentarians) had complained to Menzies about a public comment by C.P Fitzgerald (a noted left-winger at the ANU), who had made the inflammatory remark that ‘China’s fight in Korea was an example of strategic intervention by a neighbouring country’.³⁵

³⁴ Rothblatt, *The Modern University* p.27

³⁵ Kent Hughes to Menzies 30th October 1951, NAA: A1209/23 1957/4264 Australian National University- Security

For the back-benchers such as Kent Hughes the role of Asia was crucial to the Cold War.³⁶ This view was bi-partisan. Lowe says that Stan Keon (a Labor MP, of the Catholic anti-communist right), was ‘consistent with some speeches from across the floor’ in his attacks on communists.³⁷ John Murphy said Stan Keon was a ‘Cold Warrior’, who believed after Dien Bien Phu that ‘today we are in danger almost as great as the peril when the Japanese were pressing in on us.’³⁸ Much of the political antagonism towards universities in Australia came from junior ministers who tended to then be reigned in by premiers or senior ministers.³⁹ However, these backbenchers’ attacks served a dual purpose — to remind universities that they were beholden to the taxpayer and to enable more senior politicians to appear to defend academic freedom while subtly pulling the universities into political conformity.

According to Foster and Varghese ‘The Prime Minister’s position [on attacks on communists at ANU] was reassuring. In response to questions about the appointment or employment of academic staff he consistently replied that such matters were the University’s business’⁴⁰ and that ‘With Copland vigilant and Menzies benign, the University remained fairly safe from ill disposed politicians’.⁴¹ This was a misleading view of the collaboration between government, the security services and the Vice Chancellor.

Henry (Jo) Gullet, the Chief Government Whip, raised the issue of communists at Australian universities in the House of Representatives on 26th August 1952 with a barrage of questions relating to the supposed disloyalty of the ANU, and the RSPacS in particular. The specific nature of these questions points strongly to their being composed by the Director of ASIO Charles Spry

³⁶ Lowe, *Menzies* pp.171-172

³⁷ Lowe, *Menzies* p.172

³⁸ Murphy, *Harvest* p.39

³⁹ Partridge, P.H. “The Australian Universities and Governments” in Australian Vice Chancellor’s Committee, *A Symposium* p.9

⁴⁰ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of* p.121

⁴¹ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of* p.115

and given approval for public airing by Menzies. Spry said (in later years) that ‘public awakening in Australia could arise out of a parliamentary debate on the dangers of communism. ASIO can supply information. In fact ASIO’s only expression is through the medium of the house.’⁴² This statement suggests the broader purpose of the questions about the ANU.

Gullet asked:

How many members of the professorial or administrative staff of the Australian National University or Canberra University College are known to have or to have had communist affiliations?

Who are they?

How many of these were the subjects of adverse security reports in their country of origin?

Why were these reports ignored?

How many have been refused employment in or admission to member nations of the British Commonwealth or the United States?

Was Dr Worsley of the Australian National University ever known to have been a member of the Communist party?

If so, is he still one?

Who appointed him to the University?

What are his duties?

Is it proposed to retain his services?

What are Lord Lindsay’s duties at the Australian National University?

Was he previously an officer in the Chinese Communist Army?

Is it considered that he is a person capable of giving Australian students a disinterested picture of affairs in China?

Is the instruction which is being given to diplomatic and other students on Oriental studies in accordance with the best interests of this country as expounded by the Minister of External Affairs and his predecessor?⁴³

⁴² Spry, memorandum on ‘Counter to Communist Propaganda’ 15th December 1960, NAA: 1838/2 563/6 Part 1 Communism- Cold War Activities- Policy

⁴³ Gullett, H. in Hansard, 26th August 1952, NAA: A 1209/23 1957/4264

The Prime Minister had discussed the issue with Cabinet, acknowledging that difficulties existed in terms of balancing excluding communists with academic freedom,⁴⁴ but Spry was confident in the cooperation of the university, as he had ‘no doubt’ that the Vice Chancellor would provide the answers to the questions and knew that Copland was already supplying information to the security service about both Michael Lindsay (of the RSPacS International Relations Department) and Gollan.⁴⁵

Gullet expanded on his questions, saying:

What does interest me very greatly is that a government of this complexion should authorize the expenditure of a large amount of taxpayer’s money to subsidise the teaching or imparting of communist ideas or ideals... it is quite wrong that people who hold an office in the Public Service, particularly a teaching office, [that] they should allow their political thought, or a thought running along communist lines to influence their teaching... That university is in a fair way to becoming a great deal more famous for its left wing policies than for its research... there should not be a dissemination of communist propaganda by any government agency.⁴⁶

This direct attack is important, not only in its similarity to the public attacks by McCarthy but also in its perception of the ANU as a ‘government agency’ and its members as part of the ‘public service’. Gollan said that there were only two members of the communist party at the ANU at the time and that ‘this talk of “a nest of communists” was absolute nonsense.’⁴⁷ Nonetheless, a residue of wariness remained as a result of these questions. Ross Hohnen (the Registrar of the ANU) later warned Vice Chancellor Melville that the university had good will from both sides of the House but that there

⁴⁴ Cabinet Minutes 19th August 1952, NAA: A4909/1 520 Cabinet Minute – Security and the National University-Without Submission

⁴⁵ Spry to Menzies 18th August 1952, NAA: A6119/78 788 Michael Francis Lindsay ASIO File

⁴⁶ Gullett, H. in Hansard, 28th August 1952, NAA: A 1209/23 1957/4264

⁴⁷ ANU: UA 2001/20, Item 32: Transcript of Interview with Emeritus Professor Robin Allenby Gollan 18 and 21st May 1993

are a few backbenchers on each side of the house who think it should be possible to call the university to account in Parliament through the Prime-Minister for any of its actions... it has been the practise of the Prime Minister to disclaim responsibility and refer the questioner to the Vice Chancellor since the Council has full statutory control of the university's affairs. This gets under the skin of a few people, particularly those who are interested in the political affiliations of our staff and in the public statements they make.⁴⁸

Menzies has traditionally been viewed as a staunch defender of academic freedom. His public pronouncements on Gullet's questions seem to support this conclusion, but public and private realities were very different. Menzies was already negotiating with Copland to ensure the political conformity of ANU staff. Gullet's questions were therefore probably a way to pressure Copland into accepting Menzies' views on the reduction of influence of communists at the ANU. According to Foster and Varghese, Menzies' response to the questions was to state that 'such matters were the University's business.'⁴⁹ However his private negotiations with Spry and Copland belie this statement and were far more intrusive than Foster and Varghese suggest.

The draft of Menzies' public response to the questions defended academic freedom at the ANU.

He said:

Quite frankly, no university can fulfil its purpose of disinterested objective thinking if it depends for its funds on its ability to satisfy the wishes of the government of the day... There have been many statements from time to time by a variety of people that certain persons in the National University are communists or have communist affiliations... in some cases I have no doubt that accusations of communist affiliations have been made by accusers who have not examined with any depth the remarks upon which they base their accusations... I have no doubt that the slavish acceptance by an academic of certain propaganda doctrines would preclude [them] from that objective research which is the hallmark of his calling...

⁴⁸ Hohnen to Melville 13th October 1953, ANU: Australian National University, University Records, 2001/16 Personal Files Box 1 A4.2.1.1 Part 1 Personal Files, Sir Leslie Melville

⁴⁹ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of...* pp.120-121

Menzies stated that the ANU council was looking at the matter and that he trusted them to act appropriately.⁵⁰ The council (or at least Copland) had, in fact, already reported on this matter to Menzies and had in principle agreed to allow security vetting of prospective appointees.

Menzies was inconsistent in his application of the principles of academic freedom. Menzies publicly defended academic freedom and said ‘there have been universities in recent years in other parts of the world literally rent asunder by over-zealous, hysterical attempts to track down communists and their sympathisers. This kind of procedure may not be necessary.’⁵¹ Menzies obviously was referring to McCarthyism and admonishing those who were issuing personal attacks. However at the same time he was also quietly ensuring the loyalty of the ANU through a series of negotiations with Copland. Although Hohnen said that theoretically ‘the university does not enquire into the political or religious beliefs of those to whom it contemplates offering employment or scholarships’⁵², Copland was restricting the academic independence of members of his university at the behest of Menzies.

Copland and Menzies: Ming becomes Merciless!

No mention is made in the *Making of the ANU* about the role of Menzies and Copland in ensuring the political allegiance of ANU staff. Menzies is described as ‘benign’ and Copland as ‘vigilant’⁵³, while in fact Menzies had asked Copland outright whether the council could ensure that communists were not appointed to responsible positions at the university. Copland’s compliance showed he was more concerned with maintaining close relations with the government than with the principle of academic independence.

⁵⁰ Menzies, Draft statement by the Prime Minister, NAA: A 1209/23 1957/4264

⁵¹ Menzies, Draft Statement by the Prime Minister in reply to Mr Mulchay, NAA: A 1209/23 1957/4264

⁵² Hohnen to Prime Minister’s Department, 18th August 1952, NAA: A1209/23 1957/4264

⁵³ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of...* p.115

In 1952 at the time of the criticism of the ANU in parliament, and well before the Petrov Affair, Spry had ordered an extended vetting of all staff at Australian universities.⁵⁴ David McKnight notes that ASIO

was never able to systematically veto or vet staff appointments at Australian universities, though it would have liked to. But it did all it could to hamper the work of academics whom it regarded as “security threats” and, on occasions, actually stopped academic appointments. In the case of the Australian National University... there is circumstantial evidence that vetting of staff occurred through informal liaison between vice chancellors and ASIO.⁵⁵

Spry wrote to Menzies in April 1952 stating that William Berry-Smith (who was to take up position in ANU Department of Nuclear Physics) was a ‘possible security risk’. Also mentioned in the letter was the fact that Peter Worsley at the RSPacS had been appointed to the ANU

in spite of adverse security recommendations by my organisation... I am sure you will readily appreciate the inadvisability of employing, in any university, lecturers who are likely to infect students with subversive doctrines... This situation seems to me to warrant a properly organised system by which the National University will submit to my Organisation for security checking, the names of proposed appointees, at least to certain agreed departments of the University.⁵⁶

On the 18th of August 1952, Copland advised the Prime Minister of the results of ANU council discussions about communists within the university. Menzies had made Spry’s views known to Copland, and Copland discussed potential ways of dealing with communists within the university with Council. Spry informed Menzies that Council had rejected the idea that communists should be automatically excluded from appointment to the university on the grounds of academic freedom. The council advocated the freedom of the university to accept people from any political

⁵⁴ McKnight, D. *Australia's Spies and Their Secrets*, St. Leonards, Allen and Unwin 1994 p.148

⁵⁵ McKnight, *Australia's Spies* p.145

⁵⁶ Spry to Menzies 9th April 1952, NAA: A 1209/23 1957/4264

background and stated that all members of the council ‘would deplore the general imposition of any test appertaining to political views.’ Copland nevertheless advised Menzies that it would be possible

to ensure that, in general, persons who are suspected of being a security risk will not be appointed to responsible positions in the university, or to offices which may be concerned at some time with confidential work over which the security service is required to exercise supervision... [Though no strict rule was to be laid down in order to protect academic freedom:] the appointment of persons likely to involve a security risk should be avoided. Naturally the application of this procedure will be highly confidential and under strict personal supervision of the Vice Chancellor.⁵⁷

What Copland was saying was that although the council could not formally exclude communists from appointments at the ANU, the university would ensure that communists were not granted appointments and promotions informally, by allowing security vetting.

The decision by Copland has been referred to by McKnight as an episode by which ‘the university would avoid the problem by self-censorship. It was a pathetic compromise which conceded in principle but sought to retain a fig-leaf of independence for the university.’ As McKnight notes, ‘Copeland’s [sic] compromise is all the worse because it came in the midst of a public example of the operation of secret security vetting which interfered with academic work.’⁵⁸ With Worsley being denied entry to PNG (see below), academic independence and activities were being compromised by government interference.

These discussions *pre-date* the parliamentary questions about the political affiliation of ANU academics. Menzies’ replies in parliament were therefore not only evasive; they were deliberately misleading in that he had already been attempting to exert active control over the process of appointments of ANU staff. The questions had a dual purpose — to publicly disclose

⁵⁷ Copland to Menzies 18th August 1952, NAA: A 1209/23 1957/4264

⁵⁸ McKnight, *Australia’s Spies*...p.147

the danger of communist academics for discussion in the community and to force the ANU to limit communist influence or exclude communists from the university community. These discussions imply active political interference in the independence of the university in terms of staff appointments. Furthermore, that Copland suggested underhanded ways by which communists could have appointments prevented or career opportunities reduced, shows that the university was subservient to demands for political loyalty at the height of the Cold War. Of great interest here is the troika formed by the Prime Minister, the Director of Security and the Vice Chancellor as a group acting in a private fashion to exclude communists and ensure university policies and appointees were politically reliable, while largely excluding the council from the decision making process.

Figure 4: Menzies at the ANU in 1959



Sir Robert Menzies lays the foundation stone of the Arts building at the Australian National University in Canberra, Oct 1959
(NAA: A1200, L33347 11223319 “Photographic negatives and prints, single number series with 'L' [Library] prefix”)

Copland saw universities as part of the struggle against communism. He argued that unless funding and development of universities in Australia improved, ‘in defence and development

alike Australia will fall behind the effort needed of a vigorous member of the western world'.⁵⁹

Copland was a strong advocate of capitalism and was critical of communist doctrine, saying

Historically, this doctrine is utter rubbish... those countries that originated and developed capitalism, particularly the United Kingdom and the United States, have evolved an economic system precisely contrary to the expectations of Marx and his followers... [communism] constitutes a challenge to capitalism as both an economic and moral order.⁶⁰

Copland in principle opposed government interference with the economic and social affairs of people⁶¹ but he accepted political demands for ideological conformity in order to advance his institution.

It was not until 1955 that the fears of members of parliament about the danger from communists at Australian universities appeared to be justified. The Royal Commission on Espionage after the Petrov Affair found that 'one of Pakhomov's tasks was to obtain information concerning university students...with a view to using them for MVD purposes.'⁶² These findings prompted Menzies to seek a meeting with Leslie Melville (who had taken over as Vice Chancellor), writing to him that

reading the report of the Royal Commission on Espionage I have been disturbed at passages in the report which carry implications for those who are the custodians of institutions of learning. One particular concern I have as Prime Minister is with the Australian National University because of its special associations with the Australian Government...⁶³

⁵⁹ Luncheon Address by Copland to the Millions Club, Sydney 13th May 1952 on "University Development in Australia", ANU Archives: Prof Sir Douglas Copland 2000/05 Articles Speeches and Broadcasts 1948-53, 1965- Articles Speeches and Broadcasts by Douglas Copland 1952

⁶⁰ Copland's Address to the Anglican Men's Movement Dinner, Canberra 21st November 1952 on "Capitalism as a Moral and Economic Order", ANU: 2000/05 Articles Speeches and Broadcasts 1948-53, 1965

⁶¹ Copland's Address to the Anglican Men's Movement Dinner, Canberra 21st November 1952 on "Capitalism as a Moral and Economic Order", ANU: 2000/05 Articles Speeches and Broadcasts 1948-53, 1965

⁶² Clipping from Royal Commission on Espionage paragraph 240, NAA: A 1209/23 1957/4264. Pakhomov was a Soviet intelligence officer at the Canberra embassy (see Manne, *The Petrov Affair* pp. 8-9 and 15).

⁶³ Menzies to Melville 29th September 1955, NAA: A 1209/23 1957/4264

Tim Rowse has perceptively stated that while Melville defended the freedom of the university on its spending he was ‘ambivalent’ about government interference in the political freedom of the university and that Menzies was also ambivalent, defining ‘reasonable liberty’ as the benchmark by which the activities of the university would be judged. This was a statement neither for nor against academic independence and it defined and framed the ‘ideological space’ within which the university could operate. It was a trade-off: some academics ‘would be free to do their expensive research, then other academics might tactfully limit their freedom of speech.’⁶⁴

Menzies was a strong supporter of universities and the principle of academic freedom as it related to individual freedom of thought but he also believed he had a duty to protect Australia from communism. He saw no contradiction between interfering with the appointment of communists and protecting academic freedom. In his mind they were not mutually exclusive. In order to protect those freedoms, the converse of reasonable liberty — reasonable limitations — had to exist.

Security vetting of staff was common to both the ANU and American universities. Ellen Schrecker, an expert on McCarthyism at universities in the Cold War, says that at Harvard prospective employees were required to clear themselves with the FBI before receiving their appointments. Harvard took this course of action at a time when McCarthy was singling out Harvard for attention and it needed to demonstrate the loyalty of the university and avoid future embarrassment.⁶⁵ Lowen believed that in the US, university administrators preferred ‘self-policing’ to overt attacks on their institutions when it came to removing communists and refused to take strong public stands in favour of academic independence.⁶⁶ At Harvard the university publicly stood for academic independence, but privately negotiated with the FBI a policy under

⁶⁴ Rowse, *Nugget Coombs* pp.257-259

⁶⁵ Schrecker, E. *No Ivory Tower- McCarthyism and the Universities*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1986 pp.258-261

⁶⁶ Lowen, *Creating* p.206

which Harvard would not knowingly hire a communist or defend in the courts faculty members accused of communist affiliation. The university would allow FBI screening of appointees and would provide information if requested.⁶⁷ Sociologist Robert Bellah (who had been urged at Harvard to ‘name names’⁶⁸) said that ‘the notion of [the university] as a “bulwark against McCarthyism” was deserved only on the narrowest of grounds... privately [the university’s] efforts were all in the direction of cooperation, not resistance’.⁶⁹ Though lacking much of the vehemence and public furore of academic McCarthyism in the US, the response of the ANU administration to the political climate appears to be similar to the attitude and actions of the Harvard administration.

Travel Restrictions and Subverted Appointments

The tendency in Australian academic circles is to believe that because we did not have show-trials and public prosecutions of communists that Australian academics and academia tolerated political dissent during the Cold War. Certainly there were people of left-wing affiliation such as Robin Gollan and J.W. Davidson who both thrived and enjoyed confronting the university authority and politicians, but these people were a minority. Though a ‘classic’ McCarthyism did not occur, the experience of the ANU shows that more subtle and less public forms of discrimination flourished, particularly in the 1950s.

There was a degree of intellectual suppression of left-wing academics. Brian Martin et al have identified key features of the suppression of intellectual dissent in Australia. Intellectual suppression occurs when a person or organisation ‘threatens the vested interests of elites’. The suppression may not be externally imposed (by the government) but may be internally imposed

⁶⁷ (No Author Named) “Dean Bundy Deals with McCarthyism” *Harvard Magazine*
<http://www.harvardmagazine.com/issues/so98/browse.open2.html> (last accessed 11th July 2008)

⁶⁸ Schrecker, *No Ivory Tower...* pp.262-263

⁶⁹ “Dean Bundy Deals with McCarthyism”

by university administrators. The person or organisation responsible for the criticism is then subjected to attempts to stop the threatening action and to penalties, which can include: blocking tenure or promotion; blocking courses or publications; preventing free speech; dismissal; harassment; blacklisting; and the smearing of reputations. While these are features of direct suppression, indirect suppression also occurs when ‘people are inhibited’ from conducting research or making public statements through an ‘implied or overt threat of sanctions’ or through a ‘climate of fear’ or pressure to conform. The true reason for sanctions is rarely given, particularly in a political climate that enshrines free speech. Suppression is therefore difficult to prove conclusively.⁷⁰ Suppression appears to have taken place at the ANU, through the imposition of travel restrictions and subverting the appointment of left-wing academics.

The government and security services used their veto power on travel to Australian territories as a means of restricting the movements of left-wing academics and consequently limiting the ability of those academics to conduct their research. In August 1952 the Minister for Territories refused a student of the ANU entry into a Commonwealth Territory. The ‘embarrassment’ suffered by the university over this was a major factor in Copland accepting Menzies demands for security vetting of staff.⁷¹ David McKnight, in his history of ASIO described the incident:

A 28 year old ANU anthropologist, Peter Worsley, sought permission from the Australian Department of Territories to visit New Guinea. ASIO refused to clear him, apparently on information received from MI5... Questioned in the House, the Territories Minister Paul Hasluck warned that “a great deal of mischief could be done to natives” and said the ban was due to Worsley’s political affiliations. Worsley challenged Hasluck to repeat his statements outside the House, explained that he intended to study kinship structures, not administration policy and suggested that allegations about his behaviour be made public so he could answer them.⁷²

⁷⁰ Martin, B. “Introduction” in Martin, B. et al (Eds) *Intellectual Suppression- Australian Case Histories, Analysis and Responses*, North Ryde NSW, Angus and Robertson 1986 pp.1-2

⁷¹ Copland to Menzies 18th August 1952, NAA: A 1209/23 1957/4264

⁷² McKnight, *Australia’s Spies* p.147

The ANU Student Association took up the struggle on Worsley's behalf, seeing the issue as an 'important matter of principle'⁷³ which had 'significance for all academic workers in Australia.'⁷⁴ Refusing permission to visit the Territory on the grounds of Worsley's opinions was believed by the Association to constitute a breach of individual freedom of thought.⁷⁵ The ANUSA felt natural justice had been denied to Worsley and that the exclusion potentially heralded the emergence of an Australian McCarthyism. The President and Secretary of the Association wrote that

the Minister's action indicates the existence of dangerous powers, under which a person may be discriminated against, no charge having been preferred, no evidence adduced, no jury made available and no legal means of redress being open to him. Moreover such action may be taken on the basis of unverifiable and secret information. The dangers of such a mode of procedure are obvious.⁷⁶

The ANUSA clearly viewed the Minister's actions as a violation of academic freedom. As Worsley was going to New Guinea to undertake research they argued that 'the Minister's decision... does constitute an attack on the liberty of inquiry. It can not help but render difficult the carrying-out of integrated research projects...'⁷⁷ They complained directly to the Minister:

The students of the Australian National University condemn the unexplained action of the Minister of State for Territories... It is the opinion of the student body that this action, so long as the Minister refuses to give reasons for it, constitutes an arbitrary interference with, and a definite threat to academic freedom and liberty of inquiry and cannot fail to have a detrimental effect upon the work of the university.⁷⁸

The ANUSA later 'directly request[ed] the Minister to reveal the content and the sources of his information... above all we urge this course in order to put an end to the growing fear in this university and elsewhere that both personal and academic freedom are under attack.'⁷⁹

⁷³ L. Barnard and J. Bromley (President and Secretary of the ANU Student's Association) to Mr MacDonald 5th August 1952, ANU Archives: ANU Chancelry [sic], 2004/42, Box 1 residual Reports and early files 1946-1953

⁷⁴ L. Barnard and J. Bromley to Mr MacDonald 5th August 1952, ANU: 2004/42, Box 1

⁷⁵ L. Barnard and J. Bromley to Mr MacDonald 5th August 1952, ANU: 2004/42, Box 1

⁷⁶ L. Barnard and J. Bromley to Mr MacDonald 5th August 1952, ANU: 2004/42, Box 1

⁷⁷ L. Barnard and J. Bromley to Mr MacDonald 5th August 1952, ANU: 2004/42, Box 1

⁷⁸ Bromley to Hasluck 4th July 1952, ANU: 2004/42, Box 1

⁷⁹ Bromley to Hasluck 14th July 1952, ANU: 2004/42, Box 1

Paul Hasluck's reply to the ANUSA showed that his decision was indicative of the imperative towards security that existed for the government at that time. He wrote

With all respect I would submit to you that the question of academic freedom has nothing whatsoever to do with the case under reference. In this case I exercised the powers and discharged the responsibility placed upon me in exactly the same way as I should have done in the case of an applicant from any other calling proposing to visit the territory for any reason. The fact that the applicant for a permit was a student from the Australian National University had no relevance and was not taken into account in reaching a decision. The decision must stand in the same way as it would have to stand in the case of any other applicant in respect of whom I had received the information which I received about Mr Worsley.⁸⁰

Hasluck, though denying an entry permit for Worsley to New Guinea did allow a visit to Groote Eyland, 'notwithstanding his membership in the communist party'.⁸¹ Worsley accepted this option and was awarded his PhD in 1956.⁸²

The most important consequence of the Worsley episode was the internal reaction of the ANU administration. In late 1952 Copland circulated around the university a "Confidential Note on Academic Freedom". The document referred to a scholar being denied an entry permit for PNG, and said that university policy needed to be developed regarding academic freedom. The assumption was made that the refusal to grant the permit was based on the political allegiance of the scholar. Although the scholar would suffer as a result of the decision and the university considered the decision could constitute a breach of academic freedom, it was noted that the university could not claim special privileges. The university decided it could not accept responsibility for limitations imposed by the state on any member of staff whose work brought them into areas involving security considerations. The report concluded that although it would

⁸⁰ Hasluck to Bromley 8th July 1952, ANU: 2004/42, Box 1

⁸¹ John Barnes to Davidson 15th April 1959, ANU Archives: Prof JW Davidson papers 2001/39 box 2 RSPacS Deanship Nov 1952- Aug 1960

⁸² Council meeting minutes 6th July 1956, ANU: 2005/8 Box 3

be proper for the university to resist challenges to academic freedom, it would be ‘very unwise’ given the current culture of ‘subversive activities’ to seek out a special position for itself.⁸³

Though contradictory, upholding academic freedom on the one hand and denying it on the other, this policy in effect ensured that, as at Harvard, members of the ANU community who were accused of communist affiliations could have their activities restricted by the government and the ANU would not publicly support them. The policy also ensured that the university would not, apart from in principle, challenge any negative decision by the government affecting academic freedom for scholars. Academics and students would be required to defend themselves. The pressure Menzies was exerting appears to have been successful in forcing a degree of self-censorship by the university.

The ANU Council noted that

The Minister had granted the Vice Chancellor a confidential interview... It was generally felt, in the absence of details about Mr Worsley’s case, that the Minister’s power to refuse entry to a territory was undeniable and that members of the University could not demand special privileges not accorded other citizens.... At the same time it was realised that there could be circumstances associated with the case of which the university should take note as restricting the scope of the university and the research carried out by scholars.⁸⁴

In future the council would inform potential field researchers that restrictions existed and that the ‘university does not accept responsibility for any difficulties in which a scholar may find himself in the event of his exclusion from a field research area.’⁸⁵

⁸³ Copland “Confidential Note on Academic Freedom” 4th July 1952, NLA: “Papers of J.W. Davidson” MS5105 Box 1

⁸⁴ ANU Council meeting 27th June 1952, Item 21 “Entry permits to Australian Territories for Field Research Workers”, ANU: 2005/8 Box 3

⁸⁵ Council Meeting minutes 15th August 1952, ANU: 2005/8 Box 3

The policy whereby the university would limit its support to academics accused of communist affiliation is mentioned by Foster and Varghese but in the briefest of terms, stating only that ‘Copland [said] the university could not claim special privileges for its own members.’⁸⁶ This is a classic Cold War university issue. As Chomsky has said, ‘Traditionally the role of the intellectual, or at least his self image, has been that of a dispassionate critic. In so far as that role has been lost, the relation of the schools to intellectuals should, in fact, be one of self defence.’⁸⁷ The ANU appears to have abrogated the responsibility for the defence of its academics due to the ‘subversive climate’.

As well as travel restrictions there were attempts to subvert the appointments processes of the university. In 1955 the parliamentary members of council showed their belief that their role was to protect political orthodoxy in the ANU’s appointments. An attempt was underway in the ANU council to appoint an American scholar, Sigmund Diamond, to the ANU’s History Department. While all appeared to be running smoothly to confirm Diamond’s appointment, the parliamentary members of the council became agitated about Diamond’s political past. Sir Frank Richardson wrote to Acting Prime Minister Arthur Fadden that referees’ reports said Diamond had been a victim of McCarthyism and Richardson protested vehemently that the council had ignored this justifiable rationale for excluding Diamond from the ANU community:

I... asked what steps the Board of Graduate Studies had taken to satisfy itself as to the degree of the leftist views of Dr Diamond... I expressed the view that universities are generally suspect for the communist tendencies of some members of their staffs, that this country has enough communists and ex-communists without importing any more at public expense, and that I personally oppose most strongly the appointment of any ex-member of the communist party.⁸⁸

⁸⁶ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of* p.122

⁸⁷ “The Logic of Withdrawal” in Chomsky, *American Power* p.251

⁸⁸ Sir Frank Richardson to Acting PM Fadden, 17th March 1955, ANU: H.C. Coombs-Chancellor 2002/08 Coombs Personal Papers c1946-19?? [sic]

Another parliamentary member of council, Donald Cameron, also wrote to Fadden about Diamond:

I stated that in my view the ANU was a national institution and that members of Council had responsibilities far more reaching than those of a merely academic body concerned only with an academic structure and that I would not regard the Council's responsibility as being adequately discharged unless it had not only made enquiries from American University Authorities as had been done, but had requested and obtained an official security check... May I say further that I am unimpressed by arguments to the effect that appointments to the staff of a University must take no account of "political" views of prospective appointees as this is an infringement of "academic freedom", and that all that matters is that they should possess "intellectual integrity"...I believe that as I represent the National Parliament on the Council, it is incumbent upon me to inform you as Head of the Government of these facts.⁸⁹

Clearly the political appointees to the ANU council believed their role included ensuring an anti-communist policy was maintained at the ANU. This example also shows a *direct link* between American McCarthyism at universities and the actions of the ANU: Diamond had refused to "name names" for the FBI while at Harvard and as a result had his contract terminated.⁹⁰ The parliamentary representatives on the ANU council were concerned that the appointment of such an individual at the ANU could infect the faculty with subversive principles. Foster and Varghese state that in the end 'someone' wrote to Diamond in terms that scared him off the ANU and he stayed in the US.⁹¹

Foster and Varghese explored yet another instance of political interference in 1955 when the proposed appointment of Stephen Mason to the position of Fellow in the Department of Medical Chemistry created controversy. Melville and Hohnen, 'anticipating trouble on council' due to Mason's political views, investigated Mason's background. Conflicting evidence was received

⁸⁹ Cameron to Fadden, 19th March 1955, NAA: M2576/1 100 "Personal paper of Prime Minister Menzies Correspondence re Cabinet and overseas matters"

⁹⁰ "Dean Bundy Deals with McCarthyism"

⁹¹ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of* p.123

which indicated that Mason was still a communist. While many members of the university backed the appointment on the grounds of academic freedom, Frank Richardson argued that the ‘risks were too great’. The matter was complicated by Mason’s having opposed Catholicism while at Oxford and the Oxford influence at ANU was strong, notably that of Patrick Moran on the Board of Graduate Studies who argued vehemently against Mason’s appointment and ‘was alleged to have kept a black-list of left wing academics who should not be appointed to the ANU’. Melville decided that the appointment should be allowed to proceed, but Mason had been told by Howard Florey (then an adviser to the John Curtin Medical School at ANU) that ‘political considerations were involved in his appointment’ and decided ‘what the ANU could do with its position and took a tenured appointment at the University of Exeter’. Strangely, given the outcome of this affair, Foster and Varghese use this episode as an example of how the ANU ‘was not to be “a McCarthy university” after all.’⁹² This and the other episodes, as well as the policies enacted by Copland, would seem to indicate that there was a form of McCarthyism at the ANU, at least in the sense of attenuated academic freedom and reduced opportunities for communists.

Florey argued that the dangers inherent in being financially dependent on the government and living at the seat of government meant that the ANU was ‘influenced in day to day matters by politicians... [who had an] influence on policy and on the selection of university personnel.’ He believed this was a similar situation to what was occurring in the United States. Florey acknowledged that political interference in ANU appointments had occurred and believed Dr Mason’s appointment had been denied due to his political beliefs. Florey he said that ‘as soon as it is known... that the ANU has taken to investigating political or religious beliefs in its appointments it will lose stature, except possibly in those countries where there is a totalitarian government or a McCarthy’.⁹³ Political interference in appointments processes led to the loss of

⁹² Foster and Varghese, *The Making of* pp.123-124

⁹³ Report to Council by Sir Howard Florey (undated), ANU: 2000/18 1(2) 3.4.0.1c Part 1

one of the ANU's great minds as in 1955 Florey resigned, as politicians and civil servants had too much say in policy and selection of staff.⁹⁴

A husband and wife team of ANU academics, the Epsteins also received restrictions on their travel in 1959. John Barnes (RSPacS Professor of Anthropology and Sociology) had been asked by Cecil Lambert (Secretary of the Territories Department), 'What are you going to do about the Epsteins? Both of them have terrible security records.' Barnes responded 'it had always been a matter of policy with us to appoint people solely on their academic attainments.' Lambert responded 'contemptuously', 'of course, if you want this academic freedom...'⁹⁵ Barnes then felt compelled to discuss the situation with Hasluck who

was not seriously worried about Scarlett. He said that they knew that she had a communist background, but that, by itself was not sufficient to deny her entry into the territory... As for Bill, Hasluck said that he had a very serious security report on him, such that if it were true there would be no possibility at all of his being allowed into New Guinea... he had referred the matter to Menzies before taking a final decision, and Menzies agreed that on his record Bill should not be given an entry permit.⁹⁶

In the aftermath of the Worsley affair both the university and the government were highly sensitive to negative publicity and hoped to avoid any adverse consequences. Barnes informed Davidson that

Hohnen, and to a lesser extent Melville, have been concerned lest there should be any of the publicity about this matter which accompanied the Worsley affair. Hohnen, I think, thought that it would be possible to keep the whole thing quiet, so that no one else in the university would know that entry permits had been refused... although the refusal is now well known in both the Schools, there has been no move to organise a

⁹⁴ Gollan, Some Recollections on the Early History of the ANU, NLA: MS 9372 Box 10

⁹⁵ John Barnes to Davidson 15th April 1959, ANU: 2001/39 box 2

⁹⁶ John Barnes to Davidson 15th April 1959, ANU: 2001/39 box 2 (if communist affiliation was not sufficient to deny Scarlett entry, it is worth wondering what extra information had been received from MI5 about Worsley and Gluckman?)

public protest against Hasluck's action. Hasluck too said he was anxious to avoid a repetition of the Worsley affair in this respect, and I told him that I too hoped that this would not happen.⁹⁷

The major influence on the decision to deny the Epstein's their entry permits seems to have been less the issue of communism and more Bill Epstein's attitudes about racial equality. This shows the contemporary use of the term 'communist' as a blanket ban on unwanted attitudes. Barnes posited why the Epsteins had been checked by ASIO:

I think both Hohnen and Melville are persuaded, quite correctly that this case is not in any way analogous to those of Worsley... The most likely hypothesis seems to be that the security people have sent in an unfavourable report on Bill Epstein based on his work in Northern Rhodesia. Recent events in Central Africa make it only too clear how easy it must be for anyone who is not a dyed-in-the-wool negrophobe to be classified as a communist.⁹⁸

The Gluckman affair was another example of the direct interference by government in university activities. In 1960 the anthropologist Max Gluckman was refused a permit to enter the Territory of Papua and New Guinea by the Australian authorities and was forced to abandon his research.⁹⁹

The council commented on this situation by stating that:

In general, members of the school have maintained excellent relations with the Minister for Territories, the Department of Territories and the Administration of the Territory... None the less, Professor Gluckman's difficulty does not stand alone in the School's experience. There have been previous occasions on which an apparent lack of confidence in a new member of the School or doubts about the granting of facilities necessary for a particular project have seriously hindered research.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁷ John Barnes to Davidson 15th April 1959, ANU: 2001/39 box 2

⁹⁸ Barnes to Davidson 26th March 1959, ANU: 2001/39 box 2

⁹⁹ *Australian National University: Report of the Council for 1960* p.65

¹⁰⁰ *Australian National University: Report of the Council for 1960* p.65

Menzies discussed Gluckman's exclusion from PNG in the House of Representatives and while publicly supporting the principle of academic freedom, he demonstrated the variable way in which he applied the principle. Menzies said

Certain comments that have been published rather suggest that academic freedom is involved in the exclusion of this man from the Territory of Papua and New Guinea. I want to refer to that because it exhibits a complete misconception of this problem. Academic freedom, yes. The Australian National University enjoys it in the fullest possible measure. We do not appoint people to the staff of that university. The university authorities do so according to their own untrammelled judgement...

Mr Curtin interjected: 'It is just as well!' Menzies then continued:

'Indeed it is just as well, because perhaps a few of the appointments made would not have received my approval. But I believe in academic freedom... But academic freedom does not carry with it the right to enjoy immunity from the immigration restrictions of the territory which apply to other people. Although academic people occasionally confuse the issue, it is quite clear that you do not rise above the law simply because you attain academic freedom, and whether a man is a free academic or not, when he desires to enter this territory he must secure a permit to do so. I emphasise that point...'¹⁰¹

There was an irony when Menzies commented that he and the government did not appoint staff members of the university, considering he had gone to considerable efforts to ensure that certain people would be *excluded* from appointment there. When asked specifically why Gluckman was denied an entry permit to PNG Menzies was evasive, remarking how all he had to do was publish this reasoning and the security agencies '...can close up... I am not going to take any step which would involve us in the loss of access to information bearing on the security, the territorial integrity and the political integrity of Australia.'¹⁰²

The exclusion provoked fierce debate in the ANU council. Gollan was on council during the Gluckman incident and

¹⁰¹ Hansard, 8th September 1960, NLA: "Papers of Sir Robert Menzies" MS4936/6/132 Box 270

¹⁰² Hansard 8th September 1960, NLA: MS4936/6/132 Box 270

moved for a pretty savage motion of criticism of the government for this refusal which caused great consternation on the council. Sir Kenneth Baily was a member of the council and I remember Baily saying “I couldn’t vote for a motion like that, I’m a public servant.” Mark Oliphant waving his fist at him and saying “Here you’re a member of the university, you’re not a public servant.”¹⁰³

Gluckman was not a member of the communist party, though his wife had been. Gollan suggested that there was a rumour that Gluckman was a homosexual and had been denied entry to PNG for this reason.¹⁰⁴ Despite the efforts of Gollan and Oliphant, Gluckman received relatively little support from the ANU. Crawford wrote to Melville that

It occurs that my silence on the Gluckman affair may be construed wrongly... there has seemed little I could do by trying to interfere from here [he was in New York]... meanwhile would you assure my colleagues that my silence does not mean lack of sympathy with them... At least, as a person with some experience already under the security legislations I will press for information before accepting any future bans. In the absence of bans I will only be able to go on the attitude of other governments to the particular individuals.¹⁰⁵

This episode and others indicate that at times when the government felt unsure about potential research outcomes or when it felt it suspected the “allegiance” of ANU students or staff members it was willing to interfere with the conduct of research in order to prevent it being completed. The government was thereby using its ability to influence the type and outcomes of research conducted by the university. As another example, in 1962 Allan Healy’s ANU PhD on Australian colonial policy detailed shortcomings in the policy and presented the case for a rapid transfer of political power to PNG. As he had been required to sign forms giving the Department of Territories the right to approve or veto publication in order to gain access to official

¹⁰³ ANU: UA 2001/20, Item 32: Transcript of Interview with Emeritus Professor Robin Allenby Gollan 18 and 21st May 1993

¹⁰⁴ ANU: UA 2001/20, Item 32: Transcript of Interview with Emeritus Professor Robin Allenby Gollan 18 and 21st May 1993

¹⁰⁵ Crawford to Melville 15th September 1960, ANU Archives: Prof JW Davidson papers 2001/39 box 3 RSPacS Deanship Nov 1952- Aug 1960

documents, the department ‘demanded that the thesis be kept under lock and key at the University’ and this action was supported by the university administration.¹⁰⁶

The restrictions imposed on ANU academics were a challenge to the principle of academic freedom and show that the government was actively suppressing the independence of the university. The core principle involved is that the government should not place restrictions on the *outcome* of research conducted within the university. While funding agencies may have input on the topic for research or even the evidence to be considered in the conduct of the research, any attempt by the funder to influence the outcome of that research perverts its objectivity and denies the researcher the freedom to make their own independent conclusions.¹⁰⁷

Accusations of communist affiliation while at the ANU may have dogged people throughout their careers. One of the more controversial figures in the history of the ANU, Russel Ward, had been denied an appointment at the Wagga Teachers College by the Public Service Board of NSW in 1951. He believed that he had been black-balled as a communist, despite having left the Party over a year before.¹⁰⁸ Ward feared that this black-ball had continued to affect his career, so he was pleasantly surprised that he was successful in applying to the ANU for a PhD scholarship.¹⁰⁹ Ward felt part of a subversive atmosphere at the ANU, saying that the Research School of Social Sciences History Department ‘were seen by many as communist refugees from the NSW Education Department.’¹¹⁰ While he was at the ANU, Ward said he ‘eschewed any kind of political involvement... from a realistic fear of persecution.’¹¹¹ At the end of his time at the ANU Ward applied for a position at the NSW University of Technology. Despite unanimous approval from the selection committee, the university council rejected the application as the Vice

¹⁰⁶ Martin, B. “The Archives of Suppression” in Martin, *Intellectual Suppression* p.165

¹⁰⁷ Scanlon, T. “Academic Freedom and the Control of Research” in Pincoffs, *The Concept* pp.238-239

¹⁰⁸ Ward, *A Radical Life* pp.199-200

¹⁰⁹ Ward, *A Radical Life* pp.210-212

¹¹⁰ Ward, *A Radical Life* p.211

¹¹¹ Ward, *A Radical Life* p.221

Chancellor (J.P. Baxter) said Ward had ‘been active in seditious circles in Canberra’. Ward believed the appointment procedures at universities throughout Australia had been compromised by the security state.¹¹²

The question remains whether a selective appointments policy was enacted in the long term. Institutions tend to recruit individuals who are able to conform to the institutional identity and purpose. One of the most outspoken critics of the university, Gregory Clark, contends that the ANU adopted the practice of appointing people who would follow the government line and also engaged in wrecking careers of people who did not conform. It should be noted that the antagonism between Clark and the ANU is still mutual and deep-seated after 40 years. Clark, it was said, still harbours some resentment towards the university as he ‘was a failed PhD from here’.¹¹³ Clark’s memoirs suggest restrictions on left-wing appointments were applied well into the 1960s.

Gregory Clark was a former Australian diplomat who had resigned from External Affairs in protest over the Vietnam War. He sought employment at what he calls ‘that large employer of ex-bureaucrats – the Australian National University’. In 1962 he had been offered a job by Crawford and also had an offer from J.D.B. Miller to become a researcher in International Relations. At the time he had turned them down as he was due to be posted to Moscow with External Affairs and said that when he returned he would be a more valuable addition to the school, having Russian as well as Chinese language skills. After his resignation from External Affairs, however, the attitude towards him changed and he was denied the position he had previously been offered. Although Clark did eventually receive a ‘generous’ PhD scholarship at

¹¹² Ward, *A Radical Life* p.235 and 238. For an alternative explanation of this affair see Chapter 6.

