Generosity and Refugees: the Kosovars in Exile

Brill's Specials in Modern History

Generosity and Refugees: the Kosovars in Exile

By

Robert Carr

Contents

Acknowledgements

List of Illustrations

Table

Serbia

Montenegro

KOSOVO

Rožaje

Pejë

Pristina

Podgorica

Gjakovë

Bajram curri

Prizren

BULGARIA

Bar

Shkodër

Kukës

Blace

Tetovo

Skopje

Ulqin

Gostivar

THE
FORMER YUGOSLAV
REPUBLIC OF
MACEDONIA

Peshkopi

Mavrovo

ALBANIA

Debar

Kičevo

Durrës

Tirana

Librazhd

Struga

Adriatic
Sea

Elbasan

Ohrid

Lake Ohrid

Bitola

Pogradec

Lake Prespa

Fier

Berat

Korçë

GREECE

Thessaloniki

Vlorë

50 kilometers

© 2018 Mappa Mundi Cartography   50 miles

Agean
Sea

MAP 1 *'Kosovar Refugees, April 1999', in Department of State, United States of America (USA). May 1999. 'Erasing History: Ethnic Cleansing in Kosovo'.*

Introduction: Generosity, Refugees and Historical Perspectives in Relation to the Kosovars

Refugee resettlement is an issue that dominates contemporary Australian politics. It has continued to do so since at least the era of the Howard Government, which governed the country from 1996 to 2007. The major political parties frequently debate how to appropriately respond to the issue of asylum seekers arriving by boat on Australia's northern shores. People smuggling is a priority policy area for the Australian government. Lives have been lost as those seeking protection as refugees have made the dangerous voyage across the seas. A contentious political cycle ensues as these tragedies are conveyed and debated in the media.

Generosity and Refugees: The Kosovars in Exile is a history of the social and political context encountered by Kosovar refugees fleeing their homeland to Australia at the height of the war between North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and Serbian forces in 1999. Situated just prior to Kosovo's declaration of independence, the flight of the Kosovar refugees has had continuing consequences for Australia's refugee policy. Australia's role in the evacuation was a compassionate intervention with both heart-warming and malevolent consequences for the Kosovars. A paradoxical element within Australia's body politic, which this history reveals to be capable of both generosity and cruelty, confronted the Kosovars upon their arrival in the country. A new test for international humanitarianism had begun.

Generosity and Refugees is an inquiry into how a sense of generosity can and has shaped state responses to refugees. It is a political history of the Howard Government's 'Operation Safe Haven', exploring a time when Australian compassion shone brightly and generosity permeated Australia's response to the plight of refugees from Kosovo.

The more recent Syrian refugee crisis created an atmosphere in which the international community has been implored to embrace a generosity of spirit. In September 2015 the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Antonio Guterres stated that the Syrian refugee 'situation requires a massive common effort'. Commending 'the selfless generosity of private citizens and civil society organizations [for] reaching out to welcome and help the new arrivals', Guterres appealed for further international assistance stating, 'overall, Europe has failed to find an effective common response, and

people have suffered as a result.'[1] Australian state and federal governments subsequently offered to assist in the resettlement of 12,000 Syrian and Iraqi refugees. One news media depicted this as a response to 'Churches and NGO s [that] were demanding generosity… With the pressure building, and the call for generosity becoming deafening… The Government is to be commended and every Australian can hold their head up high.'[2]

Responding to such a climate, this book explores whether there are limits to generosity within a broader debate and context concerning refugee resettlement. It investigates the ways in which generosity may be inhibited by nationally contextual and historical perspectives. In doing so, this book examines the Australian news media's portrayal of the Howard Government's treatment of Kosovar refugees temporarily brought to the country in 1999. *Generosity and Refugees* inquires into the relationship between the formation of historical perspectives on asylum seekers and the ways in which they have been mediated, framed and narrativised in popular and political discourse. Examined is the role of the media in framing public understandings of refugees throughout Australian history, drawing parallels that may be useful for understanding the contemporary international political and human rights paradigm.

Operation Safe Haven began with the exodus of Kosovo's refugees from their homeland, followed by a journey to Australia by plane and, for the first group of evacuees, a personal welcome by Prime Minister John Howard at Sydney airport in full view of the nation's media. Numbering just under 4,000 the Kosovar refugees were housed at disused or vacated Australian army barracks, the conditions of which led to confrontation with the Howard Government. The Operation culminated in a contentious challenge brought by the Kosovars to the High Court of Australia, and the refugees' journey home to Kosovo – many by force, many without a home to go back to.

The experience of the Kosovar refugees internationally has been examined by scholarship though analysis has been much sparser in regards to the Aus-

---

1   A. Guterres, 'Statement by UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Antonio Gutterres on refugee crisis in Europe', United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 4th September 2015. URL: http://www.unhcr.org/news/press/2015/9/55e9459f6 /statement-un-high-commissioner-refugees-antonio-guterres-refugee-crisis.html. Accessed 5th September 2015.

2   R. Marles, 'This generosity on Syrian refugees is the sign of a civilized nation', *Herald Sun*, 11th September 2015. URL: http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/opinion /this-generosity-on-syrian-refugees-is-the-sign-of-a-civilised-nation/news-story /78241095c63b6a37f79d48e9b6d3273e. Accessed 15th September 2015.

tralian context.[3] Their treatment in Australia provided much of the initial impetus for the introduction of the Howard Government's temporary protection regime. The visa arrangements under which the Kosovars' were evacuated to Australia became a precursor for the Temporary Protection Visa (TPV). Their temporary stay in Australia provides insight into the continuities that have shaped refugee policy. More recently, images of Manus and Nauru island detention centres as well as Curtin Detention Centre (located in the far northern region of Western Australia) and Christmas Island have appeared regularly on the evening television news. Asylum seekers continue to be housed in isolation camp-like conditions on the mainland of Australia as well as in offshore processing centres. These camps are guarded by armed security personnel and by their remote locations the facilities provided to house refugees by-and-large deter if not prevent them from mixing with the general population. These conditions are very similar to those faced by the Kosovars in 1999. The difference is that the Kosovars were a "popular" group of refugees who were openly welcomed by the Australian government. Such conditions beg questions about the isolation of refugees in remote regions in and offshore from Australia and why quarantine-type accommodation continues to be utilised.

The history of Operation Safe Haven begins in late March 1999, when NATO began a major air-bombing campaign against Yugoslav military forces inside Kosovo. The offensive was aimed at defending local ethnic Albanians against the violence being perpetuated by Serbian paramilitaries.[4] By the end of the following fortnight the UNHCR formally appealed to the international community to evacuate Kosovars waiting for help at the border of the Former

---

3   See D. McMaster, *Asylum Seekers: Australia's Response to Refugees*, Melbourne University Press, Carlton South, 2001 (reprinted 2002). See also S. Pickering, 'Common Sense and Original Deviancy: News Discourses and Asylum Seekers in Australia', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 14(2), 2001, pp. 169-186. See also J. Van Selm (ed.), *Kosovo's Refugees in the European Union*, Pinter, London and New York, 2000. See also C. Driscoll, 'Drawing race and refugees: making sense of political cartoons of Australian refugee policy 1886-2001' (Doctoral Thesis), RMIT University, Melbourne, 2015. See also M.J. Gibney, 'Kosovo and beyond: popular and unpopular refugees', *Forced Migration Review*, 1999, 5, pp. 28-30. URL: http://www.fmreview.org/sites/fmr/files/FMRdownloads/en/FMRpdfs/FMR05/fmr5full.pdf. Accessed 1st December 2016.

4   Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA), 'Report on RCOA field visit to Kosovo and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia', November 1999. URL: https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/r/rpt/1999-Kosovo-field.pdf. Accessed 12th October 2016. The conflict had intensified in previous months as a result of fighting between the separatist Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) and forces of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in a dispute over the sovereignty of the Serbian province. Around 840,000 ethnic Albanians fled Kosovo, having been expelled by Serbian forces and in conjunction with the displacement caused by NATO air strikes.

Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Concerned about ethnic tensions, Macedonian authorities had closed the country's borders to the fleeing refugees. It was feared that the sudden influx of over 250,000 refugees into Macedonia would tip the fragile balance between its own ethnic Macedonian and Albanian populations.[5] The domestic political climate in Macedonia was delicate and there were a growing number of public demonstrations against the NATO campaign.[6] The Macedonian government's concerns were further compounded by the argument that NATO's bombing campaigns had caused the mass influx of refugees in the first place.[7] Over the next two months the evacuation saw 91,000 refugees relocated on a temporary basis to 29 countries including Australia. The UN's aim was to relieve pressure on Macedonia and to ensure the border remained open to those refugees fleeing Kosovo.[8] NATO air strikes ended three months later alongside the withdrawal of Yugoslav forces from the province.

On 6th April 1999 the Howard Government agreed that it would temporarily relocate a limited number of Kosovar refugees to Australia for three months, although it had initially rejected the UN's request to do so. The Government announced the new temporary 'Safe Haven' visa scheme, establishing the first formal policy on temporary protection in Australian immigration history. These changes culminated in the introduction of the *Migration Legislation Amendment* (*Temporary Safe Haven Visas*) *Act 1999* (Cth) on 11th May 1999. The

---

5   *Ibid.* See also J. Van Selm, 'Reception in other states: information relating to other key states involved in the reception of Kosovars (Appendix 1)', in Van Selm, *op. cit.*, p. 213. Van Selm's assessment is that 'Macedonia had a substantial ethnic Albanian minority already, and the political balance was already somewhat worrisome'.

6   Van Selm, *op. cit.*, pp. 212-213. It is noted here that the country was still hosting 1250 refugees from the Bosnian conflict, indicating a source of tension in Macedonian domestic politics. See also p. 213. Here, the Macedonian Prime Minister Ljubco Georgievski stated that the country was in danger of political and economic collapse. His government questioned why Macedonia was expected to take endless refugees while other countries in the region had refused to open their borders. Georgievski added: 'How many [Kosovar refugees] do we have to take to satisfy Europe and for the Kosovo people to say thank you? All this time we have been trying to get the UNHCR to take care of the refugees. The problem is they are not doing anything.'

7   *Ibid.*, p. 213. See also M.W. Manulak, 'Canada and the Kosovo crisis; a "golden moment" in Canadian foreign policy', *International Journal*, Spring, 2009, p. 574. Here the author states: 'Not only did Milosevic not blink, but some blamed NATO bombs for the mass exodus of Kosovar refugees.'

8   Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA), 'Report on RCOA field visit to Kosovo and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia', *op. cit.*

Safe Haven program was defined by the government as a 'short term humanitarian' measure, under which 4,000 Kosovar refugees were to be given an initial three-month Safe Haven Visa (with a view to possible extension as determined by Phillip Ruddock, the Immigration Minister). A "sunset" clause of six months also applied in which an offer of safe haven would expire if not taken up before that time. Under the arrangements the Kosovars would receive food, accommodation (at eight disused or vacated military bases), health care and other necessities, as well as an allowance of $20 for adults and $5 for children per week.[9] The legislation refused the right of the Kosovars to apply for permanent residency or social security benefits and initially they were explicitly banned from obtaining paid employment.

The legislation empowered the Immigration Minister to shorten, extend or cancel a Safe Haven Visa at will. It denied the Kosovars the right of appeal in applying for refugee status under the United Nations (UN) Convention on Refugees or to obtain any other type of visa. The Government would be able to use the legislation to force entire Kosovar families to be repatriated at any time.[10] The Safe Haven legislation granted non-reviewable, exclusive powers to the Immigration Minister to determine the status of Safe Haven Visa holders, insulating the minister from external judicial review. The visa denied the Kosovar refugees the right to be treated by the Australian government with the protection afforded to them under international human rights conventions. Such limits generated some criticism from the Australian Greens and Democrats in the Senate.[11]

---

9   B. York, 'Australia and Refugees, 1901-2002: An Annotated Chronology Based on Official Sources', Information and Research Services, Department of the Parliamentary Library, Canberra, 16th June 2003, p. 81.

10 M. Head, 'The Kosovar and Timorese "Safe Haven" Refugees', *Alternative Law Journal*, 24(6), December, 1999, p. 279. See also pp. 282-283. Here, Head states, under the Migration Legislation Amendment (Temporary Safe Haven Visas) Act, there was vague and sweeping language that entitled the Minister to refuse or cancel visas, such as 'good character' or 'representing "a danger to the Australian community"'. He pointed out that Safe Haven Visas could be used to discriminate on grounds of 'national security' and 'prejudice to Australia's international relations.' The danger, Head says, was of the refugees' interests being subordinated to the Australian Government's relations with Indonesia or other countries. Moreover, refusals and cancellations of the Safe Haven Visas automatically applied to applicants' immediate family members.

11 See D. Margetts, in 'Migration Legislation Amendment (Temporary Safe Haven Visas) Bill 1999; Second Reading', *Senate: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 29th April 1999, pp. 4557-4559. See also A. Bartlett, in 'Migration Legislation Amendment (Temporary Safe Haven Visas) Bill 1999; Second Reading', *Senate:*

Prior to the Kosovo conflict in 1999 the international community had used 'safe haven' as the name for a variety of humanitarian programs. For example, the United States military conducted its own Operation Safe Haven as early as 1957 in which 20,000 Hungarian refugees were relocated to the US following Soviet suppression of the Hungarian revolt and offered permanent residency.[12] The US conducted another Operation Safe Haven to resettle tens of thousands of Iraqis to the US as recently as 2009.[13] Australia's Safe Haven program was designed, unlike these operations, to evacuate a limited number of Kosovars – whose rights and liberties would be highly restricted by the Howard Government – as a short-term temporary option.

The Immigration Minister described the Australian government's Operation Safe Haven on 4th May 1999 as: 'a program of evacuation to provide safe haven for people where there is an expectation they should be able to return home.'[14] The Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA) said the intent of the operation was very clear from the start. It was the first time in Australian immigration history that refugees had been brought to Australia with the 'express purpose that it be for short-term respite rather than resettlement'.[15]

The Kosovar refugees' experience of temporary safe haven in Australia – including their flight from war in Yugoslavia, evacuation and arrival in Sydney – was widely reported by the media at the time. The Kosovars' story has in many ways been overshadowed by subsequent heated public debates about asylum seekers from the Middle East as well as Sri Lanka and Afghanistan. Yet, no other group of refugees has been associated with challenging and changing the

---

Official Hansard, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 29th April 1999, pp. 4553-4557.

12   See 'REFUGEES: Safe Haven', *Time Magazine*, 17th December 1956. URL: http://content .time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,867401,00.html. Accessed 3rd October 2016. See also 'Operation Provide Comfort II', *Global Security*. URL: http://www.globalsecurity.org /military/ops/provide_comfort_2.htm. Accessed 12th October 2016. Here, the less ambiguous name 'Operation Provide Comfort' was given to the US program that assisted Kurdish refugees fleeing Iraq following the Gulf War in 1991, in which the US military offered protection to the refugees and ensured deliveries humanitarian aid.

13   See 'Operation Safe Haven Iraq 2009; An Action Plan for Airlifting Endangered Iraqi's Linked to the United States', Centre for American Progress. URL: https://www .americanprogress.org/issues/courts/report/2009/01/12/5437/operation-safe-haven-iraq -2009/. Accessed 12th October 2016.

14   P. Ruddock, cited in S. Gee and T. Skotnicki, 'Mire ce vini ne Australia (That's welcome, in Albanian)', *The Daily Telegraph*, 4th May 1999, p. 6.

15   Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA), 'KOSOVO SAFE HAVENS: Views from the Community Sector', January 2000. URL: http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/r/rpt /2000-Kosovo-Havens.pdf. Accessed 12th October 2016.

policies of a Prime Minister with such profound immediacy – and, no less, those of John Howard, who has since been credited with winning the 2001 federal election while demonising refugees involved in the "children overboard" affair. Very few public or media commentators expressed concern about the evacuation. After all, there were no boats illegally ferrying the Kosovars towards Australia's shores and the evacuation itself was sanctioned by the Federal Government. The Kosovar refugees were even welcomed by Prime Minister Howard with 'open arms' at Sydney airport.[16]

Generosity and Refugees draws on empirical evidence primarily from three Australian newspapers in establishing the story of the Kosovar refugees' stay in Australia, including their interactions with everyday Australians in the community and at the army barracks where they were housed. It investigates the extent to which the plight of the Kosovars ultimately forced the hand of the Howard Government to provide the refugees with temporary safe haven. Was media pressure the reason for the Government's change of heart? What *is* the power of the mass media in influencing the direction of refugee policy and the acceptability of refugees in Australian society? Calls for tougher border control generally come in far greater quantities in Australian news headlines than calls for empathy towards refugees. So what made the Kosovars unique and perhaps special in the eyes of Australians?

Generosity and Refugees provides insight into the inner workings of the Liberal Party led by John Howard, and the manipulations of his Immigration Minister Philip Ruddock. This book unveils bureaucratic workings of the Department of Immigration as a propagator of government ideology, in shaping public consensus on refugees in the contemporary context and in executing government policies. This book interrogates Howard and Ruddock's personal roles in shaping an important chapter of Australian refugee policy. The high profile associated with Ruddock's role as Immigration Minister was in many ways second only to Howard's political maneuverings in terms of galvanising public attention. It was under Ruddock's ministry that Australia first introduced mandatory detention for children seeking asylum, uncapped periods of incarceration for asylum seekers, and the accommodation of them in barren and isolated detention centres located in Woomera, Port Hedland and Christmas Island. Focusing on his policies and practices, scholars are able to reflect on how contemporary refugee policy has come to be *so* politicised today.

This inquiry incorporates the perspective that Ruddock's role was an extension of the machinations of the Howard-led Liberal Party. However, in

---

16   J. Howard, cited in R. Chesterton, 'SAFE IN OUR ARMS: Sydney greets refugees', *The Daily Telegraph*, 8th May 1999, p. 4.

this book Howard and Ruddock also share the stage as key actors in a narrative driven by populist politicking. As Prime Minister, Howard's seemingly unshakeable standing within the Liberal Party – propped up by the loyalty of acolytes such as Tony Abbott – and his keen eye for populism produced four successive election victories for the Liberal-National coalition. At the same time Ruddock ought to be viewed as an extremely important front bencher and Australian political figure during the Howard era – as much as Peter Costello, Alexander Downer, Peter Reith, Amanda Vanstone and Tony Abbott.

In some ways very little in Australia's refugee policy has changed since the Howard era particularly in the language chosen to articulate it. While making comparisons with the contemporary Federal Government is not the aim of this book, there are parallels that are evident and worth noting albeit briefly. The policies initiated by the Liberal Party – such as the Tony Abbott/Malcolm Turnbull Government's 'Operation Sovereign Borders', which is arguably more of a "call to arms" than a measured policy response – have evolved, but the policy language remains fundamentally normative and populist. Prime Minister Howard, however, was more of a pragmatist. His shrewdness in utilising media and empathy for the plight of refugees to gain political advantage is elaborated in this history of Operation Safe Haven.

In the international context, the theme of generosity frequently permeates refugee policy formation and associated debates, historically and in the contemporary era. Whitaker stipulates that the period from 1950 to the mid-1970s has been identified as a "golden age" in terms of 'an extraordinary era of relative prosperity and stability' and for refugee resettlement.[17] However, 'there is no doubt that the 1980s and 1990s have witnessed a sharp reversal of an historical pattern of relative generosity in refugee policy on the part of all the Western capitalist democracies, in Europe and North America alike.'[18] Challenging the "golden age" thesis, Whitaker states:

> one ought not to romanticise the past. Even if the period from the late
> 1940s through the 1970s is perceived as a "golden age" of relatively generous refugee resettlement, we are now [by the late-1990s] returning to a
> norm that characterised Europe and North America between the wars.[19]

Similarly Taylor explores an historical case study in which approximately 21,000 Hungarian refugees were offered asylum in the United Kingdom (UK)

---

17   R. Whitaker, 'Refugees: The Security Dimension', *Citizenship Studies*, 2(3), 1998, p. 413.
18   *Ibid.*
19   *Ibid.*, p. 414.

following the Soviet invasion of Hungary in October 1956. Taylor stipulates that 'well-worn tropes of the generosity of the British and their traditions of tolerance and hospitality were deployed consistently at national and local levels.'[20] She states that this 'had the effect of implying that entry to Britain was a privilege and one not to be abused, and it marginalized refugees who failed to conform to particular expectations.'[21] The implications of this, Taylor stipulates, include 'a failure of a new discourse of rights to permeate the language surrounding their reception', and that British attitudes toward Hungarian refugees, positioned as "grateful" or "ungrateful" in public discourse, 'can be usefully understood within the context of broader conceptions of the "deserving" and "undeserving" poor and their relationship with the (welfare) state.'[22]

Identifying a similar distinction in public discourse, Kushner describes how 'hostility of the media, politicians, state and public against asylum-seekers in Britain is unprecedented in its intensity', arguing that 'rarely in modern British history have those campaigning for refugee rights been so isolated, marginalized and silenced.'[23] He states that 'history has been instrumentalized to prove, through alleged generosity in the past, the moral righteousness of Britain's treatment of refugees.'[24]

Adding to this body of scholarship, Gibson explores how generosity permeated more recent political debates in the UK regarding refugee accommodations, identifying a how:

> [a] distinction between hotel/asylum, politics/ethics, also invokes a distinction between a discourse of rights – the right to asylum or hospitality – and a discourse of generosity, a distinction between a hospitality of invitation and a hospitality of visitation.[25]

Citing Derrida, Gibson states that 'there is consequently a "hidden contradiction between hospitality and invitation"; a difference between a hospitality of

20   B. Taylor, '"Their Only Words of English Were 'Thank You'": Rights, Gratitude and 'Deserving' Hungarian Refugees to Britain in 1956', *Journal of British Studies*, 55, 2016, p. 120.

21   *Ibid.*

22   *Ibid.*

23   T. Kushner, 'Meaning nothing but good: ethics, history and asylum-seeker phobia in Britain', *Patterns of Prejudice*, 37(3), 2003, p. 257.

24   *Ibid.*

25   S. Gibson, 'Accommodating strangers: British hospitality and the asylum hotel debate', *Journal for Cultural Research*, 7(4), 2003, p. 374.

invitation and a hospitality of visitation.'[26] Both of these categorisations (invitation/visitation) are evident in comprehending the status of temporary safe haven assigned to the Kosovars evacuated to Australia. Granted temporary safe haven protection, the Kosovars assumed the role of temporary guest with accompanying legal protections, situating them within a discourse of rights (the *right* to asylum and hospitality). Simultaneously, the Kosovars existed within a discourse of generosity, situating them on both sides of Derrida's distinction between 'a hospitality of invitation and a hospitality of visitation'.[27] A comparable example has been identified by Özden whose 2013 analysis outlines how, in committing to a temporary protection regime for accommodating Syrian refugees, Turkey utilised the concept "guests" instead of "refugees" to depict them in official language. In doing so 'the Turkish state has not carried out a policy towards Syrians based on a discourse of rights, but rather one based on "generosity".'[28]

For the purposes of this book the theme of generosity provides an overarching frame within which various sub-themes can be explained and understood. The term generosity is often referred to explicitly in political and media discourse in the empirical evidence examined; on other occasions, the theme of generosity is signified through its proximity in discourse to the relatable themes of human rights, compassion, empathy, charity, protection of innocence, genocide, national identity and belonging.

Jenkins notes how the theme of generosity has been utilised in relation to debates on asylum seekers in Australian federal politics, describing how:

> Generosity [is] conceived as an attitude that can be sustained only in so far as it does not undermine the dominant position of the one who 'gives,' the one who has something in excess to give, and only gives out of that excess, thus without risking damage to the reserves necessary to maintain ourselves just as we are; that is, in the position of the generous and not of those in need of generosity.[29]

---

26   *Ibid.*, citing J. Derrida, *Acts of Religion*, ed. G. Anidjar, Routledge, London and New York, 2002, p. 362; and, J. Derrida, 'Hostipitality', *Angelaki*, 5(3), 2000, p. 14.

27   Gibson, *op. cit.*, p. 374. Citing Derrida, 'Hostipitality', *op. cit.*, p. 14.

28   S. Özden, 'Syrian Refugees in Turkey', *MPC Research Reports* (2013/05), 2013, p. 5. URL: http://www.migrationpolicycentre.eu/docs/MPC-RR-2013-05.pdf. Accessed 20th November 2016. Also cited in I. Afacan, 'Turkey's "syrian refugees" predicament', *Turkish Review*, 4(2), 2014, pp. 218-221.

29   F. Jenkins, 'Gesture Beyond Tolerance: generosity, fatality and the logic of the state', *Angelaki*, 7(3), 2002, pp. 119-120.

Jenkins views generosity 'as an extension of the attitude of tolerance… as a function of a certain social solidarity', concerned with 'the way in which we construct, articulate and understand' limits to hospitality and 'how we construe our generosity in relation to a thought of limits and delimitation, of boundaries and boundedness.'[30] In the context of contemporary Australian political debates concerning refugees, she states that tensions over the limits to generosity

> invoke a set of questions about that sovereignty that all political parties to this dispute have been determined to assert as the bottom line of any debate over immigration: the claim that only those we choose to enter may enter, and that only under the condition of such authority can there ever be any exercise of generosity.[31]

Jenkins seeks to advance explanations of the 'image of generosity towards others that we preach as the social virtue of "tolerance".[32] However, this book simply invokes understandings of generosity articulated in scholarship as a broad analytical frame. It seeks to draw on these scholarly understandings to elucidate the ways in which the theme of generosity has been utilised historically in Australian political discourse, and specifically within the context of the case study at hand.

Chapter 1 explores the Howard Government's obligations to the Kosovar refugees under international conventions and its responsibilities towards them under Australian law. The Howard Government is remembered for eschewing Australia's obligations to refugees under international conventions. Operation Safe Haven is no exception. So how was the paradox concealed? How did a humanitarian response to a refugee crisis also produce the inhumane Safe Haven policy? An empirically intensive approach provides the foundation upon which this book is written and the analysis is shaped. In this light Chapter 1 unpacks the influence and power of news media, conveying how three Australian newspapers were selected and analysed in exploring the role of media framing throughout Operation Safe Haven. Media spin played an important role in "selling" Operation Safe Haven as well as the acceptability of the Kosovar refugees to the Australian public.

Chapter 2 analyses the global geo-political context for Operation Safe Haven, exploring the nationalist frenzy that occurred in the former Yugoslavia

---

30   *Ibid.*, p. 120.

31   *Ibid.*

32   *Ibid.*

in the 1980s and 1990s, and the historical context for the Kosovo war. It provides background for comprehending ethnic cleansing in Kosovo and the NATO intervention in 1999 from a scholarly perspective. While merely scratching the surface of these historical developments, the intent is to broaden the context of Australia's response to the Kosovo war by attenuating international relationships as they had begun to settle in the post-Cold War era. Driving much of the tensions in the Balkans was Yugoslavia's struggle to modernise throughout the twentieth century. It was industrially inefficient and failed to maintain pace with the global economy. Even with attempts by the regime led by Josip Broz Tito to increase industrialisation, horizontal economic planning and a vertical political structure eventuated in the collapse of the Federation. These tensions provided the setting for what is often called the Yugoslav "wars of succession", which began in Croatia in 1991 and ended in Kosovo in 1999.

The remaining chapters are aligned with the timetable created by the Federal Government for Operation Safe Haven. In Chapter 3 I investigate how the Howard Government propagated the virtues of Operation Safe Haven. The program was framed by the Government and news media as a compassionate evacuation for "deserving" European refugees, those repressed and forced to flee their homeland following the worst humanitarian disaster since World War II. The image portrayed by bureaucrats from the Department of Immigration was that Operation Safe Haven had been without incident. Refugees were selected because they subscribed to ideal criteria – they waited for evacuation happily and patiently as Qantas jets prepped their engines; they were clean, middle class and "just like us". This image of the Kosovars was deliberately manufactured by the Howard Government, but their worthiness as evacuees in the eyes of the Australian public was reinforced by global mass media as well. News coverage of Operation Safe Haven was fraught with pictures of children fleeing the war in Kosovo, and in this chapter I explore the acceptability of the Kosovars as intertwined with the notions of innocence, genocide and human rights violations in Australian news media.

Chapter 4 explores how the Kosovar refugees arrived in Australia suffering from experiences of war, personal loss and state-sponsored atrocities. When the first refugee flight landed at Sydney airport the Kosovars encountered unprecedented media interest as they were formally greeted by the Prime Minister. The Federal Government politicised the Kosovars' arrival. Opportunistically, John Howard capitalised on a rare occasion to bolster his personal standing with the Australian public. The Government's media unit positioned Howard deliberately – at first on the tarmac as the refugees exited the plane, and then high upon a dais where he welcomed the refugees with 'open arms', framed by a background comprising the Australian flag. The Kosovars' first experience of

Australia entailed a sharp contrast between the cameras flashes at the airport and the barbed wire-fences of disused army barracks. While the evacuation may have been intended to assist refugees in desperate need of protection and shelter, the arrival ceremony was certainly about rewarding the Australian public for its generosity.

Kosovar Albanians are European and predominantly Muslim. There was indifference to this in public debate. So what was it about these refugees that would eventually reveal the ideologies of the conservative Howard Government, often remembered for its hard line on asylum seekers? Chapter 5 investigates the media transformation of the Kosovars into an 'ungrateful' lot, into 'busniks' and rebels. Once considered "like us" and deserving of Australia's compassion, the Howard Government turned its back on the Kosovars the moment they questioned the quality of the Safe Haven program. The Kosovars were suddenly thieves, sneaky and tricky, supposedly complaining without provocation and placing unreasonable demands on the Government. In mid-June 1999 over eighty Kosovar refugees refused to accept the accommodation provided for them by the Federal Government at Singleton army barracks. They conducted a bus sit-in, refusing to leave until better accommodation was offered. The protest generated significant media coverage and had the potential to inflict serious damage on the squeaky clean image of Operation Safe Haven manufactured by the Government. The Liberal Party mounted a public relations offensive to politicise and discredit the refugees' claims.

Chapter 6 investigates how the Kosovars were returned to their homeland by the Australian government. Many went home without a choice and many without a home to go back to. The army barracks offered to house them began to close once the war ended in June 1999. The Immigration Minister detained Kosovars who refused to go home. The Government was steadfast in its resolve to remove the Kosovars from Australian soil. Philip Ruddock used legal powers to deny any further protection to the Kosovars. He had declared them 'unlawful non-citizens'. The Safe Haven Visa scheme insulated Philip Ruddock from any checks on his powers. At any time he could expel Kosovar refugees, remove entire families and children against their will, and detain them without trial or review. Some of those who remained in Australia in early 2000 faced these circumstances head on, presenting a challenge in the High Court to prevent their repatriation. Others went into hiding, only to be caught after a manhunt by the Department of Immigration for refugees on the run. Any trace of the purported spirit of generosity underpinning Operation Safe Haven had long since faded along with the flashes of the news cameras.

The final chapter 'The Kosovars and Generosity in Context' effects a change of perspective with a view towards Australian generosity. The issue of refugees

today is marked by a haste to deny their human rights and humanity. Only minor political parties such as the Greens voice any strong objection to this. Complexities surrounding the issue are often sidelined in the national debate. In Australian politics, human rights seem to be only inviolable until refugees arrive without sending a notice of intent – a referral from the UN's refugee agency. That is the "ordered" way preferred by many Australian politicians; many seemingly don't wish others coming to Australia unannounced whose lives are in chaos and who simply turn up seeking help. Ironically, the refugee convention is designed to cater to peoples who lives are just that – chaotic, frightening, and otherwise unfortunate.

It is often unclear why Australia is a signatory to international treaties on refugees and human rights at all when its federal governments have been so ready to discard them. In the contemporary period the Coalition Government remains steadfast in building on refugee policies introduced during the Howard-era, reintroducing temporary protection and remaining committed to mandatory detention. Such policies were overturned by Howard's successors, the ALP Government led by Kevin Rudd, but the political winds changed once again. McAdam stipulates:

> Despite dismantling many of these initiatives when it came to power in 2007, the Labor government gradually started reintroducing them. At first, it seemed to do so with a humanitarian agenda, shifting the rhetoric from 'stopping the boats' to 'saving lives at sea'. In the end, though, it adopted many of the same draconian policies as the Howard government, despite promises that it would never replicate them because of their inhumanity, illegality and ineffectiveness.[33]

The subsequent Labor Government of Julia Gillard further conceded to demands from the Opposition for tougher border protection and reintroduced offshore detention. There has since been significant concern from civil society organisations and charities about the welfare of children incarcerated in offshore immigration detention centres. The nastiness and a haste to isolate foreigners has many international commentators questioning Australia's actions. The release of the 'Nauru Files' in 2016 depicted inaction by the Turnbull Government to respond to 'the assaults, sexual abuse, self-harm attempts, child abuse and living conditions endured by asylum seekers held by the Australian

---

33   J. McAdam, 'Editorial: Australia and Asylum Seekers', *International Journal of Refugee Law*,
        25(3), 2013, p. 493.

government, painting a picture of routine dysfunction and cruelty.'[34] Following the release of the 'Nauru Files', a statement was released by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) describing how: 'OHCHR teams have witnessed many of the migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees [on Nauru], including children, suffering from severe mental health problems as a result of their detention and lack of certainty. For its part, OHCHR has regularly and persistently brought these to the attention of the governments of Nauru and of Australia, but it is not clear to what extent the alleged incidents were properly investigated'.[35]

Generosity and Refugees turns the spotlight toward policy makers and how their decisions are made, posing historical questions about the direction and morality of Australia's refugee policy. The undertaking of Operation Safe Haven demonstrates that a sense of generosity can gain prominence in the public conversation alongside negative portrayals of refugees. It has been argued that Australia needs to incorporate the "voices" of refugees in deciding on the direction of refugee policy, to recognise their stories, their humanity and personalities, and to overcome the "facelessness" of refugees in public debate. As McAdam states: '[refugees] cannot vote, so their voices are marginalized in political debate, and as they are increasingly moved outside the Australian community into immigration detention in remote offshore processing centres, the divide between "them" and "us" is reinforced.'[36]

This book concludes by drawing attention to the complexities and limits of the willingness of Australians to assist others in need. As Colin Salter says greater examination is needed concerning the activities of those with "best intentions", the contradictory structures of civility and those engaged in the pursuit of fair and just relationships.[37] The Kosovars' experiences reveal much about the connections between government and the various groups and individuals who assisted Operation Safe Haven. Revealed are the complexities of

---

34 P. Farrell, N. Evershed and H. Davidson, 'The Nauru files: cache of 2,000 leaked reports reveal scale of abuse of children in Australian offshore detention', *The Guardian*, 10th August 2016. URL: https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2016/aug/10/the-nauru -files-2000-leaked-reports-reveal-scale-of-abuse-of-children-in-australian-offshore -detention. Accessed 11th August 2016.

35 United Nations News Service, 'Australia and Nauru must end offshore detention; investigate claims of abuse – UN rights office', 12th August 2016. URL: http://www.un.org/apps /news/story.asp?NewsID=54669#.WFnjD3er2pg. Accessed 21st December 2016.

36 McAdam, *op. cit.*, p. 435.

37 C. Salter, *Whiteness and Social Change: Remnant Colonialisms and White Civility in Australia and Canada*, Cambridge Scholars Publications, Newcastle upon Tyne, 2012, p. 204.

the desires of Australians to be part of government-led actions, like Operation Safe Haven, which are said to aspire to the best in humanity and which demarcate goodness. While the Operation reveals prejudices – nationalist, xenophobic and populist – actions signifying civility are not without moral complexities, contradictions and inconsistencies.

Likewise, at the heart of *Generosity and Refugees* are questions about how a fairer and more just society is conceived and sought in Australia, and how government responds accordingly. The view espoused in this book is that a sense of generosity can be measured by the ways in which Australians come to know newcomers, their commitment to democracy and equality on a trans-national level and in the policies of their own democratic government. *Generosity and Refugees* is a story about looking "beyond" nationalism as a source of and as a way of measuring goodness and civility.

FIGURE 1   *Street in Pristina shortly after the end of the war in Kosovo.* Courtesy Lloyd Turner.

The Howard Government, Operation Safe Haven and Media Spin

Introduction

The Howard Government is often remembered for eschewing Australia's obligations to refugees under international conventions. Operation Safe Haven is no exception. This chapter begins by exploring the Howard Government's obligations to the Kosovar refugees under international conventions, and its responsibilities towards them under Australian law. So how was the paradox concealed; how did a humanitarian response to a refugee crisis also produce the Safe Haven policy? This chapter briefly comments on the influence and power of news media. Media spin played an important role in "selling" Operation Safe Haven as well as the acceptability of the Kosovar refugees to the Australian public.

Operation Safe Haven in the Context of the International Sphere

Asylum seekers were, until the early 1990s, dealt with under the 1958 *Migration Act* which incorporated Australia's obligations as a signatory to the 1951 UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (hereafter referred to as the Convention).[1] As a signatory, Australia is obliged to offer protection to persons defined as a refugee by the Convention, including those who have a 'well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion … and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country'.[2] Australia's response to refugees under the Convention has

---

1 The 1967 Protocol was an addendum to the 1951 Convention, and is also covered by the Migration Act. The full text of both the 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol is available at United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 'UNHCR – Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees', 1951 and 1967. URL: http://www.unhcr.org/protect /PROTECTION/3b66c2aa10.pdf. Accessed 12th October 2016. See also S.E. Davies, 'Migration and Refugees', in R. Devetak, A. Burke and J. George (eds.), An *Introduction to International Relations: Australian Perspectives*, Cambridge University Press, Port Melbourne, 2007, p. 353.

2 'UNHCR – Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees', *op. cit.*

included (and continues to include) the provision of an annual number of places for refugees to resettle in Australia pending referral by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). There was a quota of 12,000 places reserved for refugees referred to the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA) by the UNHCR for the fiscal year 1999-2000, under the humanitarian component of Australia's immigration program (the 'humanitarian program').[3] Another 3,100 places were available under DIMA's 'special humanitarian program' (SHP) for persons who had suffered discrimination amounting to gross violation of human rights.[4] These programs were not made available to Kosovar refugees evacuated as part of Operation Safe Haven, who were instead offered a new temporary visa class named the 'Safe Haven Visa'.

These policies must be viewed in the context of the broader restructuring of the Department of Immigration with respect to the processing of refugees. Under the Howard Government, the humanitarian program (which accepted refugees via UNHCR referral) remained the main program under which refugees gained access to Australia. Yet DIMA was increasingly tasked with more punitive roles that transformed it into an agency more concerned with border protection. While the Howard Government was not the first government to implement changes in immigration law that enhanced DIMA's border protection responsibilities, it was instrumental in popularising the notion that refugees were to be automatically regarded with a degree of mistrust and scepticism. The Howard Government played a significant part in watering-down humanitarian engagement over the plight of refugees in public debate. The Government shifted the focus to the need to police Australia's borders with increasingly tough measures.

A formal policy on refugees was first introduced in 1977 by Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser, leading a Liberal and Country Party coalition government, to assist those displaced during the Vietnam War. By the 1990s, under Australian law, many asylum seekers were placed on Permanent Protection Visas (PPV) under which they were offered both permanent protection and the right to apply for Australian citizenship. Even before the Kosovar evacuation Australia had already experimented with a number of temporary visas, granted

---

3   L. Humpage and G. Marston, 'Contested Belonging: Temporary Protection in Australia', *Refuge*, 22(2) (Winter), 2005, p. 69.

4   The Mission of U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI), 'About Refugees'. URL: http://www.refugees.org/counrtyreports.aspx?id=559. Accessed 5th April 2009. It is further noted here that another 900 offshore resettlement places were available to refugees under the 'special assistance category' (SAC) for persons who had close links with Australia and who were particularly vulnerable but did not meet the criteria of the other categories.

to people already in Australia and who were unable to return home (mainly from Iraq, Lebanon, China and Sri Lanka). In 1989, for instance, the Labor Federal Hawke Government provided a four-year temporary protection for Chinese students already in Australia following the Tiananmen Square massacre, which were later upgraded to permanent visas.[5] It was the Keating Labor Government that first introduced a kind of good/bad dichotomy with regard to refugees; by introducing the *Migration Amendment Act 1992* (*Cth*), Keating established mandatory detention for "boat people".[6] The legislative changes also featured a sub-category to provide four-year temporary protection visas to particular refugees. This first attempt at temporary protection was highly unsuccessful due to the uncertainties faced by applicants and because many Australian employers found the scheme unattractive and were reluctant to provide work to these kinds of visa holders.[7] In 1994, the Federal Government returned to offering more permanent protection and it was not until war unfolded in the former Yugoslavia in 1999 that the notion of temporary protection regained prominence.[8]

Between 1984 and 2004 the number of refugees worldwide almost doubled, peaking in 1994 following the Rwanda genocide.[9] The world's refugee population (as specified by the UNHCR) was around 21 million people at the time of the Kosovo war.[10] At the turn of the twenty-first century, countries in the developing world were responsible for the welfare of about ninety-five per cent of the world's refugee population, while only five per cent of refugees were being sheltered by developed countries.[11] Still, the context for Operation Safe Haven was one in which governments were witnessing the increasing movement of

---

5   J. King, 'Australia and Canada compared: the reaction to the Kosovar crisis', *Australian Journal of Human Rights*, 15, 2003, footnote 3. URL: https://web.archive.org/web/20060917134745/http://austlii.law.uts.edu.au/au/journals/AJHR/2003/15.html. Accessed 10th October 2016.

6   J. Jupp, *From White Australia to Woomera: The Story of Australian Immigration*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2002 (reprinted 2004), esp. p. 52, p. 66 and p. 183.

7   King, 'Australia and Canada compared: the reaction to the Kosovar crisis', *op. cit.*, see footnote 3.

8   *Ibid.* King notes that some concessions of temporary protection were offered to former Yugoslav nationals between 1992 and 1997, but these were expected to leave Australia by 31st July 1997. These refugees, it must be noted, retained the ability to apply for permanent residence if they met the criteria for any other visa, including the family and skilled visa.

9   R.W. Mansbach and K.L. Rafferty, *Introduction to Global Politics*, Routledge, New York, 2008, p. 626.

10   Davies, *op. cit.*, pp. 355-357.

11   *Ibid.*, pp. 355-357.

the world's population from underdeveloped to wealthier countries. A major problem for the UNHCR was (and continues to be) an increasing reluctance by wealthier countries to accept refugees on a permanent basis. Their position has been promoted by domestic backlashes against immigrants that have sometimes been fuelled by racial overtones.[12] This trend is further reflected in the fact that, by 2008, forty per cent of countries had implemented policies to reduce the level of immigration.[13] The typical response by Western governments has seen a situation arise in which, 'in the name of guarding "national" interests, immigration controls have rarely been as tight as they are at the start of the twenty-first century, aided in particular by the intensified surveillance than can be conducted using new information technologies.'[14]

The NATO campaign against Yugoslavia can be viewed as directly linked to the regional instability that emerged after the breakdown of the Yugoslav state and the rise of the US as a sole global superpower. International post-Cold War politics significantly implicated the ways in which the refugee situation was conceived of and dealt with by NATO and its allies. Frans J. Schuurman makes the point that during the period of the Cold War, 'the advanced industrialised countries used the existence of the communist bloc (especially the Soviet Union) as a legitimation to uphold the military strength of individual countries (especially the USA) and of NATO... Military interventions from both sides [of the Cold War] in their own periphery were accepted strategies.'[15] Schuurman goes on:

> With the end of the Cold War this legitimation of the armed forces ended. The search was then on for new legitimation, which was found in a number of opportunities [including] "ethnic cleansing" in Africa and the Balkans, etc. US military power is still being wielded as the hegemonic global military force. In contrast to the previous period the legitimating discourse is now the defence of human rights, a defence against drugs, and an urge to help countries on the road to democracy and the free market system.[16]

12   Mansbach and Rafferty, *op. cit.*, p. 627.

13   *Ibid.*

14   J.A. Scholte, *Globalization; a critical introduction*, Palgrave, New York, 2000, p. 140.

15   F.J. Shuurman, 'The Nation-State, Emancipatory Spaces and Development Studies in the Global Era', in F.J. Shuurman, *Globalization and Development Studies; Challenges for the 21st century*, SAGE, London, 2001, p. 71.

16   *Ibid.*

At the time of the Kosovo war, many media and political commentators in Australia regarded the Yugoslav communist regime as "backward" and archaic. Sheltering and providing safe haven to refugees from this part of the world was frequently construed as liberating by Western political leaders including Bill Clinton and Tony Blair. As a supporter of NATO, the Australian government's response strongly reflected these kinds of judgements about the global order in the post-Cold War era.

Australia's response to the Kosovars further reflected ongoing ramifications of the rapid breakdown of post-colonial societies in the 1960s and 1970s, and the increasing burden placed upon wealthier nations to assist in the resettlement of refugees from these countries (including in South East Asia and Africa). The Australian government resettled around 85,000 refugees from Indochina between 1975 and 1985.[17] Australia's acceptance of refugees, however, has been mediated by a culture of stringent selection procedures. Jackie Davies comments that Australia's annual quota of 12,000 places for refugees had been rarely filled (at the time of writing), 'because the conditions that Australia places upon who they will accept as a refugee are too narrow to fit with the profile of many refugees needing resettlement.'[18] Some of these conditions included the ability to speak English, a relatively high standard of education, physical and mental health as well as an age threshold. It is little wonder, Davies argues, that an average of only 4,000 Convention refugees had actually been accepted each year.[19]

Despite these selection procedures, Australia's refugee quota by the time of Operation Safe Haven had been no less or more harsh than other countries in the developed world. A significant part of the rationale behind immigration policies has been the need for governments to promote a balance between population growth, the economy and the environmental capacity of a country to sustain such a population. Australian governments have continually emphasised the need for "skilled" migrants under the humanitarian program as well as offering preference to those that are not only healthy and willing to work, but who also have desirable skills relative to industry demands.[20] Since 2001, the "war on terror" has often been used to justify even tougher standards for the acceptance of refugees into Western countries, with the Howard Government readily drawing on the notion that "terrorists" might enter Australia

---

17   Davies, *op. cit.*, p. 358.

18   *Ibid.*

19   *Ibid.*

20   E.F. Kunz, *Displaced Persons; Calwell's New Australians*, Australian National University Press, Rushcutters Bay, 1988, p. 49.

under the guise of being refugees. The irony is that Australian government policies, particularly those of John Howard-led coalitions, have been hostile towards those deemed "economic refugees" – those persons, sometimes conceived of as "middle class" refugees, who leave poorer countries for rich ones in search of a better life. While the use of this terminology by governments continues to resonate with the electorate, the legal ramifications are drastic for those deemed to be "economic refugees", as countries are under no legal obligation to grant asylum to such persons under the Convention.[21]

The UNHCR's request for Australia to evacuate and temporarily provide a safe haven to Kosovar refugees as part of its Kosovo Humanitarian Evacuation Programme (HEP) in early April 1999 was extraordinary in terms of Australia's obligations under both domestic law and international conventions. The procedures did not follow the usual process of referral via which Australia would admit refugees for the purposes of permanent resettlement. The UNHCR typically administered the process whereby refugees were "screened" before being referred to the Department of Immigration. In this case, however, Australian immigration officials were dispatched by the Federal Government to the refugee camps in Macedonia to screen refugees themselves for temporary safe haven in Australia. This was because the UNHCR was unprepared and overwhelmed by the immediacy with which refugees had flooded across the borders of Kosovo and into camps hastily erected as emergency accommodation.

As noted earlier the Australian government implemented significant changes to immigration law in order to accommodate the Kosovar refugees by dividing protection visas into two subclasses – permanent visas and temporary visas.[22] These measures passed both Houses of Parliament on 11th May 1999 and increased the Howard Government's coercive powers in dealing with non-citizens. As part of the *Migration Legislation Amendment (Temporary Safe Haven Visas) Act 1999* (Cth) these changes were designed to control almost every aspect of the visitors' lives. The Safe Haven legislation granted non-reviewable, exclusive powers to the Immigration Minister to determine the status of Safe Haven Visa holders. The new powers were designed to uphold the integrity of the existing Australian immigration program, and insulate the minister from accountability via external review. They granted the minister the authority to cancel an individual's Safe Haven Visa, and prevent the Kosovar refugees from attaining more permanent residency in Australia. The Safe

---

21   Mansbach and Rafferty, *op. cit.*, p. 627.

22   The Mission of U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI), 'About Refugees', *op. cit.*

Haven Visa legislation severely diminished refugees' access to rights afforded to them under the 1951 Refugee Convention, the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Punishment (CAT), and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).[23] One of the protections offered to refugees under the 1951 Convention, for example, was the right not to be returned (*non-refoulement*) to a situation where such persons could face torture or other cruel or degrading treatment. These and other aspects of the 1951 Convention did not apply to refugees who had been given a Safe Haven Visa.[24]

It should be noted that nowhere in the Safe Haven legislation are the Kosovars referred to as "refugees", and as such there is a need to clarify why the Kosovars are depicted in this book as such. Description of the Kosovars as refugees is consistent with international recognition of this status; for instance, Kosovars evacuated to the United States at this time were 'admitted under the refugee provisions of the *Immigration and Nationality Act* (INA), which provide for permanent admission after a year in refugee Status'.[25] Furthermore members of the Howard Government described Kosovars who had fled their homeland around this time as 'refugees' including both John Howard and Philip Ruddock.[26] Moreover, news media content surrounding the experiences of the Kosovars in Australia consistently describes this group of evacuees as refugees.

Recognising this contention over the use of terms is useful for understanding the political and legal debates of 1999 and 2000 regarding the treatment

---

23   S. Taylor, 'Protection or Prevention? A Close Look at the Temporary Safe Haven Visa Class', *UNSW Law Journal*, 23(3), 2000, p. 79. Liz Curren also supports this interpretation of these international conventions, in L. Curren, 'Hordes or Human Beings?; A Discussion of Some of the Problems Surrounding Australia's Response to Asylum Seekers and Possible Solutions to Those Problems', Catholic Mission for Justice, Development and Peace, Melbourne, Discussion Paper 8, March 2000, p. 5.

24   See Taylor, 'Protection or Prevention? A Close Look at the Temporary Safe Haven Visa Class', *op. cit.*, esp. p. 102. See also Davies, *op. cit.*, p. 352.

25   L.B. McHugh & J. Vialet, 'Kosovo: Refugee Assistance and Temporary Resettlement', Congressional Research Services – Library of Congress, Washington, 1st September 1999, p. 5. See also description of Canada's legislative response in King, 'Australia and Canada compared: the reaction to the Kosovar crisis', *op. cit.*

26   See R. McGregor, 'Kosovar family can go – Ruddock', *The Australian*, 19th June 1999, p. 6. Here, John Howard describes Kosovars accommodated at the Singleton army barracks as 'refugees'. See also M. Grattan, 'Backflip So Quick Details Are Yet To Be Settled', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 7th April 1999, p. 7. Here Phillip Ruddock states 'flying planeloads of refugees into Australia would not be an appropriate response.'

and status of the Kosovars. As explored later in this book these debates extended from the Howard Government's decision not to process this group under the UN Convention on Refugees, which 'suggests states have an obligation to provide for individual determination of refugee applications in order to find a durable solution for refugees'.[27] The Kosovars evacuated to Australia did not undergo this process of refugee status determination, which technically means they were not refugees under Australian law. However, contention over this legal technicality relates to an alternative interpretation of the applicability of the UN Convention on Refugees under Australian law which stipulates that the 'Convention cannot be made unavailable for persons for whom it was intended.'[28]

Legal nuances aside, from the beginning Operation Safe Haven was designed to select particular *kinds* of evacuees to be evacuated to Australia that ensured their compliance with the visa program. The Safe Haven Visa legislation had 'far-reaching provisions to extinguish the legal and democratic rights of unwanted asylum-seekers.'[29] At the same time, the Immigration Minister promoted the legislation, which passed through both houses of Parliament largely unopposed, as 'a magnanimous and humanitarian offer of haven.'[30]

Temporary Protection in the International Context

The Australian approach to temporary protection as it emerged during Operation Safe Haven is situated in a broader international context. Australia's response to the Kosovar refugees, in terms of granting evacuees temporary safe haven status, was a major shift in refugee policy domestically away from permanent protection; however, this response was in line with that of other Western European countries as well as the UNHCR's request in April 1999 for temporary protection. European countries had attempted for some time to redefine protection instruments for refugees within a temporary framework of asylum. This was part of a move away from permanent protection that sought

---

27   King, 'Australia and Canada compared: the reaction to the Kosovar crisis', *op. cit.*

28   From a statement by the UNHCR's Director of the Division of International Protection, cited in Refugee Council of Australia RCOA, 'Media Release (Return of the Kosovars)', 13th April 2000. URL: https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/n/mr/000413-Kosovars.pdf. Accessed 12th October 2016. Also cited in J. King, 'The Temporary Safe Haven – An Australian Perspective', *Refuge*, 19(2), 2001, p. 19.

29   M. Head, 'The Kosovar and Timorese "Safe Haven" Refugees', *Alternative Law Journal*, 24(6), December, 1999, p. 279.

30   *Ibid.*

to enable states to respond with greater flexibility and rapidity to a specific series of historical circumstances. This shift was 'a short-term strategy to secure the immediate physical safety of refugees and a way station to more durable protection.'[31]

Durieux outlines that while the concept can be traced to formulations of 'temporary refuge' in the 1980s, temporary protection 'truly emerged as a term of art in the 1990s, as Western Europe was faced with a large-scale influx of forced migrants from the former Yugoslavia.'[32] Writing in 1993, Morten describes the historical context for this shift;

> temporary protection has thus been discussed and used, among other places, in connection with Vietnamese refugees in Hong Kong, Thailand and elsewhere in South East Asia, in connection with Afghan refugees in Pakistan and Iran, and in connection with Iranian refugees in Turkey. Once again we are in a situation where the international community is looking for remedies in order to be able to act rapidly and provide protection for a large number of refugees, viz., the refugees from the war in the former Yugoslavia, who are fleeing a terrible war.[33]

Joly stipulates similarly how, during the Yugoslav wars of the early-mid 1990s, temporary protection became for EU states 'a possible and desirable option because it provided an answer to their dilemma between a policy to reduce refugee numbers on their territory and the pressures to accept former Yugoslavs. The magnitude of the war and its atrocities exploding onto the media had indeed led to a general feeling among the European populations that something had to be done.'[34]

While the magnitude and proximity of the Kosovo war were imperatives to act for Western European countries, 'an additional factor animating resort to temporary protection in response to both the Bosnian and the Kosovo crises was the nature of the displacement' which involved ethnic armed conflict.[35] Writing in 2000, Fitzpatrick argued that: 'Offering durable asylum to the victims of "ethnic cleansing" poses a moral and political dilemma to receiving

31   J. Fitzpatrick, 'Temporary protection of refugees: elements of a formalized regime'. *American Journal of International Law*, 2000, 94, p. 280.

32   J.F. Durieux, 'Temporary Protection: Hovering at the Edges of Refugee Law', in M. Ambrus and R.A. Wessel (eds.), *Netherlands Yearbook of International Law*, 2014, 45, p. 221.

33   M. Kjaerum, 'Temporary Protection of Refugees in Europe in the '90s', *Helsinki Monitor*, 1993, 4(3), p. 31.

34   D. Joly, 'Temporary Protection within the Framework of a New European Asylum Regime', *International Journal of Human Rights*, 1998, 2(3), p. 50.

35   Fitzpatrick, *op. cit.*, p. 287.

states, which wish to avoid complicity in genocide and to resist the persecutor's fait accompli.'[36] In other words, the temporary nature of asylum represented in one sense an attempt to signify to the persecutors that their actions would not have the intended effect of permanently displacing persecuted populations while enabling recipient states to uphold purported international and moral obligations. In another sense temporary protection was a 'political compromise' between the UNHCR and recipient states during the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s; as Koser states, the 'UNHCR felt compelled to promote temporary protection because of concerns that otherwise states would refuse admission to Bosnians'.[37]

Temporary protection was not a new concept at the time of the Kosovo war in 1999, however 'various versions of it were codified in a 1969 African refugee convention, promoted during mass flows from Southeast Asia [in the late 1970s and early 1980s], and vigorously debated in the context of flight from Central American civil wars in the 1980s.'[38] Despite this, 'steps toward comprehensive codification of [temporary protection] at the international level have been notably modest and slow.'[39] While formal policies and legal frameworks of temporary protection emerged much later, practices akin to temporary protection such as temporary refuge, temporary safe haven and temporary asylum had been undertaken in Europe since at least the 1930s. In 1936 temporary refuge was first offered by France and Britain which provided safe haven to persons fleeing the Spanish Civil War for the length of the conflict, while other historical examples of the practice include the temporary asylum offered by Austria and Yugoslavia in 1956 to 200,000 Hungarians fleeing their homeland after the October uprising. In 1968 Austria offered a similar form of temporary asylum to those fleeing Czechoslovakia following the Soviet invasion.[40] Thorburn notes that 'later examples come mostly from Africa and Asia, where localised, regional protection was offered to the large number of persons displaced by the conflicts of the post-colonial and Cold War period.'[41] However, Western countries 'received relatively few persons in flight from such conflicts, and those who did arrive at distant destinations usually entered the normal asylum procedures which, from the late 1970s onwards, became increasingly

36   *Ibid.*

37   K. Koser, 'Refugees, Transnationalism and the State', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 2007, 33(2), p. 239.

38   Fitzpatrick, *op. cit.*, p. 279.

39   *Ibid.*

40   J. Thorburn, 'Transcending Boundaries: Temporary Protection and Burden-sharing in Europe', *International Journal of Refugee Law*, 1995, 7(3), pp. 465-466.

41   *Ibid.*, p. 466.

over-burdened as other immigration channels were closed off.'[42] Mechanisms for coping with "large influxes" of persons not meeting the Convention criteria in Europe had been developed in the late 1970s and early 1980s, with the emergence of *de facto* humanitarian statuses offering what has been described as 'safe haven' that was intended to facilitate humanitarian relief from deportation for those not strictly deemed to be refugees under the Convention on Refugees.[43] Gallagher *et al.* note that in the main these policies of temporary safe haven were 'intended to benefit fellow Europeans, but [in practice] these mechanisms serve[d] a much wider range of persons, from all parts of the world.'[44]

Koser *et al.*, writing in 1998 prior to the Kosovo war, stipulate that 'temporary protection, as a distinct legal status from that of "refugee" under the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, has its origins in western Europe in the war in the former Yugoslavia'. They state that with over half a million people seeking asylum in the early 1990s in western Europe, there had been concern from governments as well as the UNHCR that the system of granting asylum may be overwhelmed by the volume of claims. In such a context:

> temporary protection represented variously a mechanism for circumventing or suspending established asylum procedures, as well as granting fewer rights to those allowed to stay; for shifting decision-making to procedures located in administrative edict rather than conforming to international law; and for granting status to 'war refugees' who were seen by some host States as falling outside increasingly strict requirements for asylum under the 1951 Convention.[45]

Writing in 1995 Thorburn notes: 'The idea of temporary protection is not new, although its widespread application if achieved might be'.[46] She adds: 'The protection mechanism most discussed in the context of the displace-

42   *Ibid.*

43   *Ibid.*

44   D. Gallagher, S., Forbes Martin, and P. Weiss Fagen, 'Temporary Safe Haven: The Need for North American-European Responses', in G. Loescher and L. Monahan (eds.), *Refugees and International Relations*, Clarenden Press, Oxford, 1989, p. 340. Also cited in Thorburn, op. cit., p. 466.

45   K. Koser, M. Walsh and R. Black, 'Temporary Protection and the Assisted Return of Refugees from the European Union', *International Journal of Refugee Law*, 1998, 10(3), pp. 444-445.

46   Thorburn, *op. cit.*, p. 461.

ment from former Yugoslavia is that of temporary protection'.[47] This discussion was explicitly linked with the emergence of notions of 'burden-sharing'.[48] Thorburn states that 'the experiences of Southeast Asian and African States brought early calls for a sharing of the burden of protection – calls which were largely left unanswered. In addition, Western States soon began to hesitate over the emergence of a norm of temporary protection.'[49] As Kjaerum observed in 1994, among Western European states 'the major reason for the introduction of temporary protection is the inability of the European countries to co-ordinate their efforts sufficiently to allow for equal burden-sharing'.[50]

However, it has further been suggested that electoral implications were factored into these discussions of burden-sharing which 'allowed those states that were most exposed [to the Kosovo refugee crisis], such as Germany, to seek the same kind of justification as states in the developing world for a less than welcoming attitude towards new and prospective asylum seekers.'[51] Fitzpatrick observed similarly: 'Temporary protection is like a magic gift, assuming the desired form of its enthusiasts' policy objectives. Simultaneously, it serves as a magic mirror of its observers' fears.'[52] A criticism is that 'states weary of their obligations under refugee law may look upon a [temporary protection] regime as a strategy to shift refugee protection from the realm of law to that of politics and voluntary humanitarian assistance.'[53]

The temporary protection schemes offered by European countries by the mid-1990s varied considerably with some established in national laws while others granted on an *ad hoc* basis.[54] To elaborate:

> Some form the extension of existing mechanisms, such as the United Kingdom's 'exceptional leave to remain', while in other States there is no temporary protection, but rather immediate admission to asylum procedures.... Since 1 January 1994, the Netherlands offers a series of cumulative rights relative to the length of stay, and others offer similar rights

---

47   *Ibid.*

48   *Ibid.* See also Joly, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

49   Thorburn, *op. cit.*, p. 466.

50   M. Kjaerum, 'Temporary protection in Europe in the 1990s', *International Journal of Refugee Law*, 1994, 6, p. 447.

51   Durieux, *op. cit.*, p. 234.

52   Fitzpatrick, *op. cit.*, p. 280.

53   *Ibid.*, p. 287.

54   Thorburn, *op. cit.*, p. 462.

to those granted to refugees, or rights commensurate to those of asylum seekers.[55]

According to Thorburn the numbers of those granted some form of temporary protection status by 1995 varied greatly between countries, estimated to be approximately 400,000 in Germany, 40,000 in Italy, and 100 in both Greece and Portugal.[56] While application of temporary protection practices varied, Thorburn notes that the definition of temporary protection across European states shared a common theme: 'States formulating temporary protection policies have tended to see return as a goal, and the term temporary as applying to the duration of stay, rather than to the duration of this limited form of protection.'[57] Similarly Fitzpatrick argued that temporary protection regimes 'may be consciously structured to cultivate [the refugees'] natural desire for repatriation and to encourage the recipients to conceive of exile as limited in time.'[58] Adding to this Durieux states: 'In sum, what European states expected from [temporary protection] was a protection regime that, instead of facilitating local integration and deterring repatriation (which 'normal' application of the Convention was deemed to involve), would in fact deter local integration and facilitate repatriation.'[59]

While there were no definitions of the "temporary refugee", 'various States have their own domestic mechanisms for, and categories of, so called de facto refugees, that is non-Convention refugees who cannot be returned to their countries of origin for humanitarian reasons.'[60] These modes of protection initially emerged in the 1970s 'as a response to the changing character of refugee movements, and come under various titles, such as B-status, humanitarian status, and "exceptional leave to remain".'[61] Writing in 1986 Perluss and Hartman saw the emergence of what was at that time known as 'temporary refuge' as a common example of a customary norm in international law, depicting it as having evolved as 'the practical solution to situations of mass influx of civilians fleeing internal armed conflict'.[62] Thorburn states that the idea of

---

55   *Ibid.*

56   *Ibid.*

57   *Ibid.*

58   Fitzpatrick, *op. cit.*, p. 299.

59   Durieux, *op. cit.*, p. 236.

60   Thorburn, *op. cit.*, p. 462.

61   *Ibid.*, pp. 462-463.

62   D. Perluss and J.F. Hartman, 'Temporary Refuge: Emergence of a Customary Norm', *Virginia Journal of International Law*, 1986, 26(3), p. 580. Cited also in Thorburn, *op. cit.*, p. 465.

short-term protection in mass influx situations was originally referred to as 'temporary asylum', and conceptualisation of the term 'temporary protection', despite a much longer history of the practice, came about initially in the 1970s during the Vietnamese boat people crisis.[63] The first appearance of the concept in official documents 'comes in Conclusion 15 of the UNHCR Executive Committee in 1979, which was concerned with the reception of Boat People in coastal States.'[64] Subsequently a 1992 statement from the UNHCR articulated its position as 'persons fleeing from the former Yugoslavia who are in need of international protection should be able to receive it on a temporary basis.'[65]

The purported success of the international community's Humanitarian Evacuation Programme during the Kosovo refugee crisis greatly vindicated proponents of temporary protection in Europe and among the broader UN-HCR membership. As Fitzpatrick depicts:

> The unprecedented Humanitarian Evacuation Programme to airlift Kosovar refugees to temporary safety in European and more distant states exemplifies [temporary protection]'s appeal and adaptability. The Kosovo experience, by restoring faith that some mass influxes are genuinely temporary, may reinvigorate enthusiasm for [temporary protection], which had flagged during the endgame to the Bosnian refugee crisis.[66]

Durieux states that: 'In contrast to the ad hoc approach to [temporary protection] in the Bosnian crisis, this time [during the Kosovo refugee crisis] UN-HCR was able to rapidly establish precise refugee rights and obligations in the countries of destination of the evacuees'.[67] He adds that, 'in the eyes of asylum states the success of that programme did not reside so much in the evacuation per se as it did in its happy ending, whereby the vast majority of the evacuated refugees were both willing and able to return to (the UN-administered) Kosovo within a matter of months. At last, the temporary character of [temporary protection] had been vindicated.'[68]

---

63   Thorburn, *op. cit.*, p. 465, p. 467.

64   *Ibid.*, p. 467.

65   *Ibid.* Citing UNHCR Background Note, 'Comprehensive response to the Humanitarian Crisis in the former Yugoslavia', Informal meeting on Temporary Protection, Geneva, 21st January 1993.

66   Fitzpatrick, *op. cit.*, p. 279.

67   Durieux, *op. cit.*, p. 241.

68   *Ibid.*

In the contemporary period the imperative to implement temporary protection in Europe is greatly attributable to a legacy extending from the Kosovo refugees crisis in 1999. Policies adopted by the European Union in 2015 to cope with the migration crisis implicated by events in the Middle East and North Africa have been underscored by discussion over the 2001 European Commission Directive on Minimum Standards for Giving Temporary Protection (Temporary Protection Directive). Ineli-Ciger stipulates that, 'Following the Kosovar refugee crisis, the Temporary Protection Directive was adopted and entered into force in 2001 [to establish] an emergency mechanism to provide immediate and temporary protection to displaced persons from third countries who are unable to return to their country of origin in mass influx situations. The Directive, however, has yet to be activated.'[69] Ineli-Ciger explores whether this Directive could play a key role in resolving the contemporary European migration crisis, arguing that this mechanism should be part of the EU response 'as it would provide crucial benefits to both Member States as well as persons seeking refuge in the EU.'[70] In the contemporary era temporary protection is said to exemplify 'the way that the balance of power between states and the international refugee regime has shifted away from international obligations to privilege national interests'.[71] This is evident in recent examples and initiatives incorporating Australia's 'Pacific Solution', proposals by the EU for the offshore processing of asylum applications and in the UK's 'blue sky thinking' in relation to withdrawing wholly from the international refugee regime.[72]

Operation Safe Haven, Australian Nationalism and 'in the National Interest'

The opportunity to evacuate the Kosovars as part of a global humanitarian mission allowed many Australians to reaffirm a triumphal sense of White virtue as central to their country's conception of citizenship. It is the idea that whiteness is able to triumph over "Other" racial or cultural groups when it can be construed as 'uplifting, noble, universal, and pure'.[73] The common link

69   M. Ineli-Ciger, 'Time to Activate the Temporary Protection Directive: Why the Directive can Play a Key Role in Solving the Migration Crisis in Europe', *European Journal of Migration and Law*, 2016, 18, p. 13.

70   *Ibid.*, p. 1.

71   Koser, *op. cit.*, p. 240.

72   *Ibid.*, pp. 240-241.

73   P. Ingram, 'Racializing Babylon: Settler Whiteness and the "New Racism"', *New Literary History*, 32(1), 2001, p. 158.

between representations of the Kosovars and asylum seekers is how refugees in a broader sense have been incorporated into White national identity discourse. Richard Wazana states that, in the refugee discourse of the Howard era, there was a definitive re-emergence of the White Australia policy.[74] Australia's geographical position, as a bastion of "western civilization", has had important ramifications for Australia's sense of identity and its fears around how many "foreigners" it is ready to receive. For early British settlers, Wazana states: 'this obsession has transformed itself into various measures meant to "protect" Australian culture and traditions, including an inhuman refugee policy [*sic*].'[75] Overall, popular discourse about the Kosovar evacuation is part of a broader story about how Australians have imagined the continuing history of immigration to their country, a story about the ways in which new arrivals are welcomed, and a legacy centred on the selection of migrants.

Don McMaster reflects on this period stating that Australia's refugee policies were acts of exclusionary politics based on notions of citizenship, identity and belonging, or in most cases "not belonging".[76] He notes how the Kosovars received a much more compassionate reception than other refugee groups. The coincidental arrival of both Chinese boat people and Kosovar refugees in Australia in the first half of 1999 attracted considerable media attention, but public and official reactions could not have been more different. McMaster states, on one hand, the Chinese were decried in the media with headlines such as 'Invaded' and 'Outcry over illegals', and they were placed in detention. On the other, the Kosovars were met with headlines such as 'Sanctuary' and 'Safely Into Our Arms'. Moreover, 'They were welcomed; they were European and not the "other". These events highlight the discriminatory manner in which Australian refugee policy and citizenship have been used to exclude its "other."'[77] McMaster asserts their 'mode of entry' (i.e. an arrival that was "authorised", and not via boat) into Australia played a significant part in their acceptance and legality.[78] The legal changes undertaken during the Kosovar evacuation were an extension of such a mindset. They were embodied in the coercive powers acquired by the Federal Government as part of Operation Safe Haven. Developments in refugee policy at the time of the Kosovo war

---

74   See also G. Tavan, *The Long, Slow Death of White Australia*, Scribe, Carlton North, 2005.

75   R. Wazana, 'Fear and Loathing Down Under: Australian Refuge Policy and the National Imagination', *Refuge*, 22(1), March 2004, p. 86.

76   D. McMaster, *Asylum Seekers: Australia's Response to Refugees*, Melbourne University Press, Carlton South, 2001 (reprinted 2002), p. 166.

77   *Ibid.*, p. 2.

78   *Ibid.*, p. 190.

and subsequent refugee crisis were part of a broader, culturally conservative approach to immigration that has historically reflected the anxieties of Australians. Later developments were similarly extensions of this rationale and included the Howard Government's decision to establish remote immigration detention centres primarily for "boat people" deemed unauthorised arrivals at Woomera in November 1999 and Christmas Island in 2001. These added to existing remote detention facilities at Port Hedland, which opened in 1991, while Baxter detention centre was established by the Government in 2002.[79] A clear parallel can be drawn between the isolation experienced by Kosovar refugees accommodated at remote army barracks in 1999 and the trend emerging soon afterwards wherein the Howard Government established detention centres at a relatively considerable distance from Australia's major population centres.

Much of the literature surrounding refugee policy initiated during the period of the Howard Government makes a narrow assertion. It asserts that popular national identity discourse be demanded of refugees who might be construed as cultural and/or racial "others" and that they conform to the hegemonic mode of belonging. This discourse was part of a long-standing regulatory culture that has tended to govern Australian immigration, and is inherited from, or at least linked to, the exclusionary racial practices promoted by the White Australia policy. This discourse played an important part in the rationale and implementation of Operation Safe Haven. In many ways, the Kosovars were conceived as a threat (as "boat people" came to be) and the media was able to justify their stay by promoting it as a controlled, temporary intrusion. The Kosovars' *mode of entry* and then their confinement to army camps in Australia was a notable factor in the public mindset. Undoubtedly, there are links between the coercive powers of the Safe Haven legislation and a conservative discourse that has tended to dominate Australian immigration.

Since the early 1990s, coercion has increasingly been used by Australian federal governments with the support of the dominant cultural group to dominate and overwhelm minorities (particularly asylum seekers) who are collectively identified and subjugated into more manageable subject positions. Scott Poynting and Victoria Mason, following Antonio Gramsci, assert that consensual hegemonic relations are always backed by 'the armour of coercion'.[80] Their study on the Australian media suggests how it is often used to

---

79   S. Anderson & J. Ferng, 'No Boat: Christmas Island and the Architecture of Detention', *Architectural Theory Review*, 18(2), 2013, p. 219.

80   S. Poynting and V. Mason, 'The New Integrationism, the State and Islamophobia: Retreat from multiculturalism in Australia', *International Journal of Law, Crime and Justice*, 36, 2008, p. 240.

signify authority by more subtle means. The media, they maintain, is central to disseminating the perception that the State should be able to police elements that are popularly felt to threaten core morals and values. Public backlash to the *Tampa* and 'children overboard' refugee incidences in 2001 reflected a growing consensus in the Howard era in support of increased regulation of immigration. Popularly constructed social wrongs in the media, typified by the dominant "invader" and "queue-jumper" mentality of the period, played a substantial role in justifying the State's acquisition of greater coercive powers – most notably the TPV and the 'Pacific Solution'. Scholars have often noted the 'moral panic' that gripped popular identity discourse in the Howard era and the ways in which this panic legitimated the expansion of the coercive powers of the Government in its dealings with asylum seekers.[81] Immigration (and its control) has remained central to the consciousness of how Australians have constructed their identity.

Such practices, Jupp says, must be viewed from the traditions of British empire-building and the identities that extend, both consciously and unconsciously, from this as an ongoing historical process.[82] In more recent times, Jupp observes, rather than engineering society by subsidized British migrants, it is done by *exclusion* and *selection*, via the Department of Immigration and its various branches and policies. The ability to select *how* and *who* to migrate to Australia has remained a continuing historical norm, fundamental to national cultural policies. The 2001 budget for the Department of Immigration reflected a declining concern for settlement and multiculturalism, turning instead to its increasing 'obsession' with control and compliance.[83]

Many view temporary protection as reminiscent of the White Australia policy and disagree with State aspirations to increase its control of immigration by coercion. Katherine Betts urges that negativity towards asylum seekers in this period was not racism, but involved the sentiment that refugees did not fit in with the 'Australian' way of life. She says that public opinion on this matter revolved around doubts about asylum seekers' *bona fides*, the wish for a strong Australian community, and a 'common sense of peoplehood'.[84] This view supported Howard Government rhetoric about meeting its obligations to protect

---

81   See S. Poynting and G. Morgan (eds.), *Outrages! Moral Panics in Australia*, ACYS Publishing, University of Tasmania, Hobart, 2007.