¹¹³ Michael McKinley, Interview, Australian National University 6th of June 2006

the RSPacS Department of Economics,¹¹⁴ Clark implies he was denied the jobs due to his political position. When he returned, Crawford was, he says,

making headlines with savage tirades against ANU students with the good sense and conscience to demonstrate against the Vietnam War. Miller was handing out grave warnings about the threat from China and his department had been stacked with a lot of strange people from strange places who seemed to have briefs to rigidly support government positions on China and Vietnam.¹¹⁵

Asked why the ANU appeared to be appointing people with briefs to support the government line, Clark replied that the dependence of the ANU on government patronage forced it into a defensive position, saying

The ANU [in the 1960s] was very dependent on government funding and support. There had been much criticism of its establishment since Australia at the time did not seem to need such an expensive institution. It seemed to feel it had to go out of its way to justify itself... But there was also the political climate and hysteria caused by the Vietnam War in Australia at the time. Even so called liberals such as Crawford really did believe that in Asia we faced a dangerous communist monster which had to be stopped at all costs. Needless to say, those who seemed to oppose that line also had to be stopped. It was a very black period in Australian history.¹¹⁶

Clark wrote a book on China's 1958 confrontation with Taiwan and asked the ANU press whether they would be interested. He said

They took one look at the emerging manuscript and fled. They were not into publishing polemical books, they said. Later I learned that they passed the MS to my dear friends in the ANU international relations department, who had lost no time in saying that this "leftwing pro-Beijing tract was quite unsuitable for an academic publisher"... They had succeeded in at least one of their ambitions, namely to make sure that no

¹¹⁴ Clark, G. "Life Story" www.gregoryclark.net/lifestory/page3/page3.html (Accessed 29th March 2006)

¹¹⁵ Clark, G. "Life Story" www.gregoryclark.net/lifestory/page3/page3.html (Accessed 29th March 2006)

¹¹⁶ Gregory Clark, Email 29th March 2006

serious critic of government policies would have access to whatever academic respectability they could provide.¹¹⁷

Clark's allegations about the ANU suggest that after almost 50 years there is still a polarised view about the ANU during the Cold War — some commentators believe the ANU acted within the bounds of academic propriety, with objectivity and independence guiding their activities. Others believe that the ANU kowtowed to the government, compromised its independence, adopted skewed hiring practices and promoted works designed to support the government. As in all such polarised disputes, the truth lies somewhere in the middle. On occasions there were questionable activities, but for the most part the ANU — in seeking to gain and maintain a reputation as a credible academic institution had to have objectivity and independence as a desirable outcome. The temptation may have been strong to follow the government line when they provided the majority of funding but it cannot be suggested that *all* dissenting academics at ANU were effectively silenced or encouraged to resign. Nevertheless, the 1950s and 1960s were a particularly tense time, posing challenges to the ANU that were similar in many ways to the US Cold War university experience.

The collaboration of the ANU administration with the government to ensure the political allegiance of ANU appointees is an issue that has been largely avoided by previous studies of the ANU. This complicity is similar to the actions of the American university administrators, who sought to comply with the aims of government in order to avoid any embarrassment and loss of prestige or funding. This demonstrates that while there may not have been a pure McCarthyism in the sense of show-trials, career prospects and academic opportunities for communists (or associates of communists) were reduced and there are subtle similarities with the US experience. The lack of support given to ANU academics who were publicly accused of being disloyal to the

¹¹⁷ Clark, G. "Life Story" www.gregoryclark.net/lifestory/page3/page3.html and www.gregoryclark.net/lifestory/page4/page4.html (Accessed 29th March 2006)

Australian people shows that the ANU responded poorly to the threat to its academic and intellectual independence which came about in the 1950s.

The experiences of Worsley, Gluckman, Mason, the Epsteins and Diamond demonstrate that the government had interfered with the independence of, and freedom of inquiry within, the university. They also demonstrate that the government was sensitive to the political colour of potential appointees. Further, these incidents show that on these occasions the university administration allied itself with the government and refused to support the intellectual freedom of its academics. In the long run it was the administration itself which was most threatened by McCarthyism, in the sense that it felt it needed to make concessions in order to ensure funding. Hancock had noted that ‘most of the wreckers have been careerists, pedants or idiots’ and that ‘few have been communists’.¹¹⁸

Communists were not fired wholesale from the ANU. In mid 1952 Spry had reported to Cabinet on Gollan and Lindsay. Gollan said that Melville suggested several times in 1957 that he should ‘get rid of Gollan...[however] instead he recommended me for a permanent fellowship’.¹¹⁹ While there may not have been ‘typical’ McCarthyism in the sense of loyalty oaths and the firing of communist academics, there were some similarities in the American and Australian experience of dealing with the potential threat of communists within the universities. The Australian experience was one of more subtle forms of discrimination. The Cold War produced a climate of suspicion in Australia which contributed to public accusations of disloyalty of staff at the ANU, to restrictions on the travel of communist academics and attempts to prevent the appointment of communist academics to the ANU and reduce their chances for promotion within the university. Like Harvard, the university minimised its support to those who were attacked in this climate.

¹¹⁸ Gollan, Some Recollections on the Early History of the ANU, NLA: MS 9372 Box 10

¹¹⁹ Gollan, Some Recollections on the Early History of the ANU, NLA: MS 9372 Box 10

This ensured the university could disassociate itself as an institution from the actions of its more controversial members. Ultimately, the troika of the Vice-Chancellor, the Director of Security and Menzies ensured compliance with government wishes for reduced communist influence at the ANU, bypassing the council to do so and thus — in an attack on academic freedom and independence — violated (or at least ignored the spirit of) the ANU Act.

CHAPTER 5: INTERLUDE — A RED HERRING?

With the questions in parliament concerning Michael Lindsay's allegiance to communism it is tempting to describe the subsequent controversy about the Chair of International Relations and Lindsay's resignation as a simple case of a communist being forced out of the university, a case of subtle McCarthyism. Even if this is not the case, the political overtones of the affair warrant deeper analysis in the context of the ANU as a Cold War university. The affair could have been an instance of the application of the principle by which communists would not be given advancement in the university. However, the deeper the research into the Lindsay controversy went, the more it appeared to be an example of academic politics gone awry, a complicated case involving broken promises, cliques, conflicting ambitions, political interference and eventually committees and external auditors. It may, of course be *both* the exclusion of a communist sympathizer and the removal of a source of embarrassment to the university, these are not mutually exclusive.

Figure 5: Lord Lindsay



Lord Lindsay of Birker, with Phra Sumangalo from Wat Sam Pluem Monastery in Bangkok and the Ambassador for Thailand, Nai Konthi Suphamongkhon. (NAA: A1501, A296/2 8887457)

Foster and Varghese's description summarises the Lindsay controversy succinctly.

The Department of International Relations had troubled beginnings — when Crocker left for New Delhi in 1952, the small department was placed in the charge of Michael Lindsay... during the war he had served

alongside Mao's armies against the Japanese occupation and had expressed strong support for the Communist cause... he had reversed his opinions and had become a profound critic of the Maoist regime. On Crocker's resignation in 1954, Lindsay... applied unsuccessfully for the chair... As the University seemed reluctant to promote him even to the readership that he insisted had been promised, he came to see himself as the victim of an injustice and made his grievances publicly known, questioning the University's standards in social science research as well as its appointment and promotion procedures... In 1957 the department's problems looked as though they might be solved when Martin Wight... accepted the chair and reached the stage of passing a medical examination. But Lindsay wrote to him in terms that scared him away. Soon the case was completely out of hand, with Lindsay writing scathing articles... and lambasting the University on ABC television. In the meantime, the department languished. While individual members, including Lindsay himself, continued to do valuable work, there was nothing and no-one to hold it together.¹

Despite the political overtones, in the *Making of the ANU* the Lindsay affair was presented more as an example of the difficulties of the fledgling International Relations Department than an example of political interference. Foster and Varghese are probably correct to make this conclusion, as the evidence for political machinations in the affair is scant and circumstantial. The documentary record points more strongly towards a bitter and prolonged episode of academic infighting.

Lindsay: Communist Agent or Anti-Communist?

Lindsay's background makes the supposition of political overtones in the dispute more likely. In a letter to Menzies in 1951, Stan Keon referred to Lindsay's service as a British liaison officer with Mao's Army during the Second World War and said that 'anyone with Mr Lindsay's record should be very thoroughly screened before being let loose in the national university'.² Menzies replied, 'I do not know whether there is any relation between Mr Lindsay's experiences in China

¹ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of...* pp.108-109

² Keon to Menzies, March 1951, NAA: A1209/23 1957/4264

and his political beliefs' and refused to take any action.³ Keon was not deterred, and in August 1952 took the opportunity of Gullet's questions in the House to attack Menzies, the university and Lindsay, saying:

I do not intend to skirt around the matter, I say outright that the ANU has become deliberately, according to a planned scheme, a nest of communists who are busy building up their own organisations to subvert the institutions of this country, to frustrate the desires of governments and to destroy proper administration. This government approved of the appointment of Lord Lindsay to the staff of the ANU... I wrote to the PM and stated that if the Government contemplated such an appointment that it should know that Lord Lindsay had served for a number of years with the communist Army in China. The reply to my letter was most insulting, and suggested that any one who could query the appointment of a belted earl must be out of their senses. It was obvious that members of the government were so anxious to be rubbing shoulders in Canberra with a genuine belted earl that they were not worried about the fact that this gentleman was doing the work of the Communist party. I know very well that much will be said about academic freedom, and all that sort of thing, but the persons that I have mentioned are being paid with money that has been provided by the Australian taxpayers... when he does it by virtue of a salary paid by the Australian Government and by virtue of the fact that the PM has invited him to occupy a position in the ANU then it is high time that a halt should be called to his activities. This is a matter of deadly seriousness.⁴

Menzies responded glibly: 'I do not make appointments to the staff of the university... Good heavens I have seen hundreds of earls!'⁵

Complicating examination of the controversy are Lindsay's fluctuating political beliefs. In the early 1950s he appeared to be a strong supporter of communism, and even as late as 1957 he argued that American views on communism were too dogmatic and inflexible.⁶ These views meant that Lindsay had come to the attention of the security services even before he entered the country. Lindsay's communist affiliations were enough to warrant surveillance (and public

³ Menzies to Keon 16th May 1951, NAA: A1209/23 1957/4264

⁴ Keon, in Hansard 28th August 1952, NAA: A1209/23 1957/4264

⁵ Menzies, Hansard 28th August 1952, NAA: A1209/23 1957/4264

⁶ Lecture by Lindsay given in 1957 "Australia, the USA and Asia", ANU Archives: Prof JW Davidson papers 2001/39 box 1 Research School of Pacific Studies, Department of International Relations 19/2/1953-26/8/1963

attack by parliamentarians) but not sufficient to exclude him from the country. The Director General of Security had no objection to the Lindsay's getting Australian citizenship⁷ and Copland and Spry had agreed that 'that information held was not of a sufficiently definite character to warrant objections [to Lindsay's entry to the country] being raised on security grounds.'⁸

Nonetheless ASIO was concerned about Lindsay being either an intentional or unintentional agent of influence or even a spy for the communists and they went to the extent of asking the Petrovs whether they knew of him.⁹ An ASIO assessment of Lindsay reported that

His personal experience with the Chinese Communist Army and his marriage to a Chinese woman would obviously be strong influences, against which his academic training is waging an unsuccessful battle. I incline to the view that dishonesty rather than conscious propagandist purpose is the clue. But while he persists in spreading the kind of false impressions [pro-communist] I have described, I do not see that the possibility of the latter more sinister role can be ruled out.¹⁰

By the mid-1950s Lindsay's views on communism were in flux. In a surprising turn-about ASIO then gave Lindsay a clean bill of political health, reporting to the Governor General that

Lord Lindsay, who worked with the Chinese Communist forces in the Sino-Japanese war, has grown progressively disillusioned about the Chinese Communist Party ever since, and is now out of sympathy with it and does not agree with its foreign or domestic policy. As far as the Director General knows, Lord Lindsay has never subscribed to Marxism and indeed appears to be opposed to Soviet Communist ideology.¹¹

⁷ ASIO Memorandum 14th November 1956, NAA: A6119/78 788

⁸ Heyes (Secretary of the Department of Immigration) to Deputy Director Security (undated), NAA: A6119/78 788

⁹ They said they did not know of him. ASIO Memorandum 9th January 1957, NAA: A6119/78 788

¹⁰ NAA: A6119/78 788 ASIO Memorandum 8th September 1952

¹¹ Draft reply to telephone message from the Governor General's Official Secretary dated 2nd August 1954, NAA: A6119/78 788

The principal cause of this shift in politics was personal, not ideological. Lindsay had been denied entry into communist China.¹² He viewed this, like other set-backs, as a personal affront.

C.P. Fitzgerald (Professor of Far Eastern History) noted Lindsay's tendency to act this way:

[Lindsay] would fiercely criticise the Chinese communists for not being communist enough, for being too literal — talking to these imperialists and ridiculously betraying their own principles. [After Lindsay was then denied entry into China by the CCP] Then, of course, the whole thing went right a 100% round and nothing could be too bad for the communists and nothing could be too good for the Taiwan outfit.¹³

Fitzgerald believed Lindsay's changing views on communism were a major influence on the conflict that later arose over the Department of International Relations: 'They [the council] didn't feel this was quite the objective approach to international relations which they really wanted so they invited a man from London [to take over the chair].'¹⁴

The International Relations Tiff

The debate over whether Lindsay should be promoted to the Chair of International Relations was prolonged and bitter. The absence of the original head of International Relations (Walter Crocker) had originally been viewed as short-term by the council¹⁵ and Lindsay was appointed as acting Director in his absence. When Crocker resigned, Lindsay continued in this role while a search for a permanent head was conducted. Lindsay, though, felt that he was entitled to the position as a right. When Martin Wight was selected as the chair of the department and Lindsay's application rejected, Lindsay felt offended that as acting head he had not been consulted about the appointment of the chair.¹⁶ Lindsay then complained to Keith Hancock that a new chair would impede the work Lindsay was doing. Hancock urged Lindsay to write to Wight and seek

¹² Hancock to Wight 21st July 1958, ANU: International Relations, (Department of) Research School of Pacific Studies, A2000/8, Box 1 Papers concerning the Lord Lindsay Affair, Folder 1, Prof. Hancock's personal correspondence with Mr Martin Wight and Mr W. Crocker 10/3/1957-1/10/1959

¹³ ANU: UA 2001/20, Item 19: Transcript of Interview with Emeritus Professor C.P. Fitzgerald 2 May 1991

¹⁴ ANU: UA 2001/20, Item 19: Transcript of Interview with Emeritus Professor C.P. Fitzgerald 2 May 1991

¹⁵ Council Meeting Minutes 18th February 1954, ANU: 2005/8 Box 3

¹⁶ Lindsay to Hancock 15th September 1957, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1, Folder 1

reassurance that he would be able to continue in his work. Lindsay's correspondence with Wight had the ultimate result of Wight withdrawing his application. The polarisation of views on Lindsay's actions was instant and dramatic. As Spate said, 'when he was not appointed to the Chair of International Relations, he raised hell.'¹⁷

According to Melville,

Mr Wight's withdrawal was a result of letters sent to him by Lord Lindsay... Lindsay pursued his correspondence with Mr Martin Wight in such a fashion that the new professor concluded that he would have to face a difficult personal problem in his relations with Lindsay.¹⁸

Lindsay countered this view by quoting Wight as saying:

I was not much worried about getting on with you personally. What worried me was the picture I got, mainly from your letters but also from other sources, of the public interest and political influences surrounding the Department... public criticism of the ANU... bulked larger and confirmed my misgivings... It seems to me that Australian nationalism is a factor in academic life.

According to Lindsay's testimony, Wight appeared to be deeply concerned about the ANU's reputation for being subject to political interference, a view that Lindsay made no effort to dispel. Lindsay said that Wight had made it clear that he would not be interested in 'coming to a university confined to what he termed "parochial pursuits"'.¹⁹

When Lindsay wrote to Martin Wight warning him off becoming Chair of International Relations, Lindsay had personal motivations in mind but his warning that work at the Research School was subject to political controls and interference warranted further investigation by Wight in his considerations about accepting the appointment. Wight commented that

¹⁷ Spate, *The Early Days at the ANU - an Anecdote*, NLA: MS7886 Series 3

¹⁸ Report by the Vice Chancellor on the question of Mr Wight's withdrawal from the Chair of International Relations and events leading up to it- Council Minutes 37th Meeting Paragraph 13, 31st October 1957, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1, Folder 1

¹⁹ Lindsay's comments on the Vice Chancellor's statement regarding Mr Wight's Withdrawal, 5th November 1957 ANU: A2000/8, Box 1, Folder 1

Australian society is such that the ANU has to justify its activities before the bar of public opinion by their utility. The ANU is under criticism anyway as an educational white elephant, whose funds could be better allocated elsewhere. More concretely, when the head of the Department of International Relations might be required to justify his program of research before a parliamentary foreign affairs committee... I reserve judgment. When they find they have a much wider credence I become worried.²⁰

Wight wrote to J.W. Davidson (Head of Pacific History) saying that he did not refuse to accept the chair just because of potential personal difficulties with Lindsay but that 'there grew up in my mind the suspicion that Lindsay himself would be more en rapport with what public opinion expects international relations to mean than I could hope to be.'²¹ The perception that the ANU was subject to political control and focused on utilitarian studies was therefore a trigger in the dispute. Hancock attempted to reassure Wight, saying that 'political and bureaucratic interference with our studies does not exist.'²² Wight had met Lindsay in London and acknowledged that he 'had an impression of a slightly obsessive personality'.²³ Alf Conlon, a former principal of the Australian School of Pacific Administration and a key figure in the creation of the ANU, noted that Wight had written many things to many people seeking to explain why he did not come to ANU and the statements were inconsistent, varying according to who Wight was corresponding with. Conlon said 'I am not prepared after reading the correspondence to lay the responsibility [for Wight's non arrival] firmly on Lindsay's doorstep.'²⁴

A factor in the Lindsay affair was the dispute over the role of the university. Lindsay tended towards an extreme utilitarian view that made some other members of the university

²⁰ Wight to Hancock 18th June 1957, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1, Folder 1

²¹ Martin Wight to Davidson 14th August 1957, ANU: 2001/39 box 1

²² Hancock to Wight 21st July 1958, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1, Folder 1

²³ Wight to Hancock, 4th September 1959, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1, Folder 1

²⁴ Conlon to Coombs 4th November 1957, ANU: 2002/08

uncomfortable.²⁵ Davidson said ‘his belief in empirical studies aimed at illuminating the minds of foreign policy makers, is somewhat extreme.’²⁶ Lindsay tended to be conservative when it came to the social responsibility of the university, arguing forcefully that the University Act’s prescription for examining areas of national importance should be taken seriously and that the majority of work conducted should have direct relevance ‘to the problems facing Australian society’.²⁷ Lindsay demanded that the university adopt this approach, appealing to Cold War imperatives in his rhetoric. He wrote to Hancock

I believe that if the ANU refuses to do the sort of work implied by its original objectives, if it develops into a purely academic institution producing work that has little or no relevance for the problems which Australian society faces, this will be a part of the process which will increase the risk of Australian society falling victim to some form of irrationalist totalitarianism.²⁸

Melville refused to be swayed by this argument. In a contrast to the later views of Crawford, Melville said that ‘the utilitarian test is not a useful one — work should be “significant”, though we should not attempt to define that.’ Lindsay retorted that ‘if [research is] not practical, [it is] sterile’.²⁹

Robin Gollan recalled a sudden escalation of the conflict by Lindsay’s threatening to publish a book claiming that Crocker had promised Lindsay the chair and accusing the university of deceitful and unprofessional conduct.³⁰ It was unlikely Crocker had made such a promise to Lindsay. Crocker had told the Vice Chancellor in 1954 that Lindsay was not up to the job of chair due to his slow progress on his book on the history of the Chinese communist movement and ‘his oddities both personal and intellectual’. Crocker recommended that Lindsay be given a

²⁵ Despite the predominant utilitarian focus, several members of the ANU preferred a theoretical approach in order to demonstrate the ANU was not under government influence and control.

²⁶ Davidson to Wight 16th July 1957, ANU: 2001/39 box 1

²⁷ Lindsay, Memorandum on “The Department of International Relations and University Policy” 30th January 1957, NAA: A10651/1 ICR22/11

²⁸ Letter and Memorandum, Lindsay to Hancock, 5th March 1957, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1, Professor Sir Keith Hancock’s Personal File Lord Lindsay of Birker 5/3/57-5/7/61

²⁹ Board of Graduate Studies Meeting 24th May 1957, ANU: 2001/09 Box 1

³⁰ Gollan, Some Recollections of the Early History of the ANU, NLA: MS 9372 Box 10

position as acting head and if he improved over 2 years, he could then be appointed if he showed himself to be more capable.³¹ When the time came, the electoral board for the chair concluded that ‘Lindsay was not of professorial standard. Not for further consideration’. Lindsay also believed that Siegfried Nadel (Head of Anthropology) had said that he was second on the short list of candidates and could expect the job if the other candidate declined the position. Nadel denied having said this.³²

Gollan recalled that Lindsay thought the failure to appoint him to the chair was a breach of contract and the result of the ‘machinations of Hancock (the fox) and the perfidy of the Vice-Chancellor, whose attitude to the truth was the same as Mao-Tse-Tung’.³³ Given Lindsay’s belief that the affair was exacerbated by Hancock, it is worth considering Hancock’s motivations in the affair. From his correspondence, Hancock seems to be playing middleman, soothing Lindsay, Wight, and Melville but gradually becoming exasperated with Lindsay’s continued recalcitrance. It is also possible Hancock was playing both sides against the middle. Hancock may have been attempting to poach International Relations from RSPacS and ensure it was permanently located in Research School of Social Sciences. This happened temporarily during the Lindsay dispute but was not a long term shift. Spate said ‘at one point International Relations was formally ceded to Social Sciences... there were any number of demarches, detentes, dementis, but never a satisfactory denouement’.³⁴ On a more personal level Conlon had noted Hancock’s ‘deep personal disappointment in not getting Martin Wight... he spoke about the matter almost as a bereavement.’³⁵ This may have given Hancock a motive to destroy Lindsay. According to Lindsay, Hancock’s conduct ‘was at times rather tricky’, arguing that Hancock had induced Wight to take up the chair while telling Lindsay that he had no desire to interfere in

³¹ Lindsay Report- Committee appointed by Council 15/8/1961-8/12/1961, ANU: International Relations, (Department of) Research School of Pacific Studies, A2000/8 Box 1 Papers concerning the Lord Lindsay Affair

³² Lindsay Report- Committee appointed by Council 15/8/1961-8/12/1961, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1

³³ Gollan, Some Recollections of the Early History of the ANU, NLA: MS 9372 Box 10

³⁴ Spate, The Early Days at the ANU- an Anecdote, NLA: MS7886 Series 3

³⁵ Conlon to Coombs 4th November 1957, ANU: 2002/08

Pacific Studies affairs. As the issue over the chair intensified Lindsay believed that Hancock was trying to minimise ‘loss of face for people in authority without regard for what would be implied by the evidence and by principles of justice.’³⁶ From his own side, Hancock said he felt compelled to enter into the affair ‘against my will’ in order to defend Wight from Lindsay’s allegations.³⁷ Hancock ultimately lost all patience with Lindsay, writing angrily, ‘you say that if recognition does not come soon you will seek a job elsewhere: Why not?’³⁸

Despite the falling out between Lindsay and Hancock, Oliphant believed that Hancock had treated Lindsay fairly. Oliphant told Hancock that

Lindsay’s accusations of lying which he makes you are quite unjustified... I can find no evidence whatsoever that you played a false game with Lindsay and I am convinced that all that you did was done in the best of faith and with the intention of helping Lindsay, not of punishing him... Lindsay’s behaviour in all this was not in accord with academic conventions...³⁹

Hancock was disgusted with the turns events had taken. He felt that the situation had spiralled out of control and that damage minimisation was the only possible approach the university could take. At a Board of Graduate Studies meeting Hancock said ‘[I have] watched with fascination and disquiet. Now pessimistic of chance of avoiding damage to individuals and the university.’ He considered International Relations to be a liability to ‘peace, order and good government... done the university much damage... tendency to look to past and what went wrong and who. Others look to future. Whole truth of past will never come out. May be unavoidable. Would be discreditable. Only hope [is] to look to future settlement...’⁴⁰

³⁶ Lindsay to Oliphant, 2nd September 1961, BSL, Oliphant Papers, Series 3: Correspondence

³⁷ Hancock to Melville 7th November 1957, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1, Folder 1

³⁸ Hancock’s comments on 21st June 1957 on a letter from Lindsay, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1, Folder 1

³⁹ Oliphant to Hancock January 21st 1960, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1, Professor Sir Keith Hancock’s Personal File Lord Lindsay of Birker 5/3/57-5/7/61

⁴⁰ Board of Graduate Studies meeting 29th November 1957, ANU Archives: Standing Committees, University Council, Professorial Board 2001/09 Box 1 Council and Committee Minutes 2/11/57-25/11/58

As the conflict intensified Crocker and others sought to mollify Lindsay, to encourage him to continue at the university, to just concentrate on his work and not attack the institution. Crocker suggested that Lindsay only had himself to blame.

All you had to do was apply yourself for a couple of years ... and at the same time keeping quiet about your grievance and exhibiting some sweetness and light... Instead you chose the opposite course, and have persisted in it. As a result you have not improved your prospects but on the contrary have antagonised those who were previously disposed in your favour... You have lost your sense of proportion.⁴¹

Crocker noted Lindsay's belief that Melville was conspiring against him and beseeched him to ignore this and just do his job.⁴² Privately, Crocker believed that while '[Lindsay] has done some damage to the university and to himself and is not, in my opinion, worth a Chair... except when biting the carpet, I think he earns his keep in this university'.⁴³ Lindsay had no intention of calming down. The situation was getting worse rather than better.

The Crisis Deepens

Lindsay became more deeply embittered the longer the dispute continued and threatened to publish a "tell-all" book, exposing the inadequacies and corruption of the ANU. Lindsay provided the university with an 'immense typescript of the affair' which Spate viewed as 'so excessively detailed and dull that I don't think any publisher in his senses would have taken it'.⁴⁴

Lindsay believed that the university had allowed itself to confuse

morality with the expediency of accommodation to power... anyone who cares about standards has a duty to expose people who claim to be upholding the highest academic standards while they have in fact repudiated them. And I am in a position to do this in the case of a number of professors at the ANU. If

⁴¹ Crocker to Lindsay 24th September 1957, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1, Folder 1

⁴² Crocker to Lindsay 24th September 1957, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1, Folder 1

⁴³ Crocker, letter of 16th September 1957, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1, Folder 1

⁴⁴ Spate, *The Early Days at the ANU- an Anecdote*, NLA: MS7886 Series 3

Council is at last willing to admit that there has been a serious failure of standards at the ANU and to insist that this should be recognised and standards raised, this may be the best solution.⁴⁵

Lindsay's book fumed in its introduction, 'about the ANU, I think it is worth doing all one can to discredit the people there who have no standards'. He believed that the ANU's reaction to him was that of 'a corrupt political organisation trying to cover up a scandal in which it has become involved.'⁴⁶ Oliphant, while sympathising with Lindsay, was of the opinion that his actions were becoming damaging both to Lindsay and to the university. In relation to the manuscript Oliphant told Lindsay,

I do not think it would be wise to circulate it as it is at present — either for your [sic] personally or for the University... you have written it as a criticism of the members of the original selection committee. This is a weakness, for it would look like personal resentment to many of your colleagues... Publication of your memo at this stage would so solidify and spread opposition — largely because of the truth of much of what it states — that it would be impossible to persuade the Committee to accept you... I doubt the efficiency of a policy of banging your head against the brick wall of opposition.⁴⁷

In an attempt to calm the situation the Head of CSIRO (Sir William Clunies-Ross) suggested to Melville that Lindsay be given a readership in order to allay his fears about advancement in the university.⁴⁸ In June 1957 the Vice Chancellor and the Heads of Schools invited Lindsay to lunch in an attempt to amicably resolve the issue. The meeting did not go well. The discussion ended with a censuring of Lindsay by Melville who said that he was considering creating a readership but that Lindsay's tactics had forced him to reconsider.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ Lindsay to Oliphant, 2nd September 1961, BSL, Oliphant Papers, Series 3: Correspondence

⁴⁶ Lord Lindsay, A Study in Academic Standards: International Relations at the Australian National University, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1

⁴⁷ Oliphant to Lindsay 4th February 1957, BSL, Oliphant Papers, Series 3: Correspondence

⁴⁸ Ian Clunies Ross to Melville 5th June 1957, NAA: A10651/1 ICR22/11 Lord Lindsay of Birker- Personal File

⁴⁹ Davidson's note on a meeting 28th June 1957, ANU: 2001/39 box 1

After Lindsay made disparaging remarks about the university on TV and in the press, Hancock advised the Vice Chancellor that the university should make no reply. Hancock said later that 'Lindsay's public attacks were not a serious danger to the university' but he was concerned that Lindsay's book could gain wide readership, warning that 'he will have no difficulty in finding a publisher unless fear of libel actions is a deterrent. Lindsay tells a rattling good story which absorbed me like an exciting whodunit.'⁵⁰ If the manuscript was published then 'the university would seriously damage itself if it kept silence'.⁵¹ Melville was furious. In a letter to Clunies-Ross, Melville said

Lindsay's actions have now seriously embarrassed me. What he is trying to do is to force his promotion by the pressure he is exerting. There is some danger, not based only on this case, of people in this university coming to believe that personal advancement is best secured not through electoral committees but by disgruntlement, canvass and pressure.⁵²

For Melville, this was the final straw.

The Committee of Enquiry

Melville was through trying to reach a compromise and resolved to go beyond denying Lindsay the chair to finding a way to remove him from the university entirely. Melville's anger is in no way surprising, considering Lindsay had been publicly questioning his ability and management of the university. Lindsay had said

Melville is a very good illustration of the generalisation that people in a false position usually behave badly... Melville's behaviour can be explained in terms of the psychological defence mechanisms of a man who has taken on a job he is not really capable of handling but is determined to maintain his authority and prestige.⁵³

⁵⁰ Hancock to Huxley 26th June 1961, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1, Professor Sir Keith Hancock's Personal File Lord Lindsay of Birker 5/3/57-5/7/61

⁵¹ Hancock to Huxley 26th June 1961, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1, Professor Sir Keith Hancock's Personal File Lord Lindsay of Birker 5/3/57-5/7/61,

⁵² Melville to Ian Clunies Ross 10th June 1957, NAA: A10651/1 ICR22/11

⁵³ Lindsay to Casey 17th November 1959, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1, Professor Sir Keith Hancock's Personal File Lord Lindsay of Birker 5/3/57-5/7/61

Melville's response was to establish a committee of enquiry to investigate Lindsay's charges and his conduct. Hancock said that

[Lindsay] has made wild charges against other people and the university. The Vice Chancellor has felt it necessary to invite him to formulate these charges so they may be investigated by an impartial inquiry. I anticipate that they will be refuted. In all this I don't seriously fear any damage to the university but I do fear damage and perhaps ruin to Lindsay... If I were not so sorry for Lindsay, I should enjoy the whole affair as a little and quite amusing comedy.⁵⁴

Council was concerned that a committee of enquiry could potentially backfire, resulting in reduced government support. Council emphasised that it could 'affect relations with government departments'. The Vice-Chancellor acknowledged that a committee of enquiry, though welcome, would 'take on a character not intended. This would arouse feelings [it would be] intended to allay.'⁵⁵

The thought of firing Lindsay was uppermost in Melville's mind, but procedures for removing a tenured staff member would potentially require amendments to the ANU Act. The ANU administration subsequently began looking for ways by which they could legally remove trouble-making employees. In a letter to the Solicitor General in 1959, Hohnen wrote that the ANU council wanted to have a procedure which would enable it to terminate the appointment of a permanent member of the academic staff. Hohnen had said that the council should have the right to form a committee of enquiry to determine whether termination was warranted. In September 1959, it was suggested that the committee of enquiry should become a statute of the university.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Hancock to Wight 27th June 1957, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1, Folder 1

⁵⁵ Council meeting 8th November 1957, ANU: 2001/09 Box 1

⁵⁶ Hohnen to Solicitor General, 2nd April 1959, and Hook, 4th September 1959, NAA: M1505/1 72 "ANU Committee of enquiry"

The mechanisms for committees of enquiry at the ANU were established as a means of dealing with the legal issues raised by the Sydney Orr case in which the University of Tasmania dismissed an academic due to repeated complaints of sexual misconduct with students. Orr's defenders believed that the university did not have the right to simply dismiss him and had breached the principles of academic self-government by doing so. The case had major implications for the relationship between tenured employees of universities in Australia and university administrators. At the ANU, the general feeling was that the University of Tasmania's council had been correct in dismissing Orr as he was a 'trouble-maker'.⁵⁷ The implications of the Orr case were that employees of a university may be in a slightly different position to that of 'master and servant'. As a result universities did not necessarily have the right to summarily dismiss members of the academic staff. The conclusion of the ANU was that its council could legally dismiss individuals but only after a proper committee of enquiry had been held and found the individual to have acted improperly.⁵⁸

Lindsay seemed to vacillate between desiring a committee of enquiry which he believed would vindicate him and the belief that the committee would serve only the ends of the university. Lindsay originally viewed the mention of a committee in 1957 as a threat, saying 'I was presented with a demand from the Vice Chancellor that I should withdraw certain statements I had made. This demand was accompanied by the threat that the alternative was an investigation by a committee of inquiry which was likely to be damaging to my career'.⁵⁹ Lindsay later complained that 'in itself this attempt to suppress criticism by threats was fairly extraordinary behaviour which would seem to be more appropriate to a totalitarian regime than an institution

⁵⁷ Coleman, P. "Peter Coleman Memoirs of a Slow learner: An intimate and Cultural memoir" quoted in <http://setis.library.usyd.edu.au/pubotbin/ot2www-anderson?specfile=/usr/ot/www/anderson/anderbin/anderson.o2w&act=text&offset=11538702&textreg=1&query=Orr&id=> (accessed 11th July 2008)

⁵⁸ Solicitor General to Hohnen (undated, c. April 1959), NAA: MS 1505/1 72 Report on establishment of Committee of Enquiry

⁵⁹ Lindsay to Board of Graduate Studies 27th June 1957, ANU: 2001/39 Box 1

claiming to be a university of high reputation in a democratic country.’ He then welcomed the Vice Chancellor’s suggestion that a committee of inquiry be opened, and believed that an impartial committee would decide that Nadel’s conduct towards him had been ‘unscrupulous and dishonest’ and that the Vice Chancellor condoned Nadel’s behaviour.⁶⁰ It may have been that a simple admission by the university that they had been unfair in their treatment of Lindsay may have encouraged him to withdraw his accusations against the university but events had moved beyond this being a reasonable possibility. Melville wrote to Lindsay saying, ‘I have found by experience that it is not fruitful to try to reach agreement with you on what is true and what is false and I therefore have no intention of trying.’⁶¹

Before the committee could be appointed Lindsay resigned, saying that the university was compelling him to waste his time ‘playing academic politics [and that the university had] failed to provide conditions in which he could carry on his work.’⁶² People began to back away from Lindsay, fearing that to support him could jeopardise their own careers. Hancock noted that ‘Lindsay had no support at all in the university or elsewhere in the Australian academic body and became glum as his excitement faded’. By the time of Lindsay’s resignation the atmosphere was so tense that any reduction in the tension seemed almost surreal. Hancock remarked that it was ‘very odd’ that Lindsay’s colleagues and wives seemed to enjoy a dinner party Hancock held for Lindsay’s benefit before he left.⁶³

In September 1959, Lindsay sent his resignation letter to Hohnen. It was a jibe at the university which acknowledged that he should give 6 months notice, but said

⁶⁰ Lindsay to Hancock 15th September 1957, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1, Folder 1

⁶¹ Melville to Lindsay 8th February 1960, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1, Sir Leslie Melville’s Lord Lindsay Papers 3/6/55-15/8/61

⁶² “Jock Marshall- One Armed Warrior” http://www.asap.unimelb.edu.au/bsparcs/exhib/marshall/m_ch17.htm (last accessed 11th July 2008)

⁶³ Hancock to Martin Wight 1st October 1959, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1, Folder 1

I do not wish simply to repudiate this obligation after I have criticised the practice in the ANU of arbitrarily repudiating obligations... However I do not consider that the university is entitled to more than purely nominal damages because the occasion for my resignation would never have arisen had the University shown proper regard for the principles of natural justice and proper concern for the work and reputation of the university. I therefore offer the sum of one penny as full compensation for any damage which the university may have suffered through my failure to give six months notice of my resignation... I enclose a cheque for one penny.⁶⁴

Lindsay by this time was exhausted and probably deeply paranoid as well. Gollan recalled that Lindsay broke his leg walking across campus just before he left the university, an event 'which he attributed to the conspiracy in the university against him'.⁶⁵

Lindsay's realisation that the threat of a committee of enquiry had resumed was almost certainly the trigger that caused him to resign from the ANU and leave the country, taking up a Chair of International Relations at the American University of Washington.⁶⁶ Lindsay was ultimately able to get what he wanted, just not at the ANU. With Lindsay gone the Department of International Relations was finally able to appoint a new head (J.D.B. Miller) in 1962.⁶⁷ But Lindsay's difficulties were not over on hearing confirmation of his new appointment. Embarking on a study trip to Yale in the late 1950s Lindsay had a difficult time getting a visa. He said 'someone in Washington argued that my service with the 18th Group Army brought me under the "affiliation with a communist organisation" clause of the act, which I suppose is technically correct.'⁶⁸ On leaving the ANU the visa issue arose again for Lindsay.⁶⁹ The main problem for Lindsay in getting access to the United States appeared to be not so much his former communist

⁶⁴ Lindsay to Registrar ANU 16th September 1959, NAA: M448/1 249

⁶⁵ ANU: UA 2001/20, Item 32: Transcript of Interview with Emeritus Professor Robin Allenby Gollan 18 and 21st May 1993

⁶⁶ The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia *The Australian National University: Report of the Council for 1959*, Canberra, Commonwealth Government Printer 1961 p5

⁶⁷ The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia *The Australian National University: Report of the Council for 1962*, Canberra, Commonwealth Government Printer 1963 p6

⁶⁸ Lindsay to Hancock 29th June 1958, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1, Professor Sir Keith Hancock's Personal File Lord Lindsay of Birker 5/3/57-5/7/61

⁶⁹ Note by Hancock 22nd July 1959, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1, Professor Sir Keith Hancock's Personal File Lord Lindsay of Birker 5/3/57-5/7/61

affiliation, but rather the fact that if he was to move there permanently he had to overcome immigration hurdles for his Chinese wife. In the end President Eisenhower personally signed a Bill to allow Lindsay's wife to join him in the United States.⁷⁰ Hancock was concerned that Lindsay would continue to agitate against the university from overseas and hoped he could put the issue to rest. He wanted Lindsay be able to 'write off all his troubles here' and was willing to write him a terse letter which would enable Lindsay to blame someone and move on.⁷¹

The ANU's Committee of Enquiry into Lindsay's allegations took place in 1961, comprising entirely of members of the ANU community.⁷² Lindsay had noted that for him to receive a fair hearing any inquiry about his claims and accusations against the university could not and should not be conducted by the university as 'it is a principle of natural justice that no one should be a judge in his own case'.⁷³ From Lindsay's perspective, his fears about the committee were justified. Upon finding the results of the inquiry Lindsay argued that its terms of reference had totally failed to meet the objections he had about the institution, likening their standards to those of 'an authoritarian system'.⁷⁴

The committee divided Lindsay's charges into three sections:

- Personal charges: 'there are numerous reflections upon the character, intellect, and conduct of members of the university's staff';
- general charges: that the ANU was an 'authoritarian institution, in which arbitrary authority was exercised and that ANU authorities refused to accept or discuss Lindsay's view of the right pattern for work of the IR department'; and

⁷⁰ Clipping from the Canberra Times 11th April 1960, NAA: A6119/78 788

⁷¹ Hancock to Oliphant 19th January 1960, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1, Professor Sir Keith Hancock's Personal File Lord Lindsay of Birker 5/3/57-5/7/61

⁷² Lindsay Report- Committee appointed by Council 15/8/1961-8/12/1961, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1

⁷³ Lindsay to Board of Graduate Studies 27th June 1957, ANU: 2001/39 Box 1

⁷⁴ Lindsay to Huxley 15th December 1961, BSL, Oliphant Papers, Series 3: Correspondence

- specific charges: namely that Lindsay was wrongly denied a readership which Nadel had led him to expect and that Lindsay did not receive proper consideration and was wrongfully denied the Chair of International Relations. The committee also considered Lindsay's charge that he was wrongfully penalized as a result of the interpretation placed on his correspondence with Wight.⁷⁵

The committee concluded that Lindsay thought that anyone who differed from his ideas was 'acting irrationally or with wilful prejudice' and that he had proceeded with the deliberate aim of restrictively narrowing the field of candidates for the Chair of International Relations.

According to the committee, Lindsay's charges against the university were not sustained. While on occasion he might have felt 'some cause for personal injury or disappointment' he, 'by his own acts of aggression or concession removed for the time being grounds which might otherwise have existed for action in his favour... we do not consider Lindsay has made a case that there is any wrong to be righted or any grievance to be addressed.' The university's decisions 'throughout were made in accordance with proper procedures determined by statute, resolution or convention. They were reasonable decisions, made with due consideration of the relevant factors and sometimes after long debate.' The committee concluded that the university could have gone some way towards alleviating the conflict by appointing Lindsay to a readership much earlier, showing Lindsay that no nameless 'authorities' were arrayed against him and acknowledging that because of Crocker's absence and the development of the department Lindsay was left with a feeling of 'insecurity concerning the future of the department' and that his long time as acting head created feelings he was entitled to the chair. Further, less 'tale-bearing and fewer leakages of confidential information' and providing less well-meant but imprudent advice to Lindsay would have reduced the controversial issues present in Lindsay's mind. The report specified that

⁷⁵ Lindsay Report- Committee appointed by Council 15/8/1961-8/12/1961, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1

these points explained, but ‘do not in any way condone Lindsay’s behaviour, nor do they cast any doubt upon the academic standards and good faith of the university.’⁷⁶

Appointing John Anderson

The Lindsay affair had not reflected well on the university and there was a concern that the composition of the Committee of Enquiry would raise allegations of a whitewash.⁷⁷ It was decided to appoint an independent auditor to examine the case. The auditor eventually hand-picked by the university was the noted philosopher John Anderson. Anderson was an interesting choice as he had previously had close links with the Australian Communist Party.⁷⁸ The appointment of such a person as external assessor was probably done to create the perception that the university was impartial and apolitical in its decision-making process. However, the very fact that the university administrators felt they had to appoint an external assessor demonstrates unease about whether the grounds on which the decisions were made were justifiable.

Anderson had been thought by ASIO to be the leader of a troika of communist professors at the University of Sydney. However, Anderson’s relationship with the Australian communist movement was rocky at best. Anderson supported Keon’s calls to extend attention to communists in the Universities.⁷⁹ As a supporter of Keon’s moves he could be expected to be critical of far-left academics, while maintaining the appearance (as a well known lefty) of being an impartial observer in the Lindsay case. John Anderson is referred to by Peter Coleman as an

⁷⁶ Lindsay Report- Committee appointed by Council 15/8/1961-8/12/1961, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1

⁷⁷ Gollan, Some Recollections of the Early History of the ANU, NLA: MS 9372 Box 10

⁷⁸ Barcan, A. *Radical Students- The Old Left at Sydney University* Carlton South, Melbourne University Press 2002 pp.44-45

⁷⁹ Barcan, *Radical Students* pp.244, 254 and 60-61

‘anti-communist crusader’, whose expulsion from the Communist Party led to ‘uncompromising anti-Stalinist analyses’.⁸⁰

Coombs (the Chancellor at the time) wrote to Anderson that the resolution by the council on the Lindsay affair was ‘designed so that, if it seemed wise, the Vice Chancellor and I could use it in the event of Lindsay publishing his book or the matter receiving public attention which might, in the absence of a clear statement from the university, have reflected adversely on the university’s behaviour.’⁸¹ By this stage the threat of publication had passed, Coombs saying ‘we understand that Lindsay offered his manuscript to an Australian publisher but it was rejected’.⁸² Coombs informed Anderson that

The Committee holds the unanimous view that, since it is composed wholly of persons directly associated with this university, its report, before it is finally presented to Council, should be examined impartially with a view to determining whether it is in accordance with the available evidence... The university is not asking you to conduct an enquiry *ab initio* into all the aspects of the case. Rather it is asking you to examine Lord Lindsay’s book, the documents, and the Committee’s report and express an opinion as to whether the statements and conclusions are validly drawn from the documentary evidence.⁸³

John Anderson entirely vindicated the Committee of Enquiry’s report. Gollan said that ‘when Anderson gave his report there was a horrible moment when he began by saying “the university has made a terrible mistake [long pause] it should never have given the man an M.A.”’.⁸⁴

Anderson’s report affirmed that ‘Lord Lindsay has made out none of his charges, either of a general departure of the ANU from academic procedure or of unjust treatment of himself in particular’. Anderson would take an even more critical view of Lindsay’s activities than the committee had done, saying of Lindsay’s manuscript that he was ‘struck by the second-rate

⁸⁰ Coleman, P. “Bring on the Cold War dissident debaters” *The Australian* July 11th 2006 p.12

⁸¹ Coombs to John Anderson 1st May 1962, ANU: 2002/08

⁸² Coombs to John Anderson 1st May 1962, ANU: 2002/08

⁸³ Coombs to John Anderson 22nd September 1961, ANU: 2002/08

⁸⁴ Gollan, *Some Recollections of the Early History of the ANU*, NLA: MS 9372 Box 10

character of the work, and by the fact that so defective a production could come from any member of an academic community and in avowed *defence* [emphasis in original] of academic standards.’ Further Anderson said that the university should not have even given Lindsay the readership, as this was giving in to the pressure Lindsay was imposing. Anderson commented that there should be no attempt to prevent Lindsay publishing his book — saying ‘if its demerits do not condemn it “in the eyes of the learned world” then there is no longer a learned world.’⁸⁵

Suppression of Lindsay?

As well as professional squabbling, the denial of the chair to Lindsay and subsequent controversy was also a result of personal disagreements between himself and other members of the school and the university administration. Oskar Spate believed ‘much of the trouble was due to his wife, Sha Li [sic], a shining example of the Bad Influence of the Good Woman.’ Spate implied that Lindsay’s wife was riling Lindsay up against the other staff members and added that there was also a personal disagreement between Spate and Hsao Li herself. Hsao Li accused Spate of hurting Lindsay’s career due to the fact that Lindsay’s father had once denied Spate a Chair of Geography at the University of Keele.⁸⁶ Spate had been criticised by Lindsay, who argued that Spate’s approach to International Relations abrogated social responsibility.⁸⁷ Spate in turn helped lead the opposition to Lindsay.⁸⁸ Oliphant said that ‘Lindsay is quite right in his contention that Davidson and Spate were bitterly opposed to him. The story of his administrative deficiencies stemmed from them.’⁸⁹ Spate’s views of Lindsay were not moderated by time. His view that Lindsay was an unabashed communist impacted on his thinking about the situation.

When interviewed in 1993 Spate had said Lindsay

⁸⁵ Lindsay Report- Committee appointed by Council 15/8/1961-8/12/1961, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1

⁸⁶ Spate, *The Early Days at the ANU- an Anecdote*, NLA: MS7886 Series 3

⁸⁷ Lindsay Report- Committee appointed by Council 15/8/1961-8/12/1961, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1

⁸⁸ Electoral Committee Meeting for the Chair of International Relations 24th October 1957, ANU: 2001/09 Box 1

⁸⁹ Oliphant to Hancock January 21st 1960, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1, Professor Sir Keith Hancock’s Personal File Lord Lindsay of Birker 5/3/57-5/7/61,

was not a man who would take a reasonable 'no' for an answer... I think he was just a dreadful nuisance to be got rid of as soon as possible, and certainly not to be made professor of whatever it was [interviewer: international relations]. International Relations. After all the relations would have been with only one nation, and that's sort of rather limiting in itself...He broke with the traditions of his class, his nationality and his profession.⁹⁰

There are important implications in this statement. Firstly there is no doubt that Lindsay in a sense did betray his profession by publicly attacking his institution. Spate was further appalled at Lindsay's manners (being unbecoming of his class), and the idea of betrayal of his nationality suggests Spate's belief that it was improper to take a Chinese bride. The foreign relations being with 'one nation', implies that Spate believed that Lindsay was still a communist and that his idea of foreign relations was to consort with China (or perhaps Russia). Ideological, professional, social and racial animosities are all evident in Spate's recollection.

Lindsay was furious at the academic infighting that had accompanied the dispute, saying 'people have made accusations about me behind my back'.⁹¹ Personal disagreements complicated matters, making it harder to come to a reasonable compromise. Spate's argument that Lindsay was encouraged in the dispute by his wife was confirmed by Lindsay himself:

Hsao Li's first reaction was to say she was so angry about the situation that she would not at all mind a Committee of Inquiry if people wanted it, that she was quite ready to get out of the ANU if that was the result, and that while the readership would have been acceptable if offered earlier she really did not care much about it now. I'm asking other advice.⁹²

As the affair escalated, the conflicting advice Lindsay was receiving, and the pressure he was under began to tell on him in other ways. Hancock began to believe that Lindsay was developing psychological problems which were impacting on his ability to act rationally in relation to the dispute. Handwritten notes on Hancock's copy of a letter Crocker had written to Lindsay said

⁹⁰ ANU: UA 2001/20, Item 04: Transcript of Interview with Emeritus Professor O.H.K. Spate 15 May 1990

⁹¹ Lindsay to Hancock 15th September 1957, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1, Folder 1

⁹² Lindsay to Hancock 25th June 1957, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1, Folder 1

‘I’m afraid I am losing patience with L... He refuses to be reasonable. I suspect that the fault is a) his wife and b) a deep psychological rift of reason due to his methods and the results. That is why I hope you — unlike me — will not lose patience with him.’⁹³ Hancock said that ‘Lindsay has been badly handled in the past and this bad handling *plus* [emphasis in original] nervous disorder go far to explain his recent intolerable behaviour.’⁹⁴ Hancock was ‘uncertain whether or no[t] Lindsay can be saved from a nervous breakdown’⁹⁵ and implied Lindsay’s masochism, saying that ‘he *wants* [emphasis in original] to be argued with. Probably he also wants to be punished. We should not oblige him’⁹⁶

The Lindsay affair could have been an example of intellectual suppression. R. Douglas Wright (a former member of the ANU Interim Council) summarised the elements of an ‘academic witch hunt’ in a book on the Orr case published in 1961. Wright argued that the campaign against Orr contained certain key elements which also seem to have been present in the controversy surrounding Lindsay:

1. ‘Defamation of the victim, relating to professional competence, mental balance’, integrity etc. which serves to isolate the victim from their peers;
2. ‘Reward of collaborators from the victim’s group’ by promotion, acceptance for grants etc.;⁹⁷
3. The development of a group of prosecutors, which ‘misleads the community as to the integrity of the prosecution’;
4. ‘Proclamation at all stages of the authority of the corporation’;
5. Leaking of defamation to broad numbers of other social groups and the press so that the accusations are broadly accepted by the community as a whole;

⁹³ Notes on Letter Crocker to Lindsay 24th September 1957, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1, Folder 1

⁹⁴ Hancock to Wight 24th August 1957, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1, Folder 1

⁹⁵ Hancock to Wight 21st July 1958, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1, Folder 1

⁹⁶ Hancock to Melville 12th July 1959, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1, Professor Sir Keith Hancock’s Personal File Lord Lindsay of Birker 5/3/57-5/7/61

⁹⁷ Incidentally, this may be why Oskar Spate, despite his left-wing leanings, was given rapid advancement at the RSPacS after the Lord Lindsay affair.

6. The victim is isolated within the community and may suffer 'exile'; and
7. Encouraging the victim and their supporters to resign — which is 'accepted as proof of guilt.'⁹⁸

Lindsay appears to have suffered most (if not all) of these elements of a witch-hunt and while it may have been partially self-inflicted, it is obvious the body corporate had made a decision to exclude him. According to Robin Gollan 'what the university did [to Lindsay] was a work of subrogation', implying that reasons apart from Lindsay's objections about the chair were of significance.⁹⁹

The Lindsay affair was the result of personal and professional disagreements. Lindsay's ambitions were unacceptable to other members of the university community and he was gradually excluded from the university's life. This has speculative similarities to instances in the US, where Schrecker has suggested that academics often were 'let go quietly' in an internal attempt by the universities to purge themselves of 'potential sources of embarrassment'. The evidence for McCarthyism in such cases is often lacking as university administrators sought to conceal or cover up the political nature of their decisions, claiming scholarly or bureaucratic reasons for the dismissals.¹⁰⁰

The Lindsay affair was complicated. There is a possibility it was an instance of the policy of excluding communists from responsible positions at the university and the word 'communist' and discussion of the parliamentary controversy caused by Lindsay are conspicuous in their absence from the ANU's records. In the chronology of the Lindsay affair in the committee's report

⁹⁸ Manswell, C. and Baker, C. "'Not Merely Malice': The University of Tasmania versus Professor Orr" in Martin, *Intellectual Suppression* pp.44-45

⁹⁹ ANU: UA 2001/20, Item 32: Transcript of Interview with Emeritus Professor Robin Allenby Gollan 18 and 21st May 1993

¹⁰⁰ Schrecker, *No Ivory Tower* p.241

absolutely no mention is made of the references to Lindsay in parliament.¹⁰¹ However, on the available evidence, if McCarthyism was the major driving force the players in the saga have remained silent in their written legacies. On the balance of the available evidence it appears likely that the Lindsay affair was more the result of academic infighting, exacerbated by Lindsay's insistence he was entitled to a position for which he was not qualified.

Lindsay himself stated that academic rather than Cold War politics were the primary cause of the dispute. Lindsay had said 'the whole IR affair has been absolutely typical of a bureaucratic scandal. It might make a very interesting thesis topic for some future student.'¹⁰² Discussing his criticism of the university Lindsay said

American observers, for example, have tended to report the case as one of political prejudice in which left-wing professors have been determined to keep down a colleague whose views were more critical of communist policy and less critical of American policy than theirs. (When I have met this analysis I have argued that political prejudice has been, at the most, a very minor factor.)¹⁰³

Lindsay viewed the political overtones as being an attack by left-wing professors who were less enlightened about the evils of communism than he was rather than evidence of a possible McCarthyism against himself. He said to R.G. Casey, 'you asked about left-wing prejudice, I don't think that this was important.'¹⁰⁴

As a curious postscript members of the Australia-China Society alleged that Lindsay worked for British intelligence.¹⁰⁵ It was possible that Lindsay had links with British military intelligence

¹⁰¹ Lindsay Report- Committee appointed by Council 15/8/1961-8/12/1961, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1

¹⁰² Lindsay memo to Hancock, Oliphant and Trendall 10th April 1959, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1, Professor Sir Keith Hancock's Personal File Lord Lindsay of Birker 5/3/57-5/7/61

¹⁰³ Lindsay memo to Hancock, Oliphant and Trendall 10th April 1959, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1, Professor Sir Keith Hancock's Personal File Lord Lindsay of Birker 5/3/57-5/7/61

¹⁰⁴ Lindsay to Casey 17th November 1959, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1, Professor Sir Keith Hancock's Personal File Lord Lindsay of Birker 5/3/57-5/7/61

¹⁰⁵ ASIO report 20th March 1958, NAA: A6119/78 788

due to his work as a liaison officer with Mao's army¹⁰⁶ during the Second World War. This raises the possibility that the whole Lindsay affair was a set-up. If he appeared to be stigmatised against due to his leftist affiliation, this made him credible to the left-wing and ensured that his later attacks on communists would be more likely to be believed by them — using Lindsay as a weapon in the cultural Cold War. However, there are some significant flaws in this interpretation of events. First of all, Lindsay's shift in ideology after 1950 was well known. It is most likely that he simply became disenchanted with communism, rather than orchestrated this shift as part of a conspiracy to provide anti-communist propaganda. Secondly this theory implies multi-national coordination of the cultural Cold War dating back to the 1930s. Though possible, in Lindsay's case it is not probable. This degree of sophistication for such a minor propagandistic end is unlikely.

Lindsay's resignation was primarily a result of failed ambition and petulance. James Everett and Leland Entrekin from the University of Western Australia have argued that many academics see the atmosphere within their institutions as being 'intensely political, with many divisive cliques and groups, and with considerable display of professional jealousy making it unwise to acknowledge too many academic weaknesses.'¹⁰⁷ Lindsay thereby committed the ultimate academic sin — in assuming he was better than his peers, he alienated them and managed to create cliques devoted to his downfall. The affair was a complex clash of diverse and powerful personalities and egos. Lindsay was ambitious but naïve. Nadel (and perhaps Crocker) misled Lindsay on his chances of obtaining the Chair. Hancock aimed to expand the Research School of Social Sciences and was the middle-man in the affair. Spate believed Lindsay was a communist, may have had a personal vendetta and believed it was improper for an English earl to marry a

¹⁰⁶ Lindsay to Hancock 29th June 1958, ANU: A2000/8, Box 1, Professor Sir Keith Hancock's Personal File Lord Lindsay of Birker 5/3/57-5/7/61

¹⁰⁷ Everett, J. and Entrekin, L. "Changing attitudes of Australian Academics" *Higher Education* Vol 27 (1994) pp.203-227

Chinese woman. Melville, who furious with Lindsay, sought to arrange harm minimisation for the university. Crocker leaves ambiguity in his wake when he leaves. Hsao Li gives bad advice and is a cause of animosity. These egos, and politics, collided in a great academic implosion.

Although the evidence points toward academic infighting being the primary cause for the controversy it would be reasonable to suggest that the Cold War played a part, if unspoken, in the removal of Lindsay. The Lindsay affair could have been at least partially motivated by Copland's policy of denying communists senior positions and by the political embarrassment Lindsay had caused with the questions asked about him in parliament. Unfortunately the evidence for this is slim and circumstantial. Ultimately it was about Lindsay's public pronouncements against the independence and competence of the university. The end result was largely of Lindsay's own making. His public denigration of the university's competence made the administration defensive and gave the university no option but to orchestrate an untenable situation for him. Despite the political overtones, the Lindsay affair can not be seen as a definitive example of a subtle form of McCarthyism.

CHAPTER 6: SPIES AND THE COLD WAR CAMPUS

When the Cold War was not “hot” as in Korea and Vietnam, the war between capitalism and communism was fought on two levels: through propaganda extolling the virtue of one ideology over the other; and through intelligence organisations striving to undermine the efforts of the other side. Both popular literature such as the Bond movies and the novels of John LeCarré and reality, in the Petrov Affair in Australia and the Cambridge Five defections from Britain in the 1950s and 1960s emphasise the role of this shadow war.

Like some US universities in the 1950s and 1960s the ANU was, wittingly or unwittingly, a party to both the propagandistic and intelligence aspects of the struggle. ASIO agents kept ANU staff under surveillance for much of the Cold War and the ANU can be tentatively linked with the propaganda and subversion inherent in the cultural Cold War. It was not surprising, given the place of academia in the Cold War, that they could be both suspected of subversion and called upon to assist in the struggle.

In the United States the involvement of the CIA and FBI in university life was well documented by left-wing students at the time and it is now a readily acknowledged factor in studies of Cold War universities. In Australia, however, only a few specialist authors such as David McKnight in *Australia's Spies and their Secrets* have broached the question of whether similar activities took place here. Foster and Varghese also touched briefly on the issue of ASIO surveillance, but they discount its potential significance. In Australia there are systemic causes for limitations on research on this topic. Research is confounded by the prior use of “D-Notices” restricting publication of items relating to intelligence activities. Relationships between the university and foreign intelligence services are almost impossible to uncover due to restrictive clauses in the

Freedom of Information Act. The government did not even announce the existence of ASIS until 1977¹, and ASIS's operational activities are jealously guarded. This limits the study to material available on domestic (internal) intelligence, though ANU would be an obvious recruiting ground for ASIS operatives and there are some indications that these activities took place.² Documents available to the public are vetted and censored. With censorship of document collections which are released to the public (and the withholding of other documents) the results of this research can necessarily only tell part of the story.

The recent release of the documents of the Hope Royal Commission into Intelligence and Security highlight the activities of ASIO in relation to academia. The Hope Report, produced in the 1970s, provides recommendations for reform of Australia's intelligence agencies. It is aimed at limiting the broad scope of ASIO's activities in gathering information on left-wing Australians (in the light of the suspicion ASIO was merely a tool of conservative governments) and intended to produce a greater focus on counter-intelligence rather than counter-subversion. The Hope Report states in relation to investigations in universities that radical viewpoints in themselves were not sufficient grounds for an investigation and that care needed to be taken to differentiate between 'radical thought and revolutionary expression', a subtle indication that ASIO was investigating academics who departed from the political orthodoxy.³ Gregory Clark has said 'the extent of ASIO infiltration of our universities at the time has never been fully realised... at the time even some otherwise balanced and sensible academics... felt they were really doing the nation a service by cooperating with ASIO to keep us alleged left-wingers at bay.'⁴

¹ ASIS, *History*, <http://www.asis.gov.au/history.html> (accessed 23rd April 2009)

² In 1972 an ANU student was talent-spotted and recruited by ASIS, later becoming disillusioned with the methods used by the Service. See Toohey, B and Pinwill, W. *Oyster*, Port Melbourne, William Heinemann Australia 1989 pp. 152-158.

³ Hope Royal Commission on Intelligence and Security 4th Report Volume 1 pp.124-5 in NAA: A8908/4a 4727806 Royal Commission on Intelligence and Security Fourth Report [re Australian Security Intelligence Organization] Volume 1 (Copy No 25)

⁴ Clark, G. "Life Story" www.gregoryclark.net/lifestory/page5/page5.html (Accessed 29th March 2006)

ASIO may have exaggerated the potential threat. While the Petrov affair indicated that the Soviets were attempting to infiltrate the universities, in 1959 a SEATO paper assessed the threat of communist subversion as low:

Throughout member countries the spread of communism in the universities does not appear disproportionate to the strength of local communist movements... Since future leaders... are found in the universities it might be expected that such institutions would be a primary target for communist subversion... examples given of communist infiltration do not at present seem to amount to any threat of significance... It seems generally agreed that in countries where there is a tradition of academic freedom communism is frustrated by objective teaching and the free play of democratic opinion.⁵

However, ASIO had good reasons to be interested in Australian universities in the 1950s and 1960s. There was a proven history of Soviet intelligence actively recruiting agents at western universities. The Soviets also recruited agents of influence (whether witting or unwitting) from the universities to promote the communist line. What better way to advance the cause of communism than to have respected academics promote the cause? With the threat of communist subversion this meant that academics and students were a legitimate target for ASIO counter-subversive activities.

US Universities, the FBI and the CIA

Robin Winks claims that close relationships between counter-espionage agencies, intelligence organisations and the universities had a long history in the United States. During the Second World War Harry Fisher, an employee of Yale and the FBI, was instrumental in ensuring the cooperation of the university in providing information on faculty and students who were 'enemy aliens'. The university tolerated and encouraged his activities as it saved the university from potential embarrassment and scandal. His role included assessing the security clearance of faculty and students for sensitive wartime employment and the vetting of 'aliens'. The latter

⁵ "Collated paper presented by New Zealand" SEATO, 6th May 1959, NAA: A9954 SE/10/D6 "Agenda Item 3d. Communist subversion in universities in member countries"

activity included not only informing on their activities but also recommending whether they should be allowed to continue in employment by the university or in their studies. Winks says that 'in this way the university allowed matters of educational policy to be blurred into questions of administrative procedure, putting at risk important precepts of academic freedom'.⁶ Winks noted that the activities of intelligence agencies at the universities expanded with the onset of the Cold War. With the end of the Second World War, 'the urgencies of the wartime campus simply extended... into the cold war... not to be questioned until the early 1960s'.⁷ University complicity with counter-intelligence and intelligence activities was a crucial element of the Cold War university experience.

The FBI often investigated and interfered with American universities. Schrecker has observed that the FBI authorised 'the dissemination of information to appropriate authorities... concerning Communist or subversive elements' in universities.⁸ At times, individuals within universities with left-wing leanings would be asked to cooperate with the FBI on questions about their communist allegiances or those of their friends. Refusing to assist the FBI could have serious consequences for academic careers.⁹

There was also a long-standing relationship between the CIA and academics. The 1976 US Church Committee investigation into CIA activities revealed that

The Central Intelligence Agency is now using several hundred American academics, who in addition to providing leads and, on occasion, making introductions for intelligence purposes, occasionally write books and other material to be used for propaganda purposes abroad. Beyond these an additional few score are

⁶ Winks, *Cloak and Gown* pp.32-34

⁷ Winks, *Cloak and Gown* p.55

⁸ Schrecker, *No Ivory Tower* pp.257-258

⁹ Schrecker, *No Ivory Tower* pp.258-262. Robert Bedell of Cooper Union, refused to discuss these issues without a lawyer present. The then FBI initiated enquiries about him at the university which he was told 'might affect his career'. Bedell was eventually denied the tenure that he had been told he would receive once he had finished his Masters. Schrecker considers it likely he would have received his employment with the university had he cooperated with the FBI. Sigmund Diamond had his appointment at Harvard terminated for similar reasons.

used in an unwitting manner for minor activities. These academics are located in over 100 American colleges, universities and related institutions.¹⁰

At Princeton a group known as the “Princeton Consultants”, which included at least five professors, worked as high-level consultants for the CIA throughout the 1960s.¹¹ Journalist Ernest Volkman claims that in 1976 Derek Bok, the President of Harvard University, began an investigation into the relationship between Harvard and the CIA, as universities and the CIA had for years

joined together in a secret relationship to turn many of America’s university and college campuses into virtual espionage centres. [Bok] was aware that a number of professors and administrators were secretly working for the CIA, recruiting prospective agents among students, spying for the agency while overseas, sometimes helping to spy on “troublemaking” students, and using the cover of research institutes and other projects to gather intelligence.¹²

Though Bok argued that the CIA should cease all undisclosed relationships with Harvard employees, he eventually accepted that academics would be free to choose to accept or refuse any CIA advances under the principle of academic freedom.¹³

Michael Packard observed in the Harvard *Crimson* that the relationship between universities and the CIA was a reciprocal one. Universities provided the CIA with ‘top flight scientific researchers’, ‘talented historians, anthropologists and political theorists who were valuable in formulating foreign policy’, ‘professors with peer networks overseas’ who could recruit foreign agents and investigate ‘a foreign nation’s political mood’ and a ‘student body who could be tapped for analyst positions’. In return the CIA provided universities with ‘hands on experience with governmental operations that made their theories and lectures more cutting edge’ and

¹⁰ Church Committee *Foreign and Military Intelligence: Final Report of the Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities*, Washington, US. Government Printing Office 1976 p.189

¹¹ Cavanagh, J. “Dulles Papers Reveal CIA Consulting Network” <http://www.cia-on-campus.org/princeton.edu/consult.html> (last accessed 11th July 2008)

¹² Volkman, E. “Spies on Campus” <http://www.cia-on-campus.org/volkman.html> (last accessed 11th July 2008)

¹³ Packard, M. “Harvard and the CIA” http://www.thecrimson.com/fmarchives/fm_02_08_2001/article1S.html (last accessed 5th August 2004)

provided funding for scientific research and historical/political surveys and studies.¹⁴ The American experience of universities in the Cold War shows close links between universities and intelligence organisations and that conforming with the investigative and propagandistic aspects of intelligence activities in the Cold War carried potential advantages as well as threats.

Subversion and Surveillance

The relationship between the ANU and Australian intelligence agencies was multifaceted. On occasions individuals within the university served to assist the intelligence agencies but the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) also kept the members of the university under close surveillance. This could potentially have had negative implications for the objectivity and outputs of the university.¹⁵ Foster and Varghese have correctly argued that ‘officers of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation kept a close watch on staff and students with alleged communist sympathies.’¹⁶

ASIO surveillance of Australian universities was extended after the Petrovs revealed details of Soviet intelligence operations in Australia. The Soviets were skilled at ‘talent spotting’ and recruitment at universities, thereby targeting the intelligentsia and those who were likely to attain high positions in government and the public service. The Soviet intelligence agencies were known to target students and academics (the spies Philby, Burgess and Maclean were recruited while students at Cambridge). They not only recruited spies, but also enlisted the help of ‘agents of influence’ from academic circles who would forward the communist agenda by altering public opinion and policy through publications and pro-communist statements.¹⁷ After the Petrov affair

¹⁴ Packard, “Harvard and the CIA”

¹⁵ There is some evidence that there was a degree of intimidation. This is described in Chapter 9.

¹⁶ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of...* p.121

¹⁷ Barron, J. *KGB: The Secret Work of Soviet Secret Agents*, London, Hodder and Stoughton 1974 p.26 and see Collins, L. and Reed, W. *Plunging Point*, Sydney, Fourth Estate 2005 pp.31-34

ASIO surveillance of the ANU was intensified. Did evidence point to — perhaps unwitting — ANU involvement or complicity in MVD¹⁸ or its successor, KGB, activities?

At the Royal Commission on Espionage after the Petrovs' defection, questions were raised about potential MVD activities at the ANU. While being questioned at the commission, Charles Bresland¹⁹ denied having any connection or contact with Australian youth movements at the ANU (being a euphemism for 'communist movements' in the parlance of the commission²⁰). There seemed to be confusion on the part of the panel of the Commission whether postgraduate students should be classified as 'students'. As the focus of the questioning was on undergraduates (as 'youths') this line was not pursued in any detail.²¹ The MVD was also found to have an interest in the 'research and testing on the atom bomb in Australia'. While the commission concluded that the MVD operations in this area had been unsuccessful²², the Petrov papers referred to a 'scientific worker' (Leonard Hibbard) who was a senior research engineer at the School of Physical Sciences at the ANU. The commissioners believed that the MVD had been unable to gain information from Hibbard or other scientific workers.²³

One would assume that ANU studies into nuclear energy would be of more interest to the Soviets than the RSPacS, but foreign affairs was a highly sensitive area — one known to be of interest for the MVD, who had had some success in infiltrating the Department of External Affairs.²⁴ As cadets for External Affairs were recruited from the universities and RSPacS had a special

¹⁸ MVD = *Ministerstvo Vnutrennikh Del* (Ministry of Internal Affairs), the Soviet external intelligence organization, concerned with intelligence gathering outside the Soviet Bloc which succeeded the NKVD in 1946.

¹⁹ Bresland was under investigation as the MVD had reports on him as a result of his visit to the Berlin World Festival of Youth and Students for Peace in 1951 and later visits to Moscow. The Petrov Papers showed Bresland to be 'favourably reported on' by the MVD.

²⁰ Commonwealth of Australia, *Report of the Royal Commission on Espionage 22nd August 1955*, Sydney, Government Printer for New South Wales 1955 p.99

²¹ Commonwealth of Australia *Royal Commission on Espionage- Official Transcript of Proceedings* Volume 3, Sydney Government Printer for New South Wales 1955 p.2435

²² *Report of the Royal Commission on Espionage 22nd August 1955* p.219

²³ *Report of the Royal Commission on Espionage 22nd August 1955* pp.222-223

²⁴ Chapter 10 "The Operations of the MVD in relation to the Department of External Affairs" in *Report of the Royal Commission on Espionage 22nd August 1955* pp.117-154

relationship with the department (see Chapter 8), this was a potential area for concern. Another reason for ASIO's focus on RSPacS could well have been the 'type' of people recruited for intelligence work in the 1950s and 1960s. CIA recruitment drives focused on academics and students with majors in history, economics, political science, anthropology, linguistics and applied mathematics, all but the latter being subjects offered by the Research School of Pacific Studies.²⁵ As a result the RSPacS was a primary focus of ASIO's investigations of the ANU.

While Menzies was Prime Minister and Spry Director of ASIO there were unusually close relations between the two. This ensured a reciprocal flow of information, and ensured that ASIO was kept closely aligned with the agenda of the government.²⁶ This agenda involved keeping close watch on left-oriented ANU academics. Menzies was kept informed on this issue by ASIO, which in November 1952 noted that Robin Gollan was active in organisations with communist sympathies connected with students and was a member of the Australian Communist Party. The report also noted that Michael Lindsay had publicly supported the communist Asia-Pacific conference.²⁷ ASIO's investigations involved the collaboration of academics. At least one ANU academic (probably in a reasonably senior position) was actively working as a 'talent spotter', providing ASIO with information on other staff members well into the 1960s.

Talent spotting was a procedure used by intelligence organisations to locate people who could be potential sources of information. The Royal Commission on Espionage described talent spotters as people with 'knowledge of local conditions and people' who could indicate likely recruits.²⁸ The briefing for the ASIO talent spotter at the ANU outlined the objectives of their operation. As Soviet espionage existed in Australia, ASIO needed to watch Soviet officials in order to be able

²⁵ Winks, *Cloak and Gown* p.54

²⁶ Commonwealth of Australia *Australian Royal Commission on Intelligence and Security Fourth Report*, Volume 1, Canberra, Australian Government Publishing Service 1977 p.180

²⁷ Spry to Menzies 20th November 1952, NAA: A1209/23 1957/4264

²⁸ *Report of the Royal Commission on Espionage 22nd August 1955* p.111

to detect this espionage. To do this effectively ASIO wanted contact with all people contacting Soviet officials so long as this did not get back to the Soviets themselves. Not all people contacted in this way were suspected of espionage, but it was believed that they could help ASIO with their enquiries. The talent spotter was briefed to provide information on people in contact with the Soviets who would be willing to help ASIO with their inquiries, to provide comments and assessments on people nominated by ASIO and to provide the names of other people who would be willing to help ASIO.²⁹

In discussions with ASIO, the ANU talent spotter

opened his remarks by saying that he was persona non-grata with what he termed the suspect element in the ANU and due to his participation in the [redacted] and his forthright comments on extreme left-wing activity as it affected the University, he was not himself in a good position to say who was contacting the Russians in that particular category... [Redacted] then turned the conversation back to people of interest at the ANU... [Redacted] closed the interview by saying he would help us wherever possible but that it may take time to obtain the desired information regarding contacts with the Russians. Nevertheless he was available at anytime to give an assessment on any person and to give a lead whenever he could to a person who would assist us.³⁰

In 1965, another ANU academic had told ASIO that he was quite prepared to assist the organisation ‘on any occasion if it does not offend academic propriety.’³¹

As well as watching those contacting Soviet officials in order to counter Soviet espionage, ASIO was also concerned about communist sedition and left-wing writings emanating from the ANU. One agent’s report discusses an ANU student’s involvement in an anti-apartheid protest inspired by Manning Clark. Editorials about the protest in the *Canberra Times* emanating from the ANU were of particular interest to ASIO, which lamented that ‘there was no doubt the way things were

²⁹ Talent Spotting Brief, undated, NAA: A6122/47 1901 “Spoiling Operations- Academic A”,

³⁰ ASIO 6th April 1960, NAA: A6122/47 1901

³¹ ASIO 17th November 1965, NAA: A6122/47 1901

going with certain elements within the ANU in bringing forward matters of a contentious nature which automatically linked them with the ANU'. This statement is important as not only was ASIO concerned with left-wing attitudes being presented by members of the university, but also they were concerned about the potential for the ANU itself being seen to be a pro-communist institution. Preventing communist intellectual subversion by conscious and unconscious agents of influence was another priority for ASIO.³² It is probable that the purpose of the ASIO operation was twofold — to investigate any Soviet attempt to co-opt academics (counter-intelligence) and to investigate possible pro-communist propaganda emanating from left-wing academics at the ANU (counter-subversion).

Whether the ANU leadership and administration had knowledge of and approved the activities of the talent spotter(s) – as Yale did in the case of Harry Fisher — is unclear from the available documents, but the close links between successive Vice Chancellors and the head of ASIO described in Chapter 4 make it unlikely the university's administration was unaware that ASIO was active in surveillance of academics and students and that it did not provide at least tacit support.

The Shadow of Suspicion

The range of ANU academics under ASIO surveillance was broad and included members of RSPacS, RSSS and the Science schools. People named in the talent spotter's reports included Robin Gollan and the economists Trevor Swan, Horrie Brown and Heinz Arndt. ASIO was also interested in appointments to the council of the ANU.³³ The report concerns not only known communists but also people of more right-wing political orientation. This latter group may have

³² ASIO, 6th April 1960, NAA: A6122/47 1901

³³ ASIO, 6th April 1960, NAA: A6122/47 1901

been assessed for potential roles as talent-spotters themselves or may have needed to be vetted due to the potential sensitivity of their work at the ANU.

The Royal Commission on Espionage observed that the MVD was ‘disinclined to use the known and prominent communist party member as a direct agent’. This was because party members were likely to be known to the security services and their use could compromise the party, potentially leading to it being banned (as had nearly happened under Menzies). Party members were used by the MVD as talent spotters rather than as agents. The MVD was believed to prefer as active agents those who were not members of the party but were ‘sympathetic’ to communism.³⁴ For this reason those who were associated with communists were suspected to be potential agents for the Soviet cause.

In 1955 ASIO prepared information on the academics at ANU it suspected of association with communists.³⁵ J.W. Davidson (of the Department of Pacific History) was regarded by ASIO as an ‘associate of communists’; L.F. Fitzhardinge (of the RSSH History Department) had ‘attended Soviet embassy functions and appeared before the Royal Commission on Espionage’; Oscar Spate (in the RSPacS Geography Department) was ‘an ex member of the British Communist Party and an associate of communists and suspected communists’; Michael Lindsay (in RSPacS International Relations) ‘is closely associated with the Canberra Peace Group, a communist front organisation’; C.P. Fitzgerald (in Far Eastern History) ‘was, at one time, president of the NSW branch of the Australia-China society and is closely connected with the Canberra Peace Group, both communist front organisations. He consistently advocates recognition of communist China’.³⁶ These people were suspect, due to their associations and memberships as ‘the Australian Peace Council is a typical communist front organisation which has successfully used

³⁴ *Report of the Royal Commission on Espionage 22nd August 1955* pp.113-114

³⁵ ASIO, 16th August 1955, NAA: A6122/38 1265 “Australian National University”

³⁶ ASIO, 16th August 1955, NAA: A6122/38 1265

intellectuals and ministers of religions, amongst others, to further the aims of international communism.³⁷ Manning Clark also attracted considerable ASIO attention.³⁸

ASIO surveillance was not just of potential threats, but also of people who had a public profile³⁹ and ASIO vetted conservative academics when they embarked on sensitive studies. For example, in 1963 J.D.B. Miller was vetted and cleared by ASIO for a visit to Asian countries on behalf of ANU which included a visit to SEATO headquarters.⁴⁰ The project aimed to create ‘informed public opinion about SEATO and, at the ANU, [create] a nucleus of expertise about political problems in South East Asia’.⁴¹ Miller’s name had been found on a 1949 search of an address book at CPA headquarters and ASIO’s report noted that Miller was one of 26 signatories to a letter to the editor of the *Sydney Morning Herald* on 22 May 1950 opposing the Communist Party Dissolution Bill.⁴² Despite these potentially adverse findings, Miller was cleared by ASIO and determined not to be a security risk as he was an opponent of communism. ASIO activities affected a great many people at the ANU, whatever their political affiliation.

A Necessary Evil

The impacts of ASIO activities on campus and the reaction of Australian academics to these activities are contentious. Interviewees varied in their responses to ASIO surveillance, with some perceiving the surveillance as a threat, others as a necessary government activity in the context of the time. Hugh Stretton said there was a fair amount of debate at the time about whether ASIO’s activities were justifiable and that the dominant attitude among academics to ASIO surveillance

³⁷ External Affairs, record of Conversation with Mr H. Ruoff, Counsellor, Embassy FDR and Dr J. Reitberger Third Secretary Embassy FDR with Mr B.C. Hill, Mr M.E.Lyon 19 August 1959, NAA: A1838/287 2471/2 Part 2 SEATO Counter Subversion Assessment of Cold War Threat

³⁸ Salusinszky, I “Fellow travellers’ tales” *The Australian* July 10th 2006 p.8

³⁹ Robert O’Neill, Telephone Interview, 1st May 2006

⁴⁰ ASIO Assessment 1963, NAA: A6119/79 1217 *Miller, John Donald Bruce- ASIO file*

⁴¹ Undated report entitled “SEATO Project”, ANU: 2001/39 box 1

⁴² ASIO Assessment 26th September 1963, NAA: A6119/79 1217

was indignation.⁴³ Robert O'Neill believed that ASIO did not influence appointments or the work conducted at the university and said it was generally believed by academics at the ANU that ASIO stayed within proper limitations and were not a problem.⁴⁴ J.D.B. Miller said that as far as he knew ASIO surveillance had no impact on the activities of the ANU during the Cold War.⁴⁵ Any influence of ASIO appears to have been discounted by ANU academics.

To all outward appearances ASIO surveillance did not have a major impact on the lives, activities or outputs of ANU academics. Those under the most intense surveillance regarded it as almost a humorous challenge. Foster and Varghese give the example of Robin Gollan's experience of ASIO surveillance:

The Gollans and their friends were aware of this and not much disturbed, drawing some amusement from ASIO's excessive diligence, which led on one occasion to the Solicitor-General's allegiances being called into question after his son had driven to a party at the Gollans' in his father's car. In later years, Gollan reflected that the activities of the political right had no significant effect on his work as an ANU academic.⁴⁶

Foster, when interviewing Gollan, suggested ASIO surveillance was 'an irrelevant perversion'.⁴⁷

The assessment of the impact of ASIO surveillance is more problematic than these statements would seem to imply. ASIO surveillance, though discounted as a nuisance by the subjects of the surveillance, was pervasive. Robin Gollan, when asked whether there was a feeling that he was under surveillance all the time responded, 'Yes.' When asked whether this imposed a 'great constraint on what you were doing' responded '... I knew I wasn't doing anything illegal or unpatriotic, but I simply said, yes they're keeping an eye on me, well, let them, it's a waste of

⁴³ Emeritus Professor Hugh Stretton, Interview, the University of Adelaide, 9th of November 2005

⁴⁴ Robert O'Neill, Telephone Interview, 1st May 2006

⁴⁵ J.D.B. Miller, letter to the author 28th November 2006

⁴⁶ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of* p.121

⁴⁷ ANU: UA 2001/20, Item 32: Transcript of Interview with Emeritus Professor Robin Allenby Gollan 18 and 21st May 1993

money'. Gollan did not believe it had any effect on his work but added that he knew he was under close surveillance, his phone was tapped and 'at demonstrations they must have taken hundreds of photographs of me'.⁴⁸ Asked whether intelligence organisations sought to monitor scholars at the ANU, T.H. Rigby (a Soviet specialist in RSCS) commented that he did have an older student who turned out to be an ASIO "agent" (using the term loosely). At other times he 'saw people in cars who might be keeping an eye on me'.⁴⁹

Mere awareness of ASIO activities on campus could have created an implicit constraining effect that impacted on activities without people being aware of it. T.H. Rigby stated outright that the atmosphere did not have an effect on people's output and that at the height of the Cold War academics would make jokes about the environment, laughing at it. He noted, however, that this covered a certain amount of unease in the atmosphere, that 'there was anxiety that there would be a McCarthy like situation developing here'.⁵⁰ Other examples provided by Michael McKinley indicate an implicit constraint and mutual suspicion within the university. There was a hesitance about discussing intelligence organisations and related matters openly in public. McKinley recalled a seminar in the early 1970s where an intelligence officer was taking notes. An academic from the United States was concerned by this and wanted to know who the man was. However, his colleagues refused to discuss ASIS until they were away from other staff and students.⁵¹

Colin Symes has suggested the coercion inherent in the surveillance constituted a threat to academic freedom.

⁴⁸ ANU: UA 2001/20, Item 32: Transcript of Interview with Emeritus Professor Robin Allenby Gollan 18 and 21st May 1993

⁴⁹ Professor Rigby, Interview, Griffith ACT 8th June 2006

⁵⁰ Professor Rigby, Interview, Griffith ACT 8th June 2006

⁵¹ Michael McKinley, Interview, Australian National University 6th June 2006

In fact in the “Cold War” university of the 1950s and 1960s, security checks were a regular part of university appointment process and Australian Security Intelligence Organisation agents were active on campuses monitoring seditious activity and thwarting appointments considered a security risk. For although the Menzies government had encouraged academic freedom, in many Australian universities that freedom was attenuated.⁵²

Though the ASIO surveillance of academics is seen to be a curtailing of academic freedom and a disruption of civil liberties by those opposed to interference with universities, it formed an element of Menzies’ ambition to reduce the influence of communists and is the converse side of Menzies’ ‘reasonable liberty’. In the climate of subversion and with the potential threat of Soviet infiltration of universities the government would have been remiss *not* to have authorised ASIO to examine the university. In this context surveillance was necessary, even if it went beyond the bounds of what was required.

There are indications the surveillance was justifiable in the case of some people at the ANU. Russel Ward noted that his colleague L.F. Fitzhardinge had been called before the Royal Commission on Espionage and felt that this was due to Fitzhardinge’s association with Gollan and Ward, although the majority opinion tended towards the view that it was due to Fitzhardinge’s wife visiting the Soviet embassy ‘to coach the children in English’.⁵³ Ball and Horner have suggested that the Fitzhardinges’ association with the Soviets went beyond merely coaching the children. Fitzhardinge’s wife gave weekly language lessons to Victor Zaitsev who was the GRU (Soviet Military Intelligence) resident in Australia between 1943 and 1947. Zaitsev had been involved in the famous Sorge spy ring⁵⁴ in Japan before being posted to Australia.⁵⁵ Investigation of former associates of someone who became known as a senior Soviet intelligence agent would be a logical and reasonable course of action for Australian counter-

⁵² Symes, “Revolting Campuses” pp.395-401

⁵³ Ward, *A Radical Life* p.222

⁵⁴ It is surmised that Zaitsev was running a very highly placed agent in Australia, but no detailed information has emerged about his precise espionage activities. See Ball and Horner, *Breaking the Codes* pp.138-145.