82   See Jupp, From *White Australia to Woomera: The Story of Australian Immigration*, *op. cit.*, pp. 6-7.

83   *Ibid.*, p. 65.

84   K. Betts, 'Boatpeople and public opinion in Australia', *People and Place*, 9, 2001, pp. 34-48. As also outlined in A. Pederson, S. Watt and S. Hansen, 'The role of false beliefs in the

national borders. That is, popular sentiment mandated Government officials to punish and seize refugees deemed to be "illegal immigrants".

Such claims have been disputed and it has been noted that a highly politicised language had galvanized public opinion. The Federal Government's implementation of TPVs in October 1999 was fraught with labels such as "illegals", "forum shopping" and "queue jumpers".[85] One study describes how societally-prevalent 'false beliefs' – about "queue jumpers", "genuine refugees" and "illegal" asylum seekers – were connected with false information and comments made by political leaders. This punitive language was also implicit in Department of Immigration and media commentary that linked asylum seekers with being 'queue-jumpers', 'terrorists', 'cashed up', 'non-genuine' and 'illegal'.[86] The *Tampa* incident in 2001 demonstrates best how, in using these kinds of terms, the Government was able to galvanise popular accord. The demonising of boat people prior to the 2001 election helped to re-establish a legitimate claim to political leadership by the Prime Minister. The language was crucial to the election success, particularly when it was likely the Government would lose office. It is also evident that the language resonated with a much deeper resentment of non-invited refugees, as border protection has continued to remain a prominent issue beyond 2001.[87]

The underlying purpose of this kind of discourse was to confirm 'an image of the White Australian as a manager of national space,'[88] while (re)producing the legitimacy of the State and its increased use of coercive powers against non-citizens. As Foucault has argued in relation to governmentality, while paraphrasing La Perriere: 'government is the right disposition of things, arranged so as to lead to a convenient end.'[89] Attempts by the State to establish a causal link between criminality, racial or cultural identity and "mass"

---

community's and the federal government's attitudes toward Australian asylum seekers', *Australian Journal of Social Issues* 41(1), Autumn 2006, p. 106.

85   Humpage and Marston, *op. cit.*, pp. 67-76.

86   Pederson, Watt, and Hansen, *op. cit.*, pp. 105-124. See also p. 108. Here, they point out that, in Klocker and Dunn's 2003 study, 90% of Government press releases regarding asylum seekers were negative, with politicised terms (such as 'illegal') outweighing more neutral terms (e.g. 'asylum seekers') in the discourse.

87   N. Klocker, 'Community antagonism towards asylum seekers in Port Augusta, South Australia', *Australian Geographical Studies*, 42, 2004, pp. 1-17. As also cited in *ibid.*, pp. 106-107.

88   G. Hage, *White Nation, Fantasies of White Supremacy in a Multicultural Society*, Pluto Press, Annandale, 1998, p. 91.

89   M. Foucault, 'Governmentality', in G. Burchell, C. Gordon and P. Miller (eds.), *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, Harvester, Hemel Hampstead, 1991, p. 93.

breaches of national space at the borders have been used increasingly to generate political consensus since the early 1990s.[90]

Refugees have often been used to promote as normative a coercive element that has continued to underpin popular constructions of Australian identity. Similar sentiments about non-British Others were prominent in anti-Chinese anxieties of the 1850s on the goldfields, and in relation to the arrival of Vietnamese refugees in the 1970s. By 2001 Middle Eastern refugees had become what Poynting and Mason refer to as a "fifth column" threat within Australia during the US-led 'war on terror'. That is, an "enemy within" who raised new questions about citizenship, identity and loyalty at times when the country of residence is in conflict with their country of origin.[91]

The Kosovar refugee evacuation requires a slightly different interpretation where the Australian government supported the NATO bombing of Kosovo in light of human rights. However, it is clear that the Kosovars, like boat people, were simultaneously imagined from the outset, albeit more subtly, as a possible threat to Australia's border protection policies. There remained concern for the Kosovar visit to be officially regulated, producing a form of temporary protection legislation that discarded a range of human rights otherwise available to refugees. As Head says, the Safe Haven Visa legislation introduced to accommodate the Kosovar refugees was part of continuing efforts by successive Commonwealth governments – both Coalition and Labor – to withdraw and restrict, if not abolish, access to judicial review by those people classified as 'unlawful non-citizens'.[92]

The Kosovars were imagined in a more popular light during the evacuation on account of their background as Europeans and other values thought to be shared with Australians. As has been argued, there are some humanitarian crises – such as the Nazi Holocaust – that have been given high visibility not only because of the great numbers involved, but also because of their 'Europeanness'.[93] This implies that these events were so disturbing because they took place 'within ... white borders' rather than elsewhere: in Africa, Asia or

90   G. Hage, *Against Paranoid Nationalism: Searching for Hope in a Shrinking Society*, Pluto Press, Annandale, 2003, p. 20 and p. 21.

91   S. Poynting and V. Mason, '"Tolerance, Freedom, Justice and Peace?": Britain, Australia and Anti-Muslim Racism since 11 September 2001', *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 27(4), November 2006, p. 366.

92   Head, *op. cit.*, p. 280.

93   S. Tascon, 'Refugees and the coloniality of power: border-crossers of postcolonial whiteness', in A. Moreton-Robinson (ed.), *Whitening Race: Essays in Social and Cultural Criticism*, Aboriginal Studies Press, Canberra, 2004, p. 244.

Latin America.[94] Popular identity discourse and policy making merged during the Safe Haven evacuation program because, as has been argued: 'belonging has the capacity to mobilise individuals … around the contentious question of citizenship rights'.[95]

Increasingly *control*-orientated refugee policies in this period reflected the Howard Government's concern about national *sovereignty*, but they also pandered to popular fears that "Australian culture" and its territorial independence were under attack from refugees. As Wazana says, the 'natural sequence of events [was such that] if one believes that one is under attack, one will naturally want to defend oneself.'[96] Immigration Minister Phillip Ruddock emphasised the notion of sovereignty during Parliamentary debates over the Border Protection Bill (2001), stating that new approaches to asylum seekers were due to 'increasing threats to Australia's sovereign right to determine who will enter and remain in Australia.'[97] John Howard commented in Parliament during the *Tampa* incident in 2001: 'Every nation has the right to effectively control its borders and to decide who comes here and under what circumstances, and Australia has no intention of surrendering or compromising that right.'[98] The Prime Minister was attempting to normalise a link between the unpredictable "threat" posed by refugees and popular discontent over non-British migrant groups. This is, in more general terms, indicative of the way in which federal politics was contested in the period that immediately followed Pauline Hanson's brief career as a Member of the House of Representatives between 1996 and 1998 (in 2016 Hanson was re-elected though on this occasion to the Federal Senate). In 1997 Hanson founded the One Nation Party with a platform centred heavily around anti-immigration policies. Humpage and Marston comment accurately that, in the Howard era: 'it is clear that refugees and asylum seekers have been regarded as physically embodying an external threat to jobs, living standards, welfare, and the dominance of the nation-state as the focus of social belonging.'[99] Political debates in such a climate frequently became contests between political parties as to who was the toughest on "illegals".[100]

---

94   *Ibid.*

95   Z. Skrbis, L. Baldassar and S. Poynting, 'Introduction – Negotiating Belonging: Migration and Generations', *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 28(3), August 2007, p. 261.

96   Wazana, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

97   Ruddock, as cited in B. Kampmark, 'Refugee Identities and the MV Tampa', *Antipodes*, June 2006, p. 67.

98   Howard, as cited in Wazana, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

99   Humpage and Marston, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

100   *Ibid.*

The fundamental area of interest for the Howard Government's foreign policy, as noted in the 1997 White Paper *In the National Interest*, was 'the security of the Australian nation and the jobs and standard of living of the Australian people'.[101] The Government promised to 'apply this basic test of national interest' in all of its activities associated with the field of foreign and trade policy.[102] The Howard Government later described its approach to foreign policy as a "realist" approach.[103] The Howard Government's approach reflected the prominence of the popular discourse of the *national* sphere in areas of policy that might have otherwise been dealt with as a matter of foreign affairs, including border protection. The Howard Government's approach to foreign policy had a significant influence on the way in which the Department of Immigration operated. The international humanitarian focus within the Department's operations was significantly watered-down and was compensated for this loss by a much greater regard for national political currents. As international relations commentators Gary Smith and David Lowe note, the Howard Government's approach to foreign policy 'sought not only to make foreign policy in response to new regional and global agendas, but also to respond to and to seek to manage new forms of electoral challenge.'[104] They observed that the Howard Government's self-promoted "realist" approach saw the line between domestic and international politics become increasingly blurred. This was particularly evident following the 2001 refugee incidences involving the *Tampa* and the 'children overboard' affair, which demonstrated how new forms of Australian nationalism weighed-in on an incident with international consequences.[105] The Howard Government frequently played on popular notions about "queue-jumpers" in the media and in policy statements, a term deeply offensive to many Australians' sense of "fair play".[106] Responses by federal governments over the past two decades to the issue of refugees mirrors the ways in which many States have attempted to deal with increasing tension within

---

101   Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), *In the National Interest; Australia's Foreign and Trade Policy White Paper*, Australian Government, 1997, p. iii.

102   *Ibid.* As discussed similarly in P. Singer and T. Gregg, *How Ethical is Australia? An Examination of Australia's Record as a Global Citizen*, Australian Collaboration in Conjunction with Black Inc., Melbourne, 2004, p. 13.

103   See G. Smith and D. Lowe, 'Howard, Downer and the Liberals' realist tradition (foreign policy realism)', *The Australian Journal of Politics and History*, 51.3, September, 2005, pp. 459-472.

104   *Ibid.*, p. 460.

105   *Ibid.*

106   Pederson, Watt, and Hansen, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

their societies between *globality* (the influence of the extra-national sphere) and *nationality* (domestic resistance to the global sphere).[107] In reality, Australia's foreign policy has continued to encompass varying degrees of both local and international political influences, even while aspirations for domestic political success have encouraged governments to promote (what is purported to be) the *national* interest ahead of global concerns.

Media as Useful to the Howard Government

This section elaborates on the significance of media representation of the Kosovar refugees and notes the methods employed in this book to analyse media coverage. It discusses the role of the news media using a sceptical lens that is critical and evaluative. Here I evaluate this role alongside purposive attempts by the Howard Government to position itself in a favourable light throughout Operation Safe Haven. The cultural implications of mass media coverage are considered briefly in this section as well in order to provide insight into the ways in which the relationship between the corporate media, government and popular discourse is most often complementary and serves to reproduce the hegemony of the existing social order.

This book draws on more than a year's newspaper coverage in *The Daily Telegraph* (Sydney), *The Australian* (distributed nationally) and *The Sydney Morning Herald* (Sydney). I have examined news stories, opinion columns, editorials, features, letters-to-the-editor, photographs and cartoons. My choice of these newspaper sources was based on the need to establish clear analytical boundaries for my case study. These newspapers produce daily publications and weekend editions as well – *The Sunday Telegraph*, *Weekend Australian* and *The Sun-Herald*.[108] *The Daily/Sunday Telegraph* catered to the largest readership in Sydney throughout 1999, outselling the nearest rival (*The Sydney Morning Herald/Sun-Herald*) by a ratio of approximately 1.1 to 1, including average weekly sales of 4,097,000 newspapers.[109] *The Sydney Morning Her-*

---

107   Scholte, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

108   I will hereafter refer to *The Sydney Morning Herald* and *Sun-Herald* as the '*Herald*'; *The Daily Telegraph* and *Sunday Telegraph* as the '*Telegraph*'; and *The Australian* and *Weekend Australian* as '*The Australian*'.

109   Roy Morgan, 'Readership – December 1999; Media Release.' The *Telegraph* (including both *The Daily Telegraph* and *Sunday Telegraph*) outsold, from January-December 1999, the nearest rival newspaper (*The Sydney Morning Herald/Sun-Herald*) by a weekly average of 4,097,000 to 3,697,000, at a ratio of 1.108:1.

ald/Sun-Herald sold around 3,697,000 per week in this period, while *The Australian/Weekend Australian* distributed an average of 1,363,000 copies weekly to a national readership for the same year.[110]

These sources are useful for viewing more clearly the ways in which three of Australia's most prominent media organisations competed for audiences in both the more localised Sydney metropolitan media market as well as the national media market as this relates to *The Australian*. There may have been prominent news sources competing in alternative metropolitan media markets – such as the Melbourne-based *The Age*, Adelaide-based *The Advertiser* or Brisbane-based *Courier Mail* – that merit further investigation relative to the objectives of this book. However, it should be noted that the content published across mastheads within the same publishing stable often redistributed identical output particularly in regards to popular opinion columns and nationally focused news stories. The *Fairfax Media* stable, for example, has concurrently published the *Sydney Morning Herald*, Melbourne's *The Age*, the *Australian Financial Review* and *The Canberra Times*. Meanwhile *News Corporation* has published *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Australian*, Melbourne's *Herald Sun*, Adelaide's *The Advertiser* and Brisbane's *The Courier-Mail*. There were furthermore a number of limitations imposed on the investigation that led to the exclusion of further media sources in the analysis. This included the length of time required to conduct a manual content analysis of the selected newspaper sources over the course of more than one year's news coverage.

The discourses espoused by these newspaper sources are relative to the broader corporate frameworks within which each media is situated. Two of the sources (*The Australian* and *The Daily Telegraph*) operate within Rupert Murdoch's international media stable *News Corporation*, while *The Sydney Morning Herald* is part of the Australian-based *Fairfax Media* network.[111] Internationally, *News Corporation's* business strategy has been heavily dependent on Rupert Murdoch's cultivation of political connections.[112] This book may, for some, raise questions about the political leverage gleaned by proprietors through

---

110   *Ibid.*

111   See 'Brands – *The Australian*', News Corp Australia. URL: http://www.newscorpaustralia.com/brand/australian. Accessed 2nd November 2016. See also 'Brands – *The Daily Telegraph*', News Corp Australia. URL: http://www.newscorpaustralia.com/brand/daily-telegraph. Accessed 2nd November 2016. See also 'Our Portfolio', Fairfax Media. URL: http://www.fairfaxmedia.com.au/portfolio-landing. Accessed 2nd November 2016.

112   A. D'Arma, 'Global media, business and politics: A comparative analysis of News Corporation's strategy in Italy and the UK', *International Communication Gazette*, December 2011, 73(8), pp. 670-684.

their business practices, and explain trends in editorial positioning favoring or criticising the Howard Government's policy on the Kosovar refugees. However, the politicking of proprietors is not a central component of the analysis nor does it seek to explicitly engage with these issues.

Newspaper evidence was gathered by utilising the electronic database Factiva and conducting keyword searches within the date range of July 1998 until December 2000. Further exploration of microfiche records of each of the newspapers allowed for a much more thorough analysis – in terms of, for example, being able to catalogue images – and involved tracing developments on a day-by-day basis. This book incorporates a variety of other media (such as Internet-based documents) into my analysis, although these were not included in the media content analysis of news sources. It further investigates almost two years of Australian Federal Parliamentary debates (Hansard) that discussed the Kosovar refugees, the Safe Haven legislation and Operation Safe Haven. Complete proceedings of the Australian Federal Parliamentary sittings were obtained using online Hansard records, of which I examined Hansard proceedings – from both the House of Representatives and the Senate – dated between August 1998 and May 2000. Although oral testimonies were not used as part of the investigation, my primary sources provide a broad perspective for evaluating the Howard Government's refugee policy and the implications of media representations of the Kosovar refugees.

Newspapers are one of the most highly consumed mass media in Australia, although television, radio and "new" media content (including the Internet) are invaluable primary sources as well. The production and consumption of newspapers provides a useful avenue for understanding the reproduction of consensual relations within Australian society and the relationship that is often formed between the media and State as part of this process. Some commentators have stated that the media's influence over populism and public opinion can be described as fickle at best, and that media discourse is merely a reflection of the prevailing social consensus.[113] Those who support this position suppose that media organisations are, by virtue of good business practice, required to construct news stories around pre-existing social discourse. This grants licence to news media companies to claim to be representative of the community's interests. They claim they have been "feeding-off" public concerns and trends.[114] However, the news media has considerable ability to

---

113   K. Wahl-Jorgensen, 'The Normative-Economic Justification for Public Discourse: Letters to the Editor as a "Wide Open" Forum', *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, Spring 2002, 79(1), esp. p. 129.

114   *Ibid.*

construct and shape public opinion by offering, for example, space and voice to some social, political and cultural groups while excluding others. It is often the absences in media content – what equates to the effective muzzling and marginalisation of some social groups and ideas – that provide the clearest indication of the political leanings of a particular news organisation.[115] By utilising these perspectives, this book elaborates links between mass media practices, the ideological leanings of the newspapers drawn on as primary sources and the responses of these newspapers to the Kosovar refugees.

My decision to analyse newspapers is not intended to diminish the role or the importance of other mass media reporting on the Kosovar refugees. It is evident throughout this book that the relationship between radio, television, newspapers and other media is an interactive one. News sources often feed off each other, reinforcing the salience of the dominant narrative. However, the different news organisations can also challenge the stories being reported by other media (as will be explored in Chapter 5) when it is in their interests to do so. There is the potential for media companies to profit by taking on board alternative positions and by the controversy that is generated by not acquiescing the popular perspective. News organisations also, at times, rely on each other for source material as well as independent news analysis to sustain representational narratives. This includes statistics from media polls produced externally to news organisations – such as by *AC Nielson* and *Newspoll* – from which newspapers and their journalists select information to incorporate as well as ignore. There is, as such, a degree of flexibility in the production of news narratives including in the relations between newspapers and other sources of news. My primary concern, however, is to evaluate the production of dominant media frames vis-à-vis news stories about the Kosovars, and to uncover as well as analyse the preferred stance of the relative newspapers selected for the analysis in their representations.

The analytical method that is used to analyse media texts in this book owes a debt to scholarship that draws on the notion *media framing*. Other scholars might prefer the terms *spin*, *representation* or *discourse* and I have chosen to employ these notions at various times as well. The intention is to investigate the *power of representation* in the media as well as the *representative power* of the media. The task in using this method is to identify how consensual social relations are maintained through the relationships formed between governments and the media. This method provides a useful avenue for investigating 'deliberate strategies for securing stronger consensus' by the Howard

115   R.V. Ericson, P.M. Baranek and J.B.L. Chan, *Representing Order; Crime, Law and Justice in the News Media*, Open Press University, Buckingham, 1997.

Government as evident in its publicity campaigns surrounding Operation Safe Haven.[116] It is a means for making clearer the ways in which 'consent can be manufactured' in liberal democracies.[117]

The argument of scholars using this method is that consent can be manipulated and that this manipulation occurs through the persuading, pressuring and managing public opinion.[118] The notion of media framing allows researchers to understand how those in a 'commanding position' – particularly media proprietors, often in conjunction with hegemonic political groups or individuals – work to shape and transform opinion within a political schema that privileges the dominant moral or social framework.[119] An important work in this area of media analysis is *Manufacturing Consent; the Political Economy of the Mass Media* by Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky. They identify how the mass media mobilise bias via patterns of news choices. They examine how the mass media 'serve to mobilize support for the special interests that dominate the state and private activity, and that their choices, emphases, and omissions can often be understood best, and sometimes with striking clarity and insight, by analysing them in such terms.'[120] In deconstructing the news media, Herman and Chomsky's analysis challenges the democratic postulate that the media are independent and committed to discovering and reporting the truth. The media goes much farther than merely reflecting the world as powerful groups wish it to be perceived.[121]

What is particularly interesting about this study is the initial tension between the media and the Howard Government over the evacuation of the Kosovar refugees. The Government initially rejected calls by the UNHCR to evacuate some of the hundreds of thousands of Kosovars from the refugee camps of Macedonia. Its policy stance was quickly overturned in-line with widespread public concern for the refugees, intense media criticism and pressure from the international community among other reasons. This study of news production provides a way of measuring (through content analysis) and rationalising why the media's position toward the refugees shifted over the

---

116   R. Briggs and P. Dearman, 'The Question of Consent Today', *Southern Review*, 37.3, 2005, p. 4.

117   P. Murphy, 'Communication and Self-Organisation: Why the Manufacture of Consent Has Always Been a Sunset Industry', *Southern Review*, 37.3, 2005, p. 88.

118   *Ibid.*

119   *Ibid.*, p. 89.

120   E.S. Herman and N. Chomsky, *Manufacturing Consent; the Political Economy of the Mass Media*, The Bodley Head, London, 1988 (reprinted 2008), p. xlix.

121   *Ibid.*

course of their stay, while concurrently predominantly supporting the strategic aims of the Howard Government.

Furthermore, as noted the concept of generosity is utilised in this book to broadly explain an interconnected series of discursive relations which, taken collectively, depict commonly shared meanings and assumptions in the empirical evidence that are underscored by notions of empathy and compassion. The method of content analysis is used to elucidate the core theme of generosity by coding and counting related concepts such as innocence, human rights, and nationalistic code words (for example "mateship"), thereby providing a meaningful lens for illuminating how Australia's generosity was conceived and debated in political and media discourse during Operation Safe Haven.

This approach to unpacking the implications of generosity as a theme in public discourse is not without precedent. Rose and Baumgartner's study attempts to demonstrate a statistical relationship between media framing and government spending on the poor, and in particular 'whether we can document changes over time in the framing of poverty and if these changes relate to the degree of government generosity toward the poor.'[122] They investigate how public discussion in US news media began to focus on the poor as 'cheaters, as lazy or unwilling to work, and on the dysfunctions of government efforts to help them.'[123] Rose and Baumgartner found that 'From less than 10 percent of all discussion of poverty in the nation's news media, these "stingy frames" have grown steadily over time, so that today they represent the most prominent way of talking about the poor.'[124] Their study examines how 'the nation's conversation about the poor has changed over almost 50 years, and [demonstrates] that these shifting frames constitute a simple and compelling explanation for equally substantial changes in the relative generosity of US policy toward the poor.'[125]

While this analysis is not based on a 'pure' form of media framing, it does owe this approach considerable due.[126] Media framing provides researchers with a method to explore the paradoxes in media opinion – for understanding not only the correlation between the media and the Federal Government's

---

122   M. Rose and F.R. Baumgartner, 'Framing the Poor: Media Coverage and U.S. Poverty Policy, 1960-2008', *The Policy Studies Journal*, 41(1), 2013, p. 24.

123   *Ibid.*, p. 23.

124   *Ibid.*

125   *Ibid.*

126   See, for instance, what others may consider to be an example of 'pure' media framing analysis in R.M. Entman, 'Framing Bias: Media in the Distribution of Power', *Journal of Communication*, 57, 2007, pp. 163-173.

'strategies for securing stronger consensus', but also their need and ability to remain flexible in responding to popular views. This method of analysis opens avenues for understanding the degree to which hegemonic groups *bend and shift* in relation to the position from which their interests are able to benefit most. By adapting to the popular perspective as it bends and shifts, the media reproduces its own significance and remains at the centre of (and a catalyst for) popular opinion.[127]

Research concerned with media framing is often based on both quantitative and qualitative insights. Herman and Chomsky employed content analysis to present 'media priorities and biases' in the US, alongside the suppression of certain issues or perspectives in news reports.[128] Herman and Chomsky examined the 'attention given to a fact – its placement, tone, and repetitions, the framework of analysis within which it is presented, and the related facts that accompany it and give it meaning (or preclude understanding).'[129] They were also concerned with 'whether that fact received the attention and context it deserved, whether it was intelligible to the reader or effectively distorted or suppressed.'[130] This assisted in their aim to demonstrate clear discrepancies not only in the quantity but also 'the *quality* of treatment' of particular issues and whether some of these were given more generous treatment than others.[131]

One of the benefits of conducting content analysis is that it provides avenues to demonstrate how an 'observable pattern of indignant campaigns and suppressions, of shading and emphasis, and of selection of context, premises and general agenda, is highly functional for established power and responsive to the needs of the government and major power groups.'[132] These patterns can be observed across a range of newspaper items – in editorials, news stories, features, opinion columns, images, cartoon satire, and even the public contributions (such as letters or vox-pop articles) that are selected for publication. These kinds of media interventions work to set the boundaries of public discussion on government policy as well as the overall political agenda, via longer-term priming and the framing of content. Such patterns in the media

---

127   See N. Couldry, *Media Rituals: A Critical Approach*, Routledge, London, 2003.

128   Herman and Chomsky, *op. cit.*, p. lii.

129   *Ibid.*

130   *Ibid.*, pp. lii-liii. See also A. Hansen, S. Cottle, R. Negrine and C. Newbold, 'Content Analysis', *Mass Communication Research Methods*, Macmillan, London, 1998, pp. 91-129.

131   Herman and Chomsky, *op. cit.*, p. 35. Italics in original.

132   *Ibid.*, p. liii.

'constitute the commons', creating consent 'intuitively – without anything being said or even in implicit opposition to what is said.'[133] Patterns of media framing can be viewed to 'persist through time' and are 'durable' indications of political life that 'stand outside language' telling us how political actors "build" and what they "make" through consent.[134]

My analytical method provides firm though not incontestable boundaries for the study at hand. This method is useful for understanding the political power of the media, though there are critical limitations to media framing. Chomsky's work on media analysis has been described as an 'almost conspiratorial view of the media',[135] and perhaps focuses too greatly on micro analysis and risks displacement of the broader context. Still, Chomsky utilised content analysis to trace media behaviour not to state directives or backroom intrigue, but to institutional imperatives. The method illuminated the 'nature of institutions, not the machinations of individuals'.[136] It provided a framework for investigating the coalescent relationship of institutional pressures and self-censorship in the production of news. As Rai says one of the key mechanisms in mass media processes is the recruitment of media personnel 'who are selected by media corporations on the condition that they already possess the "right" attitude... it is the pre-selection of "right-thinking" journalists and scholars which accounts for much of the censorship in [Chomsky's work including] the Propaganda Model.'[137] Pressures to self-censor are institutionalised; 'Journalists may be led into a process of steadily adapting their judgements until they conform to the prevailing norms.'[138]

There is significant contention with this theory on grounds it is premised on the assumption that the mass media simply communicate "messages" and thereby inculcate individuals with values, beliefs, and codes of behavior that will integrate them into the institutional structure of the larger society.[139] What is 'absent from this interpretation is an analysis of the major transformations of the modern era that have altered the nature of social relations,

133   Murphy, 'Communication and Self-Organisation: Why the Manufacture of Consent Has Always Been a Sunset Industry', *op. cit.*, p. 97.

134   *Ibid.*

135   M. Rai, *Chomsky's Politics*, Verso, London and New York, 1995, p. 42.

136   *Ibid.*, p. 42.

137   *Ibid.*

138   *Ibid.*, p. 44.

139   Lichtman, R., 'Noam Chomsky's politics', *Capitalism, Nature, Socialism*, December 2000, 11.4, p. 145, citing Chomsky.

persons, and our conscious and unconscious functioning... Absent is any systematic reference to the root features of modern life [such as] industrialization, ubiquitous technological transformation, the fragmentation of belief and morality under the influence of specialization, secularization, and bureaucratization ... the segmentation and growing powerlessness of individual resistance; and the manipulation of unconscious psychological processes beyond the limits of any previous historical periods.'[140] The issue of contention is a sender/receiver framework of communication, with critics arguing that consciousness is not determined primarily by the flow of media transmitted information and misinformation: 'As human beings we are rooted in and permeated by the economic, social, cultural and psychological dynamics which structure our lives. We are constructed not merely by ideas, but by the social forces which determine the valence and viability of our conceptual existence. In fact, the ground of media distortion is already prepared in the deep structure of social and family life...'[141]

While Chomsky's analytical method has been criticised for being "simplistic", micro-analysis through content analysis is useful for understanding the underlying social pressures of media performance. This is particularly in regards to the ideological commitments of journalists whose work is cultured in such as way as to provide 'a picture fairly close to reality for investors and other decision-makers'.[142] The institutionalisation of the dominant political ideology renders media discourse a cultural phenomenon practiced by the agents of the institution – the journalists, editors and sub-editors and other perpetuators of the dominant news narratives who have over time accepted the parameters set by long-term *internal* organisational priming. This kind of self-censorship is reinforced by the effects of *external* long-term agenda setting by the mass media. The radar for newsworthiness is thus subject to the mediating role of a dual-layered scope set both internally and externally.

Chomsky concedes: 'Just how that works in the editorial offices I can't tell you.'[143] Empirical inquiry through content analysis does not provide an absolute depiction of media processes as a mediator of social and political discourse. While individual reporters learn to frame stories in particular ways as appropriate to their media organisation and the audience it "serves", there is also an element of suddenness that needs to be recognised. It can be conceded that some events which are reported on often emerge seemingly out of

---

140   *Ibid.*, pp. 143-144.
141   *Ibid.*, p. 144.
142   Rai, *op. cit.*, p. 45.
143   Chomsky, cited in *ibid.*, p. 46.

nowhere, leaving questions about the consistency of supporters of the political economy thesis. The analytical method, however, provides useful parameters for exploring particular aspects of the case study while highlighting media bias and the preferential treatment of facts by news companies.

The identification of which parts of a media text *to* analyse via content analysis is an ambiguous and problematic process, and it is difficult for researchers to avoid questions about bias and robustness of the coding categories selected.[144] The claim has often been made that coding categories are chosen following a "deep" or "careful reading" of the material, or by a simple acknowledgement that they "emerged from the analysis".[145] The selection of categories is implicated by many factors, particularly the researchers' own subjectivities and even *carefully* chosen categories are, across different schools of thought, often questioned for their reliability. The problem is that researchers run the risk of extracting researcher categories, rather than media categories (or frames).[146] Coding categories are often based on quite abstract variables that are both difficult to identify and to code in content analysis and, as a result, the process of coding commonly falls into a 'methodological black box.'[147]

Despite these kinds of ambiguities, content analysis provides avenues for determining how particular news narratives are shaped by and infused with ideological meanings. I coded news items manually for this book and a different coding sheet was constructed for each chapter or relative area of investigation. The first task in constructing each coding sheet was to overcome any ambiguities in the language of the texts that were deconstructed. To do this I identified a variety of keywords as *indicators* – to indicate particulars in the language used to support those frames being deployed in news reports. These include common phrases, metaphors, emotive keywords, symbolic jargon, words that are value-laden, judgements with connotative meanings or any other frequently-used terminology which can be deconstructed because of its lexical meaning.[148] These keywords are listed in the footnotes section throughout this book (where they are not cited in the body text). Via the coding of the language of the news, content analysis provides a systematic, quantifiable method for identifying the preferred position of a media source in

---

144   See J. Matthes and M. Kohring, 'The Content Analysis of Media Frames: Toward Improving Reliability and Validity', *Journal of Communication*, 58, 2008, p. 259.

145   *Ibid.*, p. 260.

146   See similar discussion about the problems associated with identifying media frames in *ibid.*

147   *Ibid.*, p. 263.

148   Hansen, Cottle, Negrine and Newbold, *op. cit.*, esp. p. 114.

relation to a particular issue, view or social group – in this case, to the Kosovar refugees and the Howard Government.[149]

Conclusion

The Kosovo refugee crisis prompted significant changes in refugee policy, and many aspects of the Safe Haven legislation were questionable as far as Australia's commitments to international treaties were concerned. The media played an essential part in reassuring Australians during the refugee crisis that the nation's commitment to human rights was extraordinary, while neglecting the point that the Safe Haven Visa program contravened many of the human rights of the Kosovars. News reports throughout Operation Safe Haven commonly reproduced the notion that Australians were the most generous people in the world and their efforts (including charity and the evacuation program) were highly commendable.

The Australian media was useful for the Howard Government in promoting the acceptability of the refugees. It assisted in the Government's effort to position itself in a favourable light throughout Operation Safe Haven. While not over-extending the nature of the media's relationship with the Federal Government in this episode, such ties appeared (or were presented in such a way that they appeared) somewhat more accidental than symbiotically conjoined. As such, the investigation elaborated throughout the remainder of this book centres on how the press signified its "approval" of government policy throughout the various stages of Operation Safe Haven by more subtle means – signifying its approval, for instance, for the process by which particular refugees were selected for the evacuation program; of the use of Government coercion to repatriate the Kosovars after their initial three-month stay; and, of the Government position that refugees who contested repatriation were "ungrateful" and "undeserving" of Australia's assistance.

---

149   On the notion 'preferred position' see P. Gale, 'Fear, Race, and National Identity', *Dialogue*, 25(3), 2006, p. 38. See also P. Gale, 'The refugee crisis and fear; Populist politics and media discourse', *Journal of Sociology*, 40(4), 2004, p. 326.

FIGURE 2   *Kosovo refugees in Kukes refugee camp, assisting with distribution of food provided by aid agencies.* Courtesy Christian Oster.

Kosovo and the Breakdown of Yugoslavia in the Eyes of the "West"

Introduction

In 2008 Kosovo declared independence from Serbia. Today most countries recognise Kosovo's status as a self-governing democratic republic although Serbia has been vocal in its opposition to independence. The success of the independence mission is tied to the ongoing support of other countries both militarily and economically. Almost two decades since the end of the Kosovo war, there is the ongoing presence of international security and civil service providers and an economy buttressed by foreign financial assistance. Slowly, Kosovo is stabilising. It is a nation that is becoming. Its people have a global past situated at key crossroads between empires, cultures and conflicts. Kosovo today is seeking its own, independent place on the international stage having spent much of history in the shade of the plans and ambitions of other nations.

Providing an in-depth history of Kosovo is not a core focus of this book nor is delving into the contested histories of Balkan states. However, it would be remiss to not reflect on some of the key developments implicating the refugee exodus leading up to Operation Safe Haven, not to mention the geo-political implications of Australia's role in evacuating refugees during the Kosovo war. This chapter divulges useful background for rationalising ethnic cleansing in Kosovo and the NATO intervention in 1999. It provides a brief overview of the history of Yugoslavia, reflecting on the period of Ottoman-ruled Balkans to the kingdom of the South Slavs (the "first" Yugoslavia). Relations between Western European powers and Balkan countries from the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries were strained and exploitative, favouring the wealthier West as the Ottoman hold over the region declined. The impact of Western European countries in the Balkans on subsequent historical events was long term and this includes the World Wars and the Cold War.

This chapter explores the organisation of the Federation of (or the "second") Yugoslavia and the leadership role played by President Josip Broz Tito during the Cold War period. Yugoslavia's political and economic decline in the 1980s is assessed as well as the inability of Serbia to "salvage" Yugoslavia from collapse under the leadership of Slobodan Milosevic. Serbia's nationalist "turn" in

the late 1980s hastened Yugoslavia's decline and conflict within the federation. Yugoslavia struggled to modernise throughout the twentieth century. It was industrially inefficient and failed to maintain pace with the global economy. Even with attempts by the Tito regime to increase industrialisation, horizontal economic planning and a vertical political structure eventuated in the collapse of the Federation. 'Anti-modern' tensions provided the setting for the Yugoslav 'wars of succession', which began in Croatia in 1991 and ended in Kosovo in 1999.[1]

Emergence of Yugoslavia from the Ottomans to Tito

Slavic speaking ethnic groups initially migrated to the Balkans in the 6th and 7th centuries. Subsequent waves of migration to the region were undertaken by ethnically diverse Slavic groups including Slovenes, Croats, Bosniaks, and Serbs, while Albanians have claimed much older lineage that pre-dates colonisation by the Roman empire.[2] In 1453 the East Roman (or Byzantine) capital Constantinople was conquered by the Ottoman Turks. At this time Turkish power was firmly established in most of the territories previously governed by the Byzantines. By the mid-15th century the Ottoman sultanate controlled most the Balkans, governing an ethnically diverse local population.

A large Slavic-speaking Muslim community emerged and was significantly concentrated in Bosnia. Conversions from Catholicism and other sects of Christianity to Islam were not usually forced on the local populations. The Ottoman government preserved many features of Balkan life including social and ceremonial customs.[3] Conversion was attractive to many, particularly Albanians and Bosniaks. It increased career and business prospects within the Ottoman class system. In the 15th and 16th centuries Catholics were subjected to greater suspicion by the Ottoman government than Orthodox Christians. This was because the religious allegiances of Catholics lay in Rome, and to the foreign power of the Papacy. On the other hand Orthodoxy was fragmented

---

1 John B. Allcock, *Explaining Yugoslavia*, Hurst and Co., London, 2000. See also Tim Judah, *The Serbs: History, Myth and The Destruction of Yugoslavia*, Third Edition, Yale University Press, Padstow, 2009, p. 2.

2 Judah, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

3 N. Malcolm, *Kosovo: A Short History*, MacMillan, London, 1998 (reprinted by Pan Books, London, 2002), p. 93. See also p. 109, where Malcolm says that Serbian Orthodox enjoyed a particularly favoured position in the late 16th century.

along ethnic lines and patriarchs kept office within the empire, and were able to be more greatly influenced by the Ottomans.[4]

Constant military conflict in the 18th century along the Austro-Hungarian/Ottoman frontiers, encompassing modern-day Croatia and Slovenia, rendered economic conditions unstable in these areas. Following their failed siege of Vienna in 1683 the Ottomans conceded Hungary to Austria in 1699. Serbs embarked on a mass migration to Hungary and elsewhere after fighting for Austria during the war, particularly emigrating from Kosovo where they faced punishment by Turks.[5] In Kosovo the local population of Serbs and Albanians had revolted against Ottoman rule in 1689, after which Catholics were treated with hostility and many priests were killed or fled the province.[6] The frontier was heavily underpopulated, and coupled with military instability this meant the growth of markets and industry was limited. It wasn't until the end of the 19th century that these lands began to be industrialised (and not until the end of the Second World War for some rural areas).[7]

By the early 1700s Balkan cities such as Pristina, Sarajevo, Mostar and Visegrad grew into major regional centers of trade and urban culture.[8] Sarajevo 'was exceptional among Balkan cities', experiencing a boom in the late 18th and early 19th centuries to develop into a major centre of international commerce.[9] Bosnia played a significant role in European affairs because of mining, textiles and metallurgy, though its trade was never directed primarily at Istanbul, looking more so towards the Dalmatian ports, especially Ragusa (Dubrovnik) and Split.[10] Towns situated at key river and coastal ports were important crossroads for trade and cultural exchanges between the Ottoman empire and Western Europe. European political disputes, however, led to a decline in commerce and industry in Sarajevo after it was 'demoted' during the Austrian occupation of 1878.[11]

Citing these kinds of continued relations with the rest of Europe, Allcock disputes tendencies to separate the Balkans from within Europe's sphere of

---

4   *Ibid.*, p. 127.

5   F. Bieber and Z. Dasklowski, *Understanding the War in Kosovo*, Frank Cass, London and Portland, 2003, p. 15. See also Judah, *op. cit.*, p. 1 and p. 13.

6   Malcolm, *op. cit.*, p. 166.

7   Allcock, *op. cit.*, p. 15 and pp. 46-47. See also Malcolm, *op. cit.*, pp. 140-141.

8   Allcock, *op. cit.*, p. 37-39.

9   *Ibid.*, p. 38.

10   *Ibid.*, p. 39. See also Malcolm, *op. cit.*, p. 103 who says most of Kosovo's exports under the Ottomans during the 16th century went through Ragusa on their way to Western Europe.

11   Allcock, *op. cit.*, p. 39. See also Malcolm, *op. cit.*, p. 103, on towns which prospered under the Ottomans.

influence. This is because it provides grounds for Western Europeans to disconnect themselves from the "troubles" of the late twentieth century such as ethnic cleansing and the wars of succession. Allcock says: 'If "the Balkans" have come to signify conflict and fragmentation, this is because the region has been the arena in which the larger conflicts of European powers have been concentrated and, to some extent, conducted by proxy.'[12] This book rejects primordial assumptions because they tend to be ahistorical. Such disconnect enables Western Europeans to separate themselves from having played an historically influential role in the affairs of the Balkans.

The popular view of 19th century Balkan history is extremely simple: 'it is a story of people struggling to be free on the one hand, and an illiberal, autocratic Ottoman state trying to suppress them on the other.'[13] By the late 19th century the idea began to circulate in Western Europe that the Balkans was "backward". Western European powers promoted their interventions and meddling in the Balkans in the 19th century in binary terms, propagating the notion that Austria was "advanced" and the Ottoman empire was anti-modern.[14] Railway lines were sparser than in Europe and it wasn't until very late in the 19th century that industrialisation began to accelerate. However, much of the popular view, even today, has been based on many Europeans' own xenophobia and their haste to mark comfortable boundaries between East and West.[15]

There are historical reasons for challenging commonplace generalisations about the Balkans in regards to slow economic development, and in particular the lack of industrialisation, of the former Ottoman provinces. The basis for these generalisations can be traced back to the 19th century when Western European capitalists were vying for industrial contracts in Ottoman Balkan territories. The overall volume of Ottoman trade continued to grow with the industrialising countries thoughout the 19th century, although cheaper, mass-produced manufactured imports from Western Europe had a considerable impact on Ottoman markets, undermining local production.[16] Industrialisation of the Balkans was slower in comparison to wealthier Western European countries like Germany, Austria, France and Britain. Part of the reason for this, Allcock says, can be linked to Ottoman institutional conservatism and suspicion which prevented direct investment and the importation of advanced

---

12   Allcock, *op. cit.*, p. 24.
13   Malcolm, *op. cit.*, p. 181.
14   Allcock, *op. cit.*, pp. 7-8.
15   *Ibid.*, p. 8.
16   *Ibid.*, p. 35.

technologies until the mid-nineteenth century. This thwarted, to an extent, industrialising projects including the rapid expansion of railways, making the Ottoman empire more dependent on Western Europe for the supply of industrial products rather than establishing it as an industrial producer in its own right.[17] Still, 'one should refrain from overgeneralisation about the necessary or inevitable character of "Ottoman backwardness", recognising not only that the backwardness of the empire relative to Western Europe has varied over time, but also that this process has been shaped at many points precisely by the nature of the relationship between the two.'[18]

European powers played a significant role in limiting the development of the Balkan economy in the nineteenth century. In fact, 'the competition between the major European powers began to act as a brake on development by creating, in effect, a mutual veto on Balkan railway investment. Austrian and German transcontinental projects competed with each other ... for the compliance of the other powers.'[19] Consequently, the main north-south rail link, which had significant potential for increasing Ottoman trade, was not completed until the 1880s. This was particularly detrimental for the development of Serbia. The lateness of industrialised communication networks resulted in Serbia's relative isolation and low levels of foreign investment.[20]

Unable to maintain its frontier provinces and facing international pressure, the Ottomans conceded Bosnia in 1878 to the Habsburg Austro-Hungarian empire under terms of the Treaty of Berlin. Modernising reforms brought about by the Habsburgs, such as railway extensions and establishing more effective communication networks, were hampered because administration of the region was divided between Austria and Hungary.[21] The uncooperative nature of these factions left Bosnia-Herzegovina without effective rail contact with the rest of the Austrian empire. Habsburg administration also meant its military interests effectively overruled local market interests. Bosnia was subsequently highly dependent on shipping and ports in Dalmatia for trade and communication with the outside world.[22]

It was during the late 19th century that Croats, Slovenes, Albanians, Serbs, Bosnians and Herzegovinans developed nationalist ambitions and were in-

---

17   *Ibid.*, p. 36.

18   *Ibid.* See also various entries in Malcolm, *op. cit.*; Judah, *op. cit.*; and, Bieber and Dasklowski, *op. cit.*

19   Allcock, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

20   *Ibid.*, p. 43.

21   *Ibid.*, p. 49. See also Bieber and Dasklowski, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

22   Allcock, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

creasingly resentful of foreign influence. The idea of a unified state of South Slavs (Yugoslavia) also became popular across the region in the early 1900s. Austria's decision to formally annex Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1908 generated a sense of urgency for Balkan nationalists.[23] Political tensions culminated in a plot in Sarajevo which unfolded on 28th June 1914 when Serb nationalist Gavrilo Princip assassinated the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne Archduke Franz Ferdinand. The assassination was the catalyst for the outbreak of the First World War, setting in motion military responses by the major European powers based on the treaties between them. Russia supported Serbia's claim to independence, Germany advocated for Austria's claim to the Balkans, while France and Britain acted to defend Russia against German hostility.[24]

With Austria's defeat at the end of World War I, the different segments of the Balkans, corresponding still more to ethnic groups rather than geography, came together under the guise of mutual strength and protection from foreign powers. The result was establishment of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes in 1918, though the country was renamed Yugoslavia in 1929. Unable to quell German aggression the Kingdom was invaded by Nazi Germany in April 1941. Yugoslavia's King Peter II fled the country while royalist supporters appeased the Nazis and accepted their program to persecute Jews. Atrocities were also committed by the various ethnic groups against each other amid efforts to re-take control of Yugoslavia. Paramilitary groups were established and mobilised during this period such as Ustashi (Croatian fascists) and Chetniks (Serbian mercenaries).[25]

In response to the Nazi invasion Yugoslav communists under the leadership of Josip Broz Tito organized a multi-ethnic resistance group called 'partisans' who fought against the Axis powers and the Ustashi. In November 1943 Tito founded the Anti-Fascist Council of National Liberation of Yugoslavia in an attempt to establish the Yugoslav federation. Upon military success the Allies recognised Tito as the leader of Yugoslavia. By 1946 the partisans had established the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia. This meant there were six semi-autonomous republics within the new state – Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Croatia, Macedonia, Slovenia and Montenegro. There were two provinces as well – Kosovo and Vojvodina – which had limited autonomy and were administered directly by Serbia.

During the early period of the "first Yugoslavia" from 1918 to 1930 the country's economy centred on the extraction and export of primary products. It

---

23   See also discussion about Serbian nationalism in Judah, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

24   See Judah, *op. cit.*, pp. 95-97 for discussion on 'Sarajevo, 1914'.

25   *Ibid.*, p. 120.

was predominantly an agrarian society.[26] The world depression was 'catastrophic' for trade, though coastal areas recovered more quickly in the 1930s due to a boom in tourism.[27] During World War II the Nazi occupation led to the nationalising of key Yugoslav industries. Production in the Balkans was subordinated to the needs of the Nazi war effort, and then those of the partisans as Tito gained control of the country. The centralisation of resource distribution underpinned the planned economy envisioned by the Communist party under Tito.[28] Attempts by Tito's regime to increase industrialisation were undermined by an experiment in paradox. The experiment began in the early post-war period and combined horizontal economic management (workers' self-management) with a vertical political structure. The outcome produced significant internal contradictions: instead of a flexible, market needs-based system of resource allocation within the federation, there was rigid, planned allocation of resources.[29] As a result the period 1945 to 1991 was characterised by a deep contradiction between the imperatives of modernisation and the fundamentally anti-modern features of the Yugoslav 'road to socialism'.[30]

Yugoslavia's slow economic growth reflected the country's struggle to insert itself into global patterns of development.[31] Localised strengths were often sacrificed to the desires of the Federation. Primary resource production remained central to the economy of Tito's Yugoslavia, rendering the country dependent on imports for capital and technological advancement. The planned economy was thwarted by problems such as inefficient production and inflation as well as self-interest by republican political elites to "rescue" their own republics from the mire.[32] The break up of Yugoslavia in the 1990s can be attributed, in this sense, at least in part to the ideological goals of its elites and their failure to adapt economically to the globalising world.[33] Mehmeti further attributes this break up to the failure of Federalism in the late 1980s during which time Yugoslavia was unable to successfully navigate three 'crucial and interrelated factors', namely: identity politics; misunderstanding the implications of federal centralisation and the decentralisation of political powers be-

---

26   Allcock, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

27   *Ibid.*, p. 57. See also Judah, *op. cit.*, pp. 103-104.

28   Allcock, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

29   *Ibid.*, p. 69. See also Judah, *op. cit.*, pp. 135-167.

30   Allcock, *op. cit.*, p. 8 and p. 69.

31   *Ibid.*, p. 9.

32   *Ibid.*, p. 78.

33   *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

tween the federation and the federal units; and, economic disparities between federal units.[34]

Tito's death in 1980 was a significant factor leading to the disintegration of Yugoslavia; he was in many ways a kind of keystone holding all the republics together.[35] Malcolm says Tito's legacy was a 'stultified political system and a collapsing economy', and created the conditions under which a politician such as Slobodan Milosevic 'could rise to power and manipulate Serbian nationalism to his own destructive advantage.'[36] In Tito's absence, nationalism increasingly undermined relations between the republics alongside differences in economic growth which were openly politicised by Slovenia and Croatia.[37]

In 1989 the collapse of the USSR lifted the unifying threat and pressure from the north. Russia's political influence and military capabilities had been a major incentive for the unification of the Yugoslav republics.[38] Economic decline, poverty, high inflation and Serbia's heavy-handed attempts to maintain Yugoslav cohesion were immediate factors in the eventual break up of the federation.[39] By 1990 unemployment was up to 16.4% in Serbia and 38.4% in Kosovo.[40] In the search for explanations for their own difficulties, republican political leaders resorted to blaming other republics, creating a culture of paranoia: 'Everyone was surrounded by enemies, although the "enemies without" of the Cold War period were now replaced by the "enemies within" of other republics and other nations.'[41]

Diametrically opposed to Western historical thought, which is typically represented as an image of 'ineluctable historical continuity', has been repeated insistence on the importance of discontinuity in the histories of Balkan peoples.[42] The history of Yugoslavia is often represented by academic and non-academic observers absolutely as 'a series of abrupt breaks with the past'; UN military commanders during in Bosnian war made constant references to the

---

34   L. Mehmeti, 'Democratization in Kosovo: The Role of International Institutions,' in B. Radeljić (ed.), *Europe and the Post-Yugoslav Space*, Ashgate, Surrey, 2013, p. 190.

35   See Bieber and Dasklowski, *op. cit.*, p. 17. See also Allcock, *op. cit.*, p. 300 and p. 309.

36   Malcolm, *op. cit.*, p. 315.

37   D. Chandler, 'Western Intervention and the Disintegration of Yugoslavia, 1989-1999', in P. Hammond and E.S. Herman (eds.), *Degraded Capability: The Media and the Kosovo Crisis*, Pluto Press, London, 2000, p. 20. See also M. Glenny, *The Fall of Yugoslavia: the Third Balkan War*, Penguin, London, 1992.

38   Allcock, *op. cit.*, p. 311.

39   *Ibid.*, pp. 417-418. See also Chandler, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

40   Allcock, *op. cit.*, p. 192.

41   *Ibid.*, p. 97. See also Judah, *op. cit.*, esp. pp. 168-190.

42   Allcock, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

"historical" and fanatical divisions between Serbs, Croats and Muslims.[43] Historical accounts invoke a sense of mechanisation through the use of labels such as "first Yugoslavia" and "second Yugoslavia". These notions are fraught with generalisations about capitalism giving way to socialism, and centralist royal power to federalist republicanism. A preoccupation with discontinuity has constituted much of the prevailing understanding about the history of Yugoslavia.[44] Use of the phrase "wars of succession" is another indication of the central role played by the notion of discontinuity in contemporary understandings of the history of the Balkans.[45] "Succession" conveys an image of momentum because of discontinuities. This provides a comfortable, sequential ordered historical narrative, but reduces history 'to the more or less constant outworking of basically fixed psychological predispositions of cultural traits', segmenting the history of the South Slav peoples into a series of static, ordered processions.[46]

Fixations with dis/continuity have reinforced the image of the Balkans as disconnected from Western Europe. In doing so the South Slavs are often construed as Western Europe's relative "other", uncivilized and fractured. Paradoxically, because of the interests of Western European capitalism, the Balkans is also considered to exist within the moral sphere in which Europeans are obliged to take notice of their affairs and thereby compelled to "fix" Balkan troubles. Such discourse is present in the jargon used by NATO and its allies who construed military operations in Bosnia and Kosovo as civilizing missions. These were interventions into an ongoing sequence of uncivilized historical successions.[47]

As Allcock says, a common representation of the independence of Croatia and Slovenia depicts them as regaining their "rightful" place in the West, as opposed to the "oriental" societies further to the near and far East.[48] Rather than a series of breaks with continuity, the development of the region ought to be viewed as the journey of South Slavs towards modernisation and their struggles to overcome barriers to globalisation: 'the region is involved in essentially the same processes of development upon which we ourselves are embarked.'[49]

---

43   *Ibid.*, p. 3.

44   *Ibid.*, p. 3.

45   See for example Enver Hasani, 'The Evolution of the Succession Process in Former Yugoslavia', *Thomas Jefferson Law Review*, 29. 1, Fall, 2006, pp. 111-150. See also Gale Stokes, John Lamp, Dennison Rusinow and Julie Mostov, 'Instant History: Understanding the Wars of Yugoslav Succession', *Slavic Review*, 55.1, Spring, 1996, pp. 136-160.

46   Allcock, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

47   See M. Mazower, *The Balkans: A Short History*, Random House, New York, 2000.

48   Allcock, *op. cit.*, p. 23. See also Judah on 'historical circumstances', *op. cit.*, p. xiv.

49   *Ibid.*, p. 5.

The Fall of Communism and Demise of Yugoslavia

This section evaluates the 'nationalist frenzy' that occurred in the former Yugoslavia in the 1980s and 1990s and the ways in which this facilitated Serbia's campaign of ethnic cleansing in Kosovo.[50] The aim is to indulge a greater sense of depth and context to the Kosovo war by highlighting the historical implications impacting on Australia's decision to accept ethnic Albanian refugees. This provides useful context for understanding how the Kosovo war was represented by the media in Australia and influenced the Howard Government's decision to accommodate the refugees under the Safe Haven program.

A surge in ethnic-nationalism within the republics of the former Yugoslavia played a fundamental role in mobilising armed forces during the 1990s Balkan wars. Historians and other scholars have offered varying interpretations about the origins of the conflicts. Popular history attributes six centuries of Ottoman rule to producing ethnic tensions in the Balkans. Naimark disagrees with this interpretation, stating that the nationalist frenzy in the former Yugoslavia is related much more specifically to the political history of Europe in the twentieth century as opposed to centuries of Turkish rule. The rise of communism after World War II was a much more immediate influence, and 'The breakup of communist Yugoslavia at the end of the 1980s unleashed forces of national antagonism that recapitulated, in some ways, those [held by Serb Chetniks, Croat Ustashas and Bosnian SS fighters during] World War II.'[51]

Communism not only gave way to radical ethnic-nationalism in Yugoslavia in the 1980s but its demise was made more likely because of widespread dissatisfaction with the hardships that accompanied communist economics.[52] Throughout the 1980s Yugoslavia faced endemic economic problems such as severe inflation, high unemployment and credit strain. These factors encouraged the wealthier republics of Croatia and Slovenia to sever ties with the Yugoslav federation for fear of being pulled down with the "sinking ship".[53] Where Serbs, Croats, Bosnians and Kosovar Albanians had lived in relative peace for centuries, there emerged in the 1980s growing resentment of each other alongside mass poverty.[54] Naimark states: 'With nationalism's major enemy – Soviet-inspired communism – defeated and everywhere [in Europe] in

---

50   N.M. Naimark, *Fires of Hatred; Ethnic Cleansing in Twentieth-Century Europe*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge and London, 2002, p. 147.

51   *Ibid.*, p. 140.

52   J.A. Mertus, *Kosovo; How Myths and Truths Started a War*, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1999, p. 232.

53   Naimark, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

54   *Ibid.*, p. 1.

retreat, nationalist ideologies naturally sought out other enemies, usually "other" nations, whether minorities within one's own nation or one's neighbours.'[55]

While nationalism lent to escalating tensions within Yugoslavia, Allcock disputes the notion that it was a 'congenital disease' typical of the Balkans.[56] Despite the comfortable image of the Balkans being fragmented from Europe, and of hostile nationalist fragmentation within, nationality ought to be viewed as meaning different things in different areas. National identities are produced by disparate processes that are specific to the relationship between local conditions (including kinship, locality, religion and traditionalism) and global influences.[57] Nationality can thus be viewed as resulting from the need to adapt to the modern world, and nationalism is not in itself the reason for the Balkan wars of the 1990s.

Rationalising Ethnic Cleansing and the Serbian Nationalist 'Frenzy'

The term ethnic cleansing 'exploded into our consciousness in May 1992 during the first stage of the war in Bosnia'.[58] After the atrocities committed by Serbian military leaders and paramilitaries in Bosnia, the concept quickly became part of the international lexicons of crimes associated with Serb aggression.[59] The Bosnian government declared the country to be a sovereign state, cutting ties with Yugoslavia on 15th October 1991. The referendum that followed on 29th February 1992 produced an affirmative result for independence from Yugoslavia. Most Bosnian Serbs boycotted the referendum out of protest. The leaders of Bosnia and Herzegovina declared the country to be an independent state on 3rd March 1992. Bosnian Serb leaders counter-claimed the breakaway from Yugoslavia, declaring the formation of the Republika Srpska in territories located to the east of Sarajevo.[60]

After a month of rising tensions, open war began with the siege of Sarajevo on 6th April 1992, even though the UN recognised Bosnia-Herzegovina as an independent state. The Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) officially withdrew from Bosnia-Herzegovina. However, the JNA's Bosnian Serb members simply became members of the Army of Republika Srpska. These troops were armed

---

55   *Ibid.*, p. 151.
56   Allcock, *op. cit.*, p. 10.
57   *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11.
58   Naimark, *op. cit.*, 2.
59   *Ibid.*, p. 3.
60   See Judah, *op. cit.*, pp. 192-224.

and equipped from JNA stores in Bosnia and were reinforced with volunteers from Serbia. Successful offensives by Republika Srpska for the remainder of 1992 saw much of Bosnia-Herzgovina come under its control. By early 1993 about 70% of the country was under its control.[61] With Sarajevo surrounded, Bosniak Muslims maintained control of the Sarajevo airfield, enabling Bosnia-Herzegovina to withstand the siege. The international community under the auspices of the UN was able to fly in supplies to the city while snipers and artillery lined the hills overlooking the airport and the city. Most buildings in the city were either destroyed or damaged by shelling and Muslim casualties were high.

In July 1995 Bosnian Serb troops under the command of general Radko Mladic carried out the murder of 8,000 men and boys in the supposed "safe haven" of Srebenica. The bodies were buried in mass graves. The incident was captured by camera operators accompanying the Bosnian Serb army as well satellite footage of mass graves taken by the United States.[62] These images and other evidence have since been used as part of war crimes trials for the Bosnian Serb leadership in The Hague. The siege of Sarajevo was lifted and the war ended officially in February 1995 when the leaders of Croatia, Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina agreed to Bosnia's independence and the federation of three regions, namely Bosnia, Herzegovina and Republika Srpska.

While Naimark argues the term "ethnic cleansing" first 'exploded into our consciousness' in 1992, it had been used for at least a decade beforehand by the Serbian government to describe what was supposedly happening to their ethnic kin in Kosovo at the hands of the majority Albanian ethnic group. The myth that ethnic Albananians were purging ethnic Serbs was propagated by Serbian nationalists and used to justify state persecution of ethnic Albanians in Kosovo.[63]

This myth was fanned by political leaders in Serbia to legitimate military action against insurgents in Kosovo as well as war with neighbouring countries. Ethnic cleansing was part and parcel of Serbia's governing rationale throughout the 1980s and a dominant feature of Serbian popular psychology at this time. It had 'the intent of driving victims from territory claimed by the perpetrators,' though it has also been articulated as a euphemism for genocide by international commentators.[64]

---

61   See Ian Oliver, War and Peace in *The Balkans: The Diplomacy of Conflict in the Former Yugoslavia,* I.B. Tauris, London and New York, 2005, esp. pp. 8-11.

62   Judah, *op. cit.*, pp. 300-304.

63   H. Clark, *Civil Resistance in Kosovo*, Pluto Press, London, 2000, p. 40.

64   Naimark, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

Ethnic cleansing involves attempts to remove a particular group of people through fear and intimidation. In Bosnia, ethnic Serbs (as well as Muslims and Croats) were involved in rounding up other ethnic groups for execution followed by mass grave burials. In Kosovo, like Bosnia, Serb paramilitaries and military units raped, tortured and committed other acts intended to demoralise and humiliate ethnic Albanians with the intent of forcing them to flee.

Ethnic cleansing is not 'a necessary corollary of nation-state building; it is a path chosen by governmental elites with concrete political goals in mind.'[65] The charismatic leadership of Slobodan Milosevic was a crucial factor in the popular turn to ethnic nationalism in Serbia. Ethnic cleansing was not merely an instrument of the Serbian state; it was a central part of the political compromise that had elevated Milosevic to the leadership of Serbia's national government.

The practice of ethnic cleansing was endorsed by Serbia's intelligentsia and political leaders. Serbia's political elites and intellectuals 'exploited the appeal of nationalism to large groups of resentful citizens in the dominant ethnic population. Using the power of the state, the media, and their political parties, national leaders have manipulated distrust of the "other" and purposefully revived and distorted ethnic tensions'.[66]

Milosevic was particularly skilful in the 'harnessing of historical memory to national causes', using stories of Ottoman oppression, Albanian insurrection, Serbian national greatness, loss, victimisation and retribution which readily resonated with the population.[67] These factors, alongside Serbian Orthodox populism, were interwoven seemingly with ease by Milosevic into the popular nationalist consciousness of a country attempting to re-define itself following the demise of communism.[68] Milosevic galvanised his constituents with the belief that Serbs have never been aggressors but instead saw themselves as "liberators" 'who try – unselfishly and by way of great sacrifices – to help others (other Serbs) in need'.[69]

The Serbian government steered a path to the wars of succession, contributing to and exacerbating rising tensions between the former Yugoslav republics. A key turning point in the lead up to the beginning of the wars of succession

---

65   *Ibid.*, p. 139. See also Mertus, *op. cit.*, p. 232.

66   Naimark, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

67   *Ibid.*, p. 141.

68   See L. Kuhle and C.B. Lausten, 'The Kosovo myth; Nationalism and revenge', in T.B. Knudsen and C.B. Lausten (eds.), *Kosovo between War and Peace; Nationalism, Peacebuilding and International Trusteeship*, Routledge, London and New York, 2006, esp. p. 28.

69   A.J. Vetlesen, in Knudsen and Lausten, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

was Serbia's persecution of Kosovar Albanians. The first major repression was in 1981 following major unrest by student protesters, leading to a declaration of a state of emergency in Kosovo. Throughout the next decade attempts by Kosovar Albanians to resist restrictions imposed on their democratic rights were met with violent Serbian countermeasures and brutality.[70]

Serbia's repression of the rights and liberties of Kosovar Albanians was given intellectual force and legitimated by the 1986 'Memorandum of the Serbian Academy of Social Sciences'. In the Memorandum leading intellectuals captured the mood of the Belgrade nationalist intelligentsia who called for extreme actions to be taken against Kosovar Albanians in order to strengthen Serbia's control of the province.[71] In the document they recommended removing Kosovo's autonomy and subordinating the interests of the Kosovar Albanians to those of the Serbs. By 1987 the Memorandum embodied the political consensus of Serbia, and its core principles mirrored in the elevation of Milosevic to the presidency. Milosevic would 'ride the wave of nationalism' until the end of the Kosovo war.[72]

The president's political success was largely premised on his ability to blend widely felt victimisation and Serbian aggression into a new, volatile mix of nationalism. Milosevic 'appealed to populist slogans and antigovernment sentiments among the peasants', and his 'mix of Serbian chauvinism and Yugoslav integralism meant that non-Serb nationalisms were interpreted as reactionary and separatist.'[73] By the late 1980s, in the Serbian media and in mass rallies in Belgrade, Milosevic's propaganda portrayed Kosovar Albanians as the natural enemy of Serbs – as dirty, primitive, nasty, rapists, and even baby-killers.[74]

By 1989 Kosovar Albanians involved in protests were being arrested en masse and Albanian schools had been shut down. As Naimark described: 'Serbs were openly favoured in economic policies, Albanians clearly discriminated against.'[75] Kosovo was effectively governed by martial law until the NATO campaign in 1999. Only Serbians were permitted to work in Kosovo's public service. Significant numbers of skilled Kosovar Albanians left their homeland to find employment in Western Europe. The courts were placed in the hands of Serbs. Albanian-language press, radio and television were banned and Albanian ceased to be an official language of the province. Hundreds of lectur-

70   Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 40. See also Naimark, *op. cit.*, p. 148.

71   Naimark, *op. cit.*, p. 150. See also Bieber and Dasklowski, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

72   Naimark, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

73   *Ibid.*, p. 155.

74   Clark, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-20.

75   Naimark, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

ers were sacked from the University of Pristina and thousands of its students expelled. This was because: 'Intellectual, academic and linguistic ties to Albania […] strengthened Kosovars' identity either in an independent republic or within greater Albania… Education-related socio-economic development concerns partly explain the riots and resistance that grew in the 1980s.'[76] State repression of ethnic Albanian Kosovars was heavy-handed and systematic. Every government support service was unavailable to ethnic Albanian Kosovars. The Serbian government set out to make life brutally unpleasant for ethnic Albanians. The intent was to encourage as many ethnic Albanians to leave Kosovo of their own accord. For Allcock: 'Kosovo symbolises as does nothing else the failure of the Yugoslav state to embody its own normative ideals… The state became identified with blatant repression and the prisoner of one of the most anti-modern segments of Yugoslav society – Kosovo Serbs.'[77]

Perceptions and Representations of Serbian Cruelty in the "West"

Throughout this book I evaluate the response of the Australian media to the Kosovo conflict. Particular focus is placed on the ways in which Western media rationalised the war, the actions of the Serbian regime and the ethnic cleansing that led to Kosovar refugees fleeing their homeland. By the time of the NATO campaign in Kosovo the atrocities committed during the Bosnian war had already convinced many international commentators of the willingness of Serbs to resort to acts of cruelty. The Srebenica massacre carried out by Bosnian Serbs was one of the worst and most visible acts of genocide committed throughout the wars of succession. What is clear is that, by the start of the Kosovo war, Western media commentators viewed little difference between Serbs living in Serbia proper and those living in other countries of the former Yugoslavia.

Considering Bosnian Serbs carried out the siege of Sarajevo while receiving military and financial support from the Serbian government, it is not difficult to comprehend how impressions of an "evil" plan based on pan-Serb collusion gained momentum. Hammond and Herman argue that there was a 'Nazification' of Serbian atrocities at work in the media and policy discourse of NATO countries: 'While NATO politicians were eager to push the Second World War comparison regarding Kosovo, in doing so they drew on a ready-made image

---

76   W. Nelles, 'Foundations and fractures of Kosovo's educational system; Towards conflict or peace?', in Knudsen and Lausten, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

77   Allcock, *op. cit.*, p. 208.

of the Serbs developed by crusading journalists in Bosnia.'[78] Such an impression was reinforced by the orchestration of the mass rape of Muslim women by Bosnian Serbs. Systematic rape was intended not only to drive Muslims out of the country but also to "breed" them out. At rape "camps" and "rape houses" established during the Bosnian conflict, Serbian soldiers partook in 'sexual-sadistic fantasies' that included beatings, gang rape and even the tattooing of perpetrators names on the skin of the rape victims.[79] Rape camps received financial and logistical support from the Bosnian Serb government and the campaign was 'organised and directed from above'.[80]

Like Bosnia, ethnic cleansing in Kosovo was intended to compel all ethnic Albanians to leave without exemption – the elderly, women, children, peasants, men of fighting age, the middle class and intellectuals were compelled to flee Kosovo. Ethnic Albanians were completely disenfranchised from state protection by the time of the NATO campaign. Albanian protests were consistently met with arrests, assaults and imprisonment and even torture. Yugoslav government records show that between 1981 and 1988 there had been 586,000 Kosovars (over a quarter of the population) taken by police from the street, interrogated at police stations, and gaoled.[81] By the late 1990s there was little Albanians could do to prevent ethnic cleansing as tensions began to escalate in Kosovo. Thousands of young Albanians turned to the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) for protection and to resist Serbian repression as armed combatants.

When Serbian forces assaulted the Kosovar village of Račak in January 1999, resulting in the massacre of 45 ethnic Albanians, the event was a major turning point for the NATO alliance and is often viewed as the catalyst for militarily intervention by the Western powers.[82] Račak was a pertinent reminder in the minds of many Western analysts of the atrocities committed by Serbs during the Bosnian conflict. In the months that followed, Serbian military and paramilitary forces conducted a sweeping operation aimed at forcing Albanians to leave major cities including Pristina.[83] It was clear to the NATO alliance that a humanitarian disaster was a looming in Kosovo. NATO's decision to undertake a military intervention in Kosovo was purportedly to prevent further ethnic cleansing by Serbia.

---

78   Hammond and Herman, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

79   Naimark, *op. cit.*, p. 168.

80   *Ibid.*, p. 170.

81   *Ibid.*, p. 178.

82   M. Ignatieff, *Virtual War; Kosovo and Beyond*, Chatto and Windus, London, 2000 (reprinted by Vintage Random House, London, 2002), p. 61.

83   See A.J. Bellamy, *Kosovo and International Society*, Palgrave Macmillan, Houndmills and New York, 2002, esp. p. 164.

Conclusion

This chapter provided historical background for understanding ethnic cleansing in Kosovo and the NATO intervention in 1999. It has explored Yugoslavia's difficulties with adapting to an increasingly globalised world economy. The fragmentation of Yugoslavia in the 1990s was underpinned by 'the frailty of the federal state, caught in the dual processes of international and domestic social and political realignment after the Cold War.'[84] The Federation of Yugoslavia inherited structural inefficiencies in industry that had limited economic growth and stability in the region since the 19th century. Still, the modernising reforms enacted by the Tito regime were impacted by paradoxical factors. Horizontal economic planning and a vertical political structure failed to maintain the unity and stability of the Federation. Economic hardship, nationalism and the end of the Cold War created conditions under which nationalist political leaders such as Slobodan Milosevic rose to power. Serbia's grievances with Albanian Kosovars are directly linked to economic decline as well as Milosevic's manipulation of Serbian nationalism for destructive purposes.

How the Balkan wars of succession were interpreted by Western countries, however, is a different matter altogether. While many of horrors of the Bosnian, Croatian and Kosovo wars were fully televised around the world, the international response to the needs of those being persecuted varied in both the kinds and scale of assistance that would be offered. For Australia, in regards to the Kosovo war, the least humane response was its first. Selfishness, void of any natural emotion or empathy, had taken hold of the Howard Government as it asked: why should a country as distant and far removed from Kosovo like Australia respond to calls to assist? By early April 1999, just a few weeks in to the Kosovo war, the UN's first call to assist was to be rejected by the Australian Government. But the *globality* of the world of Australians was, for many of them, much closer to home than the Howard Government had calculated as the weight of a sense of international obligation and a feeling of connectedness with those far away spilt over into anger. Backlash ensued when the Howard Government refused to help the Kosovars.

---

84   Chandler, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

Natural Selection? The Evacuation, Bureaucracy and Governmental Agenda

Introduction

The Liberal Party both under its current leadership and previous leader John Howard has utilised the media to politicise the contentious issue of refugees with great effect. The broader question in Chapter 3 – and which is relevant as much today as it was during Operation Safe Haven – is whether the media and party politicking merely reflects these contentions; or, and to what extent, are these contentions fuelled by media sensationalising and party politics. This chapter reveals how the *image* of the Kosovars was constructed by the Howard Government. The media image is potent in setting and driving the public political agenda. It is not too difficult to comprehend the effect on the public of media coverage during Operation Safe Haven fraught with pictures of children fleeing the war in Kosovo. Public generosity and charity emerged as key signifiers of national identity for Australians during the early stages of Operation Safe Haven. The Howard Government recognised and responded to this sentiment, albeit initially with great reluctance.

Having committed to evacuations the politically savvy Howard Government propagated the virtue of Operation Safe Haven. It was a compassionate evacuation for "deserving" European refugees, those repressed and forced to flee following the worst humanitarian disaster since World War II. The Howard Government was able to utilise the evacuation as part of a strategy for producing stronger political consensus. Key to this strategy was the (re)production of conservative cultural binaries surrounding the evacuation. The image portrayed by bureaucrats and staffers working in the Department of Immigration was that Operation Safe Haven had been undertaken without difficulty. Refugees were selected by Departmental officials because they subscribed to ideal criteria – they waited for evacuation happily and patiently; they were clean, middle class and "just like us". Significantly, the language surrounding the selection process overwhelmingly promoted the refugees as a familiar and "compatible" cultural group.

This chapter investigates the Howard Government's plans for evacuating the Kosovar refugees to Australia in April and early May 1999. A key focus is

how developments in refugee policy around this time and the legal restraints imposed on the Kosovar refugees throughout the duration of their stay in Australia were the result of both domestic political influences (including populism and the media) and international political forces. I also unpack here the contributions of public charity to the refugees' welfare, how generosity gained momentum during the crisis and the implications of charity for the changes made in refugee policy at this time. This chapter provides a clearer view of how media, community and international pressure contributed to the Government's about-face response to the Kosovo refugee crisis.

The Image of the Kosovo War: a Human Tragedy

What is clear in media discourse surrounding the evacuation of the Kosovar refugees is the way the phrase "safe haven" promoted a sense of national goodwill as well as an obligation to shelter the refugees on humanitarian grounds. Providing a temporary haven to the Kosovar refugees was part of what *The Daily Telegraph* portrayed as 'Australia's duty of care'[1] alongside the responsibility to provide a safe, secure and enclosed space to recuperate from war.[2] By providing safe haven, Australia offered an opportunity for 'survival'[3] to the Kosovars, along with a 'new home'[4] and 'Sanctuary and hope in Sydney'.[5] The news-friendly catchphrase, 'safe haven', in no subtle terms, emphasised the overall emotion of the evacuation, carrying with it a sense of obligation and national "duty".

The Safe Haven Visa, in another sense, can be viewed as a metaphor for reasonable control and compliance within a humanitarian context. The implications of the visa reveal darker aspects of Australian immigration, promoting safe haven on the rationale of temporary protection. King aptly describes the Safe Haven Visa as a 'restrictionist policy, severely limiting the rights and op-

---

1   See the two page feature, 'Australia's duty of care', *The Daily Telegraph*, 6th April 1999, pp. 4-5.

2   See S. Gee, 'Home away from Hell', *The Daily Telegraph*, 10th April 1999, p. 4. Here, the *Telegraph* described the East Hills barracks in Sydney that would accommodate the refugees as a '5ha fenced site', and stated that the refugees 'will live in 52 free-standing two-storey townhouse-style buildings each containing three-to-four room dormitories.'

3   B. Wilson, 'Smiles that say thanks', *The Daily Telegraph*, 6th May 1999, p. 4.

4   M. Jones, 'Sanctuary and hope in Sydney; Refugees ready for a new home', *The Daily Telegraph* (Afternoon Edition), 7th May 1999, p. 1 (continued p. 4).

5   *Ibid.*

portunities of the Kosovars in Australia.'[6] Assessing the Safe Haven legislation, Liz Curren argues that: 'The problem in the main is that Australia continues to deal with the issue of refugees as an issue of domestic politics... and [requiring] the preservation of an illusive largely Anglo Saxon identity'.[7] The TPV, introduced five months after the Safe Haven Visa, was permeated with similar xenophobic connotations. The parallels between the visas, particularly the restrictions they imposed on the human rights of refugees, must be viewed alongside the re-emergence of popular xenophobia within Australian society in the Howard era. One Nation party leader David Oldfield reinforced the point, commenting that John Howard's decision to accept the Kosovar refugees on a temporary basis was a 'direct application' of One Nation's immigration policy.[8]

When writing this chapter I have investigated 106 news articles published in *The Daily Telegraph*, *Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Australian* between 5th April and 7th May 1999.[9] Much of the news coverage in these newspapers noted the importance of "humanitarian obligation", "compassion" and "empathy" for the Kosovar refugees. *The Australian* offered 41 references to "humanitarian" concepts in this regard, which was similar to the *Herald* (noting 42), while the number of these terms in the *Telegraph* comprised 31. This sentiment was generally supported by a broader moral framing of the Kosovo war as a whole, although the content analysis for this section reflects only those articles specifically related to Australia's evacuation effort.

---

6   J. King, 'Australia and Canada compared: the reaction to the Kosovar crisis', *Australian Journal of Human Rights*, 15, 2003. URL: https://web.archive.org/web/20060917134745/http://austlii.law.uts.edu.au/au/journals/AJHR/2003/15.html. Accessed 10th October 2016.

7   L. Curren, 'Hordes or Human Beings?; A Discussion of Some of the Problems Surrounding Australia's Response to Asylum Seekers and Possible Solutions to Those Problems', Catholic Mission for Justice, Development and Peace, Melbourne, Discussion Paper 8, March 2000, p. 11.

8   D. Oldfield, cited in R. Garran and P. Green, 'Agreement remote on housing refugees', *The Australian*, 8th April 1999, p. 1.

9   The dates for the analysis extend from when the UNHCR request was issued to Western countries to evacuate and provide temporary resettlement to Kosovar refugees, to the arrival of the first evacuation flight at Sydney airport. It investigates news articles directly related to the UHNCR request to Australia, and which provided details concerning those refugees being (or soon to be) evacuated to Australia as part of Operation Safe Haven. The news articles (including editorials and opinion columns) comprised 37 from the *Telegraph*, 43 from the *Herald* and 26 in *The Australian*. The content analysis excluded photographs, cartoons and letters to the editor, although some of these elements are drawn on throughout this chapter to complement the investigation.

This analysis of media portrayals of the Kosovar refugees demonstrates the way the Howard Government was able to tap into public sympathy and to reappropriate popular consensus after a brief period of backlash against its initial decision not to evacuate them. It highlights how the Prime Minister shunned utilising nationalist sentiment in re-establishing public support for the Government – something that had been otherwise commonplace for Howard during his term of office. As Judith Brett later noted, Howard's 'convincing consensual language', focussed on the 'Australian way, Australian values and identity', was a significant factor in three election victories.[10] There remained (for the most part) a clear separation between "humanitarian" concepts and Australian "values" in the analysis with significantly fewer references to concepts such as "mateship", "mates" and "fair go" across the newspapers.[11] This analysis affirms a strong correlation between media discourse and how the Prime Minister sought to promote the evacuation as an issue of 'moral obligation' and being a good world citizen.[12] It was the idea that Australia's part in the international aid effort was a gesture that extended beyond the interests of the national community resonating in a much more global sense that connected Australians with the wider world. In the following, I examine the development of humanitarian sentiment in the Australian news media about the Kosovo war before returning to Howard's appropriation of such a discourse.

Massacres, Women and Children – Australia's 'Duty of Care'

The Kosovo war was depicted by the news media as a series of human rights atrocities not seen in Europe since the rise of Nazi Germany.[13] It was repeatedly noted that the conflict had resulted in the 'biggest humanitarian disaster

10   J. Brett, 'The New Liberalism', in R. Manne (ed.), *The Howard Years*, Black Inc. Agenda, Melbourne, 2004, pp. 75-84.

11   In *The Australian*, there were 3 references to "mateship", 2 concerning a "fair go" and 0 for "egalitarianism". In the *Telegraph*, there were 10 references to "mateship", 1 concerning a "fair go" and 0 citing "egalitarianism". In the *Herald*, there was 1 reference to "mateship", 1 to "egalitarianism" and 0 to "fair go".

12   M. Farr, 'SANCTUARY – Australia to accept 4000 from Kosovo', *The Daily Telegraph* (Morning Edition), 7th April 1999, p. 1. See also reference to Howard's promotion of "moral obligation" in P. Kelly, 'Knee-jerk response to Kosovo crisis', *The Australian*, 7th April 1999, p. 13.

13   See reference to 'Nazi Holocaust' in G. Elgood, 'Albanians' identities erased', *The Daily Telegraph*, 1st April 1999, p. 29.

in Europe since World War II.'[14] Images of refugees and reports from journalists in the Balkans worked to generate widespread empathy in Australia with headlines such as 'Orwell comes true in Kosovo.'[15] This complemented the common representation by journalists of a "doomsday" scenario that was facing the Kosovar refugees. In the lead up to NATO air strikes, news reports focussed on the Serb "orchestration" of massacres throughout the Kosovo countryside and the building of a case for "war crimes" against the Yugoslav regime by international human rights monitors. The *Telegraph's* 'WAR IN EUROPE' series promoted the air strikes as both inevitable and a just, moral crusade. The *Telegraph* often referred to "massacres" on a mass scale, as well as "mass" or "summary executions" committed by Yugoslav forces.[16] The newspaper relayed an image of Serbian forces using (what NATO referred to as) "rape houses" and "rape camps", along with the "emptying" of whole city populations of their ethnic Albanian inhabitants.[17] By early April 1999, newspaper readers were witnessing the final stages of the campaign to expel ethnic Albanians from Kosovo.[18]

Much of the media's coverage in the lead-up to the air strikes relayed information disseminated by the media offices of NATO, closely espousing sentiments promoted by Jamie Shea and UK Foreign Secretary Robin Cook. The management of public relations in the Macedonian refugees camps by NATO

---

14   See these references, for instance, in 'Escape from Kosovo in anything that moves', *The Daily Telegraph*, 30th March 1999, p. 1. See also S. Mann, 'Stranded And Hungry: An Ocean of Despair', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 5th April 1999, p. 1. See also M. Stevens, 'EXODUS – on the Macedonian border', *The Australian*, 3rd April 1999, p. 17.

15   'Orwell comes true in Kosovo', *The Daily Telegraph*, 1st April 1999, pp. 28-29.

16   T. Montgomery, 'Village of death – Killers seek out all young men', *The Daily Telegraph*, 23rd March 1999, p. 23. See also reference to summary executions in T. Hundley, 'Kosovo's cruel sea of misery – Deaf man shot for ignoring an order', *The Daily Telegraph*, 31st March 1999, p. 28.

17   See description of Pristina being emptied by Serbian forces in 'No one dreamed Pristina would be like this', *The Daily Telegraph*, 1st April 1999, p. 29. See descriptions of the 'rape of Kosovo' and 'systematically raping young Kosovar women' in L. Montgomery, 'Emergence of one of the most evil war crimes', *The Daily Telegraph*, 14th April 1999, p. 32. See references to 'rape houses' in R. Pendlebury, 'Women tell of rape houses of Dragacin', *The Daily Telegraph*, 1st May 1999, p. 27. See also discussion about the evidence concerning the systematic rape of ethnic Albanian Kosovar women in P. Knightley, *The First Casualty; The War Correspondent as Hero and Myth-Maker from the Crimea to Iraq*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1975 (reprinted 2004), p. 510.

18   See G. Kitney, 'Serbs Against Rest Of The World', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 3rd April 1999, p. 32.

is described by Morris; 'NATO had a good public relations machine ready in the first few days. On-site photo-scanners and satellite communications were made available to journalists, enabling them to file stories with an ease and speed unprecedented in refugee camps.'[19] NATO's media strategy can be viewed as situated in parallel to historical discourses associated with peace, security and a tradition of lending humanitarian aid to certain types of refugees. Gibney stipulates there have been a variety of "popular" refugees associated with humanitarian responses throughout post-war European history, arguing the UNHCR 'owes its existence largely to the way it successfully coordinated the Western response to the refugee crises produced by the Hungarian uprising of 1956'.[20] This response involved resettling 200,000 Hungarians permanently across Europe and other liberal democracies such as the United States. In 1968 a similar response was undertaken to resettle at least 40,000 refugees from Czechoslovakia, while hundreds of thousands Vietnamese received asylum in the 1970s and 1980s. The common theme, Gibney suggests, is that their 'popularity owed as much to the ideological desire to demonstrate the moral bankruptcy of communist regimes as to humanitarian need.'[21] A point of contrast is the response to the Kosovar refugees 'occurred at the end of the Cold War, when a key prop supporting the popularity of refugees was no longer available.'[22]

Media commentator Phillip Knightley suggests that a recurring emphasis on "systematic" massacres and atrocities in the Western media was a core aspect of NATO's public relations campaign. In his analysis of the Kosovo conflict Knightley says the purpose of the media campaign was to shore-up support in the UK, US and other NATO member states. The objective of NATO's media campaign was to persuade Western nations of the humanitarian justification for the conflict. Even before the NATO bombing began, Western media generally referred to the Balkans conflict as "ethnic cleansing" and painted it in black-and-white terms with simply "goodies and baddies", "evil vs good", between civilization and barbarity.[23] NATO states needed to publicly justify the fighting, by selling war to democracies that were not being attacked, and to

19   P. Morris, 'Humanitarian interventions in Macedonia: an NGO perspective', *Forced Migration Review*, 1999, 5, p. 19. URL: http://www.fmreview.org/sites/fmr/files/FMRdownloads /en/FMRpdfs/FMR05/fmr5full.pdf. Accessed 1st December 2016.

20   M.J. Gibney, 'Kosovo and beyond: popular and unpopular refugees', *Forced Migration Review*, 1999, 5, p. 28. URL: http://www.fmreview.org/sites/fmr/files/FMRdownloads/en /FMRpdfs/FMR05/fmr5full.pdf. Accessed 1st December 2016.

21   *Ibid.*

22   *Ibid.*

23   Knightley, *op. cit.*, pp. 501, 507.

demonise the leader of the enemy – Slobodan Milosevic – as inhumane.[24] Referring to the exaggeration of atrocities by NATO, Knightley asserted: 'the public drowned in wave after wave of images that added up to nothing.'[25] As he further points out, there were 2700 media people accompanying NATO forces when they entered Kosovo at the end of the bombings in June 1999. This is compared to the total number of 500 correspondents for the Vietnam War.

Virtually all of the reporting about the war in the Australian media during the conflict was conducted from the sidelines. The *Telegraph*, promoting a humanitarian justification for the war, repeatedly emphasised civilian atrocities committed by Serbs, but often relied on explicitly partisan sources. Western journalists had been expelled from Kosovo by the Yugoslav government and relegated to the refugee camps along its borders at the beginning of the NATO campaign. There, Knightley notes, they eagerly waited to pester traumatised refugees for eyewitness accounts. Much of the information reported about life inside Kosovo was provided via the KLA news agency, the media arm of the militant group fighting against Yugoslav forces alongside NATO.[26] No British or American correspondents were able to enter the battleground to make their own critical assessments. They reported from NATO headquarters in Brussels, or simply by peering over the borders into Kosovo.[27]

On 3rd April 1999, the media began to describe horrific scenes on the streets of Pristina (the capital of Kosovo). Thousands of ethnic Albanians had been

---

24   M. Buckley and S.N. Cummings, 'Introduction', in M. Buckley and S.N. Cummings (eds.), *Kosovo: Perceptions of War and Its Aftermath*, Continuum, London and New York, 2001, pp. 2-3.

25   Knightley, *op. cit.*, p. 504.

26   See similar assessment by BBC News Monitoring, 'World Mediawatch: Yugoslav agency sees Kosovo 'terrorism' spreading to media', 4th January 1999. URL: http://news.bbc.co.uk /1/hi/world/monitoring/248364.stm. Accessed 3rd October 2016. Here, it is reported that in January 1999, according to BBC News Monitoring, the KLA had created the news agency, 'Kosovo Press' and the radio station, 'Free Kosovo'. It had established offices in Western Europe and developed contacts in the Western press and with diplomats in Geneva. As noted earlier, a key aim of the KLA was to generate Western interest in expelling the Serbs and helping the Kosovar cause of independence. Its news stories were constructed to touch the hearts and minds of Western diplomats, NATO general staff and ordinary people in Western countries. Further, it aimed to enhance perceptions of horror and terror in the eyes of Western media.

27   The language adopted from KLA reports in the *Telegraph* used terms like "ethnic cleansing", "systematic" and "summarily executed". It emphasised an alleged orchestrated attempt by Serbia to expel Albanian Kosovars, which was found in the year after war to be highly exaggerated by the news agency. See, for example, reports by the KLA featured in the *Telegraph* during the early stages of the conflict, including L. Cika, 'Refugees still pour into Albania', *The Daily Telegraph*, 27th March 1999, p. 18, and G. Jahn, 'Savage strikes bat-

forced onto over-crowded trains by Serbian police to be taken to the Macedonian border.[28] Over the next week, life at the border camps was miserable and hopeless, a crossroads between freedom and the horrors of war left behind. Thousands of all ages congregated in an open field at Blace (a town on the Macedonian border with Kosovo).[29] By 5th April, the *Telegraph* reported, thousands of Kosovar refugees had erected makeshift homes from plastic and other materials on the muddy ground. In several photographs, hundreds of these tents extended into the horizon, hastily erected from the belongings refugees had brought with them.[30]

Paul Harris, reporting from Macedonia, depicted the scene: 'There were so many aching bodies sprawled in the field you could barely see the ground... a small border crossing in Macedonia [turned] into a vast sea of misery yesterday. Freedom was a bare field, with no shelter or sanitation.'[31] Eleven refugees, including two babies, had died waiting to be allowed into Macedonia by guards who had closed the border crossing. They had been among 50,000 Kosovars, 'herded into a valley where they have waited up to six days to be allowed into Macedonia, where armed troops bar the way.'[32] Aid workers at Blace complained that the Macedonian soldiers were stopping them from reaching the refugees who included many elderly Kosovars as well as small children. The refugees slept under the open skies on the freezing mud without food, water or medical treatment. In the makeshift encampment, they waited for days before the UNHCR was able to begin co-ordinating international relief efforts. The *Telegraph*, like other international media, presented an image of Kosovar refugees simply waiting for help.[33]

An official refugee camp in Skopje (the Macedonian capital) was quickly established by the UNHCR known as 'Stenkovac 1'. It became the temporary home

---

ter Belgrade – Dogfight over Bosnia broadens the showdown', *The Daily Telegraph*, 28th March 1999, p. 16.

28   S. Mann, 'Journey of The Dispossessed: 25,000 Herded into Trains And Sent', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 3rd April 1999, p. 1. See also 'Clinging to life amid the misery', *The Daily Telegraph*, 3rd April 1999, pp. 4-5.

29   Mann, 'Stranded And Hungry: An Ocean Of Despair', *op. cit.*

30   See, for example, a photograph of these 'Makeshift home[s]' in *The Daily Telegraph*, 5th April 1999, p. 5.

31   P. Harris, 'Border troops block Kosovar freedom flight', *The Daily Telegraph*, 5th April 1999, p. 4. See also description of the situation in "no man's land" in S. Mann, 'War Now On Two Fronts', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 6th April 1999, p. 1.

32   Harris, *op. cit.*

33   See also M. Barutciski and A. Suhrke, 'Lessons from the Kosovo Crisis: Innovations in Protection and Burden-sharing', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 14(2), 2001, p. 98.

of thousands of ethnic Albanian refugees who had arrived before the border was closed by Macedonian authorities. By 8th April, the remainder had been evacuated to nearby countries as an intermediary solution. Journalist Patrick Quinn, reporting from Blace, wrote of the scene: 'All that remained today [...] was a giant, smouldering pit, with garbage burning and tonnes of muddy clothing and plastic sheeting strewn about. Filthy, primitive conditions in the camp had led to an outbreak of illness and some deaths.'[34] The conditions at Skopje were reportedly far less than improved. The *Herald* described how one convoy of refugees arriving at Skopje carried 'a defeated people', who entered a camp that 'reeked of stale urine and faeces'.[35]

The media portrayed scenes of chaos in the refugee camps, home for the time being to thousands of Kosovar exiles. A significant portion of photographs in the *Telegraph* centred on Kosovar children suggesting a broader context of innocence (or the loss of) and hope (a chance to redeem and rebuild). The effect of mass media images such as these is to express the ideological commitments that generate political agency.[36] Images of children as helpless victims of war are often included in news content to bolster a sense of moral urgency, promoting emotional disbelief and outrage. They work to decentre more rational understandings and are geared towards bringing disbelievers into the political fold that underlies media messages.[37]

The effects of Yugoslav politics on Albanian Kosovar children had long been a point of contention for international commentators. In the early 1990s a Serbian school curriculum was imposed in Kosovo by the Yugoslav regime alongside the banning of Albanian language education. The province's health services were largely dismantled, and the remaining public hospitals were closed to Albanians. At the time it had been alleged in the local Kosovo press that thousands of Albanian school children were being poisoned, though evidence remains disputed as to whether the Yugoslav State was involved.[38] Ethnic and

---

34   P. Quinn, 'Macedonia empties enclave', *The Daily Telegraph*, 8th April 1999, p. 2 (continued from p. 1).

35   S. Mann, 'Sanctuary Found Amid the Chaos', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 6th April 1999, p. 10.

36   B. Wood, 'Stuart Hall's cultural studies and the problem of hegemony', *British Journal of Sociology*, 49(3), September 1998, p. 403.

37   See E.S. Herman and N. Chomsky, *Manufacturing Consent; the Political Economy of the Mass Media*, The Bodley Head, London, 1988 (reprinted 2008), esp. pp. lii-liii.

38   N. Malcolm, *Kosovo: A Short History*, MacMillan, London, 1998 (reprinted by Pan Books, London, 2002), pp. 346-7 and p. 349. About the poisoning of school children, see J.A. Mertus, *Kosovo; How Myths and Truths Started a War*, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1999, pp. 187-226.

nationalist tensions between Serbs and Albanians within Yugoslavia had im-
pacted significantly on the safety and wellbeing of Kosovar children. Worried
about the decline in the number of Serbs in the province (mainly due to em-
igration to Serbia caused by poverty) Serbian leaders used the term "demo-
graphic genocide" to describe the relatively high birth rate for Albanians in
Kosovo and to justify ethnic Albanian repression. Serb nationalists fantasti-
cally exaggerated Serb emigration from the province, linking it to the high-
er percentage of ethnic Albanians being born.[39] Ethnic Albanian Kosovars
had responded by setting up local schools independently of the State along
with medical clinics. Tens of thousands of children attended classrooms in
houses and makeshift rooms while teachers attempted to avoid arrests, in-
timidation and assaults by police.[40] The context for images of refugee chil-
dren was much broader than the Kosovo war, following in many ways from
the Cold War. The subtext of freedom and liberty extended directly from the
US' attempts to provide NATO with a moral premise in maintaining global
order.[41]

     Publishing images of ethnic Albanian children, the *Telegraph*'s 'WAR IN EU-
ROPE' series presented the NATO intervention as an opportunity for the West
to bring liberty and freedom into their lives. Alongside a concerted campaign
by NATO to justify the war, images of children reinforced the need for the inter-
national community to protect the innocent and those oppressed by the Yu-
goslav regime. From a total of twenty-three images in the *Telegraph* depicting
the crisis between 1st April and 7th May 1999 there were at least seventy-nine

---

39   W.G. O'Neill, *Kosovo; An Unfinished Peace*, Lynne Rienner Publishers, Boulder and Lon-
      don, 2002, p. 21. See also Malcolm, *op. cit.*, p. 329. Here, official censuses showed that
      a pattern of demographic decline was present, but not on the scale alleged by Milo-
      sevic and other radical nationalist and religious leaders. These included Archimandrite
      Atanasije Jevtic, who in 1984 had written that 200,000 Serbs had fled in the last fifteen
      years and by 1990 it was alleged that the loss in the previous two decades was 400,000.
      More realistic figures, Malcolm points out, from the censuses about the population of
      Serbs and Montenegrins in Kosovo were as follows: 264,604 (1961); 259,819 (1971); 236,526
      (1981); 215,346 (1991). Malcolm, *op. cit.* (p. 332) also gives figures to support the notion that
      Albanian women have had a higher rate of birth in recent years than other European
      nations. See also H. Clark, *Civil Resistance in Kosovo*, Pluto Press, London, 2000, p. 13,
      who says that poverty was the main reason for Serb emigration from Kosovo between
      the 1960s and 1980s. While many in Serbia proper resented that Kosovo absorbed such a
      high proportion of federal development funds, Kosovo continued to fall behind the rest
      of Yugoslavia economically.
40   O'Neill, *op. cit.*, p. 21. See also Malcolm, *op. cit.*, p. 349.
41   See Herman and Chomsky, *op. cit.*

Scared and alone . . . Ardita Hajdini, 9, weeps as she arrives in Kukes after walking from Citak in Kosovo. She lost her parents and three sisters

FIGURE 3   *Ardita Hajdini first appeared in* The Daily Telegraph *on 19*[th] *April 1999, p. 19.*

children pictured individually, and in significantly greater quantity than adults (see examples in Appendix 1).[42]

The face of nine-year old girl Ardita Hajdini accentuates how the media presented the image of children during the NATO air strikes. In the image (above), Ardita is weeping. Her lips and cheeks are puffed. The caption beneath Ardita's image reads: 'Scared and alone ... Ardita Hajdini, 9, weeps as she arrives in Kukes [an Albanian town near the Kosovo border] after walk-

---

42   Contrary to earlier reports that suggested there were very few men in the refugee camps, there were many photographs of male refugees in the newspaper in this period (from 1st April until 7th May 1999). (The date of 7th May 1999 was the day on which the first Kosovar refugees landed at Sydney airport.) Men were in fact more greatly represented in these pictures than women. In 14 pictures, there were at least 18 men pictured individually. Many dozens more featured in photographs of the refugee camps and in processions of refugees being forced to leave the capital of Pristina. In 11 photographs, there were only 14 refugee women pictured individually.

ing from Citak in Kosovo. She lost her parents and three sisters.'[43] This image eventually replaced the *Telegraph's* 'WAR IN EUROPE' logo in June 1999 along with the caption: 'KOSOVO – The Aftermath'.[44] The emphasis on children continued throughout April and early May in the Australian news press and those refugees being evacuated to Australia as part of Operation Safe Haven were regularly referred to as "missing", "orphaned" or "lost" children.[45] The *Herald* emphasised the point by citing the increasing number of Australian families offering to adopt orphaned refugee children.[46] The centrality of "childlike innocence" in news reports emphasised compassion for the plight of the Kosovar refugees and assisted in NATO's efforts to maintain the moral support of its allies.

Kosovar women were depicted by *Telegraph* journalists as being the helpless victims of Serbian barbarity. Repeatedly, there were questions raised in the newspaper about the unknown whereabouts of husbands, fathers, sons and brothers who had left the women to their own defences – mainly because they had been detained by Serb police or joined the KLA to fight against Yugoslav forces. The *Telegraph* described recent reports of "mass rapes" against Kosovar women as 'the most evil war crimes.'[47] The newspaper stated that, like the Bosnian war several years earlier, 'the Serbs are using rape as a weapon again'.[48] These images presented the war as a tragedy for humanity, appealing to the compassion of the Australian community. They featured alongside innumerous descriptions that permeated the Western media of women and children being harassed, beaten, murdered, raped and exiled from Kosovo.

The number of deaths (which continues to be disputed) and the scale of the Albanian exodus caused by the Yugoslav regime remains abhorrent. Media coverage of the NATO air strikes promoted strong consensus that it was Australia's 'duty' to accept its humanitarian obligations in assisting the refugees

---

43   In *The Daily Telegraph*, 19th April 1999, p. 19. Citak is in the Drenica valley, which borders Albania, and is one of the major towns through which many ethnic Albanian refugees exited the province.

44   The image was taken by Reuters' Dylan Martinez and used in other Western media, including the *Washington Post*.

45   The number of times newspaper sources described the refugees – those being evacuated to Australia or being attended to by Australian officials or aid workers – as "children" (or "babies") was 27 in the *Telegraph*, 20 in the *Herald* and 3 in *The Australian*.

46   C. Sutton, 'War "orphan" Jo Melts Australia's Heart', *The Sun-Herald*, 18th April 1999, p. 1.

47   Montgomery, 'Emergence of one of the most evil war crimes', *op. cit.*

48   *Ibid.*

by offering short-term resettlement.[49] The *Telegraph* compelled Australians to support the evacuation as part of the nation's 'duty of care'.[50] The newspaper's editor-in-chief, columnists, political commentators and war correspondents mobilised to promote the idea that humanitarian obligation was an essential component of Australian nationhood. The *Telegraph's* 'duty of care' campaign in the first week of April 1999 played-out alongside developments in Federal politics – contesting the Howard Government's initial rejection of the UN request to temporarily accommodate ethnic Albanian refugees in Australia. The *Herald* and *The Australian* also attempted to generate moral urgency by criticising the Federal Government for not obliging the UNHCR's request to evacuate refugees as soon as possible.[51]

The Politics: Ruddock Toes the Party Line

The plan to evacuate the Kosovar refugees was an unlikely resolution for the Australian government. On 4th April 1999, Immigration Minister Phillip Ruddock ruled out taking any Kosovar Albanian refugees following NATO air strikes, saying: 'Flying planeloads of refugees into Australia would not be an appropriate response.'[52] The following day the Federal Government again rejected outright the UNHCR's formal request for Australia to temporarily resettle some of the 370,000 Kosovar refugees who had fled the province at that point in time. The Immigration Minister defended the Government's initial reluctance to offer the Kosovars temporary refuge in Australia. Ruddock noted that Australia did not have 'a temporary residence culture'.[53] He upheld the official stance of the Department of Immigration – that Australia only accepted refugees on a permanent basis so they could immediately begin to rebuild their lives. He stated that past experience had shown that temporary solutions had always led to permanent outcomes.[54]

The Immigration Minister cited two incidences to support his argument – Australia's experience with Chinese students fleeing their homeland after the

---

49   See, for instance, G. Sheridan, 'Our duty to take share of exodus', *The Australian*, 6th April 1999, p. 10.

50   See two-page feature headline, 'Australia's duty of care', *op. cit.*

51   See, for example, G. Henderson, 'Just Not Good Enough, Mr Ruddock', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 6th April 1999, p. 15.

52   Ruddock, cited in M. Head, 'The Kosovar and Timorese "Safe Haven" Refugees', *Alternative Law Journal*, 24(6), December, 1999, p. 281.

53   Ruddock, cited in Kelly, 'Knee-jerk response to Kosovo crisis', *op. cit.*

54   *Ibid.*

Tiananmen Square massacre, and with East Timorese fleeing violence earlier in the decade. The Minister said that these incidences revealed the difficulty in sending people back home:

> You have to look at what we're able to do and if you look at our past experience with temporary location of people, it generally becomes a permanent residents outcome[.]
>
> …Temporary outcomes have never been successful in terms of moving people, locating them for a short period of time and then returning them.
>
> That's really the reason that I am hesitant about providing temporary arrangements.[55]

Ruddock argued that it would be preferable if the Kosovar refugees were accommodated within existing programs, by adding 1000 extra refugee places from within the immigration program itself.[56] The next day, however, Ruddock's proposal was overturned by senior members of Cabinet.

The Backlash and the About-Face

Organisational pressure began to mount on the Government, with the NSW Council of Churches urging authorities to accept the refugees, 'on compassionate grounds and humanitarian grounds.'[57] The *Telegraph's* editor was particularly critical of the Federal Government, saying it had a 'duty' to 'Get to the heart of things.'[58] The editorial asserted:

> It is […] unrealistic for Immigration Minister Philip Ruddock to suggest that only another 1000 places could be found for Kosovar refugees[.] It would have been better if he had said nothing.[59]

---

55   Ruddock, cited in P. Harris and M. McKinnon, 'Howard urged to take more refugees', *The Daily Telegraph* (Afternoon Edition), 6th April 1999, pp. 4-5. Ruddock was also cited, stating temporary arrangements have 'never been successful', in D. Shanahan and P. Green, 'Cabinet reverses block on asylum', *The Australian*, 7th April 1999, p. 9.

56   Figure of 1000 cited in Editorial, 'Get to the heart of things', *The Daily Telegraph*, 6th April 1999, p. 10.

57   NSW Council of Churches, cited in Harris and McKinnon, *op. cit.*

58   Editorial, 'Get to the heart of things', *op. cit.*

59   *Ibid.*

The editor commented that, as a member of the international community, Australians 'must be prepared to play a greater role than Mr Ruddock proposes,' and that it was 'the duty of Federal Cabinet to immediately reconsider the number of Kosovar Albanians it will accept'.[60] The newspaper's cartoonist Warren captured what some critics had suggested about the Federal Government being unsympathetic and insensitive (see below). With growing criticism, and while other nations were offering assistance to tens of thousands of Kosovar refugees, John Howard risked becoming unpopular by being unsympathetic.[61]

Following the reversal of the government's decision, many news commentators championed the way in which the Australian media facilitated public pressure to support international evacuation efforts. In the two days leading up to that decision the *Telegraph* cited members of the Albanian community as well as former Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser who voiced concern with the government's refusal to evacuate Kosovar refugees. The newspaper reported that Sadik Binakaj, a spokesperson for members of the Australia-Albania Association, had 'pleaded' for an increase in the number of Kosovo refugees to be accepted under the existing humanitarian refugee visa program from the present figure of 4500 to about 20,000.[62] He stated: 'the present number is not enough. I am sure that is not enough because there is going to be at least one and a half million refugees from Kosovo.'[63] Malcolm Fraser, who was the head of CARE Australia, further argued on 5th April that Australia should accept 30,000 refugees from Kosovo. Fraser added: 'We haven't seen anything like this in more than 50 years, it is difficult to envisage the hardship and suffering involved'.[64] He further articulated that there was 'no excuse' for Australia not to accept up to 30,000 refugees, arguing: 'We haven't seen anything like this in more than 50 years, it is difficult to envisage the hardship and suffering

---

60   *Ibid.*

61   See figures shown in 'What has happened to the refugees', *The Daily Telegraph*, 9th April 1999, p. 31: The US had agreed to temporarily relocate 20,000 Kosovar refugees; Turkey would relocate 20,000; Norway had accepted up to 6000; Germany would receive 10,000 (with another 10,000 throughout other parts of the European Union); and, Canada offered to relocate 5000. Hundreds of thousands more would remain in Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro and Bosnia Herzegovina.

62   P. Harris and M. McKinnon, 'Deserted in the valley of death – Mass of humanity pleads for help', 6th April 1999, *The Daily Telegraph*, p. 4.

63   S. Binakaj, cited in *ibid.*

64   M. Fraser, cited in *ibid.*

involved'.[65] Although Fraser was no longer a leading figure in the Australian Liberal Party, he nevertheless retained personal prestige and his position as director of CARE carried significant weight. His concerns were worthy of citation in the media. Mounting public pressure was also noted by the *Herald's* letters editor who indicated the consensus building around the issue of the Kosovar refugees throughout the week prior to 5th April. She stated: 'The NATO bombing of Yugoslavia has preoccupied letter writers all week, with every possible explanation put forward for the crisis in Kosovo. It has been analysed from historical, ethnic and superpower perspectives. Our readers have also expressed anguish over the human suffering caused by the conflict, especially among civilians who were feeling the effects of war...'[66]

Howard confirmed the Government's support for the evacuation via a press conference on 6th April. Announcing the Safe Haven Visa scheme, he stated: 'This is something where a nation of Australia's strength and wealth and comparative affluence has an overwhelming moral obligation to play a part in.'[67] It is worth noting that the long-term success of John Howard as leader of the Australian Federal Government was often the result of his ability to be responsive to popular undercurrents and to change policy where needed. Commenting on the 'children overboard' incident in 2001,[68] this aspect of the Prime Minister's approach to politics is succinctly described by David Marr and Marian Wilkinson: 'John Howard is a master of ambiguity. His words must always be read with care.'[69] The Prime Minister's management of public relations during the early stages of the Kosovo war was timely. A 'source' had told the *Telegraph*, after three hours of debate, that: 'There was a very strong feeling across the board in Cabinet that something additional had to be done'.[70] This

---

65   M. Fraser, cited in M. McKinnon, 'Australia set to open doors to war refugees', Courier Mail, 6th April 1999 (page unspecified).

66   D. Jopson (Acting Letters Editor) 'Letters; POSTSCRIPT', 5th April 1999, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, p. 12.

67   Howard, cited in Farr, 'SANCTUARY – Australia to accept 4000 from Kosovo', *op. cit.* The story also reappears in similar form in M. Farr, 'Australia takes 4000 refugees' *The Daily Telegraph* (Afternoon Edition), 7th April 1999, p. 4. A similar comment by the Prime Minister was noted in D. Shanahan, P. Green and M. Stevens, 'Safe Haven for 4000 souls – Howard bows to refugee pressure', *The Australian*, 7th April 1999, p. 1.

68   It is widely believed that the 'children overboard' incident in 2001 ensured John Howard's re-election as Prime Minister. See, for instance, D. Marr and M. Wilkinson, *Dark Victory*, Allen and Unwin, Crows Nest, 2003.

69   *Ibid.*, p. 47.

70   Farr, 'SANCTUARY – Australia to accept 4000 from Kosovo', *op. cit.* A 'strong view' is also cited in Shanahan and Green, *op. cit.*
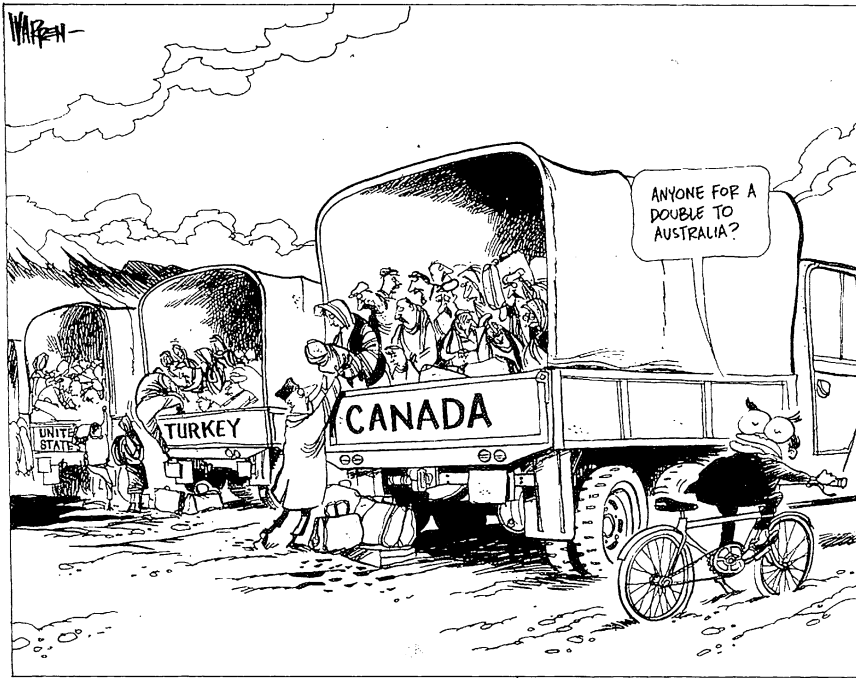
FIGURE 4   *John Howard offering assistance to the Kosovar refugees, as drawn by Warren,* The Daily Telegraph, *6th April 1999, p. 10.*

was despite Ruddock's reservation that once in Australia the refugees would take exhaustive court action to stay permanently.[71]

Ruddock emerged as 'a solitary voice'[72] with the *Herald* describing how the Immigration Minister had been isolated by the episode: 'Ruddock stood silent beside John Howard through the Prime Minister's news conference', at which the announcement was made on reversing Ruddock's earlier decision.[73] The newspaper added that 'it must have been agony for Mr Ruddock' to have held firm on the official position and be overruled in such a public manner.[74] By overruling the Immigration Minister Howard was able to capitalise on growing support from within the Australian community to evacuate the Kosovar refugees to Australia. However, it further demonstrates the Prime Minister's

---

71   Farr, 'SANCTUARY – Australia to accept 4000 from Kosovo', *op. cit.*

72   *Ibid.*

73   M. Grattan, 'Backflip So Quick Details Are Yet To Be Settled', *The Sydney Morning Herald,* 7th April 1999, p. 7.

74   *Ibid.*

dominant position within the Cabinet and his abilities to direct, formulate and implement party strategy. The Prime Minister stated that he expected some criticism of the plan, dubbed 'Operation Safe Haven', but he was 'not prepared to see Australia turn its back on these people.'[75] Following the lead of the international community with its offer to temporarily relocate 4000 refugees, the Federal Government obliged public pressure, ensuring Australia played a part in the 'biggest humanitarian operation' undertaken by the international community since World War II.[76]

The Australian noted that at least 100 people had telephoned radio stations around the country throughout the week following the Government's refusal to evacuate refugees. Most described the decision as harsh.[77] A *Herald*-ACNielsen poll found that eighty per cent of Australians approved of giving support to the Kosovar refugees, which included allowing them to be relocated to Australia on a short-term basis.[78] The editor of *The Australian* described Australia's initial response to the UNHCR request as 'niggardly and over-cautious', urging Australia to 'recognise its responsibility to make every effort to resettle the victims [of the war] as quickly as possible.'[79] The editor later added that the Prime Minister 'must have had his eyes and ears closed'.[80]

Conservative commentator Gerard Henderson, writing in the *Herald*, described Australia's initial response to the refugee exodus as 'woefully inadequate' adding that the Government's attitude contrasted with 'that of our traditional allies and friends in the European Union (EU) and NATO.'[81] He argued that the attitude of the Government toward the Kosovar refugee crisis reflected recent developments in Immigration policy as well as in Foreign Affairs, which had drifted significantly away from Asia. These policies, Henderson added, had produced 'disturbing signs of insularity in Australia'.[82]

---

75   Howard, cited in I. McPhedran, 'Jumbo Fleet to Pick Up Refugees', *The Daily Telegraph*, 8th April 1999, p. 3.

76   R. Garran and M. Stevens, 'PM Insists on Release of Aussies – Aid Pair Safe, But Where?', *The Australian*, 10th April 1999, p. 1.

77   'Backflip on refugees; The Rehame report', *The Australian*, 15th April 1999.

78   M. Seccombe, 'Refugees Are Welcome But Not Forever', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 13th April 1999, p. 6.

79   'Refugee crisis needs new generosity' (editorial), *The Australian*, 6th April 1999, p. 12. The *Herald* also referred to the initial rejection of the UNHCR request as 'niggardly and heartless', in 'Kosovo Turnaround', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 7th April 1999, p. 16.

80   'Milosevic shows his hypocrisy ... as refugee policy is made on the run' (editorial), *The Australian*, 8th April 1999, p. 12.

81   Henderson, 'Just Not Good Enough, Mr Ruddock', *op. cit.*

82   *Ibid.*

Paul Kelly described the initial rejection of the UNHCR request in *The Australian* as providing 'insight into [the Federal Government's] streak of incompetence and myopia,' adding, 'Ruddock had misjudged the situation grievously.'[83] He was doubtful that the Federal Government had been sincere in its change of heart: 'the question is being asked whether the Government's policy reversal is inspired by the humanitarian crisis or to pacify public criticism.'[84] Kelly doubted the Prime Minister's 'credibility', arguing that he was only compelled to change the Government's position due to public pressure, and that: 'if Howard was so concerned about Australia's moral obligation, why didn't he interfere [to overrule Ruddock's decision] earlier?'[85] The Government's approach to the Kosovar refugees was similarly criticised by Ian McPhedran in the *Telegraph*: 'Mr Howard's reaction on Kosovo proves he is a creature of public opinion... Ruddock held the government line only to see Howard capitulate to public opinion.'[86] The *Herald* applauded the policy reversal stating: 'A continuing paltry response by Canberra would have been unpopular as well as morally indefensible.'[87] The policy reversal was, to some media commentators, very clearly a political response. It typifies the need for dominant political groups to maintain legitimacy by being 'able to claim with at least some plausibility that their particular interests are those of society at large.'[88]

One of the main immediate criticisms from ethnic and migrant welfare groups, which had voiced criticism of the initial refusal to accept Kosovar refugees prior to the reversal, was that the temporary Safe Haven program was a "band-aid" solution and "tokenistic".[89] The offer of temporary safe haven displeased Ethnic Communities Council of NSW chairman, Paul Nicolaou, who said that the Government must consider a 'long-term policy' of allowing the 4000 refugees to stay in Australia.[90] Kelly criticised the Government on this issue, arguing that the offer of temporary Safe Haven was a 'knee-jerk' reaction that reeked of 'politics and panic.'[91] He stated that the decision reflected the

83   Kelly, 'Knee-jerk response to Kosovo crisis', *op. cit.*

84   *Ibid.*

85   *Ibid.*

86   I. McPhedran, 'Refugee footsteps lead only one way', *The Daily Telegraph*, 10th April 1999, p. 11.

87   'Kosovo turnaround', *op. cit.*

88   T.J. Jackson Lears, 'The Concept of Cultural Hegemony: Problems and Possibilities', *The American Historical Review*, 90(3), June 1985, p. 571.

89   Shanahan and Green, *op. cit.*

90   Cited in *ibid.*

91   Kelly, 'Knee-jerk response to Kosovo crisis', *op. cit.*

'bizarre rules of today', that the 'logical response' of permanent protection was overlooked because it was deemed 'to be a concession to Milosovic' who was seeking to eradicate ethnic Albanians from Kosovo.[92] Federal Court judge and human-rights campaigner, Justice Marcus Einfeld, further criticised the temporary Safe Haven program, arguing: 'There is no such thing as a temporary refugee.'[93]

Commentators across the *Telegraph*, *Herald* and *Australian* often noted that it was the public and media backlash that had swayed the Australian Government to reassess its position and oblige the UNHCR request. McPhedran, for instance, advised Ruddock to 'watch the editorials' in order to be more responsive to public opinion and avoid mass backlash in the future.[94] The intensity of the criticism varied between each of the newspapers, particularly in the ways they attributed accountability for the initial "lapse" in judgement and then policy reversal.[95] *The Australian* offered the most critical opinion citing 53 negative criticisms of the Government in total, while there were 26 in the *Telegraph* and 24 in the *Herald*. Further analysis revealed that the *Telegraph* and *Herald* positioned Ruddock as slightly more accountable than the Prime Minister for the initial rejection of the UNHCR request. On the other hand, the Prime Minister was more greatly scrutinised by *The Australian* than Ruddock for rejecting the UNHCR request, with nine direct criticisms of the Prime Minister.[96]

Comparatively, in light of these figures, *The Australian* was least supportive of the Prime Minister and the Government as a whole, while the *Telegraph* and *Herald* produced only around half of the total amount of criticism as *The Australian*. Textual analysis (as noted below) further revealed much more moderate criticism of the Government in the *Telegraph* than the other newspapers. The analysis reflects significant differences between each of the newspapers in

---

92   *Ibid.*

93   M. Einfeld, cited in Garran and Green, 'Agreement remote of housing refugees', *op. cit.* See also M. Einfeld, 'Is There a Role for Compassion in Refugee Policy?', *UNSW Law Journal*, 23(3), 2000, pp. 303-314.

94   McPhedran, 'Refugee footsteps lead only one way', *op. cit.*

95   The analysis undertaken here investigates the criticisms published by each of the newspapers about the Howard Government, including those directly expressed by newspaper editors and journalists, as well as that from other sources (such as community and welfare groups).

96   The results include, for the *Telegraph*, there were only 4 direct criticisms of Ruddock and 2 of Howard. In the *Herald*, there were 2 direct criticisms of Ruddock and 1 of Howard. In *The Australian*, there were 8 direct criticisms of Ruddock whilst there were 9 of Howard.

terms of their political leanings and sympathies for the Howard Government. It also provides a clearer view of the extent of the pressure on the Government as a whole, as well as on the key figures – mainly, the Prime Minister and Immigration Minister – behind Australia's decision to allow the Kosovars to be temporarily resettled in Australia.

Human Tragedy in the Media and the Impact on the Australian Government

There was, undoubtedly, a significant amount of media criticism concerning the Government's initial refusal to evacuate the refugees to Australia. Politics within the Cabinet, along with mounting pressure to uphold international humanitarian obligations, further prompted the policy reversal. Until the morning of 6th April, as Denis Shanahan commented in *The Australian*, the Immigration Minister, 'in the absence of any forewarning from the Prime Minister to play a cooler hand, [was] entitled to think the Government's policy of not taking any refugees would hold firm.'[97] However, senior ministers in the Cabinet had endured a 'barrage of criticism' over the decision and were quickly 'convinced more had to be done.'[98] Shanahan argued it was the spirit of the generosity shown by some 'families [who] were prepared to throw open their homes' to the refugees that led to the policy reversal – suggesting that Australians 'wanted the Government's action to enact and represent their feelings.'[99] The policy reversal, Shanahan noted: 'left Ruddock on the beach, high and dry', though Howard defended the Immigration Minister by pointing to policy consistency.[100] Although Ruddock was 'admired' by Cabinet ministers for 'the way he walked the line between giving into the Hansonites' agenda and cleaning out the excesses … there was concern [within Cabinet] the Government was now seen as "too hard"'.[101]

According to Cabinet members, the decision made by the Government was far-removed from any direct criticism by the media. The Government propagated the notion that it had committed to the evacuation by stressing the importance of such a "moral obligation" to Australian families. According to *The*

---

97   D. Shanahan, 'Anyone who had a heart', *The Australian*, 10th April 1999, p. 27.

98   Shanahan and Green, *op. cit.*

99   Shanahan, 'Anyone who had a heart', *op. cit.*

100   *Ibid.*

101   *Ibid.* See also comments (as noted above) by One Nation party spokesperson David Oldfield as cited in Garran and Green, 'Agreement remote on housing refugees', *op. cit.*

Australian, the Easter long weekend prior to the policy reversal had allowed leading Ministers time to observe the situation at the Macedonian border on television news alongside their families. As Shanahan stated:

> [It] is a long time since the views of small children were aired in the Cabinet room. Wives, sons and daughters, some young children and other family members had a significant impact on policy around the Cabinet table on Tuesday [when the policy reversal was decided]. [The Easter holiday] had a positive effect on the decision-makers.[102]

The human tragedy unfolding on television had prompted calls for a 'moral decision' from the National Party deputy leader and Transport Minister John Anderson as well as at least four senior ministers, including Foreign Affairs Minister Alexander Downer (who played a leading role), Agriculture Minister Mark Vaile, Health Minister Michael Wooldridge and Finance Minister John Fahey.[103] The Prime Minister also said that a moral decision was necessary after he had watched the news over the weekend, while Vaile noted that the 'effect on families of watching the refugees' misery unfold' was the driving force in the Government's decision.[104]

The policy reversal is indicative of the ways in which hegemonic groups are often compelled to assert their legitimacy by adopting some of the values of subordinate groups.[105] By changing its position the Government significantly capitalised on the media's insistence to reverse its policy stance on the Kosovar refugees. Ministers received praise from *The Australian* for drawing on their 'collective and individual souls' and acting with a 'generous spirit.'[106] The Cabinet, it was noted, wanted to 'ensure that this decision, which would provide a palpable and highly visible moral dimension to the Government's character, was made in that spirit.'[107] The Government played-down the impact of public sentiment with Downer suggesting that it was humanitarianism that had prompted the policy reversal. Downer was asked during an interview on 6th April 1999 on the ABC Television program, *The 7:30 Report*: 'Was Cabinet's response today based partly at least on public sentiment, given what Philip

---

102   Shanahan, 'Anyone who had a heart', *op. cit.*

103   *Ibid.*

104   *Ibid.*

105   R. Simon, *Gramsci's Political Thought, An Introduction*, Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1982, p. 23.

106   Shanahan, 'Anyone who had a heart', *op. cit.*

107   *Ibid.*

Ruddock was saying yesterday [about not taking any refugees]?' The Foreign Affairs Minister replied: 'I think it's based, above all, on a humanitarian sentiment... there was just a strong sense that we needed to make a contribution. I think the Australian public will strongly support that.'[108] Although Downer argued in the media that the Government's policy reversal was a gesture of humanitarian goodwill, there is evidence to support the notion that Australia's foreign relations played an important role in this decision as well.

International Relations, the US and the Howard Government's Policy Backflip

A range of international influences on the Australian government during the Kosovo war require further attention. The NATO bombing campaign in Kosovo (led by the US) was undertaken without the full support of the UN and United Nations Security Council (UNSC). Surrounding the military campaign was the US and NATO's desire to justify, on humanitarian grounds, a war that could not be sanctioned in international law.[109] Another major strategic dilemma for the US quickly emerged, as the NATO campaign unexpectedly produced a general state of panic in which thousands of ethnic Albanians fled directly to the Macedonian border.[110] There emerged immediate consensus within leading NATO countries to resolve the situation as soon as possible. This added pressure on the Howard Government to accept Kosovar refugees for temporary safe haven.

The dilemma foreshadowed NATO's plans to utilise Macedonia as a launching pad for 10,000 ground troops to enter Kosovo following initial aerial bombardments. Morten Kjaerum describes the impact of the closure of the Macedonian border: 'mass influx situations [such as these] are often considered

108   A. Downer, cited in 'Humanitarian concern prompts refugee rethink: Downer' (transcript), *7.30 Report*, Australian Broadcasting Corporation, 6th April 1999. URL: http://www.abc.net.au/7.30/stories/s21172.htm. Accessed 28th September 2016.

109   B.S. Chimni, 'Globalization, Humanitarianism and the Erosion of Refugee Protection', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 13(3), 2000, p. 248. See also D.T. Stuart, 'NATO and the wider world: from regional collective defence to global coalitions of the willing', *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 58(1), March 2004, p. 37. Here, the author discusses the US' determination to lead NATO into Kosovo without UN Security Council authorisation.

110   Barutciski and Suhrke, *op. cit.*, p. 98. The authors argue here that the problem with Macedonia closing its borders partly resulted from the UNHCR's belief that NATO air strikes would not lead to a mass outflow of refugees but, rather, rapidly pave the way for a political settlement of the conflict.

to constitute a threat to internal stability'.[111] The image of starving and dying refugees that was heavily reproduced in the Western media added pressure on the US to deal with both a public relations disaster (at home and abroad) and a significant strategic dilemma.[112] Before allowing more refugees to cross the border and seek assistance at UNHCR refugee camps the Macedonian government requested international assistance and assurances that at least some of the refugees would be transferred elsewhere.[113] Michael Barutciski and Astri Suhrke noted that: 'The spectacle attracted intense international attention for days, creating strong incentives for states and organisations concerned to find a solution.'[114] In order to proceed with a ground attack (which did not eventuate), the US was compelled to resolve Macedonia's reluctance to accommodate the refugees and assist in overcoming the escalation of a 'destabilising effect throughout the region.'[115]

Barutciski and Suhrke state that: 'Once the border crisis occurred, the central policy challenge was to persuade Macedonia to admit a massive influx of refugees that the government initially rejected. The eventual solution was based on a "burden-sharing" scheme involving transfer of refugees to other countries, both in the region and outside.'[116] Thus, under pressure from the US government, UNHCR committed to evacuations out of the region and 'produced guidelines for the innovative humanitarian evacuation program that involved airlifts.'[117] As Terje Einarsen says: 'the international promise of airlifting refugees from the camps in Macedonia to other countries was a crucial factor in the effort to persuade the Macedonian government to keep the Blace border crossing open.'[118] The Australian government eventually moved to support

---

111   M. Kjaerum, 'Human Rights, State Security and Burden-Sharing: People or States First?' (Responses to Barutciski and Suhrke), *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 14(2), 2001, p. 116.

112   See J. Hewett, 'Clinton Promises An Unrelenting Campaign', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 7th April 1999, p. 8, who says that: 'Public outrage [in the US] at the refugee crisis has tempered the political difficulties of the [US] Administration.'

113   Barutciski and Suhrke, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

114   *Ibid.* These commentators were part of a team that evaluated UNHCR's emergency preparedness and response to the refugee exodus from Kosovo. Their role is described in these terms by T. Einarsen, 'Refugee Protection Beyond Kosovo: Quo Vadis' (Responses to Barutciski and Suhrke), *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 14(2), 2001, p. 119. See also discussion of the Macedonian government's concerns about Kosovar refugees in J. Van Selm (ed.), *Kosovo's Refugees in the European Union*, Pinter, London and New York, 2000, pp. 212-215.

115   'Kosovo turnaround', *op. cit.*

116   Barutciski and Suhrke, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

117   *Ibid.*, p. 100.

118   Einarsen, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

'the controversial United States-backed call for an "air bridge"' for refugees to be evacuated by the UNHCR.[119]

As Joanne Van Selm points out, the Australian government agreed to accept its quota of 4000 Kosovar refugees, on 6th April, 'even before many EU states had decided on co-operating with evacuations.'[120] The idea of being a "good world citizen" with a sense of "moral obligation" significantly influenced the Australian government's response to the Kosovar refugee crisis.[121] However, the role for Australia sought by John Howard in international affairs reflected Anglophonic and US-centric interpretations of what this meant. Australia's response was in-line with a growing consensus in powerful Western states that had largely rejected the demand for aid in Africa, and come to favour assistance for white Europeans.[122] Moreover, unlike previous Labor governments which had promoted closer relations with Asia, Howard's foreign policy was typified by his push to promote Australia-US relations as a kind of "special relationship". As Douglas T. Stuart argued, upon entering office, 'Prime Minister Howard made it clear that the cornerstone of this new Australian security policy was direct and consistent cooperation with the United States.'[123] Howard's move away from Asia towards the US was in many ways predicated on the assumption that a 'common sense of values and common traditions' would make any clash between the two countries unlikely.[124] The Prime Minister promoted the idea that the economic and military relationships formed between US and Australia during his term of office would be equally beneficial.

However, as has been said: 'Although the US has created a liberal international economic order that is broadly supported by its allies, its dominant position means that it can flout its own normative prescriptions when it chooses to do so.'[125] The Australian government's position on the Kosovo war reflected the long-standing benevolence of the US toward Australia. The government's

119   D. Lague, 'The Escape From Hell', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 9th April 1999, p. 1.

120   Van Selm, *op. cit.*, p. 223.

121   M. Beeson, 'Issues in Australian Foreign Policy; July to December 2001', *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, 48(2), 2002, p. 230.

122   Chimni, *op. cit.*, p. 249.

123   Stuart, 'NATO and the wider world: from regional collective defence to global coalitions of the willing', *op. cit.*, p. 41.

124   J. Howard, from 'Speech at the Launch of Documents on Australian Foreign Policy – The ANZUS Treaty 1951', 29th August 2001. As cited in Beeson, *op. cit.*, p. 235 (original no longer available online). See also discussion about the Howard Government's move away from Asia and towards the US in M. Wesley, 'Perspectives on Australian foreign policy, 2001', *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 56(1), 2002, p. 52.

125   Beeson, *op. cit.*, p. 236.

back flip on denying the refugees safe haven mirrored the position of the US as the dominant world power in the post-Cold War period. Moreover, while the Prime Minister promoted the need for Australia's foreign strategy to be closely aligned with the US' during the Kosovo war, he was in various ways reiterating a much older policy tradition of dependence upon the US that had existed since the Second World War, both militarily and economically.[126]

International pressure was played down by the Foreign Affairs Minister, although he did acknowledge the importance of international affairs in relation to the Government's policy reversal. Downer commented on *The 7.30 Report*, following the closure of the border by Macedonia to thousands of Kosovar refugees:

> Well, we're part of the international community and there was a feeling in the Cabinet that it would be appropriate for us to make a humanitarian contribution to this simply appalling crisis.[127]

Nonetheless, the influence of the US on Australia during the crisis remained strong, as Shanahan writes: 'Although no direct pressure came from [US President] Bill Clinton before the decision [to offer temporary safe haven], there was an expectation in Cabinet that there would be.'[128]

Barutciski and Suhrke argue that the combination of strategic and humanitarian sentiments ensured that the Kosovo refugee crisis received extraordinary attention from the powerful Western states.[129] What is clear, however, is that in many ways Operation Safe Haven provided Australia with a more prominent role in global politics. The Prime Minister embarked on a fundamental re-assessment of Australia's foreign and defence policies immediately on entering office, in which, 'Canberra moved away from its traditional role as a status-quo orientated regional actor toward a more pro-active and globally-orientated posture.'[130] The foreign policy arrangements sought by Howard and Downer in the late 1990s not only represented the Government's desire to forge a more significant place for Australia in world affairs, but also one that reflected the eminence of leading "Anglo" nations. The increasing independence

---

126   See further discussion in P. Kelly, *The End of Certainty: The Story of the 1980s*, St Leonards, NSW, Allen and Unwin, 1992. See also Herman and Chomsky, *op. cit.*

127   Downer, in 'Humanitarian concern prompts refugee rethink: Downer' (transcript), *op. cit.*

128   Shanahan, 'Anyone who had a heart', *op. cit.*

129   Barutciski and Suhrke, *op. cit.*, p. 101.

130   Stuart, 'NATO and the wider world: from regional collective defence to global coalitions of the willing', *op. cit.*, p. 41.

of NATO from the UN in this period, under the leadership of the US and UK, provided Howard with an opportunity to promote stronger ties with these countries and enhance Australia's role in the 'so-called anglosphere coalition'.[131] This policy reiterated the US' desire for 'English-speaking democracies' to be the 'foundation for a full unity of a democratised world' and as the best means of giving NATO a new sense of energy and direction.[132]

Charity, Donations and NGOS

Operation Safe Haven provided the Australian government with an opportunity to profess (and position itself alongside popular views about) the moral importance of being charitable. Government and non-government organisations (NGOs) made important financial contributions in aid of the Kosovar refugees. The Federal Government had initially offered a $2 million aid package following NATO air strikes, which was increased to $6 million by early April, to be distributed amongst international aid agencies.[133] By 6th April, the *Telegraph* reported how Australians had 'pledged' $1 million to the aid agency World Vision for its campaign to assist the Kosovar refugees.[134] Australian NGOs, the *Telegraph* noted, had set a $5 million target for public donations for the Kosovo crisis. CARE Australia donated $850 000 to Operation Safe Haven, while World Vision Australia provided $304 000.[135] By 13th April Australians had donated about $2 million to the cause over the previous ten days.[136] By 3rd May about forty-five NGOs including the Red Cross, St Vincent de Paul and the Salvation Army were working with DIMA, 'to ensure [those being evacuated to Australia] a smooth transition to Australian life'.[137]

---

131   *Ibid.*, p. 33.

132   *Ibid.*, p. 42, citing R. Conquest.

133   See figures quoted by R. Alston, in 'Kosovar refugees', *Senate: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 20th April 1999, p. 3853: $3.5 million was given to the UNHCR, $1 million to the World Food Program, $500,000 to CARE Australia and International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and $250,000 to World Vision and Australian Red Cross.

134   '$1m pledged for Kosovars', *The Daily Telegraph*, 6th April 1999, p. 5. See also figures in Mann, 'Sanctuary Found Amid the Chaos', *op. cit.*

135   I. McPhedran, '$15m to provide shelter for 4000 refugees', *The Daily Telegraph* (Morning Edition) 9th April 1999, p. 8.

136   '$2m for refugees', *The Daily Telegraph*, 13th April 1999, p. 22.

137   E.K. Symons and M. McKinnon, 'Cooks and carers stand by for action', *The Daily Telegraph*, 3rd May 1999, p. 8.

A considerable focus in the *Telegraph*, *Herald* and *Australian* was to make explicit reference to the kinds of offerings made by Australians to the Kosovars. The sentiment of praise that had been espoused to reports of these offerings in the media is contradicted by the reality that welfare and charity groups had faced increasing pressure in the Howard era to assist needy Australians. This is because, as Philip Mendes says, the election of the Howard Government in 1996 presented welfare organisations with enormous challenges, immediately imposing massive spending cuts on services to help the poor and disadvantaged. Howard's social welfare policies amounted to a 'substantial retrenchment of the welfare state.'[138] The analysis of "charity" in the *Telegraph*, *Herald* and *Australian* examined how news sources described acts, donations, costs and material objects that were undertaken or offered by both the Federal Government and the wider Australian community. The *Herald* publicised at least 430 charitable offerings, while the *Telegraph* and *Australian* noted around 300 and 270 respectively. A key issue is the question of how the Howard Government was able to legitimately dismantle social welfare institutions while exempting the Kosovars from this ideological practice.[139]

Clive Hamilton *et al.* explain this paradox by noting how the dominant political discourses of the Howard era were able to legitimate a dramatic shift in public expenditure from lower to middle income earners. They question why there was, through various schemes initiated by the Howard Government (such as Family Tax Benefit Plan B), an increasing amount of welfare and tax breaks available to middle income earners while those on lower incomes were increasingly excluded from such benefits. As Hamilton *et al.* suggest, central to the Howard Government's abilities to cut and then shift welfare expenditure away from the poorer sections of the Australian community was the Prime Minister's consistent promulgation of the idea of a "crisis of the middle class". The Howard Government's policies substantiated this myth to the point that, 'for every genuine battler there are three or four who imagine they fit the description.'[140] Hamilton *et al.* comment: 'That is why our political leaders keep the myth of the battler alive and exploit it for all it's worth.'[141]

---

138   P. Mendes, 'The Ideology of the Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS): from the charity model to welfarism to social justice', *Melbourne Journal of Politics*, 26, 1999/2000, p. 48.

139   See further discussion of public charity under the Howard Government in C. Hamilton and R. Denniss, *Affluenza: When Too Much is Never Enough*, Allen and Unwin, Crows Nest, 2005, esp. chapter 9.

140   *Ibid.*, p. 133.

141   *Ibid.*

One form of charity discussed by the media and offered by some individual Australians was billeting. The notion of inviting a stranger or strangers into the "sanctified" space of the Australian family home was symbolic, particularly in a period in which the notion of the "white picket fence" was central to popular political discourse.[142] The offer to billet the refugees in Australian homes was mentioned on dozens of occasions across the newspaper sources and was repeatedly urged as an alternative mode of accommodation (instead of army bases) by Opposition leader Kim Beazley.[143] The editor of *The Australian* commented on the significance of billeting for the refugees: 'That would reduce the emotional trauma for the refugees, many of them already suffering from the murderous break-up of the family unit at the hands of ethnic cleansing squads.'[144] The *Herald* noted the enthusiasm of one Australian resident: 'A Mount Druitt disabled pensioner with one room to spare has offered to take in a [refugee] family.'[145] Billeting was not an option explored by the Government, although there was nothing legally preventing refugees from leaving the barracks and staying with Australian families. The Immigration Minister did, however, make it clear that the Kosovar refugees would not be able to access any of the health benefits or other services available under the Safe Haven program outside of the barracks, thereby discouraging the refugees from dispersing into the community.[146]

Excitement about the evacuation was captured in the *Herald's* front-page headline: 'Australia Joins The Rescue'.[147] The newspaper noted how Australia's Governor-General Sir William Deane, patron of CARE Australia, had donated part of his 'vice-regal salary' to assist aid work in refugee camps around Kosovo.[148] Southern Cross Quilters, an organisation of 800 quilters from Australia

142   See M. Maddox, 'God Under Howard', *Market Values*, Allen and Unwin, Crows Nest, NSW, 2005, p. 292.

143   See references to Beazley and billeting in Garran and Green, 'Agreement remote on housing refugees', *op. cit.* See also reference to billeting in S. Lunn and S. Emerson, 'Local Albanians offer refuge', *The Australian*, 8th April 1999, p. 8. The majority of terms or discussions that depicted "community excitement" centred on the notion of "billeting" across the newspaper sources. These concepts featured 14 times in the *Telegraph*, 9 times in *The Australian*, and 7 times in the *Herald*.

144   'Milosevic shows his hypocrisy ... as refugee policy is made on the run' (editorial), *op. cit.*

145   D. Dasey, 'Aussies Open Arms to Refugees', *The Sun-Herald*, 11th April 1999, p. 10.

146   See discussion of accommodation in I. McPhedran and S. Spencer, 'TASBANIA – Hobart huts to house refugees', *The Daily Telegraph*, 10th April 1999, p. 1.

147   S. Mann, 'Australia Joins the Rescue', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 7th April 1999, p. 1.

148   L. Martin, 'Governor-General Donates His Salary', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 14th April 1999, p. 8.

and New Zealand, launched an appeal for hundreds of quilts as part of the Kosovo Quilt Drive which would culminate on the 15th May 'Make A Quilt for Kosovo Day'.[149] Sydney resident Maria Campo from Baulkam Hills delivered two bags to the Chester Hill Albanian Australian Community Centre, 'brimming with clothes, shoes and stuffed toys, which her daughters, 10 and 4-year-old twins, had agreed to give up.'[150] Mrs Campo, the *Telegraph* wrote, said her family was heartbroken by the experiences of the refugees:

> It really makes you grateful for what you have[.] I explained to the kids why they [the Kosovars] were coming here and they were happy to help. It's just some clothes and shoes and some toys because they've got nothing.[151]

Brian Dickey assesses the motivations of charity and welfare groups throughout Australian history, saying that the acts of these organisations intend to be universal 'expressions of the dignity of human beings wholly admirable in intent.'[152] He urges caution towards those who may appear to have altruistic intentions, arguing for the need to recognise processes of objectification in acts of charity. That is, to identify how charitable groups have 'treated the objects of action: the people being offered social welfare.'[153] Understanding charitable acts in this way provides an avenue for identifying 'the dominant social and economic forces in society'; how hegemonic groups define who is *deserving* of assistance (often colloquially defined as the "deserving poor"); and the implications of that understanding for public offerings of assistance.[154]

In varying degrees, the charity offered by Australians to the Kosovars was motivated by popular sentiments about Australia being the "most compassionate country in the world". The evacuation very clearly allowed the Australian government to parade a positive image of the nation internationally and in the local media as "charitable" and "caring". There is, however, an element of continuity in both the ways in which charity was offered to the Kosovars and the kind of assistance that has been offered to refugees, particularly those from the former Yugoslavia, since the Second World War. Australia had accepted 180,000 displaced persons (DPs) at this time for permanent

149   'Column 8', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 24th April 1999, p. 1.

150   S. Gee, 'Digging deep to ease their pin [sic]', *The Daily Telegraph*, 5th May 1999, p. 7.

151   M. Campo, cited in *ibid.*

152   B. Dickey, *No Charity There; A Short History of Social Welfare in Australia*, Allen and Unwin, North Sydney, 1987, p. xiii.

153   *Ibid.*, p. xiv.

154   *Ibid.*, p. xvii.

resettlement, largely due to the leadership of Immigration Minister Arthur Calwell.[155] The language employed in official resettlement policies to sell those refugees as "acceptable" to the Australian public in the late 1940s has continued to shape popular perceptions of Balkan groups in a variety of ways. The acceptability of these migrant groups was often achieved by accentuating their usefulness to the national economy. Most of those who came were contracted to undertake priority work schemes that required rigorous manual labour. Even when the migrants had high educational skills these were rarely recognised and they had a non-threatening class status as low-skilled workers.[156]

A similar feature in the media coverage surrounding the Kosovar evacuation was that the refugees did not appear to challenge popular notions about the racial superiority of British Australians. Of the post-war era, Egon F. Kunz says: 'Australian insularity and xenophobia made it almost inevitable that to continue the [DP labour] program, charity had to be served up as utilitarian gain, and calculated gain as charity.'[157] What developed was,

> dogma that newcomers are "lucky to be here" [which] absolved the community from the responsibility to help the New Australians in any meaningful way. Indeed, it put the onus of contented gratefulness on the immigrant, and ensured that any criticism from them be rejected as ingratitude.[158]

As evident in public discussions concerning the Kosovar evacuation, notions of gratitude and egalitarianism in the Calwell era promoted the ability of dominant Australian social groups to categorize who might be considered worthy or unworthy of their assistance. These notions strengthened perceptions held by these groups that they were members of "valued" social and cultural categories. They also created, in this sense, moral grounds for dominant groups to withdraw their offer of charity to the Kosovars when they were no longer viewed by the public to need it.[159]

Anne Summers, commenting in the *Herald*: 'found it heartening, and affirming, last week when the rage and shame of talkback radio callers forced a

---

155   E.F. Kunz, *Displaced Persons; Calwell's New Australians*, Australian National University Press, Rushcutters Bay, 1988, p. xvii.

156   *Ibid.*, p. 256. See also p. 164.

157   *Ibid.*, p. 256.

158   *Ibid.*, p. 257.

159   See discussion on language, identities and social discourse in T. Purvis and A. Hunt, 'Discourse, Ideology, Discourse, Ideology, Discourse, Ideology...', *The British Journal of Sociology*, 44(3), September, 1993, p. 474.

change of heart in the Government'.[160] However, she questioned the way 'We can congratulate ourselves on our considerable compassion quotient.'[161] She cited figures showing how Australians had 'dug deep' on a regular basis since the Vietnam war in support of a variety of humanitarian crises, yet: 'When put into perspective against other appeals, our response to Kosovo while not stingy, is certainly not outstanding.'[162] The amounts given to some agencies in those cases still exceeded donations for the Kosovo refugees. This brings to the fore questions about the distribution of charity in Australia in light of the broader economic climate typified by continuous growth in national wealth and falling unemployment since the mid-1990s.[163] As Summers says: 'many of us have far more to give. The day the Government did its backflip on the Kosovo refugees, the Australian Stock Exchange hit an all-time high.'[164]

My analysis so far in this chapter provides a clearer view of the ways in which the Howard Government attempted to appropriate popular empathy for the Kosovars as a means of developing political consensus. It demonstrates the response of the Federal Government in repositioning itself in line with public interests and re-establishing popular legitimacy following a growing backlash. However, I accentuate the limitations of the assistance offered to the refugees. The context for popular generosity and empathy was heavily premised on the notion that the Kosovars were non-threatening along class, cultural and racial lines. The motivation behind these kinds of charitable offerings, which were in any case highly conditional, becomes much clearer when exploring the language surrounding the selection of the refugees for the evacuation program, as discussed in the following.

Bureacracy and Selecting the Kosovars for Evacuation

The Federal Government created an operational task force on 7th April 1999 headed by the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs

160   A. Summers, 'We Can Afford Much More For The Kosovars', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 15th April 1999, p. 15.

161   *Ibid.*

162   *Ibid.* She notes that in 1979 Australians had donated $11.25 million to the post-Pol Pot Kampuchea appeal, and a similar amount to Rwanda five years before the Kosovo refugee crisis. Australians had also 'dug deep', she points out, in support of the Papua New Guinea drought and tidal wave in 1998.

163   M. Lyons, M. McGregor-Lowndes and P. O'Donoghue, 'Researching Giving and Volunteering in Australia', *Australian Journal of Social Issues*, 41(4), Summer, 2006, p. 393.

164   Summers, *op. cit.*

(DIMA), which included the Departments of Defence, Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Health, Finance and Prime Minister and Cabinet. Collectively these departments would determine the most suitable ways of proceeding with the operation and accommodating the Kosovars on their arrival. A team of eight DIMA officials working alongside the UNHCR were given the task of selecting potential candidates for evacuation to Australia, via a series of interviews with refugees at Stenkovac 1. Locating such persons was reportedly a simple process. DIMA officials conducted a 'door-knocking campaign' of refugees' tents.[165] DIMA spokesperson Stewart Foster, who was also director of the department's Public Affairs unit, told the *Telegraph* that those selected had been asked to meet several criteria. Firstly, abandoned or unattached women, especially those with children, were given high priority, followed by entire families. The team then concentrated on those who had not expressed any wish to be reunited with relatives in nearby European countries. Each family and individual refugee was required to sign a declaration in Albanian, indicating they understood the terms. That is, as stressed during the screening process, they understood that they would only be in Australia until able to return home.[166] The *Telegraph* wrote: 'It is understood that the main selection criteria for the refugees were health, fitness and a willingness to be moved out after three months.'[167]

The selection of the Kosovars was promoted as an important part of Operation Safe Haven in the media. Much of the media coverage reassured the public that only the most desirable kinds of refugees would be selected for the evacuation program. It often appeared as though DIMA officials were far less concerned with evacuating those refugees who were perhaps most in need than those (who could be represented by the media as) persons who were healthy and willing to be compliant with the arrangements offered by the Federal Government. The Safe Haven Visa was designed, as stipulated in the Migration Legislation Amendment (Temporary Safe Haven Visas) Bill 1999, so that it could be granted at short notice by DIMA staff working in Macedonia with the UNHCR – in situations where Kosovars had been stripped of their credentials by Yugoslav forces, and more extensive character checking was not

165   B. Wilson, 'Happy to be on the plane out', *The Daily Telegraph*, 5th May 1999, p. 9.
166   *Ibid.*
167   S. Gee and T. Skotnicki, 'Mire ce vini ne Australia (That's welcome, in Albanian)', *The Daily Telegraph*, 4th May 1999, p. 6. The reference to 'three months' relates to previous statements made by the Federal Government about the duration in which the Kosovar refugees would be allowed to stay in Australian under the proposed Safe Haven program.

possible.[168] The paradox is that DIMA officials provided significant detail in the media about the kind of refugees being evacuated to Australia. They often described the refugees in terms of those attributes that appealed to Howard voters – middle-class, family values, cleanliness and generally not too dissimilar to "mainstream" Australians.[169]

Media Representations of the Refugees Selected for Evacuation: Constructing the "Other"

Gibney argues, in relation to international media coverage of Kosovar refugees: 'Virtually overnight the dominant public perception of refugees as economic migrants gave way to a view of the displaced as worthy recipients of public and private aid'.[170] He adds that 'it was almost impossible to walk around the camps in Albania and Macedonia without tripping over television cables... If we wish to explain the reaction [of the international community] to Kosovo, we must consider those features of this crisis which linked the public, media and governments of Western states to the plight of this particular group of refugees.'[171]

Bloch notes how media depictions of Kosovar refugees who had arrived in the UK prior to the UNHCR evacuation program in 1999 were laden with criticisms, mainly in regards to the Kosovars exploiting generous welfare payments. However, these depictions had been supplanted by more empathetic coverage upon Britain's participation in the UNHCR evacuation program. Bloch states that the high level of media attention attracted by the situation in Kosovo meant the public was aware of intimate details about the Kosovars' lives; 'media coverage enabled [Kosovars] to tell of their experiences. This helped the public understand what it means to be a refugee and the result was a very favourable and hospitable local welcome.'[172]

In Australia, sweeping assumptions were evident in media and Federal Government statements about the Kosovars *prior* to "getting to know them"

168   'Migration Legislation Amendment (Temporary Safe Haven Visas) Bill 1999', *Senate: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 21st April 1999, p. 3966.