⁵⁵ Ball and Horner, *Breaking the Codes* pp.141-142

intelligence. Another link between the ANU and the Soviet spy ring was a key communist agent, Ian Milner, who provided Top Secret documents from his position in External Affairs to the Soviets and was close friends with Manning Clark. They remained close for many years, Manning Clark visiting Milner in Prague in 1958 and 1984 after Milner had defected to Czechoslovakia in 1950.⁵⁶ These links would seem to give *prima facie* grounds for at least some investigation of ANU staff. The constraining effect was a by-product of necessary national security activities.

The ANU and the Cultural Cold War

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s it was claimed in left-wing American university circles that the CIA and FBI had not only infiltrated the universities but was using them as cover for anti-communist operations. Often these operations involved the dissemination of anti-communist rhetoric through the medium of academic journals. The American historian Hugh Wilford has asserted that a cultural Cold War existed in which the superpowers vied for the support of intellectuals around the world and that the CIA appreciated the potential value of academics and intellectuals 'as spokespersons for cultural freedom.'⁵⁷

Wilford says that The CIA funded Congress for Cultural Freedom financed literary magazines and 'established a significant presence... in academic circles.'⁵⁸ Historian Robert Tomes asserts that

the Central Intelligence Agency had desired the creation of a liberal propaganda front to counter communist mechanisms of the same variety... the CIA channelled funds indirectly through these organisations to *Encounter* and others, thus undermining the credibility of their intellectual autonomy. Charged with

⁵⁶ Ball and Horner, *Breaking the Codes* pp.256 and 326

⁵⁷ Wilford, H. *The CIA, The British Left and the Cold War*, London, Frank Cass Publishers 2003 pp.193-194

⁵⁸ Wilford, *The CIA* p.193

complicity and propagandizing, all liberals associated with the journals, and the organisations themselves, felt forced to prove their independence.⁵⁹

Rather than simply supporting a right-wing, openly anti-communist intellectual movement the CIA pursued the sophisticated approach of encouraging a moderate, non-communist left which would provide a more attractive alternative to communism for those whose political inclinations were unclear, wavering or left-wing.⁶⁰ This subtle diffusion of ideas among intellectuals proved to be quite effective. As political messages were only a minority of the articles published, *Encounter* established itself as a literary and cultural force in its own right and was widely accepted by the intelligentsia.⁶¹

Australia was an active participant in this war for hearts and minds, using Radio Australia and ‘targeting schools, trade unions, youth and other organisations’ to counter communist propaganda in Asia.⁶² Cabinet papers show that in the mid-1950s a ministerial committee was established to ‘look into the question of combating subversive communist propaganda domestically’.⁶³ Later ASIO examined the methods used by Interdoc, a Dutch organisation devoted to the study of communism which aimed to form ‘cadres’ with the cooperation of universities with the objective of informing industry about methods of communist subversion and providing counter-propaganda.⁶⁴ Similar techniques were to be adopted in Australia.

Liberal backbencher W.C. Wentworth viewed the conflict between communism and democracy as ‘the decisive issue of our times’, proposed measures to counter communism and believed that

⁵⁹ Tomes, R.R. *Apocalypse Then, American Intellectuals and the Vietnam War 1954-1975* New York, New York University Press 1998 p.159

⁶⁰ Wilford, *The CIA* p.82

⁶¹ Wilford, *The CIA* pp.262, 267-270

⁶² Lowe, *Menzies* p.178 (see the Chapter 8 for the importance of ANU’s languages training in the cultural Cold War in Asia)

⁶³ Cabinet Minute 1st January 1955, NAA: A4940/1 C1147 “Australian Activities in the Cold War”

⁶⁴ ASIO memorandum 30th May 1963, NAA A6122/1698/1747588 Spoiling Operations Volume 3

‘some action against communism should be in the government sphere and some outside it.’⁶⁵ Spry agreed with this assessment, but believed that the production of propaganda should be a government activity, supplemented by external groups. Spry envisaged connections being made with international groups and outside bodies which would publish their own material on communism and counter-communist propaganda. Any funding to these areas needed to be ‘non-attributable’. Spry also believed that contacts with overseas anti-communist organisations should come from a ‘non-government body’.⁶⁶ This suggests that universities may have had a place in Australian cultural Cold War efforts. Australian studies on the region were to contribute to the effort. Officials in the Prime Minister’s Department noted

SEATO has also conducted two seminars on counter subversion and on these occasions Australia was represented by fairly large delegations including not only security experts but also journalists, trade union leaders and university professors...[on the basis of these] the public information office of SEATO publishes material in both classified and unclassified form designed to expose various aspects of the communist threat.⁶⁷

Academic exchanges were another element of Cold War planning. The Department of External Affairs linked student exchanges with the fight against communism, saying

The general program of Australia’s foreign policy can not easily be separated from specific targets in the Cold War, so that any expansion of Australian influence in South East Asia should be contemplated in the light of these... purposes. In all Asian countries which are members of the Colombo Plan, there are now many people who have been trained in Australia under the Colombo plan or who have been students in Australia privately...⁶⁸

Attracting students from the region was part of the Cold War aim to spread Australian views and produce intellectual opposition to communism. Under the Colombo Scheme foreign students

⁶⁵ Wentworth to Barwick 5th July 1962 (with memorandum “Suggested Measures Against Communism 25th June 1962) NAA A6122/1698/1747588

⁶⁶ Spry 13th July 1962, NAA A6122/1698/1747588

⁶⁷ A.M. Morris (for) the Secretary Prime Minister’s Department 2nd December 1960, NAA: 1838/2 563/6 Part 1

⁶⁸ Department of External Affairs paper on Australian Centres in Asian Countries 9th July 1959, NAA: A1838/266 563/6/6/4 Information- Cold War Activities- Australian Centres in Asian Capitals

began attending Australian campuses in large numbers, a process accelerated by the Cold War which, as Graham and Diamond have said was itself in large part a conflict for ‘brains and loyalties’.⁶⁹ Significantly, the students studying at the RSPacS showed substantial variety in their national demographics. By 1961, of the 51 students enrolled at the School, only 12 were Australians.⁷⁰

Academic exchanges could play a major role in promoting democracy throughout the region. M.R. Booker, a senior officer in External Affairs, stressed that ‘one of the objectives of current planning is to make contact with educational circles in Asian countries.’⁷¹ The Australian government encouraged exchanges between Australian and Asian academics as a part of Cold War policy. The aim of these exchanges was to promote goodwill towards Australia in selected Asian and South East Asian nations and to increase Australian influence with leading Asians. University exchanges were particularly encouraged. The interdepartmental Overseas Planning Committee (charged with determining Cold War policy) determined that the government should not appear to be the sponsor of these exchanges and so invitations and the handling of visits were to come from ‘some group in Australia belonging to the same field of interest’. Universities were considered to be the primary group to organise these activities.⁷² The importance of academic exchanges in the cultural Cold War goes some way towards explaining the episode with the Thai King described in Chapter 3. Given the regional focus of the RSPacS, these government policies are indicative of a potential role for RSPacS in the cultural Cold War.

The cultural Cold War extended to Australian literary publications. In 1967 allegations about the CIA’s role in funding cultural organisations in Australia emerged with an article in the *Age* which

⁶⁹ Graham and Diamond, *The Rise...* p.9

⁷⁰ *The Australian National University: Report of the Council for 1961* p.75

⁷¹ M.R. Booker to Mr Shaw 16th May 1955, NAA: 1838/2 563/6 Part 1

⁷² Overseas Planning Committee, Visits to Australia by Asians : Visits by Australians to Asia (undated), NAA A 1838 563/6 650688 Cold War Activities- Policy

described the CIA's funding of *Encounter* through the Congress for Cultural Freedom. Noting that the Congress funded other journals including *Quadrant*, *Quest* and the *Partisan Review*, the article acknowledged that

in the struggle with communism for the hearts and minds of men, the forces of freedom within our society have to be promoted against the paid propagandists of the communist state. But if scholars, journalists, trade unionists and others who took up the battle with the communists were known to be paid by the state, the argument runs, they would not seem to be really free.⁷³

Cassandra Pybus has noted that Richard Krygier, the editor of *Quadrant*, was the founding secretary of the Australian branch of the Congress for Cultural Freedom, 'which was established by the CIA in 1950 as a key element in their strategy to combat Soviet propaganda... one of any number of private institutions used to launder CIA money, of which the Ford Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation were especially prominent.'⁷⁴

In 2004, *Quadrant* questioned whether academics in Australia were subject to discrimination on the basis of their left-wing leanings during the Cold War. In *The Ward Fabrication* Frank Crowley believed that the true reason Russel Ward was not appointed to the University of Technology in New South Wales was inappropriate behaviour by Ward while a teacher rather than any activity in 'seditious circles'. Crowley claims 'the protracted and public repercussions of the Ward Case were a godsend for left-wing activists'⁷⁵. The article demonstrates how *Quadrant* is espousing a right-wing, revisionist view of the history of Cold War academia, downplaying the suggestion of any political interference in academic appointments. *Quadrant* and Krygier played an active role in cultural Cold War politics in Australia. Krygier attempted to discredit the rival *Meanjin* by accusing their editors of being security risks — accusations that

⁷³ Grant, B. "Encounter with the CIA" *The Age* 11/5/1967 in NAA: A1533, 1959/575 "Central Intelligence Agency"

⁷⁴ Pybus, C. "CIA as Culture Vulture", *Jacket Magazine* 2000 at :<http://jacketmagazine.com/12/pybus-quad.html>, (accessed 07/08/2002)

⁷⁵ Crowley, F. "The Ward Fabrication" *Quadrant* Vol 48 No 5 (May 2004) pp.30-33

were investigated by ASIO and resulted in *Meanjin*'s editors appearing before the Royal Commission on Espionage.⁷⁶

Quadrant was certainly not a purely propagandistic operation. Wilford has said that in many countries 'there was a tendency among local intellectuals involved in the US cultural Cold War effort to use American patronage in domestic projects which had no immediate obvious relevance to the anti-communist struggle.' *Quadrant* 'was deployed by cultural conservatives in a local culture war with radical nationalists... Cold War ideological positions were taken in this contest, but the main issue at stake was not so much global geo-politics as the future shape of Australian literary culture.'⁷⁷ This debate still resonates today.

Cassandra Pybus (a historian from the University of Sydney) alleges the ANU was involved in the CIA's cultural Cold War effort. In 1960 the Congress for Cultural Freedom provided \$67,000 for a seminar on constitutionalism in Asia and the publication of a book of the same name by the ANU Press. ANU seminars on New Guinea and a book on the Communist Party of Australia were also funded.⁷⁸ Printed propaganda was relatively low in the priorities of the Australian government, but individuals and organisations were to contribute to the regional effort. R.G. Casey said that

Australia and the democratic nations must do all they can to prevail in the Cold War so that the communists do not gain their objectives by subversion, infiltration, or other non-military means... Activities that can be taken by Australia and other countries inside and outside the Manila treaty arrangements include... propaganda and information to combat communism and assistance in eliminating communist influence... and the promotion of democratic influence... Here Australia can make a significant contribution through

⁷⁶ Pybus, C. "CIA as Culture Vulture" and NAA: A6201 343 "Royal Commission on Espionage- exhibit Correspondence between the editor of *Meanjin* and the Soviet embassy concerning writings on Soviet literature" See also the debates on the propriety of government funding to *Quadrant* and *Meanjin* in NAA: A463/58 1963/2565 part 3 "Commonwealth Literary Fund Grant to *Meanjin* Magazine"

⁷⁷ Wilford, *The CIA* p.270

⁷⁸ Pybus, C. "CIA as Culture Vulture"

Radio Australia... Apart from radio activities, a great deal of printed and pictorial propaganda material is being distributed by United Kingdom and United States in the South and South East Asia area. It is doubtful whether Australia should add substantially to the flow of propaganda material, but there are countries and particular fields where Australia may be able to make a special contribution.⁷⁹

The Australian Country Party in 1960 wrote to Menzies saying they ‘gave serious consideration to the impact of communist propaganda and its effect on the minds of electors. Our executive has been seriously exercised over that propaganda and more recently in what is now commonly known as the “Gluckman Case”’. The letter proposed the establishment of ‘machinery to counter communist propaganda.’⁸⁰ The Department of External Affairs replied (for public consumption) that ‘no material is prepared specifically in Australia for countering communist propaganda.’ While SEATO developed material for this purpose with Australian assistance, External Affairs said that material was distributed in Australia

on an individual basis to persons who can be relied upon not to disclose its source...in addition, opportunities are taken to supply reliable and influential persons such as writers with suitable material on communist countries to enable them to carry out particular assignments.⁸¹

External Affairs said that they were not greatly involved in providing counter-communist material to the Australian people on overseas places but that ‘individuals such as [journalist] Denis Warner were supplied from time to time with material for their writings’.⁸² While these statements suggest a relatively small-scale local effort, the discussions between RSPacS and External Affairs described in Chapter 8 may indicate the ANU had a role in creating propaganda for domestic consumption.

⁷⁹ Cabinet Agendum RG Casey 5th January 1955, NAA: A4940/1 C1147

⁸⁰ J.F. Dredge (General Secretary, Australian Country Party NSW Branch) to Menzies 20th October 1960, NAA: 1838/2 563/6 Part 1

⁸¹ Draft External Affairs Document “Counter Propaganda Material for Domestic Use (Inc. Schools)”, NAA: 1838/2 563/6 Part 1

⁸² Minutes of Overseas Planning Committee Meeting Department of External Affairs 25th November 1960, NAA: A1838/2 563/6/1 Communism- Cold War Activities teaching of Asian Languages in Australia

Despite the low priority given to written propaganda (as the majority of the propaganda was produced by Australia's allies) there are other indications that the ANU had a role to play in the cultural Cold War. In 1959, SEATO emphasised the need for targeting propaganda on 'publicizing the economic successes of non-communist but relatively underdeveloped and non-white countries rather than in the countries of western Europe and North America'. The principle targets of this propaganda were 'the civil and military services of their governments, in the universities and in journalism'.⁸³ M.R. Booker wrote that Australia's contribution to this effort should be propaganda material to be developed by Australia for overseas consumption in the region, which should be aimed at 'school and university students where there would be less possibility of duplicating United Kingdom efforts.'⁸⁴ Though the evidence is circumstantial, the implication of the Australian cultural Cold War policies is that given its regional focus and the overall importance of universities within the policies, the RSPacS would appear to have had a niche market for furthering Australian cultural Cold War efforts.

Dirty Money

The ANU received significant funding in the 1960s and 1970s from the Ford Foundation which has often been accused of being a front for CIA funding.⁸⁵ This funding could be seen as an indication that the ANU was closely linked with the agenda of the CIA. Johannes Lombardo of the Politics Department at the University of Hong Kong said that in the early 1950s, the US Information Service (USIS) 'became the key operating unit for the dissemination of anti-

⁸³ SEATO Minutes of the 7th meeting of the Committee on Information, Cultural, Education and Labour Activities, 20th July 1959, NAA: 1838/2 563/6 Part 1

⁸⁴ M.R. Booker to 'Mr Kevin' 13th December 1955, NAA: 1838/2 563/6 Part 1

⁸⁵ See, for example, Pybus, C. "CIA as Culture Vulture", *Jacket Magazine* 2000 at <http://jacketmagazine.com/12/pybus-quad.html>, (accessed 07/08/2002) and *Australian National University: Report of the Council for 1964* p.19

communist and pro-democratic propaganda in Asia'.⁸⁶ USIS used Ford Foundation grants to sponsor 'local scholars and educators' who were willing to assist in spreading their chosen messages.⁸⁷

Lowen suggests that the Ford Foundations support was important in creating Cold War universities. The Foundation's key beliefs were that democracy and capitalism should be promoted and that the significant danger from communism meant studies into communist movements were of pressing importance.⁸⁸ Through the Ford Foundation significant funding went to international studies programs. The US Defense Department had realised that waging war required understanding the behaviour and culture of potential enemies in order to be able to predict how they would respond to military attack, threats and propaganda. Lowen says 'the military and state agencies... were not interested in ideological or philosophical discussion or in challenges to their own goals. They expected the social scientists from whom they sought advice to adopt the rhetoric of objectivity and to conduct research which had predictive and practical value.'⁸⁹ As such, funding was not often for propagandistic purposes or for rigorous critical analysis of policy but rather was focussed on practical Cold War applications. The Ford Foundation aimed to help universities meet the demand for this assistance by providing funds to foster research.⁹⁰ The Research School of Pacific Studies was to be a major Australian beneficiary of Ford Foundation funding.

Even if ANU academics were active in CIA cultural Cold War activities funded through the Ford Foundation, as Wilford has noted 'Intellectuals only cooperated with [the CIA's anti-communist

⁸⁶ Lombardo, J. "A Mission of Espionage, Intelligence and Psychological Operations" in Aldrich, R. J. et al (eds) *The Clandestine Cold War in Asia, 1945-1965*, London, Frank Cass 2000 p.67

⁸⁷ Lombardo, J. "A Mission of Espionage, Intelligence and Psychological Operations" in Aldrich, *The Clandestine* pp.67-68

⁸⁸ Lowen, *Creating* p.204 (See Chapter 8)

⁸⁹ Lowen, *Creating* pp.198-199

⁹⁰ Lowen, *Creating* pp.198-199

cultural programs] when they realised they stood to get something out of them.⁹¹ Funding was at stake, and if playing a small role in the CIA's war on communism was a means to get it, this was a means to an end.

Despite their political agenda, the ANU saw the Ford Foundation (and the Congress for Cultural Freedom) as not much more than an alternate source of funding. This is shown in the correspondence between the university and the Ford Foundation. The initial contact between the institutions was an approach to the Ford Foundation from the university, seeking external funding. In 1961 Sir Mark Oliphant raised with J. Wayne Fredericks of the Ford Foundation the possibility of their supporting the Research School of Pacific Studies. He advocated the necessity of their funding the school, not only because Australia could make a 'real contribution' to the 'study of international affairs with particular reference to South East Asia and the problems of underdeveloped countries', but also because the International Relations Department of RSPacS

is severely circumscribed in its activities by the strong party-political set-up in Australia and the natural reaction of the government in power at any moment to any criticism, overt or implied, of its particular policies. We are especially vulnerable in this University because we receive our funds directly from the Federal Treasury.⁹²

Oliphant wanted the Ford Foundation to finance a small research institute within the department and added that

An independent group of scholars... could have a great influence on Australian official policy in international affairs and towards help for South East Asian nations, because it would sit side by side with the seat of government, and it could make a significant contribution to world understanding of these questions.⁹³

Fredericks replied that

⁹¹ Wilford, *The CIA* pp.299-300

⁹² Oliphant to Mr J. Wayne Fredericks, 12th January 1961, BSL, Oliphant Papers, Series 3: Correspondence (see also chapter 8 for Crawford's efforts to secure FF funding and the Foundation's development of the SDSC)

⁹³ Oliphant to Mr J. Wayne Fredericks, 12th January 1961, BSL, Oliphant Papers, Series 3: Correspondence

The approach you describe is one which has interested many of us who work in international affairs. We believe, as you do, in the necessity for centers of excellence outside government for critical and unbiased examination of foreign affairs... I am personally interested in the creative role Australia can play in world affairs, especially in South East Asia.⁹⁴

Under Crawford's leadership numerous projects were undertaken in the RSPacS with Ford Foundation funding. Many of these were projects with utilitarian value for the Cold War. Crawford reported that 12 projects had been financed or partially financed by the Ford Foundation in the triennium to 1965. These included studies of: Foreign aid; international politics in South East Asia; communism in Asia; Afro-Asian-Latin American developments; a Japan seminar and a communist bloc seminar. According to Crawford, the project on communism in Asia had 'proved impossible to implement so far because of the poor quality of the applicants to our original advertisement', but the communist bloc seminar by contrast had proceeded very well.⁹⁵

George Modelski, the temporary head of International Relations after Lindsay's departure, designed a program for research in October 1961 that included projects on 'foreign aid in South East Asia, limited war in South East Asia, and the requisites of statehood.' Funding was to be sought for these projects from the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations. The foreign aid project was to evaluate 'foreign aid as a permanent structural feature of the international system, as a partial functional equivalent of war, and as a rudimentary form of world taxation'. This was to be an intensive analysis of all types of assistance from the US, Australia, the Soviet Union and China in South East Asia, focusing on Indonesia, Malaya and Thailand. The limited war project focused on Laos, Vietnam and Indonesia, examining limited and internal warfare as an exertion of

⁹⁴ Fredericks, W. to Oliphant, February 16th 1961, BSL, Oliphant Papers, Series 3: Correspondence

⁹⁵ Crawford, progress report to Ford Foundation, NAA: A463/63 1964/4461 "Ford Foundation grant to Australian National University Research School of Pacific Studies- progress report 1963/4"

military force by great powers without provoking nuclear exchanges. The project would also consider methods of waging undeclared war by opposing political systems, how these conflicts were resolved and the relevance of Australian and American defence policies to this situation were also to be considered. The project on requisites for statehood was to investigate the conditions that had to be fulfilled for new nations to become effective states, concentrating on the Pacific island countries. Modelski said that the International Relations work on Asia and the Pacific 'is valuable and important for Australia.'⁹⁶ International Relations received significant funding from the Ford Foundation, as these projects aligned perfectly with their aims and had practical applications for the Cold War effort.

In 1963 council acknowledged that 'a very generous grant was made to the university by the Ford Foundation for the expansion of work relating to the South East Asian area.'⁹⁷ This grant was for £11,120, which was the second largest grant to the university that year and only £380 less than the largest.⁹⁸ This grant enabled research in anthropology on New Guinea, Sarawak, Indonesia, Malaya, India and Pakistan, all potential 'hot-spots' in the war against communism. In addition, anthropology also began conducting studies on linguistics in Vietnam⁹⁹, probably to support the Australian advisory effort to the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) which had commenced the previous year.

The following year the Ford Foundation provided another £11,127 to the School, which was the largest single grant to the university.¹⁰⁰ Council emphasised the importance of the Foundation's funding for the activities of the School:

⁹⁶ George Modelski, Memorandum on proposed research in International Relations, October 1961, ANU: 2001/39 box 1

⁹⁷ *Australian National University: Report of the Council for 1963* p.7

⁹⁸ *Australian National University: Report of the Council for 1963* p.22

⁹⁹ *Australian National University: Report of the Council for 1963* p.54

¹⁰⁰ *Australian National University: Report of the Council for 1964* p.19

The year was one of considerable activity in the use of the grant made to the school by the Ford Foundation. The Departments of Economics and International Relations have undertaken studies of certain aspects of Australian foreign aid; links with Japanese universities are being strengthened; scholars from a number of universities took part in a conference on communism in August; and the Department of Economics initiated a major research project on the Indonesian economy.¹⁰¹

The size of the Ford Foundation grant grew substantially in 1965 to AUS\$133,451. This was again the largest single grant to the university.¹⁰² In 1965, public lectures were given by the School on 'Southeast Asia today', discussing the political, military and economic aspects of Australia's relations with Southeast Asia.¹⁰³ In 1967 the Department of International Relations focused on the conflict in South East Asia and its implications for the global balance of power, with council reporting that

New topics included a study of the "domino theory", nuclear politics in Asia, guerrilla warfare in South East Asia and relations between China and Vietnam. Members of the staff began studies of Chinese policy in Asia, the conditions of international order and the Asian balance of power... the Department organised one major conference on relations between India, Japan and Australia and took part in others.¹⁰⁴

The Ford Foundation grants were a great boon for the school at a time when the research assets of the school were being stretched beyond tolerable limits by the events in South East Asia. Spate expressed his gratitude to the Ford Foundation after taking over as Director in 1967: 'The School has developed research interests which could easily absorb greater sums that are available from normal sources. It has been fortunate in receiving support by significant funds from the Ford Foundation.'¹⁰⁵

¹⁰¹ *Australian National University: Report of the Council for 1964* p.50

¹⁰² *Australian National University: Report of the Council for 1965* p.25

¹⁰³ *Australian National University: Report of the Council for 1965* pp.15 and 61

¹⁰⁴ *Report of the Council of the ANU for 1967* p.80

¹⁰⁵ *Report of the Council of the ANU for 1967* p.78

The supplementary funding was beneficial but from the early 70s there was a drastic decrease of Ford Foundation funds, from \$171,869 in 1972 to only \$3,117 in 1975.¹⁰⁶ This decline reflects the growing American disenchantment with Australia's government and foreign policy during the period, as well as the American policy of direct engagement with Asian communist nations. This decline was also in part reflective of trends in the US. US Department of Defense support for basic research fell by 50% between 1969 and 1975.¹⁰⁷ However the pattern of funding from US private institutions is not so clear. It appears that while aid to Australian studies of the Asian region declined significantly, Ford Foundation funding to organisations did not itself decline in the early 1970s. Total Ford Foundation funding to organisations actually increased from \$192,475,943 in 1970 to \$199,346,000 in 1974.¹⁰⁸ It is clear that Australia's (and the ANU's) importance to Ford Foundation priorities lessened from the time of the withdrawal from Vietnam.

Ford Foundation grants began and show a marked increase at times of escalating regional Cold War tensions in South East Asia. The end use of the grants seems indicative of an agenda of studies related to anti-communist activities. Social scientists Everett Ladd and Seymour Lipsett have noted that the use of Ford Foundation funding to support activities by academics that had applications in the fight against communism was questioned in the United States, it being wondered whether such actions constituted 'reprehensible professional behaviour'.¹⁰⁹ However, the focus on contemporary communism and on potential and existing hot spots within the regional scope of the school is not hard evidence of CIA involvement with the ANU, funded through the Ford Foundation. It should not be implied that simply because the Ford Foundation funded ANU activities that the university was a tool of the CIA. Robert O'Neill said that the Foundation was a liberal organisation, which had a 'hands off' approach to its grantees and had

¹⁰⁶ *ANU Report of the Council for 1972* p.260 and *ANU 1975 Report* p.127

¹⁰⁷ Graham and Diamond, *The Rise* p.95

¹⁰⁸ Ford Foundation *Annual Reports* for 1971 and 1975

¹⁰⁹ Ladd, E. and Lipset, S. *Divided Academy*, McGraw Hill, Berkley 1975 p.104

no expectation of specific or particular results.¹¹⁰ If research outcomes were not dictated, then the use of external funding to support research, even topical research of utility to the Cold War, was legitimate.

A Seething Hotbed

The ‘spoiling’ and ‘talent spotting’ operations at the ANU demonstrate that the active surveillance of academics at the ANU was ongoing throughout the late 1950s and continued until at least the mid-1960s. This parallels closely with the experience of American academics before and during the Cold War when FBI counter-intelligence agents were known to be operating on American campuses. ASIO was investigating ANU academics who were members of the Communist Party and those who were known to be the associates of communists. These people were considered to be security risks. As prime candidates for potential recruitment by the MVD Australia’s intelligence agencies saw the need to keep a close eye on the activities of these people. Foster and Varghese certainly were not exaggerating when they stated that ASIO was deeply interested in the university and particularly personnel in the RSPacS.

During the Cold War, with a known Soviet policy of subversion through agents of influence and talent-spotting of intellectuals, the government would have been remiss had it *not* engaged the security services to investigate the universities. ASIO surveillance may also have been part of the pressure applied to universities to conform to the political orthodoxy. ANU personnel were not deeply concerned or intimidated by these activities, though the influence was probably more subtle. This role, of ‘intimidating’ academics was incidental to the main aim of spoiling Soviet

¹¹⁰ Robert O’Neill, Telephone Interview, 1st May 2006

recruitment and propagandistic activities and monitoring *potential* Soviet agents, recruiters and agents of influence.

The associations between the Congress for Cultural Freedom and the ANU Press would seem to demonstrate, at least superficially, that the ANU was actively involved in disseminating cultural Cold War propaganda. The inference that the CIA was behind the ANU's role is a matter of contention, although certainly the production of material supporting the government and countering left-wing publications would have been high in the list of priorities in any battle for the hearts and minds of the Australian population. Whether the ANU believed this was what it was doing in accepting Congress' or Ford Foundation funding is another matter, rather it may have been simply accepting supplemental funding, allowing it to expand its operations. In accepting funding from such a source, however, the ANU was inadvertently aligning itself with this agenda. There is circumstantial evidence that the main instigator in the ANU's involvement in cultural Cold War activities was the Australian government not the CIA. Unfortunately for the conspiracy theorists, the Ford Foundation appears to have been viewed as a convenient source of funding for projects that were aligned with the ANU's topical (Cold War) interests rather than as a conduit for secret, US monies which subverted Australia's intellectual independence.

The greatest boon for the school in terms of funding from private organisations came at a time when Australia's involvement in "hot wars" in Asia was expanding. The Ford Foundation's grants enabled the expansion of RSPacS activities at a time when anti-communist activities in Asia were high on the national agenda and the school had difficulties in managing the emerging knowledge requirements. The primary beneficiary of this increase in funding was the Department of International Relations, which was able to produce a significant amount of material which would have regional Cold War applications. Aside from the use of the Ford

Foundation's funding for activities supporting the national agenda, the *trajectory* of this funding in itself parallels with the active fighting of the Cold War in Asia and Australia's support for the US aims in Asia. The funding commenced in the early 1960s with the advisory effort in Vietnam, increased greatly with the commitment of combat troops to that conflict and peaked at the time of greatest commitment of troops, only to decline with the withdrawal of troops from the War in the early 1970s and the election of the Labor government.

The government was concerned about communist subversion emanating from the universities and the potential for Soviet recruitment of students and staff. There was a perception that there was a real threat to be countered. ASIO may have been part of an implicit pressure to conform applied by the government but the main aim of the investigations was security, not ensuring conformity. If it had this effect it was incidental to the main aim (even if it was beneficial in the view of ASIO and the conservative government). On the basis of more circumstantial evidence, it can be speculated that the ANU did form part of the cultural Cold War effort, but more through cultural exchanges rather than the production of propaganda. This effort was promoted by the Australian government rather than the CIA. Finally, Ford Foundation funding, rather than demonstrating a link between the ANU and CIA was merely seen as a convenient source of supplementary funding, albeit one applied to topical research. The relationship between the ANU and intelligence agencies, while exhibiting similarities with the experience in the US, was also more complicated and rather more subtle than some conspiracy theorists would have us believe.

PART THREE: MUTUAL BENEFITS

Though there was some chronological overlap with the coercive period, from the late 1950s a more mature relationship with mutual benefits developed between the government and the ANU. The university received funding, patronage and prestige and the government in turn received expert advice and support.

The ANU did very well financially out of this arrangement but there were costs to their independence. Funding could be used as a lever to encourage the university to align with the national interest. This alignment was enhanced by the appointment of Sir John Crawford which resulted in the promotion of an attitude of social utility within the university.

While acting in the interests of government and society was a primary focus, the ANU was able to maintain a proper distance when it was in their interests to do so. The university determined that the benefits of service for the most part outweighed the costs.

CHAPTER 7: UNIVERSITY FINANCING

Being beholden to the federal government as primary funder led to doubts about whether the ANU could maintain independence if the government was able to give or withhold funding as it chose. As in the case of the American Cold War universities, federal funding at the ANU both increased the influence of government and enabled the ANU to receive substantial benefits. The federal government created institutions whose purpose was perceived to be a direct threat to the autonomy of Australian universities. Significant changes impacted on higher education in Australia during the Cold War. As demographic change resulted in increased demand for higher education, changes increasing federal influence resulted from the Murray Report in 1957 and the Martin Report in 1964. There were increasing demands to document and demonstrate accountability, efficiency and quality.¹ These factors enhanced the position of the government as a stakeholder in higher education.

The AUC as a threat to independence

Sir John Crawford in his final annual report as Vice Chancellor argued that the ‘Australian Universities Commission inevitably presents a threat to university autonomy’.² Crawford doubted whether the AUC was a bridge between universities and government as it was supposed to be, instead he believed the AUC was an instrument for inter-government negotiations in which ‘university views may be inadequately heard.’ He argued that the AUC’s definitions of university funding needs were not meeting requirements and as the AUC had the power to veto academic developments this represented a threat to university autonomy.³ Crawford believed that

¹ Adams, D. “Examining the fabric of academic life: an analysis of three decades of research on the perceptions of Australian academics about their roles” *Higher Education* Vol 36 (1998) pp.421-435

² The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia *ANU Report of the Council for 1972*, Canberra, The Government Printer of Australia 1973 p.8

³ Crawford, *University and Government* p.4

‘both British and Australian experience point to the dangers of over-rigid application of arbitrary “rules of thumb” for what [funding] norms tend to be’.⁴

Seeking to protect the independence of universities from their reliance on public funds, during the mid 1950s the Australian Vice Chancellor’s Committee advocated the formation of an Australian body along the lines of the UK University Grants Committee. In their argument the AVCC wanted to establish a buffer between the universities and the government to create a system which ‘contained greater safeguards for the corporate autonomy of the universities and the freedom and independence of their staffs’. The AVCC was in an invidious position as they regarded the creation of this system as necessary, but needed to soften their argument to ensure that their aim was attained, stating that ‘although the temptations and dangers are obvious, I think it is fair to say that [the Australian universities] direct and continual dependence on government has not greatly affected the autonomy of the universities.’⁵ In other words, the AVCC was saying that no danger to autonomy existed; in fact there was so little danger to autonomy that there was a need to establish a committee to ensure that autonomy was maintained and to ensure the continued funding needed for development! The irony was that the proposed buffer itself became a threat.

Hasley and Trow have described the UK University Grants Committee (UGC) on which the AUC was modelled. The UGC was to ‘enquire into the financial needs of university education... [and to] plan for the development of universities... in order to ensure they are fully adequate for national needs’. The objective of the UGC was to ensure that the government did not take direct control over the universities, to safeguard the universities from political interference and to enable the government to provide money to universities without strings attached. This ‘enabled

⁴ Sir John Crawford’s Buntine Oration *University Accountability* Draft, ANU: 2000/16 Box 2 item 9 folios 117-147

⁵ Partridge, P.H. “The Australian Universities and Governments” in Australian Vice Chancellor’s Committee, *A Symposium* p.7

universities to enjoy public funds without fear that the gift might turn out to be a Greek one'.⁶ A.P. Gallagher has said that as a result of institutions such as the AUC and UGC 'tertiary education came increasingly under the direct control of governments. This meant that in many cases universities lost a degree of their individual autonomy and came to be regarded as part of a tertiary education system, a system expected to serve public needs and purposes.'⁷

Crawford welcomed increasing calls for assistance from government and believed that too little use had been made of the universities, although the ANU had been an exception to this rule. The ANU, he said, was 'better prepared' for this type of activity than other Australian universities 'and could respond to the challenge without loss of its autonomy' however

Sir John said that autonomy remained a matter calling for constant vigilance... especially as far as the Australian Universities Commission was concerned. He saw the AUC as an important safeguard against financial arbitrariness on the part of governments towards universities... but he said that [the AUC's power as a statutory body] over the "balanced development" of universities inevitably presented that threat to university autonomy.⁸

Crawford believed that in the past universities had 'enjoyed a high degree of freedom from control by external authorities such as governments or their agents' and that the only real constraint was funding. He wondered whether the increased role of universities in modern society actually 'call[ed] for more supervision of, and even government interference in, their operations.'⁹ The import of this is that clearly Crawford viewed acting for government as an important part of a university's function but that doing this work ran the risk of increased governmental interference and that the AUC, rather than safeguarding universities from interference actually had the opposite effect of increasing the administrative and financial

⁶ Hasley and Trow, *The British Academics* pp.61-62

⁷ Gallagher, *Coordinating Australian University Development* p.1

⁸ *Canberra Times*, Thursday March 15th 1973, ANU: 2001/16 University Records Personal Files Box 5 Sir John Crawford 6.2.1.10 Part 2

⁹ Sir John Crawford's Buntine Oration *University Accountability* Draft, ANU: 2000/16 Box 2 item 9 folios 117-147

controls exercised over universities. He accepted the government's input as a stakeholder in higher education but believed the major threat came from limits to university funding.

The Murray Report and the AUC — Federal encroachment on higher education

The Murray Report and creation of the AUC coincided with a massive increase in western spending on universities linked with Cold War imperatives. The shock of Sputnik was such that it forced a vast increase in funding for higher education, based on the realisation that the Soviets were ahead in scientific and other forms of knowledge and that in order to win the Cold War investment in knowledge was as important as weapons.¹⁰ Between 1958 and 1963 the US government assumed primary responsibility for supporting basic research in the United States. The US federal research and development budget grew 455% between 1953 and 1963.¹¹ The launch of Sputnik had a massive impact on higher education in western nations. The Sputnik challenge expanded (US) federal research expenditures and Graham and Diamond have said that by the 1960s this had 'produced high concentrations of research funding in a small number of elite universities'.¹² In the Australian context this had parallel implications for the ANU. The Martin Report (1964) stressed the vital role universities were to play in ensuring Australia's economic health. As Symes has noted 'Cold War paranoia underpins Martin's sentiments: the university is pictured as an ideological bulwark against Soviet expansionism.'¹³ The Cold War therefore formed a major impetus for increased government control over university funding and activities.

Education *in and of itself* had value as a weapon in the Cold War, a means by which the victory of democratic nations over communism could be ensured. By educating people about the dangers

¹⁰ Geiger, R. "Organized Research Units- their role in the Development of University Research" *Journal of Higher Education* Vol 61 No 1 (1990) p.13

¹¹ Graham and Diamond, *The Rise* pp.33-34

¹² Graham and Diamond, *The Rise* p.27

¹³ Symes, "Revolting Campuses" pp.395-401

of communism and by producing highly trained scientists and political scientists, democratic nations would be able to defeat communism. The father of the American nuclear navy, Admiral Hyman Rickover, argued that only improving American education would enable the US to win in either war or peace against the Soviet Union.¹⁴ The CIA was concerned in the late 1950s that Russian technological advances showed the beginning of an ‘education gap’ between the US and the USSR.¹⁵

According to Hugh Stretton the Murray Report in the 1950s produced dramatic increases in the funding provided to universities by the government and this interference by the government was positive rather than negative.¹⁶ Recurrent funding to Australian universities from the Commonwealth increased from £388,000 in 1950 to £7,610,000 in 1960. Research grants increased from £97,000 in 1945 to £1,519,000 in 1960.¹⁷ The Murray Report also provided an additional £4,500,000 ‘emergency’ grant to enable the universities to meet their immediate needs.¹⁸ It is plain that the Murray Report resulted in significant increases in funding for universities — an immensely positive development — but it represented at the same time a vast increase in the position of the federal government as a stakeholder in higher education throughout Australia.

The *Murray Report on the Committee of Inquiry into Problems Confronting Australian Universities* was submitted to Menzies in September 1957. The report examined ways the universities could cope with projected growth and the inability of the universities to meet existing requirements for teaching and research. The submission of the Australian Vice Chancellors (supported in the report) was that a body similar to the UK University Grants Committee be

¹⁴ Rickover, H. *Education and Freedom* E.P. New York, Dutton and Co. Inc. 1959 pp.35-38

¹⁵ Rickover, *Education and Freedom* pp.35-45

¹⁶ Emeritus Professor Hugh Stretton, Interview, the University of Adelaide, 9th of November 2005

¹⁷ *Report of the Australian Universities Commission on Australian Universities 1958-1963* p.4

¹⁸ *Report of the Australian Universities Commission on Australian Universities 1958-1963* p.9

established ‘which safeguards government interests, yet leaves the universities as free from interference’ as was possible given government support for the universities. As a result, Menzies established the Australian Universities Commission. As was noted in the first report of the Commission, Menzies personally rejected the word “grants”, ‘because it seemed to indicate that the Commission’s only function would be financial. He believed that its responsibilities should be much wider... to co-ordinate the balanced development of universities, State and Commonwealth so that their resources would be used to the greatest possible advantage for Australia.’¹⁹ Menzies acknowledged that universities were beholden to the government for funding, and believed that Gresham’s Law applied to universities: the idea that bad money is thrown after good. This implies that he advocated government monitoring and control over funding given to universities.²⁰ He said ‘in Australia the universities are in a substantial sense government universities, relying to a major extent on monies provided by governments.’²¹

Harman has suggested that the Murray Report recommended a national approach to university planning, creating a ‘major continuing financial role’ by the federal government. In this context the AUC’s main function would be ‘advising the Prime Minister on the financial needs of the universities for recurrent and capital grants’. The Menzies government adopted most of the recommendations of the Murray Report, but decided to set up the AUC as a statutory body rather than an advisory committee and gave it ‘broader functions and wider powers’ than the UK UGC. Harman suggests that as a statutory agency the AUC was in reality ‘a government agency rather than a “loose” buffer committee...[it] took on many of the characteristic features of any Commonwealth Government agency’. From the early 1960s ‘both the way that the AUC acted and how it was viewed by Commonwealth Ministers made it increasingly clear that the AUC was a Commonwealth body rather than a joint collaborative body of the Commonwealth, the states

¹⁹ *Report of the Australian Universities Commission on Australian Universities 1958-1963* p.7

²⁰ Menzies, *The Universities* p.10

²¹ Menzies, *The Universities* p.12

and the universities'. Harman believes that the AUC served the interests of the Commonwealth over that of the other parties whose interests it was also supposed to represent, which 'facilitated an increased degree of Commonwealth control and influence over university and tertiary education affairs.'²²

Figure 6: Position of the AUC as a Coordinating Agency for Australian Universities²³

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 209
of the print copy of the thesis held in
the University of Adelaide Library.

²² Harman, "Australian Experience" pp.501-515

²³ Adapted from Gallagher, *Coordinating Australian University Development* p.6

Three items are of importance in interpreting this diagram. Firstly while the AUC is represented separately here, it was a de-facto Commonwealth Government agency. Secondly, universities continued to have informal contacts at the Commonwealth level, but the formal channel was through the AUC. Thirdly, in relation to the ANU, the channel of state involvement did not exist, and the informal channels of communication with the Commonwealth Government were probably of much greater importance than this diagram indicates.

Though the AUC was designed to act as a “buffer zone” between the government and the universities, Gallagher also argues that it was increasingly dominated by the needs of the government.