169   See Brett, *op. cit.*

170   Gibney, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

171   *Ibid.*, p. 29.

172   A. Bloch, 'Kosovan refugees in the UK: the Rolls Royce or rickshaw reception?', *Forced Migration Review*, 1999, 5, p. 25. URL: http://www.fmreview.org/sites/fmr/files /FMRdownloads /en/FMRpdfs/FMR05/fmr5full.pdf. Accessed 1st December 2016.

through the evacuation program. The refugees, it was commonly assumed, were somewhat backward, uneducated and docile, ignorant of the world and particularly Australia. Media reports over the past year about the spiralling Kosovo conflict had consistently portrayed an image of the locals as farmers and villagers exiled from rural Kosovo, or living as dispossessed hill-folk attempting to evade the violence. The *Telegraph* often reported on "remote villages" being attacked by organised Serb military units, and "villagers" fleeing on tractors, carts and horses.[173] Indeed, Balkan countries have been susceptible to some of the lowest educational and economic growth rates throughout the twentieth century.[174] What was severely lacking before the NATO air strikes began, particularly in the *Telegraph*, were stories about how life was being experienced in the capital Pristina. *Telegraph* readers were given an overwhelming impression that Kosovars were industrially inept, living under primitive economic and political systems that were inefficient and sub-standard.

Government officials were somewhat startled to discover that Australia was to provide safe haven for refugees mainly from the provincial capital of Pristina, rather than the villages and backwaters of the Balkan countryside. According to ALP Senator Chris Schacht, who visited the Macedonian refugee camps as part of a parliamentary study mission in mid-April 1999:

> you are dealing with people who are well educated in the middle class/upper middle class who had comfortable lives and had very good houses in places such as Pristina. You are dealing with people who are tertiary educated – I met doctors, psychiatrists, school teachers, technicians and tradespeople – and even those from the farms are well educated and are running successful farms. You are not dealing with a Third World population of illiterate peasants.[175]

The image that the refugees were middle class was reaffirmed by various news reports. *The Australian*, for instance, described how 'the middle-class nature

---

173   See for example J. Flieshman, 'Go in and you'll die; Tanks clear Kosovo villagers', *The Daily Telegraph*, 6th July 1998, p. 21: 'Serbian offensives to rout [the KLA] have skipped from village to village, as hundreds of families flee on tractors and horse carts.'

174   See, for instance, Kunz, *op. cit.*, p. 117 and 133. He provides figures concerning the poor educational standards and literacy rates in Yugoslavia at the time when refugees from Balkan countries departed Europe for Australia in the late 1940s.

175   C. Schacht, in 'Migration Legislation Amendment (Temporary Safe Haven Visas) Bill 1999; In Committee', *Senate: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 30th April 1999, pp. 4639-4640.

of the Stenkovac refugees' had created 'particular problems' for staff providing aid there.[176] For Jo Hutton, an Australian citizen co-ordinating CARE Australia's aid effort at Stenkovac, these problems included the range of items the refugees desired whilst awaiting resettlement: 'Ms Hutton has to deliver some of the basic necessities of a middle-class life... "We need scissors to cut their hair, the men want razors, we need toys for the children, something for the teenagers to do. We are taking a table tennis table up there tomorrow".'[177] DIMA's Stewart Foster, speaking to the media at the Stenkovic 1 refugee camp, commented: 'Of course, we have had people with a sense of adventure... One man told us he had always wanted to see the Australian Open tennis. Who knows? Maybe he will.'[178] He emphasised the point that some of those selected included nurses, a computer expert, businessmen and (the more expected) agricultural workers. As the *Telegraph* described, generally, officials were 'dealing with people of sharp intelligence.'[179] Foster further commented: 'Most of them understand that it's two days in the plane'.[180]

DIMA officials were susceptible to circumstantial pressures and opportunities during the selection process. Morris describes how 'Selecting refugees for departure on humanitarian evacuations was fraught with difficulties and open to abuse.'[181] The UNHCR reported abuse of its evacuation program by some Kosovars as 'a rapid way of obtaining tickets to the West'.[182] According to one NGO: 'UNHCR concedes that refugees have bought and sold places on departing planes, and falsified their identities.'[183] UNHCR further reported that some refugees were deliberately seeking evacuation to particular countries. It is not evident that Australian immigration officials participated in this kind of abuse of the UNHCR evacuation program. What is evident, however, is that the evacuation 'allowed some governments to score public relations points by appearing "humanitarian" in receiving a limited number of "popular" refugees.'[184]

176   M. Stevens and S. Farrell, 'Lost Jehona, 5, finds her place amid the exodus', *The Australian*, 10th April 1999, p. 1.

177   J. Hutton, cited in *ibid.*

178   In Wilson, 'Happy to be on the plane out', *op. cit.*

179   *Ibid.*

180   S. Foster, cited in P. Green and B. Montgomery, 'Welcome and $20 a week – Refugees journey to shelter', *The Australian*, 4th May 1999, p. 1.

181   N. Morris, 'UNHCR and Kosovo: a personal view from within UNHCR', *Forced Migration Review*, 1999, 5, p. 16. URL: http://www.fmreview.org/sites/fmr/files/FMRdownloads/en /FMRpdfs/FMR05/fmr5full.pdf. Accessed 1st December 2016.

182   Barutciski and Suhrke, *op. cit.*, p. 104.

183   *Ibid.*

184   *Ibid.*, pp. 104-105.

The significance of the Government's political investment in the Safe Haven program – including a highly organised public relations campaign – presented staff from the Department of Immigration with opportunities for performing in a manner consistent with political and bureaucratic expectations. This is reflected in the language utilised by DIMA officials to describe evacuees in the media – one that promoted the "acceptability" of the Kosovars to the Australian public, and which emphasised "acceptable" qualities possessed by evacuees (such as high intellect and middle class credentials).

The use of this type of language was criticised in *The Australian* by commentator Ramona Koval, who wrote: 'And while hearts go out to refugees from Kosovo, who look like us and have middle-class clothes and mobile phones, in January an even bigger refugee crisis emerged from Sierra Leone... But those people are black, aren't they? And they don't have mobile phones.'[185] This criticism is supported by figures that emerged in August 1999 in which Kosovar refugees had received 21 times more in humanitarian aid from the international community than those in Africa. Around 800,000 Kosovar refugees were given an average of $US13 per day in food and medical aid since the NATO intervention, while Africa refugees continued to receive only US$0.60 per day.[186] The Kosovars were afforded what appears to have been "special" treatment in receiving countries compared to the other groups of refugees. Gibney points out that in the US, Guantanamo Bay – deemed appropriate for Haitian refugees – was regarded as unsuitable for the Kosovars, while in the UK Kosovar evacuees were able to circumvent ordinary family reunion restrictions in a manner unavailable to other refugees. Moreover in Germany the Kosovars were granted the status of 'civil war refugees' rather than being assigned temporary exemption from deportation, as had been the case for previously arrived Bosniaks.[187]

Kunz notes how "acceptability" permeated the methods employed by immigration officials dispatched to Europe to select immediate post-war refugees for resettlement in Australia. Much of the focus was on 'Australia's stringent health criteria', resulting in the acceptance of predominantly younger age groups.[188] The 'search for quality' consisted of recurrent references to 'high quality' and 'finest quality' in the migration officers' vocabulary, and the 'overeagerness to please Canberra by recruiting "high quality immigrants"'.[189]

---

185   R. Koval, 'Come Over and Taste the Prejudice', *The Australian*, 17th April 1999, p. 25.

186   'World Briefs', *The Australian*, 26th August 1999, p. 9.

187   Gibney, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

188   Kunz, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

189   *Ibid.*, p. 49 and 52.

Kunz adds, 'the selection missions imposed a uniformity of youthfulness and health, which became the hallmark of Australia's DP scheme', and often meant 'the rejection of illiterates'.[190]

While Government and immigration spokespersons often promoted evacuees as acceptable, there remained an element of xenophobia in media discourse surrounding the evacuations. Ethnic "caging" is reflected in some of the language used to describe the Safe Haven evacuees in the media. That is, attempts by journalists to categorise (or "cage") the Kosovars with patronising language and to represent them as unintelligent (both directly and by implication).[191] Bruce Wilson's article, 'Kosovo refugees take off for Sydney', was based on interviews with Kosovar refugees on their bus trip from the Stenkovic 1 camp to Skopje airfield before departing for Australia. Noting the refugees' ignorance and emotional trauma, Wilson described how one man tugged on his sleeve, asking: 'In Australia… will we be put in a house, or a hut? Will we have a roof? Will there be water?'[192] The journalist asked one of the women what they knew of Australia; she replied through an interpreter: 'Nothing'. After a long pause, the woman went on: 'Kangaroo.'[193] Such representations of the Kosovars reflect similar sentiments publicised elsewhere by the *Telegraph* about the level of 'intelligence' displayed by the refugees.[194] This patronising perspective of the Kosovars before their arrival is captured by columnist Ray Chesterton who surmised the potential for Australians to benefit from the cultural exchange brought by the evacuation. Noting the menu arranged for the refugees at East Hills barracks on their first day in Australia, he commented: 'There could also be a jar or two of Vegemite on breakfast tables. Perhaps the cultural exchange will be both ways.'[195]

Despite the Howard Government's efforts to promote an image of the refugees as intelligent, "middle-class" people, there remained tension within news reports with long-standing stereotypes about Balkan migrants. Stereotypes about Balkan migrants have historical connections with the xenophobia embodied in the White Australia immigration policy, as well as the migrant labour programs introduced at the end of the Second World War. Jock Collins

190   *Ibid.*, p. 131.

191   G. Hage, *White Nation, Fantasies of White Supremacy in a Multicultural Society*, Pluto Press, Annandale, 1998, p. 113.

192   B. Wilson, 'Kosovo refugees take off for Sydney', *The Daily Telegraph*, 7th May 1999, p. 4.

193   *Ibid.*

194   Wilson, 'Happy to be on the plane out', *op. cit.*

195   R. Chesterton, 'Army hosts prepare dry welcome for new friends at the barracks', *The Daily Telegraph*, 7th May 1999, p. 4.

describes the experience of Central Eastern European refugees at this time who, after fulfilling their labour contracts with the Australian government, suffered substantial downward employment mobility in coming to Australia. One study emphasised 'the devastating effects of loss of professional, vocational and social standing among East Central European intellectuals'.[196] As Collins notes, university professors, surgeons, lawyers and artists were to be found on the production lines and undertaking a variety of manual labour work. He recognises the frustrations of one of these refugees who was unable to find more appropriate employment, citing: 'The Australian migration policy does not allow the use of my intellectual values; the Australian society does not accept us as equals.'[197] These migrants were inhibited by 'a history of racial antagonism and xenophobia' against refugee workers, labelled popularly as "reffos".[198] Central Eastern Europeans along with other groups of "reffos" were acceptable to Australians as long as they remained in their "second class" roles.[199]

The positioning of the Kosovars within Australian political discourse is not limited to the national sphere. Larry Wolff says that, in much of Western thought, the Balkans (which he views as part of Eastern Europe) have tended to assume the role of Western Europe's internal "other". He comments: 'It was Eastern Europe's ambiguous location, within Europe but not fully European, that called for such notions of backwardness and development to mediate between the poles of civilization and barbarism. In fact, Eastern Europe in the eighteenth century provided Western Europe with its first model of underdevelopment, a concept that we now apply all over the globe.'[200] As K.E. Fleming says, for Wolff: 'the Balkans provided Europe's first experience of the other (and thus concretized the Western category of "Europe")'.[201]

In Australia, however, popular discourse has tended to promulgate precisely where Balkan refugees ought to be situated – as worthy of humanitarian assistance, though largely because of their supposed non-threatening class and cultural status. The experience of the Kosovars highlights the continuance of this

---

196   J. Collins, *Migrant Hands in a Distant Land; Australia's post-war immigration*, Pluto Press Australia, Leichhardt, 1988, p. 56.

197   *Ibid.*, p. 57.

198   *Ibid.*

199   *Ibid.* See also Kunz, *op. cit.*, p. 165.

200   L. Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe; The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1994, p. 9. Also cited in K.E. Fleming, 'Orientalism, the Balkans, and Balkan Historiography', *American Historical Review*, 105(4), October 2000, p. 1230.

201   Fleming, *op. cit.*, p. 1230.

humanitarian/racial superiority binary within Australian immigration history. This is noted by Kunz in his account of Australian attitudes towards refugees in the post-war era: '[The pressures to assimilate] often exerted with an air of generous naivety by well-meaning Australians ready to share their "superior culture" with the newcomers, were a potent cause of anxiety and resentment [for many refugees].'[202]

Representations of the Familiar

Summers was sceptical of the way in which the Kosovars were identified by relief agencies in their attempts to elicit financial support from the Australian public as they competed for the 'compassion dollar'.[203] She wrote, 'Agencies report a high degree of identification with the refugees: "People can really associate with them, they wear clothes like ours, they really feel for them", says World Vision's Ian Neil.'[204] Despite the prevalence of negative stereotypes, "othering" and ethnic "caging", those Kosovars selected for evacuation were overwhelmingly represented in the media as possessing what was typified as core Western lifestyles and social roles. The central role of the family in Kosovar life was commonly emphasised, as were the tastes and trends they shared with their host country.

The *Telegraph* mainly described the Kosovars, in relation to those involved with Operation Safe Haven, as "family people", making 61 references to mothers, fathers, sons, daughters, brothers, aunts and uncles (and other family roles). These were the people who required Australia's assistance. The newspaper referred to the refugees in a more general sense as "Europeans" (or "like us") twice, while eliciting 11 references to the Kosovars as significantly "dissimilar, alien or "Other"", noting the language and cultural barriers they were likely to face upon coming to Australia.[205] The *Herald* produced similar reports

---

202   Kunz, *op. cit.*, p. 166.

203   Summers, *op. cit.*

204   *Ibid.*

205   Phrases and terms used to represent the Kosovars as "dissimilar, alien or Other" include an emphasis in news articles on the supposed linguistic, cultural, customary, political, physical, educational, economic, social and geographical differences between Kosovars and Australians. Terms used to describe the refugees as more generally "European" include references to 'Europe', 'Europeans', the refugees' links to European places, as well as indicators of supposed similarities (such as wearing "clothes likes us", some types of popular pastimes, films, TV shows, occupations, owning mobile phones, and "student" lifestyles).

'The family', 'The teenage girl' and 'The new best mates' at Stenkovac 1, in The Daily Telegraph*, 6*th *May 1999, p. 4.*

about the Kosovars, describing them in terms of their "family" titles on 56 occasions. The newspaper depicted the Kosovars as significantly "different, alien or Other" 11 times, while they were viewed in a much more general sense as "Europeans" 25 times. *The Australian* produced much less commentary about the Kosovars in this regard, describing them as "family" types on 21 occasions, and as "Europeans" and "dissimilar, alien or Other" six times respectively.

The ideological purpose of these kinds of binaries in the media works to remove the Other from the bounds of the dominant moral community, while strengthening the appearance of the dominant group as superior within the discourse.[206] Instances where the Kosovars appeared morally or culturally compatible with Australians, by the same measure, make implicit judgements about the hegemonic categories assigned to and used to displace less desirable social groups. Male refugees, teenagers Prindon Sadriu and Gent Prokshi, interviewed by the *Telegraph* at Stenkovac 1 before their departure to Australia, were noted to be fans of the Australian television series *Heartbreak High*.[207]

Labelled, 'The new best mates', Sadriu and Prokshi were depicted as *typical* teenage boys (pictured above). Wearing baseball caps and giving a "thumbs up" in the photograph, they were said to be 'excited adventurers to a land that until a week ago had seldom entered their minds'.[208] Sadriu, along with his parents, brother and sister, had fled from Gjilan (eastern Kosovo). It was also reported that Prokshi had urged his family of five to go to Australia, having fled Pristina at the height of Serbian atrocities. The *Herald* further noted the importance of *Heartbreak High* to Kosovar youths in the article 'Flight to land

---

S. Dagistanli, '"Like a pack of wild animals"; Moral panics around "ethnic" gang rape in Sydney', in S. Poynting and G. Morgan (eds.), *Outrages! Moral Panics in Australia*, ACYS Publishing, University of Tasmania, Hobart, 2007, p. 194.

207   'The new best mates', *The Daily Telegraph*, 6th May 1999, p. 4.

208   *Ibid.*

of Heartbreak High'. One young refugee, who had informed the *Herald* that his relatives had disappeared, honed-in on how 'All the kids in Kosovo love that movie'.[209]

Seventeen-year-old Valmira Abazi (pictured above), interviewed before her departure to Australia, was depicted as a *typical* teenage girl, ensuring that the *Telegraph's* photographer avoided capturing her 'baggy pair of camouflage combat fatigues.'[210] Describing Ms Abazi as 'Clothes conscious', the article stated: 'Refugee camp or not, girls want to look their best for the camera.'[211] It was reported that Prindon Sadriu was Abazi's 'new boyfriend' who she met at Stenkovac 1. Abazi's father had been an economist in Pristina, and, along with her brother and sister (aged 16 and 14), had 'lived a comfortable life in Pristina'.[212] It was reported that her father's telecommunications company had been stormed by Serb forces – thought to be used by Albanian activists – along with the family home. Media portrayal of the Kosovars in these ways affirms Sharon Pickering's study on the Australian media and discourse about refugees. Pickering found that the 'ideal refugee' was typically represented as passive, invited and visibly grateful.[213] Abazi was not only submissive for the cameras, she also professed strong family-ties, and was willing to work with the *Telegraph* in its attempts to position her as "acceptable" for the evacuation program.

Families of a variety of shapes and sizes were pictured in the *Telegraph* patiently waiting at Stenkovac 1 to be evacuated to Australia.[214] These descriptions reinforced the idea that family-*type* people had been selected by the Department of Immigration for temporary relocation to Australia. The symbolic weight of the *family* in reports about the evacuation is linked to the prominent position of family politics during the era of the Howard Government. Popular notions of the "traditional" Australian family were central to many of the Howard Government's policies. The *Telegraph's* emphasis on "family" values reaffirms its place, compared to the *Herald* and *Australian*, as most supportive of the broader political agenda Howard Government – one that was highly geared towards upholding the sanctity of the "traditional" Australian

---

209   E. Leqiei, cited in B. Lagan, 'Flight to land of Heartbreak High', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 7th May 1999, p. 5.

210   'The teenage girl', *The Daily Telegraph*, 6th May 1999, p. 4.

211   *Ibid.*

212   *Ibid.*

213   S. Pickering, 'Common Sense and Original Deviancy: News Discourses and Asylum Seekers in Australia', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 14(2), 2001, p. 177.

214   See, for instance, Wilson, 'Smiles that say thanks', *op. cit.* The focus here is on the sixteen-member Rasimi family.

family.[215] This kind of media discussion promoted consensus for the Government's Safe Haven program. It was not only useful for the Howard Government in re-establishing support after considerable backlash, it further supported the way Howard had mobilised cultural conservatism, a crucial factor in successive election victories for the Prime Minister.

Further to this are the continuing historical ramifications impacting on refugee policy which have tended to pander to an element of xenophobia. Kunz notes that politicians attempting to sell the post-war migrant and refugee intake from Europe were compelled 'to cater to pressure groups and flatter the egos of their constituents' in order to sustain their political careers.[216] He adds:

> Those few, like [Immigration Minister] Calwell, who tried to do better, could only counter the prevailing xenophobia by portraying the [displaced persons] as patient, willing to take anything, eager to learn anything, happy New Australians who were perennially smiling into cameras and ever ready to change into national costumes... This reassuring presentation of so many foreigners, up until then resented and feared, helped to disarm opposition to the [migrant labour work] scheme, but at the same time made the hosts smug in their belief that they and their government had done enough for the refugee. Hence, if an immigrant had any complaint, he must have been exceptional: an ungrateful person, badly selected.[217]

Conclusion

The evacuation of the Kosovars to Australia was co-ordinated alongside a dramatic new direction for Australian refugee policy based on the rationale of temporary protection. As Jupp commented in *The Australian People*, the Kosovo refugee crisis not only mobilised the Australian community behind charitable activities, '[it] also marked an important shift in refugee policy towards temporary protection rather than permanent settlement.'[218] Kelly commented

---

215   See discussion of Howard's "family values" in C. Hamilton and R. Denniss, *Affluenza: When Too Much is Never Enough*, Allen and Unwin, Crows Nest, 2005, p. 142. See also Maddox, *op. cit.*, p. 292.

216   Kunz, *op. cit.*, p. 256.

217   *Ibid.*

218   J. Jupp (ed.), *The Australian People: An Encyclopedia of the Nation, Its People and Their Origins*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2001, p. 167.

on the significance of these changes, describing the Safe Haven program as 'a significant and historic change in Australia's immigration policy, which, presumably, was neither recommended by Ruddock or his department.'[219] In this sense, the Safe Haven program was implemented in conjunction with a variety of strategies for appropriating popular consensus following a dramatic policy backflip undertaken by the Federal Government.

The politicking surrounding the implementation of the Safe Haven program reflects a populist response from the Howard Government. The editor of *The Australian* aptly described the early stages of the development of the Safe Haven program as 'policy on the run', as the Howard Government scrambled to formulate a strategy that would regain public favour.[220] In each of the responses made by the Howard Government to the Kosovo refugee crisis, it worked to maintain the position from which it was able to retain popular support. The initial refusal to oblige the UNHCR evacuation request denotes the deployment of popular xenophobia by the Howard Government. Under other circumstances – such as, for instance, the arrival of Chinese "boat people" in 1999 – a "tough" stance on refugees remained popularly desirable. The reversal of this decision was a symbolic attempt to establish a perception of the Howard Government as compassionate and acting in accordance with popular interests.

The Howard Government's refugee policy changes in 1999 were, in no small measure, impacted by international forces, particularly in relation to the US' lead role in the NATO military campaign against Yugoslavia. The Government undertook these changes with an eye on both the national political arena and how Australia was being perceived internationally as a "good world citizen". The Government's response was influenced by a policy of compliance with US foreign strategy.

The Safe Haven policy was the result of a highly successful political compromise by the Howard Government. It embodied the conservatism of the Government and demonstrated the ability of leading Cabinet members, particularly the Prime Minister, to capitalise on popular sentiment. The Government significantly benefited by pandering to public pressure and acting compassionately towards "popular" refugees. This image was bolstered by an emphasis on the kinds of refugees selected for evacuation in the media – those deemed

---

219   Kelly, 'Knee-jerk response to Kosovo crisis', *op. cit.*

220   'Milosevic shows his hypocrisy ... as refugee policy is made on the run' (editorial), *op. cit.* See also Lyons, 'Take A Bet On Our Generosity', *op. cit.*, who also describes the Safe Haven program as 'policy on the run.'

middle class, family-types and White Europeans. This image of the Kosovars continued to be propagated throughout April and into early May 1999 as the Howard Government prepared for the refugees' arrival at Sydney airport. Here, the Prime Minister would host a dramatic welcoming ceremony for the Kosovars and boast of Australia's generosity in front of the nation's media.

FIGURE 6   *Flamur Armeti, a Kosovar refugee who resided at Portsea barracks.* Courtesy Embassy of Republic of Kosovo in Canberra.

Arrival: the Howard Government's Propaganda Machine in Action

Introduction

The Kosovar refugees arrived in Australia on 7th May 1999 suffering from experiences of war, personal loss and state-sponsored atrocities. When the first refugee flight landed at Sydney airport the Kosovars encountered unprecedented media interest as they were formally greeted by the Prime Minister. The Federal Government politicised the Kosovars' arrival. Opportunistically, John Howard capitalised on a rare occasion to bolster his personal standing and "goodness" with the Australian public. The Government's media unit positioned Howard deliberately – at first on the tarmac as the refugees exited the plane, and then high upon a dais where he welcomed the refugees with "open arms", framed by a background comprising the Australian flag.

This chapter explores the journey of the refugees aboard the initial flight to Australia. The Kosovars' first experience of Australia entailed a sharp contrast between the cameras flashes at the airport and the barbed wire-fences of disused army barracks. While the evacuation may have been intended to assist refugees in desperate need of protection and shelter, the arrival ceremony was certainly about rewarding the Australian public for its generosity.

Chapter 4 traces the experience of the first Kosovars to arrive at the East Hills Safe Haven. Significantly, there were a range of limitations imposed on the media by the Federal Government during this episode. The Government tightly regulated access to the refugees which increased the importance of the media as a mediator between the general public and the Government. The arrival provided the news media with an opportunity to celebrate and "parade" Australian national values. Media positioned the Howard Government as central to this parade. The newspaper media frequently portrayed the Kosovars as relinquishing the lives they had known in Yugoslavia for a "new" and "better life" in Australia. The news media supported perceptions about the moral qualities of the Howard Government, its nationalist platform and the appropriateness of the temporary Safe Haven Visa program.

This chapter again draws on news reports from *The Daily Telegraph*, *Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Australian*.[1] This includes content analysis of news (general), features, opinion columns and editorials drawn from the first five days following the landing of the first plane of refugees in Sydney (7th to 11th May 1999).[2] Media representations of the first plane landing – a highly co-ordinated and pre-planned media event – generated publicity for the Howard Government over the course of the week that followed. This chapter draws attention to images and letters to the editor that accompanied or responded to these articles. Newspaper reports assisted in the Government's attempts at gaining consensus on the changes to refugee policy.

The Initial Plane Ride to a Safe Haven

The Howard Government embarked on Operation Safe Haven as a plan for temporary resettlement, responding to international obligations and growing pressure from within the Australian community. Despite having formally requested Australia's assistance to evacuate refugees on 5th April 1999, the UN-HCR's Humanitarian Evacuation Programme (HEP) stalled for several weeks. This was mainly due to the concerns of some of the organisation's members over the legal rights of refugees being granted temporary protection in Convention countries around the world. Under pressure from the US, the UNHCR resumed the evacuation program despite being what Barutciski and Suhrke describe as a 'hesitant participant'.[3]

The UNHCR formally renewed its request to the Australian Federal Government for assistance on 1st May 1999, asking for the evacuation of the refugees to commence. The first refugee flight to Australia departed on 5th May 1999, in which 414 exiled Kosovars were flown from Skopje to Rome, Bangkok and then

---

1   This included 13 in *The Australian* (including *Weekend Australian*), 17 in the *Telegraph* (including *Sunday Telegraph*) and 16 in the *Herald* (including *Sun-Herald*).

2   The dates beyond this were excluded from the content analysis due to the fact that the first group was transferred out of Sydney to Brighton barracks in Tasmania on 11th May.

3   M. Barutciski and A. Suhrke, 'Lessons from the Kosovo Crisis: Innovations in Protection and Burden-sharing', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 14(2), 2001, p. 99. The Programme was halted on 10th April and resumed on 17th April 1999. Australia was not officially asked to evacuate the refugees it had selected for evacuation over the past month until 1st May 1999. It is noted here, quoting UNHCR, that the HEP was a 'source of dissention among the protection staff', that 'Non-HEP protection staff question the compatibility of HEP with our core function to promote the right to seek asylum in a Convention signatory State.'

finally to Sydney.[4] The *Telegraph* published a photograph of smiling refugees on its front-page as they boarded a Qantas aeroplane (see Appendix 2), alongside the headline, 'Sanctuary and hope in Sydney'.[5] It was implied that the refugees were happy to be relinquishing their former lives for the protection and opportunities offered to them in Australia.

On the evening of 7th May 1999, the refugees landed at Sydney airport after a 22-hour flight from Rome aboard a Qantas Boeing 747. It was the first of ten chartered flights arranged by the Federal Government to temporarily relocate almost 4000 Kosovar refugees to Australia. The group comprised 216 males and 194 females – 27 under the age of two – and eight over the age of 60, including a 95-year-old man.[6] The refugees had watched *Patch Adams* during the flight, a popular American film that the *Telegraph* called 'emotionally safe viewing'.[7] The image given by the newspaper portrayed operational workers as treating the Kosovars with significant amounts of care and caution.

Journalists from the *Telegraph*, *Australian* and the *Herald* obtained access to the flight from Rome to Sydney, situated alongside 'refugees jam-packed into economy class'.[8] Journalists Doug Conway and John Hamilton relayed their account after being aboard the refugee flight from Bangkok to Sydney. Some students among the refugees were browsing a map, the journalists said, who took note of 'the longitude and latitude of their Australian landfall and possibly a new life.'[9] As the newspaper suggested, for Australians, the 'landfall' offered to the Kosovars was something special, not to mention highly irregular for a country with a history of tough immigration policies. There was no question, at least for the *Telegraph*, that the "compassion" shown by Australians to the refugees was paramount in their survival.

In reports about the flight, it was said that the Australian cabin crew were, in no small measure, going to extraordinary lengths to assist the evacuees. The

---

4   The original plan was to evacuate 440 Kosovars on this flight. However, some of the refugee families had decided not to fly to Australia.

5   See M. Jones, 'Sanctuary and hope in Sydney; Refugees ready for a new home', *The Daily Telegraph* (Afternoon Edition), 7th May 1999, p. 1 (continued p. 4).

6   R. Chesterton, 'SAFE IN OUR ARMS: Sydney greets refugees', *The Daily Telegraph*, 8th May 1999, p. 1 (continued on p. 4).

7   S. Harris and S. Westwood, 'Life starts anew for hell's exiles; A sense of hope amid the awful sadness', *The Sunday Telegraph*, 9th May 1999, p. 4 (continued p. 5). The film is also mentioned in T. Stephens and A. Darby, 'Clothes, Castles, Cash and PM Await Kosovars', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 7th May 1999, p. 5.

8   B. Lagan, 'Politics triumphs over comfort in Kosovo flight', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 11th May 1999, p. 13.

9   J. Hamilton and D. Conway, 'Cheers, tears as refugees touch down to freedom', *The Daily Telegraph*, 8th May 1999, p. 4.

Kosovars were served 'specially prepared' halal food provided by cabin crew aboard the flight and the children were kept busy 'playing with new toys given to them by Qantas staff and drawing furiously in colouring books.'[10] The *Herald* pointed out: 'There was even a caretaker brought from Australia to clean toilets in flight.'[11] There was the underlying sense in these reports that it was Australians who would benefit most from the exchange by vindicating their innate altruistic character. As the *Telegraph* (and the *Herald*) highlighted: 'Many of the Qantas crews on each sector volunteered for the privilege of serving the refugees.'[12] Noting the efforts of the flight crew, the newspaper seized the opportunity to present Operation Safe Haven as exemplary and indicative of the moral fortitude of the Howard Government.

Conway and Hamilton described how, for those refugees who spoke English aboard the flight, the questions posed to the journalists 'never stopped'. Some of these included:

> What was our money like? How long would it take for a letter posted in Australia to reach Europe? Would they be allowed to go to school? Would they be allowed to go to University? What would Australians think of them? How big was Australia? What were its animals like? Were they friendly? We [Conway and Hamilton] tried our best to help them.[13]

The Kosovars were portrayed as excited and inquisitive travellers who were anticipating some of the freedoms that might be available to them in Australia. A tension emerged in the *Telegraph's* narrative, which would continue throughout its coverage, between the idea that the Kosovars were somewhat backward and poor and indications of their social status as middle class and educated. In one sense, for the *Telegraph*, the flight to Australia offered a world of opportunity to the Kosovars unlike anything they had been able to explore while living in Yugoslavia. It was the perception that Operation Safe Haven had allowed the refugees to experience a more democratic system of government and a better way of life in general by being temporarily relocated to Australia. This was despite the reality that the Safe Haven program – which resulted in the refugees being largely dependant on (and hence confined) to army bases – significantly limited the opportunities for the Kosovars to travel,

---

10   *Ibid.*

11   B. Lagan, 'Flight to land of Heartbreak High', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 7th May 1999, p. 5.

12   Hamilton and Conway, *op. cit.* See also Lagan, 'Politics triumphs over comfort in Kosovo flight', *op. cit.*

13   Hamilton and Conway, *op. cit.*

obtain education and experience Australian life without restrictions imposed by the Australian government.

For Shefshet Kaqkini, one of the refugees interviewed during the flight, Australia offered the chance of a "new life" and to start over. It was noted that Mr Kaqkini's son had been decapitated and his wife had been 'stabbed in the heart'.[14] Mr Kaqkini stated, through an interpreter: 'I want to show Australia the reality of what is happening in Kosovo. I love my family. But I must accept what has happened. I must live. I am going to live again. I think I am going to find myself in Australia. You are peaceful people, kind people.'[15] Australia's generosity was described as overwhelming for Mr Kaqkini who was worried that Australia was spending too much money helping Kosovo's refugees. An interpreter for Mr Kaqkini said: 'He feels you are now his family. He is worrying about you.'[16] The interpreter added, 'This man [Mr Kaqkini] is incredible.'[17]

The Australian published four images captured by Grant Turner, a photographer aboard the flight from Rome. The central figure of the photographs (see Appendix 4) was: 'An elderly woman, travelling alone, [who] sat silently for the entire 22-hour journey.'[18] The woman, wearing a headscarf, was consistent with many images of Kosovar Albanians depicted as village-peasants which had been published in the media over the previous several months. The newspaper was surprised to find, as the caption read: 'they were well-educated and many had good English.'[19] In the photographs the refugees appeared excited about coming to Australia. In one photograph, 'Passengers scramble[d] to portholes to gain their first glimpse of the Australian coastline'.[20] It was the sense that a world of freedom awaited them.

The *Herald* emphasised two aspects on the morning before the arrival, including the 'rush' by Kosovar refugees to sign up to come Australia, and the similarities between Kosovar and Australian youths. A photograph on the front page of the *Herald* (below) depicted this "rush" as somewhat aggressive, with the caption: 'Next stop, Sydney'.[21] It further described how: 'Kosovar refugees in the Stenkovac camp in Macedonia crowd around the noticeboard listing those chosen to fly to sanctuary in Australia.'[22] The *Herald* contrasted this desperate image with the excitement expressed by several youths about being able to see

---

14   *Ibid.*

15   *Ibid.*

16   *Ibid.*

17   *Ibid.*

18   See *The Weekend Australian*, 8th-9th May 1999, p. 5.

19   *Ibid.*

20   *Ibid.*

21   See D. Lague, 'Rush for first freedom flight', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 7th May 1999, p. 1.

22   *Ibid.*

Next stop, Sydney . . . Kosovar refugees in the Stenkovec camp in Macedonia crowd around the noticeboard listing those chosen to fly to sanctuary in Australia.   Photograph by MIKE BOWERS

FIGURE 7   *Photograph of the Kosovar 'rush' to come to Australia, in* Sydney Morning Herald,
7th *May 1999, p. 1.*

the country in which the Australian film *Heartbreak High* had originated. The
18-year old male refugee, Eashkim Leqiei, told the *Herald* that he knew noth-
ing of Australia except for this film which was 'his favourite movie'.[23] Leqiei
stated: 'All the kids in Kosovo love that movie'.[24] Another young man, 25-year
old Niti Arianit, commented that he had seen *Heartbreak High* three times.
The implication was that Australians ought to extend their compassion to the
refugees because they were just "like us".

Media presented the Kosovars as extraordinary survivors during the flight.
They had overcome the persecution suffered under the Yugoslav regime. These
reports are indicative of the effects of the media discourse used, particularly
by the *Telegraph*, to mobilise public support for Operation Safe Haven. The
refugees were portrayed by the *Telegraph* as highly deserving of compassion
and overwhelming in their gratitude for the Australian government's offer to
evacuate them. More importantly, the refugees were positioned on one side
of a binary that highlighted everything that was "good" about Australia (its
compassion and values), as opposed to all that was "wrong" with Yugoslavia.

Even before the Kosovars had arrived in Australia, there was a significant
framing of media coverage that represented them as originating from an
alien, backward world much different to Western European societies. Flem-
ing says that the perception of Southern Europeans as somewhat alien or

23   Lagan, 'Flight to land of Heartbreak High', *op. cit.*
24   E. Leqiei, cited in *ibid.*

"Others" extends from a general historical disconnect between colonial (and post-colonial) European cultures and the Balkans. Assumptions in both the popular media and intellectual literature over the last several hundred years have resulted in the development of fears in the West about Balkan cultures as "unstable" and that such an influence might bring the "uncivilized" to the "civilized" world. Fleming says: 'The Balkans' liminal status – at the interstices between worlds, histories, and continents – is tantamount not so much to marginality as to a sort of centrality. To be "liminal", after all, is to be *between* (and overlapping) two (or more) domains, while to be marginal is merely to be at the edges of one.'[25] There has emerged, Fleming argues, in much of Western thought the notion that Southern Europeans constitute an "inside other". This is due to 'Western Europe's uncertainty as to where to place them'.[26]

The media have played an important role in the dissemination of these kinds of conceptions of Balkan peoples in Australia. Mass media assert significant powers by working to legitimate a particular agenda about the popularly conceived *nation*, as well as its culture and interests. This is often undertaken in a process of juxtaposition: by exemplifying and parading a particular set of *ideal* national traits and denoting symbolic national boundaries in depictions of the national "Other". This juxtaposition can be viewed in how the Kosovars were simultaneously constructed to embody White national traits, whilst being used to depict "otherness" as a marker of national boundaries. As stated by Zlatko Skrbis, Loretta Baldassar and Scott Poynting, national belonging has the capacity to be 'enacted, displayed, paraded, exaggerated and frequently articulated in the jargon of essentialism and authenticity.'[27] The excited tone of the in-flight reports indicates how the news press utilised the arrival as an opportunity to parade Australian, including White Christian, national values as morally praiseworthy. This national/other binary continued to permeate media coverage throughout Operation Safe Haven.

The Arrival as a Media Event

There was a large media presence at the arrival of the first evacuation flight at Sydney airport. The landing was attended by high-profile government repre-

---

25   Also cited in K.E. Fleming, 'Orientalism, the Balkans, and Balkan Historiography', *American Historical Review*, 105(4), October 2000, p. 1232.

26   *Ibid.*, p. 1231.

27   Z. Skrbis, L. Baldassar and S. Poynting, 'Introduction – Negotiating Belonging: Migration and Generations', *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 28(3), August 2007, p. 262.

sentatives including John Howard, Philip Ruddock, and Opposition Immigration spokesperson Con Sciacca. As DIMA stated, the sizeable media presence was an important part of the landing ceremony and a highly coordinated affair:

> The [DIMA] Public Affairs team was responsible for managing the immense media interest the Operation generated in [the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia] and Australia. More than 120 media representatives were present for the arrival of the plane carrying the first group to Australia. Public Affairs Officers were temporarily located in [Macedonia] and at each safe haven to manage the continuing strong media interest.[28]

The public was shut out of the media event, as *The Australian* wrote: 'Media security was tight, with journalists and photographers required to show two forms of identification. While Sydney radio stations had earlier in the week been encouraging Sydneysiders to be at the airport to welcome the refugees, no public access was permitted.'[29] The fact that the public was not allowed to greet the refugees, however, was not publicised by the *Telegraph* which attempted to position the Prime Minister as surrounded by public acolytes. When the refugees exited the plane, the newspaper described how they were met with 'clapping', 'cheering', and a barrage of camera flashes, welcoming speeches and ceremonial pomp.[30] Documenting each moment, the *Telegraph* promoted the arrival as a way of demonstrating unity between the goodwill of the Australian people and the moral standing of the Howard Government. The Federal Government had experienced significant media backlash a month before the arrival of the Kosovars when it rejected the UNHCR's request to temporarily relocate some of the refugees waiting for assistance along the border of Macedonia. The official welcoming offered by the Prime Minister allowed him to assume a central role in media coverage of the event. It was an attempt to regain public support.

---

28   Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA), 'Annual Report 1998-99; "Operation Safe Haven".' URL: https://web.archive.org/web/20060911190216/http://www .immi.gov.au/about/reports/annual/1998-99/html/safe.htm. Accessed 13th October 2016.

29   J. Scott, L. McIlveen and J. Hamilton, 'Safely Into Our Arms – 7.16pm – Deliverance for 410 Kosovars', *The Australian*, 8th May 1999, p. 1.

30   Hamilton and Conway, *op. cit.* See also references to 'clapping' and 'cheers' in Scott, McIlveen and Hamilton, *op. cit.*

Broadly favourable media coverage of the Prime Minister was a likely outcome because the Immigration Department carefully managed public relations surrounding the Kosovar refugees. I noted earlier how the media was granted limited access to the refugees during their arrival. The *Herald* commented on this situation, noting how the Immigration Department was 'keeping the media away from the refugees for a few days.'[31] Ruddock stated this was because of concerns for the psychiatric welfare of the refugees: 'They are not circus animals to be dealt with as a matter of perverse interest'.[32] Nonetheless, a small group of journalists did gain access to the East Hills barracks during the subsequent week. Their reports shaped the image of the Kosovars in a particular (though highly regulated) light. Evident here were attempts by the Government to mobilise popular acclaim via the media behind particular shades of truth. As Nicholas Rose states, in assessing the mobilisation of consent what matters is 'analysing what counts as truth, who has the power to define truth, the role of different authorities of truth, and the epistemological, institutional and technical conditions for the production and circulation of truths.'[33]

The *Telegraph's* choice of language and imagery supported the Howard Government, capturing the determination of the Prime Minister to be perceived as welcoming the refugees "with open arms". In newspaper reports 'words and language used are deliberate choices... the choices are not just about accuracy but about portrayal, imagery and representation.'[34] The *Telegraph* consistently represented the Prime Minister in a favourable light throughout its coverage of the Kosovar refugees because the populist sentiments promoted by Howard supported the ideological platform of the newspaper and its readership. The *Telegraph* highlighted the central role played by the Howard Government in Operation Safe Haven in its coverage of the landing ceremony. It noted how the refugees participated in a formal ceremony to be welcomed by the Prime Minister, before being delivered to the safe haven that awaited them at East Hills. Tracing the ceremonial procedure, the event was represented by the *Telegraph* with 'deliberate choices' of imagery that lent moral weight to the leadership of the Prime Minister and produced favourable publicity for the Howard Government in a more general sense.[35]

---

31   Stephens and Darby, *op. cit.*

32   Ruddock, cited in *ibid.*

33   N. Rose, *Powers of Freedom; Reframing political thought*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1999, p. 30.

34   P. Manning, 'Arabic and Muslim People in Sydney's Daily Newspapers, Before and After September 11', *Media International Australia Incorporating Culture and Policy*, 109, November 2003, p. 52.

35   *Ibid.*

The newspaper cover reads:

SAFE IN OUR ARMS

Sydney greets refugees

By RAY CHESTERTON

AUSTRALIA'S newest visitors broke down and cried last night as they embraced freedom in a new country far away from war-torn Kosovo.

A 21-year-old woman named Fatima wept as she talked of family left behind in Kosovo.

"I think Australia is a wonderful country," Fatima said. "I'm here with my two brothers and my parents." Then her eyes filled with tears and she wept openly as she tried to talk of two brothers and a sister left behind.

Prime Minister John Howard was close to tears himself as he welcomed the Kosovars to Australia.

The 747 City of Tamworth touched down at Mascot at 7.16pm after a 22-hour flight from Rome. The journey from the insanity of Kosovo to the compassion of Australia is beyond measurement.

The 410 passengers who arrived last night are the vanguard of an estimated 4000 Kosovars from Macedonian refugee camps being brought to Australia. The next intake is expected on Wednesday.

Feelings of relief, apprehension and joy jumbled around in the turbulent atmosphere as Sydney

Continued Page 4

A young boy says hello to Australia at Sydney Airport last night. Picture: BRETT COSTELLO

FIGURE 8   *This image of a young Kosovar refugee with a toy plane in his hand dominated the cover of* The Daily Telegraph *on 8th May 1999.*

The next morning, the front-page of the *Telegraph* described how the refugees had arrived 'SAFE IN OUR ARMS'. Coverage of the landing was dominated by the theme of tears – of sadness, relief and elation. Photographs depicted the Kosovars leaving the Qantas jet, stepping onto the tarmac and into the terminal overwhelmed with tears and wiping their eyes (see Appendix 3). Ray Chesterton commented in his front-page report: 'Australia's newest visitors broke down and cried last night as they embraced freedom in a new country far away from war-torn Kosovo.'[36] Even the Prime Minister, who attended the arrival, 'was close to tears himself as he welcomed the Kosovars to

---

36   Chesterton, 'SAFE IN OUR ARMS: Sydney greets refugees', *op. cit.*, p. 1. He also described how 21 year-old refugee Fatima 'wept' as she said: 'I think Australia is a beautiful country.' Fatima's 'eyes filled with tears' and she 'wept openly' as she remembered two brothers and a sister left behind in Kosovo.

Australia.'[37] Chesterton wrote: 'The journey from the insanity of Kosovo to the compassion of Australia is beyond measurement.'[38] The moment was summarised as: 'Feelings of relief, apprehension and joy jumbled around the turbulent atmosphere as Sydney opened its heart to the Kosovars. Men and women wiped tears from their tired eyes as they left the plane while children embraced trauma teddies and other gifts with wide smiles.'[39]

The Kosovars were portrayed as "overwhelmed" and "emotionally fragile" in a majority of *Telegraph* articles, while in lesser degrees they were depicted as "relieved", "excited" and "crying". The crowd and government officials were described as overwhelmed by the emotion as well and the number of times "tears" was mentioned or implied (29) is indicative of the weight the image carried for the arrival for *Telegraph* readers. The emotional climax of the entire airport being a scene of tears bolstered the perception that Operation Safe Haven was the result of the moral resolve of the Australian government to assist the refugees. For the most part these linguistic choices were similar in the *Herald* and *Australian*, although "tears" featured much less in *The Australian* (five times) and was mentioned only three times in the *Herald*.[40] The *Herald* focussed more on the refugees being "relieved" to have landed in Australia, while *The Australian* centred more on the Kosovars being "emotionally fragile" rather than "crying".

A major difference between each of the newspapers' coverage of the arrival was the emotive images used to capture the scene at the airport. The *Telegraph* pictured the Kosovars wiping tears from their eyes with their heads front or down and appearing very tired (see Appendix 3). By contrast, *The Australian* captured on its front page an image of a smiling child refugee giving a peace sign with his forefingers, surrounded by dozens of others holding their heads up and patiently waiting (see Appendix 4). The caption read: 'A symbol of love and a victory sign from a small child'.[41]

The images of the Kosovars' arrival presented a view that all parties involved in Operation Safe Haven had been "carried away" by the emotion of the landing, despite the stylistic differences between the newspapers. Responding to this sentiment, the *Telegraph's* coverage of the arrival focussed significantly on the idea of the Kosovars being offered a "new home" by the Australian gov-

---

37   *Ibid.*

38   *Ibid.*

39   *Ibid.*, p. 1 and p. 4.

40   See 'It's not the homeland, but it is a homely land', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 11th May 1999, p. 6.

41   See The *Weekend Australian*, 8th-9th May 1999, p. 1.

ernment. It was, the *Telegraph* suggested, Australia's goodwill and compassion that had delivered the Kosovars to a "new life" and "freedom":

> Teenagers threw their arms into the air in delight and waved to the crowd
> as they clambered down the stairs to a new life, free of pain and suffer-
> ing.[42]

The image was one of relief and elation, reinforcing the perception that the Australian government had delivered the Kosovars to a new life motivated by a sense of compassionate obligation. Chesterton noted how the refugees regarded Australia as a 'safe country' without enemies where they could relax from the horrors of war 'without having to look over their shoulder'.[43] The *Telegraph* described in one headline how 'Life starts anew for hell's exiles', with the evacuation presenting an opportunity for the refugees to start over.[44] It was noted, though exhausted by the long journey, 'the refugees' relief and gratitude was palpable' for being offered such an opportunity.[45]

Media and the Temporary Safe Haven Policy

The political response of the Howard Government was a deliberate attempt at mobilising 'the domains or entities to be governed: to govern one must act up-on [a range of] forces, instrumentalize them in order to shape actions, process-es and outcomes in desired directions.'[46] The kinds of images that dominat-ed media coverage of the Kosovar arrival complemented the Federal Govern-ment's attempts at generating favourable publicity, particularly the notion that it had acted compassionately and generously. There were significant differ-ences between the *Telegraph*, *Herald* and *Australian's* treatment of the arrival, particularly in relation to the level of emotive verbiage. Analysis of the *Tele-graph's* use of the terms "new home" and "temporary home" around the time of the arrival revealed preferential treatment of the former. The concept "new home" was used at least 14 times during the first week of the arrival, about one-and-a-half times more than "temporary home". This preferred position of the newspaper is in clear contrast to what various other studies have revealed

---

42   Chesterton, 'SAFE IN OUR ARMS: Sydney greets refugees', *op. cit.*, p. 4.

43   *Ibid.*

44   Harris and Westwood, *op. cit.*

45   *Ibid.*

46   Rose, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

about media representation of refugee policy during the era of the Howard Government.[47] The idea of the Kosovars being offered a "new home" in Australia conflicted with the aims of the Safe Haven program and the rationale of temporary protection on which it was premised.

The idea of "temporary home" was retained by the *Herald*, in which the idea of "new home" was mentioned only twice, while "temporary home" was noted 12 times. The *Herald* was adamant: 'the Howard Government was right to provide temporary sanctuary ... But it is also right that the refugees be prepared to return home when conditions permit.'[48] The *Herald* cited, uncritically, Ruddock's comments about the possibility of accepting any further refugees from the UNHCR under the temporary arrangements: 'We want to be generous, but the responses we take need to be appropriate.'[49] The idea of a "new home" was only drawn on by the *Herald* in making the distinction between the "lesser" life the Kosovars has known and the "better" life they were being offered in Australia: 'For [refugee] Valmira Abazi, the contrast between a bleak existence as a refugee on the Macedonian border and a new life in Australia could not be more jolting... She is desperate to see Sydney while she is in Australia – to visit sights like the Opera House and Taronga Zoo which she knows only from picture books.'[50]

The Australian also favoured the idea of "temporary home", which was drawn on seven times, while "new home" was only mentioned twice in the first week of arrival coverage.[51] *The Australian's* use of "temporary home" was less emotive than the *Telegraph's*, resisting the popular inclination to become carried away by the emotion surrounding the Safe Haven program and focussing

---

47   See, for instance, Manning, *op. cit.*; P. Gale, 'The refugee crisis and fear; Populist politics and media discourse', *Journal of Sociology*, 40(4), 2004, pp. 321-340; I. Lygo, *News Overboard; The Tabloid Media, Race Politics and Islam*, Southwood Press, Marrickville, 2004; J. Coughlin, A. Wells and J. Minns (eds.), *Seeking Refuge; Asylum Seekers and Politics in a Globalising World*, University of Wollongong Press, Wollongong, 2005; A. Pederson, S. Watt and S. Hansen, 'The role of false beliefs in the community's and the federal government's attitudes toward Australian asylum seekers', *Australian Journal of Social Issues* 41(1), Autumn 2006, pp. 105-124.

48   'Haven and a Reason to Hope', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 8th May 1999, p. 44.

49   L. Martin, 'Refugees on Way Here', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 11th May 1999, p. 6.

50   A. West and A. Patty, 'Survivors Tell of Fears and Hardships', *The Sun-Herald*, 9th May 1999, p. 6.

51   See references to "temporary home", for instance, in B. Montgomery, 'Doctors will get chance to treat fellows', 8th May 1999, *The Australian*, p. 5; C. Harvey, 'Niceties as Vital as the Necessities', *The Australian*, 8th May 1999, p. 5; and, C. Harvey, 'Hot reception turned on for new arrivals', *The Australian*, 8th May 1999, p. 5.

more so on policy suitability and the obligations of the Federal Government to assist the refugees on arrival. Although *The Australian* tended to support the notion that Australia was obligated to provide a temporary rather than permanent home, the newspaper encouraged a sensitive response by the Australian government under the obligations set out in the Safe Haven policy. As the editor of *The Australian* wrote:

> Australia's duty of care and respect extends beyond material comforts… they are not in custody. They should be allowed to make contact, if and when they want, with the Australian Albanian community and beyond… Australians must also recognise that our commitment to Kosovar refugees extends beyond three months… The Federal Government, with tact and sensitivity, should realise this and allow for the possibility [to stay in Australia] sooner rather than later.[52]

This is further reflected in a report by Matthew Stevens, published on 8th May. He cautioned that: 'Australian immigration workers at Stenkovac understand the Government's policy. Privately, many of them also know the desperate reality that faces the refugees… [Australia is] a nation that has accepted the challenge of a multicultural future and rejected the cause of ignorance and racism. How can it justify images of Kosovars […] being dragged against their will back on to the jumbo jets which brought them to Australia?'[53]

This indicates a significant disjuncture in the narratives employed by the newspapers in supporting the Howard Government during the Kosovar refugee arrival. The *Telegraph* was to promote a punitive stance against the Kosovars over the next three months. Its momentary adoption of "new home" is viewed critically as a means of corroborating the broader human-interest story unfolding in the newspaper's arrival narrative. While the *Telegraph*, Sydney's most popular newspaper, went to some lengths to promote the notion of "new home", the *Herald* and *Australian* were much more reserved in their attempts to galvanise an emotional audience response.

The contrast is made clearer in comparing the editorials of *The Australian* and the *Telegraph* following the arrival. While the editorial of *The Australian* (8th May) focussed on the 'Freedom' of the refugees upon landing in Australia, commenting on government policy, the *Telegraph* (9th May) centred on 'our hearts' and 'Aussie mateship'.[54] The *Telegraph* orientated the focus of arrival

---

52   'Freedom a basic need for refugees' (editorial), *The Australian*, 8-9th May 1999, p. 18.

53   M. Stevens, 'Longing to leave, return in doubt', *The Australian*, 8th May 1999, p. 4.

54   See 'Freedom a basic need for refugees' (editorial), *op. cit.*; and 'Opening up our hearts' (editorial), *The Daily Telegraph*, 9th May 1999, p. 52.

coverage via a particular brand of popular, nationalist discourse and iconography. In contrast, *The Australian* presented a more sophisticated, rational response with some consideration for the humanitarian implications of the Safe Haven legislation being introduced at the time.

Through analysing these patterns in media discourse it is possible to recognise that there are important implications in *terminological choice* for media representations. As Peter Manning says: 'The choice of adjectives and nouns can turn the reader's sympathies one way or another.'[55] While the media often remain "open" (in a Gramscian sense) to public opinion,[56] the effect of terminological choice on "ordinary readers" is that they are often drawn to 'natural conclusion[s]' about who may be deemed deserving of compassion and assistance.[57] The political implications of this are clear, considering the power of the mass media to introduce or enhance a particular agenda that is favourable to hegemonic groups. This kind of media discourse is 'highly functional for established power and responsive to the needs of the government and major power groups.'[58] The *Telegraph's* preferred use of "new home" must be understood as part of an agenda that was adopted by the newspaper for its news value. This is particularly because these representations of the Kosovars served to naturalise the appearance of unity between the moral standing of the dominant cultural group and the Howard Government.

The *Telegraph, Australian* and *Herald* further publicised the arrival with consistent references to Kosovar children. On the morning before the arrival the *Herald* described how 'Bibs for 26 babies will be waiting' for those refugees arriving in Sydney, along with 'jumping castles for children'.[59] Attending the arrival at Sydney airport, the *Telegraph's* Ray Chesterton described how, when the doors of the aeroplane finally opened, younger Kosovars 'ignored their weariness and came tumbling and running down the stairs.'[60] Children leaving the plane were said to have 'eyes wide in wonderment' and were pictured holding signs of thanks that they had drawn in crayon.[61] One of these hand-drawn signs stated, as cited in the *Telegraph* and *The Australian*, 'NATO 1949-1999', celebrating the organisation's recent 50th anniversary (see

---

55   Manning, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

56   See L. Pellicani, *Gramsci, an Alternative to Communism*, Hoover Institution Press, Stanford, 1976, p. 32.

57   Manning, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

58   E.S. Herman and N. Chomsky, *Manufacturing Consent; the Political Economy of the Mass Media*, The Bodley Head, London, 1988 (reprinted 2008), p. liii.

59   Stephens and Darby, *op. cit.*

60   Chesterton, 'SAFE IN OUR ARMS: Sydney greets refugees', *op. cit.*, p. 4.

61   *Ibid.*

Appendix 3).[62] Another boy had drawn a sign that read, 'I love Australia', in bright red crayon.

The impact of the media's coverage of the NATO air strikes on Australians had been profound. A month before the arrival, the *Telegraph* had compelled Australians to support the UNHCR evacuation as part of the nation's 'duty of care'.[63] The newspaper had actively promoted the notion that compassion and humanitarian obligation were essential components of Australian national identity. Following the arrival, the newspaper once again centred on the idea that Australia's role was important for the restoration of child-like innocence. These images also linked to the immensity of photographs used to justify the NATO bombing in the *Telegraph* during the month beforehand – a campaign propagated to save the innocent and children from systematic persecution. As Philip Knightly states, the Western media overwhelmingly propagated the official view of NATO and its goal to persuade Western nations of the humanitarian justification for the conflict.[64]

By focussing on children and innocence, the main purpose of propagating moral discourse for the media is to 'set about persuading by first separating "correct" from "incorrect" views. The rhetoric of correctness cast an aura of intellectual implacability and moral urgency around even the most naïve assertions of opinions.'[65] Peter Murphy adds, in this kind of media coverage: 'The mix of truth and morality in politics generates huge pressure to agree. The "how could you think otherwise?" factor quickly rises to the surface.'[66] He concludes: 'Get into a nation's soul [in this way], and you have strong consent.'[67] In this light, the image of children exiting the plane corresponded to a broader narrative about moral restoration in which the Howard Government was to play a central role. This kind of coverage was, moreover, the culmination of a variety of political factors beyond the national sphere. The subtext of freedom and liberty extended in many ways from the US' attempts to provide NATO with a moral premise in maintaining global order. Operation Safe Haven inevitably catered to the Australian Government's desire to forge a more central

---

62   See Scott, McIlveen and Hamilton, *op. cit.*; and, picture in *The Daily Telegraph*, 8th May
       1999, p. 5.

63   'Australia's duty of care', *op. cit.*, pp. 4-5.

64   See P. Knightley, *The First Casualty; The War Correspondent as Hero and Myth-Maker from
       the Crimea to Iraq*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1975 (reprinted 2004), p. 501
       and p. 507.

65   P. Murphy, 'Communication and Self-Organisation: Why the Manufacture of Consent Has
       Always Been a Sunset Industry', *Southern Review*, 37.3, 2005, p. 90.

66   *Ibid.*

67   *Ibid.*, p. 98.

role for the nation in global politics and its support for US ambitions to instil in NATO a new sense of energy, direction and independence in determining world politics.[68]

The unification of moral and popular consensus has far-reaching implications for the politics of the modern nation-state. Core to the (re)production of consensual relations is the idea that: 'Once political power takes as its object the conduct of its subjects in relation to particular moral and secular standards, and takes the well-being of those subjects as its guiding principle, it is required to rationalize itself in particular ways.'[69] The moral and political consensus brought about by the arrival was confirmed by the Federal Opposition Immigration spokesperson Con Sciacca in debating the Safe Haven legislation in the Lower House on 11th May. Having attended the landing, Sciacca stated: 'The sight of those people ... left little doubt in my mind about our decision to support their relocation. At that time, all the political debate in the world about the wisdom of bringing people to such a faraway country like Australia did not even come close to looking into the eyes of those hundreds of men, women and children as they marched down the stairs smiling, crying and thanking us for possibly saving their lives.'[70] He later added, about the evacuation program: 'The opposition has been very glad, very happy, to go along with the government. I think this is something that the country can be proud of.'[71]

The Safe Haven Bill passed both houses by 11th May with bipartisan support. The main opposition to the legislation was expressed by senators from minor parties (Democrats and Greens). Parliamentary discussions on the 7th May arrival at Sydney airport confirmed bipartisan support for the Bill as far as the major parties were concerned. Sciacca's comments indicate the way both the media and the mainstream parties largely avoided offering significant criticism of the radical changes being made in refugee policy. This was affirmed in Ruddock's comments during the Safe Haven legislative debates about the consensus formed by the evacuation. He noted the 'cooperation that we have seen between the government and the opposition, ... the Commonwealth and the states, and ... between the Commonwealth and the voluntary sector.'[72]

---

68   D.T. Stuart, 'NATO and the wider world: from regional collective defence to global coalitions of the willing', *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 58(1), March 2004, esp. p. 42.

69   Rose, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

70   C. Sciacca, in 'Migration Legislation Amendment (Temporary Safe Haven Visas) Bill 1999; Second Reading', *House of Representatives: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 11th May 1999, p. 5025.

71   *Ibid.*, p. 5028.

72   Ruddock, in *ibid.*, p. 5038.

The moral consensus was not enough, however, to dissuade Ruddock's self-confessed 'sense of realism' towards the Safe Haven refugee policy.[73] As he argued in the debates: 'Our international obligation is to provide [these] people with protection. The obligation is not to provide permanent resettlement; the obligation has only ever been to provide protection.'[74] The "realist" approach reflects the broader program of the Howard Government which, unlike the international relations strategies of previous governments, was highly responsive to both international and domestic influences. Successive Howard governments 'sought not only to make foreign policy in response to new regional and global agendas, but to respond to and to seek to manage new forms of electoral challenge'.[75] Ruddock's "realist" position indicates that he was committed to maintaining the conservative party line. Perhaps this also explains his relative absence in media coverage, allowing the Prime Minister to take most of the credit for Operation Safe Haven.[76]

Representations of the Prime Minister

John Howard was positioned as a major star in the media's landing coverage and a central figure in Operation Safe Haven. The Prime Minister's face-to-face meeting with the first planeload of Kosovars added to a sense of anticipation in the newspaper. He was portrayed as caring and compassionate in the *Telegraph* and quoted or referred to directly eight times in coverage following the arrival of the first refugee plane. This is similar to *The Australian*, which quoted or referred to John Howard at least seven times in this period. Howard featured much more in reports about the arrival in the *Herald*, referred to at least 22 times. He was a central figure for the *Herald*, and on the morning before the landing the newspaper had noted the importance of 'the welcoming presence of the Prime Minister and Mrs Howard.'[77] There was only one newspaper report about the arrival that was critical of him. It was published in the *Herald* (discussed below).[78] Both the *Telegraph* and the *Herald* published photographs of the Prime Minister shaking hands with the Kosovars upon their

---

73   *Ibid.*, p. 5040.

74   *Ibid.*, p. 5041.

75   G. Smith and D. Lowe, 'Howard, Downer and the Liberals' realist tradition (foreign policy realism)', *The Australian Journal of Politics and History*, 51.3, September, 2005, p. 460.

76   Between 7th and 11th May, there were two references to Philip Ruddock in *The Australian*, two in the *Herald* and one in the *Telegraph*.

77   Stephens and Darby, *op. cit.*

78   See Lagan, 'Politics triumphs over comfort in Kosovo flight', *op. cit.*

arrival at Sydney airport.[79] The caption underneath the *Telegraph* photograph read: 'Our home is your home … Prime Minister John Howard last night.'[80] The Immigration Minister, a crucial player in Operation Safe Haven, was comparatively absent in newspaper coverage of the arrival.

Howard was adept at utilising the media to promote favourable coverage of his policies and individual persona throughout his term as Prime Minister. Gwynneth Singleton describes how Howard 'engaged in populist and pragmatic politics in playing the political game whenever he has deemed it necessary to do so.'[81] She further depicts Howard as a 'very astute, pragmatic, practical politician who reads the political "tea leaves" very well.'[82] The *Telegraph* noted how John Howard, 'reacting to the delight of the plane's safe arrival, started waving at faces in the windows as it pulled into the hangar.'[83] The article described how two families, including three children, representing the refugees were 'presented to Mr and Mrs Howard.'[84] Chesterton went on, the Prime Minister 'embraced them all warmly, later paying tribute to the bravery of all displaced ethnic Albanians of Kosovo.'[85] John Howard said: 'We admire your courage', and 'we extend our open arms in welcome.'[86]

Once again, *The Australian* differed slightly from the *Telegraph's* "new home" theme, assuming a more reserved approach and maintaining perspective on the landing as a matter of refugee policy. It noted: 'The Prime Minister told the refugees he hoped they would soon be returned to their homeland but, in the meantime, the Australian people would do whatever they could to make their stay a happy one.'[87] However, *The Australian* did incorporate the emotional investment that typified *Telegraph* coverage, though to a lesser extent, citing John Howard: 'As you prepare to spend your first night under the stars of Australia, we want you to know this is a very happy country that extends its arms in welcome to all of you.'[88]

The *Herald* applauded the Prime Minister's behaviour at the airport, providing significant details concerning his interactions with the refugees. Tony

---

79   See image in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 8th May 1999, p. 1.

80   See image and caption in *The Daily Telegraph*, 8th May 1999, p. 4.

81   G. Singleton, 'Issues and Agendas: Howard in Control', in C. Aulich and R. Wettenhall (eds.), *Howard's Second and Third Governments*, UNSW Press, Sydney, 2005, p. 5.

82   *Ibid.*

83   Chesterton, 'SAFE IN OUR ARMS: Sydney greets refugees', *op. cit.*, p. 4.

84   *Ibid.*

85   *Ibid.*

86   Howard, cited in *ibid.*

87   Scott, McIlveen and Hamilton, *op. cit.*

88   Howard, cited in *ibid.*

FIGURE 9   *Cartoon by Warren, in* The Daily Telegraph, *8th May 1999, p. 10.*

Our home is your home . . . Prime Minister John Howard last night

FIGURE 10

Photograph of Prime Minister John Howard shaking hands with a delegation of Kosovar refugees at Sydney airport, in The Daily Telegraph, *8th May 1999, p. 4.*

Stephens wrote, after the plane landed: 'the Prime Minister then stood at the bottom of a gangway, shaking hands with all those who descended, hugging some of them and tickling the cheeks of a couple of children. Mr Howard then addressed the refugees from a dais, in front of an Australian flag, welcoming them on behalf of the Australian people.'[89]

By contrast, another, less flattering image of the Prime Minister appeared in the 8th May edition of the *Telegraph*. A cartoon by Warren reproduced the same visual stereotypes about Southern and Eastern Europeans to convey an image of the Kosovars as backward and poor. As Jock Collins states, this relates to how Eastern European refugees and migrants in post-war Australia were inhibited by 'a history of racial antagonism and xenophobia' against refugee workers.[90] What is interesting, however, is the fear and mistrust being expressed by the Kosovars about the Prime Minister. Frightened, and pointing at John Howard as they exit the plane, the refugees ask: 'Is Koala? Is Wombat? Is Crocodile? Is Black Snake? Is Blue Bottle? Is Red Back? Is Funnel Web?'[91] While the cartoon satirises the notion of "safe haven" being provided in an "unsafe" country, it further depicts the Prime Minister capitalising on the media event, alluding to his opposition to a more open border policy for refugees.[92]

Another cartoon that appeared in *The Australian* on 10th May made a subtle comment about the media event at Sydney airport. The cartoon by Nicholson depicts the refugees alighting the Qantas jet and facing a camera crew before having even stepped onto the tarmac. A reporter is shown asking one refugee: 'Enjoy the flight?', who replied, 'Yes... but I still call Kosovo home.' The refugee's comment was a pun on the Qantas advertising theme song ('I Still Call Australia Home'), a popular tune regularly performed at major Australian sporting events. Evidently, the image was commenting on the promotional value of the event, particularly for Qantas.

Frustration about the media spectacle was expressed in a letter by Paul Kleywegt of Lindisfarne (Tasmania), published by *The Australian*. The author described the episode as 'selfcongratulatory back slapping at what a warm, giving nation we are' and connects with the satire drawn on by the Warren

---

89   T. Stephens, 'Touchdown: safe haven out Wattle Grove way', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 8th May 1999, p. 1.

90   J. Collins, *Migrant Hands in a Distant Land; Australia's post-war immigration*, Pluto Press Australia, Leichhardt, 1988, p. 57.

91   See cartoon in *The Daily Telegraph*, 8th May 1999, p. 10.

92   This cartoon of the Prime Minister was responded to with disdain by a member of the public who published a letter in *The Daily Telegraph*. See B.M. Welfare (Curl Curl), 'LETTER – Firing Squad', *The Daily Telegraph*, 11th May 1999, p. 12.

FIGURE 11   *Cartoon by Nicholson from* The Australian, *10th May 1999, p. 12.*

cartoon but otherwise unmentioned directly by the press.[93] He makes the point: 'The repetition of clichés such as "safe haven" and the use of head-lines such as "Safely in our embrace" and "Deliverance…" [in *The Australian*] is cringing given the magnitude of the situation. Imagine suffering the indignity of stepping off a plane on the other side of the world to have a bright light and a camera shoved in your face and being expected to smile and tell the world in a foreign language how grateful you are.'[94] The author adds: 'No one is spared the humiliation of the inevitable media circus.'[95] The author was correct in emphasising the media's attachment to the arrival, particularly its promotion of the idea that the refugees were indebted with gratitude for Australia's assis-tance – a theme that was reproduced throughout the Kosovars' stay. Each of the newspapers concerned noted the thankfulness of the Kosovars upon their arrival.[96] Both the *Telegraph* and *The Australian* cited some of the refugees as saying, through an interpreter, 'thank you, thank you, thank you'.[97]

---

93   P. Kleywegt (Lindisfarne, TAS), Letter, *The Australian*, 11th May 1999, p. 14.

94   *Ibid.*

95   *Ibid.*

96   For the *Herald*, see 'Kosovo's kids safe at last in Sydney; NO WORRIES', *Sun-Herald*, 9th May 1999, p. 1. Here, it was noted: 'They thanked Australia for giving them basic necessi-ties'.

97   Scott, McIlveen, and Hamilton, *op. cit.* See also Hamilton and Conway, *op. cit.*

The only direct criticism of the event was published by the *Herald*, written by journalist Bernard Lagan who had travelled with the refugees aboard their flight from Rome to Sydney. Lagan noted the frustration of the refugees forced to endure a broken air-conditioning system while the plane was stationary – a problem known by Australian officials since the plane departed from Rome causing several hours delay. He described how the Kosovars waited aboard the plane on the Sydney tarmac while the Prime Minister prepared for the media ceremony. As Lagan says, the refugees 'were made to wait and wait and wait aboard the stinking, stationary, airless, broken aircraft.'[98]

The support given to the Howard Government across the newspapers is only differentiated by Lagan's reproach on the arrival media event. The exclusion of critical content challenges, as Herman and Chomsky assert, the 'democratic postulate' that 'the media are independent and committed to discovering and reporting the truth, and that they do not merely reflect the world as powerful groups wish it to be perceived.'[99] Lagan went on to describe how the plane then had to be towed into the hangar: 'Why? Well, that was where a dais had been erected for the [Prime Minister] so he could greet some of the refugees in front of the waiting media.'[100] The refugees waited another 20 minutes, Lagan explains, while 'officials outside fussed over arrangements for selected refugees to be greeted by Howard'.[101]

When the refugees disembarked the plane they 'were given little stuffed koalas to hold – so nice for the television cameras.'[102] Lagan mimicked Howard's words during his welcoming speech. He argued that 'any other free and happy country would have long before let the refugees do what they most wanted: have a shower and go to bed'.[103] The journalist concluded: 'as the dazed refugees were delayed behind the fences for more media pictures, you couldn't help but think these people were being used for domestic political purposes. Why couldn't the Prime Minister instead have visited the East Hills base … over the weekend (after they were bathed and rested)?'[104] Apart from Lagan's article, there was no direct criticism of the Government for the welcoming ceremony at Sydney airport, despite its obvious attempts at politicising the event.

---

98   Lagan, 'Politics triumphs over comfort in Kosovo flight', *op. cit.*

99   Herman and Chomsky, *op. cit.*, p. xlix.

100   Lagan, 'Politics triumphs over comfort in Kosovo flight', *op. cit.*

101   *Ibid.*

102   *Ibid.* There were no other articles in the *Herald*, *Telegraph* or *The Australian* that documented the experience of the refugees waiting aboard the plane for the Prime Minister's welcoming ceremony to begin.