The plans of individual universities for their future development were often at cross-purposes with the AUC’s perceptions of national needs... the Commonwealth Government, through the AUC exercised an increasing influence. The result was that each university acted less and less independently... On several occasions the relevant minister established an atmosphere in which the chairman of the AUC was in no doubt of political guidelines and constraints... [the AUC therefore] became less an independent ‘buffer’ agency and more a governing agency.²⁴

The effect of these changes were demonstrated in a conference of university governing bodies held at the ANU in 1969, where concern was expressed about the radical shift in the relationship between universities and the government. This shift meant that they interacted (as P.H. Partridge said) ‘more closely, directly and continuously’ than previously. Harman suggests this shift entailed progressive loss of control over capital funds, research grants impacting on priorities within the universities and an ‘increasingly dominant government role’.²⁵

Crawford believed the government’s influence over the AUC had a significant impact on funding provided to Australian universities. In 1966 the federal and state governments significantly modified the recommendations of the AUC, ‘not to mention the hopes of the universities’.²⁶

Crawford’s concerns are reflected in Harman’s analysis when he says that the AUC brought ‘tension and conflict’ between the government and the universities as it was unable to ‘reconcile the financial demands of universities with the sums that Commonwealth and state administrations were able and willing to spend.’²⁷

²⁴ Gallagher, *Coordinating Australian University Development* pp.7-9

²⁵ Harman, “The Erosion” pp.501-518

²⁶ Sir John Crawford’s Buntine Oration *University Accountability* Draft, ANU: 2000/16 Box 2 item 9 folios 117-147

²⁷ Harman, “Australian Experience” pp.501-515

The Murray Committee and creation of the AUC led to a change in funding arrangements for the ANU. All university annual budgets in Australia were channelled through the AUC and approved by the relevant government.²⁸ Crawford felt that the AUC was unable to effectively inform the government of university needs and problems and balance these with the place of universities in Australia's social planning, and that it was also failing to adequately liaise with the universities. Crawford complained that the AUC's 1970-1972 recommendations for the ANU, 'were, in fact, simply the average for the states taken as a whole despite the fact that we had pruned back the ambitions of the research schools and teaching faculties to a level comparable with economic realities and could fully justify all requests we sent forward.'²⁹ Crawford regarded the statement in the AUC Act that it should 'promote the balanced development of universities so their resources can be used to the *greatest possible advantage to Australia* [emphasis in original]' as 'a clear reference to rationalisation of resources and to the desired social responsibility of resources'.³⁰ In a way the AUC and ANU operated on a similar line of thought and were established for similar reasons — to align university activities with the national interest. The AUC had brought further tension into the university-government relationship.

The Whitlam reforms of 1973-74 whereby the federal government accepted full responsibility for capital and recurrent university funding were the culmination of the trend towards greater government control over the university system. Harman says that while universities had hoped that these reforms would result in 'more liberal financial support', the effect of these changes was to ensure that the universities became 'almost totally dependent on the generosity or otherwise of the Commonwealth'. Recurrent grants failed to keep pace with inflation and the government

²⁸ Notes for Vice Chancellor's meeting with non-professorial academic staff: HC Coombs lecture theatre, 2nd September 1970, ANU: 2000/16 Box 1 item 4

²⁹ Notes for Vice Chancellor's meeting with non-professorial academic staff: HC Coombs lecture theatre, 2nd September 1970, ANU: 2000/16 Box 1 item 4

³⁰ Sir John Crawford's Buntine Oration *University Accountability* Draft, ANU: 2000/16 Box 2 item 9 folios 117-147

‘used the power of the purse... to insist on particular policies being followed’.³¹ Thus, the encroachment of government control over the universities had been considerable throughout the 1950s and 1960s.

The continued government interest in and control over universities was not only a matter of monitoring expenditure, it was also related directly to the ideological struggle of the day. The 1964 Martin Report emphasised that

‘the factors which determine national survival in the modern world require the Australian community to provide talented young people with opportunities to develop their innate abilities to the maximum... it is doubtful whether the people of any previous age have been confronted with social, national and international problems as complex and as far-reaching as those with which mankind is faced today’.

The report noted that education is ‘the very stuff of a free and democratic society’ and for this reason the report supported further expansion of the universities and government support.³²

Funding Tensions

The ANU’s focus on regional affairs meant that the increasing focus of government on Cold War events in Asia and the Pacific was bound to have an impact on the ANU. The financial pressures of expanding governmental interest in the region began to take their toll on the RSPacS in the mid-1960s. In 1963 the council had been optimistic about the growth of output from the university and the level of funding it was receiving, considering both to be more than adequate,³³ but by 1965 Crawford and the RSPacS were feeling the pinch. Crawford said that ‘the school is feeling the financial pressure of maintaining its research activities and I have no doubt that this pressure will increase.’ With limited funding, an expanding school and increased requirements for research on the region, the school was facing unpalatable alternatives. The school had to

³¹ Harman, “The Erosion” pp.501-518

³² Martin, L.H. et al *Tertiary Education in Australia – Report of the Committee on the future of tertiary education in Australia to the Australian Universities Commission* Vol. 1, Commonwealth of Australia, August 1964 pp.1-4

³³ *Australian National University: Report of the Council for 1963* pp.4 and 6

choose between either restricting the research that staff and students could conduct or limiting the numbers of students the school would be able to accept.³⁴ It was an invidious position to be in. To limit the school's areas for research would reduce the ability of the school to be a world leader in its field, to reduce the intake of research scholars would be to cut back on the main reason for being of the university — to produce trained researchers.

The events in South East Asia were placing great pressure on the school. By 1966 council acknowledged that 'the wind of change in research seems to be felt most in those with regional interests, notably in the Research School of Pacific Studies.'³⁵ Acting Director W.E.H. Stanner thought that while the school aimed to respond to the new conditions which affected Australia's situation in relation to Asia, the spread of activities of the school was very wide and even with resources 'fully stretched' the school was only able to cover a small amount of the potential areas for research. The conflict between educational requirements and research output was reaching a peak. By the end of 1966, Stanner said that 'the prospects of financial stringency were requiring each department... to face the likelihood of an enforced choice between fields of research in which staff and doctoral scholars might undertake medium or long term commitments, and the number of doctoral students that could safely be accepted.'³⁶

In the face of these conflicting priorities and insufficient funding difficult decisions needed to be made. In 1967 the council concluded that research was to be the principal function of the Institute of Advanced Studies.³⁷ Research priorities now formally took precedence over producing large numbers of postgraduates. This in turn shows that the research outputs of the university were valued more highly by the funding agency (the government) than the production

³⁴ *Australian National University: Report of the Council for 1965* p.61

³⁵ The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia *The Australian National University: Report of the Council for 1966*, Canberra, Commonwealth Government Printer 1967 p.8

³⁶ *Australian National University: Report of the Council for 1966* pp.73-74

³⁷ The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia *The Report of the Council of the ANU for 1967*, Canberra, Commonwealth Government Printing Office 1968 p.9

of postgraduate degrees. Despite adopting this position, the school was also forced to limit the scope of its research. Considering the priorities which had emerged in the mid-1960s for the study of Australia's regional relations, it is not surprising that the focus of the school shifted away from its traditional studies of the Pacific islands and Papua New Guinea to a specialised examination of South East Asia, and to a lesser extent China and Japan. The new Director of the school, Oskar Spate, considered that little more could be discovered about the islands of the Pacific.³⁸ This was an exaggeration, rationalising the change in focus due to government requests for more information about South East Asia. Financial pressures had resulted in the ANU aligning their research with areas of direct national interest.

In 1970, funding problems for the ANU were again causing Crawford (by now Vice Chancellor) considerable anxiety: 'In one area, that of financial relationships [between] universities and government, the difficulties have become acute.' That year a program was put in place to limit enrolment numbers of the university to 1,300 postgraduate students and to conduct a program of controlled growth. Crawford noted a feeling that

our development needs had been less than adequately met... growth funds would be severely limited [and therefore] plans for new developments must be approached very tentatively... because of financial constraints, however, it has not been possible for the faculties to preserve the balance between students and staff deemed appropriate by the Australian Universities Commission.

Crawford lamented that 'some difficult decisions were reached which involved the rejection of several worthwhile proposals'.³⁹

In 1971 Crawford seemed more optimistic about the financial situation of the university. He said 'significant progress' had been made on the financial problems of the university which allowed

³⁸ *Report of the Council of the ANU for 1967* p.76

³⁹ The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia *ANU Report of the Council for 1970*, Canberra, Commonwealth Government Printing Office 1971 pp.5-7

some relaxation of the restrictions imposed by budget constraints on research and development.⁴⁰ But Crawford's optimism was misplaced. Council said that in 1974 'with accelerating inflation the costs of fieldwork overseas and of publications began to present serious problems.'⁴¹ The following year Crawford's concerns about the potential of the AUC to interfere with university affairs came glaringly to light in the new Vice Chancellor D.A. Low's complaints in the annual report. The AUC's recommendations 'had been influenced by the need for restraint in the current economic climate.' Low said that as a result 'the university sustained a cut in its allocation which was close to three times as large as it had ever suffered before.'⁴²

Audits and Accountability

In the final analysis, as Foster and Varghese have correctly stated, 'there could be no avoiding the fact that the University was accountable to the taxpayer.' The ANU Act, while affirming the independence of the council also ensured that the university's finances were to be audited and managed under the direction of the Commonwealth Treasurer.⁴³ In parliament it was noted that 'the annual grant to the Australian National University is subject to the treasurer's approval' and any requests for subsequent funds 'are subject to parliamentary approval'.⁴⁴ As a result the government had ultimate control over the finances of the university.

Foster and Varghese show that in 1953 the Auditor General 'refused to certify as correct the balance sheet for the previous year...[which] left a residue of wariness among members of the

⁴⁰ The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia *ANU Report of the Council for 1971*, Canberra, Commonwealth Government Printing Office, 1972 p.8

⁴¹ The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia *ANU Report of the Council for 1974*, Canberra, The Government Printer of Australia, 1976 p.12

⁴² The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, *The ANU 1975 Report*, Canberra, The Government Printer of Australia 1977 p.2

⁴³ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of...* p.116

⁴⁴ Extract of Hansard 19th April 1950, NAA: A571/150 1945/1316 Part 2 "Australian National University"

university who had anything to do with financial matters.⁴⁵ The Auditor General had described an inability to verify expenses and inadequate contract and tendering procedures. As a result he had ‘not been able to certify that the above-mentioned balance sheet presents a true and fair view of the affairs of the Australian National University’.⁴⁶ The ANU council blamed the circumstances of the establishment of the university and took steps to rectify the situation.⁴⁷

According to Florey, the Auditor General’s report placed a financial stringency on the university which promoted cost-cutting measures and made it difficult to recruit new research staff.⁴⁸ This constrained the expansion of most of the research schools.⁴⁹ In a 1956 council meeting the Vice Chancellor noted he ‘had been asked to consider, with his budget advisers, the financial ceiling of all schools and sections’.⁵⁰ Ernest Titterton (then Director of the Department of Nuclear Physics) regarded the ceiling as ‘catastrophic’, said he would not be making any new appointments and ‘was carefully considering even replacements’.⁵¹

The timing of the Auditor General’s report was significant as Foster and Varghese have said that in the early 1950s Menzies, concerned about the vast increases in expenditure by the ANU proposed that the ANU ‘put a stop on further increases in spending’.⁵² As noted in Chapter 2, the early years of the ANU had seen a great deal of taxpayer expense without a sizeable return in terms of output. This resulted in animosity from members of parliament. Rowse has observed that in the 1953 debate on ANU estimates in the House of Representatives some MPs said that

⁴⁵ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of...* p.116

⁴⁶ Undated Unsigned Document (probably Auditor General), NAA: A1831 1954/501 Australian National University

⁴⁷ Australian National University: Report of the Council for the Period 1st January 1954 to 31st December 1954 p.4

⁴⁸ Report to Council by Sir Howard Florey (undated), ANU: University Records 2000/18 1(2) Sir H Florey 3.4.0.1c Part 1

⁴⁹ ANU: UA 2001/20, Item 06: Transcript of Interview with Emeritus Professor Geoffrey Sawer May-June 1990

⁵⁰ Council Meeting Minutes 7th September 1956, ANU Archives: ANU Council 2005/8 Box 3 Council Minutes 1951-1956

⁵¹ Derived from notes in Standing Committee Meeting 10th August 1956, ANU Archives: Standing Committees, University Council, Professorial Board 2001/09 Box 1 Council and Committee Minutes 10/8/56-30/9/57

⁵² Foster and Varghese, *The Making of* p.120

the ANU ‘indulge[d] in extravagant expenditure’ and in November 1954 Jo Gullett complained about the university that ‘a ludicrously large amount of money has been very ill spent’.⁵³ These financial attacks by parliamentarians were also noted by Foster and Varghese who said that Richard Casey and Wilfred Kent Hughes ‘made no secret of the fact that they regarded the ANU as a waste of government money’.⁵⁴ Rowse suggests that this attack was at least partly linked with the perception that the ANU was a haven for communists:

In the rhetoric of the university’s parliamentary critics there was an eager tendency to conflate intellectual with financial irresponsibility. If the ANU were to defend its autonomy as a community of scholars, its leaders would have to conduct with discretion their relationship with that ambivalent patron, the Menzies Government.⁵⁵

The attacks on the ANU about funding and political loyalty acted in concert to align the ANU with the government agenda. While government would fund ‘modest expansion’, Foster and Varghese said the ‘University would consider the period as one of consolidation, embarking on no new projects, and aiming to demonstrate effectiveness within its original fields of research.’⁵⁶ These events represent much more than government penny-pinching: German political scientist Richard Lowenthal has written that ‘financial pull is not only an effective, but also a reasonable and legitimate, mechanism for bringing social priorities to bear on autonomous decisions of universities.’⁵⁷ As noted above, it was an effective tool for ensuring the ANU focused on research in line with national priorities.

Newly established universities such as the ANU were more vulnerable to pressure from the government and therefore were more likely to cede their autonomy in return for secure funding. P.H. Partridge believed this was due to the fact that these universities

⁵³ Rowse, *Nugget Coombs* pp.255-256

⁵⁴ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of* p.115 (See Chapter 4 for a continuation of this assault on the University through other means)

⁵⁵ Rowse, *Nugget Coombs* p.259

⁵⁶ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of* p.120

⁵⁷ Lowenthal, R. “The University’s Autonomy versus Social Priorities” in Seabury, *Universities* p.78

have no non-governmental sources of income of any significance; a large part of their capital equipment is still to be provided; they are more than usually dependent on the annual budget, and their own annual estimates have to run the gamut of treasury scrutiny. Moreover unlike [established universities] they are not shielded by the fact that they have been publicly accepted for a very long time as independent, self governing communities... it is too easy to regard them as creations and instrumentalities of government... [and they are] altogether too subject to government scrutiny.⁵⁸

Rowse has observed that economists such as Copland, Melville, Coombs and, later, Crawford were especially prominent in the development of the ANU. He says that ‘more than other academics they had enjoyed intimate experience of government at the highest level. That experience and their professional ease with financial planning gave them the confidence of the government.’ It also meant that as they were ‘professionally sensitive to questions of cost [their background became] a political virtue.’⁵⁹ This led to them being more willing to acquiesce to government demands in order to secure funding. Governmental control over university funding was to be a major challenge for the independence of the ANU. As Hancock wrote, ‘in my experience, academic freedom is most secure when the benefactors of academic institutions are distant, dispersed and a long-time dead.’⁶⁰

The ANU's Advantages

Despite the negative consequences in terms of government influence and the tension over funding, being linked so closely with government led to huge financial benefits for the ANU. The effect of this was similar to the elite research universities in the United States, which, according to Graham and Diamond, were able to turn their negative features, including economic

⁵⁸ Partridge, P.H. “The Australian Universities and Governments” in Australian Vice Chancellor’s Committee, *A Symposium* pp.7-8

⁵⁹ Rowse, *Nugget Coombs* pp.255-256

⁶⁰ Gollan, *Some Recollections of the Early History of the ANU*, NLA: MS 9372 Box 10

vulnerability, ‘almost into assets’.⁶¹ The ANU did extremely well financially through its close relations with the federal government, not only in terms of direct funding from the government, but it also received significantly greater proportional funding in terms of numbers of staff and students than any of the other universities in Australia.

Negotiations with only one government conferred significant advantages in terms of salaries and sabbaticals for ANU staff. Foster and Varghese observed that ANU professors were given a sabbatical of one year in four and very generous travel allowances, which was a much more generous proposition than the usual one year in seven.⁶² Negotiations with just one government conferred other advantages as well. Crawford was willing to informally bypass the AUC in his efforts to secure funding for the university. Crawford said that

Relations with government are always important to a university and the ANU is no exception... it has been essential to ensure the federal departments concerned know our position. There have been times when the AUC has evidently accepted departmental (including treasury) views without proper consultation with us... it is essential for [the] ANU always to make its position known to Ministers and Departments. Here the parliamentary members of Council have been useful, but we can not expect them to substitute for direct contact between the university’s senior staff (academic and non-academic) and the Ministers and their senior advisers. There has, fortunately, always been a willingness to meet us in discussion.⁶³

In terms of salary negotiations, the university felt able to both initiate demands of the government and to pre-empt the decisions of the AUC. In April 1961 questions were raised in parliament as the council of the ANU had taken action ‘to raise the salaries of academic staff... to levels which the council had recommended prior to the establishment of the salaries committee (of the Australian Universities Commission).’ This caused Menzies some consternation, as the university appeared to be over-stepping the bounds of propriety in ignoring the recommendations

⁶¹ Graham and Diamond, *The Rise* p.9

⁶² Foster and Varghese, *The Making of...* p.83

⁶³ Crawford’s report to Council 9th March 1973, ANU: 2001/16 Box 5 6.2.1.10 Part 2

of the AUC. However, the government concluded that the decisions of the ANU council were binding for the university.⁶⁴ The ANU was therefore able on at least one occasion to bypass AUC decisions in order to obtain salary increases.

Was Crawford correct to be concerned about the level of funding granted to the ANU (and more particularly the Research School of Pacific Studies) via the AUC? Of course, every university complains about its funding. There is never enough money for everything that universities want to do. Examination of levels of expenditure by the Research School of Pacific Studies between 1958 and 1972 reveal almost constant growth in expenditure. This must indicate that the school was both confident in its funding sources and underwent continual expansion during the period in question (see fig. 7 and 8. There are two tables here to avoid potential errors in the conversion from pounds to decimal currency).

Figure 7: Expenditure by RSPacS 1958-1964

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 220
of the print copy of the thesis held in
the University of Adelaide Library.

(Source: Derived from data in ANU Annual Reports to Parliament 1958-1964)

⁶⁴ Draft reply to Parliamentary Question for Prime Minister and Senator Spooner, 11th of April 1961, NAA: A 463/63 1961/4369 “Parliamentary question regarding salaries at the Australian National University”

Figure 8: Expenditure by RSPacS 1965-1972

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 221
of the print copy of the thesis held in
the University of Adelaide Library.

(Source: Derived from data in ANU Annual Reports to Parliament 1965-1972)

Two elements are immediately obvious from examination of RSPacS expenditure. First of all, the school, (apart from in 1958-59) was continually increasing its expenditure. Secondly there was an enormous increase of expenditure between 1960 and 1964: expenditure increased by more than 300% during this four-year period. Two factors (apart from growth in the staffing levels and field research expenses of the school) account for the dramatic increase. The school was financing construction of the Coombs building⁶⁵, a project which involved considerable spending by the university. Secondly, another influence on the spending of the school was the government interest in the events in South East Asia at the time. The years of most marked increase between 1960 and 1964 were also a period of heightened tensions in the region. Conflicts in Malaya, Borneo and Vietnam were all occurring during this period with varying and increasing levels of Australian military involvement. The rise of Indonesian communism was an issue of particular concern for the government and the British withdrawal from Asia was also occurring, increasing the need for an Australian understanding of the region.

⁶⁵ *Australian National University: Report of the Council for 1964* p.5

The school's funding in the 1950s *exceeded requirements*. A letter to Crawford from Melville in 1959 noted that the RSPacS 'has never yet been able to spend its allocated share of the universities grant... Shortfalls over the last four years have been 21.8%, 11.3%, 11.4% and 25%.'⁶⁶ The government was providing the RSPacS with funding at least 10% and at times a full 25% over their requirements. Funding was more than adequate. The school's needs were not only being met, they were being exceeded. Crawford had little reason to be concerned by comparison with other Australian universities.

The Special Relationship Pays Off

The ANU had considerable financial advantages over the state universities in Australia. This created resentment. The simple fact that the ANU was designed as a postgraduate centre was seen by other universities as a threat as it was taking funding and students at a time when these universities wanted to enhance their own postgraduate capability. Crawford said that

One of the early fears was that a university in Canberra would rob other universities of their financial support... it is true we could all have used more [funding] and that post-graduate developments in the older universities have received less support... than might properly have been expected.⁶⁷

Crawford placed the blame for reduced funding to the state universities on the state governments deciding not to meet the expenditure of the federal government rather than 'the ANU robbing its sisters'. He acknowledged the advantage the ANU held in its unusual position among Australian universities 'in having only one government with which to deal.'⁶⁸

Robin Gollan was clearer on the animosity between the ANU and its sister universities:

⁶⁶ Melville to Crawford 15th July 1959, NLA "Papers of Sir John Crawford" MS 4514 Box 84

⁶⁷ Crawford, *The Australian National University* p.16

⁶⁸ Crawford, *The Australian National University* p.17

the attitude of other universities, with notable exceptions... was one of, I suppose, envy mainly of the marvellous conditions that the ANU offered and I think there was a lack of cooperation in this respect. There was jealousy of the ANU... for good reasons – the sort of conditions that we had there was no comparison in other universities.⁶⁹

Gollan argued that the ANU was compensating for ‘the inadequacies of the state universities’ and that:

Broadly, this university is providing research facilities for staff both permanent and temporary, and for postgraduate students that ideally should exist in state universities, but in fact don’t... the political fact is that only the Commonwealth has (or is prepared to spend) the money necessary to maintain a university at anything like a reasonable standard, in terms of staff/student ratios, opportunities for research etc.⁷⁰

Gollan was correct, though this situation arose due to federal largesse. Table 2 demonstrates the significant advantage the ANU had over the state universities in terms of federal funding.

Table 2: Sources of Australian University Income 1961

<p>NOTE: This table is included on page 223 of the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.</p>
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(Source: Australian Council for Education Research *A Brief Guide to Australian Universities* (4th Ed) Hawthorn, ACER 1964 p.42)

Not surprisingly, the federal government provided a very high percentage of funding for ACT universities. Though this funding also includes a substitute for state government funding which did not apply to the ACT universities, total government funding (state and federal) for state universities came to 79.7% as opposed to 93% (federal) for ACT universities. Universities in the

ACT therefore received an additional 13.3% of their funding from government revenue over and

⁶⁹ ANU Archives: ANU History project, UA 2001/20, Oral History project Records Item 32: Transcript of Interview with Emeritus Professor Robin Allenby Gollan 18 and 21st May 1993

⁷⁰ Gollan, Comments on Sir Alexander Carr-Saunders’ Reflections, 1959, NLA: MS 9372 Box 9

above what the states received. Students at the universities in the ACT also received much more federal support than students at universities in other states.

Figure 9: Government Assistance to Students c. 1961

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 224
of the print copy of the thesis held in
the University of Adelaide Library.

(Source: Australian Council for Education Research, *A Brief Guide to Australian Universities* (4th Ed) Hawthorn, ACER 1964 p.44)

The ANU's share of federal government spending on universities was beneficial to say the least. In 1961-63 the federal government spent £44,797,000 on all the state universities combined and £14,776,000 on the ANU. Therefore in 1961-63, almost 25% of all federal spending on universities went to the ANU.⁷¹ This was despite the fact that in 1966 the ANU was to have only 3% of predicted enrolments at universities nationwide (2,750 out of 94,650).⁷² Obviously the money was to be spent on something other than training students. Capital works were a significant expense but much of the funding was used to increase research output. The ANU in the mid-1960s received by far the lion's share of research grants. In the 1964-66 triennium, the AUC recommended \$3,000,000 to the ANU for research purposes compared with \$6,000,000 for all other universities combined.⁷³ The ANU was, for its size, receiving a vast amount of the federal government's spending on universities. The ANU did very well as a result of its close

⁷¹ *Second Report of the Australian Universities Commission* p.4

⁷² *Second Report of the Australian Universities Commission* p.9

⁷³ Commonwealth of Australia *Third Report of the Australian Universities Commission on Australian Universities 1964-1969*, Canberra, Commonwealth Government Printer 1966 p.68

links with government: 'when all other grants received a slash, Doug, and his A.N.U. were showered with cash.'⁷⁴

From the mid 1950s the government had been consistently increasing its stake in higher education and consequently its ability to influence the universities. The trend towards increased funding of research activities by government placed academics in a dilemma, as the greater the level of funding from government, the greater the potential for government interference. While indirect control in the forms of grants and direct funding from government was perceived as a challenge to their independence, this funding came at a time when universities were finding it more and more difficult to make ends meet. While the funding was welcome, there were disadvantages associated with the acceptance of funding from these sources. The conditions imposed through acceptance of this funding deflected scholars away from problems of theoretical interest and focused them more towards applied research. The funding created a degree of financial dependence on the government, from which it was difficult to extricate the university. The political philosopher Robert McIver, commenting on the situation in the United States, said that 'in proportion as education accepts governmental aid... it must expect an effort to establish political domination'. As a result, from the 1950s 'government determines the direction of a considerable portion of present-day research'.⁷⁵ The nature of the ANU's funding arrangements with the government, and the fact that it was beholden to the government for its very existence, meant that unlike private, or even state universities, it was more susceptible to direct government interference in its activities.

Funding was a central issue in the independence of the Australian National University. Funding and expenditure trends were strong, and showed significant growth. The ANU had advantages over state universities and was allowed a degree of liberty in salaries, but the ANU was not

⁷⁴ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of* p.115

⁷⁵ MacIver, R. *Academic Freedom in our Time*, New York, Columbia University Press 1955 pp.115-117

immune from government influence over its spending patterns and consequently academic independence suffered as a result of government control over funding. Restrictions on funding led the Research School of Pacific Studies to, of necessity, focus a greater proportion of its energies to practical research conducted for the benefit of the government, rather than training postgraduate students.

Funding tensions helped to focus the ANU's activities into alignment with the government research agenda. The ANU was more vulnerable to these pressures than other Australian universities due to the fact that it was a new university and due to its special relationship with the government. These links as well as representing a threat, conversely, when combined with the ANU's practical focus meant that (like the US Cold War universities) the ANU was ultimately able to benefit substantially from the post-war increases in federal funding for universities.

CHAPTER 8: SERVING THE GOVERNMENT

In the United States the Cold War universities devoted a significant proportion of their activities to supporting the government in fighting the Cold War. William Cusack, the Dean of Harvard, said during the Cold War that ‘Harvard is at the heart of the fight against communism’.¹ Graham and Diamond suggest that

Especially in the cold war climate of the early 1950s, federal funds for academic research were heavily weighted towards goals that would further the program of the sponsoring agency rather than toward the basic research agenda determined by individual scientists.²

Kennedy, the former President of Stanford, said that ‘service is an important academic duty in all colleges and universities. In the context of the large, state-supported institution, it embraces a wide range of public obligations.’³ The ANU also seems to have demonstrated a trend towards service in its extensive activities for the government and particularly in the relations between Sir John Crawford and the Department of External Affairs. Although some attempts to create units designed to serve government interests were unsuccessful (for instance the amalgamation of the Australian School of Pacific Administration with the ANU), and demonstrate that there was not slavish obedience to government whims, the ANU developed an entrenched attitude in favour of public utility.

The Research School of Pacific Studies had the potential to be of considerable importance for the federal government in the context of the Cold War. Gregory Clark said that area studies were ‘a hot topic since the Cold War and Sino-Soviet polemics were in full swing. It was a bountiful area for academic researchers, especially those who went along with the hawkish interpretations

¹ Michael McKinley, Interview, Australian National University 6th of June 2006

² Graham and Diamond, *The Rise* p.94

³ Kennedy, *Academic Duty* p.117

of both.’⁴ Direct requests for cross-institutional assistance between government departments and the Research School of Pacific Studies were common and the university wherever possible acceded to these requests. Even when difficulties existed in meeting requests, compromises would be reached to enable the government’s aims to be accommodated. This relationship was mutually beneficial, enabling the university to access grants from national and international organisations with the sponsorship of the federal government.

Supporting federal activities was always intended to form a portion of the ANU’s activities, but not to the extent to interfering with the traditional academic functions of the university. The council attempted to minimize the impact of its obligation to government. The interim council, when designing the RSPacS said that

An important function of the School should be to make available skilled and independent advice to the Australian government, to international conferences, and to international organisations. The staffing of the School should be such as to allow for the performance of such functions without disturbing the general research and teaching program of the School.⁵

The potential advantages and disadvantages of such a course of action were clear — federal funding was understood to require a quid pro quo but to focus purely on such activities could diminish the standing of the university. The interim council’s initial discussions on Pacific Studies noted that

The government... may expect positive utilitarian results from its investment, may expect to suggest or even nominate some of the research projects, and may wish to indicate some order of priority of attack. Looking at some activities that are classified as research in every country, some direction of labour may not be without its advantages; but, at the highest level of research activity, it would, at the least, not be “in the best tradition.”⁶

⁴ Gregory Clark, Email 29th March 2006

⁵ Report on the Committee for the School of Pacific and Asiatic Studies 1st March 1946, ANU: 2001/03, Box 1 Basic Papers 1946-1951

⁶ Pacific Studies in a National University- a practical charter (undated), ANU: 2001/03, Box 1 Basic Papers 1946-1951

Nonetheless, even activities which were not directly requested by government were assumed to have some utilitarian value: ‘... we can neither evade nor avoid the implications of our researches for international relations, for economic policies, for immigration procedures, or for military preparations, to mention only some’.⁷ Despite the reservations of council, service to government became an entrenched tradition at the ANU.

Foster and Varghese argue that the ANU contributed to public affairs by generating research findings of use to the government in developing their policy; by providing informed opinions, ‘sometimes solicited and sometimes not’ and by participating in ‘policy making activities, as members of government boards and inquiries or as policy advisors and consultants. Crawford in particular warmly supported this kind of “public service”’.⁸ Foster and Varghese rightly suggest that Crawford (as Head of RSPacS and Vice Chancellor) was ‘someone who believed that scholars should help understand and overcome the urgent problems confronting the world... As a bonus his close relations with the government promised to serve the University well.’⁹

Crawford not only had close relations with government officials but was also a strong proponent of ways in which the university could serve the government. Despite the interim council’s assurance to Hancock that the university should not accommodate ad hoc requests for assistance from government¹⁰, Crawford sought to assist with government requests wherever possible and was instrumental in developing a utilitarian attitude at the university. The interim council had not been clear on the extent to which requests from government were (or were not) to be entertained. As Brown noted, the lack of university policy on this issue led R.C. Mills, as Chairman of the

⁷ Pacific Studies in a National University- a practical charter (undated), ANU: 2001/03, Box 1 Basic Papers 1946-1951

⁸ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of...* p.274

⁹ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of...* p.129

¹⁰ Described in Chapter 3

interim council, to claim that from its earliest days the university was an ‘institute of government’.¹¹

The Appointment of Sir John Crawford

Given the debates about how to address the issue of ‘national importance’, how was the ANU to serve the government and at the same time maintain its independence? The answer came with the appointment of Sir John Crawford as Director of the Research School of Pacific Studies and later as Vice Chancellor. Peter Edwards, the biographer of the important Australian public servant Arthur Tange, noted that Crawford was one of the ‘seven dwarfs’ who carried a disproportionate amount of influence in the public sector in Canberra from the 1940s and was considered the most ‘intellectually powerful’ of these men.¹² Crawford had been knighted in June 1959 for his work in the Department of Post-War Reconstruction and as Secretary of the Department of Trade.¹³

Figure 10: Sir John Crawford



Sir John Crawford as Director RSPacS with the Executive Director and Deputy Director of the United Nations FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization) World Food Programme (NAA: A1501, A4006/1 8912464 “Photographic negatives, single number series with 'A' [Asian] prefix”)

¹¹ Brown, N. “Aspirations and Constraints in Australian Universities in the 1950s” in Smith and Crichton, *Ideas* p.76

¹² Edwards, P. *Arthur Tange*, Sydney, Allen and Unwin 2006 pp.43 and 99

¹³ Edwards, *Arthur Tange* p.112

Crawford initially had misgivings about moving from the public sector to the university. In 1958 he had refused to accept the position, saying ‘I can make my best contribution to national affairs by remaining for a while longer at least an official in a policy making department of government.’¹⁴ Crawford eventually felt that his public service could extend to shifting the focus of academia into more practical realms. He wrote to Menzies that ‘the company of university men (including students) has always stimulated me, even if the remoteness from the world of some of them rather bothers me.’¹⁵ On his deciding to join the university, an article in *The Nation* acknowledged that Crawford’s public service would continue undiminished by the change in his role:

Crawford’s translation to the ANU would underline that strange university’s function as a kind of independent annexe and powerhouse to the federal public service... A kind of scholar-public servant mandarin class, on old Chinese lines, is developing in Canberra... there seems to have been some resistance in the ANU to the idea of appointing an economist to direct the hitherto aimless and unproductive School of Pacific Studies... with the practical knowledge he has gained in the last nine years, his capacity for work and for making others work, the 49 year old Crawford may have his most valuable years of service to the country ahead of him.¹⁶

At the higher levels of the ANU, there was no objection to bringing in such a devoted public servant. Crawford was gratified to see that he had the ‘unanimous support of the Board of Graduate Studies.’¹⁷ H.C. Coombs was ‘delighted’ to hear that Crawford would accept the position and said that Crawford was ‘an outstanding public servant with considerable qualities of leadership.’¹⁸ However, among the rank and file of the Research School there was a degree of

¹⁴ Crawford to Melville 12th December 1958, NLA: MS 4514 Box 84

¹⁵ Crawford, Note for the Prime Minister’s Information, 4th December 1958, NLA: MS 4514 Box 84

¹⁶ Extract from *The Nation* No 22 July 18th 1959 p5, NLA: MS 4514 Box 84

¹⁷ Crawford to Melville, July 15th 1959, NLA: MS 4514 Box 84

¹⁸ Coombs to Melville, 4th July 1959, NAA: M448/1 260

apprehension.¹⁹ Oskar Spate said that ‘we regarded this import from the public service as an intruder foisted upon us — but after a few drinks at Trevor’s house we were eating out of Jack’s hand’.²⁰

In a letter to the Minister for Trade in August 1960, Crawford expressed his belief that he was moving to ‘a different form of public service’.²¹ His appointment at the university would be a way of continuing to serve the government, and would give him more scope to pursue his personal interests. Crawford said

I have felt for some time that the universities of Australia could do more, through their social science departments, to contribute to an understanding and solution of major problems... including her economic relations with other countries... I will leave [the public service] only because I am attracted by academic work and see in it no less interesting and rewarding scope for service.²²

Crawford said he hoped to ‘prove of some use’ to the government²³ in his new position. He recognized the importance of intellectual development in the Cold War and related his view of academic service to Cold War issues. Before his appointment to the ANU Crawford had written to the Chairman of the Joint Intelligence Committee describing the need for increased studies and information on communist economic policy and the effects of communist actions on Australian trade policy.²⁴ This helped guide his research agenda for the school.

Gregory Clark (although not the most objective of observers) has attempted to explain Crawford’s political position. He says that

¹⁹ Russel Ward said that many ANU academics believed in the ‘surpassing importance of pure research, of disinterested research for its own sake completely divorced from any possibility of practical application of results.’ (Ward, *A Radical Life* p.231)

²⁰ Spate, *The early days at the ANU- an anecdote*, NLA: MS7886 Series 3

²¹ Crawford to McEwen, 5th August 1960, NLA: MS 4514 Box 84

²² Crawford, Press Release 24th July 1959, NLA: MS 4514 Box 84

²³ Crawford to Menzies 21st July 1959, NLA: MS 4514 Box 84

²⁴ Crawford (as Secretary of the Department of Trade) to A.J. Eastman, Chairman of the Joint Intelligence Committee 13th August 1959, NAA: 1838/2 563/6 Part 1

Crawford's position was typical of what I call the Kennedy Liberals — people with some progressive bias but only a superficial knowledge of Asian communist societies... Ironically, it was just these Kennedy Liberals who would be responsible for most of the evil in the West's China and Vietnam policies. Many other ANU progressives shared Crawfordian views...²⁵

Chomsky's definition of a liberal intellectual was one who believed that economic problems at home can be solved rationally and that the 'problems of international society, too, would be subject to intelligent management if it were not for the machinations of the communists.' The liberal intellectual also held 'a firm belief in the fundamental generosity of western policy towards the third world', an idea that Chomsky viewed as an 'illusion',²⁶ but was taken seriously by Crawford who staffed his school with like-minded individuals. Clark, like Chomsky, viewed this mindset as an impediment to a rational view of the errors of Vietnam but Crawford firmly believed that liberal intellectual thought could be a force for good in the world and this drove his desire for academic social utility.

As well as being a strong believer in the ability of universities to improve society, Crawford also knew from personal experience how disruptive and damaging political conflicts could be for university departments. His brother (Max Crawford) was the husband of Ruth Hoban who was the Head of Social Studies at the University of Melbourne during the "Sharp affair", in which Geoffrey Sharp had been accused of communist affiliation and appeared to have suffered discrimination. Max Crawford had been deeply embroiled in the affair, which had public repercussions for the University of Melbourne, had entailed widespread publicity and had deleterious effects on Max Crawford's health.²⁷ Sir John Crawford, therefore, although already inclined towards a close linkage with government, also understood that a cautious approach in

²⁵ Clark, G. "Life Story" www.gregoryclark.net/lifestory/page4/page4.html (Accessed 29th March 2006)

²⁶ "Objectivity and Liberal Scholarship" in Chomsky, *American Power* pp.29-30

²⁷ Anderson, F. *Max Crawford: An Historian's Life* Carlton, Victoria, Melbourne University Press, 2005 pp.329-349

dealing with the sensitive political issues of the time was essential for maintaining both the good will of the government and the cohesion of the university itself.

Crawford and Public Utility

Crawford's belief in the social utility of universities shaped his view of the ANU as an institution. Crawford quoted Sir Robert Garran, a founding father of the ANU, as saying, 'when we speak of a national university it must be understood that there can be no idea of its being in the nature of a government department. The very essence of a university is that it should be independent of outside control... But though not a servant of government, it would be an ally.'²⁸

Crawford believed in academic duty as a corollary to academic freedom. In his view the *quid pro quo* for academic freedom was that universities must efficiently perform three functions:

teaching, research and, especially, meeting societal needs.²⁹ Despite his statements supporting the ANU's independence from the government, Crawford was a wily academic politician. To ensure a strong positive relationship between the government and the ANU he had to maintain the utility of the university to the affairs of state. Crawford believed in the statement in the

Murray Report that

No independent nation in the modern age can maintain a civilised way of life unless it is well served by its universities; and no university can succeed in its double aim of high education and the pursuit of knowledge without the good will and support of the government of the country.³⁰

Crawford believed that when the government created the university it was of the view that the university's research should 'contribute to Australia's development and the solution of its problems'.³¹ Gollan stated that Crawford thought he could

²⁸ Crawford, *University and Government* pp.1-2

²⁹ Crawford, *University and Government* pp.3 and 6

³⁰ Crawford, *University and Government* p.1

³¹ Crawford, *The Australian National University* p.11

contribute to the job of changing Australian society for the better... Crawford agreed that his emphasis had been to direct the school towards a greater concern with research, whose results could be applied to contemporary political and economic problems than had been the case previously...he believed also that his long experience of the working of the Westminster system... helped in getting research results accepted as government policy.³²

Crawford rapidly enhanced the productivity of the school and focussed its output towards societal needs. By 1963, the council was saying that ‘a considerable body of work has now been published... and the experience and expertise of staff has been effectively placed at the disposal of the government.’³³ This signals Crawford’s victory in the debate on utility of research. The school was from this point to be used to assist the government wherever possible, as long as the government — publicly at least — abstained from direct interference with the direction, conduct and outcomes of research. Crawford in his 1970 annual report expressed his belief that the university had been contributing very well to public life in Australia and was making valuable contributions to the policy process.

The emphasis I have placed in this report on the internal affairs of the University might give the impression of an undue, and even selfish, concentration on our own private concerns. The University recognises on the one hand its major obligations to teaching and research. On the other hand however, it accepts the responsibility for assisting in public affairs where its members have the relevant knowledge and experience. I believe the ANU staff has contributed significantly to the work of ministers and departments in Australia [and overseas]. The volume of calls on the University for assistance reflects a growing awareness of the valuable contribution university members can, and are ready to, make in the area of public policy...³⁴

Crawford was proud that under his leadership the university had become an invaluable resource for the government. The disparaging comments he makes about the ‘selfish concentration on our own private concerns’ and ‘obligations to teaching and research’ reveal his antipathy towards theoretical research and his concurrent emphasis on applied research of use to the government.

³² Gollan, notes on discussion with Crawford 21st July 1983, NLA: MS 9372 Box 10

³³ *Australian National University: Report of the Council for 1963* p.55

³⁴ *ANU Report of the Council for 1970* p.9

He plainly believed that there was no conflict between applied research and academic independence and stressed the point that this kind of applied research was not only something that universities could do, but also something they should do, saying: ‘I make no apology for believing that this kind of “public service” is something universities can and do properly offer as one response to liberal public support of their work.’³⁵

This perception of the school’s function has continued unabated. In the early 1980s the outgoing Vice Chancellor (D.A. Low) said that: ‘Here at the ANU not many weeks pass without my being asked by a Minister for the expert services of one of our number on an issue of public importance.’³⁶ The 1990 review of the Institute of Advance Studies stated that the university relates its goals ‘to the priorities of government and industry when formulating its research agendas, thereby pursuing what is often termed, in Australia, “strategic research”’. This research combined the search for ‘fundamental understanding with a concern for specific use.’ It was said that it should be viewed as extending scientific understanding *and* meeting societal needs and that ‘the responsiveness of the institute to the country’s needs is especially clear in aspects of the work of the Research School of Social Sciences and the Research School of Pacific Studies.’³⁷ It was the actions and influence of Crawford that ensured that this delicate balance between independence and utility was perpetuated.

Crawford was a masterful academic politician. He saw the advantages of supporting the government line for attracting funding to the school and the university. An attitude favouring public utility was encouraged under his watch, but independence was still important. Crawford’s activities — while seeming to encourage a pro-government stance — were aimed at enhancing

³⁵ Crawford, *The Australian National University* pp.18-19

³⁶ Low, D. *Final Report to the University*, Canberra, ANU 1982 p.4

³⁷ “*Report of the Committee to Review the Institute of Advanced Studies of the Australian National University November 1990*” p.19

the university's prestige and encouraging both utility to the government and to society more generally.

Policy on Outside Activities

Crawford, in his negotiations with Melville prior to his appointment, specifically mentioned that he should have 'freedom to undertake special work for the Commonwealth Government'.³⁸ In the face of such pronouncements Melville felt compelled to warn Crawford of his obligation to preserve the independence of the university in his new role. Melville advised Crawford that

one of the earliest pieces of advice of the University Academic Advisory Committee was that the staff should be sheltered from demands that they serve on government committees or do ad hoc pieces of work for the government... As Director you would find the need to control outside activities by the staff of your school and this might mean a somewhat self denying limitation of your own activities.

However Melville immediately followed up with a contradictory statement that demonstrated the confusion existing in the ANU with regards to its role. Melville said

There is a growing demand on the University for this sort of help and the attitude to it is largely framed by the directors and deans themselves... we are inclined to press people to get on with the job within the University, but inevitably accept some proposals that have national importance on the one hand or are of value to the university on the other.³⁹

Crawford was receiving mixed messages. On the one hand he was being told that he must limit his service to the government if he took up his position at the ANU, on the other he was being told that the policy, in practice, was that the university's response to requests from the government was formed by the directors of the schools. Crawford was being told that while the university in principle frowned on external activities, whether or not the RSPacS could respond to such requests would be up to Crawford as Director, on the basis of the consideration of national importance.

³⁸ NLA: MS 4514 Box 84, Crawford to Melville 20th July 1959

³⁹ NLA: MS 4514 Box 84, Melville to Crawford 10th June 1959

Only minor restrictions existed on outside activities of academics and these were not strictly enforced. Crawford sought to reduce or circumvent the barriers to academics working for government departments. Even before Crawford's arrival at the ANU, RSPacS academics were performing activities that would serve Commonwealth interests. J.W. Davidson was heavily involved in designing the constitutions of South Pacific nations from the late 1950s. Doug Munro from the Victoria University of Wellington says that before taking up his appointment Davidson had stressed 'his dual loyalties as an academic and a man of affairs' with Copland. Copland supported Davidson's interest in contemporary affairs and saw advantages in Davidson's external associations, and as Munro says, 'the ambience of the early ANU was conducive to academics who combined scholarship with outside activities.'⁴⁰

Once Melville had taken over as Vice Chancellor a greater focus on accounting entered the university. Davidson's continued absences from the university led to Melville questioning and eventually opposing Davidson's applications for leave for his activities in the Pacific. Davidson knew that Melville would not, despite his opposition, actually deny these activities to him because it would reflect poorly on the university. Davidson's absences continued and increased as the university was unwilling to compromise its growing reputation for practical activities. In 1959-1961 Davidson was absent from the university for a total of 63 weeks.⁴¹

John Crawford then entered the debate. He was, as Munro notes, 'a man of considerable political finesse'. Agreeing with Melville that Davidson was spending excessive time in Samoa, Crawford proposed that the Samoans share the cost of Davidson's absences to the university. To Crawford, the central question was to balance outside activities 'and so advance the school's

⁴⁰ Munro, D. "J.W. Davidson and Western Samoa - University politics and the travails of a constitutional adviser" *The Journal of Pacific History* Vol 35 No 2 (2000) pp.195-211

⁴¹ Munro, "J.W. Davidson" pp.195-211

prestige without making a reasonable output of scholarly work impracticable.’ After Melville’s departure and Sir Leonard Huxley’s appointment, Huxley was ‘appalled’ by the amount of time Davidson was spending away from the university, and insisted Crawford take a ‘firm line’. However, Crawford ‘valued the sorts of outside activities in which Davidson was engaged’ and favoured ‘university/real life interaction’. As Director of the RSPacS and as Vice Chancellor Crawford ‘insisted on sole discretion over the extent of his outside activities’. Crawford ignored Huxley’s directive and the ANU thereby failed to devise a formal policy on outside activities.⁴² Crawford, the practical academician, wanted this aspect of the ANU’s public life to remain poorly defined in order to provide more scope for outside activities by ANU staff. Crawford plainly saw limiting academic’s activities as a needless restriction on the benefits academics could provide to society. Crawford argued that

To-day there is an increasing clamour for more direct application by universities to the problems of society: the indirect approach through teaching and research is not enough, important as this is... What I am suggesting is that... besides making an indirect impact through teaching and research they also contribute directly to decision-making in government, industry and to the cultural life of the community at large.⁴³

Prior to Crawford’s arrival the Board of Graduate Studies had discussed outside work. Geoffrey Sawyer argued that there should be no rules, ‘leave it to contract and common sense of individuals’. The Vice-Chancellor, however, argued that this could land the university in trouble and that having defined rules on outside work would be useful for public relations.⁴⁴ Crawford’s machinations ensured that the ANU would limit restrictions on outside activities. By 1965 Crawford’s focus on utilitarian research outside the university had begun to create tension. As Partridge said to Coombs,

...More serious is the fact that Jack Crawford for 12 months now has been getting more deeply preoccupied with non-university affairs, and gives less and less of his time to the university: there is no prospect that this

⁴² Munro, “J.W. Davidson” pp.195-211

⁴³ Sir John Crawford’s Buntine Oration *University Accountability* Draft, ANU: 2000/16 Box 2 item 9 folios 117-147

⁴⁴ Board of Graduate Studies Meeting 24th May 1957, ANU: 2001/09 Box 1

will change within the next year or two. His school now enjoys an alternation of acting-directors, holding office for a month or two at a time.⁴⁵

According to Foster and Varghese, 'The ANU had no formal policy on staff participation in public affairs, except to ensure that the amount of outside earnings and the time spent on outside activities did not in particular cases get out of hand.'⁴⁶ However, Hohnen had observed that the ANU conditions of appointment of professors specified in relation to outside work that a staff member could not sit in parliament or conduct work which was not 'consistent with a full time role at the university' without the approval of the Vice Chancellor. Outside work was defined as work in which payment was received other than from the university and was not related to the staff member's (or any other member of the university's) research.⁴⁷ This provided a loophole by which academics could engage in outside work so long as it remained within their field of expertise and could be said to be furthering their research activities. In practice it meant that virtually all outside consultancy work was approved and as a result the ANU's public role was enhanced. Furthermore, much of the work done for government was done as an integrated activity within the university itself.

Activities for Government — the growing trend

From early in the history of the ANU senior academics had sought to act directly in the interests of the government, in spite of objections from the council. These activities are an important parallel with the American Cold War universities. Foster and Varghese note that Ernest Titterton's 'overzealous support for the government' produced difficulties for the university. His involvement in atomic tests at the request of the British and Australian governments meant he

⁴⁵ Partridge to Coombs February 15th 1965, ANU: 2002/08

⁴⁶ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of...* p.274

⁴⁷ Hohnen to Crawford 20th March 1958, NLA: MS 4514 Box 84

was at the 'centre of government policy making relating to atomic energy'. As the number of requests increased the ANU council worried that these activities would impact on Titterton's productivity. Oliphant opposed Menzies' proposal that Titterton be appointed to the National Radiation Advisory Committee on the grounds the university would suffer as a result. Titterton, though, argued that his outside activities had produced major benefits for the university which included a gift of an electron synchrotron and that they had promoted the continued goodwill of the federal government. As a result he received his appointment to the committee and continued to serve as a key adviser.⁴⁸

The ANU granted the government requests to grant Titterton leave for the atomic tests, but only under protest. Council noted that

...increasingly frequent requests of this kind for the services of members of one institution would have the effect not only of restricting the experience to be gained to a very small number of individuals, but also of hampering the scientific research work of the institution concerned.⁴⁹

This protest did not diminish another benefit for the university — the receipt of kudos that demonstrated the importance of the ANU in the practical application of intellectual force for Cold War activities. Council acknowledged the receipt of this kudos: 'The Vice Chancellor received a copy of a letter from Sir William Penny to General Stevens thanking him for Australian assistance in the recent tests at Woomera and paying particular tribute to the scientific assistance of Professor Titterton.'⁵⁰ Funding for ANU capital development was also linked with Cold War imperatives. The ANU homopolar generator was regarded by W.C. Wentworth as important for the 'free world's race against Soviet nuclear science.'⁵¹ Plainly members of the ANU community would have disagreed with the Lowenthal's assertion that

⁴⁸ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of* p.274

⁴⁹ Council Meeting Minutes 14th August 1953, ANU: 2005/8 Box 3

⁵⁰ ANU Council Meeting Minutes 18th December 1953, ANU: 2005/8 Box 3

⁵¹ Rowse, *Nugget Coombs* pp.257-259

a university must be free, and should be determined, to reject projects for “secret” research... however legitimate such a project may be in the particular case, its secrecy is incompatible with the unity of research and teaching and with the principle of public verification of methods and results. Hence it should find its place in other institutions than universities.⁵²

As well as providing advice when requested, the university acted as an extension of the official training schools for the public sector. ANU graduate programs were designed to meet the continuing education needs of public servants.⁵³ The ANU council reported that the university had a close relationship with the public sector in Canberra, due to the fact that they actively encouraged public servants who did not have a tertiary degree to study at the ANU. In 1971 Part-time students made up 44% of the ANU’s undergraduate enrolments and 83% of these came from within 25 miles of the university, a strong indication that public sector employees formed a considerable component of the undergraduate body of the university.⁵⁴

For graduates of the ANU with a Bachelors degree by far the largest single employer was the Commonwealth public sector. 28% of the ANU’s 1969 graduates were employed by the public sector within 12 months.⁵⁵ Foster and Varghese have noted that ‘ANU graduates were fortunate in having the nation’s largest employer of graduates on the University’s doorstep.’⁵⁶ The government did not just receive undergraduates and postgraduates from the university, many ANU academics also moved back and forth between academic and government appointments. Crawford encouraged this, saying

The tendency of many public servants to try to work solely with [government] departmental resources shunning contagious contact with academics was harmful to good government... [this avoidance was]

⁵² Lowenthal, R. “The University’s Autonomy versus Social Priorities” in Seabury, *Universities* p.79

⁵³ Crawford, *University and Government* p.14

⁵⁴ *ANU Report of the Council for 1971* p.7

⁵⁵ Rawling, S. J. *Destinations of Graduates of the Australian National University*, Canberra, ANU 1969 p.1

⁵⁶ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of* p.226

unnecessary and unwise... greater interchange and contact could be achieved by increased movement of academics in and out of the public service.⁵⁷

As well as providing trained staff to the public sector, ANU centres and departments also undertook a significant amount of work for the public sector, conducted as a separate activity from their teaching and research. Michael McKinley has noted that it is unusual for a university to devote such a significant amount of their resources to accommodating government requirements. Theoretical research appears in McKinley's eyes to have been largely subverted at the ANU in favour of research of direct practical use to the government.⁵⁸

Government directed research did not extend to defining research outcomes. T.H. Rigby commented that there was no pressure to look at specific areas and though he would receive calls from former students at the Office of National Assessments to seek his understanding of events in Russia, he could not recall any instances of improper pressure being applied to study particular areas or make results conform to expectations. He described the relationship as 'comfortable': 'We were not put under pressure to do something that would be uncomfortable for our conscience.'⁵⁹ This was important in maintaining the university's sense of self-worth. Academic institutions are judged on the quality of their research and teaching. If an institution blindly supports policy and acts as a mouthpiece for the government, then their reputation as an independent and valuable source of information will suffer.⁶⁰ However, it has been suggested that certain people at the ANU are willing to publicly provide tacit support for policy. Michael McKinley suggested that when the government wants things blessed independently, they float

⁵⁷ Clipping from the Canberra Times 25th November 1969, ANU: 2001/16 Box 5 6.2.1.10 Part 2

⁵⁸ McKinley, "Discovering the 'Idiot Centre'"

⁵⁹ Professor Rigby, Interview, Griffith ACT 8th June 2006

⁶⁰ Robin Jeffrey, Interview, Australian National University 7th June 2006

their ideas past a select group of ANU people.⁶¹ This does suggest the existence of a pro-government orientation, at least on the part of some academics.

The ANU was unusual in the extent of its focus on research. The core focus of the ANU on research, as opposed to teaching, is demonstrated by table 3. This table shows that the percentage of full-time staff involved in research only activities (as opposed to teaching) was significantly higher at the ANU than at other Australian universities, demonstrating the practical, utilitarian focus of their activities.

Table 3: Staff Engaged in Teaching and Research 1963

NOTE:
This table is included on page 244
of the print copy of the thesis held in
the University of Adelaide Library.

(Source: Adapted from; Australian Council for Education Research *A Brief Guide to Australian Universities* (4th Ed) Hawthorn , ACER 1964 p.50)

Between 1973 and 1975 under Vice Chancellor R.M. Williams there was an attempt to re-emphasise the more basic and theoretical roles of the university but the precedent created by Crawford, combined with the emphasis of the Whitlam government on regional affairs, made it inevitable that the ANU would be regularly called upon to provide advice. Council emphasised the range of activities for government in its annual report for 1973.

Because of its location in Canberra and also its emphasis on “subjects of national importance to Australia” as prescribed in the Act, the ANU was inevitably faced with a mounting volume of requests for assistance

⁶¹ Michael McKinley, Interview, Australian National University 6th of June 2006

from Government agencies and other bodies... it is not practicable to attempt an exhaustive account of [activity with government] which range over... the Institute of Advanced Studies.⁶²

The attempt to re-focus on theoretical matters was bound to be futile in the political climate that prevailed in the early 1970s. Extensive cross-institutional work continued at the ANU, particularly from the Research School of Pacific Studies. The 1974 annual report of the school listed some of the key contributions of its staff:

The School's contribution in the public realm included Dr T.B. Millar's chairmanship of the Committee on the Citizen Military Forces; Dr R.J. O'Neill's membership of the panel restructuring the Joint Service Staff College; Professor J.D. Freeman's two reports to the Aboriginal Housing Panel... Mr D.M. Bensusan-Butt's membership of the Australian Taxation Review Committee; the Director's membership of the PNG Committee on University Development; the completion of a five volume survey... of the economic circumstances of Torres Strait Islanders and Dr R.G. Garnault's participation in the PNG team renegotiating the Bougainville Copper Agreement, for which the school received especial thanks from the Secretary of the PNG Department of Finance and the Chief Planning Officer.⁶³

Though extensive work was conducted for government, opinions about the impact of the ANU on policy development (in both formal and informal activities) are varied. Robin Jeffrey noted that Canberra is essentially a big country town where everybody knows everybody else. The ANU's influence on policy therefore comes less through formal contacts and arrangements but rather through informal, personal contacts.⁶⁴ Asked whether the ANU had contributed to government policy or helped government activities, J.D.B. Miller said 'in so many ways, depending on the field of knowledge. In my case, ie, that of my department, it would be mainly through conversation with officials, with no subsequent knowledge of whether there had been an impact.'⁶⁵ T.H. Rigby said that there were no formal arrangements with the government by

⁶² *ANU Report of the Council for 1973* pp.30-31

⁶³ *ANU Report of the Council for 1974* p.13

⁶⁴ Robin Jeffrey, Interview, Australian National University 7th June 2006

⁶⁵ J.D.B. Miller, letter to the author 28th November 2006

which the ANU would help to create policy, but noted that Foreign Affairs would call him to seek his opinion on events in the Soviet Union. These people would take the advice and then advise their ministers accordingly. It was an informal arrangement between officials and those in the university that they were comfortable talking to.⁶⁶ The ANU devoted a significant amount of its energies to practical utilitarian work for government, but the ANU's main advisory capacity seems to have been conducted through informal connections with policy makers — a link which leaves little documentary trace.

The Strategic and Defence Studies Centre — a Crawfordian Institution

In 1966 the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre was created as an independent body for the analysis of strategic and military issues in the Pacific and Indian Oceans. It came to be seen as closely aligned with the Australian and allied defence establishments. Foster and Varghese described the creation of the centre in the following terms:

The Strategic and Defence Studies Centre (SDSC)... was controversial from the start. Its purpose was to coordinate and conduct research on strategic problems and other security questions... and to provide facilities for strategic analysis outside the confines of government departments... The centre declared at the outset that it would not sponsor any particular policies or promote a particular viewpoint. It nevertheless attracted strong criticism, partly because its progenitors... were perceived as supporters of the political right... Opponents also suggested that the Centre was wrong in principle [and inclined towards a 'hawkish' posture]... that they collaborated with the establishment instead of using their knowledge to argue on matters of conscience. During the student protests of 1970, the centre took the precaution of restricting the numbers who could attend seminars, and so encouraged the view that staff were closing their doors to those who did not share their political outlook.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ Professor Rigby, Interview, Griffith ACT 8th June 2006

⁶⁷ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of...* pp.275-276

The SDSC was certainly controversial. The appointment of right-wing academics to the leadership positions of the centre and restricting entry to conferences led to the impression that the centre was nothing more than a military think-tank, designed solely to support the government. Michael McKinley said that there were ‘secret seminars’ at SDSC during the late 1960s and that the SDSC charter had a clause prescribing close relations with the government and that work would be conducted which would benefit policy.⁶⁸ Seminars at the SDSC regularly included members of government bodies and the defence establishment.⁶⁹

The SDSC was host to a major seminar in September 1967 to discuss the implications for Australia of Britain’s withdrawal from Asia. The people in attendance at this seminar demonstrate the breadth of the SDSC’s links with government officials and the importance the centre had achieved as early as 1967 as a source of informed discussion on defence policy. T.B. Millar noted this seminar

was attended by members of the faculty of five Australian universities, officials of the Prime Minister’s Department, the Department of Defence, and the Department of Territories, officers of the three Service Departments, representatives of the British, Canadian, Malaysian, Singapore and New Zealand High Commissions and the United States Embassy, Representatives of the Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee... and some members of the press.⁷⁰

By 1968 the SDSC was already being publicly recognized as a major contributor to the field of strategic studies and as useful resource for government. The council’s annual report proudly stated that ‘its value may be judged by the appreciative reference of Mr L. H. Barnard, M.P. Deputy Leader of the Opposition to “the devoted work of a handful of university people” at the Australian National University.’⁷¹

⁶⁸ Michael McKinley, Interview, Australian National University 6th of June 2006

⁶⁹ Gungwu *1975 Annual Report...* p.28

⁷⁰ Millar, T.B. “The Substance of British Defence Policy Changes” in Millar, T.B. et al *Britain’s Withdrawal from Asia, its implications for Australia*, Canberra, Strategic and Defence Studies Centre ANU 1967 pp.4-5

⁷¹ The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia *The Report of the Council of the ANU for 1968* Canberra, Commonwealth Government Printing Office 1970 pp.92-93

The SDSC was set up by T.B. Millar in 1966.⁷² Millar was a particularly controversial appointment. Left-wing opponents of the centre claimed that ‘Millar holds strong public political views... At the first military “teach in” on Vietnam at the ANU in 1965, he supported Australian intervention’.⁷³ Robert O’Neill says that Millar’s conservative views made him ‘a particular target’ for protest.⁷⁴ It was galling to left-wing observers that the majority of the funding for the creation of the centre came from the Ford Foundation. In 1968 and 1969 John Playford, a political scientist at Monash University, wrote critical articles about the centre in *Australian Left Review* and *Broadside*. These articles stressed that ‘the source of the Centre’s funds could link it too closely to the general aims of US foreign policy’ and further claimed that ‘the gap between Russell Hill and Acton rapidly closed in the second half of 1966 with the establishment of the SDSC’.⁷⁵ Crawford felt compelled to answer the accusations and wrote to the editor of *Broadside* that the Ford Foundation grants carried ‘no strings’ attached whatsoever.⁷⁶

Threats to university autonomy do not just come from the government but also from groups of people with radical agendas. Kennedy observed that the left-wing potentially produced as great a threat to academic freedom as the government.

[people] have attempted to apply their own moral criteria to the work itself, to its purpose or prospective end-use, or to the source of its funding. During the late 1960s and the 1970s... groups of faculty and students raised moral objections to the sponsorship or the possible applications of scholarly work, demanding that administrators or faculty committees eliminate projects sponsored by the Department of Defence that were alleged to have military value...[If] a faculty member wishes to do it, the university should permit it. Otherwise, the institution would be placed in the position of reaching moral judgments on

⁷² Ball, D. “Robert O’Neill: a strategic career” *Australian Journal of International Affairs* Vol 60 No 1 (March 2006) pp.7-11

⁷³ Clipping from *Broadside* 6th March 1969 and *Australian Left Review* December 1968, NLA: MS 8605 Series 3

⁷⁴ Robert O’Neill, Telephone Interview, 1st May 2006

⁷⁵ Clippings from *The Age* 4th August 1966, *Broadside* 6th March 1969 and *Australian Left Review* December 1968, NLA: MS 8605 Series 3. Russell Hill is the Headquarters of the Australian Defence Department. Acton is where the ANU is located.

⁷⁶ Clipping from *Broadside*, April 17th 1969 (p34), NLA: MS 8605 Series 3

the possible end-uses of all sorts of products... support for the principle of academic freedom has kept university decision-makers off that slippery slope.⁷⁷

Academic freedom is not only the purview of the ‘left’ or ‘radicals’, but can work in favour of pro-government activities when they are threatened by voices of dissent in the community. It is important that those who seek to support the government, as well as those who seek to oppose it, retain their academic freedom.

The second head of the centre was Robert O’Neill. Like Millar he was a former Australian Army officer, serving in Vietnam in 1966-67.⁷⁸ Desmond Ball, a later head of the centre, said that O’Neill’s role required

navigating the complex shoals at the confluence of the academic and policy worlds. He needed to be internationally recognised for his scholarship, but he also needed to demonstrate extraordinary project management and fund-raising propensities, to have a dedication to institution-building and a steadfast commitment to the strategic studies profession, and ultimately to be comfortable in the corridors of power to which he enjoyed access in many places around the world.⁷⁹

As there were ‘scurrilous complaints’ about the centre in the media at the time of its creation, O’Neill aimed to see that there were no foundations for criticism. His aim was that the centre would remain balanced and objective and thereby sustain its credibility and its resource base.⁸⁰

In any case, according to Robert O’Neill, Playford and others of the far left were ‘barking up the wrong tree’ and were too extreme in their views.⁸¹ He emphasised that one reason why these critics were incorrect was that the centre, at least at the time they were writing, received no assistance from the Defence Department in terms of funding.⁸² The way that the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre was funded therefore did not compromise their academic independence.

⁷⁷ Kennedy, *Academic Duty* pp.179-180

⁷⁸ Ball, “Robert O’Neill” pp.7-11 see also O’Neill, R. *Vietnam Task* Melbourne, Cassell Australia 1968

⁷⁹ Ball, “Robert O’Neill” pp.7-11

⁸⁰ Robert O’Neill, Telephone Interview, 1st May 2006

⁸¹ Robert O’Neill, Telephone Interview, 1st May 2006

⁸² Robert O’Neill, Telephone Interview, 1st May 2006

O'Neill said that while the Vietnam War was continuing it was unthinkable to get money from the government which had led Australia into the conflict. The ANU would not accept money from the government for defence studies until the Labor Party, with a different approach to the conflict, was in office.⁸³ After this point it was deemed more appropriate to seek governmental assistance. Later, Whitlam's Defence Minister agreed to provide for two government funded places when the ANU asked for support.⁸⁴ This separation was deliberate. The 1966 Annual Report of Council had emphasised that the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre 'will work in entire independence of government and service policy'.⁸⁵

The distancing of the centre from direct government funding was noted at the time of its creation.

An article in *The Age* in August 1966 had commented that

the centre will not receive direct government aid, nor will it work on projects commissioned by any member of federal government... however, academics hope to receive cooperation from the relevant government departments though it is reported the defence department itself is hostile to the project... it is hoped the centre will stimulate ideas outside the government machine.⁸⁶

Crawford replied to the article the following day:

In your report... it is stated that the Defence Department is understood to be hostile to the project. May I say that I have no such understanding... The aim of the centre we have established is not to become part of, or closely linked with, the defence establishment, but to stand on its own feet and to prove, by its output, that a university in Australia can usefully undertake and sponsor studies of national security problems which will have the interest and respect of professionals both in the university and in the government.⁸⁷

⁸³ Robert O'Neill, Telephone Interview, 1st May 2006

⁸⁴ Robert O'Neill, Telephone Interview, 1st May 2006

⁸⁵ *Australian National University: Report of the Council for 1966* p.73

⁸⁶ Clipping from *The Age* 4th August 1966, NAA: A5954/69 1201/15- Institute of Strategic Studies *The Age* 4/8/1966 and response from Crawford

⁸⁷ Crawford, to the Editor of *The Age* 5th August 1966, NAA: A5954/69 1201/15

Notwithstanding the lack of initial government funding, controversy over the close links between Defence and the SDSC has continued over the years. More recently, Michael McKinley has been particularly scathing in his criticism of the centre. He writes

...they refer to the “remarkable influence on national security policy” exerted by the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre in particular. Indeed, SDSC is the example, par excellence, of the acquisition of money, power and status by a university centre — of the locus of training in which the instructors speak with what de Tocqueville discerned were “the accents of authority”... SDSC is not unlike the US think tanks in that there is a considerable degree of interchange between its staff and the official security bureaucracy... SDSC cannot be regarded as a university operation under any sensible definition of that term. In the field of regional security policy, for example, it not only has been at the “forefront of new policy issues” but has also been responsible for their implementation by way of so-called “second track” diplomacy whereby SDSC is responsible for conducting discussions with high-level officials of foreign governments.⁸⁸

Robert O’Neill stressed that the government was not involved in setting the research agenda for the centre. While government representatives were invited to seminars, the setting of the research agenda was in the hands of the university. What tended to happen was cooperation and an exchange of views at a mid- to high-level. These views did not necessarily see eye to eye and there were generally amicable debates that could go either way. He commented that the relationship between government and the ANU was closer than with state universities due to the level of funding received from the government by the ANU, the geographical proximity to the seat of government and the fact that the university was approached by people from the government for advice on policy issues — the university provided background advice for the government in many sectors. The Opposition also sought the centre’s advice. Bill Hayden, for example, as Opposition Defence Spokesman spent a lot of time at the ANU asking questions and seeking advice. Malcolm Fraser, when out of office, asked for opinions. O’Neill said these discussions did not result in any change in policy, but that the politicians knew a bit more about

⁸⁸ McKinley, “Discovering the ‘Idiot Centre’”

the issues as a result. The degree to which politicians sought help from the university varied according to their interests and capacity to engage in dialogue.⁸⁹

While the centre was attacked by left-wing protesters in the 1960s and early 1970s, in 1975-76 the direction of the criticism changed as government started to critique the controversial findings emanating from the centre. This demonstrates the independence and objectivity of the centre. It was seen as impertinent for the centre to criticise government policy. Defence did not value the centre for its objectivity and independence but rather viewed it as a government funded institution to be directed as they wished. Nevertheless the university managed to hold its own in these disputes.⁹⁰

The SDSC *was* independent and able to present opinions contrary to those wanted by government officials, even when significant funding was obtained from that source. Robert O'Neill described a conflict between Desmond Ball and Defence as an example of how the centre was able to maintain its independence. O'Neill said the Defence Department did not welcome Ball's investigation into how Pine Gap fitted into US nuclear plans and O'Neill was called in to explain, and defend Ball's work. As Defence was funding the post Ball held at the university they felt they could object to Ball's findings. O'Neill successfully defended Ball's right to come to his own conclusions.⁹¹ As Ball explains:

I saw Bob display not only superb diplomatic skills but also an immense personal integrity and a commitment to academic values. Some of the Centre's work was intensely controversial... Some senior defence and intelligence officials regarded my own work on US installations in Australia, such as Pine Gap, with great suspicion.... Sir Arthur Tange complained that I was dangerous and irresponsible, opening up matters which "successive American and Australian governments have deemed it a national interest" to keep secret. He was especially upset since my post was then funded by the Department of Defence. Bob defended the right of

⁸⁹ Robert O'Neill, Telephone Interview, 1st May 2006

⁹⁰ Robert O'Neill, Telephone Interview, 1st May 2006

⁹¹ Robert O'Neill, Telephone Interview, 1st May 2006

academics to pursue unfettered research. [Only later] did I fully appreciate the extent of his discourse and solidity of his refusal to countenance any hint of infringement on the principle of academic independence.⁹²

The SDSC was an independent and autonomous institution, able to present unfavourable views when this was warranted by the evidence. This in itself meant that it was useful to government as the SDSC's personnel were not bound by the need to conform to policy or party line, which enabled analyses of strategic issues in an impartial manner. While relevant in its activities, the SDSC maintained both independence and utility to government. It was the classic example of a Crawfordian academic institution.

Cold War Patronage — links with External Affairs

Crawford's role as Head of the RSPacS included both leadership and administrative functions. Heads of schools must provide a long-term 'vision' for their departments and enable those within the departments to function according to this vision. They must manage the operations of their school on a day-to-day basis and they have a crucial role in the selection and maintenance of staff. Departmental staffing often reflects the head's vision of how a department should 'look'.⁹³ Crawford's desire for close links with government therefore was significant in shaping the outlook, composition and function of the school. The links that developed with the Department of External Affairs under his leadership show the practical nature of the ANU's assistance to the government during the Cold War.

There were strong links between the heads of ANU departments and the departments of government. J.D.B. Miller said that as a Departmental Head 'I had nothing to do with the

⁹² Ball, "Robert O'Neill" pp.7-11

⁹³ Wolverson, M. et al "A Comparison of Department Chair Tasks in Australia and the United States" *Higher Education* Vol 38 (1999) pp.333-350

relationship at the top level of finance and educational policy. At the personal level, I had good relations with senior officials in Defence, External Affairs, Immigration, Prime Minister's etc. Canberra in the 1960s was a smaller place than now.'⁹⁴ These close relationships proved beneficial. The government in the US and Australia, having used the "stick" of attacks on communists in the 1950s, moved by the end of the decade towards providing a much nicer "carrot" to ensure relevant and useful research emanated from the universities. Kennedy noted how this situation operated in the United States when he said that 'Federal agencies... attempt to move researchers toward their own goals by supporting particular lines of work... [encouraging] some adaptation [by academics] to the requirements of funding sources.'⁹⁵ The relationship between the government and the RSPacS matured in a similar way in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

The ANU's Cold War links with External Affairs contained a number of elements. Training in Asian languages and culture formed an important part of the Australian Cold War effort and the ANU played a part in providing this training. Cabinet emphasised the importance of language training for the Cold War effort, Paul Hasluck noting that special grants had been made for the teaching of Asian languages in universities.⁹⁶ In 1965 the University of Western Australia requested funding from External Affairs to create an Asian studies faculty. The letter stated bluntly 'perhaps I should make it clear that we are in no way endeavouring to compete with the Australian National University.'⁹⁷ External Affairs officials noted that 'it is correct to say... that the Department of External Affairs was active in encouraging the universities to undertake Asian studies.'⁹⁸ However, as the ANU had 'a flourishing School of Oriental Studies' and the funds for this were 'almost entirely provided by the government', this was believed to be sufficient

⁹⁴ J.D.B. Miller, letter to the author 28th November 2006

⁹⁵ Kennedy, *Academic Duty* pp.181-182

⁹⁶ Hasluck to Gorton 31st March 1964, NAA: A1838/2 563/6/1

⁹⁷ R. Bernt (University of Western Australia) to Hasluck 10th February 1965, NAA: A1838/2 563/6/1

⁹⁸ Memo Patrick Shaw (acting Secretary) to Minister for External Affairs 29th March 1965, NAA: A1838/2 563/6/1

commitment by the government to Asian language teaching.⁹⁹ External Affairs believed that Canberra was the best place for expanding studies on the Asian region as advanced studies could be undertaken at the RSPacS.¹⁰⁰ The department advocated improvement of the teaching of Asian history, culture, literature and philosophy. This was to be done by ‘pooling the resources of the Canberra University College, the Australian National University and possibly part of the National Library.’¹⁰¹

A more informal relationship between the departments of the government and the RSPacS developed in the early 1960s. After a meeting between ANU academics and members of the External Affairs Department, the Head of the Information Branch of External Affairs (Mr H. Gilchrist) wrote that there was an interest in liaisons with academic groups. These were to inject fresh thinking into the bureaucracy. Gilchrist opposed the idea of formal relationships with academic bodies but he advocated the pursuit of an informal relationship as, ‘discussions with *known* men of known integrity (and prudence) is a different matter.’¹⁰² Tange, who was Secretary of External Affairs, before moving to Defence in 1970, noted that these relationships ‘could be of value to the government in the development of Australian official policies’.¹⁰³

Assistance to the department became a priority for the school. External Affairs wanted a paper produced rapidly (‘a matter of a few weeks’), and while Crawford did not commit the school immediately, he promised to ‘review the situation with Sir Arthur Tange at an early date’.¹⁰⁴

Davidson told Crawford:

⁹⁹ Gorton to Hasluck 26th August 1965, NAA: A1838/2 563/6/1

¹⁰⁰ Memo to Secretary Department of External Affairs 6th June 1958, NAA: A1838/2 563/6/1

¹⁰¹ Keith Brennan (Pacific and Americas Branch) to Secretary External Affairs 28th May 1958, NAA: A1838/2 563/6/1

¹⁰² Gilchrist, External Affairs memo 31st May 1961, NAA: A1838/300 556/2/30

¹⁰³ Tange to Crawford 18th September 1962, NAA: 1838/1 277/1/9

¹⁰⁴ Crawford, memo to Davidson 22nd June 1962, ANU Archives: Prof JW Davidson papers 2001/39 box 1 External Affairs 1962

I should like to see us take up Sir Arthur Tange's request if we can; and I think that it ought to be possible for us to do so... As I was talking with Tange today I asked him whether he would be able to second one of his own people for six months or more if you should ask for it... he was sympathetic to the idea and said he would be ready to consider if he had anyone suitable for the job.¹⁰⁵

External Affairs wanted to encourage the university to conduct research on political, economic and social aspects of the South Pacific. Crawford, in a letter to Tange, raised the possibility of External Affairs helping to get a grant from the Ford Foundation for the project¹⁰⁶, and External Affairs enthusiastically agreed:

if Sir John [Crawford] were disposed to arrange for those studies to be made by a research fellow or fellows to be added to his staff and financed by, say, one of the Foundations we think this would be an excellent project. We think also that if it would assist the ANU to make this arrangement and we were satisfied with the proposal to be put to a foundation, we could perhaps go so far as letting it be known that the study would be welcome to the Australian Government.¹⁰⁷

The project would be long term as Crawford advised that the department's initial expectation that papers would be produced by RSPacS staff directly for External Affairs could not be met. This watered down the initial demand and ensured a 'correct' distance was maintained between the public service and the ANU. Crawford compromised by saying that Department of External Affairs's research officers could attend special seminars tailored to the department's needs.¹⁰⁸ The compromise evolved as time went on. Crawford had agreed to the proposal that an External Affairs research officer would be able to produce a paper on the South Pacific under ANU supervision. An External Affairs officer would conduct research at the ANU, attend a series of seminars for learning and act 'as rapporteur'.¹⁰⁹ Crawford saw the inherent advantages in conducting these activities at the request of government departments — in addition to the prestige

¹⁰⁵ Davidson, memo to Crawford 26th June 1962, ANU: 2001/39 box 1

¹⁰⁶ Crawford to Tange, 9th July 1962, NAA: 1838/1 277/1/9

¹⁰⁷ External Affairs memo 12th July 1962, NAA: 1838/1 277/1/9

¹⁰⁸ External Affairs memo 12th July 1962, NAA: 1838/1 277/1/9

¹⁰⁹ External Affairs 13th July 1962, NAA: 1838/1 277/1/9

involved there was also the possibility of receiving additional funding as External Affairs had proposed government level support for ANU applications for Ford Foundation funding.

External Affairs noted that Crawford had been given ‘sufficient confidential background’ to the project to determine its importance to the government. Particularly, he had been informed of the existence of a proposed inter-governmental study group, the ANZUS origin of the idea and U.S. Secretary of State Dean Rusk’s expressed interest. The External Affairs memo on the discussions observed that, given this background

Sir John himself raised the question of security. He indicated that this would be a consideration in selecting personnel for work in this project, and that in this selection security risks would not be admitted. He emphasised however that the criterion must be *security* [emphasis in original] and not political attitudes, i.e. a person would not be excluded from participation in the study for the reason that the department did not like his political views.¹¹⁰

Crawford was pre-empting External Affairs demands that people involved in the project be vetted by them to ensure their political allegiance. This ensured he retained control over the staffing of projects undertaken for government departments and is a good example of his shrewd manoeuvring to obtain the best advantage for the university while maintaining the confidence and patronage of government.

The relationship between External Affairs and the Research School of Pacific Studies led to a number of meetings between the two institutions. The first (in September 1962) related to studies on communism within the school. The objective of the meeting was to help the Department of External Affairs prepare recommendations for the ANU for an expected Ford Foundation grant into study on aspects of communism. At the informal meeting it was noted that language courses in Chinese and Russian had developed to the stage where students could acquire some capability

¹¹⁰ External Affairs, 21st June 1962, NAA: 1838/1 277/1/9

in less than two years. While this was a promising development and the courses would be utilised in later years by departmental officials, doubt was expressed about whether the university could provide current intelligence on communist activities which would add significantly to material provided by British and US authorities. The university was of the view that any study of this nature should be financed independently for reasons of propriety. By the end of the meeting there was an agreement to undertake informal cooperation between the institutions.¹¹¹ The next meeting noted that work on communist nations was proceeding in a 'piecemeal' basis in various branches of the ANU but that there was a body of opinion in the university that favoured widening these studies.¹¹² The Department of External Affairs was particularly interested in seeing new studies relating to South East Asia and the Pacific. Key areas of interest included a study on the relationship of Peking and Moscow to the communist parties in South East Asia. External Affairs undertook in return to assure the Ford Foundation of External Affairs' interest in increased ANU studies in the field of international relations including communist countries.¹¹³

The External Affairs officials had an interest in studies on communism at the ANU for the purposes of:

1. Informing the public on international affairs. As the department noted, 'public information on the communist bloc could be handled more effectively by a non-official body'. This meant that information on communism that the government wanted disseminated would be seen by the public to be independent if it came from the ANU. To further separate the connection between the Department of External Affairs and the university funding for these projects was to come from private 'public spirited bodies or individuals'.

¹¹¹ Notes of Meeting between External Affairs and RSPacS 21st September 1962, NAA: A1838/300 556/2/30

¹¹² Notes of Meeting between External Affairs and RSPacS 27th September 1962, NAA: A1838/300 556/2/30

¹¹³ Notes of Meeting between External Affairs and RSPacS 27th September 1962, NAA: A1838/300 556/2/30

2. Encouraging specialisation on international affairs so as to increase the number of people available to External Affairs for informal consultation and to increase the number of potential recruits for the department.
3. Assisting research workers by providing source material for studies in particular fields of interest to government.
4. Finally, the department wished for the possible use of research organisations at the university on topics for which the department had no officers available.¹¹⁴

This direct assistance to a government department, and their patronage, correlates well with the US Cold War university experience. The ANU was clearly acting in this instance as an informal, defacto branch of External Affairs, providing staff, expertise and training as well as information for the public on communist activities, precisely the kind of activity which was to be pursued in the Australian cultural Cold War policy described in Chapter 6. This symbiotic relationship was mutually beneficial but Crawford's compromise meant that independence was retained in terms of staffing and in terms of dictating how the work would be conducted.

Bucking the Trend

The Research School of Pacific Studies was perceived by the government to be the ideal site to train colonial administrators. Since 1945 there had been suggestions that the training of colonial administrative staff should be undertaken within the Canberra University College or the ANU.¹¹⁵ Despite this, the university shied away from perhaps its most positive chance to influence the public servants who were working in the Pacific, a situation which developed because it was felt

¹¹⁴ Notes of Meeting between External Affairs and RSPacS 27th September 1962, NAA: A1838/300 556/2/30

¹¹⁵ NAA: A452/1 1963/1337 "Summary of attempts to associate Australian School of Pacific Administration with the Canberra University College and the Australian National University", Various. This file is cited extensively below. It does not contain the original documents, but rather is a summary developed within the Department of Territories on the attempts to amalgamate the School and the ANU with reference to the files held by the Department. The reference to the original document is cited here where available.

that Ministers were over-stepping their authority and attempting to *directly* control the actions of the school.

The idea that the school should provide training for colonial cadets was met initially with a positive reaction from the interim council. Eggleston said 'I believe that [the school] should provide means for training people for the services in colonial territories in the Pacific and also for training diplomatic cadets. There seems to me a tendency among the educationalists here to depreciate pedestrian objectives of this kind.'¹¹⁶ In 1951 Davidson indicated that senior RSPacS personnel were placing considerable thought to the question of the training of colonial administrators. Selection of appropriate trainees was an important issue for Davidson, who wrote that 'the colonial office, at any rate, still seems to me obsessed with the need to pick good, decent, honest men who won't run amok or embezzle the funds. Important as these qualities are they are not enough.'¹¹⁷ He believed that bringing in people who had been in the service for five years and had local experience to small group tutorials was an excellent way of imparting the necessary knowledge.

Initially it was planned to amalgamate the Australian School of Pacific Administration (ASOPA) and the ANU in 1947, with the school becoming part of the university.¹¹⁸ The ANU interim council wanted to have a 'Director of Colonial Studies', and departments of 'Colonial Administration', but did not believe that a permanent school of Colonial Studies should be set up. Rather they wanted a temporary arrangement which would then be subsumed under RSPacS. Funding for ASOPA was to be shared between the Department of External Affairs and ANU.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁶ Eggleston 8th May 1946, NLA: MS 423 Series 12 Box 23

¹¹⁷ Davidson to Mander, 3rd July 1951, NLA: MS5105 Box 1

¹¹⁸ Submission on the future of the Australian School of Pacific Administration, ANU: 2001/03, Box 1 Basic Papers 1946-1951

¹¹⁹ Submission on the future of the Australian School of Pacific Administration, ANU: 2001/03, Box 1 Basic Papers 1946-1951

The Minister for External Territories proposed that the ANU establish a training school running three month courses in research, teaching and training in colonial affairs as ‘an integrated activity of the Australian University’. The Minister also suggested that the ANU create a 3 year degree course in colonial administration.¹²⁰ Earlier, the Minister for External Affairs had told Eggleston he would be head of the RSPacS, but Eggleston said that was not correct as the appointment was not a part of the Ministry.¹²¹ This latter point indicates confusion in the government as to their degree of power and influence over the university, to the point of believing they had the authority to appoint personnel. In the course of the interim council’s development of the university, the ASOPA was given a low priority. Tensions began to increase between the ANU and the Minister over the issue.

The Minister added a carrot to his request by stating that ‘in general terms the policy of my Department will be to provide for those activities which arise directly from the needs of territorial administration.’¹²² The Chairman of the interim council, R.C. Mills, was not to be so easily persuaded. He responded to the Minister that the interim council refused to accept ‘any responsibility at this stage for the training courses envisaged by the Minister’, due to the need to establish the research credentials of the university and the lack of appropriate staff. He announced that the university would wait to be compelled by legislation before undertaking any ‘instruction in the subjects mentioned’. This indicated Mills firmly believed that the university was under no obligations to take orders from any Minister as they had no mandated authority to instruct the University. Mills was clearly telling the Minister that academic independence was paramount and that the needs of those responsible for colonial administration were a secondary consideration.¹²³

¹²⁰ *Argus* 20th March 1946, NAA: A452/1 1963/1337

¹²¹ Eggleston 8th May 1946, NLA: MS 423 Series 12 Box 23

¹²² Minister of Territories to Mills, Undated, NAA: A452/1 1963/1337

¹²³ Mills to Minister of Territories 24th January 1947, NAA: A452/1 1963/1337

The Minister took offence at these remarks, and placed the project on the back-burner, telling Mills that ‘no action should be taken to incorporate the School at this stage.’¹²⁴ The Ministry expressed its displeasure by arguing that without the ASOPA and the focus on New Guinea during the Second World War the ANU itself (and RSPacS in particular) would never have been developed, Alf Conlon saying that

This school [ASOPA] was as a result of the Army’s attention to the problems of New Guinea and it was developed in the context of the national university when the national university was only a few thoughts at the back of Dr Coombs mind. It was very largely as a result of serious representations made by General Blamey and Mr Curtin that the emphasis on Pacific studies was brought about in the national university.¹²⁵

By 1953 the Minister appears to have given up and proposed that the ASOPA should simply be moved to Canberra as a separate institution.¹²⁶ The issue appears to have been set aside, but in 1960 it was proposed by ASOPA that the school should establish links with ANU which would ‘establish a Department of Community Administration and Development... [for] the training of cadets for field service in Papua and New Guinea.’¹²⁷

In 1961, the proposal for amalgamation was dropped entirely as ASOPA was gradually being phased out of existence in favour of an administrative staff college, with the ANU taking over the ‘university-type functions’ of the school.¹²⁸ Almost twenty years after the original discussions began, the ANU finally got what it wanted out of the debate, a stake in the training of colonial administrators on its own terms rather than those of the Minister for Territories.