103   *Ibid.*

104   *Ibid.*

"Fundamental" Australian Values and the Arrival

Following the arrival media event, buses transporting the Kosovar refugees departed the airport amid a 20-police motorcycle motorcade destined for Sydney's East Hills army barracks. According to the *Telegraph*, they were flanked by onlookers, television cameras, journalists and photographers and despite strict security:

> Sydney turned on a rousing and compassionate welcome. Outside the airport, handfuls of Australian-based Kosovars waved national flags and cheered as their countrymen were driven past in buses.
>
> … The refugees attracted media attention usually reserved for rock stars and royalty, with an army of photographers around the hangar.[105]

The attendance of the Prime Minister at the arrival of the first evacuation flight was more than simply a public relations exercise in the national media. In some ways it was also part of an attempt by the Federal Government to show that it was taking its foreign policy obligations seriously. As the editor of the *Telegraph* suggests, international as well as domestic concerns were an important part of the Prime Minister's agenda, commenting on 9th May 1999: 'This [Operation Safe Haven] is the sign of a nation which recognises its responsibilities as a good world citizen.'[106] *The Australian* too had written: 'If ever evidence were needed that Australia was an international citizen, a caring, generous, charitable community – this was it.'[107] Although the Federal Government had a month earlier cited broader humanitarian concerns that "something had to be done",[108] Barutciski and Suhrke recognised that the UN-HCR's evacuation program 'probably allowed some governments to score public relations points by appearing "humanitarian" in receiving a limited number of "popular" refugees.'[109]

---

105   Chesterton, 'SAFE IN OUR ARMS: Sydney greets refugees', *op. cit.*, p. 4.

106   'Opening up our hearts' (editorial), *op. cit.*

107   B. Montgomery and A. Riley, 'Tight-knit welcome for our Kosovars', *The Australian*, 7th May 1999, p. 2.

108   See Downer, cited in 'Humanitarian concern prompts refugee rethink: Downer' (transcript), *7.30 Report*, Australian Broadcasting Corporation, 6th April 1999. URL: http://www.abc.net.au/7.30/stories/s21172.htm. Accessed 28th September 2016. As cited previously in this book, Foreign Affairs Minister Alexander Downer stated on 6th April 1999: 'I think it's based, above all, on a humanitarian sentiment… there was just a strong sense that we needed to make a contribution. I think the Australian public will strongly support that.'

109   Barutciski and Suhrke, *op. cit.*, pp. 104-105.

Particular "fundamental Australian values" provided an important subtext to John Howard's motivations for participating in the evacuation which is most heavily reflected in the *Telegraph*, although this sentiment is somewhat evident in the *Herald* and *The Australian* as well. The Howard Government's foreign policy was typified by a nostalgic blend of ideas about the "British world" and an Anglo-nationalist vernacular. In Howard's idealised concept of moral order and cohesion in international affairs the Prime Minister viewed himself and his fellow Liberal Party members as 'standard bearers of accumulated wisdom from the British world.'[110] In capturing vernacular nationalism – often drawing on the notions of "mateship" and "battlers", for instance – Howard was able to 'build popularity for a society that gives priority to values with lineage rather than bold social or cultural innovation, and for government management of "national interests" ahead of sectional ones.'[111] The underlying rationale behind a range of Howard's foreign policy strategies – including Operation Safe Haven – was a reverence for British-Australian nationalism in responding to international obligations.[112]

In domestic policy, the symbolism of the arrival corresponded to Howard's vision of "fundamental Australian values". Howard's official speeches regularly promoted ideas about 'persistence, mateship, voluntary effort and optimism', the 'primacy of family values', 'strong and enduring communities', 'equality', and 'tolerance and harmony'.[113] Hage expressed concern over Howard's use of these ideas, referring to as the fundamentalist 'causal essence' that the Prime Minister commonly assigned to particular nationalistic acts and values.[114] It is the idea that these values were "uniquely" and "exclusively" Australian, 'making the ludicrous claim that other people in the world are less committed to them or actually committed to opposing values'.[115] Howard's insistence on these values popularised the notion that, to truly possess humanitarian virtue, one had to accept a particular view and *live* as Australians supposedly did.

The editor of the *Telegraph* utilised similar sentiment in describing Australia's contribution to the Kosovar refugee crisis, stating on 9th May: 'So Australia's willingness, its near-insistence that we lead the global effort to help

---

110   Smith and Lowe, *op. cit.*, p. 470.

111   *Ibid.*

112   See *ibid.* The authors discuss Howard's East Timor strategy, as well as the implications of these kinds of sentiments for the "war on terror".

113   G. Hage, *Against Paranoid Nationalism: Searching for Hope in a Shrinking Society*, Pluto Press, Annandale, 2003, pp. 70-71.

114   *Ibid.*, p. 71.

115   *Ibid.*, p. 73.

the Kosovars, is a comforting sign of this nation's compassion, maturity and downright kindness… [W]ho could deny that the very best aspects of Aussie mateship has [*sic*] been on show in helping the Kosovars?'[116] For the *Telegraph*, mateship was a defining feature of why the Kosovars had been evacuated to Australia and would now shape how they were to be treated by the Australian community as they arrived at safe havens around the country. The larrikin "Aussie mateship" focus was further reproduced by the *Herald* in a feature article that was addressed to the Kosovars entitled: 'Feel at home with us, mate.'[117] The author, Terry Smyth, proclaimed mateship to be an educational tool for the Kosovars, a 'code of mutual respect, demonstrated in rituals we call "bonding sessions", which is why you [refugees] will need to learn the word "shout"'.[118] In extending mateship to the Kosovars, the author's comment overlooks the notion that alcohol is not permitted in Islam. Mateship has often been tied with broader conceptions in popular discourse of Australian national identity as predominantly white, egalitarian, masculine and democratic. The concept was drawn on in the media to promote the idea that the Australian national paradigm offered a world of opportunity for the Kosovars, albeit from within the confines of army barracks.

Changing Clothes: a "New Life" for the Kosovars Beginning at East Hills Safe Haven

Media reporting of the arrival at Sydney airport was complemented by post-arrival news reports centred on the 'Sanctuary' provided for the refugees in Australia. As noted in the *Herald*: '"The Sanctuary at Voyager Point" says the sign at the road turnoff to the East Hills Army Barracks… After two days in Sydney, the barracks have become just that, a sanctuary.'[119] What the *Herald* did not mention was that 'Sanctuary' was the name of a housing estate near the barracks.[120] The Kosovar arrival was consistently accompanied with news headlines including 'Sanctuary' and 'Into Our Arms'.[121] It was a much different

---

116   'Opening up our hearts' (editorial), *op. cit.*

117   T. Smyth, 'Feel at home with us, mate', *Sun-Herald*, 9th May 1999, p. 7.

118   *Ibid.*

119   G. Jacobsen and M. Brown, 'Peace At Last for Kosovars', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 10th May 1999, p. 6.

120   Harvey, 'Hot reception turned on for new arrivals', *op. cit.*

121   See, in *The Australian*, Scott, McIlveen, and Hamilton, *op. cit.*; and, in *The Daily Telegraph*, Chesterton, 'SAFE IN OUR ARMS: Sydney greets refugees', *op. cit.*

reception than that accompanying the Chinese "boat people" who had arrived in recent months with headlines such as 'INVADED'.[122] In their 'sanctuary', the Kosovars were not allowed to leave the barracks. They would only 'be allowed to roam free within the compound'.[123]

Newspaper reports presented two opposing scenarios to readers following encounters with the Kosovar refugees after their first day at East Hills – the Kosovar way of life, and the Australian way of life. The *Telegraph*, in particular, depicted the Kosovars shedding their Balkan "otherness" in favour of the opportunities provided by Australia. On 9th May journalists Sarah Harris and Sasha Westwood made comparisons between the life Kosovars had known and the "better life" offered to them in Australia. They wrote that toddlers, teenagers and even 'bent old women in headscarves and the precious menfolk who had survived the holocaust of Kosovo' had made the journey from Macedonia.[124] They went on, referring to those who had arrived aboard the first evacuation flight:

> Four hundred and fourteen souls dressed in the mismatched costume of refugees providing stark contrast to the crisp uniformed police, ambulance officers, paramedics and official greeters who flanked the plane.
>
> It was, a colleague observed, like the scene from the movie Close Encounters of the Third Kind. And, indeed, these people are alien to us.[125]

'Most Australians', the article went on, 'have never experienced the kind of hardship and horror that unite the Kosovars.'[126] In turn, it commented, the refugees 'have little knowledge of the far-away land that has become their temporary home and haven.'[127]

The *Herald* further noted the divides between Australians and the Kosovars accentuating the need for the refugees to be educated about the Australian "way of life". Upon arriving at East Hills, the Kosovars would undergo not only health checks but also 'a broad Australian familiarisation course.'[128] The newspaper cited Federal Finance Minister John Fahey, who said, defending the

---

122   See 'INVADED: 100 boat people land on NSW beach', *The Sunday Telegraph*, 11th April 1999, p. 1.

123   Harvey, 'Hot reception turned on for new arrivals', *op. cit.*

124   Harris and Westwood, *op. cit.*

125   In *ibid.*

126   *Ibid.*

127   *Ibid.*

128   Stephens and Darby, *op. cit.*

government's refusal to allow the refugees to leave the East Hills compound: 'Outside of this complex there is a world that they don't know; no-one out there knows them.'[129] This was reinforced by the juxtaposition: 'Refugees who on Friday night were bedraggled, tired and unkempt [on their arrival] were, at breakfast [the next morning], clean shaven, refreshed and no longer hungry.'[130] The representation of the Kosovars as 'alien' in this context (as opposed to being familiar, or "like us") supported the subtext in these reports that the refugees were transcending the barriers of their former existence for a "better life" in Australia.

The significance of the compassion promoted by the Australian government was further noted in the *Telegraph* as more personal aspects about the refugees' lives began to emerge. For some of these refugees, hopes for a "new life" were more apparent for those about to give birth in Australia. The *Telegraph* noted that three pregnant women were aboard the first evacuation flight with one of these taken immediately to hospital. She was due to give birth within two weeks time.[131] According to Dr Jo Karnaghan (manager of NSW Health Services Australia), most of the refugees had arrived in good health. The main issues, she explained, included ear infections and sore throats for some of the children and blood pressure in older refugees. For others, the "new life" began with more standard medical checks at the East Hills barracks and 'the first hot showers in months'.[132] As one of the refugees noted, many had not showered for several months. They were afraid of being raided by Serbian police. 'Behind the barbed-wire fence of their temporary home at Sydney's East Hills army barracks', the newspaper reported, the Kosovars 'had their first taste of a decent existence in recent memory.'[133] The *Herald* noted the significance of the showers for one of the refugees, Mr Fitim Konjufca, who said: 'I lost myself in the shower', which lasted for one hour.[134] High on the agenda was 'the chance to brush their teeth', as some had been

---

129   J. Fahey, cited in C. Sutton, P. Kogoy, A. West, D. Neilson and A. Patty, 'Refugees Out to See Sydney', *The Sun-Herald*, 9th May 1999, p. 6.

130   *Ibid.*

131   See B. Lawson, 'Farewell, friends; Refugees leave Sydney on final leg of journey', *The Daily Telegraph*, 11th May 1999, p. 3. One of the women, who was 37 weeks pregnant, was taken to Liverpool hospital upon landing in Sydney.

132   K. Parsons and N. Vass, 'Baby alert as mother-to-be steps off plane', *The Sunday Telegraph*, 9th May 1999, p. 4.

133   *Ibid.*

134   F. Konjufca, cited in Sutton, Kogoy, West, Neilson and Patty, *op. cit.*

unable to do so having spent the last 'twelve months' hiding in the hills of Kosovo.[135]

As part of official "processing" procedures at East Hills, the refugees had number tags placed around their necks, proceeding to have their photograph taken for identification purposes (see Appendix 2).[136] After filling out personal details on official forms, the Kosovars were sent into the next room where there were rows of tables piled with second hand clothing. As the *Telegraph* described it, there was:

> everything from underpants to brightly coloured Bananas in Pyjamas raincoats. There they could choose new clothes for their new life.[137]

The Australian described how the refugees were given three changes of clothes, '"plus socks and jocks", one pair of shoes, one coat and some baggage to transport their belongings to Tasmania when they leave Sydney.'[138] On passing through processing and clothing rooms at East Hills, the refugees were allocated a room to sleep. Their time at East Hills was, the *Telegraph* and *Herald* indicated, a comfortable experience. According to *The Australian*, the refugees had proclaimed East Hills a 'paradise', enjoying their time 'Under flowering gums'.[139] With 'lots of smiles',[140] wrote the *Telegraph*, the refugees' first breakfast had included cereal, eggs and sausages. The breakfast was further described as a 'hearty selection' by the *Herald* that included 'hash-browns', 'pancakes', 'toast', 'orange juice', 'tea and coffee'.[141]

The first dinner provided for the Kosovars, according to the *Telegraph*, was a seven-course meal that included chicken, fish and lamb dishes, soup and casserole, 'with some dishes prepared halal style for devout Muslims'.[142] A major concern for the refugees was getting in touch with relatives at home via Internet and telephone services available at the East Hills barracks. As noted

---

135   J. Ellicott, 'From gunpoint to gum tree – darkness to light', *The Australian*, 10th May 1999, p. 2.

136   Jacobsen and Brown, *op. cit.*

137   In Parsons and Vass, *op. cit.*, pp. 4-5.

138   Harvey, 'Hot reception turned on for new arrivals', *op. cit.*

139   'First days in Camp Kosovo', *The Australian*, 10th May 1999, p. 1. The phrases 'paradise' and 'Under flowering gums' are also used in Ellicott, *op. cit.*

140   Captain S. Straud (officer in charge of East Hills barracks), cited in Parsons and Vass, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

141   Sutton, Kogoy, West, Neilson and Patty, *op. cit.*

142   In Parsons and Vass, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

on 10th May, an immigration official told the *Herald* that most of the telephone calls 'were getting through and there had been many happy faces.'[143] The generosity of Australians was further highlighted in the actions of members of Sydney's Albanian community. The *Herald* noted: 'A member of the Albanian Cultural Centre was handing out Mother's Day roses to the mothers in the camp while refugees were being given a briefing about Tasmania as a promotional video played in the background.'[144] One refugee (unnamed) informed *The Australian* that travelling to Australia was a journey from 'darkness to light', although the 'gums and new flora played havoc with their sinuses'.[145] It was further noted: 'Children were ecstatic at their Australian surrounds, with computers [providing] entertainment… Albanian music bellowed from a CD player. Kosovar male youths took up a game of soccer… Those who had been given army fatigue-style clothing boasted the most about their new clothes and shoes.'[146] The nationalist sentiment in *The Australian* was clear, with the reference to 'flowering gums' featuring alongside a photograph of a child refugee laughing with (and wearing the hat of) a female Australian Army soldier at the barracks (see Appendix 2).

The refugees had been shown a video aboard their flight to Australia consisting of 'aerial shots of the Sydney Harbour Bridge and Ulura Rock'.[147] The media had viewed the operation as an opportunity to promote Australia's natural and architectural tourist sites. However, after only a short-term visit to Sydney, and without being able to explore the city itself, the first group of Kosovars were taken to Brighton barracks in Tasmania on 11th May 1999.[148] For the *Herald*, the refugees had no complaints about not seeing the city. One of the Kosovars informed the newspaper that he was simply surprised by how 'green' Australia was: 'I thought we were coming to a desert.'[149] The media did not note any significant concern about how quickly the refugees had been relocated to Hobart by the Federal Government and kept away from the public eye.

---

143   Jacobsen and Brown, *op. cit.*

144   *Ibid.*

145   Ellicott, *op. cit.*

146   *Ibid.*

147   Lagan, 'Flight to land of Heartbreak High', *op. cit.*

148   See also G. Bearup, 'Tears of Relief for Normality', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 12th May 1999, p. 10. Bearup notes how Sydneysiders had expressed discontent on talkback radio that the first group of Kosovars had not been taken via the 'scenic route' to Sydney airport before disembarking for Hobart.

149   *Ibid.*

Safe and sound: Refugees at the East Hills barracks yesterday

FIGURE 12   *Some of the Kosovar refugees as well as Red Cross and other volunteers with clothing tables at East Hills Safe Haven, in* The Daily Telegraph, *9*th *May 1999, p. 4.*

Trading-up: a "Better Life" Beyond the Initial Arrival

The theme of a "better life" continued to feature prominently in news coverage for several more weeks. The second evacuation flight landed at Sydney airport on 12th May 1999, although without the same level of media attention as the initial plane arrival. Repeating the procedure undertaken only five days beforehand, the second group of refugees were transported to East Hills Safe Haven for processing. Evacuation flights were thereafter scheduled to arrive every three to five days. The refugees would stay at East Hills for several days before heading for army bases around the country.[150]

In the first two weeks of the refugee arrival in Australia the *Telegraph* consistently portrayed how the Kosovars were trading-in the lives and culture they had known in Yugoslavia for the Australian way of life. This is captured on 20th May when the *Telegraph* reported on the cultural exchange unfolding following the arrival of the third "rotation" of refugees at East Hills barracks. As part of the welcoming celebrations organised by camp staff, the Sydney Army Band

---

150   Lawson, *op. cit.*

played an Albanian folk-tune for the refugees, arranged after hearing an elderly refugee play the song on an electronic keyboard. Journalist Will Temple wrote: 'the tune had the Kosovars dancing into the afternoon before trading their traditional goulash for an Aussie barbecue.'[151] The implication was that the refugees were upgrading to a freer, better life and shedding themselves of the political repression they had endured before their arrival in Australia. This sentiment was affirmed by *The Australian* which cited Albanian migrant, Kola Nikolaj, a professional chef and former president of the Albanian community centre in Chester Hill (Sydney): 'It is a better life for [the refugees] here, we should thank the Australian Government.'[152]

The idea that Australia offered a better alternative to the repression and violence of Yugoslavia is, at least in the media discourse surrounding this episode, linked to a variety of stereotypes in Western societies about Eastern and Southern Europeans. Fleming says, for some outside observers, it is difficult 'for Balkan peoples themselves to *stop* making distinctions between themselves, and to stop killing one another senselessly over those distinctions. "Killing one another" is not just a sort of "national hobby" but an intention or imperative that must be obeyed, and that can only be exhausted, not avoided.'[153] Fleming goes on, there has been a tendency in Western countries to lump all Southern Europeans together and to overlook any differences that might exist between countries, regimes, peoples or even names of countries. It is commonly proclaimed in the language of the West that to "Balkanise" means 'to divide, or fragment, along absurdly minute and definitionally obscure grounds'.[154] Echoing European colonial confrontations with new, foreign or "Eastern" lands, Fleming surmises: 'The Balkans stand as Europe's resident alien, an internal other that is an affront and challenge by virtue of its claim to be part of the West, as well as its apparent ability to dramatically affect Western history.'[155]

Media reinforced the notion that Operation Safe Haven was a responsible course of action and that the Australian government was "rescuing" the

---

151   W. Temple, 'A little girl again; Kosovars taste freedom, goulash and an Aussie-style barbecue', *The Daily Telegraph*, 20th May 1999, p. 20. It is noted that the menu for the barbecue consisted of '20kg onions, more than 1000 sausages, green salads and coleslaw.'

152   K. Nikolaj, cited in C. Harvey, 'Chef will offer taste of home', *The Australian*, 8th May 1999, p. 5.

153   Fleming, *op. cit.*, p. 1219. Italics in original.

154   *Ibid.*

155   *Ibid.*, p. 1229. Fleming cites how, according to one commentator, World War I began upon the assassination of the Archduke of Austria in '"a mud-caked primitive village [called] Sarajevo"'.

refugees from an undesirable way of life. In media coverage there was much to suggest that, by trading-in their old lives for the Australian way of life, the Kosovars might achieve the status most desired by Western (white) Europeans. That is, that the Kosovars might not only aspire to be but also succeed at becoming "civilized" and achieve a 'decent "civilized lifestyle".[156]

Conclusion

The Howard Government effectively politicised the Kosovar refugee arrival in Australia and generated popular support for Operation Safe Haven in the media. The Australian government hastily implemented the Safe Haven program, having embarked on a plan to temporarily resettle Kosovar refugees at the request of the UN which was itself under significant pressure from the US. The Howard Government's response was shaped by a broad range of demands, most notably popular nationalism, party conservatism and media and international pressure to act responsibly under the guise of humanitarianism.

The sense of generosity espoused to the arrival ceremony by the Prime Minister was an effective political move. The Howard Government received widespread acclaim for its response to the humanitarian crisis. The Prime Minister utilised media coverage of the arrival to promote the Government in a favourable light as compassionate and supportive. This can be viewed as an attempt by John Howard to regain public support after the media backlash that occurred a month earlier when he rejected the UNHCR request for assistance. The media positioned the Prime Minister in a popular light as a political leader. He was commonly represented during the arrival as a responsible leader and a good world citizen. There was very little criticism of the Government for its policy towards the Kosovars giving the impression of popular consensus for the way the arrival was represented in the media.

What is evident, though, is that media coverage of the Kosovars' arrival and their interactions with the Australian community also supported the cultural and political standing of the Howard Government. News consumers were drawn to the notion that the Kosovars were worthy recipients of compassion and assistance, even so far as advocating (at least in the *Telegraph*) during the arrival for Australia to become the "new home" of the Kosovars. However, the Kosovars were not completely dissociated from notions that refugees presented a threat to long-standing, highly regulated immigration procedures in

---

156   Hage, *Against Paranoid Nationalism: Searching for Hope in a Shrinking Society, op. cit.*, p. 51.

Australia, despite the popular sentiment that was aroused by the evacuation program. Conceptions of the Kosovars in the media reflected a continuing imagining of refugees as "Other" or "alien" and 'a threat to … western, core values or democracy itself'.[157]

These latter inhibitions remained subdued in government and media discourse during early stages of the refugees' arrival. They were to be amplified a month after the initial arrival of the Kosovars when some refugees questioned the quality of the evacuation program. This time, however, the Kosovars would not be so popular. The Government vilified refugees who questioned Operation Safe Haven.

---

157   Gale, 'The refugee crisis and fear; Populist politics and media discourse', *op. cit.*, p. 323.

FIGURE 13   *Kosovar refugee children at the beach with an Australian teacher in Portsea during their stay at the local barracks.*
Courtesy Embassy of Republic of Kosovo in Canberra.

FIGURE 14   *Kosovar refugee children at the beach in Portsea during their residence at the local barracks. Courtesy Embassy of Republic of Kosovo in Canberra.*

FIGURE 15   *Kosovar refugee children and their Australian school teachers at the beach during their stay at Portsea barracks.*
Courtesy Embassy of Republic of Kosovo in Canberra.

FIGURE 16　*Kosovar refugee children learning about fire safety during their stay at Portsea barracks.* Courtesy Embassy of Republic of Kosovo in Canberra.

FIGURE 17   *Kosovar refugee children and an Australian volunteer at Portsea barracks. Courtesy Embassy of Republic of Kosovo in Canberra.*

FIGURE 18   *Kosovar refugee Nurije and her recently born baby resided at Portsea barracks.* Courtesy Embassy of Republic of Kosovo in Canberra.

The Singleton Incident: the Kosovars' Protest for Improved Conditions at the Safe Haven

Introduction

Kosovar Albanians are European Muslims. There was indifference to this in public debate about them during the phases of their selection, evacuation and initial arrival. So what was it about these refugees that would eventually reveal the ideological commitments of the conservative Howard Government, often remembered for its "tough" policies on asylum seekers? They were purportedly "ungrateful", these Kosovars, and they were rebels. Once considered "like us" and deserving of Australia's compassion, the Howard Government distanced itself from the Kosovars the moment they publicly questioned the quality of the Safe Haven program. The Kosovars were suddenly thieves, sneaky and tricky, purportedly complaining without provocation and placing unreasonable demands on the Government. In media spin they were no longer described as cultured Europeans, but as untrustworthy and ungrateful.

In mid-June 1999 around eighty Kosovar refugees refused to accept the accommodation provided for them by the Federal Government at Singleton army barracks. They conducted a bus sit-in, refusing to desist until better accommodation was offered. The protest generated significant media coverage and had the potential to inflict serious damage on the public image of Operation Safe Haven manufactured by the Howard Government. Many of the claims made by the Kosovars were valid – the need for warmer accommodation to endure the Singleton winter, the absence of functioning heaters, the lack of cultural sensitivity, health concerns, and "footy club" showers. The Howard Government mounted a public relations offensive. It was to politicise and discredit the refugees' claims.

This chapter explore news articles published in *The Daily Telegraph*, *Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Australian* between 16th and 30th June 1999.[1] The breakdown of articles (including editorials and opinion columns) comprised

---

1 This only includes articles primarily concerned with those refugees who were in or coming to Australia, rather than those living in camps in the Balkans or elsewhere. The content analysis did not include photographs, cartoons and letters to the editor. These aspects, however, are drawn upon throughout this chapter to complement the textual analysis. The dates for the

24 from the *Telegraph*, 15 from the *Herald* and 32 in *The Australian*.[2] The language used by the media to describe the refugees during the protest was fraught with contradiction and inconsistency. It differed considerably from earlier coverage concerning the evacuation and initial arrival of the Kosovars. Much of the coverage drew significantly on notions of chauvinism, aggression, and claims about affluent, "designer" refugees who were "ungrateful" for Australia's assistance.

What is clear is that the refugees were only supported by the Federal Government if they remained compliant, passive or unheard in media coverage. The Government went even further, questioning the character of not only those refugees involved in the Singleton protest but also journalists who reported and acted contrary to the Government's "official" position. The Government argued for an inquiry against two journalists from *The Australian* who were able to report an alternative perspective to events taking place behind the barbed wire of the army barracks.

Location, Location or the Tyranny of Distance? The Accommodation Debate

In 1953, a supporter of Australia's post-war resettlement program for European refugees reacted to recent criticism: 'According to [this criticism], Australia is herding honest, cultured Europeans into concentration camps'.[3] Similar sentiments came to the fore in debates over where to house the Kosovars in April and May 1999. Debate centred on the moral ramifications of placing them into camps and the re-hashing of a decades-old policy that involved isolating DPs from the Australian community. The ways in which the Kosovar refugees were accommodated as part of Operation Safe Haven further reflected the broader

---

    content analysis begin the morning after the refugees initially refused to leave transport coaches that had delivered them from East Hills to Singleton barracks. The period ends with the decline in coverage covering the protests at Singleton barracks.

2 Six articles in the *Telegraph*, that are similar in form to or reprinted as articles in the afternoon edition, are included in the analysis. This includes three articles appearing on 16th June (see articles by Williams; Gibson; and, the editorial), two on 17th June (see articles by O'Shea and Williams and by Devine) and one on 21st June (see article by Albert). Although a few articles are near identical, they have been incorporated to provide a more accurate reflection of the frequency and intensity of the *Telegraph's* coverage as a newspaper that published two daily editions.

3 E.F. Kunz, *Displaced Persons; Calwell's New Australians*, Australian National University Press, Rushcutters Bay, 1988, p. 166.

immigration agenda of the Howard Government and its rationale of temporary protection. As Jupp points out, there was an increasing reliance after 1999 upon *exclusion* and *selection* that came to embody the role of the Department of Immigration and its various branches and policies.[4] Both the Prime Minister and Immigration Minister were careful to note that the provision of Safe Haven for the Kosovars was only a temporary measure. The Government assured the Australian public that the Kosovars would not have access to the means (legally or financially) to overstay their three-month welcome. As noted by the *Telegraph* on 10th April 1999, John Howard was 'at pains to assure Australians' that the Kosovars would 'have to leave when the Government says so'.[5] The *Herald* added, 'The Government has been careful to insist [the Kosovar refugees] will not be able to apply for a change of status', from temporary to a more permanent form of protection.[6]

There were two issues regarding accommodation to be resolved by the Australian government in the early stages of Operation Safe Haven. These were the type of accommodation provided to the Kosovars and the locations of the Safe Havens and their proximity to where most of the Australian population was concentrated. The choice of army barracks limited the ability of the Kosovars to gain independence from the Federal Government and some of the locations chosen to accommodate the refugees would isolate them from the general community. Although the option of billeting the refugees within Australian homes was promoted by the Federal Opposition, Phillip Ruddock effectively 'ruled out' the idea,[7] stating:

> We won't be encouraging people to leave [the Safe Havens] but we won't be building walls around them so that they can't... We're not going to imprison people... Any long-term billeting arrangements are very difficult to manage and it is for that reason that we will not be providing financial support for people who do go out.[8]

4   J. Jupp, *From White Australia to Woomera: The Story of Australian Immigration*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2002 (reprinted 2004), p. 19.

5   I. McPhedran, 'Refugee footsteps lead only one way', *The Daily Telegraph*, 10th April 1999, p. 11. See also A. Lyons, 'Take A Bet On Our Generosity', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 8th April 1999, p. 15 where it is stated: 'the Prime Minister has been at pains to stress the special and temporary nature of the welcome to be offered.'

6   M. Grattan, 'Kosovo's "temporary" Refugees May Have To Stay Here', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 8th April 1999, p. 1.

7   As described by I. McPhedran, 'Jumbo Fleet to Pick Up Refugees', *The Daily Telegraph*, 8th April 1999, p. 3.

8   Ruddock, cited in I. McPhedran and S. Spencer, 'TASBANIA – Hobart huts to house refugees', *The Daily Telegraph*, 10th April 1999, p. 1.

Ruddock said the refugees would be 'free to move', but the Government was not keen to have them spread throughout the community.[9] Some concern about this policy was noted by ALP Senator Jim McKiernan (Western Australia) in parliamentary debate, when he stated:

> A military establishment might not be an appropriate place for persons who are traumatised in the way that these people have been… it might be better if they were placed in a more integrated part of society. I am sure there are those in our community, including the church groups, who could handle that number of 4,000.[10]

In terms of the location of the Safe Havens, initially Ruddock said that it was unlikely, but did not rule out the possibility, that refugees would be sent to remote barracks.[11] However, on 9th April it was reported that John Howard – overruling Ruddock for the second time in a week – had rejected a proposal that the refugees be placed in remote areas.[12] Very remote barracks – such as Woomera, which is in the South Australian desert – were excluded as an option by the Federal Government. It was decided that accommodation be provided for the refugees at eight barracks, including at Brighton (Tasmania), Puckapunyal, Bandiana and Portsea (Victoria), Leeuwin (Western Australia), Singleton and East Hills (New South Wales) and Hampstead (South Australia). Despite Howard's initial rejection of the proposal to place the Kosovars in remote barracks, several of the Safe Havens would be located at a considerable distance from the general population.[13]

---

9   Ruddock, cited in R. Garran and P. Green, 'Agreement remote on housing refugees', *The Australian*, 8th April 1999, p. 1.

10   J. McKiernan, in 'Migration Legislation Amendment (Temporary Safe Haven Visas) Bill 1999; Second Reading', *Senate: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 29th April 1999, p. 4563. See also similar concerns expressed by ALP Shadow Immigration Minister Con Sciacca about remoteness, the use of army bases and the possibility of billeting, in C. Sciacca, 'Migration Legislation Amendment (Temporary Safe Haven Visas) Bill 1999; Second Reading', *House of Representatives: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 11th May 1999, p. 5026.

11   McPhedran, 'Jumbo Fleet to Pick Up Refugees', *op. cit.*

12   I. McPhedran, '$15m to provide shelter for 4000 refugees', *The Daily Telegraph* (Morning Edition) 9th April 1999, p. 8. There is no indication given by McPhedran as to why the 'Prime Minster John Howard yesterday rejected a proposal that the refugees be housed in remote areas, the second time he has overruled Mr Ruddock in a week.'

13   Singleton barracks is 140 kilometres from Sydney in rural NSW. Bandiana barracks is over 300 kilometres from Melbourne, near Albury on the Victoria/NSW border. Puckapunyal,

The Appropriateness of the Army Bases

The Australian Government's plan was to operate the East Hills Safe Haven (also known as Holsworthy barracks) as the initial reception centre for all Kosovars. The barracks had catered to refugees since World War I.[14] There, the refugees would spend an average of three to four days undergoing medical checks, before being issued with travel documents and identification cards. The Kosovars were then to receive new clothing, phone cards and their first weekly cash allowance.[15] The plan recognised a range of needs that would be required by the refugees while living at the Safe Havens, including transport, health care, education and proximity to Albanian Australians.[16] DIMA explained the official view that service provision would be more practical and efficient by being delivered at the barracks, including medical, dental, education, recreation, specialised torture and trauma counseling, and language services.[17] A Defence forces spokesperson told the *Telegraph*, regarding the East Hills army barracks being converted into a Safe Haven, that: 'The reason the barracks was chosen was because it's secure and provides a safety haven for the displaced persons.'[18] The *Telegraph* described the East Hills barracks as a '5ha fenced site', within which the refugees 'will live in 52 free-standing two-storey townhouse-style buildings each containing three-to-four room dormitories.'[19] In accommodating the Kosovars, barracks staff recognised that the refugees had suffered greatly from systematic violence and displacement from their homeland. It was thus decided by operational officials, in responding sensitively to the circumstances, that there only be a minimal number of armed

in rural Victoria, is 136 kilometres from Melbourne, while Portsea barracks is 100 kilometres from the city at the tip of the Mornington Peninsula. East Hills, the processing centre for the Kosovars (before being shipped to other parts of the country), was one of four Safe Haven's within accessible distance to a major city (about 35 kilometres from the centre of Sydney). The others were Hampstead barracks (in Adelaide), Leeuwin barracks (about 20 kilometres from the centre of Perth) and Brighton barracks (26 kilometres from Hobart).

14   R. Garran and P. Green, 'Refugees due to fly here by next week', *The Australian*, 9th April 1999, p. 6.

15   Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA), 'Annual Report 1998-99; "Operation Safe Haven".' URL: https://web.archive.org/web/20060911190216/http://www.immi.gov.au/about/reports/annual/1998-99/html/safe.htm. Accessed 13th October 2016.

16   McPhedran, 'Jumbo Fleet to Pick Up Refugees', *op. cit.*

17   Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA), 'Annual Report 1998-99; "Operation Safe Haven"', *op. cit.*

18   S. Gee, 'Home away from Hell', *The Daily Telegraph*, 10th April 1999, p. 4.

19   *Ibid.*

military personal at the base upon the arrival of the refugees. Nonetheless, over the next three months, the location, age and facilities of the barracks would have a significant impact on the quality of welfare provided to the Kosovar refugees.

It was clear that Immigration Minister Ruddock did not wish for the Kosovars to become comfortable with the idea of living in Australia. As the ALP's Con Sciacca noted during the Safe Haven legislative debates: 'These measures seem quite drastic and seem designed to discourage these people from leaving the camps.'[20] The allowance of $20 offered by the Australian government to the refugees effectively rendered them to be dependent on the Safe Havens from the beginning. This was heavily criticised by some commentators, who noted how other countries offered substantially more to the refugees. Germany, for instance, had provided an allowance of $80 per week for adults.[21]

Friar Adrian Lyons, Chair of the Jesuit Refugee Service Australia Council, demanded in the *Herald*: 'No internment camps, please. We owe the Kosovar refugees better than that.'[22] Lyons criticised the Government's plans to provide only (quoting the Prime Minister) the 'basic necessities of life',[23] and described the temporary arrangements as 'mean-spirited' and 'hurtful'.[24] The allowance was later increased on 1st July (which would take effect by the end of the month) to $27 for adults and $10 per child. The Kosovars would further be allowed to work for up to 20 hours per week after this time, though the allowance would be taken away.[25]

Throughout the planning stages of Operation Safe Haven, Ruddock promoted his desire for the refugees to be concentrated together and confined to the army barracks, having determined that a refugee's benefits would be unavailable on leaving the Safe Havens. However, the location of and services provided at the Safe Havens remained the main concern for a number of critics. These included Victorian Premier Jeff Kennett who stated that Australia could do more harm than good to the refugees if it simply offered shelter without an extensive support network: 'You can't bring in a large number of people and isolate them.'[26] Health experts and ethnic leaders, reported the *Herald*,

---

20   Sciacca, *op. cit.*, p. 5026.

21   See P. Green and B. Montgomery, 'Welcome and $20 a week – Refugees journey to shelter', *The Australian*, 4th May 1999, p. 1.

22   Lyons, 'Take A Bet On Our Generosity', *op. cit.*

23   As cited in *ibid.*

24   *Ibid.*

25   A. Kamper, 'Refugees can work part-time', *The Daily Telegraph*, 1st July 1999, p. 20.

26   J. Kennett, in Garran and Green, 'Agreement remote on housing refugees', *op. cit.*

had warned the Government that the use of remote army barracks to accommodate the refugees was a 'serious mistake.'[27] Albanian-Australian National Council chairperson Erik Lloga, who was involved in Operation Safe Haven as an advisor and interpreter for the Federal Government, deemed the option of remote military bases as inappropriate.[28] As a point of contrast, Kosovar refugees evacuated under the Humanitarian Evacuation Programme to the UK, Austria and France would be offered housing in the community in public housing or private dwellings (e.g. with family members already settled in the host country).[29] Canada initially accommodated evacuees into barracks but these were quickly resettled into the community after medical checks.[30] Belgium also hosted evacuees in reception centres, however these refugees were given the freedom to locate their own housing if desired, although this proved difficult.[31] This approach granted the Kosovars more freedom than other asylum seekers in terms of being able choose where to reside, which often coincided with the desire to settle near to Kosovar community networks.

The editor of *The Australian* asked, on 8th April 1999, in reference to the location of the proposed Safe Havens: 'Why is remoteness an important criterion?'[32] The editor added that depriving the Kosovars of 'contact with mainstream Australia, and members of the Albanian community, will only add to their trauma,' rendering the refugees to be 'unwelcome outcasts.'[33] *The Australian's* Greg Sheridan criticised the locations of the military bases offered as accommodation, saying that instead the Government should 'treat [the

27   G. Kitney and S. Mann, 'Sign Of Belgrade Bending As Air Attacks Stepped Up', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 8th April 1999, p. 1.

28   In Garran and Green, 'Agreement remote on housing refugees', *op. cit.*

29   See E. Guild, 'The United Kingdom: Kosovar Albanian refugees', in J. Van Selm (ed.), *Kosovo's Refugees in the European Union*, Pinter, London and New York, 2000, p. 83; I. Stacher, 'Austria: reception of conflict refugees', in van Selm, *op. cit.*, p. 132; S. Lavenex, 'France: international norms, European integration and state discretion', in van Selm, *op. cit.*, p. 176. See also A. Bloch, 'Kosovan refugees in the UK: the Rolls Royce or rickshaw reception?', *Forced Migration Review*, 1999, 5, p. 26. URL: http://www.fmreview.org/sites/fmr/files/FMRdownloads/en/FMRpdfs/FMR05/fmr5full.pdf. Accessed 1st December 2016.

30   J. King, 'Australia and Canada compared: the reaction to the Kosovar crisis', *Australian Journal of Human Rights*, 15, 2003. URL: https://web.archive.org/web/20060917134745/http://austlii.law.uts.edu.au/au/journals/AJHR/2003/15.html. Accessed 10th October 2016.

31   Van Selm, *op. cit.*, p. 219.

32   'Milosevic shows his hypocrisy ... as refugee policy is made on the run' (editorial), *The Australian*, 8th April 1999, p. 12.

33   *Ibid.*

refugees] decently and avoid the mentality of punishment and control that has characterised so much of our recent refugee policy.'[34] The journalist further added that the refugees should be placed in the major cities rather than in 'isolated military facilities', preferably in Melbourne, which had the largest Albanian population in Australia.[35] Sheridan argued: 'The fumbling, backflipping, detail-absent, incoherent way in which this decision was arrived at and announced by the Government inspires no confidence.'[36]

The Immigration Minister announced on 9th June 1999 that "patrons" (Members and Senators) would be appointed to the Safe Havens with the purpose of ensuring that the Kosovars had full access to a representative of the Federal Government and made as welcome and comfortable as possible. Patrons, he said, were expected to visit their designated Safe Haven every two to three weeks.[37] Initially, the appointment of patrons to each of the Safe Havens by the Immigration Minister was based on several factors, including the electoral region of Members and Senators (and hence their proximity to the army bases), and membership of the Liberal Party. The role of patrons provided a more direct point of access between the refugees and the Federal Government. However, any concerns expressed by the Kosovars would only be managed and acted on by Liberal Party politicians.[38] It was only after the Singleton protest (see below), on 22nd June, that the Immigration Minister announced that members of the Opposition would act as co-patrons to the Safe Havens, heeding the advice of Con Sciacca, the shadow Immigration Minister.[39]

---

34   G. Sheridan, '4000 new "mates" deserve a fair go', *The Australian*, 8th April 1999, p. 9.

35   *Ibid.*

36   *Ibid.*

37   B. York, 'Australia and Refugees, 1901-2002: An Annotated Chronology Based on Official Sources', Information and Research Services, Department of the Parliamentary Library, Canberra, 16th June 2003, pp. 84-85.

38   Liberal Senator Kay Patterson (Victoria) was appointed principle patron to oversee all the Safe Havens while undertaking the role of Parliamentary Secretary for the Immigration Minister. See K. Patterson, in 'Refugees: Safe Havens', *Senate: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 26th November 1999, p. 10870. See also see F. Bailey, in 'Australian Constitution: New Preamble', *House of Representatives: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 11th August 1999, pp. 8469-8470. See also M. Danby, 'Refugees: Kosovo', *House of Representatives: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 13th April 2000, p. 15992. See also C. Pyne, in 'Kosovo Refugees: Hampstead Safe Haven', *House of Representatives: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 28th June 1999, p. 7566.

39   'Australian Government: Co-Patrons for safe havens', M2 Presswire, 23rd June 1999. See also Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA), 'Annual Report 1998-99;

A Wintery Tale: Singleton Barracks in Central NSW

Singleton barracks had been an army barracks for over 50 years when the first Kosovars arrived there in early June 1999.[40] It is in rural NSW, and 140 kilometres from Sydney. The base is approximately 6 kilometres from the township of Singleton, which had a population of around 20,000 at the time. Five busloads of Kosovar refugees arrived at their accommodation at Singleton Army barracks on 1st June 1999, coinciding with the start of the winter season in country NSW. Temperatures drop to an average of less than 7 degrees Celsius at this time of year.[41] In total, the Singleton community was preparing for the arrival of 800 refugees who would be able to access the township via a free shuttle bus service. The refugees were staying in 'renovated dormitories', and the *Telegraph* reported: 'A professional soccer player, nine pregnant women and 22 toddlers are among the first group of Kosovar refugees to be housed in NSW [at the Singleton Safe Haven].'[42] The newspaper report went on, with only the clothes and toiletries they had received at East Hills, 'some families as large as 11 had nothing but a plastic bag between them, which held all they had left in the world.'[43] It was noted by the co-ordinator of the 'Samaritans' emergency relief program in Singleton how the refugees' spirits had lifted since arriving:

> [When they arrived on Friday night] many of them were crying and traumatised[.] By Saturday morning the children were running around and you could already see the change in them.[44]

"Operation Safe Haven'", *op. cit.* The patrons after 22nd June 1999 were, for Leeuwin, Senator Sue Knowles (Liberals, WA) and Senator Jim McKiernan (ALP, WA); at Bandiana, Lou Liebman (Liberals, Member for Indi) and Michael Danby (ALP, Member for Melbourne Ports); in Brighton, Senator Eric Abetz (Liberals, Tasmania) and Dick Adams (ALP, Member for Lyons); at Singleton, Senator John Tierney (Liberals, NSW) and Joel Fitzgibbon (ALP, Member for Hunter); for Portsea, Senator Kay Patterson (Liberals, Victoria) and Senator Jacinta Collins (ALP, Victoria); in Puckapunyal, Fran Bailey (Liberals, McEwan) and Steve Gibbons (ALP, Member for Bendigo); in Hampstead, Christopher Pyne (Liberals, Member for Sturt) and Senator Chris Schacht (ALP, South Australia); and, at East Hills, Danna Vale (Liberals, Member for Hughes) and Senator Michael Forshaw (ALP, NSW).

40   The age of 50 years is given in M. Devine, 'Confusion of a town that gave everything', *The Daily Telegraph*, 17th June 1999, p. 10.

41   Australian Government, Bureau of Meteorology, 'Climate statistics for Australian locations; Singleton Army', 2010. URL: http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/averages/tables/cw_061275.shtml. Accessed 12th October 2016.

42   'Hunter Valley home for 800 Kosovars', *The Daily Telegraph* (Morning Edition), 2nd June 1999, p. 6.

43   *Ibid.*

44   P. Saunders, cited in *ibid.*

Initially, media coverage concerning the arrival of the refugees at Singleton was supportive of the operation, depicting the reception of the refugees by the local community as both a positive and highly anticipated response.

A team of local doctors, counsellors and a translator were on hand to assist at the Singleton barracks, while the Samaritans had recently begun to collect donations from the community. Samaritans director Cec Shevels said, in the *Telegraph*, the organisation was appealing for teddy bears, warm clothing and bicycles for the children to play with.[45] Singleton had not previously dealt with a population influx brought by the organised relocation of refugees, unlike some other barracks made available to the Kosovars. The community at Bandiana (near Albury-Wodonga), for instance, had accommodated over 300,000 refugees in the decades following World War II.[46] This is significant, particularly considering that Singleton would eventually house the largest number of refugees of any of the barracks (alongside Puckapunyal).[47]

The Refugees and Their Concerns

The Singleton incident centred around two aspects: the initial "bus sit-in", which began on 15th and ended on 16th June, and stories about the Salihu family who continued to reject the Singleton accommodation for another day afterwards. On 15th June, three coaches transported Kosovar refugees who had recently arrived in Australia from Macedonia from the East Hills barracks to their designated temporary Safe Haven at Singleton. The 83 refugees involved in the initial two days of the protest – some had conducted a brief inspection of the facilities, while others had spoken to Kosovars already at the barracks via

---

45   *Ibid.*

46   See Department of Environment and Water Resources, 'Australian Heritage Database; Places for Decision; Class: Historic' (Bonegilla Migrant Camp), Australian Government, Nomination Date: 6th July 2004. This report cites how more 300,000 people, mainly from Europe, came through Wodonga between 1947 and 1971. They were temporarily settled at the Bonegilla (just outside Wodonga) migrant reception and training centre. More than half of the DPs from war torn Europe, the report goes on, who came to Australia were 'sent to Bonegilla where they were given courses in English and the Australian way of life'.

47   See figures cited in the table 'Where they are; Kosovar refugees in Australia', *The Australian*, 16th June 1999, p. 2. At 16th June 1999, the figures were as follow: East Hills, 470; Singleton, 600; Brighton, 400; Puckapunyal, 830; Portsea, 400; Leeuwin, 385; and Hampstead, 150. The total number of refugees in Australia at this point was 3235. However, on 18th June, it was noted by the *Telegraph* that Singleton was home to 800 refugees. For this figure, see N. Williams and A. Stevenson, 'Kosovar rebels taxi to Sydney', *The Daily Telegraph*, 18th June 1999, p. 4.

mobile telephone – re-boarded the transfer coaches where they slept for their first night.[48] The main concerns expressed by spokespersons for the refugees were a lack of running water inside the accommodation huts, no baths for children, inadequate heating and wind protection from mid-winter winds and the absence of privacy for family groups.[49] There were also reports of electrical cables, light bulbs and piping being dangerous exposed.[50] The 'stand-off', wrote the *Telegraph*, continued over three days, but by the third night, only three Kosovars were left 'barricaded in a bus' outside the Singleton Safe Haven.[51] They were members of the Salihu family.

On 16th June the news media reported on the objections expressed by "leaders" of the protest. The refugees' grievances included, as stated by *The Australian*, the 'substandard accommodation and kangaroos and snakes in the NSW Hunter Valley "jungle"'.[52] They argued that the accommodation offered in Singleton was too cold and that the toilets were too far away from the sleeping huts, claiming they were hundreds of metres away. Spokespersons for these refugees said that Australian government had misled them over accommodation standards. Some asked to be relocated back to East Hills barracks, while others asked to be returned to the Balkans.[53] According to *The Australian*, one of the protesters, 19-year old Elvana Muqaj, stated that Singleton was 'just like [the camps in] Macedonia.'[54] The Kosovars, the media reported, were afraid of the local wildlife, with refugee Adrian Kastrati commenting: 'It's like a jungle here[.] Everywhere is kangaroos, snakes and everything. We just want elementary comfort [*sic*].'[55] The refugees at Singleton barracks were confronted with a sign placed near the sleeping huts that stated, in both Albanian and English language, 'No Unauthorised access', followed by 'Snakes'. The sight, according to some reports, had frightened both children and adults alike, unaccustomed to Australian wildlife. Mr Kastrati further 'complained', wrote *The Australian*,

---

48   The number of refugees involved in the "protest" at Singleton Safe Haven varies in news reports, with figures usually numbering the protesters at either 80 or 83.

49   M. Head, 'The Kosovar and Timorese "Safe Haven" Refugees', *Alternative Law Journal*, 24(6), December, 1999, p. 281.

50   *Ibid.*

51   See reference to 'stand-off' in N. Williams, 'Camp no better than Macedonia', *The Daily Telegraph* (morning edition), 16th June 1999, p. 7. See also F. O'Shea and N. Williams, 'THANKS A LOT – How Singleton's generous welcome for Kosovar refugees is wearing thin', *The Daily Telegraph*, 17th June 1999, p. 1.

52   'And here, they fear roos', *The Australian*, 16th June 1999, p. 1.

53   *Ibid.*

54   E. Muqaj, cited in C. Niesche and J. Zubrzycki, 'Creatures and no comfort: refugees', *The Australian*, 16th June 1999, p. 2.

55   A. Kastrati, cited in *ibid.*

FIGURE 19
'Snakes alive: A warning sign near the huts at Singleton', from The Australian*, 16th June 1999, p. 2.*

that the $20 allowance offered by the Australian government was not enough to spend at local towns, saying that '$1000 would be better.'[56] The group 'demanded' to be relocated back to East Hills Safe Haven where they had enjoyed more acceptable accommodation and facilities.[57]

Responding to the refugees' claims, manager of the Singleton Safe Haven, Tricia Flanagan, said the accommodation was basic, but not substandard and was being improved with more heating and comforts.[58] Likewise, the Federal Government quickly refuted some of the negative publicity developing around the Safe Haven program. Singleton Safe Haven patron, the 53-year old NSW Liberal Senator John Tierney, along with DIMA officials, attempted to 'negotiate' with the protesters.[59] This was a situation which quickly broke down as the Government refused to relocate the group back to East Hills. The Immigration Minister immediately 'ruled out' settling the protesters at East Hills.[60] Ruddock said that, at this stage, it was not possible to return the refugees to Kosovo because the province was unsafe and that East Hills was filled to capacity.[61] East Hills was only being operated to house refugees for a few days as they waited in transit before moving on to other Safe Havens around Australia.

---

56   A. Kastrati, in *ibid.*

57   *Ibid.*

58   *Ibid.*

59   Niesche and Zubrzycki, *op. cit.*

60   *Ibid.*

61   'Cold, hungry refugees shun new home', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 16th June 1999, p. 5.

It was impractical to return the protesters to East Hills, at least while other refugees continued to arrive aboard evacuation flights, and their request conflicted with the operational timetable. Senator Tierney's description of the protesters aboard the bus was unsympathetic. He stated that the group was being led by six men who had ignored pleas to at least allow the women and children to spend the night indoors.[62] He refuted their claims about the standard of the accommodation, arguing that 'the only viable option is that they get off the bus and enter the facility', and adding, 'They can't really criticise the facilities. They haven't even been in them.'[63]

Media Empathy for the Singleton "Bus Sit-in"

Some of the media coverage of those involved in the initial protest was sympathetic towards their concerns. The *Herald* described, in the 16th June article, 'Cold, hungry refugees shun new home', the 'fear' and 'distress' of the refugees.[64] It depicted 'an elderly woman, her head tightly wrapped in a kerchief, […] shivering with cold.'[65] The image contrasted with a comment about Senator Tierney, the 'so-called patron of the safe havens', and depictions of operation staff as heartless in denying the refugees aboard the buses food and other requests.[66] A photograph presented the image: 'one of the younger Kosovar refugees finds some comfort at the wheel of the bus at Singleton.'[67] The newspaper went on:

> A new mother is trying to breastfeed her daughter, but milk won't come. "She can't make milk, because she hasn't eaten", says [one of the other refugees]. "They won't give us milk or juice for the children, or sugar for the tea. We are hungry and cold. The warmest place is on this bus."[68]

The *Herald* further described the conditions on the bus as 'terrible' and reported that: 'The most crowded [bus] smelt like one might expect a bus with 60 people, 17 of them infants, to smell after 24 hours.'[69] The image of children was

---

62   Niesche and Zubrzycki, *op. cit.*

63   Tierney, cited in *ibid.*

64   'Cold, hungry refugees shun new home', *op. cit.*

65   *Ibid.*

66   *Ibid.*

67   See image and caption in *ibid.*

68   *Ibid.*

69   *Ibid.*

Warm refuge . . . one of the younger Kosovar refugees finds some comfort at the wheel of the bus at Singleton.

FIGURE 20   *Kosovar refugee boy asleep at the wheel of a transfer coach, from* Sydney Morning Herald, *16th June 1999, p. 5.*

central to depictions of the refugees' suffering aboard the buses. As the *Herald* noted, 3-year old Hyrije had been 'sucking on a baby's bottle full of water, taken from a tap in a concrete bathroom because the barracks staff would not give milk or juice to her mother unless she left the bus.'[70]

The refugees were reportedly suffering from hunger, having not eaten for 24 hours since they had departed East Hills Safe Haven the day before. This was because, the *Herald* stated: 'Australian officials in charge of the camp refused to provide food, saying the people would be fed only if they got off the bus.'[71] The *Herald* reported how two refugee men had walked into the food hall to ask for milk and juice for the infants on the bus, and for tea, milk and sugar for themselves, but the request was refused. An Australian staff member working in the food hall repeated the position, that: 'There's plenty to eat if they get off the bus.'[72] Imagery and scenes of sadness added to the media's narrative of the Singleton protest, providing greater depth to a story about human tragedy

---

70   *Ibid.*

71   *Ibid.*

72   Australian staffer in the Singleton barracks food hall (anonymous), cited in *ibid.*

as it unfolded (albeit much closer to home).[73] Nonetheless, most media commentary disagreed with the refugees' claims that the Singleton barracks was unsuitable or "worse than Macedonia". Textual analysis further indicated that, as Pickering says, the 'ideal refugee' is usually 'very young or very old, afraid'.[74] They are supposedly unable to retain this kind of innocence when they seek to represent and speak for themselves – a perception that was typified by the shifting media stance on the Kosovars.

Evaluating the Refugees' Concerns

The Australian provided a breakdown of the facilities provided at each of the barracks being used to accommodate the Kosovars. In Singleton, it stated that the refugees were given rooms to sleep three to six persons, communal bathrooms up to 80 metres from the sleeping huts and a dining room up to 80 metres from the sleeping quarters. Each family accommodated at Puckapunyal, the Safe Haven catering to approximately the same number of refugees as Singleton, were given their own hut, with some rooms partitioned with dividers, and toilets and showers 'a few metres' from the huts.[75] Comparatively,

---

73   Terms that invoked notions of "empathy" or "compassion" for the refugees' plight numbered 78 in the *Telegraph*, 57 in *The Australian* and 52 in the *Herald*. This included terms and phrases such as "generosity of spirit", "human sympathy", "compassion", "help", "welcome", "tragedy", "sad", "trauma", "empathy", "heartfelt", "kindness", "heart", "suffering", "understanding", "tolerance", "pity", "despair", "terror", "distress", "fear", "shivering", "crying", "hope", "dignity", "innocence lost", and more. The use of concepts denoting a sense of "humanitarian obligation" featured much less than "empathy" across these newspapers, drawn on only once in the *Telegraph*, nine times in *The Australian* and 14 times in the *Herald*. This includes terms or concepts related more to Australia's humanitarian obligation or sense of humanity, such as "expected of human beings", "acting responsibly", "humanitarian", "humanity", "humanitarian aid", "human problem", "human rights", "humanitarian evacuation", and "holocaust". Descriptors related to "children", childbirth or pregnancy further enhanced the media's dramatisation of the Singleton protest, numbering 13 in *The Australian*, 14 in the *Herald* and 26 in the *Telegraph*. This includes descriptions of the refugees as children or babies, or where childbirth or pregnancy was noted.

74   S. Pickering, 'Common Sense and Original Deviancy: News Discourses and Asylum Seekers in Australia', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 14(2), 2001, p. 177.

75   See table in C. Niesche, 'Barracks cold comfort for Kosovar who's lost it all', *The Australian*, 17th June 1999, p. 4. It describes how at East Hills, which was only being used as processing centre for a maximum of several days, the Kosovars were given two-story townhouses each with three to four dormitories, with a dining room up to 150 metres from the

at least on paper, the Kosovars at Singleton were offered similar conditions to those accommodated elsewhere. Nonetheless, complaints about the facilities at Singleton barracks are worth investigating further.

Some reports presented an image of the refugees using Superloos (portable toilets) rather than toilet blocks. There were concerns about modesty expressed by some of the Kosovars, the lack of privacy and the inappropriateness of males and females from the same family sharing rooms.[76] In one article, the *Herald*, having gained access to the Singleton barracks despite Federal Government restrictions, provided a detailed account of the facilities offered to the Kosovars: 'After permission to view the site was officially denied, [one of the refugees reported to be leading the protest] led the *Herald* on a surreptitious tour: in the shower block, the cubicles are made from fibro cement. There is no door, and no shower curtain.'[77] The newspaper vindicated some of the refugees' concerns, reporting that, inside the bathrooms: 'There are no baths for the children. There is, however, a pile of plastic potties, stacked near the door. Hot water pipes, light bulbs and electrical cables are exposed. Water from the sinks drains straight into a concrete trough dug into the floor. There are no toilets, just Superloos.'[78]

Senator Tierney admitted that Singleton barracks was built for single people,[79] though it is uncertain at what point he or other operational officials acquired this knowledge. It is further unclear, as such, with the program mainly designed to accommodate families, why the Government proceeded to use Singleton army base to house Kosovar refugees. Recognising the problem, Tierney stated without elaborating in the *Telegraph*: 'But we can get it to a level that

---

townhouses. At Bandiana, refugees arriving shortly would be accommodated in 'soldiers quarters' with communal bathrooms on each floor and dining facilities were located 50 metres from the sleeping area. Those in Brighton were offered cabins that could sleep up to 10 people, five outdoor bathrooms and a dining area 150 metres from the cabins. In Hampstead, the refugees would sleep in rooms for four to six persons, with bathrooms on each floor, showers for around 45 people and dining facilities about 100 metres from the bunkhouse. At Portsea there were to be four to five persons per family room, with showers in each unit block for up to 55 people and a dining room up to 100 metres away from sleeping quarters. In Leeuwin there was an average of four persons per room, with toilets shared by around 42 people and dining area about 50 metres from the sleeping quarters.

76   See E. Wynhausen, 'Promises and reality a world apart', *The Australian*, 19th June 1999, p. 6.

77   'Cold, hungry refugees shun new home', *op. cit.*

78   *Ibid.*

79   Williams, 'Camp no better than Macedonia', *op. cit.*

will be quite comfortable.'[80] The *Herald* described a situation where, in some areas of the barracks, Kosovars were sleeping up to six in a room with families kept separate by temporary partitions. The newspaper report went on: 'In one of the worst, there are three single beds, but no glass in the windows. There is a sink, but no water comes from the tap.'[81] Ardian Frusina, a photojournalist from Pristina, commented that, after living in a Macedonian camp for three months, an Australian official presented him with a piece of paper, which described what the facilities would be. However, he went on: 'they have made us feel like we are living on an animal farm, in a zoo.'[82] Another refugee, Fisnik Hoti, stated in the *Telegraph* that he felt misled: 'They said we would have our own building and bathrooms. There's nothing to do here. At East Hills we could play tennis, volleyball, basketball, but here all we can do is go into Singleton. Singleton is quiet, it's for old men, it's boring.'[83]

The Australian confirmed some of these claims, describing its inspection of a family's room at the Singleton barracks. The room, accommodating four persons, was one of four in a yellow fibro building. The newspaper went on: 'On the floor was cracked, discoloured linoleum, but authorities said the room would soon be carpeted. It was 80 metres from the toilet.'[84] The father of the family occupying the room, who spoke no English, pointed at the small heater on the floor and mimed being cold. As *The Australian* observed: 'He pointed to the foot of the door to show where the wind rushed in at night.'[85]

A significant problem that emerged at Singleton barracks was that the military did not cease artillery exercises once the refugees had arrived at the Safe Haven. Parachute infantry completed the two-week training exercise during the week of the "sit-in" involving field guns and other weapons at Singleton Army training area, about five kilometres from the refugee haven. According to the *Herald*, local Singleton residents 'talked about how insensitive it seemed'.[86] One farmer had heard the exercises from his property 30 kilometres away.[87]

---

80   *Ibid.*

81   'Cold, hungry refugees shun new home', *op. cit.*

82   A. Frusina, cited in *ibid.*

83   F. Hoti, cited in J. Albert, 'Three reject "boring" haven', *The Daily Telegraph* (morning edition), 17th June 1999, p. 4. Hoti is also cited in J. Porter, 'Family protest ends in hospital', *The Daily Telegraph* (afternoon edition), 17th June 1999, p. 4.

84   Niesche, *op. cit.*

85   *Ibid.* Several photographs of the rooms featured in the *Herald* and *The Australian*, depicting facilities offered to the refugees in Singleton (see Appendix 5).

86   H. Gilmore, 'Now They're Next To A Firing Range', *The Sun-Herald*, 20th June 1999, p. 7.

87   *Ibid.*

Defence Minister John Moore, whose Department was part of the team organising Operation Safe Haven, had authorised artillery exercises at Singleton, Puckapunyal and Holsworthy (East Hills) army bases. A military source stated that a recent audit of the sound found that 80 per cent of the noise failed to register or registered minimally at the Singleton Safe Haven.[88] Lloga said that he was 'concerned as a matter of principle', although he also was aware that the exercises were scheduled to take place.[89]

The Australian indicated that the core of the dispute was a misunderstanding between the refugees and Australian immigration officials in Macedonia. At the Stenkovac camp immigration workers had instructed Kosovar refugees to sign an agreement that was printed in both English and Albanian. The Singleton situation was centred, *The Australian* asserted, around the misuse of a particular word in that paperwork. The agreement stated, in English, that 'rooms will be furnished with basic beds, furniture and cupboards'.[90] However, as Lloga explained, the Albanian word chosen for "room" was more correctly interpreted by the refugees as "dwelling".[91] Lloga stated, after speaking with refugees aboard the buses, that they had understood that they were going to be offered a house or an apartment in Australia, and they 'felt Australia had not fulfilled its end of the bargain.'[92] Director of public affairs at DIMA, Stewart Foster, informed the *Telegraph* that the Australian government had divulged information accurately to the refugees about the kinds of facilities they would be offered. A copy of the form provided to the refugees, as cited by the *Telegraph*, read: 'the centres have running water, toilets and bathrooms which you may have to share with other families.'[93]

The "Showdown", Headlines and "Voice"

The language used by the media to depict the protest was, at times, scathing and severely critical, particularly in the *Herald* and *Telegraph*. On 16th June the *Herald* depicted the situation as a matter of compliance, and no longer one of understanding and empathy, constructing a "showdown" between DIMA

---

88   *Ibid.*

89   E. Lloga, cited in *ibid.*

90   Wynhausen, *op. cit.*

91   *Ibid.*

92   Lloga, cited in *ibid.*

93   As cited in Albert, 'Three reject "boring" haven', *op. cit.* Foster is also cited in Porter, 'Family protest ends in hospital', *op. cit.*

officials and those aboard the buses; 'the protest, which began on Monday night, weakened about 7pm [last night] when at least 34 refugees backed down and entered the barracks… "Reality is beginning to set in", said an Immigration Department spokeswoman.'[94] Newspaper headlines presented a similar scenario. In the *Telegraph*, these included: 'Ingratitude of the five-star whingers', 'Ungracious act', 'THANKS A LOT', and 'Rebel refugees to be sent home'. In *The Australian*, which was much more supportive of the protesters, headlines read: 'Creatures and no comfort: refugees', 'Barracks cold comfort for Kosovar who's lost it all', and 'Refugees are entitled to complain'. For the *Herald*, headlines included: 'They survived Kosovo, but won't hack Singleton', 'Cold, hungry refugees shun new home', and 'Kosovars "ashamed" of protest leader'. Headlines, like all newspaper content, provide an opportunity to elaborate the themes and meanings presented in the meta-narrative of the news. However, this is always a deliberate and selective process where headlines remain relative to both public issues "of the day" and broader hegemonic interests.[95]

This situation relates similarly to the selection of "voices" used to complement media representations of the Singleton incident.[96] Absent from the media examined is equitable 'consideration of seeking asylum from the point of view of the asylum seeker.'[97] The refugees involved in the Singleton incident were granted some voice in media coverage, with *The Australian*, *Telegraph* and *Herald* quoting or referring to their statements 52, 16 and six times respectively. This contrasts with the much larger number of statements made by Government officials – mainly Ruddock, Senator Tierney and various DIMA representatives – which numbered at least 71 in *The Australian*, 55 in the *Telegraph* and 38 in the *Herald*. As Richard V. Ericson *et al.* state, a common element in news content is how individuals tend to defer to experts and officials of the administered society who parade before them in the news media.[98] The reality is that the idea of a free market of opinion in the media is as fictional as a free market economy and that individuals have 'little effective opportunity to answer back'.[99]

---

94   E. O'Reilly, L. Kennedy and L. Edwards, 'They survived Kosovo, but won't hack Singleton', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 16th June 1999, p. 1.

95   R.V. Ericson, P.M. Baranek and J.B.L. Chan, *Representing Order; Crime, Law and Justice in the News Media*, Open Press University, Buckingham, 1997, p. 56.

96   This was evaluated by considering the range and frequency of sources (or "voices") drawn on to shape news articles about these events. This includes persons directly quoted and/or whose statements were referred to in the news article.

97   Pickering, *op. cit.*, p. 183.

98   Ericson, Baranek and Chan, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

99   *Ibid.*

One explanation for the variance in figures for "voice" is related to the notion that journalists were not generally permitted to engage with the refugees due to the restrictions imposed by the Immigration Minister at the beginning of Operation Safe Haven. Another variable is that, for *The Australian*, many of the quotes from those refugees involved in the events in Singleton were made by Sabit Salihu after departing the town – because *The Australian* had offered to provide a taxi and accompanied the Salihus to Sydney.[100] The limited voice offered to the Kosovars reinforces the criticism that refugees have often been 'put on trial by the media without the power to narrate their own stories, their own account of their crimes.'[101]

The media granted some "voice" to members of the general Australian population. Offering voice to individuals who "represent" the "community" works to naturalise the perception that news narratives are shaped by and recognise the importance of "commonsense", "public" input. One Nation Party leader Pauline Hanson gained some exposure for her comments that the Singleton protesters ought to be sent 'home', that 'charity begins at home', and authorities should 'put them on a plane and wave them hooray'.[102] Hanson's effect on popular politics was immense in this period, and her impact is captured by Saunders: 'What still remains both elusive and fascinating is why a poorly educated, inarticulate, gaudily attired woman could mobilise such fervent devotion and attention.'[103]

In *The Australian*, four local Singleton residents were cited, whereas none appeared in the *Herald*. By contrast, there were 33 statements made by local Singleton residents (including police and shopkeepers) that featured in

---

100   Other, non-Government commentary was given from people involved with these events as well, comprising at least 33 of these statements in *The Australian*, 32 in the *Herald*, and 64 in the *Telegraph*. The far majority of these "outsider" statements in *The Australian* were made by Eric Lloga the Albanian-Australian lawyer from Melbourne who acted as a "negotiator" on behalf on the Federal Government. His role, as noted throughout this media coverage, was to attempt to convince the "protesters" to leave the bus and enter the Singleton barracks. For the *Telegraph*, most of these "outsider" statements (at least 29) came from workers and refugees living at Brighton barracks in a single expose about the refugees' lives in Tasmania.

101   Pickering, *op. cit.*, p. 185.

102   P. Hanson, as cited in 'And another thing' (editorial), *The Australian*, 17th June 1999, p. 12. Reference to 'hooray' in 'Is "no thanks" no thanks?' (The Rehame Report), *The Australian*, 24th June 1999.

103   K. Saunders, 'Taking the International Spotlight: Pauline Hanson and Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party', *Queensland Review*, 12(2), November 2005, p. 78.

the *Telegraph*.[104] Being interactive with the "public", allowing it to be both a consumer and a producer of news, provides a means by which the mass media is able to develop the authority of its own political opinions. The media's semi-transparency and interactivity is one way in which consent for corporate hegemony is reproduced.[105] News consumers often function as news sources by calling in story ideas, and by being the subject of 'person in the street' segments that demonstrate reaction to news stories.[106] In this way news reports are able to make a firmer claim to authenticity and authority by incorporating what is purported to be popular public perception.

A particular concern for the *Telegraph* was how the Kosovars' 'welcome was wearing thin as [Singleton's] shopkeepers told of isolated incidents of shop lifting, refusal to pay for goods and the "rudeness" of the refugees. Shopkeepers and residents believe "enough is enough" – declaring that if the refugees are not happy in Singleton they should go home.'[107] The *Telegraph* said that 'simmering discontent' had emerged within the Singleton community, as noted by local shopkeeper Kaye Cartwidht: 'The Singleton community was so excited about them coming here and they all worked hard to make their stay as comfortable as possible[.] Now, it seems, their attitude is negative. They seem to think they can have everything for nothing.'[108] *The Australian* noted the transition in media focus and was sceptical of the timing of the negative exposure. The newspaper was critical of other media coverage attempting to *localise* the incident, writing, in reference to the family who stayed the longest aboard their transfer coach: 'The Salihu's imagined sins stained a community.'[109] The emphasis placed by the *Telegraph* on the opinions of individuals representative of the Singleton community must be viewed as strategic and deliberate. As Ericson *et al.* state, the hegemony and authority of media institutions are reinforced by the strategic placement of individuals in the news. Individuals tend to appear in the news when there is no specific implication of an institutional arrangement or questions of status. In this sense individuals do not "speak" for the majority in any sense of the word "public", but they do represent a kind of public when they do appear. At best the individual presents the fiction of "the public" that is central to mass democracy.[110]

---

104   These voices from the community do not include the great volume of letters published in each of the newspapers in relation to the Singleton "bus sit-in".

105   See esp. Ericson, Baranek and Chan, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

106   *Ibid.*

107   O'Shea and Williams, *op. cit.*

108   Cartwidht, Kaye, cited in *ibid.*

109   D. Brearley, 'From wretches to whingers', *The Australian*, 19th June 1999, p. 6.

110   Ericson, Baranek and Chan, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

Najdim Sejdim, designated by the *Telegraph* as one of the protest "leaders",[111] commented that the refugees were not coping well with the near freezing conditions at the camp.[112] Mr Sejdim said that it was '500m to the showers and toilets from the barracks' and 'there is no hot water in the accommodation and it is very cold.'[113] Site manager of the Singleton barracks, army officer Larry Tanner, responded simply: 'Well, it's cold in Singleton. We're all cold.'[114] Ruddock's response, which was repeated in a number of articles, was that Australia had never promised 5-star hotel accommodation.[115] As the *Herald* stated, the Immigration Minister 'would not be dictated to by those refusing to get off the buses'.[116] Ruddock commented, on 16th June:

> These people came from tents where running water is not available, where toilet facilities were built for an emergency situation in which there was significant overcrowding and risk of disease.[117]

There was no indication in the *Herald* as to whether Ruddock's refusal to "negotiate" with the refugees was affected by a concern for providing the optimum care available. Rather, his comments indicated that he was willing to provide only what was immediately on hand and convenient for the Government – a sentiment expressed throughout Operation Safe Haven.

During the Safe Haven legislative debates, for instance, Ruddock reiterated comments by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees that the evacuation program was not intended to be nor was it suited to being a permanent resettlement program. He suggested that such a program was not designed to offer options available to other categories of refugees, arguing instead: 'It could not be clearer. That is what the UNHCR was seeking.'[118] Ruddock indicated that his

---

111 See O'Reilly, Kennedy, and Edwards, *op. cit.*; and, Williams, 'Camp no better than Macedonia', *op. cit.*

112 O'Reilly, Kennedy, and Edwards, *op. cit.*

113 N. Sejdim, cited in Williams, 'Camp no better than Macedonia', *op. cit.*

114 L. Tanner, cited in O'Reilly, Kennedy, and Edwards, *op. cit.*

115 See reference to 'five-star hotel', for instance, in J. Marsh, 'Kosovars "ashamed" of Protest Leader', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 17th June 1999, p. 3.

116 O'Reilly, Kennedy, and Edwards, *op. cit.*

117 Ruddock, cited in *ibid.* Ruddock also cited in Williams, 'Camp no better than Macedonia', *op. cit.*

118 Ruddock, in Migration Legislation Amendment (Temporary Safe Haven Visas) Bill 1999; Second Reading', *House of Representatives: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 11th May 1999, p. 5039.

perspective on the matter was not extraordinary, that the UNHCR had other, more important concerns to deal with than the protests of few dozen Kosovars evacuated to Australia. On 29th June, he speculated about the lack of interest displayed by the UNHCR about the Singleton protest, describing: 'The UNHCR's priority is with the hundreds of thousands of people living in camps on the Kosovo border.'[119] As is consistent with similar statements made by the Immigration Minister throughout Operation Safe Haven, Ruddock was unwilling to explore alternative accommodation options for the Kosovars. The *Herald* emphasised how the Government was 'prepared to wait out the impasse.'[120] The newspaper pointed out, supporting the Federal Government and ridiculing the protesters: 'Immigration officials trying to resolve the protest said the sit-in had taken on farcical proportions, with those on board the buses leaving to use toilet facilities, even having meals, before returning to their seats.'[121]

Initially, Lyndall Sachs from the Australian Regional Office of the UNHCR expressed support for the protesters, pointing out the arrangements were 'inappropriate', and the bathroom facilities (portable "Superloos") were 500 metres from the wooden-hut sleeping quarters. Moreover, she commented: 'having to take the kids to the toilets at night would be a very frightening experience for anyone.'[122] Sachs quickly retracted her comments, however, saying the Australian government's response had been generous. One journalist noted how: 'The whole [Singleton accommodation] situation is an absolute shambles. Even one UN official said so, too, before being forced to retract her criticisms presumably for fear of us throwing a tantie and sulking off from the international aid effort.'[123] There was no other criticism of the Singleton affair offered by the UNHCR, although the retraction does in one sense reflect the political sensitivities associated with the Safe Haven program for UNHCR staff. It is plausible to suggest, too, that the main strategic issue for the organisation had been resolved – to relocate refugees from Macedonia, and thereby assist NATO with its plans for launching a land-assault from that country against Yugoslavia. Staff from the UNHCR had indicated concern at the beginning of the evacuations about the conditional (i.e. temporary) basis of the program. It is likely that these concerns included the flexibility the evacuation program afforded to national governments in setting out the protection arrangements as

---

119   Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, *Media Release*, MPS 104/99, 29th June 1999, cited in York, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

120   O'Reilly, Kennedy, and Edwards, *op. cit.*

121   *Ibid.*

122   See reference to L. Sachs, cited in Head, *op. cit.*, p. 281.

123   S. Williams, 'It's a Cold Comfort Hospitality', *The Sun-Herald*, 20th June 1999, p. 77.

well as the inability of refugees to determine their own standards of living, although these concerns are not directly specified.[124] The Federal Government, nonetheless, was bound by no formal obligations to provide better quality Safe Haven facilities under the UNHCR evacuation arrangements.

Masculinity and Aggression

News reports were further shaped by the idea that the "bus sit-in" was being conducted at the insistence of, at first, several male refugees and then later by Mr Sabit Salihu.[125] These men were often set apart from the remainder of the Kosovars in Singleton in media coverage. They were described as coming from a male-dominated society, whereas the other refugees who had accepted the conditions at Singleton were commonly depicted as rational and reasonable. These kinds of representations of male Kosovar refugees were used at least 10 times in the *Telegraph*, nine times in *The Australian* and four times in the *Herald*. As D.D. McNicoll wrote, in a highly critical commentary piece about the protest in *The Australian*, it was the 'blokes who ran the protest', further noting how 'women have very little say in Kosovar society'.[126] Gendering of the issue served to undermine the motivations of those asking for better quality accommodation and facilities by denigrating supposed aspects of Kosovar culture. As Kate Lyons, spokeswoman for DIMA, explained: 'Because their society is very patriarchal a small group have organised the sit-in and the others won't budge.'[127] Senator Tierney repeatedly asserted that it was the male-dominated culture of the Kosovars driving the refugees' protest, stating: 'It is a patriarchal society and five men are leading this group. What they say goes – the others are falling into line.'[128]

    There were a variety of descriptive terms employed by critics, conveying an image of the refugees as aggressive, violent and agitators in their 'stand' against the Federal Government.[129] These kinds of references were produced at least 147 times in the *Telegraph*, 34 times in *The Australian*, and on 20 occasions

124   M. Barutciski and A. Suhrke, 'Lessons from the Kosovo Crisis: Innovations in Protection and Burden-sharing', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 14(2), 2001, p. 99.

125   An exception is in O'Reilly, Kennedy, and Edwards, *op. cit.* Here, the authors claim the refugees 'are believed to be under the direction of eight male refugees.'

126   D.D. McNicoll, 'Rooing the day we took them?', *The Australian*, 17th June 1999, p. 13.

127   K. Lyons, cited in O'Reilly, Kennedy, and Edwards, *op. cit.*

128   Tierney, cited in Williams, 'Camp no better than Macedonia', *op. cit.*

129   O'Reilly, Kennedy, and Edwards, *op. cit.*

Kosovar refugees spending their third day on the bus at Singleton last night.   *Picture: GARY GRAHAM*

FIGURE 21   *Kosovar refugees on their transfer coach at Singleton barracks, from* The Daily Tele-
graph, *17*[th] *June 1999, p. 4.*

in the *Herald*.[130] *The Australian* continued to draw on many of these terms to
describe the actions of the refugees, despite the support offered by the news-
paper to the protesters' perspective and its rebuff of Government criticism
about the incident. This complements Pickering's findings that, not only were
refugees more likely to be represented by the media as a significant "problem",
but there was the quite "common sense" assumption that they were a "deviant"
problem.[131]

   As stated elsewhere the response of the State has commonly been to at-
tempt to naturalise and make popular the links between "criminal" or "deviant"
behaviours and insubordinates.[132] This is usually achieved in conjunction with
campaigns that identify entire minority communities as the "whole problem",

---

130   This included the use of terms such as "stand-off", "barricaded", "demands", "intransigent",
      "dummy spit", "recalcitrant", "crazy", "abusive", "rebels", "rebellion", "ringleader", "petulant"
      and "uprising".

131   Pickering, *op. cit.*, p. 169.

132   See S. Hall, C. Critcher, T. Jefferson, J. Clarke and B. Roberts, *Policing The Crisis: Mugging,
      the State and Law and Order*, Macmillan, London, 1978.

especially considering Australia's history of popularly excluding those deemed to be culturally different.[133]

These kinds of depictions of the protesters affirmed growing perceptions of the refugees as irrational, tricky and ungrateful.[134] It was in such a light that the *Telegraph* reported about Kosovars shoplifting in Singleton, noting how, according to a shopkeeper, one refugee demanded two packets of cigarettes even though he only had enough money for one. The man reportedly 'got angry and abusive and left'.[135] A local police source described the refugees as 'cunning as rats', although admitting there had only been 'two or three instances where Kosovars have been stopped in the process of attempting to shoplift'.[136] One Kosovar reportedly told staff at a local supermarket: 'We are Kosovar. We don't have to pay' and then left after making an 'offensive gesture'.[137] The cost of cigarettes severely depleted the weekly allowance of $20 offered to the refugees under Operation Safe Haven. This kind of detail was ignored by the *Telegraph*. It wasn't until several months later the Government, at the insistence of Ruddock, had recognised that a lack of 'access to cigarettes' in some centres had led to 'anti-social behaviour'.[138] The main reason Ruddock wrote to John Howard, urging Cabinet to allow the Kosovars to work up to 20 hours per week, was because most of the males were heavy smokers. Ruddock stated that giving cigarettes to the Kosovars would contravene the Government's public health policy. Instead, he said: 'Certainly, the Government thought it would be inappropriate to be buying cigarettes to give away just because people were finding it difficult to break a tobacco-related addiction [*sic*].'[139]

The image of the aggressive and irrational nature of the Kosovars was again highlighted in a *Telegraph* article published almost a week after the protest had began. The article, entitled '100 armed refugees in brawl', highlighted how: 'More than 100 Kosovar Albanian refugees, some armed with cricket bats and road barriers, were involved in a brawl at the Singleton safe haven… The battle

---

133   See esp. S. Poynting and G. Morgan (eds.), *Outrages! Moral Panics in Australia*, ACYS Publishing, University of Tasmania, Hobart, 2007. See also S. Poynting, P. Tabar and J. Collins, *Bin Laden in the Suburbs; Criminalising the Arab Other*, Sydney Institute of Criminology Series No. 18, University of Sydney Faculty of Law, Sydney, 2004.

134   See esp. Williams, 'Camp no better than Macedonia', *op. cit.*

135   O'Shea and Williams, *op. cit.*

136   Unnamed 'police source', cited in *ibid.*

137   *Ibid.*

138   R. McGregor, 'No smokes light Kosovars' ire', *The Australian*, 25th September 1999, p. 4.

139   *Ibid.*

[...] was sparked by two women over [loud] music.'[140] One of the refugees reportedly suffered a broken nose and another man's arm was injured when struck by a teenage girl wielding a cricket bat. As I noted earlier, there were around 800 refugees sharing the facilities at Singleton at this time.[141] Social life at the barracks was understandably tense, considering the circumstances. Refugee Najim Sejdim indicated how one of the reasons for the 'brawl' was that Singleton 'can be boring, and we are all stuck in here together day after day.'[142]

Comparative Agendas: Editorials and Opinion Columns

Editorial positions on the Singleton protest varied dramatically between each of the newspapers. *The Australian* noted its support for the Singleton protest in three separate editorial pieces and granted direct support for the Salihu family in one of these articles. The *Telegraph* was heavily critical of the refugees involved with three editorial pieces dedicated to criticising the "sit-in". The *Herald* maintained some perspective and distance only publishing one editorial piece about the Singleton episode and offering both a degree of support *and* criticism of the refugees involved.

The editor of the *Telegraph* expressed personal outrage at the incident. In the first editorial piece, entitled 'Ungracious act', the editor described the actions of the refugees aboard the buses as 'lamentable', juxtaposing the ingratitude of those involved with Australia's generosity:

> Australia is a generous country, offering sanctuary to these people and 4000 of their countrymen. Even if conditions at the camp were spartan, the protest was inappropriate and ungracious.[143]

The following day's editorial, entitled, 'When a fair go is not enough', articulated that the most pressing concern about the protest was ingratitude. The editor wrote that, with Australia's 'rich, compassionate heritage' of the 'fair go', it 'is difficult for us to understand the reluctance of a group of Kosovar refugees to accept our outstretched hand.'[144] The protesters were described as doing 'their countrymen a disservice with what can only be viewed as a

---

140   J. Albert, '100 armed refugees in brawl', *The Daily Telegraph*, 21st June 1999, p. 7.

141   The figure of 800, as noted earlier, is given in Williams and Stevenson, *op. cit.*

142   N. Sejdim, cited in Albert, '100 armed refugees in brawl', *op. cit.*

143   'Ungracious act' (editorial), *The Daily Telegraph*, 16th June 1999, p. 10.

144   'When a fair go is not enough' (editorial), *The Daily Telegraph*, 17th June 1999, p. 10.

petulant display of ingratitude.'[145] The editor's point was supported by a War-ren cartoon depicting a drought-stricken "battler", who says: 'If things are too rough – they can bunk with us.' This editorial reflects the populist, tabloid style typical of the *Telegraph*, catering to a readership different to newspapers such as *The Australian*. The editorial position echoes the political discourse of the Howard Government, in its consistent attempts to vindicate the concerns of "battlers".[146]

On 17th June *The Australian* editorial, 'Refugees are entitled to complain', expressed outrage at the 'meanness' of the response by Australian officials to the refugees' concerns about Singleton army barracks.[147] The editor criticised Ruddock, who 'could offer no more understanding than a snide remark that Australia had never promised five-star accommodation.'[148] The piece further described the anger felt by some Australians toward the protesters as reveal-ing 'a sour and poisonous underside' to 'our national character'.[149] The editor wrote: 'The vicious response has revealed some Australians to be ungracious and selfish. One man said he felt like "punching (a refugee) in the face."'[150] The piece went on: 'Such meanness suggests that the primary motivation for bringing these people halfway around the world was salving our conscience, not attending to the welfare of people in desperate need.'[151]

The editor said that the refugees 'have some justification for their com-plaints',[152] linking the issues raised in Singleton to concerns expressed during the planning stages of Operation Safe Haven:

> despite concerns that they should be housed close to each other, to the Australian Albanian population and the wider community, the Federal Government has instead housed them in army barracks scattered across the country. Authorities even had to fly an Albanian community lead-er from Melbourne [Erik Lloga] to Singleton to communicate with the protesters, underlining the extent of their isolation.[153]

---

145   *Ibid.*

146   J. Brett, 'The New Liberalism', in R. Manne (ed.), *The Howard Years*, Black Inc. Agenda, Melbourne, 2004.

147   'Refugees are entitled to complain' (editorial), *The Australian*, 17th June 1999, p. 12.

148   *Ibid.*

149   *Ibid.* See also Ericson, Baranek and Chan, *op. cit.* for further discussion on the ideological role of editorials.

150   'Refugees are entitled to complain' (editorial), *op. cit.*

151   *Ibid.*

152   *Ibid.*

153   *Ibid.*

One of the most pressing concerns, the editor later wrote, was that the Koso-vars were 'housed in army barracks away from the eyes of most people.'[154] The Federal Government's reaction to the Singleton incident, the editor stat-ed, demonstrated 'the flint-hearted control of the bureaucracy,' as 'Ruddock played to the morally indignant gallery by suggesting that if they did not ac-cept his rules they could go home'.[155]

Opinion columnists, as evident in this analysis, do not always coalesce with the purported editorial position. However, they perform an important politi-cal role in upholding the 'democratic postulate' of the media.[156] By including "diverse" opinion, newspapers are able to reproduce the appearance that the

---

154   'Refugee plan needs a heart, not control' (editorial), *The Australian*, 19-20th June 1999, p. 18.

155   *Ibid.*

156   E.S. Herman and N. Chomsky, *Manufacturing Consent; the Political Economy of the Mass Media*, The Bodley Head, London, 1988 (reprinted 2008), p. xlix.

news media is committed to a variety of public (rather than corporate or private) interests. *The Australian*, in seven opinion columns, provided a diverse range of commentary concerning events in Singleton. The newspaper's columnists were both supportive *and* critical of the "sit-in" (generally) at least once, while offering direct support to the Salihus at least five times and only being critical of the family on one occasion. The *Telegraph* published five opinion pieces that discussed the Singleton protest, with four of these being severely critical of those involved, and one that was somewhat supportive (though not explicitly). The *Herald* only published two opinion pieces about these events, being critical of the "sit-in" on one of these occasions, while offering support for both the "sit-in" and the Salihus in another.

The *Telegraph's* Miranda Devine was scathing toward the protesters informing readers of the efforts of the women of the Singleton Quilters who had hand-made quilts for each of the refugees. She argued: 'Australia, it seems, just can't do enough to help the refugees. So it's no wonder that their seeming lack of gratitude has inspired much anger.'[157] This was followed by commentary in support of Senator Tierney's description of the Singleton barracks, noting that the barracks had been 'standard accommodation for soldiers and reservists for 50 years.'[158] Of course, the refugees were not soldiers (at least under their present circumstances) and comprised families with small children as well as the elderly. I have noted in Chapter 3 that the Safe Haven program was initially intended to cater to families and mothers with children. Stewart Foster had stated regarding the selection of refugees for evacuation to Australia that the Department had 'put an emphasis on women at risk, those who are alone or with young children. But because the Albanians have strong family links we're also bringing a lot of family units, mum and dad, their children and in some cases grandparents so they can provide each other with emotional support.'[159]

Telegraph columnist Mike Gibson supported the position of the Immigration Minister and Senator Tierney, labelling the sit-in 'outrageous'.[160] In his opinion piece, entitled, 'When doing all we can is not enough', Gibson argued that Singleton barracks was better than 'Those stinking hell-holes [in Macedonia], in which Kosovar Albanians dropped in their tracks, without food, with-

157   Devine, 'Confusion of a town that gave everything', *op. cit.*

158   *Ibid.*

159   S. Foster, cited in B. Wilson and T. Skotnicki, 'Escape from misery on a jet to Sydney', *The Daily Telegraph*, 5th May 1999, p. 7.

160   M. Gibson, 'Ingratitude of the five-star whingers', *The Daily Telegraph*, 16th June 1999, p. 10. See also article reprinted in M. Gibson, 'When doing all we can is not enough', *The Daily Telegraph* (afternoon edition), 16th June 1999, p. 10.

out toilets, without heating, seemingly without hope.'[161] Much of the article centred on the notion of ness and whether the Singleton Kosovars deserved the assistance and generosity that had been offered to them by Australians. Gibson cited one refugee who had arrived in Australia many years before, who stated how 'thankful' she was 'to be here'.[162] He summarised his view of the protesters, describing them as ungrateful, 'five-star whingers',[163] while pointing out that the conditions at Singleton were 'met with the approval of their more colleagues'.[164] The columnist promoted the idea that those who did not voice any concerns must have simply been content with the services provided by the Australian government.

Culture and Class

A Warren cartoon accompanied Gibson's attack on the protesters depicting them as tourists aboard the 'Kosovar Accommodation Reviewers World Tour'. In the cartoon, four male refugees sit at the back of a bus as it drives at pace away from Singleton barracks. The 'Reviewers' hold their thumbs down as they sign a discontented 'x' on a clipboard checklist. The refugees in the image are all men which supported other claims by the media that the style of protest was typical of persons from a chauvinistic, patriarchal Balkan culture. The physical appearance of the men, too, is connected with images drawn earlier by Warren depicting the refugees as staunch, wearing stereotypically Balkan clothes (including the fur hat), and sporting a long moustache and slightly unshaven face.

A second cartoon by Warren published on 18th June and titled 'The Kosovars Lament', depicted male Kosovars in a similar light. The use of these kinds of images to depict the Singleton protesters had significant implications for the broader representation of Kosovar culture by the media throughout Operation Safe Haven. The Kosovars were generally referred to as "Europeans", identifiable by their Western "European-ness", on 18 occasions by the *Telegraph*, 20

---

161   *Ibid.*

162   Anonymous former refugee, cited in *ibid.* The woman (unnamed) went on: 'We were so grateful for the opportunity to come to this country and start a new life. These people in that bus at Singleton … you know what we should do with them? We should drive them back to Sydney, put them on one of those leaky, smelly boats, and send them back to China with all those illegal immigrants. Let them see what sort of welcome they'd receive over there. They are so ungrateful, these people. We should kick them out.'

163   *Ibid.*

164   *Ibid.*

FIGURE 23   *Warren cartoon 'Kosovar Accommodation Reviewers World Tour' published in* The Daily Telegraph *on 16th June 1999, p. 10.*

times in *The Australian* and not at all by the *Herald*.[165] However, there quickly emerged contention in news reports following the protest about whether the Kosovars were to be viewed as Western Europeans (and thus, "like us") or as significantly different. For the most part the willingness of the Kosovars to be satisfied with the accommodation at Singleton was significantly linked to their

---

165   This included references to keywords including: European/s, the ability to speak German, being "like us", being white, clean and nice, and being sophisticated enough to use mobile telephones. They were, further, often described as "family people" or in terms of their family titles or family units, with *The Australian* making 220 references to "the Salihus", mothers, fathers, sons, daughters, brothers, aunts and uncles (and other family-orientated roles). The *Herald* used these terms 46 times, while the *Telegraph* referred to them as such on 122 occasions. One story depicting the Kosovars as "family-types", published in both the *Telegraph* and *The Australian*, reported on the wedding of two refugees at the Singleton army base ten days after the protest had begun. See D. Tanner, 'Refugees flee to the haven of love', *The Australian*, 26-27th June 1999, p. 11. See also J. Albert, 'A love that blossomed from the fields of hate', *The Daily Telegraph*, 26th June 1999, p. 3.
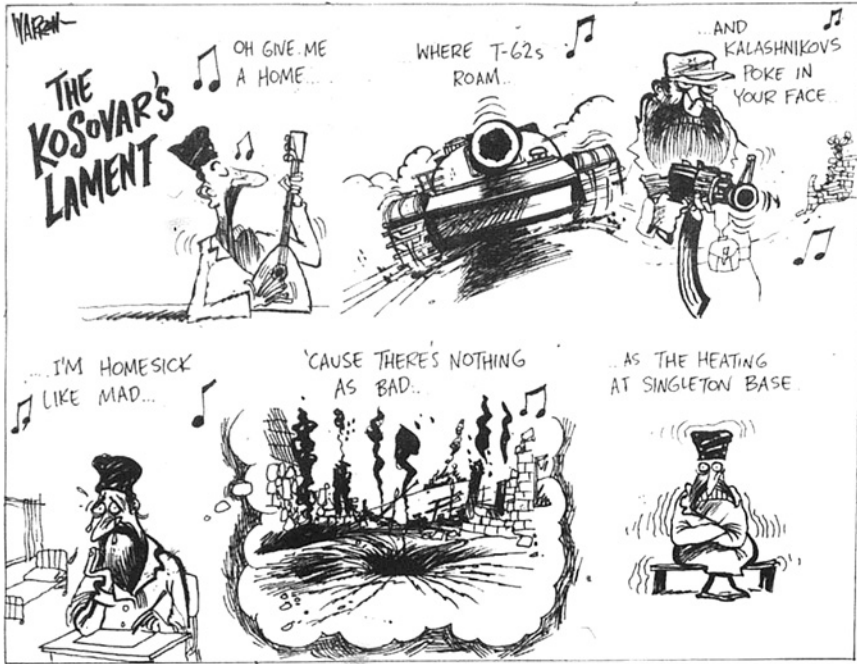
FIGURE 24   *Warren cartoon 'The Kosovars' Lament' published in* The Daily Telegraph *on 18*th *June 1999, p. 10.*

ability to adapt to (or 'hack') Australian conditions and values.[166] It is through such 'binary oppositions [that] difference is established' which includes 'the infinite discursive possibilities for talking about "us" and "them".'[167] *The Australian* cited at least 55 references to the Kosovars as significantly "dissimilar, alien or Other" noting the language, religious and cultural barriers they were supposedly facing (among other issues) upon arriving in Australia. *The Australian* mainly cited these notions, however, in relation to discussions taking place *about* the refugees, rather than suggesting the Kosovars were significantly different *to* Australians. The *Herald* and the *Telegraph* described or referred to the refugees in these terms on 12 and 28 occasions respectively.

Some of these comments included references to how the Kosovars were intimidated by flora and wildlife in Singleton, including "snakes", "kangaroos" and the refugees' descriptions of the Australian bush as a "jungle". On many

---

166   O'Reilly, Kennedy and Edwards, *op. cit.*
167   Pickering, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

occasions, the newspapers were very patronising towards the refugees on this point, suggesting they should be able to "hack" Australian conditions – including the below zero temperatures in Singleton at this time of year – particularly when compared to those from which they had come.[168] Ramona Koval, writing in *The Australian*, commented on the representational paradox:

> Hark back to a few months ago when refugees first started streaming into Macedonia and all the talk was about how like us they were. They had mobile phones. They had Reeboks. They had stylish jackets… They were easy to feel sorry for because they were white and clean and nice.[169]

In reference to the recent events in Singleton, Koval makes the point sarcastically: 'The refugees were so much like us that they preferred not to freeze at night in a room with no privacy.'[170]

Shifting representations in the media is related to Gramsci's notion of consent as well as Hall's ideas about representational power. Gramsci asserts that consent is (re)produced via the ability of hegemonic interests to bend and shift in relation to social trends and to do so on an ongoing basis.[171] Attempts at utilising and controlling the power of representation, in this sense, can more accurately be defined as a representation *of* power, available for scrutiny and dissection by scholars.[172] Representational power in the media is sustained by those in control of media production – who are able to undermine the abilities of subordinate groups to determine their own public persona. This process provides a vehicle for displacing and dislodging the power of self-representation from the hands of subordinates and to define such groups as unpopular and outcasts without significant challenge.[173]

As refugees routinely disrupt established national/spatial orders, the view of refugees as "rebels" and "deviants" emerges somewhat naturally from the perspective of those attempting to support the existing consensus – from governments, to the media and any other powerful institution. Government empathy for the Kosovars rapidly declined as an authoritative, symbolic response to their dissention. It set the standard for the public to follow suit, as is further

---

168   See reference to 'hack' in O'Reilly, Kennedy and Edwards, *op. cit.*

169   R. Koval, 'Forget politics, think compassion', *The Australian*, 26th June 1999, p. 20.

170   *Ibid.*

171   T. Purvis and A. Hunt, 'Discourse, Ideology, Discourse, Ideology, Discourse, Ideology…', *The British Journal of Sociology*, 44(3), September, 1993, pp. 492-495.

172   These can be measured and accounted for via content analysis and discourse analysis.

173   See esp. Hall, Critcher, Jefferson, Clarke and Roberts, *op. cit.*

signified by the way both the Government and popular conceptions of the refugees (as portrayed in the media) resorted to denigrating Kosovar culture. Negative representations of the protesters were enhanced by the deployment of popular stereotypes that existed prior to the sit-in – that, the Kosovars were unable to communicate properly in English or share Australian "values" and thus ought to be treated differently, patronised and have less expected of them than "normal" people. This process is linked to how minority social groups become subject to intense "ethnicisation" in the media, "caged" by cultural representations and stereotypes over which they have very little control.[174]

Stereotypes provide journalists with useful analogies in constructing their stories. An untimely description of the Kosovars in *The Australian* was provided by Luke Slattery, who referred to the protesters as 'busniks'.[175] The Serbian *chetniks* (mercenaries or militiamen) who had fought during the Yugoslav civil war (1991-92) had been hired by the Yugoslav regime to fight in Kosovo against the KLA, expelling many ethnic Albanians from the province.[176] Such a generalisation about Balkan migrant groups resonated with pre-existing stereotypes in Australia easily deployed by the dominant cultural group attempting to keep the dissenting refugees in check.

The earlier status bestowed upon the Kosovars by the news media as acceptable, "middle class" refugees further became the basis of much criticism and resentment. The *Telegraph*, in particular, repeatedly reinforced the point that the refugees involved in the Singleton incident were not genuinely "in need" of assistance because of their supposed affluence and education levels. The analysis revealed that the *Telegraph* made references to the Kosovars as "middle class" on 13 occasions.[177] A similar trend was evident in *The Australian*, with these kinds of references numbering 11 times, while there were

---

174   See discussion on ethnic "caging" in G. Hage, *White Nation, Fantasies of White Supremacy in a Multicultural Society*, Pluto Press, Annandale, 1998, pp. 105-116.

175   L. Slattery, 'DIARY – Old fruit slips into history', *The Australian*, 19th June 1999, p. 20.

176   Chetniks were originally Serbian nationalist partisans fighting alongside the Allies in World War II. Their loyalties were transferred to the Yugoslav communists under the Tito regime. The name was also popularly applied to Serbian militia forces in the Yugoslav civil war (1991-92).

177   These terms include references to terms such as "middle class" and the refugees' former employment roles in Kosovo (such as teachers or doctors, as well business managers). These terms are not always exclusive, as "middle class" may also be indicated by levels of affluence and other factors. However, "middle class" is conceived in more explicit terms here. This has been done for the purposes of establishing much clearer coding categories. Moreover, this is because "affluence" is the basis of another coding category, as noted below.

zero "middle class" descriptors used in the *Herald. The Australian* did not actively dispute this perception, stating that the frustrations expressed by the refugees, many of whom were middle class and used to living in cities and towns, were compounded by the fact that they had been dispatched to a 'bleak army camp hours from Sydney – and the nearest Albanian community.'[178] Lloga, speaking to *The Australian*, said the refugees felt they were in the middle of nowhere in Singleton. Several of the men he had spoken to on the buses were teachers and one was a doctor. He claimed: 'They had nice cars, they had nice things, they would have gone out for cappuccinos, much as you and I.'[179] The notion that the protesters were middle class, however, provided a firm basis for criticisms expressed by columnist Miranda Devine. As she wrote in the *Telegraph*, referring to comments made by an interpreter working at the barracks: 'He says the refugees who staged the sit-in are sophisticated middle-class urbanites from the equivalent of Kosovo's Double Bay – designer refugees.'[180] Devine added: 'The story doing the rounds of the East Hills refugee centre yesterday was that the ringleader of the holdouts, a charismatic man who "speaks like an American politician", has "never even been in the Macedonian refugee camps."'[181]

The income levels of the refugees were a significant focus in media coverage, with the number of terms depicting the refugees as "affluent" comprising 44 in the *Telegraph*, 16 in *The Australian* but only one in the *Herald*. The main target of criticism in this regard was Sabit Salihu, with some reports referring to him as a "wealthy" man demanding a "five star hotel" for his family from the Australian government. Senator Tierney and the Immigration Minister both made these kinds of accusations. As Tierney stated, on 16th June:

> Some of them wanted a few stars accommodation more than we could give them.[182]

Ruddock, playing down the refugees' concerns, commented that the accommodation provided was 'appropriate':

> We don't keep apartments available for thousands of people who might need them or require them at any point in time.

---

178   Wynhausen, *op. cit.*

179   Lloga, cited in *ibid.*

180   Devine, 'Confusion of a town that gave everything', *op. cit.*

181   *Ibid.*

182   Tierney, cited in Williams, 'Camp no better than Macedonia', *op. cit.*

> We have appropriate accommodation in an emergency situation
> which certainly is not five-star hotel accommodation, nobody said it
> would be.[183]

A variety of criticisms were further made across the newspapers claiming the Kosovars were "designer" refugees, who were "sophisticated" and wore quality brand-name clothing.[184]

   The shift from news articles being overwhelmingly supportive of the refugees to a stance that was severely critical of them was significant. It paralleled a major decline in popular empathy, while there was an increase in descriptions of the refugees as wealthy, demanding, not genuinely in need of assistance and exploiting Australia's hospitality.[185] As Pickering notes concerning shifting representations of the Kosovars, at first, 'the inviolability of the nation state was sidelined as the rhetoric changed [from a punitive, anti-refugee stance] with altered political imperatives... however, only inasmuch as the objects of representations (refugees and asylum seekers) remained passive.'[186] For Pickering, the Kosovars were acceptable only in the context in which they were deemed "ideal" refugees, including: '[the] very young or very old, afraid; persecuted by an internationally proclaimed oppressive state; present in Australia only by invitation of the Australian government; they originated from "wars" and "conflicts" in which Australia had a current political and publicly proclaimed interest; and, they were visibly to be in Australia.'[187]

Gratefulness and Charity

During the Singleton protest there was a swift return in media reports to 'more conventional devalued representations of refugees' as 'ungrateful, aggressive,

---

183   Ruddock, cited in *ibid.*

184   Descriptions of the refugees as "urbanites", coming from cities and large towns, numbered 12 in *The Australian*, two in the *Telegraph* and zero in the *Herald*. Representations of them as rural, poor or village "folk" comprised five in *The Australian*, one in the *Telegraph* and zero in the *Herald*. This does not include representations of the refugees in cartoons, which, on several occasions, continued to depict those Kosovars delivered by the Australian government to Singleton as poor, rural villagers fleeing on tractors and wearing peasant clothing. One such cartoon by Nicholson published in *The Australian* depicted the protesters piled on to a tractor, fleeing Singleton barracks for Sydney. See cartoon by Nicholson, in *The Australian*, 17th June 1999, p. 12.

185   See also McNicoll, *op. cit.*

186   Pickering, *op. cit.*, p. 176.

187   *Ibid.*, p. 177.

demanding, draining and different.'[188] The idea that the Kosovars were "ungrateful" numbered 55 times in the *Telegraph*, 20 in *The Australian*, and seven in the *Herald*.[189] According to a Rehame radio poll, 60 per cent of all callers expressed similar, negative sentiments about the protesters.[190] Popular talk-back radio host John Laws proclaimed on-air on 16th June that the refugees had 'thrown our hospitality back in our faces in a very discourteous fashion.'[191] Such anger reflects the way unpopular cultural and social groups throughout Australian history are routinely sacrificed 'for the sake of normality'[192] which in turn legitimates the incarceration or expulsion of such persons when they break or challenge symbolic rules of exclusion. Prime Minister John Howard voiced his opinion on the protest, linking it to the binary of un/gratefulness:

> I would imagine the great bulk of the refugees who are immensely grateful for the safe haven that Australia has provided would be extremely embarrassed about the behaviour of a small number[.] I think they would be a huge embarrassment to their fellow countrymen.[193]

Gratitude was a central concern for Senator Tierney as well, who stated that it was unfortunate that the incident 'has tended to have an effect on the attitude of the Australian people towards [Operation Safe Haven]. But they should not judge the overall gratitude of the people who have come out from Kosovo by the actions of a few.'[194] Tierney's account of the Singleton protest in the Senate positioned the refugees' gratitude and the 'enormous generosity' of Australians as central to the program. He emphasised the importance of 'pay[ing] special tribute to that generosity',[195] despite 'the actions of one man [Sabit Salihu] who may have soured the taste of some of the very generous people in Australia'.[196] Only *The Australian* resisted the Government's emphasis on gratitude and generosity. The newspaper deplored how, in relation to

---

188   *Ibid.*

189   These kinds of descriptions include the use of concepts such as "ungrateful", "whingers" and "ingrates".

190   'Is "no thanks" no thanks?' (The Rehame Report), *op. cit.*

191   J. Laws, cited in *ibid.*

192   Pickering, *op. cit.*, p. 184.

193   Howard, cited in R. McGregor, 'Kosovar family can go – Ruddock', *The Australian*, 19th June 1999, p. 6.

194   J. Tierney, in 'Kosovo Safe Haven Program', *Senate: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 21st June 1999, p. 5831.

195   *Ibid.*, p. 5832.

196   *Ibid.*

the protesters: 'word of their ingratitude spread, tainting the wider refugee population in the process.'[197]

On the other hand, Australian "charity" – involving offerings, acts, responses, monies, materials given or undertaken by Australians for the benefit of the Kosovars – was noted at least 349 times in the *Telegraph*, 142 times in *The Australian*, and on 60 occasions in the *Herald*. The *Herald* pointed out how one of Sydney's most prestigious private schools, Trinity Grammar, had transferred its annual cadet camp from Singleton barracks to make room for the refugees.[198] An article in the *Telegraph* noted, while accentuating the criminal behaviour of refugees shoplifting in Singleton, that local Lions, Rotary and Apex clubs had collectively raised $20,000 and purchased cots, potties and babies bottles for the refugees.[199] Hunter Valley coal miners had donated a further $10,000 to the Singleton Safe Haven.[200] As one local shopkeeper stated, noting the generosity of the community: 'What more can we do?'[201]

Evident is an attempt, particularly by the *Telegraph*, to establish clear contrasts between the compassion and generosity of the Australian public and "unappreciative", "undeserving" refugees. This type of coverage paralleled Tierney's account of the Singleton protest in the Senate where he described the efforts of local Hunter Valley residents as 'overwhelming'[202] while criticising leaders of the protest.[203] The discourse worked to demonise the refugees as ungrateful for Australia's efforts, support the Government in its efforts to control the image of the Safe Haven program, and silence or discredit critics (especially from within the refugees' ranks) by occupying a moral high ground. As

---

197   Brearley, 'From wretches to whingers', *op. cit.* See also 'Refugees are entitled to complain' (editorial), *op. cit.* Here the editor pointed out: 'Despite inconceivable sufferings, most of the refugees to have arrived in Australia have been courteous and eager to express their thanks. A few have expressed dissatisfaction... We might hope for thanks from our guests but we cannot demand obeisance as a condition of their stay... we cannot expect refugees to suddenly forget their traumas or their dignity thanks simply to Australian hospitality... we have done them no favours, only that which could decently be expected of human beings. Our hospitality should include a generosity of spirit as well as physical comforts but this sorry episode has shown that, as a nation, we are not as generous as we like to believe.'

198   'Column 8', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 21st June 1999, p. 1.

199   O'Shea and Williams, *op. cit.*

200   *Ibid.*

201   Anonymous 'shopkeeper', as cited in *ibid.*

202   Tierney, in 'Kosovo Safe Haven Program', *Senate: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 21st June 1999, p. 5830.

203   *Ibid.*, p. 5831. Here, too, Tierney provides a description of the protesters as rebels and conniving, as those who had 'hatched this plan that the 80 would stay on the bus.'

Pickering says, affirming Hall's ideas on the role of the media in constructing social categories of deviance: 'The seductive and material power of language in the representation of deviance can be seen in the binary logic deployed in relation to asylum seekers and refugees: bogus/genuine; refugees/"boat people"; law abiding/criminal; legal/illegal; good/evil.'[204] Such logic 'insists on the polarisation of the subject and provides communal comfort in removing ambivalence through the forced choice of either/or.'[205] Crucially, it has tended to be these kinds of punitive binaries that have come to inform responses by the State, which in turn advocate the need to combat deviance as the foremost goal.[206]

However, the charity/gratefulness discourse reveals much more about the close and complementary relationship formed between the media and Federal Government in their responses to the protest. The nature in which charity is offered, in conjunction with how charitable sentiment is deployed after assistance is given, presents a particular picture of the net gain that is desired by the group offering it. Within media discourse, it is possible to recognise how the recipient group becomes the object of good intentions – to view the point at which they are completely overlooked as subjects, grouped together and no longer identifiable by more niche, individual needs.[207] Moreover, collectivising the refugees into two distinct binary groups – such as un/deserving, un/grateful, rebels/dignified – performs a symbolic political function that is easily understood by the public. The politicisation of the protest in this way provides a clearer picture of the strategic objectives of the Government. That is, it undermines negative press coverage of Operation Safe Haven, and maintains the appearance of a compassionate refugee program while imposing a tightly regulated and inhumane form of protection.

One of the refugees residing at Singleton Safe Haven, referred to by *The Australian* as Selvet, a mother of four children, said that before the family's arrival all she knew about Australia was that it is 'end of the world'.[208] As *The Australian* commented: 'Now she knows Australians expect newcomers to act as if they have just been let through the gates of paradise.'[209] Despite widespread claims about the ingratitude of the Kosovars in Singleton, the protest incident challenged the idea of Australia being the "most generous country

204   Pickering, *op. cit.*, p. 172. See also Hall, Critcher, Jefferson, Clarke and Roberts, *op. cit.*

205   Pickering, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

206   *Ibid.*

207   See reference to the 'objects of action' in B. Dickey, *No Charity There; A Short History of Social Welfare in Australia,* Allen and Unwin, North Sydney, 1987, p. xiv.

208   Selvet, cited in Wynhausen, *op. cit.*

209   *Ibid.*

in the world." During Safe Haven legislative debates Ruddock applauded the prominence of 'compassion fatigue' within the Australian community and the support the nation had shown in assisting the Kosovars.[210] He argued that Australia continued to be 'out in front'[211] in responding to requests made by the UNHCR, noting how the country already had 'the largest [permanent refugee intake] in per capita terms in the world.'[212] In Senator Tierney's explanation of the Singleton incident to the Federal Parliament, he noted how, per capita, Australia's efforts in accepting 4000 refugees was five times that of the US (which had accepted 20,000). He thanked the broad cross-section of the Australian community – the Government, Department of Defence, DIMA, community groups and individuals – who had 'given so generously to this program.'[213]

The Singleton episode revealed the extent of the Australian government's generosity, and exposed the self-congratulatory appraisal surrounding the evacuation program as cleverly manufactured political rhetoric.[214] *The Australian* argued: 'Until [the Singleton incident], in fact, we were still clapping ourselves on the back for our hospitality, after admitting the Kosovars, to keep them on ice for three months, living in a sort of legal limbo in isolated army barracks where they have to sign in and out.'[215] In the end, the Government's response to the questions posed in Singleton was to repatriate the family who had carried on the protest, refusing to be 'dictated to'[216] by refugees asking for better quality services.

"Ungrateful": the Salihu Family

By 17th June media reports about the Singleton barracks protest began to shift some of the focus to three members of the Salihu family, the only refugees remaining aboard their transfer coach. *The Australian* wrote that the Salihus –

---

210 Ruddock, in 'Migration Legislation Amendment (Temporary Safe Haven Visas) Bill 1999; Second Reading', *House of Representatives: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 11th May 1999, p. 5038.

211 *Ibid.*, p. 5040.

212 *Ibid.*, p. 5039. The number of permanent refugees accepted at this time was 12,000 per annum.

213 Tierney, in 'Kosovo Safe Haven Program', *Senate: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 21st June 1999, p. 5830.

214 Herman and Chomsky, *op. cit.*

215 Wynhausen, *op. cit.*

216 O'Reilly, Kennedy, and Edwards, *op. cit.*

Mr Salihu kisses his sick mother as they prepare to leave Singleton.   *Picture GARY GRAHAM*

FIGURE 25   *Elmaze Salihu, as depicted in* The Daily Telegraph, *19*th *June 1999, p. 9.*

which included Sabit (47 years of age), his wife Shaha (48 years) and Sabit's elderly mother, Elmaze – refused to leave the bus because Sabit was trying to 'save face'.[217] Lloga,who had arrived the day before to be a liaison between

---

217   Niesche, *op. cit.* The ages of Sabit and Shaha are given in Williams and Stevenson, *op. cit.*

government officials and the protesters,[218] said: 'We do not want to force him to lose face, he has lost everything else.'[219] Lloga recognised the importance of taking Sabit's concerns seriously: 'Staying on the bus is a way of saying "I do exist, take notice of me"'.[220] He said: 'This man is deeply traumatised. He has shut down and we need to reach him.'[221]

Sabit Salihu's concerns were not unreasonable, particularly considering the medical needs of Elmaze, who was 74 years of age (pictured above).[222] Lloga stated that Sabit demanded better facilities for his mother and wanted to be taken back to East Hills for this reason. Elmaze was suffering from seizures, had respiratory problems, was incontinent and required a toilet in her room.[223] Sabit later stated in *The Australian* that he had spoken to the captain of Singleton barracks on arrival at East Hills. The Captain had assured him that facilities were good enough for his sick mother. However, he added: 'when we got there the toilets and baths were 500m away[.] I could not let my mother stay there.'[224] The tragic scene was captured by the *Telegraph*, noting how Elmaze had slept on the pull-down bunk bed at the rear of the bus while a portaloo was set up behind the bus which 'the aged woman frequently alights to use'.[225]

Senator Tierney was scathing in his criticism of the family, particularly Sabit, despite his assertion that he had a PhD in social psychology and was more than capable of dealing appropriately with the situation.[226] Tierney described Sabit as the 'total problem' and the stumbling block to moving his

---

218   See Niesche, *op. cit.* The author refers to Erik Lloga as an Australian-Albanian community 'elder'.

219   Lloga, cited in *ibid.*

220   Lloga, cited in *ibid.*

221   Lloga, cited in Brearley, 'From wretches to whingers', *op. cit.*

222   See Niesche, *op. cit.* This source says that the elderly Elmaze Salihu was 84-years of age, though most others state she was 74-years old. Porter, 'Family protest ends in hospital', *op. cit.*, also says Elmaze was 84 years of age.

223   *Ibid.* See reference to 'respiratory problems' in Brearley, 'From wretches to whingers', *op. cit.*

224   S. Salihu, cited in D. Brearley and D. Kennedy, 'Kosovars' night ride back to the hills', *The Australian*, 18th June 1999, p. 4.

225   Albert, 'Three reject "boring" haven', *op. cit.*

226   See Tierney, cited in Brearley and Kennedy, 'Kosovars' night ride back to the hills', *op. cit.* As Tierney told *The Australian*: 'I've got a PhD in social psychology so I can understand. People who have been through that war-strife situation, they're not necessarily going to behave rationally. But Immigration has bent over backwards to meet [Mr Salihus] needs.'

family into the Singleton barracks.[227] The Senator added that Sabit Salihu had 'lost support in the camp' and that he was acting 'irrationally'.[228] The *Herald* supported Tierney, declaring Sabit 'is behind the bus protest which has tested the patience of the Government and public and riled his fellow refugees' who were 'ashamed' of him.[229] The newspaper cited a suspicious member of the Albanian-Australian community who was at the barracks to reinforce the point: 'We should send him back… Australia has supported and helped our people, yet he shames us. Perhaps he was sent here by the Serbs to cause trouble for us'.[230] This supported Tierney's description of Sabit as 'intransigent', implying his demands were absurd and unreasonable.[231]

This criticism was juxtaposed with Tierney's story of having spent an evening sleeping at the Singleton barracks. The Senator told *The Australian* the evening had been a 'very comfortable night,'[232] and noted in the *Telegraph* that 'the rooms are well-built and insulated from the cold.'[233] He further disagreed with the protesters claims about the bathrooms, stating that the distance to the amenities block was just 20 paces for women and 50 for men, adding: 'It's just like in a caravan park.'[234] Tierney was reportedly photographed patting his bed at the base and commenting that he had discarded blankets during the night because he was so warm.[235] As *The Australian's* Frank Devine stated, however: 'the senator did not have to share his room with half a dozen strangers or get up during the night to take children to the outside toilets. He did not face an hour's walk into town and was not a modest woman dreading the communal showers… for Tierney to pretend he was sharing [the refugee's hardships] was fraudulent and foolish.'[236]

On the evening of 17th June, the Salihu family heeded the advice of medical officers at the base. They agreed that their transfer coach should drive Elmaze

227   Tierney, cited in Porter, 'Family protest ends in hospital', *op. cit.* Tierney is also cited using the phrase 'total problem' in 'Rebel Kosovar family flies out of Australia', *The Daily Telegraph*, 23rd June 1999, p. 9.

228   Tierney, cited in Porter, 'Family protest ends in hospital', *op. cit.*

229   Marsh, 'Kosovars "ashamed" of Protest Leader', *op. cit.*

230   'A member of the Australian-Albanian community' (unnamed source), cited in *Ibid.*

231   Tierney, cited in Niesche, *op. cit.* Sabit Salihu is also described as 'intransigent' by Erik Lloga in Marsh, 'Kosovars "ashamed" of Protest Leader', *op. cit.*

232   Tierney, cited in Niesche, *op. cit.*

233   Tierney, cited in Albert, 'Three reject "boring" haven', *op. cit.*

234   Tierney, cited in Devine, 'Confusion of a town that gave everything', *op. cit.*

235   F. Devine, 'Bungling leaves behind a busload of rancour', *The Australian*, 28th June 1999, p. 13.

236   *Ibid.*

to the Singleton Hospital. The officers had been concerned about Elmaze's de-
teriorating condition which included signs of pneumonia.[237] Sabit later told
reporters that his mother was diagnosed with five separate illnesses and that
doctors wanted to keep her in the hospital.[238] The family spent less than a
day at the hospital and during that time they were offered a private room. On
18th June, Tierney told *The Australian* that the family had been offered, but re-
jected, a room with a balcony, kitchen, ensuite and French doors opening to a
veranda with enough room to sleep three.[239] He informed the reporters that
the family had been offered first-rate accommodation at Singleton Hospital,
noting the generosity of the staff: 'The hospital was incredibly co-operative...
[They offered Mr Salihu] all the things he said he wanted for his mother.'[240] As
Tierney noted the following week in the Senate: 'I really take my hat off to Sin-
gleton District Hospital for the generosity of their treatment of this family.'[241]
Sabit was reported to have refused the hospital room because a maximum
of only three members of the family were permitted to remain with Elmaze
overnight. He stated that it would be preferable to keep to family together,
even though other family members were permitted to visit during the day.

The family departed Singleton Hospital via taxi, arriving at the local
train station at around 4pm. *Australian* reporters David Brearley and David
Kennedy noted how the family would have to wait three hours in the night
cold before the next train to Sydney arrived in Singleton. The episode came to
a 'sad coda', they wrote, when the Salihu family 'huddled on a platform at Sin-
gleton in the cold waiting for a train to return them from the Hunter Valley to
Sydney's East Hills refugee base'.[242] The family members were joined by Sabit
and Shaha's two daughters (Valbona and Mergim) and a son (Hysnije).[243] An-
other son, 16-year old Adnan, decided to remain at the Singleton barracks.[244]

237   D. Brearley and D. Kennedy, 'Kosovars' exodus ends back at East Hills', *The Australian*, 18th
       June 1999, p. 1.
238   Brearley and Kennedy, 'Kosovars' night ride back to the hills', *op. cit.*
239   Brearley and Kennedy, 'Kosovars' exodus ends back at East Hills', *op. cit.*
240   Tierney, cited in Brearley and Kennedy, 'Kosovars' exodus ends back at East Hills', *op. cit.*
241   Tierney, in 'Kosovo Safe Haven Program', *Senate: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Aus-
       tralia Parliamentary Debates, 21st June 1999, p. 5831.
242   Brearley and Kennedy, 'Kosovars' exodus ends back at East Hills', *op. cit.*
243   Porter, 'Family protest ends in hospital', *op. cit.* says the children were all aged in their
       20's. However, Williams and Stevenson, *op. cit.* state that Valbona was 25, Mergim was 18
       and Hysnije was 19. Interestingly, it is not until much later that the *Herald* revealed how
       two of the seven children (Adnan and Hysnije) who had travelled to Australia with Sabit
       Salihu were those of his deceased brother. This is reported in S. Mann, 'An "ungrateful
       Ringleader" Who Has No Regrets', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 17th August 1999, p. 10.
244   S. Jackson, 'Kosovar family heads for home', *The Australian*, 23rd June 1999, p. 3.

As noted by *The Australian*, Sabit 'was so concerned about getting away from Singleton that he had spent $150 on train tickets.'[245]

Brearley and Kennedy, documenting their eyewitness account of events at the train station, reported how Senator Tierney, 'trouble-shooter for Immigration Minister Philip Ruddock, paced the adjacent carpark insisting that the Government had "bent over backwards to meet the family's needs".'[246] The reporters described how Tierney, waiting at the station for the family to depart for Sydney, at no stage offered them alternative transport.[247] Brearley later commented: 'At no stage between 3.30pm and 6.30pm did I see [Senator Tierney] approach the family, although he did speak with them earlier. His plan was to see them safely onto the train.'[248] It is very clear that *The Australian*, unlike the *Telegraph* or *Herald*, was pursuing a much more inquisitive perspective, one that ultimately challenged the Government's view of the Salihu family.

"Making" the Story: Intervention by *The Australian* and Subsequent Criticism by the Government

One of the most contentious issues to arise from the Singleton affair was when *Australian* journalists Brearley and Kennedy offered to hire a taxi to take the Salihus to Sydney at the expense of $570.[249] It was, as a former editor-in-chief of *The Australian* later remarked, 'a very tabloid thing for a broadsheet that claims the quality high ground [as *The Australian* does]'.[250] Defending their actions, the reporters stated simply that the refugees were 'free to move about as they please'[251] and that the actions of the Salihus 'were entirely legal'.[252] Under the terms of the refugees' stay, as recognised by *The Australian*, they were entitled to travel anywhere in Australia, though at their own expense, if they rejected the Government's accommodation.[253] The reporters' actions, however, were viewed as a direct challenge to the Safe Haven program by Tierney

---

245   Brearley and Kennedy, 'Kosovars' night ride back to the hills', *op. cit.*

246   Tierney, cited in Brearley and Kennedy, 'Kosovars' exodus ends back at East Hills', *op. cit.*

247   *Ibid.*

248   Brearley, 'From wretches to whingers', *op. cit.*

249   G. Leech, 'MELBA – Australia fare', *The Australian*, 19th June 1999, p. 2.

250   M. Day, 'Tabloid turn of events', *The Australian*, 24th June 1999.

251   Brearley and Kennedy, 'Kosovars' exodus ends back at East Hills', *op. cit.*

252   Brearley, 'From wretches to whingers', *op. cit.*

253   McGregor, 'Kosovar family can go – Ruddock', *op. cit.*

and Ruddock. The reporters defied Government restrictions imposed on the media, having secured just a few hours alone with the Salihus. Brearley and Kennedy circumvented Government media spin and Departmental controls over public relations concerning Operation Safe Haven.

The reporters, having spoken to an immigration official, confirmed that the Salihus would be allowed to gain short-term access to the East Hills centre. The family was greeted the next morning at 12.30am by staff at the base, who were waiting with a wheelchair for Elmaze.[254] The *Telegraph*, which subsequently labelled the family 'rebels',[255] had been highly supportive of the Government throughout coverage of the incident, describing how Senator Tierney had even 'maintained a vigil at Singleton base hospital' alongside the family as they slept in the casualty waiting room.[256] The response by the *Telegraph*, however, corresponded to a broader populist backlash against the protesters. It reflected the results of a poll conducted by Melbourne-based tabloid *Herald Sun* in which 96 per cent of participants were against the protesters.[257] As Mark Day, a former editor of *The Australian*, observed, *The Australian* was 'swimming against the tide on the story of the Kosovo refugees,' and, 'By doing so the paper took a robust stand against populism.'[258]

The Australian supported the actions of its reporters, as indicated by the headline, 'Ruddock attacks Good Samaritan gesture'.[259] Ruddock argued that the newspaper had compromised DIMA's accommodation arrangements, and that: 'Those who assume responsibility for relocating evacuees also assume a duty of care for them.'[260] The Immigration Minister stated that such 'Undermining' of the Department's arrangements 'puts seriously at risk our ability to manage further arrivals due within days.'[261] There were a further 410 refugees due to arrive at East Hills from Macedonia on 20th June, while another 100 refugees were currently residing there.[262] Ruddock said, on 18th June, while

---

254   Brearley and Kennedy, 'Kosovars' exodus ends back at East Hills', *op. cit.* See also D. Tanner, 'Ruddock attacks Good Samaritan gesture', *The Australian*, 18th June 1999, p. 4, where Ruddock confirms that the family would be allowed to reside at East Hills under 'temporary arrangements', though he doesn't specify the length of time.

255   Williams and Stevenson, *op. cit.* See also reference to the Salihus as 'rebels' in M. Farr, 'Rebel refugees to be sent home', *The Daily Telegraph*, 19th June 1999, p. 9.

256   Porter, 'Family protest ends in hospital', *op. cit.*

257   Day, *op. cit.*

258   *Ibid.*

259   Tanner, 'Ruddock attacks Good Samaritan gesture', *op. cit.*

260   Ruddock, cited in *ibid.*

261   Ruddock, cited in *ibid.*

262   Farr, 'Rebel refugees to be sent home', *op. cit.*

the accommodation at Singleton would remain available to the Salihus: 'It is regrettable that one family has stood out from all the others in so far refusing that hospitality.'[263] He viewed the Salihus rejection of Singleton barracks as simply a matter of compliance, describing those who had moved into the Safe Havens without protest as having 'accepted Australia's hospitality with grace and dignity'.[264] By 19th June, Ruddock stated that, having rejected the Singleton accommodation: 'there is no option [for the Salihus] but to give them their other choice to return home.'[265] The Immigration Minister added: 'Staying at East Hills is not an option' and that 'the Kosovars do not have the option of picking and choosing accommodation'.[266] The position of the Government was to regard compliant Kosovars as graceful and dignified, while the protesters were to be were viewed as demanding and ungrateful – there was no middle ground recognised by the Government, nor "special treatment" to be offered to any of the refugees.

The response of *The Australian* to the Singleton protest extended from a particular editorial agenda that set it aside from the *Herald* and the *Telegraph*. Campbell Reid, sub-editor for *The Australian*, stated that there was unanimity expressed at a recent editorial conference in which staff were 'appalled that the collective charity of the nation survived only until one family among 4000 people crossed a line on accommodation standards.'[267] From the beginning of Operation Safe Haven, he explained, *The Australian's* editorial team very firmly claimed to advocate a human rights agenda. Reid confirmed a week after the Singleton incident that *The Australian's* approach to the story had indicated its 'willingness to take a pro-active position on the issues confronting Australia', that 'We want to be a voice of leadership'.[268] Despite claims about compassion, the newspaper actively catered to a more niche, 'intellectual' (as opposed to populist) readership.[269] *The Australian*, being the ultimate benefactor, generated its own story as well as reader interest, but also crossed the line between reporting events and creating news.

The Australian's editor-in-chief, David Armstrong, 'rejected' Ruddock's claim that the newspaper had 'undermined' the refugees' accommodation

263   Ruddock, cited in Tanner, 'Ruddock attacks Good Samaritan gesture', *op. cit.*

264   Ruddock, cited in D. Murphy, 'Go home, Kosovar family told', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 19th June 1999, p. 3.

265   Ruddock, cited in McGregor, 'Kosovar family can go – Ruddock', *op. cit.*

266   Ruddock, cited in Farr, 'Rebel refugees to be sent home', *op. cit.* Ruddock is also cited on this point in Murphy, 'Go home, Kosovar family told', *op. cit.*

267   C. Reid, cited in Day, *op. cit.*

268   Reid, cited in *ibid.*

269   Reid, cited in *ibid.*

arrangements.[270] Armstrong said that the journalists had acted out of compassion towards a family clearly disturbed by its experiences.[271] As another *Australian* reporter, David Tanner, wrote: 'the Immigration Department was prepared to let the group [...] wait on a cold railway platform for a journey that would have required them to change trains at least twice and arrive in a city completely foreign to them late at night.'[272] Tanner added: 'Once there they would have had to walk carrying heavy luggage for more than a kilometre in the dark to the barracks, including crossing a footbridge over the Georges River.'[273]

As noted by Brearley, the response by the Immigration Minister and Senator Tierney reflected a politicised transformation of the image of the Kosovars in the media from 'wretches to whingers'.[274] The reporter argued that the Government's response, along with critical backlash in other media, supported the notion that 'any charity we offer Kosovo's refugees is conditional: a beggar's gratitude is the prescribed response; anything less renders the whole deal suspect.'[275] Brearley went on: 'Ostensibly [...] the facilities fail to meet the needs of their ailing grandmother Elmaze, but there's more to the story.'[276] He criticised Tierney for attempting to 'put the government spin on proceedings', and for stating that Sabit Salihu was 'totally unreasonable', that Elmaze's condition was 'something they'd normally treat at home' and that the Government had 'bent over backwards' to accommodate them.[277]

Other media outlets and government spokespersons denounced the actions of the reporters claiming they had breached the media's code of ethics. On 21st June, Tierney announced a senatorial inquiry into the incident and threatened to lodge a complaint with the Australian Press Council arguing that it was not the role of news organisations to create news; rather, they were to simply report and stay out of it.[278] He stated: 'This is the case of a reporter crossing the

---

270   Tanner, 'Ruddock attacks Good Samaritan gesture', *op. cit.*

271   *Ibid.*

272   *Ibid.*

273   *Ibid.*

274   Brearley, 'From wretches to whingers', *op. cit.*

275   *Ibid.*

276   *Ibid.*

277   Comments by Tierney, cited in *Ibid.*

278   M. Saunders, 'Senator to press his case', *The Australian*, 22nd June 1999, p. 2. See also discussion about media 'ethics' in this case in E. Simper, 'Reporter's helping hand not a breach of ethics', *The Australian*, 23rd June 1999, p. 13. See also the Senator's comments in Tierney, in 'Kosovo Safe Haven Program', *Senate: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 21st June 1999, p. 5831.

boundary, and instead of reporting the news, actually making the news'.[279] The *Telegraph* supported Tierney, deciding not to become involved due to ethical concerns. The *Telegraph's* editor-in-chief, Col Allan, commented: 'If the story was an interview with the family, fair enough[.] But the story here was the family's travels, and if you interfere with that, you've changed the course of the story.'[280] The *Telegraph* claimed to have maintained the moral high ground on the matter (as opposed to *The Australian*), although its response very clearly indicates the political and populist leanings of the newspaper.[281]

Day dismissed the criticism, describing how other media had merely suffered 'an attack of sour grapes because they, too, saw the story being taken on a new course by the intervention of a rival reporter. They were quick to invoke the position that reporters should not be participants.'[282] Most significantly, it was not only competing media organisations that feared they had lost control of the narrative. The story was no longer under the direction of public relations officers within the Department of Immigration. The controls imposed by the Department on the situation are implicit in statements later made by Sabit Salihu after arriving home in Ferijaz: 'no one could speak to us, not television people. Even the Albanian people were frightened to speak to us [*sic*].'[283] Frank Devine accurately depicted the kind of control the Government had attempted to impose on the media: 'Before the first refugee set foot in this country, Ruddock declared war on the media… [he] was afraid parts of it wouldn't look good.'[284] Devine added: 'Immigration officials flooded into the camps as guards [...] to hold nosy parkers at bay… Ruddock's guards made the Kosovars feel at home by warning them to have nothing to do with the west-

---

279   Tierney, cited in McGregor, 'Kosovar family can go – Ruddock', *op. cit.*

280   C. Allan, cited in Day, *op. cit.*

281   See Tierney, cited in P. Akerman, 'Case for the press', *Sunday Telegraph*, 27th June 1999, p. 63. Here, Senator Tierney told AAP news service that *The Australian* had 'crossed the boundary between independent commentator and have become activists… That's against the code of practice… This incident is a classic example of unethical practice.' See also Tierney, cited in McGregor, 'Kosovar family can go – Ruddock', *op. cit.* Here, The Senator referred the 'unethical' behaviour of the newspaper to the Senate Select Committee on Information Technology, of which Tierney was a member, which was in the process of reviewing the powers of the Press Council. See also similar sentiments expressed by Tierney in Saunders, 'Senator to press his case', *op. cit.*

282   Day, *op. cit.* See also criticism of *The Australian* by Akerman, *op. cit.*

283   S. Salihu, cited in M. Stevens, 'Robbed, jobless but home happily', *The Australian*, 26th June 1999, p. 1.

284   Devine, 'Bungling leaves behind a busload of rancour', *op. cit.*

ern press.'[285] Television coverage, he noted, was taken from 'guided tours for television crews of "authorised" areas of safe havens'.[286]

As *The Australian's* editor indicated, at the core of the Government's concerns was the desire to dictate media spin concerning Operation Safe Haven; 'we had committed a cardinal sin: we helped a family escape, for a time, the bureaucrats' control.'[287] He rebuffed Tierney's threat of a Senate inquiry, noting that: 'Last night, he had the dumb honesty to say we had acted unethically because we had opposed the Government's line.'[288] This was in reference to the comments made by Tierney, that: 'This incident is a classic example of unethical practice. The Government has taken a particular line and what News Limited has done is facilitate the opposite.'[289] As Day observed, underlying Tierney and Ruddock's criticisms of *The Australian* was the sentiment that the Government was 'miffed because it was seen as hard-hearted, uncaring, and having lost control of the situation.'[290]

"Facts" About the Salihu Family

The media provided a range of insights about the Salihus, particularly Sabit, who was commonly reported to be the spokesman and head of the family – and, according to the *Telegraph*, was the 'ringleader' of the bus sit-in.[291] However, depictions of the Salihu family in the media were inconsistent, raising significant questions concerning the accuracy, credibility and political leanings of the newspapers under investigation. It was commonly reported that the Salihus had resided in their family house in the town of Ferizaj in southern Kosovo, a town with 50,000 residents before the war and located 40 kilometres from Pristina.[292] However, there were a number of variations, elaborations or

---

285   *Ibid.*

286   *Ibid.*

287   'Refugee plan needs a heart, not control' (editorial), *op. cit.*

288   *Ibid.*

289   Tierney, cited in Saunders, 'Senator to press his case', *op. cit.*

290   Day, *op. cit.*

291   Porter, 'Family protest ends in hospital', *op. cit.* Sabit Salihu is also described as the 'ringleader of the Kosovar refugee revolt' in 'Rebel Kosovar family flies out of Australia', *op. cit.*

292   See for instance these details in 'Macedonian option for stay-put Kosovars', *The Australian*, 21st June 1999, p. 2. See also the investigative report by Brearley, 'From wretches to whingers', *op. cit.*, which states that eight family members had fled to the Macedo-

details missing across the *Herald*, *Telegraph* and *Australian* concerning aspects such as where the family had stayed in Macedonia before coming to Australia, as well as Sabit's occupation. The use of facts about the family was often consistent with whether the article and more broadly the extent to which the newspaper at hand had advocated support for the Singleton protest.

Some articles questioned whether the family were "genuine" refugees and had been sincere in their intentions in coming to Australia. Situated within the broader political discourse, it cast doubt on the 'legitimacy and genuineness' of refugees 'without questioning the assumptions upon which debatable terms such as "phoney" and "bogus" are based.'[293] A point of ambiguity was whether the family had actually been living in the Macedonian Stenkovac refugee camp when they had applied to be evacuated to Australia. The *Telegraph* speculated, without confirmation and citing rumours circulating at the Safe Havens: 'this wealthy man stayed in a private home'.[294] The links made here between affluence and whether the family were genuine refugees corresponded to Senator Tierney's explanation to Federal Parliament, which emphasised: 'It was reported by the people who took the cab fare and the station fare that he had plenty of money with him.'[295] In *The Australian*, Sabit had informed reporters initially that, while he had stayed in the camp with his wife, daughters and sons, his elderly mother had been staying in a private home in a Macedonian village near the camp.[296] Later, *The Australian* reported that the family had 'enjoyed the hospitality of an Albanian family in Tetovo, Macedonia's second city,' while also spending time at Stenkovac.[297] The *Herald*, citing a member of the Australian-Albanian community working with the refugees on the bus (who wished to remain anonymous): 'He is wealthy. I was told he did not spend a single day in a camp in Macedonia.'[298]

In relation to Sabit's employment background, according to earlier reports in *The Australian*, Sabit had been a truck driver but was unemployed when Serb police told his family to leave the province or 'be decapitated.'[299] Later,

---

nian border during the conflict earlier in 1999. Seven family members were evacuated to Australia, while a third son had been evacuated to London.

293   Pickering, *op. cit.*, p. 183.

294   Devine, 'Confusion of a town that gave everything', *op. cit.*

295   Tierney, in 'Kosovo Safe Haven Program', *Senate: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 21st June 1999, p. 5831.

296   Brearley and Kennedy, 'Kosovars' night ride back to the hills', *op. cit.*

297   Stevens, 'Robbed, jobless but home happily', *op. cit.*

298   Cited in Marsh, 'Kosovars "ashamed" of Protest Leader', *op. cit.*

299   S. Salihu, cited in Brearley and Kennedy, 'Kosovars' night ride back to the hills', *op. cit.*

the newspaper described Sabit as a 'trader', importing clothes for sale at local markets.[300] The *Telegraph* described Sabit as a truck driver as well,[301] though elsewhere it was said he had been a limousine chauffeur for 21 years.[302] In most cases media reports suggested that Sabit was different to most Kosovars – somehow more selfish, wealthy and tricky – with the effect of isolating him and his claims as extraordinary and unreasonable. The accumulated effect is reflected in the links that emerged between the notions of genuineness and gratefulness. Such connotations propagated anger and a sense of betrayal as a "common sense" reaction, alongside the "common sense" resolution to deport the rebels as soon as possible. As Pickering says, 'Genuineness and gratefulness become a newsworthy question', particularly when popular identity discourse in Australia is founded on principles of exclusion and exclusivity.[303] She goes on: 'It is with relative ease that such rule breakers are necessarily expelled from the community'.[304]

Points of contestation in media narratives – particularly in relation to the embellishment or exclusion of certain details – have the effect of casting serious doubt over the credibility of the subject. These ambiguities provided an unstable view of the Salihus with the potential of generating suspicion and undermining any claims they may have had to being "genuine" refugees. The shift from empathy to outrage in the media is reflected in how some sources attempted to represent Sabit Salihu as wealthy, middle class and thus as undeserving of Australia's assistance. As *The Australian* wrote, capturing other media's depictions:

> the media's image of the family was changing: their wallets bulged with crisp Australian banknotes, and Sabit was a wealthy man who lived in a big house and made his fortune in the unlikely field of chauffeuring. They were, one account suggested, 'designer refugees.'[305]

The newspaper went on, saying that the family had paid a 'high price' in the media for its 'middle class credentials, which have not even been established.'[306] Disputing these kinds of representations, *The Australian* added:

---

300   Stevens, 'Robbed, jobless but home happily', *op. cit.*

301   Porter, 'Family protest ends in hospital', *op. cit.*

302   Williams and Stevenson, *op. cit.*

303   Pickering, *op. cit.*, p. 183 and p. 184.

304   *Ibid.*, p. 184.

305   Brearley, 'From wretches to whingers', *op. cit.*

306   *Ibid.*

'Sabit wears a Nike jacket but there is nothing flash about him. And his mother, wizened and weary, looks like she's straight off the back of a tractor.'[307]

Descriptions of the personal character of Mr Salihu comprised the basis of much of the criticism of his actions. He was occasionally described in news articles as the 'patriarch' of his family, a term that was used at least seven times in *The Australian*, though it was only used once by the *Herald*.[308] Although the *Telegraph* did not describe Mr Salihu as a 'patriarch', it did utilise the term 'patriarchal' at least two times to suggest that the protesters' behaviour was supposedly reflective of Kosovar culture. The descriptor 'patriarchal' was cited only once by the *Herald* and while *The Australian* quite clearly supported the actions of its reporters to assist the Salihu family, constant description of Sabit as the 'patriarch' of his family reinforced negative sentiments that Kosovar culture was somewhat chauvinist and male-dominated.[309]

From the range of public figures interviewed about the Singleton protest, Senator Tierney most often used these kinds of negative, "patriarchal" descriptors. As he explained to the Senate, describing the earlier part of the protest: 'We should understand that they are coming from a very patriarchal society, and what these six leading men said actually went and people did follow what they said.'[310] Such language was part of attempts by the Senator to defuse criticism of the Singleton Safe Haven and undermine Sabit Salihus' claims. The central focus on Tierney in media coverage underscores his importance as an authority on the matter and for public understandings of the protest. Noting this, ALP Senator Robert Ray (Victoria) criticised Tierney's public relations efforts during parliamentary debate. A major problem that emerged during the protest, as Ray identified, was immense politicisation of the Safe Haven program by the Immigration Minister from the beginning. Ray criticised the Immigration Minister's 'very poor form in appointing only coalition members to be patrons of the Kosovar refugees in Australia,' describing how the appointments 'fit a pattern of sleaziness and pettiness' that was consistent with other areas of policy.[311] Ray added: 'That is not a bipartisan approach. That is to do

---

307   *Ibid.*

308   Erik Lloga refers to Sabit Salihu as the family's 'patriarch' in Marsh, 'Kosovars "ashamed" of Protest Leader', *op. cit.*

309   See for instance Tanner, 'Ruddock attacks Good Samaritan gesture', *op. cit.*

310   Tierney, in 'Kosovo Safe Haven Program', *Senate: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 21st June 1999, p. 5831.

311   R. Ray, in 'Appropriation (Parliamentary Departments) Bill 1999-2000; Second Reading', *Senate: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 30th June 1999, p. 6881.

with petty, political-scoring in this country.'[312] Ray commented: 'I wonder what Senator Tierney thought when the acid dropped on him [as sole patron of the Singleton Safe Haven]. He would have loved to have a co-patron [...] to assist him at Singleton.'[313] It was not until eight days after the protest began that a co-patron representing the Labor Opposition was appointed to the Singleton Safe Haven.

Tierney's role as sole patron to the Singleton Safe Haven (until 22nd June) and as Government spokesperson for the barracks was crucial to public perceptions of the incident. His view was significantly influenced by party conservatism, pressure from the Immigration Minister and the need to uphold a positive public image of the Government while discrediting the claims of the protesters. Writing in *The Australian*, Brearley argued: 'Constrained by both law and Coalition policy, Senator Tierney kept his distance [from the Salihus at the train station].'[314] The public relations dilemma for Tierney was two-fold. On one hand, the Senator was obliged to adhere to the party line. He would be acting against official policy by assisting the Salihus in their efforts to return to East Hills, "undermine" DIMA's planning efforts and contradict the Minister's position on the matter. Moreover, the pressure placed on Tierney as the Singleton patron and Government spokesperson was amplified by media coverage. As Leech notes, one could only imagine 'the shame [the Federal Government] would have worn if Elmaze Salihu had caught pneumonia.'[315]

The Salihus Return to Kosovo

The Salihus departed Sydney airport for Rome on the morning of 22nd June 1999. From there, the family told *The Australian* that they planned to fly to Macedonia, with the intention of then driving to their hometown of Ferizaj.[316] The town had suffered heavily from Serb attacks and bombardments, although the fighting had ceased and the town declared safe by UN observers.[317]

The Australian documented the Salihus' return, describing how the Salihu family's home remained intact but most of their property was taken by Ser-

312   *Ibid.*, p. 6880.

313   *Ibid.*

314   Brearley, 'From wretches to whingers', *op. cit.*

315   Leech, *op. cit.*

316   Jackson, 'Kosovar family heads for home', *op. cit.* See also 'Refugees free to go', *The Daily Telegraph*, 24th June 1999, p. 7.

317   D. Brearley, 'Kosovars likely to find home wrecked', *The Australian*, 24th June 1999, p. 3.

FIGURE 26   *Philip Ruddock waving goodbye to the Salihu family, as depicted in* The Australian,
             28th *June 1999, p. 13.*

bian troops.[318] It was further described how imported clothes worth around
$US50,000 had been stolen from the Salihu residence which Sabit had planned
to distribute at local markets. Sabit told *The Australian* that the family's life sav-
ings had been invested in the clothes. He said he did not know how the family
would be able to survive because there were no other forms of employment
available in the current climate.[319]

   A great number of homes in Ferizaj had been destroyed in the war. Report-
ing from Ferizaj on 28th June, Matthew Stevens from *The Australian* stated that
there was no longer any major tension in the town between ethnic Serbs and

---

318   Stevens, 'Robbed, jobless but home happily', *op. cit.*
319   *Ibid.*

Albanians. He stipulated that this was probably because most ethnic Serbs had left when NATO forces arrived. UN staff commented that Serbs would eventually try to return. However, as Sabit Salihu suggested, local Albanians would find it difficult to 'be friendly'.[320]

The Australian also shed new light on aspects of the Salihus experience in Australia. The elderly Elmaze Salihu told the newspaper of her concerns about staying in Australia, that with her extremely poor health she feared she would die in a place other than Kosovo.[321] *The Australian* described how, for Sabit, 'getting Elmaze home was what all the bitterness in Australia was really about'.[322] Sabit further commented: 'This is her place, her home. She should be here. We all should. It doesn't matter that there is little food or no doctor. This is where we must be.'[323]

On 17th August 1999, the *Herald* depicted Sabit as much more relaxed and comfortable since returning home with his family. The newspaper described Sabit as the 'Kosovar refugee who quit Australia after 17 days and became a media pariah', who was 'regretful but not repentant'.[324] The *Herald* depicted Sabit as casually 'chain-smoking' while offering thanks to the Australian Government: 'I thank them because I know it's a problem when you take a crowd of people into a civilised state, because there is another mentality operating there, a different mentality from the one that operated where we had come from.'[325]

The *Herald* confirmed reports about the lack of employment available in Kosovo, and described how 'looters' had 'ransacked' many homes in Ferizaj.[326] However, the Salihus '3-bedroom house, unlike the homes of several neighbours, escaped the torches of retreating Serb forces'.[327] Sabit informed the *Herald* that he had recently obtained employment as a translator for the Polish troops serving in Ferizaj with the UN peacekeeping force.

The *Herald* further noted the manner in which Sabit, sitting in 'his neat, but austere, loungeroom', recalled 'the conversation that probably sealed his

320   S. Salihu, cited in M. Stevens, 'Happy returns for family calling Kosovo home again', *The Australian*, 28th June 1999, p. 3.

321   Stevens, 'Robbed, jobless but home happily', *op. cit.* See also Stevens, 'Happy returns for family calling Kosovo home again', *op. cit.*

322   Stevens, 'Robbed, jobless but home happily', *op. cit.*

323   S. Salihu, cited in *ibid.*

324   Mann, 'An "ungrateful Ringleader" Who Has No Regrets', *op. cit.*

325   S. Salihu, cited in *ibid.*

326   *Ibid.*

327   *Ibid.*

The Salihus depicted after returning home to Ferizaj (Elmaze Salihu, the family home, and a family group photo), and the Salihus waiting at Singleton train station. From *The Australian* 28th June 1999, p. 3.

return to postwar Kosovo'.[328] As Sabit commented: '[Phillip Ruddock] said to me through an interpreter: "So, you want to go back even though your home has probably been destroyed?" And I replied: "I will go back just to live in a tent in the backyard."'[329] The *Herald* added: 'He can see the humour in it now.'[330]

Conclusion

The Singleton incident generated contention and debate about the quality of the accommodation facilities provided by the Australian government to the Kosovar refugees. Kosovars who were dispatched to quarters in Singleton had legitimate concerns about the quality of the Safe Haven program. Having evaluated the concerns of those refugees offered accommodation at the Singleton barracks, as well as the position of the Federal Government in upholding its

328   *Ibid.*

329   S. Salihu, cited in *ibid.*

330   In *ibid.*

obligations to UNHCR, one of the foreseeable problems at Singleton – as had been expressed by various commentators during the planning stages of Operation Safe Haven – was the distance imposed by the Federal Government between the majority of the Australian community and the refugees. This was further noted by critics of the Government during the Singleton protests. The accommodation plan effectively isolated the refugees from the majority of the Australian population as well as from Albanian communities capable of assisting the Kosovars during their temporary stay. Under the Safe Haven Visa program the Kosovars were "free to leave" (as Ruddock suggested) the shelter of the Safe Havens, but faced foregoing Government protection and support.