¹²⁴ Submission from the Secretary of External Territories to the Minister of Territories, NAA: A452/1 1963/1337

¹²⁵ Conlon, Statement at Conference on the future of ASOPA 19th April 1947, NAA: A452/1 1963/1337

¹²⁶ Secretary of Territories to Burton c. August 1953 and Minister to Secretary of Territories 18th November 1953, NAA: A452/1 1963/1337

¹²⁷ McConaghy, Working Paper on the Future of ASOPA, NAA: A452/1 1963/1337

¹²⁸ First Assistant Secretary to Minister for Territories c. Sept 1961, NAA: A452/1 1963/1337

There is a middle-ground to be found in the conflict between independence and utility to government. The ANU actively sought close links with the government, which became particularly evident from the early 1960s. However these links were not so extensive as to cause the absolute corruption of the institution in its academic standing or independence.

Certainly Sir John Crawford did all he could to promote the utility of the university to the government, placing expertise at the call of government departments but he did this in such a way as to promote what he saw as the best interests of the university, and to maximise the advantages for the university in this relationship. He promoted the pursuit of *mutual* interests, activities which would benefit the government certainly, but would also benefit the university. The national importance clause in the ANU Act had a role in the creation of the attitude of service to the government interests, as did the government's desire for 'specialists', but the idea of the utility of the university to the government was led by the university, not directed externally by the government. Utility was both a means and an end — it was a means by which the university would be able to secure supplementary funding and an end by which the university could prove its worth, thereby gaining prestige. The university did accede to government requests, but it did so on its own terms, when there were advantages to be had.

In the case of the SDSC, its practical focus in defence related studies and 'closed seminars' appeared to run contrary to the concept of free and open dissemination of knowledge which is the purpose of universities in democratic societies and suggested a closed community of specialists whose aim was to further the objectives of government. The SDSC was strongly criticised for these aspects of its operations by the left. However, it was also criticised by the government for researching sensitive areas and for producing findings contrary to what the Defence Department wanted. Further, it was able to do this at a time when significant funding came from the federal

government. It had deliberately distanced itself from the government at the beginning of its operations to avoid criticism of complicity with the Vietnam War and as such proved an independent *but useful* institution, which came to be valued by the government for its impartial views. In this manner it produced precisely what Crawford hoped to achieve at the ANU, independent study of utility to Australian society.

The ANU deliberately and consciously created barriers to the direct interference and governance by government departments over its activities in the proposed merging of ANU and ASOPA. These actions demonstrated that while the ANU produced a climate of service to the government, it was not purely a tool of the government. A correct distance was maintained but like the American Cold War universities the ANU actively sought and used the advantages inherent in supporting government activities.

PART FOUR: ACTIVISM AT THE ANU

At the ANU some similarities were evident with the American experience of the protest period of the late 1960s and early 1970s — particularly the relatively insular focus of protests and the counter-measures adopted by the university administration — but it was the differences that were more significant. It is curious that the ANU, despite its close links with government, was not criticised for complicity with the government in the Vietnam War, nor was it a site of major protests. This was in stark contrast to the American Cold War university experience.

Several factors contributed to these departures from the ‘typical’ (American) Cold War university experience. The most significant was differing attitudes in Australia and America to the role of intellectuals in supporting the War, but the differences can also be attributed to the nature of the ANU itself, its size, the postgraduate composition of the student body and its relative conservatism.

The ‘activist’ period at the ANU — or lack thereof — shows the impact of both the experiences of coercion and the attitude of utility to government that emerged in the period of mutual benefits. These resulted in the development of an attitude of self-censorship which was derived from a desire to avoid threats to the funding and prestige of the university.

CHAPTER 9: VIETNAM, STUDENT PROTESTS AND THE ‘REVOLT OF THE ACADEMICS’

For Noam Chomsky the Vietnam War was central to the idea of a Cold War university and the debate on improper relationships between the universities and the state. Chomsky said that ‘for American intellectuals and for the schools there is no more vital issue than this indescribable tragedy’.¹ Chomsky found ‘terrifying’ the ‘calm disquisitions of the political scientists on just how much force will be necessary to achieve our ends.’² The debates about the War raised questions about the morality of academic conduct which supported government policy.

In contrast to the United States, in Australia there was relatively little recrimination against universities and academics who actively supported the war in Vietnam. This is a significant difference in the Cold War experiences of the universities in these nations which resulted from differing attitudes of politicians and the public towards academics and their role. This lack of recrimination is especially surprising in the context of the ANU’s close links with government. Cultural and attitudinal differences explain this different outcome. While ANU academics (and Australian academics more generally) may have had a role in policy creation and war-related research, the politicians and the public did not perceive the role as being as great as in the US and therefore deemed them to be less worthy of criticism. Furthermore, factors within the ANU itself militated against it becoming a target for protest, and mitigated the size of the protests that occurred.

¹ “The Logic of Withdrawal” in Chomsky, *American Power* p.249

² “The Logic of Withdrawal” in Chomsky, *American Power* p.294

The Australian National University seems to have been far less politically active (in terms of protest) than American or other Australian universities during this period. There were two major reasons for the ANU being less active than other Australian universities. The first of these is the nature of the demographics of the students at the ANU, particularly the Institute of Advanced Studies. The second was a strongly held attitude within the ANU that criticism of the government would be censured and could lead to a decline in funding.

Protest at the ANU was unusual in that the more radical protests against government policy came not from the students but from a few of the left-oriented members of the staff, particularly Jim Davidson. Student protest at the ANU was focused more on increasing the students' role in the administration and governance of the university — indicative of demographic shift rather than Cold War issues. These student protests also tended to be confined to the undergraduate School of General Studies rather than the postgraduate Institute of Advanced Studies. The response of the administration to student protests was one of near disdain. Though action plans were prepared for student occupations and protests, the perceived likelihood of such actions was low. The university administration was more concerned with attempts to discourage public statements by staff members against government policy, imposing a policy of self-censorship and disassociation of the body corporate from radical thought.

Overview of Academic Activism

The 'student revolution' was a world-wide phenomenon in the late 1960s and early 1970s which affected both the communist bloc and the western world. The Czechoslovakian uprising against the Soviets and the Paris uprising in 1968 were both initiated by student protests. In Paris in 1968 the students initially protested against a government ban on men visiting women's university residences. Bertram Gordon, professor of History at Mills College asserts that a

trebling of the university student population over the 10 years prior to 1968 had devalued degrees, degraded working and living conditions and 'fed a growing student discontent' which erupted in the 1968 upheaval. The protests rapidly escalated, leading to student occupations of university buildings and strikes spread throughout the country.³

As seen in the Paris uprising the global wave of student protests were triggered by a number of factors, not least of which was demography. The baby-boom after the Second World War had led to unprecedented numbers of young people entering universities around the world in the 1960s. In the United States the number of students at universities more than doubled between 1960 and 1969. Clare White, a former graduate fellow at Harvard University, argues this demographic change led to a strong sense of 'generational identity' and the belief that young people had an important, if not pivotal, role in the political and social life of nation states. White says that in western societies the students' zeal for political activism took a 'revolutionary' aspect, and was often devoted to the creation of an 'egalitarian, free and participatory society', which would transform the capitalist system.⁴ In the 1960s people were more willing to adopt communist rhetoric in the 1960s, and were open to exploring communism in a way that was in stark contrast to the climate in the 1950s. People were more questioning of their leaders.

The pronouncement of such views led leaders to view the students with deep suspicion, seeing in their rhetoric a communist influence more imagined than real. President Lyndon Johnson feared that the student protestors were part of a communist fifth column and the CIA investigated the movement's links with the National Liberation Front (Viet Cong) and communist front organisations. The CIA concluded its report by saying that the protest movement was essentially

³ Gordon, B. 'Eyes of the Marcher: Paris, May 1968- Theory and Its Consequences' in DeGroot, G. (ed) *Student Protest- The Sixties and After* London, Longman 1998 pp.39-41

⁴ White, C. "Two Responses to Student Protest: Ronald Reagan and Robert Kennedy" in DeGroot, *Student Protest* pp.117-118

characterised by the diversity of its politics.⁵ However the divisiveness of student protest was evident in that after the shootings at Kent State (in 1970) a US Gallup poll showed that campus unrest was viewed by US citizens as the nation's most serious issue, ahead of Vietnam and racial strife.⁶

The traditional view of the protest movement holds that students were protesting against their government and the perceived evils of their day: Vietnam, conscription, apartheid, the lack of civil rights. These aspects bring a heroic quality to the university lives of the baby-boomers, marking their historical time of importance, change and revolutionary upheaval. However, much protest was related to aspects of university life which directly affected the students rather than the greater social issues of the time. Aspects of student upheaval which are generally ignored in the accounts of the time are the number of protests focussed on improving cafeteria food⁷, or for a greater say in the content of courses or a role in the running of the university and representation on the university councils, issues which reflect more insular concerns. These issues were linked in the minds of students with larger issues — universities were seen as a part of societal power structures and remaking these institutions in a more progressive mould would help prevent future social ills.

Cultural Differences

In the United States universities, academics and intellectuals actively supported the war and its mechanisms, either through being involved in policy creation or through research to support the war effort. American students vocally questioned the war in Vietnam and the role of academic

⁵ Maraniss, D. *They Marched Into Sunlight* New York, Simon and Schuster 2003 pp.181-182

⁶ Graham and Diamond, *The Rise* p.85

⁷ In the 1967-68 academic year cafeteria conditions were the motivation behind protests on 25% of university campuses. (Van Dyke, N. "The location of student protest: patterns of activism at American Universities in the 1960s" in DeGroot, *Student Protest* p.28)

staff in supporting the war. Derek Bok, a former President of Harvard University noted that in America,

When opposition to the Vietnam conflict started to mount on the nation's campuses, activists seized upon the relationships that linked universities with corporations and government agencies and exploited these connections to attack organizations that were prominently involved in the war effort.⁸

The Vietnam War was a period of tortured self-reflection for the United States. Part of this was a desire to cast blame for the war and the eventual defeat onto those who were responsible for the war and had supported the war effort. Robert Tomes points out that

Chomsky singled out men who for the most part had assumed work in an official or semiofficial capacity for the government... a conflict hence existed over the nature and role of intellectual life, and, from a radical point of view, the close affiliation of many liberal intellectuals to the liberal political power structure became a matter of dissent. Exercising political power, how could the liberals expect to be objective, honest, and morally pure?⁹

Similar statements could have been made against those ANU academics who had sought to ally themselves with the policy makers and support the government but a similar recrimination did not take place in Australia. Gregory Clark has asserted that 'in the US those in the media and universities who had cooperated with the intelligence agencies in the sixties faced embarrassing exposure or worse in the seventies. In Australia there was nothing like this, despite three years of left wing government.' Clark believes an Australian tendency towards a 'freedom from disruptive ideological debate' was a reason for this lack of remonstrations towards the universities in the aftermath of our involvement in the Vietnam conflict. Those who made the mistakes were still respected as having tried to act in the best interests of the nation. The people who opposed

⁸ Bok, D. *Beyond the Ivory Tower: social responsibilities of the modern university* Cambridge, Harvard University Press 1982 p.280

⁹ Tomes, *Apocalypse* p.154

them are distrusted as ‘troublemakers’¹⁰. This view of the protesters is encapsulated in the comment by the prominent Australian intellectual (and co-founder of *Quadrant*) James McAuley that

Whereas in the United States of America it was frequently said that the radical core was very bright, able and gifted, in Australia the reverse has been nearer the truth. With a very few exceptions, the radical left has been intellectually second rate and shoddy. This is true also at the staff level.¹¹

Harman has observed that in Australia, unlike in the United States ‘the political culture is less antagonistic... to various forms of new government intervention and regulation. From the foundation period of the late eighteenth century, Australian citizens have often looked to the state rather than to corporations or groups of individuals to solve a wide range of economic and social problems.’¹² This basic cultural difference, the view that state control is a good thing, and the absence of a fear of ‘big government’ underlies the core reason behind the lack of Australian condemnation of government-university links over the Vietnam War. While in America government interference with the campuses was widely criticised, here government and university links were seen as a natural and important part of the maintenance of a functioning and effective university system. Universities were not seen to be automatically corrupted by links with government.

Lack of disruptive ideological debate was only one factor. A major difference between Australia and the United States in relation to university-government links during Vietnam War is that in the US the war was initiated and defended by liberal (small ‘L’) government and intellectuals, whereas in Australia it was initiated and supported by conservative government and intellectuals.

¹⁰ Clark, G. “Vietnam, China and the Foreign Affairs Debate in Australia: A Personal Account” in King, *Australia’s Vietnam* p.35

¹¹ McAuley, J. “The Conditions of Australian Universities” in Seabury, *Universities* p.265

¹² Harman, “The Erosion” pp.501-518

In the US — but not in Australia — there was outrage at a perceived betrayal of liberal principles. The key difference lies not in the role of the academics, but rather in the public and indeed self-perception of the role of the academic in political life.

The lack of post-war remonstrance in Australia towards the universities about the Vietnam conflict does pose an interesting question. In a society which still suffers from the ‘tall-poppy syndrome’ one would have thought that the war would have provided a perfect opportunity to discredit the ‘ivory tower experts’ who had supported the war. That this did not happen suggests that politicians, the public, and academics themselves viewed their role in the war differently.

The ire of those who opposed the university-state links in the United States was directed at those intellectuals who played an *active* role in the policy process, rather than the more passive supporting role pursued by some at the ANU. As Chomsky said regarding the situation in America during the Vietnam War:

It is frightening to observe the comparative indifference of American intellectuals to the immediate actions of their government... and their frequent willingness — often eagerness — to play a role in implementing these policies... significant segments of the American intellectual community... offer their allegiance not to truth and justice, but to power and the effective exercise of power.¹³

Robert O’Neill commented that the reason there was little controversy about university involvement in the Vietnam War in Australia compared to the United States is simple: the ANU *as an institution* was not promoting or supporting government policy. There was discussion and debate about the war, but the ANU, as a whole, was not behind it. Also, Australia was a bit

¹³“The Logic of Withdrawal” in Chomsky, *American Power* p.249

player in the war. Our commitment was very small compared to that of the United States and the resulting controversy was in proportion to our role in the war.¹⁴

One of the reasons Australian academia was not criticised as much as American academia after Vietnam was that there had been no comparable public linkage between intellectuals and government before and during the war in Vietnam, nor as complete an association between intellectuals and the ‘evils’ caused by poor decisions regarding commitment to Vietnam and conduct of the war. Tomes highlighted the close links between academics and the policy process in America:

John F Kennedy... staffed the executive departments with professors, scholars and intellectuals, reminiscent of Franklin Roosevelt’s “brain trust”. Kennedy supporters and opponents alike noted the prominence of Northeastern intellectuals in his administration. For Americans, the Cold War became an intellectual struggle as well as a geopolitical one... Kennedy’s famous inaugural speech... reunited idealism in intellectual outlook with power politics in foreign policy. The American intellectual rank and file, with only a few exceptions, cheered publicly and with little restraint. Not since the first administration of Franklin Roosevelt had intellectuals been brought so close to the seat of power.¹⁵

If we compare Kennedy’s open embrace of academics and intellectuals with Paul Hasluck’s speech as Minister for External Affairs in 1965 which compared Australian academics studying Asia to missionaries, we find a much more blasé and disparaging attitude toward the role of Australian academia:

bare headed neo-Samaritan and crypto-missionary, hung about with badly laundered and dull grey ideas, clasping his notes in one hand and in the other a list of conferences to which somebody else might be persuaded to pay his fare. He wanders distractedly from the academic groves of Australia to the fringes of Asia, an evangelist without a gospel, a Samaritan who gives neither bread nor stone but only his analysis of

¹⁴ Robert O’Neill, Telephone Interview, 1st May 2006

¹⁵ Tomes, *Apocalypse* pp.3-4

an abstraction... they still have an unbridled eagerness to write tracts even though they are more concerned with literacy than religion, more deeply worried about hygiene than heaven.¹⁶

Academics in Australia were perceived by the public and the government as having no clear view of what the tasks and results for Australian foreign policy in the region should be. This remained the purview of the government, and the government was not perceived by Australians (rightly or wrongly) to have the same links with academia as existed in the US. While in the United States academics were perceived by the public and by politicians as a vital and integral component of the policy making mechanisms, in Australia — despite the existing closeness between the ANU and the government — academics were viewed by the wider public as being cloistered, distant from reality and not having any real relevance to policy decisions. This accounts for the lack of public recrimination of universities in Australia following the end of the Vietnam War.

Australian academia had not evolved far enough to be considered by the public to be a driving force in our nation's future. Naturally, if the public perception of academia was that it played no role in the creation of policy for the Vietnam War then recriminations against this role were unlikely to emerge.

Student Apathy – Protest at the ANU

There was a distinct lack of evidence of political activism among ANU students, especially relating to Vietnam. Although by 1968 ANU students began to actively take part in what Foster and Varghese described as 'the revolutionary movement that was sweeping across the western world',¹⁷ Foster and Varghese noted that 'those who thought the ANU should be at the forefront of political activism wondered why it was not.'¹⁸ Undergraduates at ANU were distinguished by

¹⁶ Hasluck, P. in Australian College of Education, *Australia and Its Neighbours, an educational aspect*, Melbourne, F.W. Cheshire Pty Ltd 1965 p.5

¹⁷ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of...* p.213

¹⁸ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of...* p.213

‘apathy, conservatism and indifference.’¹⁹ In 1967 the ANU students association passed a motion ‘denying itself the right to make political comments, except on matters relating to the ANU and education.’ Foster and Varghese argue the apathy was caused by fragmentation of the campus and the relative ANU advantages in terms of funding, good library facilities and staff/student ratios which meant that there was ‘little to protest about’. They correctly state that there may also have been ‘too few students to generate a politically active community.’²⁰

No major memorable episodes comparable to the protest activities at the US universities occurred at the ANU. J.D.B. Miller said there ‘was the occasional street procession etc.’²¹ Robert O’Neill said there was some protest against the War at the undergraduate School of General Studies but there was very little at the Institute of Advanced Studies.²² T.H. Rigby said that he was not aware of protests at the Institute of Advanced Studies but that there was a great deal of protest on the undergraduate side.²³ Even among the undergraduates there were elements who sought to minimise the protest emanating from the university. When the ANU student association attempted to donate \$200 to the local moratorium committee, they found that an injunction had been taken out against them in the Supreme Court by conservative students who argued that such expenditure was inconsistent with the broad purposes of the university.²⁴

Like in the US where the police and FBI monitored the meetings of radical students and kept tabs on developing protests,²⁵ ASIO monitored the activities of ANU students in anti-war protests: ‘Student organisations at the Australian National University have also participated in two similar demonstrations in the last 10 days... Members of the Australian National University Labor Club

¹⁹ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of* p.212

²⁰ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of* p.213

²¹ J.D.B. Miller, letter 28th November 2006

²² Robert O’Neill, Telephone Interview, 1st May 2006

²³ Professor Rigby, Interview, Griffith ACT 8th June 2006

²⁴ York, B. *Student Revolt! - La Trobe University 1967-1973* ACT, Nichols Press 1969 p.140

²⁵ Maraniss, *They Marched* pp.176-177

took part in peaceful “sit-ins” in the Department of Labour and National Service.’²⁶ However, the ANU’s protests were very small scale by comparison with other Australian universities. Police intelligence forecasts of the expected number of protesters on 4th of July 1969 were of 3,000 protesters in both Sydney and Melbourne, 500 in Adelaide and, in Canberra, 50.²⁷ The Canberra protesters were students from ANU, but ASIO noted that a counter demonstration had been organised by the university Liberal Club.²⁸ There were a number of arrests at this protest but the majority of those arrested were not from the ANU community. The Attorney General commented that ‘it is significant that of the twelve persons arrested [in Canberra], the majority were from the Victorian University contingent’.²⁹ The small size of the protest and the presence of a counter-protest is consistent with the suggestion that even the ANU undergraduate student body tended towards conservatism, in that most tended to support the political line or abstained from active protest. Crawford acknowledged that ‘the ANU student body tends to be more conservative than some others.’³⁰

Lowen argues that in the United States most dissent was not in opposition to the political ideologies of the day but instead was focussed on the university rather than the broader context of the world outside.³¹ The same could be said of the ANU. In fact the major student ‘actions’ at the ANU were not about the Vietnam War or larger social issues but were an attempt to address the direct concerns of university life, such as gaining greater power for the students in the governance of the university.

²⁶ Spry to Secretary of the Attorney General’s Department 27th June 1969, NAA: A432/31 1966/2116 Part 2 Anti-Vietnam and Anti-Conscription Activities 1968- General and Protest Movement

²⁷ ASIO and Police Intelligence Report of forthcoming 4th July demonstrations 1969, NAA: A432/31 1966/2116 Part 2

²⁸ ASIO and Police Intelligence Report of forthcoming 4th July demonstrations 1969, NAA: A432/31 1966/2116 Part 2

²⁹ Attorney General’s report on 4th July 1969 Demonstrations, J.M. Davis, Commissioner of Commonwealth Police 8th July 1969, NAA: A432/31 1966/2116 Part 2

³⁰ Crawford’s report to Council 9th March 1973, ANU: 2001/16 Box 5 6.2.1.10 Part 2

³¹ Lowen, *Creating* p.12

In America, students' university reform movements began in the early 1960s. The reform groups wanted to create a new 'relevant' education and methods of teaching which would enable students to have active participation in their education and their society.³² University reform was a concern in Australia as well. The students at the ANU wanted to increase the role of students in the government of the university. This, rather than Vietnam or other social issues, was their major grievance. The SRC observed that there was

increased questioning by students of the whole concept of the university and its role as an educational institution in society... [which] has culminated in demands for an increased share in the decision making processes which govern students in all aspects of their personal and academic lives.³³

Robert Menzies, no longer Prime Minister, was surprisingly moderate in his views towards student activism in the late 1960s. He identified with the concerns of the students, saying 'the state, in this country gives the impression that it regards education, particularly the expansion of higher education, as an investment on which it expects a return... no wonder students are in revolt! How would you like to be an investment?'³⁴ Menzies said that the great majority of students who had grievances believed that the universities were 'too authoritarian, too much wedded to the past and to old orthodoxies... they want a voice in what modern jargon calls the establishment.' He said that students should have a voice in councils and committees and be seriously listened to, because (he argued) where students have a voice they are less inclined to demonstrate.³⁵

³² Reuben, J. "Reforming the University: Student Protests and the Demand for a 'Relevant' Curriculum" in DeGroot, *Student Protest* pp.153-154

³³ Submission of the SRC to University Council 22 April 1969, NAA: M448 251 "ANU File 6 Working File on Student Unrest at the ANU"

³⁴ NLA: Menzies, R. G. "The modern problems of higher education", Lecture given at The University of Texas 2nd November 1969

³⁵ NLA: Menzies, R. G. "The modern problems of higher education", Lecture given at The University of Texas 2nd November 1969

These simmering tensions culminated in April 1974 when ANU students occupied the chancellery to demand a greater say in the running of the university.³⁶ ANU council meeting notes describe how they ‘met with a large group of students who wished to explain grievances and debate a motion for certain changes’. While the students preferred to term their requests for changes as ‘demands’, the proposed changes included staff-student control on an equal basis of representation in the determining of course content; student choice of the means of assessment; an end to over-crowded classes by the repetition of lectures or tutorials; and establishment of a women’s studies course, the content of which to be decided on by the women of the university.³⁷

The student demands included:

education not indoctrination, to participate in an effective way in the control of your education, equal power with the staff, have classes which are small enough for effective communication and participation and to have courses which do not serve to produce ideas and programs which stagnate and maintain a crumbling system, but which have some relationship to meaningful social change.³⁸

Though cloaked in the rhetoric of revolution, these demands relate less to broad social issues but are related to governance, administration and content of courses.

Council’s consideration and evaluation of the demands was not good enough for many of the students, who continued to agitate for greater control. The threat of occupation was used repeatedly over the following months. The ANU Labor Club newsletter for July 1974 proclaimed: ‘AN OCCUPATION OF THE CHANCELLERY, THE SEAT OF POWER AND THE SYMBOL OF OUR ALIENATION SEEMS A LOGICAL CHOICE’.³⁹ The perception of youth disempowerment and the rebellion against the traditional established structure of the university is palpable. The peak of the student protest movement at the ANU therefore focused predominantly on internal rather than external issues.

³⁶ *ANU Report of the Council for 1974* p.2

³⁷ ANU Council Meeting 24th April 1974, NAA: M448 251

³⁸ ANU Council records of Discussions with 10/10 Committee 1974, NLA: MS 7550 Series 7 Folder 56

³⁹ Clipping from ANU Labor club newsletter July 1974, NLA: “Papers of Manning Clark” MS 7550 Series 7 Folder 56

Student protests were seen as a challenge to free-expression by academics. At Harvard, Derek Bok argued that, in a reversal from the 1950s where the greatest challenges to academic freedom came from the conservative side of politics, in the 1960s and 1970s students and faculty attacking academics for involving themselves in activities supporting Vietnam represented just as great a challenge to academic freedom.⁴⁰ Richard Lowenthal noted the danger of the student power movement of the left was that this ‘would amount to turning the university from an institution protecting the freedom of inquiry into an institution exerting censorship against its own members in the name of the supposed higher interests of society — and that without a legitimate democratic mandate from society.’⁴¹

According to Robert O’Neill, at the ANU the main ‘McCarthyism’ — or threat to academic independence — came not from the government, but rather from the protesters.⁴² During the Vietnam War some protesters attempted to force their views onto university activities. At one seminar at the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, O’Neill had brought in a guest speaker who had worked for the CIA. When they arrived the seminar room had been taken over by a number of students and protestors who said that they were going to try the speaker as a ‘war criminal’. One of the participants had rigged up a noose from the wall. As O’Neill said, ‘Obviously it was impossible to have a reasoned and balanced debate in this atmosphere’.⁴³

This sort of protest is similar to the attitudes and approaches of dissenters in the United States. Chomsky had said that ‘by accepting the presumption of the legitimacy of debate on certain issues one has already lost one’s humanity.’⁴⁴ Therefore according to Chomsky’s logic, there

⁴⁰ Bok, *Beyond the Ivory Tower* pp.20-21

⁴¹ Lowenthal, R. “The University’s Autonomy versus Social Priorities” in Seabury, *Universities* p.79

⁴² Robert O’Neill, Telephone Interview, 1st May 2006

⁴³ Robert O’Neill, Telephone Interview, 1st May 2006

⁴⁴ “Introduction” in Chomsky, *American Power* p.11

was no legitimacy in presenting the ‘pro-war’ side (for example) as it is *prima facie* immoral. This is a classic radical argument that dismisses as invalid all other view-points but one’s own. Denying even the legitimacy of debate espouses the view that all human thought on an issue should be identical. This was also shown through Chomsky’s belief that ‘many people who were previously willing to accept government propaganda will become increasingly concerned to think for themselves’.⁴⁵ This is another example of the blinkered view of dissenters —that no one who ‘thinks for themselves’ could possibly support the government or rationally oppose Chomsky’s line of thinking.

Protest that denied either intellectual or physical access to those who opposed the views of the dissenters was a threat to academic freedom. A young student who wished to attend a Dow recruitment meeting at the University of Wisconsin in October 1967 was prevented by protesters from doing so. When she complained to a police officer that she wanted to exercise her rights he replied ‘these students evidently feel that their rights are a little better than others’. This is an eloquent comment on the blinkered attitude of the radical students — that rights, freedoms and ideas which support their views are acceptable but these rights do not, somehow, apply to their opponents. These radical students by their action had denied the rights of speech and association to a fellow member of the student body.⁴⁶ Classes in the occupied building could not be conducted.⁴⁷ Pulitzer Prize winning journalist David Maraniss, in his excellent study of the protests at Madison, cited the Chancellor of Madison’s anguished observation about the situation that, to create a reasoned argument in a true atmosphere of academic independence ‘dissent... had to be based on freedom of speech for all, not obstruction and repression of opposing viewpoints.’⁴⁸ The imposition of any kind of particular worldview and agenda for research is

⁴⁵ “The Bitter Heritage: A Review” in Chomsky, *American Power* p.298

⁴⁶ Maraniss, *They Marched* p.353

⁴⁷ Maraniss, *They Marched* p.354

⁴⁸ Maraniss, *They Marched* p.478

stifling for the activities of a university and a threat to their ability to create and disseminate knowledge in an atmosphere of objectivity and intellectual freedom.

Mitigating Factors

A study of American student protests during the late 1960s by Nella Van Dyke (an Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of California) attempted to define why some universities were sites of protest while others were not. The study identified three main factors which influenced the likelihood of student protest. The more selective a university in its admission standards, the more likely the university was to have some kind of protest occur. This was believed to be due to the fact that selective universities were more likely to have faculty who were involved in political affairs, and students who were from more wealthy or privileged backgrounds with a family tradition of political involvement. The second influential factor was the size of a university — the greater the size, the greater the chance of creating a ‘critical mass’ for protest. The final factor was whether or not a university had a prior tradition of involvement in protest.⁴⁹

These factors can help explain why political activism at the ANU was limited until 1968 (and small-scale after that date). First of all, while the research schools were highly selective institutions, accepting only postgraduate students, and while there was a high degree of social engagement on the part of the faculty, the ANU did not select students on the basis of wealth or class, but rather on academic merit. The schools were ‘elite’ but not ‘elitist’. Secondly, the size of the student body at the schools was extremely small by comparison with the American universities (or indeed Australian universities such as Monash, Sydney or Melbourne) which

⁴⁹ Van Dyke, N. “The location of student protest: patterns of activism at American Universities in the 1960s” in DeGroot, *Student Protest* pp.29-31

were active in the 'student revolution' from an early date, therefore no opportunity to create a 'critical mass' existed. Van Dyke believed that university size was the single most important factor in determining whether a university would be a site of protest. Large universities were seven times more likely to have active protesters than small universities.⁵⁰ In relation to a 'history of protest', the ANU by contrast had a history of collaboration with the government and discouraged protest both within the ranks of the university staff and among outspoken students.

The major difference between the inactive Institute of Advanced Studies and the more active School of General Studies seems to be due to age: the younger students at SGS were more inclined to protest. Robin Jeffrey observed that this group was of draft age so this probably gave an added incentive⁵¹, although numbers of undergraduates at ANU were still low (reducing the critical mass).⁵² A contemporary commentator on the student revolts in the US, Michael Miles, stated a contributing factor in the student revolutions was seen to be 'the psychological frustration of reaching mental and physical maturity without adult status'.⁵³ As a result the greater age of the postgraduate students who made up a large part of the university's student body mitigated against protest. This acted as a moderating influence on the student body as a whole. Postgraduate students are more likely to have greater responsibilities such as families or employment (or are likely to soon be employed) outside the university which provides an added disincentive.⁵⁴

This view was confirmed by Spate who said

⁵⁰ Van Dyke, N. "The location of student protest: patterns of activism at American Universities in the 1960s" in DeGroot, *Student Protest* p.34

⁵¹ Robin Jeffrey, Interview, Australian National University 7th June 2006

⁵² Professor Rigby, Interview, Griffith ACT 8th June 2006

⁵³ Miles, M. "The Student Movement and the Industrialization of Higher Education" in Karabel, J. and Halsey, A. (eds) *Power and Ideology in Education* New York, Oxford University Press 1977 p.433

⁵⁴ Van Dyke, N. "The location of student protest: patterns of activism at American Universities in the 1960s" in DeGroot, *Student Protest* p.28

We had no serious trouble in Pacific Studies... In the Institute, after all, the people were Candidatus, they weren't students in the normal sense, they were people up and coming and not wanting to rock the boat too much; they did a bit of rocking, now and again, quite rightly, but so it wasn't likely that we would have the sort of trouble they had in universities with undergraduate population... So we had less trouble than most universities.⁵⁵

Foster and Varghese correctly observed that at the ANU 'more often than not the administration and staff were seen as allies rather than enemies.'⁵⁶ A significant factor in reducing the scale of protest at the ANU was the level-headed approach of the administration and their willingness to create a dialogue with student protesters. Foster and Varghese say that 'Coombs and Crawford had always seemed to be one step ahead of student opinion.' Their overseas travels, particularly to France and the United States⁵⁷, enabled them to see emerging trends in the student protest movement and prepare responses which would minimise the disruption to the university by the time these trends reached Australia, which seemed perpetually a year behind. Part of the reason for Crawford's success was, as James McAuley noted, that 'radical action in the Australian universities began in 1965 and followed the American pattern to such an extent that techniques of radical action could be predicted in outline months before they appeared'.⁵⁸

Crawford emphasised two essential factors in maintaining the good order of the university. The first involved communication and mitigation of student concerns and advocating continuing consultation with students, the second was that any form of violent protest would not be tolerated. Dissent was acceptable as long as it remained within the bounds of legal protest. There was a firm position, of which students were informed, that the university would not

⁵⁵ ANU: UA 2001/20, Item 04: Transcript of Interview with Emeritus Professor O.H.K. Spate 15 May 1990

⁵⁶ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of* p.218

⁵⁷ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of* p.218

⁵⁸ McAuley, J. "The Conditions of Australian Universities" in Seabury, *Universities* p.264

condone damage to property. Students were told that in the case of damage to property civil legal action would be taken.⁵⁹

Crawford's measures included changes to the formal structure of the university, allowing greater student representation, developing close personal relations between faculty and students and promoting and fostering respect for student criticism. He would make himself available to leaders of student opinion.⁶⁰ Crawford's departure in 1973 led to a power vacuum which reduced staff-student cooperation. This culminated in the 1974 occupation of the chancellery⁶¹, demonstrating the importance of both Crawford's personal influence and the success of his tactics in heading off potential upheaval.

The slow start to any major student protest movement at the ANU was indicated by the fact that it was not until 1969 that the university made any concrete preparations to prevent or minimise the impact of 'takeovers' by students. In December 1968 ANU anthropologist Reid Cowell was asked by Hohnen to prepare 'an assessment of the tactical situation in the event of student disturbances'. Cowell did not believe that there was any evidence to demonstrate that 'an organized movement to disrupt the life of the ANU exists' and there was no expectation that activism would go beyond the minor events that had already taken place. If any events did occur, mass meetings were to be 'attended and evaluated but confrontation should be avoided, with emphasis on discussion with small representative groups.' Specific demands from student groups were to be met with the response that they will be 'evaluated'. Also the policy was to let it be known that no action would be taken on students' behalf if they got into trouble with the authorities. Civil authorities were to be kept informed of developments but police and other civil authorities would only be called in to assist if there were assaults, organised destruction or

⁵⁹ Gollan, record of Discussion with Crawford 21st July 1983, NLA: MS 9372 Box 10

⁶⁰ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of* pp.218-219

⁶¹ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of* pp.221-222

attempts to interfere with ‘key danger points’ or essential services. Access to buildings was not to be denied to ‘disciplined groups of demonstrators’ and only the Vice Chancellor could consent to approaches being made to the civil authorities for help. While small disciplined groups were to be allowed access to the chancellery, larger groups were to be intercepted outside the main entrance. If the interception proved ineffective, no physical resistance was to be offered to attempts by students to conduct a forcible entry. While the chancellery was considered to be a likely target for undergraduate protesters, the threat of occupation was thought to be ‘highly unlikely’ to affect the activities of the research schools.⁶²

Formal preparations were made to minimise potential disruptions to the university by student protests and to develop appropriate responses by the administration. Legal advice given to the university was that the university could be regarded as a ‘Commonwealth Premises’⁶³ because it was a public authority. This gave the university the right to call on the police to intervene to disperse and/or arrest demonstrators if there was a risk of damage to persons or property of the Commonwealth.⁶⁴ Sawyer’s assessment of the legal situation was that ‘the offence of assembling so as to cause fear of violence to person or property would be committed by student gatherings of three or more within the university behaving in that fashion.’⁶⁵

Defining the university as a government premises took some fancy legal footwork, given the supposed independence of the university from the government. The opinion of the Attorney General’s Department’s was that the university was an ‘institution rather than an authority and even if the university be assumed to be an authority its relation to the executive government is not so close as to bring it within the description [of an] authority *under* [emphasis in original] the

⁶² Cowell 11th December 1968, NLA: “Papers of Ross Hohnen” MS 9124 Series 18 (Folder 23)

⁶³ Note prepared by Professor Sawyer on the Public Order Bill 1971, ANU: Sir John Crawford 2000/16 Subject Files and personal material c1922-1986 Box 1 item 5 University and Public Order Bill 1971

⁶⁴ Note prepared by Professor Sawyer on the Public Order Bill 1971, ANU: 2000/16 Box 1 item 5

⁶⁵ Note prepared by Professor Sawyer on the Public Order Bill 1971, ANU: 2000/16 Box 1 item 5

Commonwealth'. It was not technically an authority under or of the Commonwealth, but it was considered to be 'a body constituted by or under a law of the Commonwealth and consequently [could to be considered a] Commonwealth premises.'⁶⁶ During the April 1974 occupation of the ANU Chancellery as the PABX (telephone exchange) system had been occupied, these measures enabled the police to be called in to remove the students as there was a threat to the university's communications and fire alarm systems. 27 people were arrested under the Public Order (Protection of Persons and Property) Act.⁶⁷

The University of Wisconsin at Madison paralleled the ANU in several important ways. It was considered by its founders to be a 'laboratory for democracy'⁶⁸, a resource available to government. It was also fairly conservative. However, despite these similarities, the outcomes of student protest at the University of Wisconsin were very different to those at the ANU. Madison became the scene of large-scale and violent protests, with clashes with police being an almost daily occurrence from 1966, particularly after the riot resulting from the protest against Dow Chemical in October 1967. This contrasts with the ANU, where protests started later and protest activity tended to be non-violent where it existed. These two universities provide a useful comparison between the Australian and American experiences. The key contributory differences that created such different outcomes were:

- By allowing DOW Chemical to recruit at the university Madison created a situation in which the university itself was seen by the student body to be directly involved in — and condoning — the use of napalm, a potent symbol of the barbarity of the Vietnam War. The ANU did not conduct similar recruitment drives and so was not seen by students to be as strongly linked with the war.

⁶⁶ Notes (undated unsigned probably 19th March 1971), ANU: 2000/16 Box 1 item 5

⁶⁷ ANU Council Meeting 24th April 1974, NAA: M448 251

⁶⁸ Maraniss, *They Marched* p.80

- A weak Vice Chancellor and Chancellor at Madison (ironically both opponents of the war), over-reacted to a disruptive but peaceful protest and called the police at an early stage, thereby alienating and radicalizing the student body. By contrast at the ANU there was a policy *not* to call the police unless critical university systems or people were actively being threatened.
- The administration at the University of Wisconsin made little attempt to create a dialogue with the students, unlike Crawford who made a point of engagement with student representatives in order to create the appearance that administration was considering their issues.
- Unlike at the ANU there were sufficient numbers of students to create the crucial critical mass for large-scale protests.
- The tendency for there to be a time-lag between events at US campuses and their emergence in Australia enabled the ANU administrators to learn the positive and negative lessons of the experience of University of Wisconsin and others, and to develop their own plans of action accordingly. This enabled ANU to develop strategies and tactics to minimise the possibility of violent protest and to ensure minimal disruption to the operations of the university.
- Another reason for the violence at Madison, which was not replicated at the ANU, was the demographics of Madison itself. The students and the university were privileged ‘west side liberals’, whereas the police were from the working class east side. There was considerable antagonism between the two groups.⁶⁹

The conciliatory attitude of the ANU council to the student actions of the early 1970s can be seen in the context of the ‘prophylactic’ measures taken by university administrators in the United

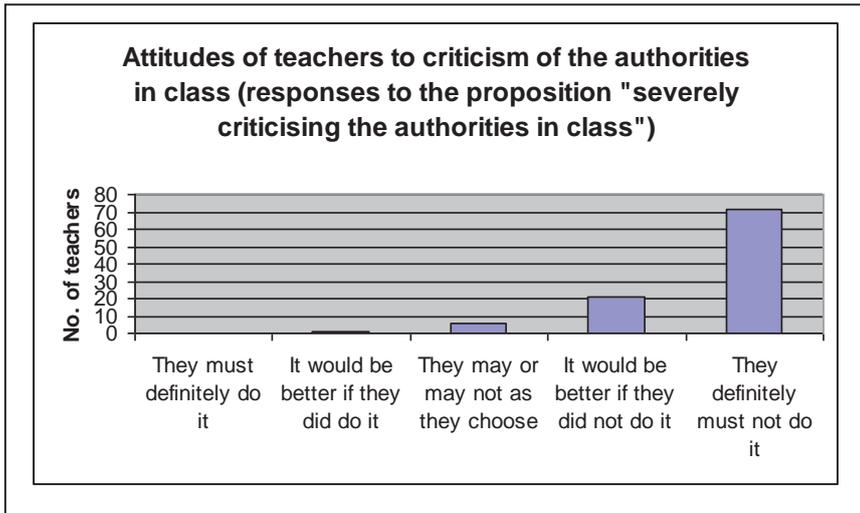
⁶⁹ See Maraniss, *They Marched*

States during the same period. Michael Miles said that as a measure to protect themselves against future ‘assaults’, American university administrators utilised a ‘strategy of containment’ which was based on ‘an effort to split the coalition of liberals and radicals which was crucial to the early success of the [student] movement’. University administrators implemented reform programs and ‘due process procedures’ to appeal to liberal and moderate elements of the protest groups.⁷⁰ Similarly at the ANU, the council agreed to listen to the concerns of the moderate protesters, which appeased the majority and relegated the more radical student elements to becoming splinter groups which were external to the political processes of the university. By creating effective dialogue and introducing tactics designed to minimise the possibility of disruption and violence, Crawford was able to reduce the scale and extent of protest at the ANU. Coupled with the demographic factors which were acting at the university this enabled the university (and particularly IAS) to be an island of relative calm in the sea of student upheaval.

An additional factor to be taken into account in mitigating protest is the reluctance of teachers to promote controversial attitudes to students.

⁷⁰ Miles, M. “The Student Movement and the Industrialization of Higher Education” in Karabel and Hasley, *Power and Ideology* p.447

Figure 11: Attitudes of Teachers to Criticising the Authorities in Class c.1969



(Source: Barbagli M. and Dei, M. "Socialization into apathy and political subordination" in Karabel, J. and Halsey, A. (eds) *Power and Ideology...* p.430)

A study into attitudes of teachers showed that a teacher's criticism of the authorities could have negative impacts on their career. Around 90% of surveyed headmasters responded that teachers who criticised the authorities in class should be punished to some degree. By comparison, only 7% of headmasters believed that criticism of the authorities by teachers should not be punished.⁷¹ This attitude on the part of administrators demonstrates that the potential consequences of advocating a critical view of the authorities were not something to be taken lightly by educators who wished to retain their careers and remain on good terms with their employers.