This chapter has discussed the relationship formed between the media and the Federal Government in responding to the Singleton protest. The isolation of the Kosovars was overlooked by the media (excepting, to a degree, *The Australian*), as was consideration for the traumatic experiences the Kosovars had endured. Moreover, debate about the suitability of using army barracks was overshadowed by the refugees' supposed insult to Australian hospitality and popular outcries concerning their "ingratitude". The majority of media coverage supported the Federal Government in these matters, frequently adopting the Immigration Minister's and Senator Tierney's account of the Singleton protest. This coincided with a dramatic transformation of popular conceptions of the Kosovars from welcomed to ungrateful and the deployment of negative stereotypes by the media including notions that the refugees were patriarchal, violent, suspect and intransigent.

A close and complementary relationship between the tabloid press and the Howard Government was clearly evident on these issues. Only *The Australian* resisted the Government's attempts to politicise and undermine the refugees' requests for better quality services. This was further demonstrated by the activist role of the newspaper where staff intervened directly to assist the Salihu family, producing scathing criticism from the Government. The Singleton incident captures the way popular refugee discourse has continued to be shaped by an expectation that refugees ought to be grateful for the opportunities provided to them by Australia. It further denotes that questioning of the country's refugee programs and its generosity is readily offset by popular campaigns to demonise refugees as deviant and undeserving. The Singleton incident reveals the extent to which Australia's media institutions have been willing to support hostility to refugees when they have sought higher quality protection and treatment.

FIGURE 28   *Crowd in Pristina soon after the 1999 Kosovo war had ended.* Courtesy Christian Oster.

FIGURE 29   *In rural Kosovo, homes damaged during the war. Photographs taken shortly after ceasefire.* Courtesy Christian Oster.

FIGURE 30   *In rural Kosovo, homes damaged during the war. Photographs taken shortly after ceasefire.* Courtesy Christian Oster.

FIGURE 31   *On the road to Pristina, in the early days after the war.* Courtesy Christian Oster.

FIGURE 33 In Kukes (Albania), this United States marine – monitoring the German military crossing into Kosovo the day after the signing of the ceasefire – was among the first American soldiers seen in public in Kukes. Courtesy Christian Oster.

FIGURE 34 *German soldiers driving towards the Kosovar border along the streets of Kukes (Albania) the day after the ceasefire was signed, with U.A.E. solder in the foreground and German television cameraman hanging on to a truck.* Courtesy Christian Oster.

FIGURE 35   *German KFOR soldiers driving through Kukes (Albania) as part of a military convoy heading towards the Kosovo border, shortly after the peace agreement.* Courtesy Christian Oster.

FIGURE 36   *A crowd of Kosovar refugees and local Albanians line the streets of Kukes (Albania). The tank depicted in the centre led the German convoy heading towards the Kosovo border shortly after ceasefire.* Courtesy Christian Oster.

The End of Operation Safe Haven: Repatriation and the High Court Challenge

Introduction

The Kosovars were returned to their homeland by the Australian government. Many went home without a choice and many without a home to go back to. The army barracks offered to house them began to close once the war ended in June 1999. The Immigration Minister detained Kosovars who refused to go home. Prime Minister John Howard was steadfast in his resolve to remove the Kosovars from Australian territory. Immigration staff at the barracks threatened to use tranquillisers against those refusing to comply. Philip Ruddock used legal powers to deny any further protection to the Kosovars. He had declared them unlawful non-citizens. To do this he used Safe Haven laws that contradicted Australia's commitments to international law and human rights.

The Safe Haven Visa scheme insulated Philip Ruddock from any checks on his powers. At any time he could expel Kosovar refugees, remove entire families and children against their will, and detain them without trial or review. Some of those who remained in Australia in early 2000 confronted these circumstances directly, presenting a challenge in the High Court to prevent their repatriation. Others evaded deportation by hiding from authorities, only caught as a result of surveillance operations conducted by the Department of Immigration for refugees on the run. The initial sentiment of generosity espoused to Operation Safe Haven had long since faded along with the flashes of the news cameras.

Chapter 5 is set out in three parts. The first part examines the closure of the Safe Havens and the repatriation of most Kosovar refugees between July and the end of 1999. This section explores the rationale underpinning the Winter Reconstruction Allowance, a monetary incentive offered by the Federal Government to the refugees to leave Australia. It investigates the Immigration Minister's threats to detain the Kosovars, as well as the legal ramifications wherein the Safe Haven Visa program enabled sending the refugees home in the period immediately following the war.

In the second part of this chapter I examine a range of issues facing Kosovars still residing in Australia in the early months of 2000. The main focus is on the High Court challenge posed by some of the refugees to prevent their repa-

triation together with media representations of this episode. A secondary focus is on the removal of Kosovar refugees by the Federal Government and the incarceration of those who continued to refuse to leave Australia voluntarily. This section also explores media coverage of the Department of Immigration's "hunt" for refugees deemed "on the run".

The final part of this chapter elaborates on the circumstances facing Kosovar refugees once they returned home in early 2000. The main concern here is the extent to which the media supported both the Federal Government's "tough" stance on repatriation, as well as the humanitarian concerns of the UNHCR.

A Safe Return? The Closure of the Safe Havens and Tightening the Reins

A peace agreement was reached between NATO and Yugoslavia on 9th June 1999, eleven weeks after the beginning of NATO air strikes against Serbian forces.[1] The agreement was followed by the withdrawal of Serbian troops and the division of peacekeeping duties in the province between US, British, Italian, German and French troops.[2] Kosovo became a NATO protectorate and was directly administered by the UN until a formal declaration of independence from Serbia was announced in 2008. The withdrawal of Serbian troops and the rapid return of refugees from border camps generated an atmosphere of panic for thousands of ethnic Serbian Kosovars, many of whom fled to Belgrade in fear of reprisals by the KLA.[3]

Although systematic persecution had ceased, the security and economic situation of Kosovo was far from stable when the Australian government began to repatriate ethnic Albanian refugees to the province in July 1999. By mid-July, the UNHCR regarded much of Kosovo safe for return. Canada and Germany had begun repatriating some Kosovar refugees on 9th July,[4] while a total 628,000 had returned home in the month after the peace settlement.[5]

---

1   J. Miles, 'PEACE SEALED; NATO and Serbs sign agreement on withdrawal', *The Daily Telegraph* (Afternoon Edition), 10th June 1999, p. 1 and p. 2.

2   See 'Peacekeepers head for Kosovo', *The Daily Telegraph*, 11th June 1999, pp. 34-35.

3   D. Williams, 'Fearful Serb hordes jostle to flee Kosovo', *The Daily Telegraph*, 20th June 1999, p. 53.

4   C. Ho, 'Kosovar Refugees Turn Eyes On Home', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 10th July 1999, p. 13. This comprised about 5000 in Canada and 15,000 in Germany.

5   *Ibid.*

A UNHCR staff member in Canberra stated that: 'Our assessment is that while conditions remain precarious in Kosovo, the situation is sufficiently secure for UNHCR to co-ordinate and manage the return of refugees who are volunteering to return.'[6] The organisation stated that 64 per cent of housing had been damaged or destroyed in the war, while 'food was scarce, water contaminated and health facilities severely damaged.'[7] A concern for the RCOA was the speed at which refugees were returning, citing the 'enormous challenge for aid providers in Kosovo.'[8]

The situation remained unsafe for about 800 refugees who had lived in Eastern parts of Kosovo before the war, a region that had become part of Serbia proper as part of the NATO-Yugoslav peace agreement.[9] There was an obvious danger to these refugees if they were to be repatriated by the Australian government. Australian-Albanian National Council chairman Erik Lloga stated: 'We can't deliver them to Milosevic only to have them again thrown across the border.'[10] He described how some of the refugees never wanted to see the Balkans again, arguing: 'There should be an option for permanent residency for those who cannot go back or aren't willing to go back.'[11] Many refugees wanted to remain in Australia and rebuild their lives because they had no home to return to. As Lloga commented: 'Probably a large portion who have no connection with Kosovo proper as it is now constituted, they have no country to return to – but Australia does not offer an option of applying for refugee status.'[12]

Opposition immigration spokesperson Con Sciacca commented that it made economic sense to allow the refugees to apply to stay in Australia while they were in the country. Moreover, he added: 'Even if as many as 50 per

---

6   E. Hansen, cited in *ibid.*

7   in *ibid.*

8   M. Piper, cited in *ibid.*

9   R. McGuirk, 'Please let us stay', *The Daily Telegraph*, 14th July 1999, p. 2. See also P. Trute and A. Kamper, 'Kosovars preparing to go home', *The Daily Telegraph* (Morning Edition), 15th July 1999, p. 19. See similar article in P. Trute and A. Kamper, 'Kosovars to fly home in two weeks', *The Daily Telegraph* (Afternoon Edition), 15th July 1999, p. 19. See also 'News Briefs', *The Australian*, 14th July 1999, p. 4.

10   Lloga, cited in McGuirk, *op. cit.* See also 'Back Home' (editorial), *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 15th July 1999, p. 16, which states how the Australian-Albanian National Council 'now insists that the Federal Government change the status of all the 3,900 ethnic Albanians from Kosovo to allow them to remain in Australia permanently.'

11   Lloga, cited in McGuirk, *op. cit.* See similar remarks by Erik Lloga in P. Green, 'Kosovo refugees want to stay here for good', *The Australian*, 15th July 1999, p. 2.

12   Lloga, cited in McGuirk, *op. cit.*

cent wanted to stay, that adds up to 2000 people, and that represents only 2-3 per cent of Australia's total (immigration) intake.'[13] Sciacca (along with the Democrats) called on Ruddock to amend the Safe Haven legislation to allow those who wanted to apply for residency to do so onshore rather than after they had gone home.[14] A Department of Immigration spokesperson responded by stating that it had been made clear to the Kosovars that they would have to return home before being granted more permanent visa status.[15] This sentiment was reinforced by Senator Kay Patterson who had been appointed patron to all the Safe Havens. She noted that: 'We made sure before the refugees came that they were very clearly counselled that it was a temporary arrangement, and they signed an agreement indicating they were aware of that.'[16]

The Daily Telegraph and the Sydney Morning Herald were, for the most part, supportive of the Federal Government's position on repatriation. The Herald attacked Sciacca for 'abandoning the pretence of bipartisanship on the refugees.'[17] The argument presented in the newspaper went on: 'For the sake of some easy politicking within the ethnic communities in Australia… He [Sciacca] has undermined the UN efforts to restore community life in Kosovo. And he has promoted a false hope among the refugees. A retraction is needed to clean up the mess he is trying to make.'[18] The newspaper later cited Liberal Senator Eric Abetz, who called for an end to Labor politicians 'cruelly' raising false hopes about long-term settlement.[19] This issue re-emerged in April 2000 concerning the procedures in which Kosovar refugees were able to return to Australia after being offered permanent protection. It was noted by the Herald at this time how one family who had already gone back to Kosovo would soon be allowed to migrate to Australia. A DIMA spokesperson responded to criticism by denying that sending the family back was a waste of money.[20]

The Australian was more concerned about the human rights of the Kosovars, describing on 16th July 1999 how the Howard Government was beginning

13   Sciacca, cited in Trute and Kamper, 'Kosovars preparing to go home', op. cit.

14   Green, 'Kosovo refugees want to stay here for good', op. cit. See also P. Green, R. Eccleston and C. Pryor, 'Olsen plea – let Kosovars stay – Pressure on Howard, Ruddock', The Australian, 16th July 1999, p. 3.

15   Trute and Kamper, 'Kosovars preparing to go home', op. cit. The source is unnamed.

16   K. Patterson, cited in Green, Eccleston and Pryor, op. cit.

17   'Back Home', op. cit.

18   Ibid.

19   E. Abetz, cited in A. Darby, 'Kosovar Refugees Pressured to Leave', The Sydney Morning Herald, 16th October 1999, p. 15.

20   A. Clennell and S. Mann, 'Kosovars Face 'Level Of Force' In Deportation', The Sydney Morning Herald, 12th April 2000, p. 5.

to face pressure from state leaders to allow the refugees to remain permanent-ly if they desired. South Australian Premier John Olsen wrote to the Prime Minister, stating that up to eighty per cent of the refugees being accommodat-ed at Hampstead (Adelaide) and around thirty per cent of those at Leeuwin barracks (Perth) wished to stay.[21] The following day *The Australian* reported that immigration officials had begun to deny phone access and information to Kosovar refugees at Leeuwin barracks. It was recognised that immigration officials had been 'intent on keeping the media out and a lid on the number of refugees wishing to remain in Australia.'[22] One of the refugees at Leeuwin told the newspaper that immigration staff had stopped supplying phone cards after some of the refugees had expressed a desire to stay in Australia. Amid a more general tightening of media access to the Kosovars, a journalist and photographer from *The Australian* were refused permission to enter the bar-racks, despite having been given clearance two days prior.[23] An immigration spokesperson denied any increase in restrictions being imposed on the media and stated that new phone cards would be issued to families on a monthly basis.[24]

On 23rd July, the first chartered-flight from Australia to Macedonia was boarded by 294 Kosovars following the UNHCR's recommendation for some of the refugees to return. The *Herald* described how the refugees would sim-ply be 'bussed' to Kosovo following their 30-hour flight to Skopje.[25] Ruddock addressed the refugees at an official farewell at Sydney airport before their de-parture to Skopje. The Immigration Minister insisted during the farewell that the refugees had left 'on a voluntary basis' as consistent with UN guidelines and said that he hoped the refugees' stay had been 'uplifting and hospitable.'[26] Ruddock noted how the Kosovars were 'eager to be reunited with their fam-ilies and friends and to begin rebuilding their lives.'[27] He added: 'I hope that

---

21   Green, Eccleston and Pryor, *op. cit.* See also commentary by refugees at Leeuwin in R. Eccleston and C. Pryor, 'Fearful Kosovars reach point of no return', *The Australian*, 17th July 1999, p. 3.

22   C. Pryor, 'Tight lid kept on refugee safe haven', *The Australian*, 17th July 1999, p. 3.

23   *Ibid.*

24   Unnamed source from DIMA, cited in *ibid.*

25   J. Marsh, 'Kosovar Refugees Just Happy to Be Going Home', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 24th July 1999, p. 4. See reference to '30 hours of flight and bus rides on their journey home' in M. Videnieks, 'Joy and tears as Kosovars begin long trek home', *The Australian*, 28th July 1999, p. 7.

26   Ruddock, cited in J. Porter, 'Kosovars head for home', *The Daily Telegraph*, 23rd July 1999, p. 2.

27   Ruddock, cited in *ibid.*

your experiences in Australia have been to see how successfully people can live together in harmony, constructively building lives and futures together.'[28] Ruddock stated that he hoped the Kosovars were able to see how 'people from different backgrounds can live together in harmony.'[29] As I have noted elsewhere this kind of statement worked to reaffirm a triumphal sense of Australian superiority. This was consistently the case in media coverage that paraded the success of Operation Safe Haven and was also congratulatory of the Australian government and Australian "values".[30]

As the Kosovars departed the *Herald* reported that: 'Where they are going courts, hospitals and schools are struggling to reopen, water and gas supplies are unreliable at best, and everywhere there are piles of rubbish. But the Kosovars at Sydney airport yesterday did not care. They were going home.'[31] The newspaper's description of life in Kosovo was accurate in relation to the periods both under Yugoslav rule and following the war. Prior to the conflict there had been a drastic shortage of public services provided for Kosovar Albanians by the Yugoslav State.[32] Nonetheless, there was a broader cultural subtext at work. Stereotypes about poverty and underdevelopment in the province had continued to inhibit media representations of the Kosovars throughout their stay in Australia. The departure of the Kosovars at Sydney airport was, for *Herald* readers, a scene of excitement and a harmonious narrative transition. The *Herald* described how one refugee couple 'could not wait to get home' stating the desire for their first baby to be born in Kosovo.[33] These images reinforced the perception that the departure was part of an expected sequence of events, and that no other option (such as permanent protection) was possible or needed to be offered by the Australian government.

The position of the Federal Government at this time was consistent with statements made during the initial evacuations of Kosovar refugees to Australia in one important respect. That is, that the refugees would need to return home 'when the Government says so.'[34] It was inconsistent, however, with comments made earlier by the Prime Minister and other officials that the

---

28   Ruddock, cited in *ibid.*

29   Ruddock, in Marsh, 'Kosovar Refugees Just Happy to Be Going Home', *op. cit.*

30   See P. Ingram, 'Racializing Babylon: Settler Whiteness and the "New Racism"', *New Literary History*, 32(1), 2001, p. 158.

31   Marsh, 'Kosovar Refugees Just Happy to Be Going Home', *op. cit.*

32   See W.G. O'Neill, *Kosovo; An Unfinished Peace*, Lynne Rienner Publishers, Boulder and London, 2002, esp. p. 21. See also N. Malcolm, *Kosovo: A Short History*, MacMillan, London, 1998 (reprinted by Pan Books, London, 2002), esp. p. 349.

33   Marsh, 'Kosovar Refugees Just Happy to Be Going Home', *op. cit.*

34   As described by I. McPhedran, 'Refugee footsteps lead only one way', *The Daily Telegraph*, 10th April 1999, p. 11.

Kosovars would be welcomed to their "new home" with 'open arms'.[35] There was an ongoing tension between media representations of the Government as compassionate, punitive and suspicious of the Kosovar refugees. The Government's position on repatriation was, thus, a continuation of the contradictory rationale upon which the Safe Haven program had been implemented from the beginning.

Prime Minister Howard indicated on 3AW Radio on 24th July that some of the refugees might be allowed to stay in Australia permanently. He noted, however, that each case would be considered on its own merit. Howard said the position of the Government continued to be that the Kosovars were in Australia on merely a temporary basis, adding: 'We're reluctant to alter that, but in all of these things we'll try and behave in a sensitive sense, sensible fashion [*sic*].'[36] Asked on the radio program if some of the refugees would be allowed to stay, Howard said 'Well, yes. But I would prefer they went back[.]'[37] As described by the *Herald*, the Prime Minister had caused 'a few raised eyebrows' with his suggestion that the Government would consider applications from Kosovars who wanted to live in Australia.[38] A spokesperson for the Prime Minister said shortly afterwards that Howard's remarks referred to refugees who wished to apply for a different refugee visa after they had returned to Kosovo.

An important concern for the Prime Minister was, he argued, to be consistent with humanitarian behaviour and not change the basis on which the refugees had come to Australia. He commented that, otherwise, other refugees applying to come to Australia could be disappointed. Howard maintained that providing the Kosovars with temporary safe haven was the right thing to do; 'It demonstrated to the world that Australia had a heart and we made the lives of 4000 people who emerged from the tragic situation that much more bearable.'[39] In this regard, the Prime Minister's position on returning the refugees to Kosovo remained consistent with that expressed during media coverage of the arrival at Sydney airport – they were welcomed, as long as they remained compliant with official procedures, particularly in view of the media. It signified the ways in which the refugees' plight had been incorporated into DIMA's

---

35   John Howard is quoted as stating 'we extend our open arms in welcome', for instance, in R. Chesterton, 'SAFE IN OUR ARMS: Sydney greets refugees', *The Daily Telegraph*, 8th May 1999, p. 4 (from page 1). See analysis of the sentiments "new home" and "temporary home" in Chapter 4.

36   Howard, cited in J. Porter, 'Kosovars say goodbye', *The Daily Telegraph*, 24th July 1999, p. 19. Quote by John Howard also appears in C. Niesche and P. Green, 'For Kosovars who want to stay, mission "almost impossible"', *The Australian*, 24th July 1999, p. 12.

37   Howard, cited in Porter, 'Kosovars say goodbye', *op. cit.*

38   Marsh, 'Kosovar Refugees Just Happy to Be Going Home', *op. cit.*

39   Howard, cited in Porter, 'Kosovars say goodbye', *op. cit.*

strategic public relations campaign from the beginning which provided the Prime Minister with a platform to promote the Government as compassionate and caring.

The Immigration Minister, responding to Howard's radio comment, downplayed the possibilities of the Kosovars being granted permanent residency. The main concern for Ruddock was whether the Kosovars were 'genuine' refugees, stating: 'If someone is a genuine refugee and their circumstances warrant consideration there is provision … for that to be articulated, but I can't see how somebody will be able to mount a claim for persecution.'[40] Ruddock said that, in the context of the new administration in Kosovo, supervised by the international community, it would be difficult for the Kosovars to 'satisfy the criteria' of proving persecution.[41] He added that the Kosovars would struggle to qualify for permanent protection under the international refugee convention under these circumstances.[42] The differences between the views of the Prime Minister and Ruddock on repatriation reflected a pattern of tension, as *The Australian* suggested, that extended back to April 1999 when Cabinet had overruled the Immigration Minister in allowing the refugees to come to Australia.[43] The Government's reluctance to allow the Kosovars to stay in Australia ignored the fragility of the peace in their home country. As *The Australian* noted, several months after the war had finished: 'The Kosovo situation remains fluid because of Milosevic's hold on office and the reluctance of Kosovo Liberation Army guerrillas to give up their weapons.'[44] As columnist Andrew Fraser described the situation: 'Shelter has to be provided, homes have to be rebuilt, commerce has to be re-established and good order achieved.'[45]

The Legal Implications of Sending the Kosovars Home

The Kosovars were provided with no legal protections to challenge their repatriation, though the drastic implications for their human rights were well

---

40   Ruddock, cited in Niesche and Green, *op. cit.*

41   Ruddock, cited in *ibid.*

42   P. Green, 'Refugees long to make lucky country their own', *The Australian*, 4th August 1999, p. 11.

43   Niesche and Green, *op. cit.*

44   'Good news is tarnished by Milosevic' (editorial), *The Australian*, 3rd September 1999, p. 12. See also references to the KLA in M. Fraser, 'Let no one impede the hands that feed', *The Australian*, 28th September 1999, p. 15.

45   Fraser, *op. cit.*

known to critics of the Safe Haven legislation from the beginning. The temporary Safe Haven Visa imposed stringent limitations and removed – as critics in the Safe Haven legislative debates had argued – "natural justice". The legislation denied the right of the Safe Haven Visa holder to legally challenge a decision by the Immigration Minister to cancel that visa and then forcibly repatriate them (and their families) from Australia. The purpose of the visa was twofold (as stressed twice in the first reading of the Safe Haven Bill in the Senate) – to maintain the Government's commitment to the UNHCR to temporarily protect 4000 Kosovar refugees; and to 'maintain the integrity of Australia's migration and humanitarian programs.'[46] Democrats Senator Andrew Bartlett (the party's spokesperson on immigration matters) was concerned that the Bill would create a 'class of visa holders who can be removed easily with minimum cost and with no regard for the opportunity for appeal. The legislation seeks to do this by insulating the minister from the fetters of the rule of law'.[47] ALP Senator Barney Cooney (Victoria) commented, similarly: 'why is it that we do not have provisions that allow the decision making to be overseen by a process, either quasi-judicial or judicial?'[48]

Sciacca had, moreover, been concerned with the way the Government had created a visa class that denied the opportunity for appeal and individual choice and discarded the principles of natural justice. He stated: '[T]o draft a piece of legislation with such latitude can create a dangerous precedent.'[49] Sciacca noted that similar concerns had been expressed by organisations such as Amnesty International, RCOA, the International Jurists Association, the Law Council and many others.[50] As Curren states, judicial review 'can only help

---

46   'Migration Legislation Amendment (Temporary Safe Haven Visas) Bill 1999', *Senate: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 21st April 1999, p. 3966.

47   A. Bartlett, in 'Migration Legislation Amendment (Temporary Safe Haven Visas) Bill 1999; Second Reading', *Senate: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 29th April 1999, p. 4556.

48   B. Cooney, in 'Migration Legislation Amendment (Temporary Safe Haven Visas) Bill 1999; In Committee', *Senate: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 30th April 1999, p. 4641.

49   Sciacca, in 'Migration Legislation Amendment (Temporary Safe Haven Visas) Bill 1999; Second Reading', *House of Representatives: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 11th May 1999, p. 5027.

50   See also L. Curren, 'Hordes or Human Beings?; A Discussion of Some of the Problems Surrounding Australia's Response to Asylum Seekers and Possible Solutions to Those Problems', Catholic Mission for Justice, Development and Peace, Melbourne, Discussion Paper 8, March 2000, p. 16: 'This provision therefore places significant limitation on the capacity of safe haven recipients to seek review.'

prevent abuse and errors by immigration officers and the Minister, whose determinations may involve the life or death of safe haven recipients.'[51]

Both the Safe Haven legislation and Operation Safe Haven were designed to deal with the collective rather than individual needs of the Kosovars. The Safe Haven Visa, in other words, did not recognise the Kosovar refugees as individuals with distinct needs under the law. Curren notes how the visa sat uneasily with the basis of common law:

> that is, that the law is to be applied to the individual facts and circumstances of each case, rather than uniformly applied irrespective of the individual circumstances of the case.[52]

Curren states how ignoring the fact that different cases raise different issues can run the risk of injustice, 'or in case of refugees fleeing persecution, a risk of return to the country where they will be exposed to personal danger.'[53] Petro Georgiou (Liberal Party Member for Kooyong) had also been concerned about aspects of the Safe Haven Bill that signalled a major departure from previous immigration policy that guaranteed human rights protection. He noted the implications the Bill would have for entire families holding the Safe Haven Visa following the cancellation of an individual's temporary Safe Haven status by the Immigration Minister. Georgiou went on: 'While we are all aware that there are reduced rights for non-residents, the imposition of what seems to be a form of collective sanction is something that, as a matter of principle, we should be very concerned about.'[54]

As I have noted, the Safe Haven program obviously limited the independence of the Kosovars while resident in Australia. The limited weekly allowance, the establishment of control-orientated accommodation and the location of the Safe Havens (four of which were in remote areas) meant that the Kosovars were highly dependent on the Federal Government throughout their stay. The $20 per week allowance was much less than that available to Kosovar refugees evacuated to other countries. Germany, for instance, had granted $80 per week for adults and $40 for children.[55] The Government discouraged the

---

51   *Ibid.*, p. 40.

52   *Ibid.*, p. 6.

53   *Ibid.*

54   P. Georgiou, in 'Migration Legislation Amendment (Temporary Safe Haven Visas) Bill 1999; Second Reading', *House of Representatives: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 11th May 1999, pp. 5036-5037.

55   In S. Gee and T. Skotnicki, 'Mire ce vini ne Australia (That's welcome, in Albanian)', *The Daily Telegraph*, 4th May 1999, p. 6.

Kosovars from residing with friends or family in Australia by tying the allocation of benefits to the condition of staying at the barracks. It inhibited the refugees' ability to attain any reasonable independence by denying (at first) and then significantly limiting the amount of paid employment they could obtain. The Federal Government used these measures to control the Kosovar refugees and dictate their terms of residence without being subject to external checks on those powers. Effectively, the Kosovars had very little economic incentive or legal right to remain in Australia under the terms of the Safe Haven Visa, nor any capacity to challenge their repatriation.

The Australian Government's Winter Reconstruction Allowance

To encourage the remaining Kosovars to return, the Australian government offered $3000 to each adult and $500 per child under-18 years of age as part of its offer of a Winter Reconstruction Allowance on 24th August.[56] This would assist individuals in re-establishing their lives back home, the Federal Government argued, as well as assisting them in restocking businesses, and buying seeds for farms, building materials and furniture.[57] Ruddock issued a two-month deadline for the remainder of the Kosovar refugees to depart Australia in order to receive the Allowance (an offer valid until 30th October 1999). This was despite recent figures produced by the UN that an average of at least five people were injured or killed by landmines each day in the province.[58] It was further reported that up to thirty per cent of NATO's cluster-bombs had failed to explode on impact, with many still scattered throughout the countryside.[59] Refugees at Singleton Safe Haven said that the money was not enough to persuade them to leave Australia. Nexhat Bajrami, 24 years of age, had been residing at the Singleton base with his wife when he stated: 'I don't care about the money. I look

---

56   See L. Martin, 'Kosovars To Be Paid $3,000 To Aid Return', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 25th August 1999, p. 5. Here, it is stated that the money was planning to be disbursed to the refugees in the form of travellers' cheques.

57   B. York, 'Australia and Refugees, 1901-2002: An Annotated Chronology Based on Official Sources', Information and Research Services, Department of the Parliamentary Library, Canberra, 16th June 2003, p. 88. See also Martin, 'Kosovars To Be Paid $3,000 To Aid Return', *op. cit.*

58   S. Mann, 'Optimism Shines Through The Pain', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 21st August 1999, p. 25.

59   *Ibid.*

for work everyday in Singleton. I want to stay.'[60] Fadil Bllaca, whose farm near the Southern Kosovo town of Gjilan had been destroyed in the conflict, said he wanted to remain in Australia and that the money would be better offered to his friends who had already left for home but were ineligible for the money.[61]

Ruddock assured the *Telegraph* that those who had already returned would be given aid from the international community.[62] The allowance offered by the Australian government was, he argued, in line with the UNHCR's request to assist Kosovars in returning home. The Winter Reconstruction Allowance eventually cost the Federal Government $4.1 million with the Immigration Minister later commenting that: 'The allowance made good economic sense as the amount of the allowance was offset through savings in accommodation and other support costs of the safe havens.'[63] Sciacca criticised the Immigration Minister. He concluded that the allowance made economic sense but said it did not address the question of the Kosovars' safety once they returned. He stated that: 'Economically, it makes sense to spend around $6 million to encourage these people to go back, given that currently, the operation is costing Australian taxpayers around $10 million a month.'[64] The fact remained, he stated, that just below one thousand of the Kosovar refugees in Australia were from Eastern Kosovo, the area now under Serbian control.

The Australian government's Winter Reconstruction Allowance was comparable to the post-war assistance offered by other countries to repatriated Kosovar refugees. By August 1999, Switzerland had given cash and materials valued at around $US3000 to returnees. Germany had offered $US300, while Norway provided kit homes.[65] A concern for the UNHCR, however, was that the amount of money given by foreign governments to returnees remained susceptible to a highly unstable economy. A UNHCR spokeswoman in Geneva stated that, while the Australian government's offer was generous and welcome, prices in Kosovo were rising fast and changing every day.[66] Adding volatility to the situation was that many of the refugees, the spokeswoman added, would not have

60   N. Bajrami, cited in D. Way and A. Kamper, '$3000 offer to go home', *The Daily Telegraph*, 25th August 1999, p. 2.

61   See comments by F. Bllaca, as cited in *ibid*.

62   *Ibid.*

63   As cited in D. Way, '500 Kosovars still here', *The Daily Telegraph*, 24th February 2000, p. 10.

64   Sciacca, cited in Way and Kamper, *op. cit.* See also discussion on Switzerland's Kosovar refugee evacuation and repatriation program in J. Van Selm (ed.), *Kosovo's Refugees in the European Union*, Pinter, London and New York, 2000, pp. 221-222.

65   Martin, 'Kosovars To Be Paid $3,000 To Aid Return', *op. cit.*

66   *Ibid.*

jobs to return to.[67] Some media reports described how black-market operators were taking advantage of the situation[68] and the expense of returning to Kosovo at this point in time seemed illogical to many refugees still in Australia.[69]

Almost half of the Kosovars who had been evacuated to Australia had returned home by 9th September and the Safe Havens at Singleton, Puckapunyal and Hampstead were closed by the end of the month.[70] East Hills Safe Haven had officially closed for the Kosovars by 29th September as well, and most of those remaining at the base (468 in total) were transferred elsewhere to make way for 1438 refugees evacuated from East Timor under a different temporary protection scheme.[71] One of Ruddock's concerns, *The Australian* noted, was that the Kosovars might contract 'tropical diseases' from the East Timorese and that there was no way to separate the groups due to communal dining and recreation rooms.[72] Ruddock reiterated that the Kosovars must leave Australia by the end of October 1999 (when the Safe Haven Visa was set to expire). Afterwards, the Immigration Minister began to reduce the medical and other types of support previously made available to the Kosovars.[73]

---

67   *Ibid.*

68   See, for instance, D. O'grady, 'Slimming Food And Marble Wax For Refugees In Tents', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 4th September 1999, p. 29, which describes how 'smuggling between Italy and Montenegro is rife.'

69   See comments by refugee Selman, Nexhat, as cited in G. Timbrell, 'Kosovars Want to Stay', *The Sun-Herald*, 12th September 1999, p. 37. As one of the refugees residing at Singleton Safe Haven, Mr Selman (described as a university lecturer), said that the money offered by the Australian government to return home was 'nothing', speculating that: 'It will cost us about $500 to buy one electrical appliance. Most of us are going back to nothing. We have no idea how we are going to start to rebuild and it is so expensive to live there compared with Australia.'

70   York, *op. cit.*, p. 89. See also 'Refugee havens to close', *The Daily Telegraph* (Afternoon Edition), 10th September 1999, p. 15. See also Timbrell, *op. cit.* See also T. Plane, 'Kosovars take the money and fly home as camps close', *The Australian*, 11th September 1999, p. 9.

71   'Sydney to shelter refugees', *The Daily Telegraph*, 18th September 1999, p. 5. East Hills Safe Haven officially closed for East Timorese refugees in early May 2000 and thereafter returned to normal military usage. See A. Kamper, 'Last safe haven closes', *The Daily Telegraph*, 8th May 2000, p. 13. See also P. Green, 'Kosovar formula opens southern havens to evacuees – East Timor – The Evacuation', *The Australian*, 15th September 1999, p. 9.

72   D. Brearley, 'Kosovars agree to exit for East Timorese – Howard presses "Australian values" as tensions escalate in region and at home', *The Australian*, 1st October 1999, p. 2.

73   J. King, 'Australia and Canada compared: the reaction to the Kosovar crisis', *Australian Journal of Human Rights*, 15, 2003. URL: https://web.archive.org/web/20060917134745 /http://austlii.law.uts.edu.au/au/journals/AJHR/2003/15.html. Accessed 10th October

Between August and October 1999, 2268 refugees had accepted the offer of the Winter Reconstruction Allowance. Ruddock noted that the Allowance was equivalent to two years' (pre-war) earnings for the average Kosovar worker.[74] The generosity of the Government in this regard accorded with the image that the refugees were low skilled, impoverished peasant workers. This was a stereotype that the Government continued to deploy at various times during Operation Safe Haven, despite the fact Government officials had previously described the refugees as white-collar, "middle class" people from Pristina.

Ruddock Threatens Incarceration

The Federal Government extended the visas held by the 1800 Kosovars remaining in Australia in late September. Around 800 Kosovars were permitted to remain in Australia until early 2000. Many of these were from Eastern Kosovo (the area now under Serbian control), while others required ongoing medical treatment or wished to avoid the difficulties of the winter season at home. Ruddock had initially said that the other 1000 refugees must leave on the chartered flight of 26th October or be considered 'unlawful non-citizens' subject to detention and removal.[75] The RCOA was concerned about the increasing pressure being applied to Kosovar refugees to leave Australia, stating that the Immigration Minister's approach amounted to 'bullying tactics'.[76] While having their visas extended for one month, these 1000 refugees were again threatened with detention by the Immigration Minister if they refused to leave Australia by 30th November 1999. Ruddock's view on their repatriation was that it was simply a matter of "fairness". He stated that: 'It gets down to this question as

---

2016. See also S. Taylor, 'Protection or Prevention? A Close Look at the Temporary Safe Haven Visa Class', *UNSW Law Journal*, 23(3), 2000, p. 79. See also R. McGregor, 'Kosovar refugees urged to move out', *The Australian*, 30th September 1999, p. 9. McGregor describes how, on 29th September 1999, Ruddock 'made a special trip to East Hills' where he told '280-odd Kosovars in the camp that they would lose their living allowances and other privileges like phone cards unless they moved [to another barracks] within a week' and make room for the East Timorese refugees.

74   Ruddock, in 'Kosovar Refugees', *House of Representatives: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 17th February 2000, p. 13870. A UNHCR spokeswoman also makes this assessment in Martin, 'Kosovars To Be Paid $3,000 To Aid Return', *op. cit.*

75   York, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

76   Darby, 'Kosovar Refugees Pressured to Leave', *op. cit.*

to what is fair… There are many people who would like to stay and they have gone.'[77]

Around ninety per cent of the Kosovars had returned home or to the refugee camps of Macedonia by early November.[78] A month later there were only 498 refugees remaining in Australia, with 366 residing at Bandiana Safe Haven, 71 at East Hills and 61 residing at various Safe Haven centres.[79] Some Labor politicians attempted to sway the Immigration Minister away from pressuring Kosovar refugees into leaving Australia. Tasmanian Premier Jim Bacon (ALP) said it was unfortunate that such pressure was being applied and that he had tried to change Ruddock's mind.[80] He went on: 'There is plenty of room for them in Tasmania, although the Commonwealth has the constitutional responsibility to deal with these matters.'[81]

Comparisons: the Generosity of the International Community and the Issue of Repatriation

From the beginning the Immigration Minister had been reluctant to accommodate Kosovar refugees under the temporary arrangements sought by the UNHCR. Ruddock had proceeded with Operation Safe Haven only at the insistence of public backlash, the Cabinet and international pressure. In line with the interests of the Cabinet he had promoted the notion that Australia's humanitarian refugee resettlement program was the most generous (per capita) in comparison to other countries.[82] Nonetheless the agreed figure to accept 4000 evacuees was significantly less than the intakes of other nations. The US and Turkey had agreed to relocate 20,000 Kosovar refugees each temporarily, while Norway agreed to accept up to 6000, Germany agreed to

---

77   Ruddock, cited in 'Time for refugees', *The Daily Telegraph*, 16th October 1999, p. 15. See also 'Kosovars stay longer', *The Daily Telegraph*, 23rd October 1999, p. 3.

78   Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA), 'Position on Return of Kosovar Evacuees', 5th November 1999. URL: https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/docs/resources/pp-kosovar -rtn-nov99.pdf. Accessed 12th October 2016.

79   Ruddock, in 'Kosovar Refugees', *House of Representatives: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 17th February 2000, p. 13870.

80   Darby, 'Kosovar Refugees Pressured To Leave', *op. cit.*

81   J. Bacon, cited in *ibid.*

82   Ruddock, in 'Migration Legislation Amendment (Temporary Safe Haven Visas) Bill 1999; Second Reading', *House of Representatives: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 11th May 1999, p. 5039.

10,000, and Canada agreed to 5000.[83] Hundreds of thousands more remained in neighbouring Balkan countries such as Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro and Bosnia Herzegovina. The Australian government's reluctance to accept a greater number of refugees was compounded in its haste to repatriate the Kosovars at the end of the initial three-month stay period.

The number of Kosovars eventually evacuated under the Humanitarian Evacuation Programme varied among the 29 recipient nations. As outlined in Table 1, Australia ranked eighth out of the 29 countries which participated in the Humanitarian Evacuation Programme on a per evacuee basis. Notwithstanding the implications of geographical distance, two of the three countries not situated in Europe which participated in the Programme outranked Australia's evacuee intake – the United States receiving 14,050, compared to Canada's intake of 5,440 and Australia's intake of 3,970 – while the third non-European country, Israel, received an intake of just 210.[84] Australia's intake was less than a quarter of the highest intake quota – Germany received 14,690 evacuees – but it was almost 100 times higher than the lowest intake figure in which Romania received 41 evacuees.[85] Table 1 further places these intake figures into context, comparing the number of permanent asylum applications received by countries (all but five participating the Humanitarian Evacuation Programme) in 1999 from citizens of the Former Yugoslav Republic and who were mainly Kosovars. As demonstrated in these figures Australia did not receive applications for asylum from these citizens in 1999. This is compared to the role of countries such as Germany which outranked all other countries in terms of both the number of Humanitarian Evacuation Programme evacuees and the number of asylum applications received.

To compare the legal status assigned to evacuees under the Humanitarian Evacuation Programme by recipient countries, almost all participating countries offered temporary protection to evacuees with Luxembourg offering permanent protection from the outset. However, in each case the specific length of stay varied and in most instances (excepting Australia) temporary protection status could be extended upon application, while in the examples of

---

83   See figures shown in 'What has happened to the refugees', *The Daily Telegraph*, 9th April 1999, p. 31.

84   United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), 'Kosovo Emergency', *UNHCR Global Report 1999*, 1999, p. 346. URL: http://www.unhcr.org/3e2d4d5f7.pdf. Accessed 10th December 2016.

85   *Ibid.*

TABLE 1   *Intake of Humanitarian Evacuation Programme* (HEP) *evacuees and asylum appli-cations received per country in 1999.*[a]

The 29 HEP participating countries	HEP intake (descending)	Countries receiving asylum applications from FYR citizens in 1999	No. of asylum applications received by recipient countries from FYR citizens in 1999[b] (descending)
Germany	14,690	Germany	31,500
US	14,050[c]	Switzerland	28,900
Turkey	8,340	UK	14,200
France	6,300	Belgium	13,100
Norway	6,070	Austria	6,800
Italy	5,830	Italy	4,900
Canada	5,440	Hungary	4,800
Austria	5,080	Netherlands	3,700
UK	4,310	Luxembourg	2,600
Netherlands	4,060	France	2,500
Australia	3,970	Sweden	1,800
Sweden	3,730	US	1,600
Denmark	2,820	Norway	1,200[d]
Switzerland	1,690	Denmark	900
Spain	1,430	Czech Republic	700
Portugal	1,270	Cyprus	600
Belgium	1,220	Bulgaria	400
Poland	1,050	Canada	400
Ireland	1,030	Romania	400
Finland	990	Slovenia	400
Czech Republic	820	Ireland	300
Slovenia	750	Lichtenstein	300
Croatia	370	Israel	200
Israel	210	Spain	200
Malta	110	Finland	100
Luxembourg	100	Russian Federation	100
Slovakia	90	Slovakia	100
Iceland	70	Poland	100
Romania	41	Australia	0
		Croatia	0
		Iceland	0
		Malta	0
		Portugal	0
		Turkey	0

[a]The data in Table 1 is extracted from UNHCR, 'Kosovo Emergency', *op. cit.*, p. 346.

[b]The number of asylum applications received in 1999 from Former Yugoslav Republic citizens, who were 'mostly Kosovars' according to UNHCR, 'Kosovo Emergency', *op. cit.*, p. 346.

[c]It should be noted that there is discrepancy in the number of HEP evacuees to the US. Van Selm, *op. cit.* (p. 223) cites 6,000 as the number of evacuated to the US. The figure of 14,050 is extracted from UNHCR, 'Kosovo Emergency', *op. cit.*, p. 346.

[d]See Van Selm, *op. cit.*, p. 221; and, UNHCR, 'Kosovo Emergency', *op. cit.*, p. 346. Here it is indicated that 1,200 permanent asylum applications were received from Former Yugsolav Republic citizens, after initially being frozen.

Canada and United States temporary protection became permanent.[86] Moreover, most countries offered evacuees the right to work from the outset of the Humanitarian Evacuation Programme, although in Australia's case the right to work was granted several months later than other countries in July 1999 and restricted to 20 hours per week.[87] Comparing accommodations, countries such as Denmark, Canada, Belgium, Finland, Luxembourg, Switzerland and Norway placed evacuees into reception centres at army barracks or other locations.[88] Unlike Australia, which used barracks as the permanent site of accommodation for evacuees, in these instances evacuees were encouraged to source lodgings in the broader community and were not penalized in doing so. Many countries including Spain, Germany, Austria, Italy, France, Switzerland, Turkey, Portugal, Luxembourg, Finland, Denmark, Belgium, United States and Canada committed to voluntary repatriation, and in most of these cases offered financial or material aid to returnees.[89] However at least several countries later undertook forced or induced returns following the cessation of conflict including Australia, Switzerland and Germany.[90] In contrast Sweden and Norway implemented a 'two-track' system involving full-time integration support (including services such as access to employment, housing, education and language training upon arrival) combined with forced return.[91] Moreover, unlike Australia, social security payments and medical benefits were liberally available for evacuees of the Humanitarian Evacuation Programme in many recipient countries including Netherlands, Britain, Austria, Italy, Canada and

---

86   King, 'Australia and Canada compared: the reaction to the Kosovar crisis', *op. cit.* See also L.B. McHugh and J. Vialet, 'Kosovo: Refugee Assistance and Temporary Resettlement', Congressional Research Services – Library of Congress, Washington, 1st September 1999, p. 5.

87   M. Head, 'The Kosovar and Timorese "Safe Haven" Refugees', *Alternative Law Journal*, 24(6), December, 1999, p. 281.

88   Van Selm. *op. cit.*, pp. 217-223.

89   *Ibid.*, pp. 217-223; K. Koser, 'Germany: protection *for* refugees or protection *from* refugees?', in van Selm, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-40; I. Stacher, 'Austria: reception of conflict refugees', in van Selm, *op. cit.*, pp. 132-133; C. Hein, 'Italy: gateway to Europe, but not the gatekeeper?', in van Selm, *op. cit.*, p. 154; and, S. Lavenex, 'France: international norms, European integration and state discretion', in van Selm, *op. cit.*, p. 176. See also King, *op. cit.*

90   BBC News, 'UN Criticises Kosovo refugee agency', 12th April 2000. URL: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/711125.stm. Accessed 10th December 2016.

91   M. Valenta and N. Bunar, 'State Assisted Integration: Refugee Integration Policies in Scandinavian Welfare States: the Swedish and Norwegian Experience', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 2010, 23(4), p. 447.

Sweden while these benefits were made available in France after an initial 3 month stay.[92]

King compared the response of the international community to the assistance provided by the Australian government. Her assessment was that the Canadian government accommodated the Kosovar refugees much more willingly and, unlike the Australian government, recognised the need to account for their international human rights. The Australian government, by comparison: 'having to further the interests of the Australian people and take domestic social and economic factors into account, merely accepted the minimum responsibility under its international obligations to appear to be playing a fruitful role in the containment of this human tragedy.'[93] King aptly describes the Safe Haven Visa as a 'restrictionist policy, severely limiting the rights and opportunities of the Kosovars in Australia.'[94] Overall, Canada's program was far more humanitarian, recognising the long-term interests of the Kosovars and offering the choice of permanent resettlement.

The Australian Safe Haven legislation did not provide the Kosovars with an individual determination process in Australian law. Had the Kosovars been processed and determined by the Australian Government to be refugees under the definition established by the UN Convention on Refugees, this would conflict with Article 34 of the Convention which suggests 'states have an obligation to provide individual determination of refugee applications in order to find a durable solution for refugees.'[95] On the other hand, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms guaranteed the human rights of Kosovars granted Safe Haven, whereas no such law exists in Australia.[96] King also notes that the accommodation arrangements provided to the refugees in Canada were much more appropriate and sensitive to their needs. Although both countries housed the refugees in army barracks, Canada allowed for greater freedom and mobility and did not (unlike Australia) penalise those who chose to leave the accommodation. Moreover, the Canadian accommodation program granted priority to locations where there already were Albanian communities and support services available. By contrast, the Australian Safe Havens were 'disused

---

92   See van Selm, *op. cit.*, esp. chapters on Netherlands, Britain, Austria, Italy and Sweden. See also Valenta and Bunar, *op. cit.*, p. 476. See also King, 'Australia and Canada compared: the reaction to the Kosovar crisis', *op. cit.*

93   King, 'Australia and Canada compared: the reaction to the Kosovar crisis', *op. cit.*

94   *Ibid.*

95   *Ibid.* See also discussion of Australia's international obligations in M. Barutciski and A. Suhrke, 'Lessons from the Kosovo Crisis: Innovations in Protection and Burden-sharing', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 14(2), 2001, pp. 95-115.

96   King, 'Australia and Canada compared: the reaction to the Kosovar crisis', *op. cit.*

and semi-used military barracks' and so were far more insensitive than the accommodation provided by Canada.[97] The situation was further exacerbated, as I noted previously, by the notion that nearby several of the Safe Havens army training exercises continued to be carried out. These exercises involved the use of live explosives.[98] In many ways King's assessment is correct: 'the real Australian motivation [behind its response to the situation in Kosovo] was clearly self-interest and the desire to be seen as acting as a responsible international citizen... [T]he intention of the Australian response was clearly [...] to limit the rights and abilities of those Kosovars selected to remain in Australia in any capacity.'[99]

Several organisations, including the RCOA and Amnesty International, expressed doubts about the legal implications of the Safe Haven Visa. They question whether the Kosovars truly understood the process in which they were participating.[100] As I have noted, recipients of the visa, before being evacuated to Australia, had been forced to sign a declaration that they understood and agreed with the Australian government's offer – that temporary safe haven was for a limited period and would leave when the government required them to.[101] Savitri Taylor describes how the Kosovars were not provided with any official information about the criteria against which their requests to remain in Australia would be assessed and like other commentators she noted official arrangements were not put in place for the provision of legal advice, free or otherwise, to the Kosovars.[102]

The only avenue for gaining a different form of refugee protection in Australia under the Safe Haven legislation was via the personal assessment of the Minister. There was considerable doubt raised over whether the Minister had used these powers fairly. In November 1999 Ruddock agreed to receive personal submissions from those Kosovars fearing persecution.[103] Among those thought to have applied, *The Australian* noted, there were mainly adults of

---

97   *Ibid.*

98   *Ibid.* King also notes the criticisms of Operation Safe Haven made by the Ethnic Communities Council (ECC) of NSW in relation to 'Sending traumatised victims of war to military bases, isolated from the Albanian communities'.

99   *Ibid.*

100   Taylor, 'Protection or Prevention? A Close Look at the Temporary Safe Haven Visa Class', *op. cit.*, p. 80. See also Curren, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

101   The Mission of U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI), 'About Refugees'. URL: http://www.refugees.org/counrtyreports.aspx?id=559. Accessed 5th April 2009.

102   Taylor, 'Protection or Prevention? A Close Look at the Temporary Safe Haven Visa Class', *op. cit.*, p. 80.

103   D. Brearley, 'Residence door ajar for Kosovars', *The Australian*, 4th November 1999, p. 3.

mixed-marriages, gypsies, those likely to be accused of collaboration with Serbia and those whose homes were now in Serbia proper.[104] Those Kosovars who had applied in writing to the Minister to be considered for more permanent status did not, Taylor points out, receive equal opportunity to have their claims assessed. DIMA officials conducted interviews with the 'head of family' in assessing which of these claims proceeded to the Minister. Taylor goes on: 'the fact that only heads of family were interviewed raises serious concerns about the extent to which facts relevant to the making of treaty-based protection claims by other members of the family emerged through the interview process.'[105] This would have had significant implications for women, for instance, subjected to sexual violence and who might have been too ashamed to reveal the fact to other family members.

Assessing the Safe Haven legislation, Curren says: 'The problem in the main is that Australia continues to deal with the issue of refugees as an issue of domestic politics... and [requiring] the preservation of an illusive largely Anglo Saxon identity'.[106] The creation of Safe Haven status was very purposefully a means of stemming the flow of refugees in the long term whilst enabling Australia to respond to an immediate need to grant a haven;

> and thus serves the dual purpose of appeasing the calls for a humanitarian response by the electorate whilst limiting the degree to which those who hold safe haven status can apply for some longer term of protection.[107]

Citing journalist Richard McGregor of *The Australian*, Curren says that Australia's immigration program continued to resemble a 'defensive rather than positive ethos... [in which] politicians are now following what they believe is an entrenched antagonism to newcomers'.[108] This correlates to Jupp's view that Australian immigration has in recent years come to value compliance at the expense of more flexible, humanitarian arrangements.[109] The concept of safe haven, as Curren notes, is 'a good one in theory' but (in Australia's

---

104   *Ibid.*
105   Taylor, 'Protection or Prevention? A Close Look at the Temporary Safe Haven Visa Class', *op. cit.*, p. 80.
106   Curren, *op. cit.*, p. 11.
107   *Ibid.*, p. 13.
108   R. McGregor, cited in *ibid.*, p. 11.
109   J. Jupp, *From White Australia to Woomera: The Story of Australian Immigration*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2002 (reprinted 2004).

case) created broader problems for the people of Kosovo.[110] As noted by the RCOA in November 1999, there remained lack of effective rule of law and an atmosphere of general instability in Kosovo.[111] The Australian government potentially contributed to instability in the region by repatriating the Kosovars without proper legal restraint and a sense of precaution.

The Government's Response to the Bandiana Kosovars and the High Court Challenge

By March 2000 the cost of the Kosovar Safe Haven program for the Federal Government had amounted to $100 million.[112] On 16th March, the *Telegraph* recorded that the Immigration Minister had begun to re-assert pressure on those Kosovars remaining in Australia, most of whom were residing at Bandiana barracks.[113] He ordered refugees with 'no valid reason to be in Australia to leave' and to board a chartered flight for home on 8th April.[114] (The scheduled flight was eventually postponed to the 9th April, following technical problems).[115] A spokesperson for the Immigration Minister said the Government hoped there would be no need for any forced removals, but threatened the use

110   Curren, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

111   Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA), 'Position on Return of Kosovar Evacuees', *op. cit.* The Council recommended the Federal Government take account of humanitarian implications, stating: 'Aside from those people who have well founded fears about returning to Kosovo, there are those who want to go back, but not yet. Any Kosovar whose home has been destroyed and/or who has no prospect of obtaining employment, would be justifiably reluctant to return to the province so close to winter. The reconstruction program is seriously behind schedule and tens of thousands of people will be facing winter in tents or other substandard accommodation. Returning such people at this time would simply add to the already considerable burden faced by the aid agencies in the province.' The RCOA added: 'This reluctance would be compounded if the individual or family had been subjected to intensely painful experiences while in Kosovo as many of the population were. Some people need longer to heal and to regain the strength necessary to rebuild their lives.'

112   York, *op. cit.*, p. 95. This included the expenses paid for chartered flights, accommodation, food, allowances and services such as counselling, laundry and medical assistance.

113   Way, *op. cit.* There were 71 Kosovar refugees residing at East Hills and 61 others were spread around the country.

114   Ruddock, cited in M. McKinnon, 'Kosovars to go in April', *The Daily Telegraph*, 16th March 2000, p. 7.

115   'Plane glitch delays Kosovars' return', *The Sunday Telegraph*, 9th April 2000, p. 3. See also F. Cumming, 'Late Hitch Grounds Kosovars', *The Sun-Herald*, 9th April 2000, p. 15, which states that the problem was twofold. A delay caused by bus failure at Bandiana pushed

of chemical tranquillisers against those who refused to leave. The spokesperson stated: 'if people refuse to cooperate with the departure order we would expect appropriate and reasonable action would be taken[.]'[116] The Immigration Minister, the *Telegraph* noted, said that it was now an appropriate time for the remaining Kosovars to return home with the Kosovo winter coming to an end, adding:

> Clearly, those who are too sick to travel – along with their immediate family – will remain in Australia until they are well enough to leave. But I expect families who have no valid reason to be in Australia to leave on the return flight[.][117]

This was despite that fact, wrote the *Telegraph*, that many Kosovar refugees had 'begged' to be allowed to stay in Australia.[118] Many were afraid to return because their homes were in the Eastern border region and because Southern Serbia had 'become a flashpoint in the recent weeks [*sic*].'[119] The RCOA was a vocal critic of the way the Government was handling the issue of repatriation, arguing that its process of determining whether it was safe to return was too simplistic.[120]

On 5th April, around 120 Kosovar refugees residing at the Bandiana Safe Haven protested against the Government's decision not to allow them to stay. It was several days prior to their scheduled refugee flight from Australia to the Balkans. Immigration officials said that 223 of the 370 refugees housed at the barracks were on the flight departure list.[121] Over a hundred of the refugees, as described by the *Telegraph*, marched in protest for four kilometres along the Kiewa Valley from Bandiana to Wodonga, seeking a last minute reprieve.[122] The NSW Albania Association's Catherine Ordway described on 8th April how

---

the scheduled flight beyond the allocated time slots in the Balkans, which made the plane and its crew unavailable. A replacement plane was found by the Government for the next day.

116   Department of Immigration spokesperson (unnamed), cited in McKinnon, 'Kosovars to go in April', *op. cit.*

117   Ruddock, cited in *ibid.*

118   'Kosovars beg to stay', *The Daily Telegraph*, 31st March 2000, p. 10.

119   Lloga, cited in M. Denney, 'Long way home for Kosovo refugees', *The Australian*, 24th March 2000, p. 8.

120   'Kosovars beg to stay', *op. cit.*

121   'Refugees protest', *The Daily Telegraph*, 6th April 2000, p. 18.

122   *Ibid.* See also York, *op. cit.*, p. 95. It is noted here that a total of 259 of those Kosovars remaining in Australia had been singled out to leave at this time. It is stated elsewhere that, following a day's delay on the flight from Melbourne, thirteen refugees did not take

some of the refugees 'are suicidal, they so desperately don't want to go. I don't think you'll find many people on the plane tomorrow.'[123] The *Herald* revealed how two young female refugees – who were sisters staying at the Bandiana barracks – had attempted suicide the previous week. As the *Herald* wrote: 'The attempted overdoses … came on the night Mr Ruddock addressed refugees at the camp whom he had ordered home.'[124] The sisters were reportedly recovering in the local Wodonga hospital. Ruddock's response was void of empathy or a willingness to acknowledge the sisters' trauma. He stated that: 'It's unfortunate people are taking this action when they have been given assurances it's safe to return to Kosovo.'[125] He later commented that the suicide attempts were part of a plan by the teenager girls to pressure him.[126] The Prime Minister responded to questions about the attempted overdoses, emphasising on a Melbourne radio program the temporary nature of the Kosovars' stay: 'I am very conscious of the emotion of all of this. But they came here on a certain basis and, difficult though it is, that basis has to be adhered to.'[127] The subtext to Howard's position on the repatriations was symbolic, stating that if the Kosovars did not leave it would create an 'enormous headache' in relation to future claims, as 'everybody in the future who wanted to short circuit the procedure would invoke the example of the Kosovars to do so.'[128]

Ruddock had in early April implemented changes to immigration policy that involved severely limiting welfare benefits available to the parents of migrants, scaling down humanitarian refugee intake due to a rise in the number of boat people, and placing an emphasis upon "skilled" migrants.[129] Labor leader Kim Beazley deplored Ruddock's attacks on "illegal immigrants" and,

---

the flight home and were granted extensions on their visas. These included seven on medical grounds and two families of three who were allowed to apply for a different kind of refugee protection. See 'Plane glitch delays Kosovars' return', *op. cit.* See also the figure of 259 cited in 'Migrant Mix', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 7th April 2000, p. 14.

123   A. Clennell and M. Wade, 'Kosovars Win Short Reprieve', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 8th April 2000, p. 9.

124   *Ibid.*

125   Ruddock, cited in *ibid.*

126   M. Wade and A. Clennell, 'Kosovars On Run As Court Rejects Their Last Chance', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 11th April 2000, p. 1.

127   Howard, cited in G. Safe and B. Lane, 'Kosovar returnee's suicide bid', *The Australian*, 8th April 2000, p. 3.

128   Howard, cited in 'Kosovars refuse to budge', *The Australian*, 14th April 2000, p. 5.

129   'Migrant Mix', *op. cit.* See references to Ruddock's policy changes regarding the elderly parents of migrants in A. Clennell, 'Opening Doors', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 8th April 2000, p. 45.

alongside his decision to remove the remaining Kosovars from Australia, ac-cused the Immigration Minister of playing wedge politics.[130] Ruddock reacted furiously to these criticisms. The *Herald* reported him asking: 'Have you ever been to a refugee camp? ... Go to Kenya ... The circumstances are appalling[.] You might say, it doesn't matter how many people you bring through in the refugee program. But it does. It's $21.5 million per thousand over five years. I have to go in and argue for [extra refugee places] in the Budget process, I don't get it.'[131] Ruddock added: 'If you had to judge them against the person sitting in the refugee camp ... you would take the person in the camp, every time... Why should I take 500 places out of the program for the Kosovars; 1,600 places out of the program for East Timorese asylum seekers; 6,000 for unauthorised boat arrivals and then take as many more that keep on coming and then see we have no refugee program... It's not wedge politics. It's about consistency and it's about fairness'.[132] Ruddock's view was in line with those sentiments being propagated by the Government about a "flood" of applications for refugee pro-tection. However, it also reflected both the conservatism that typified many of his official statements as well as the "checks and balances" style of the Howard Government.[133]

Extending from this rationale, the Kosovars who chose to stay in Australia were described by Ruddock as acting on 'bad advice',[134] which culminated in a High Court challenge that was heard on 7th and 10th April. Melbourne lawyer Basil Nuredini and barrister Andrew Flower challenged the Federal Govern-ment on behalf of 81 Kosovar refugees from the Bandiana Safe Haven.[135] The refugees' counsel argued that the group should be exempted from repatria-tion because, in accordance with international refugee conventions and UN-HCR guidelines, they feared returning home, had witnessed atrocities and their homes (for at least 64 of the refugees) were in areas now dominated

130   Clennell, 'Opening Doors', *op. cit.*

131   Ruddock, cited in *ibid.*

132   Ruddock, cited in *ibid.*

133   See P. Mendes, *Australia's Welfare Wars: the Players, the Politics, and the Ideologies*, UNSW Press, Sydney, 2003.

134   York, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

135   'Kosovars in court', *The Daily Telegraph*, 7th April 2000, p. 17. See also Wade and Clennell, 'Kosovars On Run As Court Rejects Their Last Chance', *op. cit.* It is stated here that there were only 72 refugees involved in the court case, though most other sources state the number of 81. The figure 81 is also given in M. Saunders and A. Crosweller, 'Refugees fight to stay', *The Australian*, 10th April 2000, p. 1. See also Cumming, *op. cit.* This source says there were only 67 Kosovars involved in the case.

by Serbs.[136] They stated that that the Immigration Minister failed to consider the UNHCR report when considering their request for protection visas. The report, the refugees' counsel went on, stated that most Kosovars could return safely from their temporary relocation in foreign countries except for those in certain categories – including those who had witnessed atrocities and others whose homes were in areas now dominated by Serbs.[137] The refugees won a reprieve from repatriation on the first day of proceedings pending the outcome of the challenge and were able to avoid boarding the 9th April chartered flight home.[138]

The Federal Government ultimately ignored international legal obligations designed to override any laws (including the Safe Haven legislation) to protect the human rights of refugees. As the UNHCR's Director of the Division of International Protection commented, in relation to the Safe Haven Visa program:

> At law, the [UN Refugee] Convention cannot be made unavailable for persons for whom it was intended, even while its application can be delayed. Put another way, temporary protection arrangements should be applied without prejudice to the grant of refugee status to be entitled, where it is necessary to ensure protection against continued threat.[139]

RCOA cited those groups considered to be at risk if returned to Kosovo (according to UNHCR guidelines), which included ethnic minorities; draft age males who could be considered to have evaded KLA conscription; people who could be perceived as having supported the Serb regime (or Serb sympathisers);

---

136   M. McKinnon, '81 Kosovars win reprieve from return', *The Daily Telegraph*, 8th April 2000, p. 16. The UN human rights category, 'at risk', was argued to have applied to the Kosovars. See also Taylor, 'Protection or Prevention? A Close Look at the Temporary Safe Haven Visa Class', *op. cit.*, p. 96, who criticised the Federal Government for ignoring UNHCR guidelines regarding the return of refugees to Kosovo. That is, the Kosovars were repatriated by the Australian government despite their 'at risk' status. It is stated that 64 of the refugees had homes in Presevo in 'Most Kosovars expected to leave Australia' (Transcript), *7.30 Report*, Australian Broadcasting Corporation, 12th April 2000. URL: http://www.abc.net.au/7.30/stories/s118275.htm. Accessed 11th October 2016.

137   McKinnon, '81 Kosovars win reprieve from return', *op. cit.*

138   Clennell and Wade, 'Kosovars Win Short Reprieve', *op. cit.*

139   From a statement by the UNHCR's Director of the Division of International Protection, cited in Refugee Council of Australia RCOA, 'Media Release (Return of the Kosovars)', 13th April 2000. URL: https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/n/mr/000413-Kosovars.pdf. Accessed 12th October 2016. Also cited in J. King, 'The Temporary Safe Haven – An Australian Perspective', *Refuge*, 19(2), 2001, p. 19.

female headed households without male support; people from areas in which ethnic Albanians were a minority (including Southern Serbia); and victims of extreme violence. The organisation stated that, among those recently told by the Minister to leave Australia, there were many Kosovar refugees who fitted into these high-risk categories.[140]

The Government maintained a punitive position towards the refugees throughout the proceedings. On the television network Ten *Meet the Press* program, Ruddock argued: 'I'm satisfied that they have no claims that would single them out over and above any other Kosovo Albanian for persecution.'[141] The *Telegraph* defended the Government's frustrations, stating:

> Taxpayers will spend $500,000 to send a two-thirds empty 747 jet back to Europe today after 81 Kosovar refugees won a weekend reprieve from repatriation.
>
> ... Under a UN agreement, if the Kosovars' court challenges fail, the Federal Government will have to charter another 747 to send them home.[142]

A spokesperson for Ruddock informed the *Telegraph* that those refugees involved in the High Court challenge would become unlawful non-citizens after the case and would be held in detention. The *Telegraph's* Michael McKinnon emphasised the point in support of the Government: 'The Kosovars are here on safe haven visas ... and signed agreements they would leave the country.'[143]

On 9th April, the Immigration Minister commented in the *Telegraph* that he did not 'expect problems' at the Safe Havens following the outcome of High Court proceedings. Bestowing on the refugees merely a "guest" status, Ruddock said:

> For most Kosovars, it's safe to return home. My expectation is in relation to guests – and these people have been guests for more than nine months – when it's time to ask the people to go home, they should avail themselves of the opportunity. [*sic*][144]

---

140 *Ibid.* See also S. Mann, 'Doors Slam On Kosovars', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 15th April 2000, p. 25. This article describes how people who deserted from the KLA expected to face recrimination upon returning home.

141 Ruddock, as cited in Saunders and Crosweller, 'Refugees fight to stay', *op. cit.*

142 McKinnon, '81 Kosovars win reprieve from return', *op. cit.*

143 *Ibid.*

144 Ruddock, cited in 'Plane glitch delays Kosovars' return', *op. cit.* Ruddock is also quoted in Cumming, *op. cit.*

However, the Immigration Minister was a little premature when it came to the 'problems' the case would stir. That day, more than 100 refugees residing at Bandiana Safe Haven refused to board their scheduled flight home and instead conducted a hunger strike at the barracks.[145] The Immigration Minister's response was punitive and that evening the Bandiana Safe Haven was reclassified as a detention centre. Bandiana would thereafter hold the non-compliant refugees in detention until they could be transferred to another detention centre or be deported.[146] The refugees were further informed via a Department of Immigration leaflet that they would have to pay for their detention and removal.[147]

Only 21 out of the expected 100 refugees from Bandiana had boarded the transfer coach headed for Sydney airport. The remaining Kosovars protested, refusing water and food and demanding that the Minister reconsider their status. The *Telegraph* described how one male refugee was taken to hospital after collapsing during the incident.[148] Lloga urged the refugees to abandon their hunger strike. He was sympathetic, stating that amongst the refugees were war crimes witnesses, ethnic-Albanians from Serb-dominated areas, defectors from the KLA and former high-ranking officials in the Serbian government. Greens Senator Bob Brown, in support of the protesters, had asked the Transport Workers Union (TWU) to delay the Kosovars' flight and undertake industrial action on the refugees' behalf. While some delay was caused by strike action in Tasmania, it did not have the effect of preventing the refugees' departure.[149]

---

145   'A bitter way to remember' (editorial), *The Daily Telegraph*, 10th April 2000, p. 29. It is noted here that only 168 Kosovars (out of the anticipated 259) boarded the flight. See also reference to the hunger strike in F. Farouque and M. Brown, 'Despair Finally Breaks a Little Girl's Courage', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 10th April 2000, p. 1. See reference to the hunger strike in Saunders and Crosweller, 'Refugees fight to stay', *op. cit.*

146   See A. Bartlett, in 'Refugees: Kosovo', *Senate: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 10th April 2000, p. 13732. See also comments by an Immigration Department spokesperson (unnamed), cited in N. Tsavdaridis and A. Probyn, 'Stayput Kosovars to be held in detention', *The Daily Telegraph*, 10th April 2000, p. 5. Here, the spokesperson warned that these refugees were likely to be placed in permanent detention centres at Woomera, Port Hedland or Curtin and then flown home. See also D. Lague, 'New Detention For Defiant Refugees', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 10th April 2000, p. 2.

147   Saunders and Crosweller, 'Refugees fight to stay', *op. cit.*

148   Tsavdaridis and Probyn, *op. cit.*

149   *Ibid.*

A decision on the High Court challenge was handed down the following day. It found in favour of the Federal Government. All 81 refugees were subsequently ordered by the Department of Immigration to leave Australia. DIMA spokesperson Phil Mayne, who was working at Bandiana barracks, promptly stated in the *Herald* that 'an appropriate level of force' would be used against those still unwilling to return home.[150] The Government was unperturbed by calls from within the Australian community to reconsider its decision. The NSW Ecumenical Council, for instance, representing Catholic, Anglican, Uniting and 12 other religious groups wrote to the Prime Minister and Phillip Ruddock urging them to allow the Kosovar refugees to stay.[151] Amnesty expressed further reservations about Ruddock's response to the issue of repatriation. The organisation threatened to revoke Ruddock's membership if he continued to wear his Amnesty badge while performing his ministerial duties.[152] The Government refused to reconsider its position on the matter and the refugees' legal counsel stated that there would be no appeal to the decision.[153]

The Immigration Minister promised on 13th April that refugees who left voluntarily on the next flight would be given application forms to migrate to Australia to fill out on the plane. These would be part-processed by Australian migration officials when they landed in Kosovo.[154] Those refugees would be making applications for the special humanitarian migration scheme which was designed for persons in situations of discrimination, displacement or hardship.[155] The Federal Opposition accused the Government of making a 'cosmetic offer' to 'convince them to leave' and called for the refugees to be

---

150   P. Mayne, cited in Clennell and Mann, 'Kosovars Face 'Level Of Force' In Deportation', *op. cit.* As cited here, Mayne confirmed any forcible removal would be carried out by government contractors Australian Correctional Management.

151   M. Scala, 'Refugee gives up his fight', *The Daily Telegraph*, 14th April 2000, p. 16.

152   Amnesty cited accumulated grievances against the Immigration Minister, the Safe Haven legislation, the nature of the latest repatriations of Kosovar refugees and recent developments concerning the detention of boat people. See A. Clennell, 'Amnesty Threatens To Expel Ruddock', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 18th April 2000, p. 5. Here, Amnesty's Australian branch president, Kathy Kingston, argued that the organisation was seeking legal advice, stating: 'When he's acting as or being interviewed as minister, his membership of Amnesty International shouldn't be referred to.'

153   Wade and Clennell, 'Kosovars On Run As Court Rejects Their Last Chance', *op. cit.*

154   A. Clennell, 'Kosovars "Conned Into Leaving"', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 14th April 2000, p. 5.

155   *Ibid.* The scheme further required that applicants needed relatives, a relationship or employment prospects in Australia in order to qualify, or be sponsored by community groups. See also discussion about the special humanitarian program in Chapter 1.

processed onshore.[156] The Minister refuted criticism about the whole process being a "waste of money" saying that it would set a bad precedent to allow people to apply onshore.[157]

The following day the Federal Government toughened its stance on the Kosovar refugees residing at Bandiana, ordering security personnel to restrict all visitors from entering the barracks. The move prevented the refugees from accessing legal counsel provided by non-Government sources.[158] Phil Mayne confirmed that all visitation rights had been withdrawn so detainees could make decisions free of 'external influences.'[159] *The Australian* described how the refugees were instructed to 'pack their bags' and, according to Kosovars inside the barracks, were subjected to increasing pressure from DIMA staff to sign forms agreeing to leave the country.[160] Refugees told *The Australian*, speaking via mobile telephone, that 'two truckloads of security guards had surrounded their living quarters' before they were ushered into one building. They were not allowed to leave.[161] Two days later 116 Kosovars were repatriated and 21 others were relocated from Bandiana to Port Hedland detention centre.[162]

Those departing for home had refused to sign an official declaration for the Australian government stating their return was voluntary.[163] Taylor notes that DIMA considered the repatriations 'voluntary' on the basis that no physical coercion was used by the Australian government. This characterisation, however, was not accepted by the UNHCR which defined the returns as 'induced' rather than voluntary.[164] The Australian government's handling of the situation was a serious breach of the UNHCR's repatriation criteria which stipulates the importance of 'voluntariness' (an absence of physical, psychological or material

---

156   Cited in *ibid.*

157   *Ibid.*

158   Taylor, 'Protection or Prevention? A Close Look at the Temporary Safe Haven Visa Class', *op. cit.*, p. 83.

159   Mayne, cited in A. Hodge, 'Push comes to shove for 34 Kosovars', *The Australian*, 15th April 2000, p. 4.

160   *Ibid.*

161   *Ibid.*

162   See A. Hodge, 'Kovovars fly out leaving defiant 21', *The Australian*, 17th April 2000, p. 2.

163   Taylor, 'Protection or Prevention? A Close Look at the Temporary Safe Haven Visa Class', *op. cit.*, p. 83. This is confirmed in Hodge, 'Kovovars fly out leaving defiant 21', *op. cit.*, which states that the refugees 'were defiant to the end in their refusal to sign government consent forms to leave'.