Examination of the age of teachers who provided negative responses to the issues of discussing political matters in class shows that, generally speaking, the older the teacher, the more likely a negative attitude toward making political statements in class.⁷² The findings of this study have been replicated in studies of the political attitudes of US academics at the height of the period of academic revolt in the late 1960s.

⁷¹ Barbagli M. and Dei, M. "Socialization into apathy and political subordination" in Karabel and Hasley (eds) *Power and Ideology ...* p.424

⁷² Barbagli M. and Dei, M. "Socialization into apathy and political subordination" in Karabel and Hasley, *Power and Ideology* p.429

Figure 12: Political Positions of Faculty by Age (US 1969)

NOTE:
This figure is included on page 290
of the print copy of the thesis held in
the University of Adelaide Library.

(Source: Ladd, E and Lipset, S. *Divided Academy*, Berkley, McGraw Hill 1975 p.188)

The implication of an aged (or aging) staff profile was disinclination towards condoning or encouraging protest. An examination of the age distribution of tenured ANU staff from the Institute of Advanced Studies in the early 1980s showed that the around half of the staff of the institute were aged 50 and over and that the proportion of staff under the age of 40 had progressively declined since 1960 to under one fifth of the total.⁷³ The majority of the staff of the Institute of Advanced Studies in the early 1970s were recruited before 1960 and the number reaching retirement age was growing.⁷⁴ The staff of the ANU may therefore have been less inclined towards condoning protest, and less radical, than those at universities with a younger staff profile.

Academics tend to be conservative about their institutions and the political environment for three main reasons. Firstly a large proportion of their funding and work is provided directly from the government, mitigating against any large scale protest against the government of the day. Secondly academics, when they are critical, tend to criticise from *within the system* and are not proponents of radical social change. Criticism is aimed at gradual reform. Finally academics, in

⁷³ Santow, G. and Bracher, M. *A Demographic Profile of the Australian National University*, Canberra, ANU 1982 p.8

⁷⁴ Low, D. "Academic Review and Organisational Flexibility" in Harman, *Academia Becalmed* p.176

their self perception and relation with the wider world, see their role as passive, detached and scholarly as a necessary adjutant to the objective pursuit of knowledge. This reduces the impetus to undertake an activist approach to changing governmental policy.⁷⁵ A large number of factors therefore acted against the ANU becoming a site of large-scale protest.

'Treason' and Self-Censorship

Chomsky acknowledged that 'moderate scholars' had a tendency to support the War in Vietnam.⁷⁶ The ANU's academics were not unusual in remaining relatively silent about the war. More than fifty percent of Australians believed that Australian troops should stay in Vietnam between 1965 and 1968.⁷⁷ This attitude was reflected in the protest activities of staff at the ANU. An ASIO file on academic activities in 1965 relating to Vietnam noted that only 16% of all Australian academics replied in any way (positively or negatively) to a petition condemning the Vietnam War. In the whole 115 page file, only three pages mention the ANU by name and of those two were concerned with public lectures at which ANU academics were speakers — hardly a revolutionary or subversive activity for academics.⁷⁸ This dearth of ANU activity shows that there was only limited support among ANU academics for protest against Australia's involvement in Vietnam.

Another reason for the dearth of protest at the ANU during this period was the attitude of many of the staff. Strong views against the war were condemned to a greater or lesser degree and it was considered unwise to raise one's head too far above the parapet. J.D.B. Miller described the feeling at the university:

⁷⁵ Ladd, E and Lipset, S. *Divided Academy*, McGraw Hill, Berkley 1975 pp.121-123

⁷⁶ "Objectivity and Liberal Scholarship" in Chomsky, *American Power* p.31

⁷⁷ Murphy, *Harvest* p.279

⁷⁸ ASIO file on academics activities regarding Vietnam 1965, NAA A6122/45 1675 "Associations Individual-Academics Activities regarding Vietnam"

My primary responsibility was to see my department survive. It was the only department of International Relations in Australia, and Vietnam was not the only event happening in the world. At times it seemed to me that if my department was strident in opposition to the war, we would be snuffed out. I can't say why or how. These things are a matter of hints, whispers, nudges and the likes. The sorts of things a historian finds terribly hard to document and assess. We had one or two people strongly for the war and one or two against. I wanted to sustain that balance... For my department, it was a matter of dodging the issue. We had good connections with Foreign Affairs and Defence, and it was clear that the government was going to do what it wanted. They were not going to be affected by what academics said, and if an academic disagreed with their actions it was almost seen as treason — it was as strong as that. Outside Canberra there was a lot of academic resistance, particularly in Melbourne, but my role was a cowardly one. Keep your head down and try to avoid any interferences with the Australian National University.⁷⁹

This implies that pressure was being applied to the ANU (in a subtle, but none the less menacing sense) and raises the spectre of impropriety in the relationship between the school and the government. To secure their careers and ensure the survival of their departments, academics at the ANU could not be seen to directly and overtly oppose the war. However, the 'whispers' were not necessarily coming from those in power, but rather from fellow academics. Francis West, a Professorial Fellow in Pacific History wrote to the *Canberra Times* in 1970:

There is a minority of students who want not reform, but confrontation for its own sake, and they are aided both overtly and covertly by academic staff who agree with them that the university is and should be a weapon of political and social change... They brandish the words 'academic freedom' as the great university tradition... much the most usual university tradition before that was the expulsion of academics and students for what might be called "the treason of the clerks"... [A] historian or a political scientist or an economist may be able to get away with such unprofessional statements which are more a matter of political faith than professional competence and expertise. This is why most of the militancy and the radicalism comes from social science students... This, in this generation is the real treason of the clerks for it is part of the flight from reason which is characteristic of the universities at the moment.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Langley, *A Decade* pp.108-109

⁸⁰ F. West to the *Canberra Times*, April 16th 1970, NLA: "Papers of Oskar Hermann Christian Spate" MS 7886 Series 9

As has been noted in previous chapters, Miller's Department of International Relations was doing a considerable amount of research on Vietnam and related issues. It is possible that Miller was trying to down-play the embarrassing link between the Department of International Relations and government policy during Vietnam. It is also possible that Miller at the time (i.e. during the war) was trying to prevent another leadership crisis in the department as the Lindsay controversy had hamstrung the department for a number of years. However, given the suggestions of government intimidation of ANU academics, it is possible that Miller believed there to be a real and present threat to his own position and the survival of his department. In the United States as well, there was an attitude of fear amongst academics which mitigated against criticism of the government. Lowen argues that the atmosphere led to 'a feeling of insecurity within the faculty' which 'curtail[ed] discussion of highly controversial issues in the classroom.'⁸¹

At the University of Madison protest had serious consequences for that university in the state legislature. The most important consequence for Madison was a direct threat to the funding of the university. This is of importance as it shows the need to minimise public and governmental opposition to universities if funding is to be maintained. In the wake of the October 1967 riot a hearing was held at which members of the legislature demonstrated their fury over the Chancellor's refusal to fire staff who had helped the rioters. Senator Warren argued that staff and student protesters were not entitled to benefit from the state's funding and support. Warren's statement was remarkable in that it stated openly what had rarely been said in either the United States or Australia — that failure to prevent open dissent would result in loss of funding. Warren said

⁸¹ Lowen, *Creating* p.207

is the only way in which we are going to be able to return to what at least I consider some quality to some of this university faculty by the fiscal appropriation route?... For instance do we have to say that the college of philosophy is going to lose X amount of dollars?⁸²

Menzies also regarded protests as a threat to university funding. He observed that

The more the taxpayer has to find for universities, the more he is disposed to say “what am I getting for my money?” If the newspapers keep on telling him that the universities are full of irresponsible and stupid demonstrators, (as they do, alas, with unbalanced regularity), the less disposed will he be to pay, and the more disposed he will be to use his political influence, either to cut back the amounts voted or to support harsh measures to ensure discipline.⁸³

Funding was an important consideration in developing an attitude of self censorship. Michael McKinley in commenting on Miller’s statement on Vietnam stated that Miller was claiming ‘exigencies of the time’ as a ‘defensive privilege for the course of (in) action taken by the Department of International Relations’. He argues that Miller’s department never attempted to critique government activities and instead was focussed on maintaining their premiere position in their relations with the government.⁸⁴ Miller’s statement on Vietnam is critiqued by McKinley in the following terms:

If this apologia is understood in plain terms, the inferences to be drawn are that: the Department of International Relations (or those within it who were against the war) understood that the coalition government of the day was so intolerant and repressive that it would close down their department... for expressing legitimate dissent on a war which was becoming very unpopular within the community at large; in the process it/they adopted a policy of individual and collective cowardice... and it/they placed the study of contemporary inter-state relations, which had, of course to exclude a war that was in the process of claiming three million lives, above the demands of ethics, law, honesty, humanity and decency.

⁸² Maraniss, *They Marched* pp.498-99

⁸³ NLA: Menzies, R. G. “The modern problems of higher education”, Lecture given at the University of Texas 2nd November 1969

⁸⁴ McKinley, “Discovering the ‘Idiot Centre’”

McKinley implies Miller's appointment itself was due to improper influence by the government, saying these events occurred at:

... a university which, from its earliest days, maintained such close relations with government that its Vice-Chancellor could assure the Minister for External Affairs (who in turn, assured the Prime Minister, but urged him nevertheless to pressure the Vice Chancellor), that the "right type of man" would be sought — one who would, importantly, be selected on the basis of "qualifications other than professional".⁸⁵

McKinley argues that the precedent set by Miller's behaviour was 'staggering'. The consequence of Miller's actions (or lack of them) were that 'if something as singularly important as the Vietnam War could be internalised as an ANU index prohibitorium, then a habit of obsequiousness to state power was established with a strong genealogy.'⁸⁶ The obsequiousness McKinley refers to could be seen as the natural reaction of an intellectual elite which had become a party to, and identifies itself with, the ruling power. It has been argued by Edward Shils that when intellectuals come to power, they begin to identify with the authority of the ruling group and 'attach to themselves the regalia of authority and feel that they and the state are now identical' and further they believe that those who disagree with the organs of power are the enemies of the state.⁸⁷ This implies that far from merely biting the hand that feeds, opposition to the Vietnam War would be for some ANU academics an attack on themselves which would strike at the very heart of their identification with the mechanisms of power.

Miller's statement on Vietnam has been highly controversial. McKinley stated that Miller made this statement as a justification for his support of the war — to rationalise why he supported it.⁸⁸

Even Foster and Varghese, while adopting a much more moderate line than McKinley, have said

⁸⁵ McKinley, "Discovering the 'Idiot Centre'" The document McKinley refers to here is shown in *The Making of the Australian National University* but without any contextual discussion or accompanying text.

⁸⁶ McKinley, "Discovering the 'Idiot Centre'"

⁸⁷ Shils, E. "The Intellectuals in the Political Development of the New States" in Finkle, J. and Gable, R. (eds) *Political Development and Social Change* New York, John Wiley and Sons 1966 p.361

⁸⁸ Michael McKinley, Interview, Australian National University 6th of June 2006

that ‘whatever his motives, Miller’s silence could be interpreted as implying consent for government policies.’⁸⁹ However, the question of whether it was considered ‘treason’ to speak out and whether or not this attitude was forced by government policy has not been addressed by either Foster and Varghese or McKinley. The question should be that protest and dissent was treason, but treason against whom? Was it treason against the government of the day, or was the real treason against the university, as protests could threaten funding and prestige? In 2006, Miller himself said in relation to his statement that

The explanation of this is that I was thinking, not of any direct threats from government, but the state of mind around me in the university... the ANU had already suffered much harm from press and parliamentary criticism, and there was something of an atmosphere of concern and even fear of governmental attack... as the Vietnam War proceeded there was a lingering fear in the university that governments might find it worthwhile to be hostile. This was greatly reduced by the appointment of Sir John Crawford as Vice Chancellor.⁹⁰

The truth of the matter was that it was attitudes *within* the ANU that drove self-censorship in relation to the Vietnam conflict.

Some ANU academics took active roles in opposing the Vietnam War. These, however, appear to have been in the minority, and although they were not fired their experiences reflect institutional hesitance about allowing controversial opinions to be aired from the university.

Michael McKinley said that at least one of the academics who protested against Vietnam suffered discrimination from his colleagues for his stand: ‘They didn’t urinate in his office but it was almost that bad’.⁹¹

As noted previously, Gregory Clark by his own account appears to have had a difficult time at ANU due to his views on Vietnam. Clark’s activism against the Vietnam War did not pass

⁸⁹ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of* p.275

⁹⁰ J.D.B. Miller, letter 28th November 2006

⁹¹ Michael McKinley, Interview, Australian National University 6th of June 2006

unnoticed by government ministers. John Gorton, then the Minister for Education, queried ‘how and why the government-funded ANU was providing refuge to this anti-Vietnam War subversive’. While this had little impact on Clark’s position, at about the same time Clark said he was pulled in by Crawford for

a formal dressing down over the dreadful sin of agreeing to give an extension course on Chinese history at the affiliated Canberra University College. PhD scholarship students were obliged to concentrate entirely on their PhD studies he told me. The implication — lay off the anti-Vietnam War politicking — did not escape me, even if it did not deter me.⁹²

Clark had heard that Gorton was ‘very upset that government funds would be going to a Vietnam protester such as myself.’⁹³ In 1969 Clark approached J.D.B. Miller to see if he could obtain a position he had been offered in 1962. But ‘by 1969 I had become a critic of government policy, a trouble-maker, a black sheep, possibly even a communist agitator. It took Miller just 5 minutes to close the door on me.’⁹⁴ Clark, however, had questioned the competence of the ANU in its teaching of Chinese and Japanese studies (like Lindsay, an example of a dissenter ‘biting the carpet’), thus becoming a critic of the institution as well as Vietnam and imperilling his own prospects. Eventually Clark decided he could no longer remain in an Australia that closed its eyes to the evil of the Vietnam War.⁹⁵

Academic protest against Australia’s policy towards Vietnam had emerged much earlier. Lowe has described tension between the government and ANU about Vietnam emerging as early as 1954. In 1954, C.P. Fitzgerald and others ‘published a statement of their concern that the Australian government might extend “unqualified support” to US intervention in Indochina’.⁹⁶ R.G. Casey said in response to these comments that

⁹² Clark, G. “Life Story” www.gregoryclark.net/lifestory/page3/page3.html (Accessed 29th March 2006)

⁹³ Gregory Clark, Email 29th March 2006

⁹⁴ Clark, G. “Life Story” www.gregoryclark.net/lifestory/page5/page5.html (Accessed 29th March 2006)

⁹⁵ Clark, G. “Life Story” www.gregoryclark.net/lifestory/page3/page3.html and www.gregoryclark.net/lifestory/page4/page4.html (Accessed 29th March 2006)

⁹⁶ Lowe, *Menzies* p.106

... this is a time when we have to stick to our friends and our convictions. The United States of America is on our side. It is on the side of democracy, decency and right and the forces of darkness opposed to it are very apparent and very powerful. The world may have a showdown at any time between our form of life and the forces of darkness.⁹⁷

Despite the attitude of public utility, unsolicited advice to the government, especially in relation to controversial issues, tended to receive short shrift. As Foster and Varghese stated, '[an]other main ingredient in the debate on academic freedom was the right of academics to express opinions that might be contrary to government policy.'⁹⁸ This right was questioned both by the Prime Minister, who considered these opinions to be unwarranted meddling in political affairs, and by members of the ANU who feared that such opinions could lead to a decline in funding. Foster and Varghese give the example of the Bandung episode in 1955:

In 1954 Jim Davidson and Patrick Fitzgerald... came under fire for attending a conference of Afro-Asian nations at Bandung in Indonesia and issuing a statement jointly with John Burton... But Menzies, led on and misled by a journalist, reacted sharply, denouncing the comments as 'impertinence of the first order'... Fitzgerald, having made his point, might have been prepared to leave it at that; but not Davidson, who responded immediately by defending the duty of academics and other citizens to express their views, telling Menzies, in effect, to mind his own business, and adding for good measure a few words critical of government policy. The issue split the University.

Such public statements by members of the university were dangerous as they could potentially lead to funding cuts. Foster and Varghese noted that as a result of the controversy a special meeting of the Board of Graduate Studies was called and after a fiery debate 'the final resolution censured no-one, merely confirming the right of University members to freedom of expression on any matter of public interest, while urging them to take account of the university's interests.'⁹⁹

⁹⁷ Lowe, *Menzies* p.104

⁹⁸ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of...* p.124

⁹⁹ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of...* pp.124-125

That a censure motion was even considered by the board indicates that the board felt that it was not the place of ANU academics to comment adversely on the government.

The Bandung statement made by Davidson, Burton and Fitzgerald was not well received by the government. Bandung concerned Menzies due to the condemnation by attending nations of colonialism in all its forms.¹⁰⁰ Davidson wrote to the *Canberra Times*, commenting on Menzies' response to the Bandung statement. Menzies had said that, 'there seems to be an itch for political pronouncements in academic circles nowadays which seems to be relatively new'. Davidson replied:

[academics] may differ from the government regarding the premises on which policy is based; they may feel the government has been inadequately informed of the relevant facts by its advisers, or has paid insufficient regard to the facts that have been placed before it... in the field of foreign policy (as in colonial policy) officials seldom get all the facts... and governments sometimes ignore some of the facts that they know for domestic political reasons. In these circumstances it is not only the right but the duty of any citizen, even if he belongs to "academic circles" to express his views.¹⁰¹

Davidson felt that academic independence must be paramount and that the right of academics to make comments which were adverse to government policy was not merely a question of the rights of academics but one of the duty of citizens to ensure informed foreign policy.

The Bandung conference does not, in fact, appear to have been the initial cause of the attempted censoring of Davidson. The real issue was Vietnam. Davidson raised considerable furore by releasing a letter describing the Viet Minh's cause as nationalist rather than communist and opposing western intervention. Politicians combined to condemn Davidson's opinion.

Wentworth said that Davidson's letter in 1954 had statements 'so untrue that they help the

¹⁰⁰ Lowe, *Menzies* p.178

¹⁰¹ Davidson to *Canberra Times* 28th April 1955, NLA: MS5105 Box 1

Communist cause.’¹⁰² Oskar Spate described Jim Davidson as ‘*Enfant terrible*. Far too left and brash for conservative tastes... there was no denying his lack of reverence for authority.’¹⁰³ This lack of respect for authority applied equally to the government and to the ANU administration, which he saw as trying to limit his academic freedom and his right as a citizen to protest when he saw the government making errors.¹⁰⁴ Davidson was concerned by the negative reaction of the university to his statement on Vietnam. He wrote to the Vice Chancellor about a circular he had received regarding a conversation between the Vice Chancellor, Coombs and Menzies in which the view had arisen that the university staff, ‘as public servants’, should express their views privately to the government before committing them to print. Davidson retorted that ‘we can not be regarded as public servants in this sense without danger to our academic independence.’¹⁰⁵

Spate described the issues surrounding what he called ‘the Great Vietnam debate’:

The scientists, in particular, were outraged: the reputation of the ANU was at stake and it was not fitting that academics should criticise the government that paid them. John Eccles, Director of the John Curtin, rang me to say that on the morrow’s BIAS [Board of the Institute of Advanced Studies] he would move for a vote of censure on Davidson and Fitzgerald and a ruling that nobody should write to the press except strictly on their own technicality... He did not know his Davidson; I did, but was not prepared for what followed, really the most brilliant display of tactics I have ever seen. The mood was tense, and as soon as the motions were open for discussion Jim moved to the attack, beginning with a hint of censure to the Vice-Chancellor for allowing this assault on academic freedom to be aired at all. The original motions were lost to sight in a maze of rhetoric and dialectic, and a quote compromise unquote resolution was passed nem con. This said, in effect that academic freedom was precious but that people should be tactful in public pronouncements and should not use ANU’s address except when writing technically on their own special disciplines...¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² Murphy, *Harvest* p.63

¹⁰³ Spate, *The Early Days at the ANU- an anecdote*, NLA: MS7886 Series 3

¹⁰⁴ Huxley to Davidson 6th June 1966, NLA: MS5105 Box 1

¹⁰⁵ Davidson to Vice Chancellor 22nd April 1954, NLA: MS5105 Box 1

¹⁰⁶ Spate *The Early Days at the ANU- an Anecdote*, NLA: MS7886 Series 3. Notes in the institutional history of the Coombs Building – which also contains Spate’s anecdote – say Spate conflates the Vietnam episode with a later BIAS meeting the following year (Spate, O. “The Salad Days” in Lal, B. and Ley, A. *The Coombs- A House of Memories*, Canberra, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies 2006 p.33), so the Bandung Episode may well have been the final straw. The chronology suggests this assessment is correct. The comments on Vietnam were

The specific criticism of Davidson by the Board of the Institute of Advanced Studies was that

Press releases and letters are not scholarly additions to knowledge; that because of the manner and circumstances in which they are presented they are contrary to the best interests of the University; and that the persons involved acted without regard to their duties and responsibilities to the University.¹⁰⁷

The board believed that public criticism of the government by members of the university could jeopardise their relationship with the government and was attempting to silence any protest from members of the university faculty.

Although Davidson's counter had been successful, a precedent had been set by which public pronouncements against government policy from ANU academics would be met by both disapproval and by potential censure from the leading academic bodies within the university. It would take a high degree of moral courage for ANU academics to publicly criticise the government in the face of such concerted opposition from their peers and superiors. Although a tactical victory, the compromise resolution was, perhaps, a Pyrrhic one. The resolution said that

In the personal opinions of a majority of members of this Board, the manner and circumstances of certain recent public statements by two of us are matters for regret. At the same time we affirm that this Board, consistent with the principles of personal and academic freedom, does not and can not regulate the interventions of its members or of any members of the University staff as citizens in public affairs. We do expect any such interventions to be regulated by the good taste and conscience of the individual concerned.¹⁰⁸

The compromise resolution, although asserting Davidson's (and other academics') right to speak their mind was at the very least a warning to other academics that this behaviour would be met with disapproval. Protest was to be tolerated only if it was seen to be coming from individuals and if it could be disassociated from the ANU.

made in April 1954 and the attempted censoring was in May 1955 following the Bandung Conference. Nonetheless, the fact that Spate does conflate the two episodes is significant, suggesting they were in some way linked. In any case – no matter the trigger – the attempted censoring indicates self-censorship of public critiques of government.

¹⁰⁷ Undated and Untitled document in Davidson's file marked "Academic Freedom", NLA: MS5105 Box 1

¹⁰⁸ Undated and Untitled document in Davidson's file marked "Academic Freedom", NLA: MS5105 Box 1

Whether the attempted censuring of Davidson had an impact on the intellectual life of the ANU is debatable. Geoffrey Sawer speaking on his experiences in RSSS when asked whether there was an atmosphere of political repression interfering with serious intellection discussion said

No. None at all. It was the case certainly that there were a few individuals, such as Jim Davidson, who was probably the most senior bloke involved in any such thing, whose general ideology was certainly a bit further to the left than most of us, but a considerable number of us were a bit to the left, and a considerable number of us a bit to the right...So we didn't for example have a single episode similar to the difficulties that the Pacific people had because of [interviewer: Lord Lindsay?] Yes, that's right, that's right. We had nothing remotely like the Lord Lindsay business. And we didn't either, have the other sorts of occasions on which Jim Davidson got himself into some minor trouble because of left wing views on some current government policy.¹⁰⁹

At the level of the academics there may have been a perception that debate was not stifled, but the administration of the ANU plainly regarded Davidson's public criticism as a potential threat to the university. Rowse observed that Melville, in discussions with the Board of Graduate Studies about Davidson and Fitzgerald, warned that 'the government might withhold funds for salary increases... Melville [therefore] mediated external pressures as an invitation to self-censorship.'¹¹⁰

Foster and Varghese acknowledged the concern of the ANU's administration. At the meeting of the Board of Graduate Studies Melville was concerned that the lack of a long tradition of academic freedom at ANU and their lack of independent funds meant that the university's future could be compromised by public statements. Davidson argued that accepting restrictions 'could lead to further restrictions', while Moran argued that 'the real question was about academic responsibility, not academic freedom; and Spate warned against a heresy hunt.' The issue of threats to funding resulting from such statements remained, as Sawer wrote: 'The ANU must

¹⁰⁹ ANU: UA 2001/20, Item 06: Transcript of Interview with Emeritus Professor Geoffrey Sawer May-June 1990

¹¹⁰ Rowse, *Nugget Coombs* pp.257-259

prosper and get fat/unless the Dons insist on staying thin/by writing notes in praise of Ho Chi Minh.¹¹¹

The experience of Davidson is probably the most important lesson in the ANU's experience during the Cold War. It represents a duality. First of all, the refusal to censure Davidson shows that the ANU was not a McCarthyist university in the traditional definition of the term. The fact no harm came to Davidson in his career means it can not be said that the university actively excluded all academics of left-wing persuasion. Rather than a sweeping McCarthyism as occurred in the US, the actions of the ANU with Lindsay and Clark represented a 'cleaning of house', removing or excluding noted political troublemakers, those who made a fuss about the competence of the university and thereby stepped outside the fold. They challenged the institution. At the same time this also explains the retention of Davidson who, while publicly opposing government policy largely did so while playing within the rules, not 'biting the carpet' as Crocker had said of Lindsay. Government *could* be attacked from the ANU within the bounds of academic freedom, so long as the university itself was not brought into the debate, thus jeopardizing the integrity of the institution. The other side of the duality was much more harmful: BIAS's actions demonstrate a tendency towards self-censorship, based on a fear of loss of government funding. The actions of BIAS show that while no harm would come to academics who spoke their mind on controversial political issues, the university would (given the sensitivity and potential implications of such a stance) take steps to distance itself from these statements to minimise the harm caused by them.

¹¹¹ Foster and Varghese, *The Making of* pp.125-126

In an era of world-wide student protest in the late 1960s and early 1970s, one which has come to be referred to as a ‘revolution’, the ANU — despite its location near the seat of Australian government and supposed place at the forefront of the development of Australian political thought — was a slow-starter in terms of student activism.

Several similarities exist with the American university experience, in terms of the primary focus of protesters on conditions within the university, the machinations of university councils to limit or reduce the amount of protest and the suppression of dissent from academic staff. More interesting, however, are the instances where the ANU departed from the American model of protest at universities. Australian universities, during and after the Vietnam War did not receive criticism for complicity with the government policy about the war, despite the ANU’s links with the policy apparatus. This was due to differences in perception among the respective publics in the US and Australia of the place of universities in policy making. In the United States, the Kennedy and Johnson governments publicly proclaimed the role of intellectuals in policy making, relied on ‘technocrats’ such as McNamara, and publicly linked universities with war-related activities. This led to a widespread linkage of academia and the government in the minds of the American public. The understanding was that their universities were directly complicit in both the policy relating to the war and to the conduct of the war itself. No such linkage existed in Australia. On the contrary, government ministers portrayed Australian academics as people bumbling about in the region with little purpose or direction. The public had no sense that the universities were actively supporting the war effort and were therefore disinclined to direct protest at the universities for their role in the war.

Protest at the ANU was limited by a number of internal factors. The major protests which did occur at ANU were generally not in opposition to government policy at all, but rather were

related to the role of the students in the governance of the university. The key disincentives for protest acting at the ANU included the small size of the student body which militated against protest. While universities such as Monash and La Trobe had a large amount of protest from both the student body and the academics, the ANU with its smaller student body was unable to achieve the 'critical mass' necessary for the creation of large-scale student protest.

Protest was limited by the special conditions of the ANU. The large number of postgraduate students and the older average age of these students meant that the 'youth' movement did not apply to this group. Demographic factors among the students and staff and the objective of retaining government patronage reduced the likelihood of dissent. The ANU was able to adopt successful tactics designed to minimise disruption and encourage dialogue.

An attitude of self-censorship existed, where protest from academic staff had to be seen to be coming from individuals rather than from the body corporate. The attempted censoring of those academics who did protest served as a warning to others that opposition to the government would not be tolerated by the university administration and that they should exercise caution in public pronouncements. Self-censorship is also evident in Miller's statement about 'treason'. Certainly this is not to say that there was a complete absence of protest at the ANU during this period, but their conservatism was more marked than at US or other Australian universities.

CONCLUSIONS

Further research on this topic should focus on the role of the ANU research scientists in the Woomera rocket tests and the Maralinga atomic tests. These tests represented the cutting-edge of Commonwealth military technology at the time. As traditional Cold War university studies focus on defence-related scientific research conducted for the government, the activities of Titterton and Oliphant are deserving of further analysis in the context of the Cold War university. Due to the scope of this thesis being on foreign affairs and defence policy, the scientific angle has been neglected. Another area for further research should be to examine the archival records of the MVD/KGB to determine if they contain information on the ANU and perhaps the identity of any Australian academics working (consciously or otherwise) for the Soviets. The fact that the ASIO operation at the ANU was a *Spoiling Operation* indicates that the Soviets were thought to be attempting to subvert Australian academics generally (and perhaps at the ANU in particular), and that the ASIO operation was designed to disrupt this activity. Whether there was an actual MVD operation at the ANU is unknown, indeed the ASIO operation may have been mounted to counter a potential future threat rather than an existing one. Further analysis should also be made of the links between universities and Australia's cultural Cold War efforts.

The original conception of the thesis was aligned with Chomsky's view that a close relationship between government and university was disadvantageous for universities. However, the evidence did not support a finding of complete dominance of the university by the government. Close links can be mutually beneficial to both parties and there is no harm in academia supporting government activities or of governments supporting universities — so long as criticism is also tolerated.

Defining the ANU as a traditional Cold War university is problematic. There are a number of similarities with the US experience but there are also a number of crucial differences. It is safest to say that the Cold War had a significant impact on the evolution of the university and on its relations with government but that the university's experience was not entirely analogous to the American Cold War university in its traditional Chomskyesque definition in terms of a corrupt, coerced university system which suffered under McCarthyism and was deeply complicit in the Vietnam War.

While the Cold War had a significant impact on the university's relations with government so did a number of other factors not directly related to Cold War imperatives. The growing encroachment of the federal government onto the sphere of higher education in Australia had an impact, as did the expansion of higher education following the Second World War. These issues are evident in the power the Australian Universities Commission had over setting funding for universities and in the massive boost to higher education funding provided by the Murray Report. Though these factors were linked with Cold War issues such as the desire of western nations to retain parity with the Soviet Union in the arms and space races, they were also driven by demographic growth and the desire to enhance Australia's economic capacity.

Relations with the government maintained a proper distance for the most part and it can not be said that academic independence was entirely compromised at the ANU. Independence from government interference was demonstrated by the ANU's refusal to assimilate the ASOPA under its auspices and by the university's refusal to grant the King of Thailand an honorary degree, the latter action being a refusal of a direct request by Menzies. However, several challenges to the ANU's independence occurred in the context of the Cold War. Parliamentary members on the ANU council attempted to veto left-wing appointments and requested that pressure be applied

from the government when their wishes were ignored. Parliamentary challenges to the ANU's funding and accusations of disloyalty as well as the close personal links between the Prime Minister, the Director of Security and the Vice Chancellor mean that ultimately a degree of self-censorship was created at the university. Dissenting views were tolerated, but it was expected that those with outspoken views would disassociate themselves from the body corporate. This self-censorship is evident in the stance taken by J.D.B. Miller over Vietnam and in the attempted censuring of J.W. Davidson. It is most evident in the discussions between Menzies, Spry and Copland, who created a policy by which people with adverse security reports would be denied higher positions at the ANU and that the university would not support those who suffered as a result of security issues. There was a mix of coercion and self-imposed obligation that proved challenging for the university.

The key difficulty for the Australian government in its relations with the ANU during the Cold War was, in a society that enshrines free speech, how to prevent communist subversion emanating from the university without compromising basic principles? Menzies adopted a marvellous compromise. Without resorting to outright McCarthyism and the concurrent denial of free speech to left-leaning academics, he placed the onus on the universities to exercise self-censorship and restrictions on promotions, using the threat of funding restrictions to ensure compliance. This meant that the appearance of academic independence was maintained while left-wing views, though not eliminated, were minimised.

The ANU was not a McCarthyist university in the traditional American sense of loyalty oaths, mass firings of communists and House Un-American Committees. The fact that outspoken left-wingers such as J.W. Davidson were retained in senior positions within the RSPacS supports this conclusion. Communist, and left-wing members of the university were not fired. Certain

episodes do, however, show similarities with the difficulties experienced by communists and fellow-travellers at American universities and that there were subtle forms of discrimination evident in the Australian experience. The travel restrictions imposed on Worsley and the Epsteins and the attempt to prevent the appointment of Sigmund Diamond show some ideological vetting was taking place which had an impact on the appointments processes of the university and the research conducted by academics. Other aspects which on first inspection seem to indicate McCarthyism are more contentious. Gregory Clark left the university on his own accord after becoming frustrated with Australia (and the university) in its refusal to comply with his view on the Vietnam War. Michael Lindsay's resignation, while seeming to result from parliamentary criticism, probably had more to do with his personal ambitions and academic infighting. While these latter episodes may indicate coercion of those who did not conform intellectually — in effect forcing them to resign — their exclusion is not necessarily compatible with the retention of Davidson. The explanation may lie in that it was those who attacked the government *and criticised the university in public* who had their careers made more difficult. Those who just criticised the government were left alone. This would seem to indicate that any seeming McCarthyism was in fact an act of self-preservation by the university in reducing the influence of those who were criticising the institution, rather than a blanket exclusion of communists.

After 40 years, attitudes about the ANU's relations with the government are still polarised. Either the university acted correctly and appropriately, or the university entirely compromised its independence. There is no middle ground in the attitudes of those who have examined the issue. The left-wing's attempts to impose their moral compass onto the activities of the university were potentially as threatening as attempts by the government to enforce their control. Much of the criticism of the relationship between the ANU and the government during the Cold War seems to

be concerned with the propriety of a federally funded university undertaking research at the behest of that government. Utility of a university to the government is a *good thing* in a democratic society. The taxpayer expects that research is (or should be) relevant and useful in order to justify the public funds put towards these institutions.

As a new university, and one largely dependent on the generosity of the federal government, the ANU was vulnerable to government influence, which may have led to a greater willingness to make concessions than was felt by state universities with a longer tradition of academic independence. The creation of the university by the federal government and the section of the ANU Act defining its role of investigating areas of national importance created significant debate at the ANU on how this could best be achieved while retaining academic independence. This was problematic for the university in that it wanted to deny federal control over its research agenda but recognised the importance of the government being seen to get something for its money. Although funding pressures played a significant role in forcing compliance, the adoption of an attitude of utility to the government and society and a focus on applied research was largely led by the university and was not imposed externally by the government. Crawford, a shrewd academic politician, saw significant gains in funding and prestige to be made by the university if it was seen to be serving the governmental interest. Crawford's interest in promoting the university as a source of useful information and in eliminating the 'ivory tower' distance of academics from the issues of governance created a climate of utility which became fundamental to the ANU's self-perception and provided a balance between independence and social responsibility. While some of this research supported Cold War activities this was not the sole focus of the intellectual efforts of the university. It is not surprising given an agenda of social utility that research in the context of the time would assist Cold War efforts.

Despite supposed links with the CIA the evidence suggests Ford Foundation funding to the ANU was benign, though largely focused towards applied Cold War studies. Nevertheless, it is probable that the ANU had a role in the cultural Cold War. There is some evidence that the ANU did produce material on communism for External Affairs, and the role of education in the government Cold War policy and focus of this policy on regional activities suggests the RSPacS had a potential niche market in Australian cultural Cold War efforts. Where Australian universities *were* involved in cultural Cold War efforts was through language training and the promotion of democratic values through the exchange of academics with South East Asian nations.

A commonality between the US experience of the Cold War university and the ANU's experience was in the activities of intelligence agents on campus. ASIO kept communists at the ANU under surveillance throughout the Cold War. Whether this had a major impact on the activities of academics is debatable. In any case, given the known Soviet tactics of using academic agents of influence, and recruitment of students the government would have been remiss not to have authorised counter intelligence activities to be undertaken at Australian universities.

A crucial difference between the American and Australian university experience during the Cold War was in the lack of criticism of Australian universities over their role in relation to the Vietnam War. This was largely due to a fundamental cultural difference between the two nations. Where American academics were seen to support the war and to have played a significant role in shaping US intervention, in Australia the war was seen more as a geopolitical struggle, one in which academics had little role. Australian academics were seen to have little place in shaping the national political agenda, being isolated from social issues.

A further difference was in the relative lack of protest at the ANU compared to American universities during the period of student upheaval. While there was some protest at the undergraduate School of General Studies, there was little at the Institute of Advanced Studies. A parallel did occur in that the major protests tended to be concerned with issues such as student governance, rather than larger Cold War issues. Protest was minimised at the ANU by a number of factors. The demographics of the ANU meant there were too few students to create a critical mass. The greater age of students at the Institute also provided a disincentive. There was a degree of conservatism among both staff and students. Finally, the steps taken by the administration to create dialogue with disaffected students reduced the potential for conflict and created greater harmony than was felt at American (and other Australian) universities.

Foster and Varghese were largely correct in their history of the university, the threats to its independence and the period of heightened tension during the Cold War. Where they have erred is in moderation, shying away from controversy in not discussing events such as the restrictions on the Epsteins and glossing over the Worsley and Ward and Diamond affairs (although they are probably correct in their discussion of the Lindsay episode). The ANU's independence was more compromised than they suggest, particularly in the 1950s, and the attitude of utility to government became more institutionalized than they suggest, being implanted by Eggleston and brought to fruition under Crawford. Foster and Varghese were far too lenient on Copland in his machinations with Menzies to deny communists senior positions at the ANU and his refusal to support ANU academics who were denounced for their political affiliations.

The ANU conforms more closely with Lowen's model of the Cold War university than Chomsky's. The ANU's administrators engaged in self-censorship to avoid alienating the

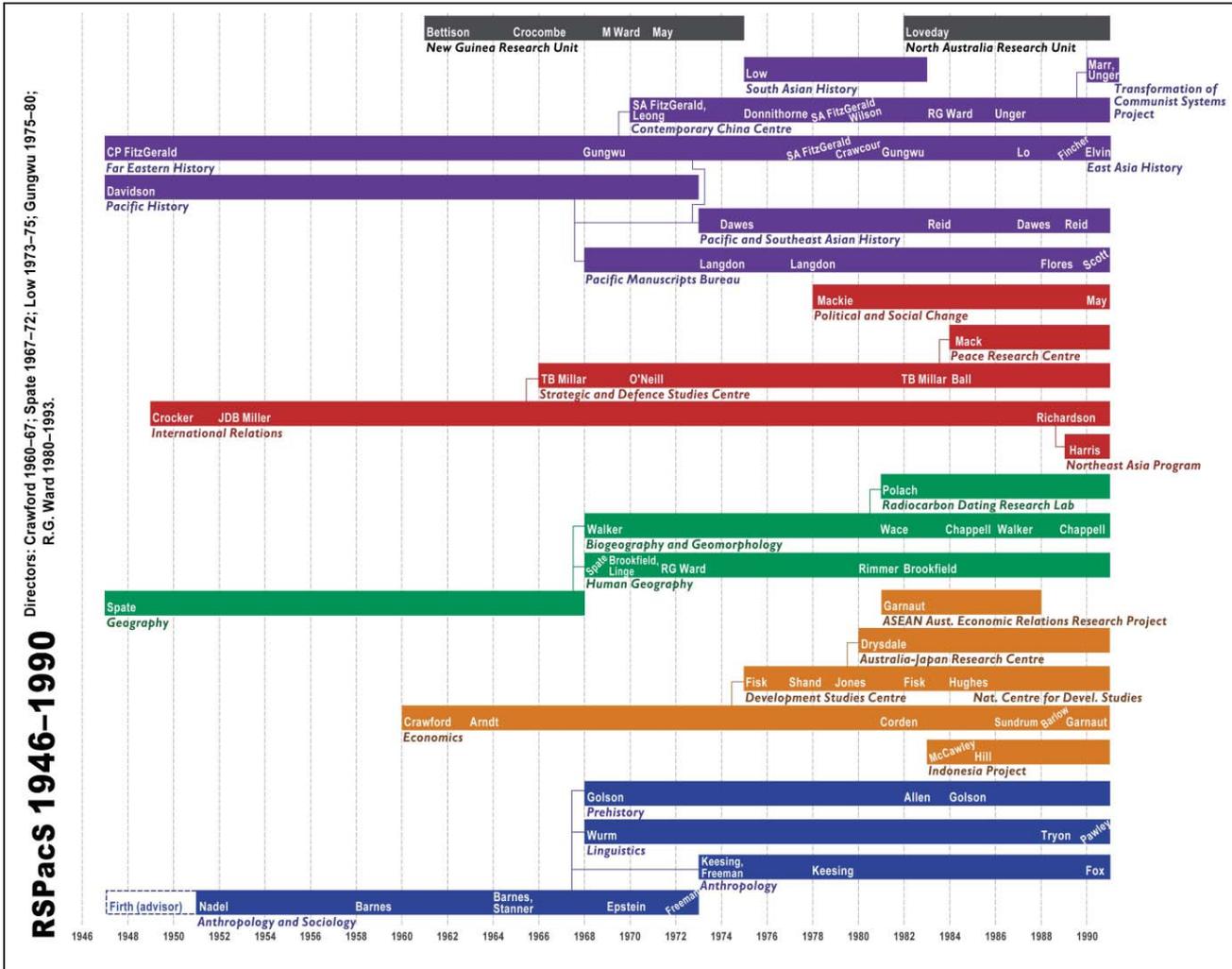
government patrons of the university and did not make strong stands in favour of academic independence. They collaborated with government in attempting to create intellectual conformity, they conducted 'self-policing' of their institution and they attempted to minimise the emergence of critical views. As in Lowen's model, the imposition of a Cold War university mind-set of utility to government and censoring of outspoken critics of government occurred largely through internal actions.

While the ANU was not entirely analogous to the experience of the American Cold War universities, its experience makes it the prototypical Australian Cold War university. Its close links with government created a research agenda closely aligned with government interests, but independence was largely maintained. There were episodes where left-wing influence at the university was curtailed, but there was no direct firing of people for communist affiliation. Federal funding increased throughout the Cold War and an attitude encouraging applied research became entrenched. ASIO attempted to prevent communist subversion, self-censorship was encouraged and protest, where extant, was minimised. The ANU was not, however, entirely subservient to the government. The Australian Cold War university emerged out of a genuine desire on the part of the university to achieve social utility. The ANU used the advantages inherent in its close links with government to develop from a vulnerable, fledgling institution to become Australia's pre-eminent university, consistently achieving the highest position of any Australian university in world university rankings¹.

¹ The Times Higher Education review placed ANU 16th in World University Rankings (Illing, D. "Local Unis Leading World" *The Australian- Higher Education Supplement* November 29th 2006 p.25)

APPENDIX 1: CHANGES TO RSPacS ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE 1946-1990

RSPacS Evolutionary Tree, developed by Alison Ley
 (http://rspas.anu.edu.au/cartography/images/_tree/05-046_RSPacS_all.pdf)



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