164   Taylor, 'Protection or Prevention? A Close Look at the Temporary Safe Haven Visa Class', *op. cit.*, p. 83.

pressure) in the returning of refugees.[165] The Immigration Department later defended its repatriation of the Kosovar refugees in the Senate, arguing that none of the refugees had been forced to leave Australia. As Immigration Department deputy secretary Andrew Metcalf stated: 'They did volunteer. They did agree to get on that plane[.] There was absolutely no force whatsoever used to secure their departure from Australia.'[166]

Many of the refugees repatriated from Australia in April 2000 faced immediate problems on landing in Skopje. On 6th April, the ALP's Michael Danby (Member for Melbourne Ports) read a UNHCR document to the Lower House, which had informed Kosovar refugees returning home that: 'No resources will be provided to you after you are distributed to the various towns from which you come.'[167] Danby warned Federal Parliament that: 'We will be leaving these people without accommodation, perhaps even without food.'[168] Senator Andrew Bartlett expressed concern to the parliament on 12th April, noting that some refugees – who were originally from areas now part of Serbia proper – were being repatriated by the Australian government to other places in Kosovo. This was in response to Ruddock's comments the day before, in which the Immigration Minister had stated that no-one would be forced back to Southern Serbia, but instead would be taken to other parts of Kosovo.[169] Bartlett pointed out that this was contrary to the repatriation objectives of the UNHCR.[170] The UNHCR had made it clear, according to the RCOA, that it was not appropriate to send people from Southern Serbia into Kosovo. The Head of the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) had recently appealed to governments not to forcibly return refugees.[171] In this way, RCOA argued, the Australian government could not legally justify the forced return of the Kosovars. RCOA commented: 'They have a right to have their subjective fears examined to determine whether these are well founded and if they are, to receive Australia's protection.'[172]

By April 2000, there were distinct differences in the way the various countries involved in temporarily relocating Kosovar refugees were handling the

---

165   *Ibid.*, p. 98.

166   A. Metcalf, cited in 'Kosovars "treated fairly"', *The Daily Telegraph*, 1st June 2000, p. 21.

167   M. Danby, 'Refugees: Kosovo', *House of Representatives: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 6th April 2000, p. 15479.

168   *Ibid.*

169   Clennell and Mann, 'Kosovars Face 'Level Of Force' In Deportation', *op. cit.*

170   A. Bartlett, in 'Refugees: Kosovo', *Senate: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 12th April 2000, p. 13924.

171   Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA), 'Media Release (Return of the Kosovars)', *op. cit.*

172   *Ibid.*

issue of repatriation. Initially offering temporary haven, New Zealand by this time had allowed 600 Kosovar refugees the right to seek permanent protection.[173] Canada offered permanent protection and maintained a policy of voluntary repatriation. Canada allowed 5000 refugees to decide for themselves when to return.[174] About 2500 had returned voluntarily out of those evacuated to the US. The remainder were free to remain in the US with an offer of permanent protection on the condition they pay the $US750 cost for the initial evacuation flight within four years.[175] The UK, however, which had offered a 12-month visa to Kosovar refugees in June 1999, was looking to repatriate those 3000 Kosovars still in Britain.[176] The stability of Kosovo in early April 2000 had in fact been downgraded by the UN, and the UNHCR Commissioner had recently informed countries looking to repatriate refugees to do so very slowly given the worsening security situation in Kosovo.[177] Circumstances were further volatile considering NATO had promised to have 6000 police on the ground in Kosovo at this time, when instead there were around 300.[178]

The RCOA appealed to the Prime Minister, expressing concern about the way in which the Government was attempting to justify the returns – by citing the documentation signed by the Kosovars stating that they would return and by citing advice from the UNHCR that it was safe to do so. The RCOA's view was that these documents were signed at a time when 'the NATO offensive was still underway and there was no clarity about the future shape of Kosovo nor about any potential risks on return.'[179] The organisation went on, making the point that: 'The undertakings were signed by highly traumatised people who had just been forced from their homes and who were residing in a very crowd-

---

173   See C. Dore, 'Shipley offers asylum for 300 in New Zealand', *The Australian*, 30th September 1999, p. 9.

174   Mann, 'Doors Slam On Kosovars', *op. cit.*

175   See references to US and Canada's offer of permanent protection in Green, 'Refugees long to make lucky country their own', *op. cit.*

176   Figures cited in A. Gray, 'Refugees arrive home in Kosovo', *The Daily Telegraph*, 19th April 2000, p. 28. See also Sciacca, in 'Telstra Legal Action' and 'Kosovo: Refugees', *House of Representatives: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 18th October 1999, p. 11765. Sciacca points out how the US had guaranteed permanent residency to their Kosovar refugees. In addition, if those refugees went back to their homeland and returned to the US within a year, the US government would still offer them permanent residency. See also comparisons to New Zealand, Canada and the US by A. Bartlett in 'Refugees: Kosovo', *Senate: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 10th April 2000, p. 13732.

177   M. Danby, 'Refugees: Kosovo', *House of Representatives: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 6th April 2000, p. 15479.

178   *Ibid.*

179   Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA), 'Media Release (Return of the Kosovars)', *op. cit.*

ed and ill-equipped camp in Macedonia. It is understandable both that they would have signed anything that would take them as far away as possible from the trauma and that at that time, their vision of the future would have been return.'[180] Another concern was how the Immigration Minister had 'selectively quoted' advice from UNHCR to argue that it was safe to return.[181]

Following the High Court challenge the UNHCR advised that Kosovar refugees should have their cases comprehensively reviewed.[182] The UNHCR's Peter Kessler, based in Kosovo at the time, stated on SBS Radio that he had concerns about refugees being forced back to areas now part of Southern Serbia, particularly towns such as Presevo and Mitrovica. He added: 'if they want to come back, that's another matter... we think there should be a definite go-slow.'[183] Kessler commented on the *7:30 Report*, as well, saying that: 'We do think it's premature people are forced back to Kosovo, a place where they don't even originate from... So we think there should be a definite go-slow until these people can possibly be returned to their actual place of origin, which would be, in this case, Presevo.'[184] A UNHCR official in Geneva, Jacques Franquin, made the point that, although Australia was not alone in pushing for the repatriation of Kosovar refugees, it was 'the only country in which the courts have rejected claims of vulnerability.'[185]

Media Spin, the Court Case and Deviance

The following analysis is based on media coverage concerning the High Court challenge. I have drawn on a total of 63 newspaper articles pub-

---

180 *Ibid.*

181 See *ibid.*, which says: 'UNHCR's advice has been that it is safe for the majority but there are particular groups who may have ongoing protection needs. The Minister's assessment of the Kosovars has resulted in the bar to applying for refugee status being lifted in some cases but not all of those in the identified risk groups. The Minister has maintained his assertion that UNHCR says that it [is] alright to return people claiming fears, including those who come from Southern Serbia.'

182 *Ibid.*

183 P. Kessler, cited in Clennell and Mann, 'Kosovars Face 'Level Of Force' In Deportation', *op. cit.* It is also noted here that major concerns for the UNHCR about those Kosovars remaining in Australia included two people of mixed-marriages (Serb and Albanian), two women who had been sexually assaulted by Serb paramilitaries and one family from Presevo. Peter Kessler is also quoted similarly in 'Most Kosovars expected to leave Australia', *op. cit.*

184 P. Kessler, cited in 'Most Kosovars expected to leave Australia', *op. cit.*

185 Mann, 'Doors Slam On Kosovars', *op. cit.*

lished between 1ˢᵗ and 30ᵗʰ April 2000.[186] There were two editorials concerned with the Kosovar refugees in the *Telegraph*, two in *The Australian* and one in the *Herald*. Editorials in the *Telegraph* and *Herald* were against the Kosovars staying in Australia, while *The Australian* was much more supportive of the idea.[187] Both editorials in the *Telegraph* supported the Federal Government's handling of repatriation, as did the editorial piece in the *Herald*.[188] One of the editorials in *The Australian* was critical of the Federal Government on this matter, while the other was only somewhat critical.

Editorials do not always reflect the opinion being expressed by journalists and other contributors. They do, however, signify ideologies around which the various components of a newspaper are assembled.[189] By the same measure, opinion columns perform a democratic function within the assemblage of a newspaper. Where they occasionally do not agree with the purported position of the editor, they are often included to uphold the notion that the media is committed to a balanced representation of public affairs.[190] There was only one opinion column that addressed the Kosovar refugees in the *Telegraph*, while there were two in *The Australian* and six in the *Herald*. The *Telegraph* opinion piece was against the Kosovars staying in Australia, while opinion on

---

186   This included all news items, editorials and opinion columns covering issues related to the Kosovar refugees in Australia and in the Balkans. These articles numbered 18 in the *Telegraph*, 20 in *The Australian* and 27 in the *Herald*. This includes the *Sunday Telegraph*, *Daily Telegraph* (only morning editions), *The Australian*, *Weekend Australian*, *The Sydney Morning Herald* and *Sun-Herald* (Sydney). All articles were retrieved from Factiva and none were in hard copy format.

187   The coding for 'Editorial stance on Kosovars staying in Australia' was divided into the following categories for greater clarity: supportive, somewhat supportive, indirectly supportive, somewhat against and against. In the *Telegraph*, both editorials were against the Kosovars staying in Australia, expressing the idea that the refugees had benefited from Australia's charity for long enough. The *Herald* editorial piece was against the Kosovars staying in Australia. One editorial in *The Australian* was supportive of the Kosovars staying in Australia, while another was only indirectly supportive.

188   The coding for 'Editorial stance on Federal Government handling of repatriation issue' was divided into the following categories for greater clarity: supportive, somewhat supportive, somewhat critical and critical.

189   See R.V. Ericson, P.M. Baranek and J.B.L. Chan, *Representing Order; Crime, Law and Justice in the News Media*, Open Press University, Buckingham, 1997.

190   E.S. Herman and N. Chomsky, *Manufacturing Consent; the Political Economy of the Mass Media*, The Bodley Head, London, 1988 (reprinted 2008), esp. p. xlix.

the matter in the *Herald* was varied.[191] The opinion pieces in *The Australian*, however, were much more supportive of the refugees staying in Australia.[192] In another light, opinion in the *Telegraph* typically supported the Federal Government's handling of the repatriation issue, while it was varied in the *Herald*. Opinion pieces in *The Australian*, though, were more critical of the Government on this matter.[193]

As reflected in the content analysis, the *Telegraph's* coverage of the High Court case clearly favoured the position of the Federal Government. The newspaper's editor was highly critical of the Kosovar refugees for protesting at Bandiana and the High Court challenge. Referring to a recent poll, the editor noted how 43 per cent of the *Telegraph's* readers thought the Kosovars should be forced to leave Australia following the UNHCR's suggestion it was safe to return.[194] 'Public sympathy for the refugees', the editor stated, 'who have been guests in this country for more than nine months would probably be greater if some of them had not become such assiduous litigants.'[195] The editor depicted one refugee allowed to remain in Australia, Nagir Zairi, as tricky and ungrateful. This was because Zairi was suing the Australian government after his 4-year old son had fallen from a bicycle at the East Hills centre and broken his leg.[196] The editor went on: 'Sadly, the bulk of the Kosovars who have already gone home, presumably grateful for the hospitality extended when they most needed it, are not the ones we will remember.'[197]

---

191   The coding for 'Columnist stance on Kosovars staying in Australia' was divided into the following categories for greater clarity: supportive, somewhat supportive, indirectly supportive, somewhat against and against. In the *Herald*, two opinion pieces supported this notion, one was somewhat supportive, two were indirectly supportive and one was somewhat against the idea.

192   Only one opinion column in *The Australian* was clearly supportive of the refugees staying in Australia for humanitarian reasons, while another was indirectly supportive of the idea.

193   The coding for 'Columnist stance on Federal Government handling of repatriation issue' was divided into the following categories for greater clarity: supportive, somewhat supportive, somewhat critical and critical. The opinion piece in the *Telegraph* supported the Federal Government's handling of repatriation. For the *Herald*, one opinion column supported the Federal Government's handling of the repatriation issue at this time, while two were somewhat critical and three were critical. In *The Australian*, one opinion piece was critical of the Government on this matter while another was only somewhat critical.

194   'A bitter way to remember' (editorial), *op. cit.*

195   *Ibid.*

196   *Ibid.*

197   *Ibid.*

The notion of "gratitude" was deployed in varying degrees by editors and in general media coverage throughout April 2000. In the *Telegraph*, the Kosovars were referred to as "grateful" six times, while they were represented as "ungrateful" on seven occasions.[198] It is significant, however, that descriptions of the Kosovars as "grateful" in the *Telegraph* were predominantly used to depict those refugees who had returned home (or had agreed to), and juxtaposed to representations of the "ungrateful" who continued to resist repatriation. Other print media were less occupied with this issue, with *The Australian* referring to the Kosovars as "grateful" three times, while they were depicted as "ungrateful" only once. In the *Herald*, the Kosovars were portrayed as being "grateful" once and "ungrateful" twice.

On 11th April 2000, the *Telegraph*'s editor was again severely critical of the refugees involved in the High Court case. The editor mimicked Ruddock's own words (noted earlier), referring to the actions of those refugees as 'ill-advised bids to gain public support'.[199] The piece described them as a 'recalcitrant group' and deplored their 'defiance of the laws of the country in which they want to remain'.[200] The editor went on:

> The anguish displayed by the Kosovar refugees remaining in Australia and their stubborn refusal to leave with good grace belies the truth of their circumstances and the efforts of the Australian Government to assist them.[201]

The editorial piece typified the shift in the *Telegraph's* narrative – from being highly supportive of the refugees a year beforehand, to highly critical commentary of those who had overstayed the Government's welcome. Almost one year ago, the editorial stated, 'Australia offered an outstretched hand and opened its heart to their plight. Most have now returned home to rebuild their lives, grateful for the sanctuary Australia was able to offer during what had been described as one of the worst humanitarian crises of recent times.'[202] Those

---

198   Notions of un/gratefulness include instances where the newspaper directly described the refugees as "ungrateful", as well as where they were viewed in this light by others (such as politicians or operational staff).

199   'Generosity cannot go on forever' (editorial), *The Daily Telegraph*, 11th April 2000, p. 18.

200   *Ibid.*

201   *Ibid.*

202   *Ibid.* See discussion about the ideological and political role of the newspaper editor in Ericson, Barankek and Chan, *op. cit.*

who remained in Australia, the piece went on, 'are doing themselves a disservice and have not kept faith with agreements they signed with the Australian Government.'[203] The editor noted that the refugees' visas had been extended several times already, arguing that the group who had lost the High Court challenge 'should honour its agreements and accept it is time to go.'[204] The piece further described the situation in Kosovo:

> Kosovo has been declared safe by a neutral umpire, the [UNHCR]. Despite claims to the contrary, no member of this group will be endangered by their return. Each case has been reviewed by the Immigration Minister Philip Ruddock. None are of mixed marriages, were members of the KLA or held government positions which could place them at risk.[205]

Noting the individual protection agreements signed with the Australian government, the editor stated: 'It is impossible for them to remain [in Australia] under these circumstances and should leave of their own free will, acknowledging the generosity of the people of Australia.'[206]

Conservative columnist Piers Akerman added to the *Telegraph's* criticism of the Kosovar refugees remaining in Australia. He cited portions of the agreement signed by each of the refugees before arriving in Australia. He argued that the case was simple:

> Importantly, they [the Kosovar refugees] agreed and confirmed that 'acceptance of the offer of temporary stay is voluntary on my part', 'my stay in Australia is for no more than three months', 'the period may be extended if the Australian Government considers circumstances require it' and 'I will not be able to extend my stay in Australia unless permitted to do so by the Australian Government and will leave Australia when the Australian Government requires me to do so'. Which part of this agreement have they now decided they did not understand?[207]

Akerman added: 'Sadly, those who opened their hearts may find it difficult to do so in the future if their honest approach is not reciprocated by the benefi-

---

203   'Generosity cannot go on forever' (editorial), *op. cit.*
204   *Ibid.*
205   *Ibid.*
206   *Ibid.*
207   P. Akerman, 'Temporarily clear as mud', *The Daily Telegraph*, 11th April 2000, p. 19.

ciaries of their charity.'[208] The underlying subtext for these sentiments in the *Telegraph* was the issue of compliance. The newspaper focussed heavily on a binary of compliance/deviance, frequently demonising those refugees unwilling to return and depicting them as "overstayers".

For the *Telegraph*, the implication was that the refugees were deviant and unworthy of Australia's ongoing protection. In the *Herald*, the Kosovars were described as "uncompliant" on 39 occasions, although they were depicted as "compliant" three times.[209] The refugees were depicted as "uncompliant" 69 times in *The Australian*, while they were described as "compliant" on six occasions. The *Telegraph*, however, referred to the Kosovars as "uncompliant" on 199 occasions, while they were viewed as "compliant" only 15 times. Descriptions of the refugees as "compliant" in the *Telegraph* were typically used in conjunction with those Kosovars who had already returned home (or had agreed to return home). Overall, there was much more focus on criminalising the Kosovars in the *Telegraph*, with 26 terms used to depict them as "deviant".[210] By comparison, there were just four descriptions of the refugees as "deviant" in both the *Herald* and *The Australian*.

On the Run: DIMA and the "Hunt" for Overstayers

Around the time of the High Court challenge, there were 10 Kosovar refugees listed by DIMA as "on the run" in Sydney as well as one man in Tasmania (Akif Lutfiu).[211] Twenty-one others were also listed as missing from the Ban-

---

208   *Ibid.*

209   This includes all references made to the notion "un/compliant" by the newspaper directly, or as the refugees are described in quotes from political leaders, operation staff and others. The category of "uncompliant" included notions such as "defied", "refused", "hunger strike", "unlawful", "on the run", "forced removal", "pressure was applied", "force", "deadline", "unwilling to go", "forcibly deported", "negotiations with the refugees", "hiding", "crunch time", "rallied in protest", "challenged", "will now be held in detention", "order/ordered to leave", "court challenge", "time to go", "detainees", "failing to turn up to the flight", "reluctance", "stubborn", "missing" and "barred".

210   The category of "deviance" was limited to notions of deviance related to unlawfulness and criminality, and where the refugees were described as evading authorities. For example, these include "illegals", "detainees/detention", "criminal", "hunted", "dishonest", "manipulating to situation", "hiding", "eluding" and "avoiding authorities". Some of these phrases also appear in the data for the category "uncompliant".

211   Wade and Clennell, 'Kosovars On Run As Court Rejects Their Last Chance', *op. cit.*

diana Safe Haven after failing to take their seats on a chartered flight home.[212] According to a DIMA spokesperson, not turning up to the 9th April flight arranged by the Government rendered those refugees illegal.[213] The Immigration Minister announced that those Kosovars who did not turn themselves in to DIMA officers by 12th April would be sent to an immigration detention centre. He warned those refugees who refused to leave Australia voluntarily that they would be banned from applying to return for three years.[214] Ruddock said those who were compliant with the Government's plans to repatriate them would, however, be allowed to apply for humanitarian visas to return to Australia. The Immigration Minister further threatened that those 81 Kosovars who had lost their High Court appeal would be forced to pay costs if they did not agree to leave. He assured the *Telegraph* that none of the Kosovars would be sent back to Serbian controlled areas.[215] Despite his assurances, Ruddock ignored the claims of some refugees that they did not have any homes to return to as a result of the conflict, and the prospects of those whose homes were in Serbian controlled areas were not positive. His motivations were simply to repatriate the refugees to Macedonia, and sooner rather than later.

In the *Telegraph*, there was significant focus on the refugee "hunt", a narrative underpinned by the idea of "compliance and capture". The *Telegraph* on 12th April described the situation in the following manner: 'Immigration officers have begun their hunt for illegal Kosovars, with a Department of Immigration interpreter's residence one of the first places targeted.'[216] The home of Sevdail Ramadani, who had worked as an interpreter for DIMA at the East Hills Safe Haven, was raided by immigration officers looking for Kosovars "on

---

212   The refugees listed by DIMA as "on the run" included, according to the *Telegraph*, Artan Ajeti, a male refugee who had eluded authorities in Sydney. The other Kosovar refugees listed as missing by authorities included two families and a couple who had been living in the Liverpool and Campbelltown areas. Adnan Neuhiu, his wife and two children, as well as the couple, Hamza and Safeta Sadrija, failed to take their seats on a chartered flight home. See M. Scala, 'I'm being treated like a criminal', *The Daily Telegraph*, 11th April 2000, p. 4. See also M. Scala, 'Kosovar ultimatum', *The Daily Telegraph*, 12th April 2000, p. 10. See also Clennell and Mann, 'Kosovars Face 'Level Of Force' In Deportation', *op. cit.* See also M. Saunders and A. Crosweller, 'Hunt for 32 Kosovars on the run', *The Australian*, 12th April 2000, p. 4.

213   Scala, 'I'm being treated like a criminal', *op. cit.* See also Scala, 'Kosovar ultimatum', *op. cit.*

214   Scala, 'Kosovar ultimatum', *op. cit.* See also similar comments by Ruddock in 'Most agree to return home', *The Daily Telegraph*, 13th April 2000, p. 3.

215   All references to Philip Ruddock in Scala, 'Kosovar ultimatum', *op. cit.*

216   Scala, 'Kosovar ultimatum', *op. cit.* See also Wade and Clennell, 'Kosovars On Run As Court Rejects Their Last Chance', *op. cit.*

the run" in Sydney.[217] Earlier, an immigration spokesperson told the *Telegraph*: 'We're not going to have a Kosovar hunt; they will turn up.'[218] However, according to several media accounts, Ramadani's experience indicates otherwise. Immigration officials arrived at his Sydney home with a search warrant, searching in wardrobes and under beds throughout the home, including in his 8-year old son's bedroom.[219] Mr Ramadani informed the *Telegraph* that he was disappointed at being treated with suspicion. A spokesperson (unnamed) for the Australian Albanian Association said the raids had upset quite a few people: 'They are hunting for families with children who will eventually give themselves up anyway[.] We don't know how far the Immigration Department will take this.'[220] The spokesperson also told the *Telegraph* that the refugees did not deserve to be treated like criminals.

An immigration official emphasised that the Kosovars would be arrested during 'normal compliance operations' which had been successful in capturing over 13,000 illegal immigrants in the previous year.[221] Ruddock, addressing the Australian Albanian Association, stated that those still "on the run" would be treated compassionately if they turned themselves in.[222] He continued to resist calls, however, from various community and church groups calling for the Minister to allow the refugees to remain in Australia. The Immigration Minister stated that the raids were 'standard action given these people are now staying ... unlawfully [*sic*]'.[223]

One of the refugees evading immigration officers at this time was 21-year old Artan Ajeti whose story was told by the *Telegraph* and the *Herald*.[224] The refugee was ordered by the Federal Government to leave Australia, despite claims that his home was in Presevo.[225] Ajeti stated in the *Telegraph* that it was his desire to remain in Australia: 'I have a job, I speak English and every

---

217   Wade and Clennell, 'Kosovars On Run As Court Rejects Their Last Chance', *op. cit.*

218   Scala, 'I'm being treated like a criminal', *op. cit.*

219   See Scala, 'Kosovar ultimatum', *op. cit.* See also Wade and Clennell, 'Kosovars On Run As Court Rejects Their Last Chance', *op. cit.*

220   Spokesperson for the Australian Albanian Association (unnamed), cited in Scala, 'Kosovar ultimatum', *op. cit.*

221   *Ibid.*

222   Scala, 'Refugee gives us his fight', *op. cit.*

223   Ruddock, cited in Wade and Clennell, 'Kosovars On Run As Court Rejects Their Last Chance', *op. cit.*

224   See also Clennell, 'Kosovars "Conned Into Leaving"', *op. cit.*

225   The town is occasionally referred to by the media as 'Presheva', which is the correct spelling of Presevo as it is pronounced by Kosovar Albanians.

day it's getting better. I am getting better at my job and finding friends.'[226] Ajeti's family (including parents and younger brother and sister) had stayed in Kosovo, he stated, adding he had fled after being forced to fight alongside Serbian forces. He said that, if forced to return home, it was likely that he would have to spend the next twenty years in a Serb prison.[227] Ajeti was unsure about where the Australian government was going to send him: 'Maybe they are just going to send me into Kosovo and I will be forced to knock on doors.'[228]

Ajeti's story was shaped by two perspectives in the *Telegraph*: as a narrative centred on "compliance and capture" and notions of illegality; and, as a human-interest story concerned with the idea of survival. Broadly, these factors signified and supported the authority of the Government to uphold the integrity of the State via punitive and coercive measures.[229] His request for permanent refugee protection in Australia had already been rejected by the Immigration Minister. The *Telegraph* described how Ajeti had evaded authorities after running away from East Hills Safe Haven, hiding in a bathroom at a friends' house (unnamed) for over a week. He stated in the *Telegraph* that he felt the Federal Government was 'running after us as if we are criminals'.[230] On 14th April 2000, it was reported by the *Telegraph* that Ajeti had turned himself in to immigration officials at East Hills Safe Haven. He realised there were few options available to him. He was repatriated shortly afterwards.[231]

In July 2000, the Department of Immigration continued its search for Kosovar refugees "on the run". The *Telegraph*, however, was not the only newspaper insisting on the idea of "compliance and capture". The 19-year old male refugee, Akif Lutfiu, had eluded authorities for three months in Hobart. *The Australian*, which had interviewed Lutfiu in April 2000 while hiding from DIMA officers, described the refugee as 'highly agitated' and noted that he was used to running from Serbian authorities who had been trying to arrest him for some time

---

226   A. Ajeti, in M. Scala and A. Ajeti, 'When home is hell on earth', *The Daily Telegraph*, 8th April 2000, p. 22. It is noted here that Ajeti had been working for six months in Australia in the building industry as a gyprocker.

227   *Ibid.* Ajeti stated here: 'I am confused and I do not know what to do… I am going back to nothing. I have a house in the city but the problem is, how can I risk going there? I was speaking with my parents two weeks ago and they didn't ask me how I was. The first thing they said was "don't come back, please" … [My family] want me to stay as far away from Serb jails as possible… [My family] told me to stay where I am.'

228   *Ibid.*

229   See S. Hall, C. Critcher, T. Jefferson, J. Clarke and B. Roberts, *Policing The Crisis: Mugging, the State and Law and Order*, Macmillan, London, 1978.

230   A. Ajeti, cited in Scala, 'I'm being treated like a criminal', *op. cit.*

231   Scala, 'Refugee gives up his fight', *op. cit.*

back home.[232] On 16th July Lutfiu was finally arrested in the early hours of the morning at a Hobart nightclub. The refugee had fled Kosovo during the 1999 conflict without his parents (who had been deceased for several years).[233] He had been one of the first Kosovars to arrive in Australia in May 1999, residing at the Brighton Safe Haven for six months until being offered a room at the home of the barracks' bus driver.[234] Shortly after his arrest Lutfiu moved to lodge a claim of racial discrimination against Ruddock with the Tasmanian Anti-Discrimination Commission. The Immigration Minister responded by denying racial discrimination and noted that federal law would override state law on immigration matters.[235] Lutfiu hoped the claim would delay his deportation. However, before the claim was lodged, he was deported on 23rd August, along with 11 other Kosovars being held at Port Hedland detention centre.

The Hobart-based support network, 'Friends of Akif', had raised $1300 to assist and provide shelter for Lutfiu in the hope of delaying or avoiding his repatriation.[236] A spokesperson for Greens Senator Bob Brown, Steven Chaffer, had spoken to Lutfiu prior to his departure. Chaffer commented on ABC Radio: 'Akif was very low and very anxious and frightened about going back to nothing because he has nothing to go back to, no family to support him, no job, no money, nothing.'[237] Tasmanian Premier Jim Bacon (ALP) had offered to sponsor Lutfiu (as well as another family) for a permanent visa, which Ruddock had initially agreed to.[238] However, the Immigration Minister was subse-

---

232   B. Montgomery, 'I'm never going back, says fugitive refugee', *The Australian*, 12th April 2000, p. 4. See also B. Montgomery, 'Hunted Kosovar can't come in from cold', *The Australian*, 10th June 2000, p. 5.

233   A. Darby, 'Frightened man's dream: to call Australia home', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 8th December 2007. URL: http://www.smh.com.au/news/world/frightened-mans -dream-to-call-australia-home/2007/12/07/1196813021833.html. Accessed 6th October 2016.

234   Montgomery, 'I'm never going back, says fugitive refugee', *op. cit.*

235   'Attempt to delay man's deportation', *The Daily Telegraph*, 26th July 2000, p. 22.

236   See Kitezh, 'Akif and the Kosovars'. URL: http://www.kitezh.com/haven/kosovars.htm. Accessed 3rd October 2016. See also Kitezh, 'John Vella (To Catch a Keith)'. URL: http ://www.kitezh.com/haven/artists/john.htm. Accessed 3rd October 2016.

237   S. Chaffer, cited in '12 Kosovars deported', *The Daily Telegraph*, 24th August 2000, p. 16.

238   Premier Jim Bacon offered to sponsor the Sopjani family, comprised of two teenage boys and two parents. Mr Sopjani had worked in a paper mill in Tasmania and the family was renting their own home when they were taken into custody on 10th April 2000. See Wade and Clennell, 'Kosovars On Run As Court Rejects Their Last Chance', *op. cit.* See also references to the Sopjani family in A. Clennell, 'More Kosovars To Go Peacefully', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 13th April 2000, p. 4. See other references to the Sopjani family in

quently overruled on the matter by the Prime Minister.[239] As Don Wing, the independent President of Tasmania's Legislative Council, stated: 'John Howard vetoed it'.[240] The racial discrimination claim was lodged in November 2000 with Tasmania's Anti-Discrimination Commissioner, Jocelynne Scutt, taking court action against Ruddock on behalf of Lutfiu.[241] The Immigration Minister contested the writ and Lutfiu has not been allowed to return to Australia. As the *Herald* noted in 2007, Lutfiu was 'Still homeless and on the run... Akif Lutfiu – or "Our Keith", as Hobart friends nicknamed him – has shuffled around Europe for seven years.'[242]

Kosovars Who Remained in Australia

On 29th May 2000, having personally considered individual circumstances, Ruddock announced that 28 Kosovar families (121 people) had been allowed to apply onshore for permanent protection and a further 39 families (170 people) had their temporary stay extended.[243] By the end of June new special long-term temporary visas ('temporary humanitarian concern' visas) were created for 150 Kosovars who were undergoing treatment for trauma. The visas provided the refugees with three years' temporary stay in Australia, allowing them to receive ongoing medical attention.[244] The decision meant that 150 places would be taken away from the total allocation of 12,000 spots available under the humanitarian category for the coming year.[245] A year beforehand, the RCOA had expressed reservations about 'pinching' places from the humanitarian category, advocating the Government instead create an extra reserve of places in 'emergency situations' such as Kosovo.[246]

   In August 2000, there were 30 Kosovars remaining illegally in Australia. Twelve were deported at this time while 18 others remained in Port Hedland

---

Hodge, 'Push comes to shove for 34 Kosovars', *op. cit.*, which describes how the Sopjani's had 'become local celebrities in Hobart'.

239   Darby, 'Frightened man's dream: to call Australia home', *op. cit.*

240   D. Wing, cited in *ibid.*

241   'Ruddock's writ', *The Daily Telegraph*, 11th November 2000, p. 20.

242   Darby, 'Frightened man's dream: to call Australia home', *op. cit.*

243   Ruddock, in 'Refugees: Kosovo', *House of Representatives: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 29th May 2000, p. 16516.

244   York, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

245   A. Clennell, '150 Kosovars To Stay For Now', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 29th June 2000, p. 11.

246   RCOA cited in Green, 'Refugees long to make lucky country their own', *op. cit.*

detention centre. They claimed they had no homes to return to.[247] On 31st October, after being 'appraised of further claims, of an individual character', Ruddock allowed the Kosovars being held at Port Hedland detention centre to apply for bridging visas which would release them from custody.[248] The Minister announced in February 2001 that, on the basis of new information provided to him, a Kosovar family who had illegally overstayed their Safe Haven Visa would be allowed to apply for permanent residency.[249]

Experiences of Return in the Media

Concerns over the Kosovar refugees shaped much of the content produced by Australia's broadcast media throughout 1999. According to the Rehame monitoring agency, out of more than 3 million monitored items on radio and television, Kosovo ranked third in the most talked-about category ahead of the Sydney Olympics, the republic referendum and the Goods and Services Tax (GST).[250] As I have noted, the first Kosovar refugees to return home departed Australia on chartered airplanes on 23rd and 26th July 1999.[251] Refugees residing at the Brighton barracks had been the first to arrive in Australia and were among the first to leave. An emotional farewell was described by the *Telegraph* when 81 Kosovars staying at the Brighton barracks departed for Melbourne airport. The newspaper noted, covering the farewell event held at the Safe Haven, 'There were tears all round' with the Tasmanian Premier declaring the Kosovars 'honorary Tasmanians.'[252] Media coverage of Brighton Safe Haven throughout the refugees' stay had been overwhelmingly supportive of the

---

247 'Refugees' mercy call', *The Daily Telegraph*, 5th September 2000, p. 14.

248 York, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

249 *Ibid.*, p. 101.

250 J. Este, 'Melba – Setting the Agenda', *The Australian*, 20th December 1999, p. 11. East Timor was first, followed by 'daylight' in second. No other details are given on 'daylight'.

251 See Ho, *op. cit.* Here, it is stated that exceptions to this were 26 refugees who had already departed for Kosovo for reasons not stated. These included seven members of the Salihu family who returned to Kosovo in June 1999 after a dispute over the quality of services provided at Singleton Safe Haven (see Chapter 4). See also Marsh, 'Kosovar Refugees Just Happy to Be Going Home', *op. cit.* It was said here that around 100 refugees had returned to Kosovo on 'commercial flights' by the time of the first officially chartered flights departed in 23rd July 1999. See also J. Marsh, 'Thrills Galore As Young Refugees Rediscover Fun', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 23rd July 1999, p. 4.

252 J. Bacon, cited in '81 Kosovars leave for home', *The Daily Telegraph*, 28th July 1999, p. 31.

Kosovars. The Brighton refugees were frequently depicted by government officials as friendly, clean and "middle class" people throughout the early stages of Operation Safe Haven. None of the Brighton refugees had caused any major difficulties for the Immigration Minister and their compliance with regard to the quality of barracks accommodation met with positive media coverage on their farewell.

The Brighton Kosovars were consistently depicted in media coverage in a way that reinforced a positive image of the Safe Haven program. The effect of these kinds of representations was to applaud the Federal Government for offering a world of opportunity and freedom to those facing persecution. The reality, however, was that this arrangement remained temporary, a paradoxical scenario that was obscured by the heightened emotion of the farewell of the Brighton refugees. The *Telegraph* focussed in particular on the emotional departure of teenage refugee Vedat Bajrami, reportedly an acting student from Pristina. A resident at Brighton barracks, Bajrami stated that he had welcomed the chance to come to Australia, and did not want to return to Kosovo.[253] Bajrami's friend, Bashkim Zeqiri (who had been interviewed by the media many times) commented similarly: 'If I stayed here it would be great, it would be my dream'.[254]

The Kosovars' departure generated some charitable efforts by the Australian community. In August 1999, the *Telegraph* reported that the Southern Cross Quilters had organised the donation of 3000 quilts to the Kosovar refugees remaining in Australia. The donation was part of the organisation's 'Kosovo Quilt Drive' that I have mentioned previously. The drive had the aim of providing every Kosovar refugee with a handmade quilt to take home.[255] Nevertheless and despite some instances of charity and goodwill, many Kosovars who returned home after October 1999 were left 'stranded in [...] miserable conditions without any material assistance from Australia. They were not even put in touch with aid agencies able and willing to help.'[256] As the United States Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI) notes, television news bulletins showed the returning refugees with all their possessions in plastic bags being left at their homes with no means to repair them. They were without

---

253   Trute and Kamper, 'Kosovars preparing to go home, *op. cit.*

254   B. Zeqiri, cited in *ibid.*

255   'Kosovo refugees to visit show – Stiches and Crafts Show – A special advertising report', *The Sunday Telegraph*, 15th August 1999, p. 171.

256   Taylor, 'Protection or Prevention? A Close Look at the Temporary Safe Haven Visa Class', *op. cit.*, p. 85.

food or money and those with Australian dollars were reportedly unable to exchange them.[257]

Analysis of media coverage of the repatriations in April 2000 indicates varied use of moral and humanitarian sentiment in each of the newspapers concerned. There were at least 98 references and descriptors urging empathy for the refugees in the *Telegraph*, while in the *Herald* and *Australian* there were at least 152 and 181 respectively.[258] There were only three notions related to humanitarianism in the *Telegraph*, while there were 44 in the *Herald* and six in *The Australian*.[259] Descriptions of the Kosovars as "children" or "babies" featured much less in comparison to coverage in the month prior to the arrival of evacuees at Sydney airport a year before. This paralleled a broader decline in media empathy for the refugees in recent months.[260] Images of children can be viewed as part of an attempt by the media to persuade the public of the moral motivations of a particular political cause (such as during the evacuations and arrival at Sydney airport).[261] Unlike coverage of the evacuation, references to children or babies numbered only two in the *Telegraph*, eight in the *Herald* and 13 in *The Australian*. The *Telegraph* was by far least supportive of the idea that the refugees should be able to remain in Australia on grounds of "compassion" or for moral reasons.

Analysis of earlier media coverage of the Kosovar refugee crisis (see Chapters 2 and 3) revealed that moral or humanitarian sentiments were occasion-

---

257   The Mission of U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI), 'About Refugees', *op. cit.*

258   These terms include "appeals", "lives at stake", "trauma", "medical assistance", "ill health", "suicide", "desperate", "mean-spirited", "crying", "distress", "ethnic cleansing", "overdoses", "emotional pleas", "hope", "afraid", "fled", "sick", "courage", despair", "weep", "flee", "compassion", "empathy", "rape", "hungry", "fear", "destitute", "travesty", "sympathy", "heart", "decimated", "pitiful", "shiver", "cold", "hardship", "uncertain", "violence", "suffering", "relief", "war", "troubled", "bleak future" and "terror" (among others).

259   The category "humanitarian" included references to notions of humanitarian obligation, humanitarian aid or programs and human rights concerns. For the *Herald*, 19 "humanitarian" references were in J. Dunn, 'UN Criticism Should Not Be Misunderstood', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 1st April 2000, p. 49. This piece was not explicitly about the Kosovar refugees, though it does mention the Kosovo conflict and is a more so a general commentary on the Howard Government's increasing reluctance to take 'human rights standards and their international responsibilities seriously'. Even so, the frequency of references to "humanitarian" concepts in the *Herald* more than doubled those drawn on by both *The Australian* and *Telegraph* which tended to invoke more emotive concepts (such as 'compassion').

260   This category included all references to "children, babies or childbirth".

261   See Herman and Chomsky, *op. cit.*, p. liii.

ally (though not always) drawn on to supplement "national values" such as "mateship". Where humanitarian sentiments were referred to, it was often in juxtaposition to the kinds of charity being offered by Australians to the Kosovars, rather than in relation to "national values". The effect was to signify the moral standing of the Australian community. In the *Herald*, there was only one reference to notions of "mateship/equality/fair go",[262] while there were 40 terms describing "charity" by the Australian government and community to the benefit of the Kosovars.[263] There were at least 99 references to "charity" in the *Telegraph* while there were no terms explicitly related to "mateship/equality/fair go". In *The Australian*, there were at least 69 references to "charity" while there was no explicit mention of concepts related to "mateship/equality/fair go". The relatively non-existent use of "national values" in the repatriation coverage is explained by the ways in which media organisations consistently attempt to position news narratives in relation to popular national causes. In this case, it is plausible to suggest that media coverage had the effect of watering down the significance of the Kosovar refugee plight as a "national" interest.

Moral sentiment was further implicated by cultural commentary that emerged in coverage of the repatriations in April 2000. Gender, unlike the Singleton incident, was not a significant concern in this coverage. The refugees were viewed as "chauvinist/coming from a male-dominated culture" on one occasion in the *Herald* though none of these descriptors were used by the *Telegraph* or *Australian*.[264] In the *Herald*, the refugees were identified as "family people" or referred to by their family titles on 56 occasions.[265] The *Telegraph* used "family" descriptors on 23 occasions, while these kinds of terms numbered 39 in *The Australian*. There was no explicit mention in the *Telegraph*

---

262   In this instance the notion of "fairness" was used in the context of being an important trait underpinning the Immigration Minister's assessment of those refugees who had applied to stay in Australia and amidst debate about recent changes to Immigration policy. See Clennell, 'Opening Doors', *op. cit.*

263   "Acts of charity" included any actions, acts, offerings, gifts, donations or monies offered to the Kosovars by the Australian government and/or community. Examples are flights, transport, visits by the Immigration Minister to the Safe Havens, accommodation, facilities used by the Kosovars and opportunities offered to them.

264   See S. Waldon, 'We Sent Them Back To This', *Sun-Herald*, 16th April 2000, p. 45. Here, the male head of a Kosovar refugee family is described as the 'patriarch'.

265   This includes descriptions of the refugees in their family roles, as family units or as "uncle/aunt", "brother/sister", "sibling", "son/daughter", "niece/nephew", "mother/father", "grandparent" and the like.

or the *Herald* of the notion that the Kosovars were "dissimilar, alien or Other".[266] There were, however, three descriptions of the Kosovars in this light in *The Australian*.[267] The Kosovars were not referred to as "Europeans" in a more general sense in any of the newspapers, which is interesting considering the amount of attention given by the media to this fact during the evacuation and arrival periods.

Those refugees who had departed Australia on 16th April 2000 were flown to Skopje from where they would be bussed to Pristina and then taken to other towns and villages by the UN. Senator Bartlett described how those who were repatriated at this time were under 'enormous coercive pressure' to leave Australia.[268] This was affirmed by refugee Veli Dodi (described as an economist) who had resisted his removal from Australia. Dodi, in a manner similar to other refugees quoted by the *Telegraph*, stated that he did not feel he had been forced to return home. However, he went on: 'There was a sort of pressure[.] We were in detention for a week.'[269] Dodi added: 'The people supported us in every way possible. Only the immigration minister was against us.'[270]

Several other refugees informed the *Telegraph* that their homes had been destroyed or damaged, and they therefore had nowhere to live. Samie Thaqi described by the *Telegraph* as a 37-year old housewife, had been removed from Australia along with her five children. She commented that it would be up to international agencies to decide where her family would live. Their home had been destroyed.[271] Thaqi was asked by the *Telegraph* if she felt resentment towards Australians for the way the refugees had been treated, to which she replied: 'Not against Australians but against the Australian Government. The Australian people were very good and very supportive.'[272]

---

266   The category "dissimilar, alien or Other" includes any references to tensions existing between Australian culture or values and those of the Kosovars (including religious or ethnic differences).

267   An explicit reference to the 'ethnicity' of the Kosovars is noted in Hodge, 'Kosovars fly out leaving defiant 21', *op. cit.* References are also made to the notions 'different culture' and 'Muslim' in R. Curtis, 'Home free among the ruins', *The Australian*, 13th April 2000, p. 13.

268   A. Bartlett, in 'Refugees: Kosovo', *Senate: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 12th April 2000, p. 13981.

269   V. Dodi, cited in 'Refugees say thanks', *The Daily Telegraph*, 18th April 2000, p. 3.

270   Dodi, cited in *ibid.*

271   Gray, 'Refugees arrive home in Kosovo', *op. cit.*

272   S. Thaqi, cited in *ibid.*

The Situation Faced by Returnees in Early 2000

In January 2000 the UNHCR's Peter Kessler described the situation on the Serbia-Kosovo border as 'extremely tense'. He cited multiple incidences of murder, arson and violent clashes between Serbs, Albanians and Slavs in recent weeks.[273] He stated that the 'time is not yet right for large-scale return of non-Albanian refugees... security cannot be guaranteed.'[274] The UNHCR had also reported that the influx of returnees to Kosovo was putting pressure on households who were already trying to make room for returning family members and as aid agencies attempted to match growing housing demands with under-resourced rebuilding programs. More than 60,000 homes had been destroyed in the war and the UN was hoping to have completed the construction or rebuilding of 30,000 homes by the end of the year.[275] UNHCR spokesperson Paula Ghedini urged continued caution and restraint by the international community. She then added: 'We understand the political imperative of sending [refugees] back. We're not asking countries to hold off forever just to give us warning and some time to deal with the problems.'[276] Ghedini further described how ethnic tensions were beginning to escalate in the province and that increasing numbers of returnees would contribute significant instability to the situation.[277] Shopkeepers complained of being forced to pay protection money to various KLA factions and there was a general air of violence and hostility despite the presence of NATO and a new local civilian police service (the Kosovo Protection Corps).[278]

As Taylor notes, the majority of those Kosovars who were reluctant to return home even after the European winter was over fell within the 'at risk' category outlined in the UN refugee Convention. The security situation remained volatile and the province still did not have a functioning police force, court system or prison system.[279] Civil infrastructure, including telephone, postal and banking services remained inadequate, and there remained a serious shortage

---

273   'Kosovo killings keeping Serbs out', *The Australian*, 19th January 2000, p. 9.

274   Kessler, cited in *ibid.*

275   S. Mann, 'Almost Home, And Devoid Of Hope', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 22nd April 2000, p. 17.

276   P. Ghedini, cited in *ibid.*

277   Ghedini, cited in *ibid.*

278   *Ibid.* The article says that there were 10 murders, 16 attempted murders and 26 arson attacks in the province in the last week.

279   Taylor, 'Protection or Prevention? A Close Look at the Temporary Safe Haven Visa Class', *op. cit.*, p. 84.

of housing. After a decade of economic underdevelopment, a virtually non-existent public service, and with 65-per cent of people unemployed, Kosovo was 'hardly able to look after its residents, let alone an inrush of half-starved newcomers.'[280] In March 2000, the ALP's Dick Adams (Member for Lyons) described to the House of Representatives how he had 'made inquiries through the postal systems and the United Nations and I have found that letters go to Belgrade and no further. There is no mail or contact system set up in Kosovo.'[281] He stated that many refugees were still living in tents and temporary accommodation at this time and that many ordinary services simply did not exist. As Taylor comments, for up to a year after the war, few Kosovars had access to legitimate sources of income, and struggled to feed themselves and their families. By mid-April 2000, Bernard Kouchner (head of UNMIK) 'pleaded for governments to stem the flow [of returning refugees] for fear that Kosovo's brittle peace and fledgling post-war infrastructure could crumble.'[282] Ruddock responded by speculating that there was an 'expectation' that Kosovo refugees returning home 'are going to have homes rebuilt for them, hot and cold water and provisions for services', which were not even available in many other, non-European countries.[283] The Immigration Minister's position was in clear contrast to his earlier claims about Australia's humanitarian record and its reputation as the most generous country in the world.[284]

Erik Lloga in Kosovo

Those Kosovar refugees who returned home on 16th April 2000 were accompanied by Lloga whose experience was discussed in the Federal Senate. On Melbourne's 744 ABC radio Lloga had described how he sat on the plane with

---

280   D.J. Whittaker, *Asylum Seekers in the Contemporary World*, Routledge, Milton Park, 2006, p. 88.

281   This is confirmed by the Member for Lyons (Tasmania), Dick Adams in 'Migration Legislation Amendment Bill; Second Reading', *House of Representatives: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 6th March 2000, p. 14002.

282   Mann, 'Doors Slam On Kosovars', *op. cit.* See also Denney, *op. cit.*, where Erik Lloga describes 'chronic electricity shortages' and a shortage of housing across Kosovo.

283   G. Henderson, 'Hard Sell For PM's Softer Side', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 18th April 2000, p. 19.

284   Ruddock, in 'Migration Legislation Amendment (Temporary Safe Haven Visas) Bill 1999; Second Reading', *House of Representatives: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 11th May 1999, pp. 5038-5040.

the refugees to Skopje. He noted that there were no Australian immigration officials aboard the flight, nor any on the ground to assist the Kosovars.[285] Lloga stated that he had personally taken refugees to police stations, even feeding some with his own money because the Australian government had not given them any.[286] It was noted that those refugees who had worked and earned money in Australia were unable to exchange any Australian currency in Pristina. Lloga further described how he had attempted to take some of the refugees to aid agencies in Kosovo who had not even been advised of their arrival.[287]

Robert Manne, referring to an interview with Lloga (speaking from Pristina) on ABC Radio, described how the Federal Government 'had not supplied [the refugees] with the addresses of agencies to which they might turn. It made no arrangements for their accommodation. It had not even assured that on arrival the Australian Kosovars would have food to eat.'[288] Manne said that even 'the cautious Lloga' who had worked closely with DIMA throughout Operation Safe Haven, 'could not disagree' with comments that the Australian government had 'washed' its hands of the Kosovars.[289] Following Lloga's interview the Immigration Minister downplayed Lloga's concerns. The presenter, Terry Laidler, asked Ruddock if he thought the Australian people would be 'fuming' about the "abandonment" of the refugees. The Immigration Minister replied that Laidler should not look at the situation from such a 'Eurocentric' perspective.[290] Manne described how immediately afterwards, 'the switchboard was alight' with angry callers: 'Every caller was ashamed. Unlike the minister, none appeared to find it difficult to distinguish between common decency and the Eurocentric point of view.'[291] According to the Rehame media monitoring service, in the week after Lloga's radio interviews there was a 'massive swing' in caller opinion, indicating that many Australians had reconsidered their support for the Federal Government's stance on the recent repatriations.[292] Sup-

---

285   R. Manne, 'Nowhere To Run Or Hide', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 24th April 2000, p. 13.

286   *Ibid.*

287   As described in M. Danby, 'Refugees: Kosovo', *House of Representatives: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 29th May 2000, p. 16433. See also p. 16432, where Danby says: 'These people were not even allowed to change their money – the pathetic $50 that they had managed to earn working in their local communities [in Australia]. No bank in Pristina changes Australian money. It is monopoly money in Pristina. So they had no money even of their own to buy food or to get accommodation.'

288   Manne, 'Nowhere To Run Or Hide', *op. cit.*

289   *Ibid.*

290   Ruddock, as cited in *ibid.*

291   *Ibid.*

292   'No refuge for Ruddock – The Rehame Report', *The Australian*, 27th April 2000.

port for Ruddock's decision to return the refugees fell from 39 to four per cent, with many callers stating they felt "ashamed" and "embarrassed".[293] The majority of those who had called radio talkback programs after the Kosovars had left 'felt they should never have been sent back.'[294]

There was a significant breakdown in communication between the Australian government and the UNHCR that added a sense of confusion and chaos to the repatriations. As Senator Danby stated, those refugees who wanted to return to Australia were given no indication by the Government as to the availability of Australian immigration officials in Kosovo, nor when or how to contact them in order to apply for visas.[295] Danby noted how the ABC's *7.30 Report* had raised significant questions about the safety of Kosovars returning to Serbian-controlled areas. He further suggested that the repatriations were somewhat paradoxical, citing a warning issued by DFAT that Kosovo was too dangerous for Australians travelling in the region. *60 Minutes'* reporter Richard Carleton had also returned with some of the refugees to their homes in Presevo (which was under the control of Serbia). He described how the town was literally occupied by Yugoslav tanks. Senator Danby noted how the refugees 'were crying with [Richard Carleton], wishing that they could return. We just dumped them there. We just put them on a plane to Skopje and did not give them any money or food or even alert the international aid agencies that they were coming.'[296]

Conclusion

The Australian government's response to the issue of repatriation was cautious and politically conservative. Despite government claims to the contrary it ignored the human rights of the Kosovar refugees as otherwise guaranteed by international conventions. The Federal Government retained the legal right to return the Kosovars to their homeland under the powers it had obtained under the Safe Haven legislation. The Immigration Minister was, as noted by the UNHCR, able to conduct an induced return of the refugees without being subject to external checks on his powers. The Federal Government's response

---

293   *Ibid.*

294   *Ibid.* The figures cited here show that 62 per cent of male callers and 88 per cent of female callers were against the repatriations in the week after Lloga's radio interviews.

295   M. Danby, 'Refugees: Kosovo', *House of Representatives: Official Hansard*, Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 29th May 2000, p. 16433.

296   *Ibid.*

to the issue of repatriation was shaped by an element of coercion and much more punitive towards the refugees in comparison to most other countries.

The experiences of many of those refugees who returned to Kosovo in the year after the war reflects an unwillingness by the Federal Government to continue to promote their human rights. The Government's response was consistent with both statements it had made during the early stages of Operation Safe Haven and the rationale behind the legal restrictions imposed on the Kosovars under the Safe Haven program. Under the legislation, the refugees were required to return when the government said so. It further provided a means by which the Immigration Minister maintained rigid control over all aspects of the lives of Kosovar refugees offered temporary safe haven in Australia. The Government's response was, however, inconsistent with sentiments expressed earlier by the Prime Minister during the arrival ceremony at Sydney airport, when the refugees were welcomed with "open arms" (at least in front of the media). As a contributor to the *Herald* noted, following the repatriations that occurred after the High Court case: 'I didn't see John Howard at the airport, making speeches and handing out soft toys to the children. He seemed so interested in their welfare just a few months ago.'[297]

Media coverage predominantly supported the Federal Government's response. There remained, for the most part, a close and complementary relationship between the objectives of the Federal Government and media representations of the Kosovars during the High Court case. The *Telegraph* and *Herald* were very critical of those refugees that wanted to remain in Australia, although *The Australian* largely objected to the Government's treatment of the Kosovars. A significant portion of media coverage represented those refugees involved in the High Court challenge as unworthy of Australia's ongoing protection. The *Telegraph*, in particular, was critical of those refugees, depicting them as uncompliant, "illegals" and deviant criminals. The overwhelming effect of the media's portrayal was to reproduce an image of the Kosovars as undeserving of the charity that had been offered to them by the Australian community. The media most frequently supported the Federal Government's repatriation program while demonising those Kosovar refugees who refused to leave Australia voluntarily.

---

297   S. Kennedy (Comerong Island), 'The Politics of Compassion' (letter), *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 18th April 2000, p. 18.

FIGURE 37   *Vehicle transporting supplies in Kosovo shortly after war ended.* Courtesy Lloyd Turner.

FIGURE 38   *Street scene in Pristina shortly after war ended. British troops mingle with children.* Courtesy Lloyd Turner.

FIGURE 39   *A Pristina building damaged by NATO bombings.* Courtesy Lloyd Turner.

FIGURE 40   *Scene in Pristina shortly after the end of the war in Kosovo.* Courtesy Lloyd Turner.

Conclusion: the Kosovars and Generosity in Context

Generosity and Refugees has inquired into a contemporary political debate about the limits to generosity with a particular focus on the Australian historical context. It sought to explore these implications within a broader discussion concerned with refugee resettlement. A case study on the history of Operation Safe Haven provided parameters for investigating the ways in which generosity is inhibited by nationally contextual and historical perspectives. Generosity was a crucial motivating factor that led to the implementation of Operation Safe Haven. However, the manner in which the ideal of generosity was harnessed by government has been accompanied by criticism concerning Australia's commitments to human rights.

This book analysed the Australian media's portrayal of the Howard Government in relation to its treatment of Kosovar refugees temporarily accommodated in the country. In doing so it has sought to provide a more adequate understanding of the relationship between the production of historical perspectives on refugees and the ways in which these lenses have been mediated and framed in public discourse.

During Operation Safe Haven the theme of generosity emerged as an organising principle in policy formation. Generosity was referred to both explicitly in political and media discourse as well as signified through its proximity in discourse to relatable themes such as human rights, compassion, empathy and charity. These themes frequently emerged in discussions about the Kosovars implicated by notions of national identity and belonging. The Kosovars' status as visiting guests of the nation aligned with the imperative to effectively manage national space through innovations in border control including the policy of temporary protection.

The concept of generosity has been utilised in this book to explain an interconnected series of discursive relations and commonly shared meanings in the research sources that are underscored by themes of compassion and empathy. The method of content analysis was used to elaborate the central theme of generosity by coding related concepts with a relative range of descriptors extending to charity and human rights discourse. This enabled the analysis to identify signifiers in language regarding the limits to generosity within the context of Australia's Kosovar evacuation program. These limits are signified, for example, by use in media coverage of the terms "new home" and "temporary home", as well as "grateful" and "ungrateful", to depict the Kosovars – the

deployment of which shifted relative to particular events as they occurred. For instance, there was greater use of the term "new home" (compared to "temporary home") during the arrival of the first planeload of Kosovars at Sydney airport. This was accompanied by media coverage that overwhelmingly portrayed the Howard Government in a favourable light. In contrast "ungratefulness" emerged as a prominent concept in media coverage used to portray the Kosovars who questioned the quality of the Government's accommodation program in Singleton. The media analysis has been expedient for unpacking the ways in which generosity was expounded in political and media debates throughout Operation Safe Haven, and indicating limits to generosity in the Australian socio-political context at the level of discourse.

The evacuation of the Kosovar refugees brought to the foreground questions about the distribution of charity in Australia respective of the country's economic prosperity.[1] Mares describes how during Operation Safe Haven 'the open-hearted response of local communities, particularly in country towns, defied the image of Australia as a nation antagonistic to new immigrants.'[2] I have argued that the evacuation program enabled the Australian government to propagate a positive image of the nation internationally and in local media as generous, charitable and compassionate. Summers noted how Australians had 'far more to give', considering the Australian Stock Exchange 'hit an all-time high' the day the Howard Government decided to establish the Safe Haven program.[3] Operation Safe Haven can thus be comprehended in relation to notions of who is purportedly "deserving" of charity and who is not.[4] This raises questions concerning the motivations of charities in their treatment of the recipients of charitable actions.[5]

Kunz provides historical context for the ways in which generosity was extended to the Kosovars, noting that Australian attitudes towards refugees in the post-war era were frequently imbued with 'an air of generous naivety by well-meaning Australians ready to share their "superior culture" with the

1   M. Lyons, M. McGregor-Lowndes and P. O'Donoghue, 'Researching Giving and Volunteering in Australia', *Australian Journal of Social Issues*, 41(4), Summer, 2006, p. 393.

2   P. Mares, 'Safe Havens: Two Cautionary Tales', *Inside Story*, 9th September 2015. URL: http://insidestory.org.au/safe-havens-two-cautionary-tales. Accessed 1st December 2016.

3   A. Summers, 'We Can Afford Much More For The Kosovars', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 15th April 1999, p. 15.

4   B. Dickey, *No Charity There; A Short History of Social Welfare in Australia*, Allen and Unwin, North Sydney, 1987, p. xiii.

5   *Ibid.*, p. xiv.

newcomers'.[6] This disposition of superiority, some have argued, is observable across political discourse surrounding the question of refugee intake in contemporary Australia, underpinning statements by politicians suggesting that 'only those we choose to enter may enter, and that only under the condition of such authority can there ever be any exercise of generosity.'[7]

International commentators further recognised how the UNHCR's evacuation program enabled governments to 'score public relations points' by appearing "humanitarian" in receiving a limited number of "popular" refugees.[8] This sits comfortably within the history of refugee policy debates internationally where a *discourse of generosity* has been a powerful countermeasure to a *discourse of rights* in terms of setting the policy agenda of recipient states.[9] These implications are also reflected in observations of how generosity has become part of a wider discussion concerning Australia's cultural identity and the responses of successive governments since the 1990s to effectively manage constituent perceptions of "mass" breaches of national space at the borders.[10]

Gibney states that the media coverage, financial aid and international concern 'lavished' on the Kosovars represented a departure from the international community's responses to refugee needs in places such as Sierra Leone, Democratic Republic of Congo and Ethiopia: '[in] one estimate UNHCR has been spending $1.23 of refugees per day in the Balkans, eleven times more than the 11 cents it spends daily on refugees in Africa.'[11] It was estimated that the refugee

6   E.F. Kunz, *Displaced Persons; Calwell's New Australians*, Australian National University Press, Rushcutters Bay, 1988, p. 166.

7   F. Jenkins, 'Gesture Beyond Tolerance: generosity, fatality and the logic of the state', *Angelaki*, 7(3), 2002, p. 120.

8   M. Barutciski and A. Suhrke, 'Lessons from the Kosovo Crisis: Innovations in Protection and Burden-sharing', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 14(2), 2001, pp. 104-105.

9   See R. Whitaker, 'Refugees: The Security Dimension', *Citizenship Studies*, 2(3), 1998, pp. 413-434. See also B. Taylor, '"Their Only Words of English Were 'Thank You'": Rights, Gratitude and 'Deserving' Hungarian Refugees to Britain in 1956', *Journal of British Studies*, 55, 2016, pp. 120-144. See also T. Kushner, 'Meaning nothing but good: ethics, history and asylum-seeker phobia in Britain', *Patterns of Prejudice*, 37(3), 2003, pp. 257-276. See also S. Gibson, 'Accommodating strangers: British hospitality and the asylum hotel debate', *Journal for Cultural Research*, 7(4), 2003, pp. 367-386. See also S. Özden, 'Syrian Refugees in Turkey', *MPC Research Reports* (2013/05), 2013, p. 5. URL: http://www.migrationpolicycentre.eu/docs/MPC-RR-2013-05.pdf. Accessed 20th November 2016.

10   G. Hage, *Against Paranoid Nationalism: Searching for Hope in a Shrinking Society*, Pluto Press, Annandale, 2003, p. 20 and p. 21.

11   M.J. Gibney, 'Kosovo and beyond: popular and unpopular refugees', *Forced Migration Review*, 1999, 5, p. 28. URL: http://www.fmreview.org/sites/fmr/files/FMRdownloads/en/FMRpdfs/FMR05/fmr5full.pdf. Accessed 1st December 2016.

camps in Macedonia at this time 'had a ratio of about 1 doctor per 700, whereas many camps in Africa have one doctor for approximately 100,000 refugees.'[12] Furthermore international support for the Kosovars after August 1999 comprised two billions dollars in return and reconstruction aid from more than 60 countries; 'all the while, crises in Africa simmer along with only a fraction of the humanitarian assistance required.'[13] Gibney attributes several key factors to the popularity of the Kosovars including: *regionality* (the proximity of Kosovo to key Western states and the impacts the refugee crisis may have placed on those countries financially, politically and socially); re-purposing and re-branding (efforts to re-legitimize NATO in the post-Cold War era within the lexicon of 'humanitarian values'); and, *relatedness* (the Kosovars, conceived as Europeans, being associated with a common sense of civilization and culture among European nations).[14] The geo-political lens espoused by the Western European and North American response to the Kosovo war and refugee crisis was in many ways adopted by Australian foreign policy. This lens also resonated with many Australians who sought to play a part in a wider struggle to protect human rights.

This book has outlined the experience of the Kosovars in Australia alongside the role of the media in perpetuating the notion of "acceptability". The evacuation of the Kosovar refugees to Australia highlighted a number of important and contemporary issues and raised questions about the conditions under which refugees have been accepted into the Australian community. Neumann links the uses of acceptability as a hegemonic discourse to a lack of critique in research and media; 'The scarcity of books, films, websites and other accessible historical scholarship about the history of asylum seeker and refugee policy is part of a wider problem: the comparative lack of interest in histories of Australia as a nation of immigrants – by historians, by policy-makers and by the general public.'[15] He argues that recent debates over refugee policy have tended to lack an 'informed historical perspective', and 'point[s] the finger at politicians and journalists, and at historians.'[16] Neumann called

---

12   *Ibid.*

13   *Ibid.*

14   *Ibid.*, pp. 29-30.

15   K. Neumann, *Across the Seas: Australia's Response to Refugees: A History*, Black Inc., Carlton, 2015, p. 4.

16   K. Neumann, 'Historians to the Fore, Or How to Inform a Much-needed Debate about Australia's Response to Refugees', *Australian Policy and History*; *Linking the past with the present for the future*, August 2010. URL: http://aph.org.au/historians-to-the-fore. Accessed 16th October 2016.

for a more constructive debate about refugee policy, and identified several key areas that remain heavily under-researched.[17] This book has explored several areas nominated as research priorities by Neumann most notably the implications of refugee advocacy, engagement with the international refugee regime and the admission and rejection of refugees.

The experience of the Kosovar refugees played an important role in effecting the changes brought about in Australia's refugee policy in 1999. The evacuation of the Kosovar refugees to Australia provided the initial impetus for the introduction of the Howard Government's temporary protection regime.[18] The Howard Government's Safe Haven program has been described with some accuracy as policy-making 'on the run'.[19] The Government implemented this policy as a strategy to regain public favour – after having initially rejected the UNHCR's request to assist Kosovar refugees. The Safe Haven program was hastily conceived and implemented as a response to the UNHCR's sudden need to accommodate hundreds of thousands of ethnic Albanian refugees waiting for help in Macedonia. The program also embodied an important and historical shift in Australian refugee policy from permanent to temporary protection.

A number of continuing practices have been central to the development of refugee policy in Australia. An example of a continuing practice is the public relations strategies employed by federal governments and the Department of Immigration. I have noted the work of immigration scholars such as Jupp, Kunz and Collins and identified a link between the way post-Second World War DPs and the Kosovars were "sold" to the Australian public by government officials. While the evacuation of the Kosovars to Australia was part of a global humanitarian mission, as was ostensibly the acceptance of the DPs after the Second World War, both instances allowed many Australians to reaffirm

---

17   *Ibid.*, p. 8. Neumann called for a more constructive debate about the historical implications of refugee policy, and identified six key areas that remain under-researched: 'antialienism and refugee advocacy, the institution of asylum, engagement with the international refugee regime, the intersections between refugee and immigration policy, the evolvement of the category of the refugee, and the admission and rejection of refugees'. See also p. 7, where he says: 'A narrative that includes those six elements would, I hope, be one that foregrounds the complexity of the past.'

18   Some of the points I have raised in my conclusion appear my published paper: R. Carr, 'Broadening the Scope of Historical Enquiry into Australian Refugee Policy', *Australian Policy and History*, November 2010. URL: http://aph.org.au/broadening-the-scope. Accessed 12th October 2016.

19   As noted in 'Milosevic shows his hypocrisy … as refugee policy is made on the run' (editorial), *The Australian*, 8th April 1999, p. 12.

a triumphal sense of national virtue as central to conceptions of Australian citizenship.[20]

Much of what has been outlined challenges the dominant representation of refugees in the media today. As Sharon Pickering observed: 'what is absent from the press … is any consideration of seeking asylum from the point of view of the asylum seeker.'[21] I have discussed how the range of sources used in news media had a significant affect on the way public opinion formed in relation to the Kosovar refugees.

The arrival of the Kosovars at Sydney airport provided immediate positive publicity for the Howard Government. The Prime Minister John Howard, positioned on a ceremonial dais in front of the Australian flag, capitalised on an opportune moment for his Government. At the same time, the Australian news media, which was given exclusive access to the event, reproduced a perception of the Howard Government as generous and compassionate. This book has revealed that the media played a crucial role as mediator of the public's understanding of the Safe Haven policy.

News reports often presented Australians as the most generous people in the world and that their efforts in assisting the Kosovar refugees were highly commendable. However this media coverage overlooked concern about the paradox that, while Australians may have supported compassion towards the refugees' plight, the Government had introduced a new visa category that was highly restrictive. It trespassed on the Kosovars' human rights.

This book has considered the quality of the accommodation facilities provided by the Howard Government to the Kosovar refugees. It discussed the impact of the isolation that was imposed by the Government on refugees offered accommodation in rural areas. The analysis of the Singleton barracks focussed in particular on protests by Kosovar refugees who argued that the conditions at the army base were unsuitable for children, families and the elderly. Particular attention has been paid to the Government's dealings with the Salihu family and the Immigration Minister's efforts to demonise them in the media for not complying with the Safe Haven program. *Generosity and Refugees* has

---

20   This argument is made similarly in R. Carr and J. Persian, 'Historical Continuities of Public Relations Surrounding Australia's Post-War Resettlement and Safe Haven Programs' (Conference Paper), Australian Historical Association (AHA) Conference, University of Western Australia, 5th July 2010. URL: https://www.academia.edu/1669691/Historical _Continuities_of_Public_Relations_Surrounding_Australia_s_Post-War_Resettlement _and_Safe_Haven_Programs. Accessed 27th September 2016.

21   S. Pickering, 'Common Sense and Original Deviancy: News Discourses and Asylum Seekers in Australia', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 14(2), 2001, p. 183.

emphasised the importance of the relationship formed between the media and the Howard Government in responding to the Singleton protest, and how debate about the suitability of using army barracks was overshadowed in media coverage by the refugees' "insult" to Australian hospitality. The Singleton incident generated significant public backlash to the Kosovars and popular outcry over their "ingratitude". It was a crucial media event that transformed popular conceptions of the Kosovars from worthy and welcomed to complaining and ungrateful.

The Federal Government's response to the issue of repatriation at the end of the Kosovo war was shaped by an element of coercion and a much more punitive attitude towards the refugees in comparison to most other countries. This book has documented the High Court challenge brought by Kosovar refugees against the Federal Government in April 2000 in an attempt to prevent their repatriation. It also noted how media coverage worked to support the Federal Government's repatriation program and its efforts to generate the consensus that those Kosovar refugees who refused to leave Australia voluntarily were "criminals" and "illegal" non-citizens which was a legitimate description of them in the wording of the Safe Haven legislation.

Generosity and Refugees explored some of the key concepts in academic scholarship about popular Australian nationalism, identity and conceptions of migrants from the Balkans. It highlighted consistencies in the ways the media reproduced notions of the "Other" in relation to ethnic Albanian Kosovars. The relationship between the mass media, NATO and NATO-aligned countries (such as Australia) has also been unpacked as well as the role of the media in facilitating support for the NATO campaign against Yugoslavia.

The influence of populism on Australia's refugee policy remains strong. There are ongoing debates about the obligations of federal government to individual non-citizens who have been persecuted in their homelands and sought Australia's protection. The news media continues to play an important role in generating public consensus on asylum seekers.

The individual circumstances faced by refugees have often been overlooked within Australian political discourse. Many refugees who have experienced persecution and been granted protection in Australia have benefited from the generosity of the Australian community. The mutual benefits of this situation are often forgotten.

Generosity and Refugees sought to establish a clearer view of paradoxes in popular identity discourse in Australia, imbued with both a generosity and meanness of spirit, and how those aspects have come to determine changes and developments in refugee policy. It has provided an overview of what constitutes and motivates the generosity of Australians when confronted by a humanitarian disaster.

Public perceptions of Operation Safe Haven were significantly mediated by the Howard Government. Some Kosovar refugees were interviewed by the Australian media and featured in heavily stylised news pieces that supported the public relations strategy of the Department of Immigration. Kosovars were warned by immigration officials not to speak to journalists, though a number of refugees commented in the media about their experiences in Australia after being repatriated. They commented on the strictness of the regulations imposed on them by the Howard Government.

The Government's response to the Kosovar refugees was paradoxical as the Safe Haven program simultaneously advocated generosity and mean-spiritedness. It promoted both the need to fundamentally guarantee human rights as well as a legal paradigm in which refugees were no longer protected by the international human rights and refugee conventions. These paradoxes led to a legal challenge in the High Court and the legalising of a moral oxymoron.

The Kosovars' experiences illuminate much about the connections between government and the various groups and individuals who assisted Operation Safe Haven. They reveal the motivations for individuals and community groups to give aid and offer comfort to previously unknown others. The importance of selflessness and the welfare of others was a prominent sentiment surrounding the role of the Australian airline, Qantas, which offered free flights to the refugees. There was the catering contractor who drove across Tasmania gathering as much halal as he could find in preparation for the arrival of the Kosovar refugees at Brighton barracks. Senior citizens mobilised via quilters associations and made thousands of blankets for the refugees. A local radio station in Hobart allocated airtime for the refugees to host their own show. Teachers volunteered to provide English lessons at the army barracks. Phone companies donated free mobile phones and call credit for refugees. Religious charities organised donations of clothing and bedding. Members of the Singleton community pooled resources for the wedding of two refugees at the barracks – a horse and cart included – plus a honeymoon in Newcastle for the newly weds. Doctors and psychologists assessed the Kosovars' health on their arrival after a long flight.

The Albanian Australian Association, with limited resources, provided interpreting services for the federal government. Military officers spent time with the Kosovars', getting to know them and provided comfort during their time in need. The Mayor of Hobart, with the support of his local constituents, acted against the Federal Government's wishes and offered to sponsor an extended stay for some Kosovars. Activists harboured refugees "on the run" after the Howard Government had ordered their repatriation. Some of these stories received media coverage. Each of these stories reveal implications concern-

ing the motivations behind citizen participation in government evacuation programs. *Generosity and Refugees* explored the complexities of the desires of Australians to be part of government-led actions such as Operation Safe Haven. The Operation highlighted Australian prejudices, particularly nationalist, xenophobic and populist, but it also embodied a shared sense of humanity and civility in the community.

Examination is needed concerning the activities of those with "best intentions", the contradictory structures of civility and those engaged in the pursuit of fair and just relationships.[22] Likewise, at the heart of this book have been questions about how a fairer and more just society is conceived and sought in Australia, and how government responded accordingly.

This book is framed by historical legacies that can be traced back to the moment of Australia's federation and when the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* (*Cth*) was introduced. This includes the reluctance by Australians to welcome newcomers which has remained prominent from the time of federation until today. Evident in the history of Operation Safe Haven, though, is that this reluctance has existed simultaneously with a spirit of generosity towards others. As such *Generosity and Refugees* may for some scholars depict a slightly unorthodox interpretation of Australia's body politic as it emerged through Operation Safe Haven.

Kosovo remains a region of the world largely unknown to Australians. It is not yet a popular tourist destination. The history of Kosovo has for decades been a contentious issue within ethnic communities from the former Yugoslavia who have come to settle in Australia. Today, as it was before Operation Safe Haven, Kosovo does not permeate the popular Australian worldview. Still, the Operation embodied a kind of worldliness among the citizen body, perhaps explaining why some refugees at certain times have been welcomed with open arms into the Australian community.

The story of the Kosovar refugees does not end with their repatriation. Indeed, some of the Safe Haven Kosovars stayed in Australia and permanently re-resettled, though most of the refugees moved on. In many ways their lives continue to be shaped by Australia's role in offering temporary Safe Haven and in facilitating their return home. The shared experience of Kosovars is currently reflected in efforts to establish an independent, democratic system of government in the recently formed Republic of Kosovo. Cultural life in Kosovo is flourishing almost twenty years after the end of the rule of the Serbian-Yugoslav regime. Vedat Bajrami, one of Kosovo's best-known screen actors and

---

22   C. Salter, *Whiteness and Social Change: Remnant Colonialisms and White Civility in Australia and Canada*, Cambridge Scholars Publications, Newcastle upon Tyne, 2012, p. 204.

comedians, continues to pursue a career in performance – attributes demonstrated during his brief role as a DJ on Hobart community radio in service of the Brighton Safe Haven refugees.[23]

Australia's treatment of the Kosovar refugees has had ongoing consequences for their lives. The Kosovars' continuing story is one of significant human interest. This is no less because their story illuminates the moral implications of housing refugees in isolated, quarantine-like camps that are typically manned by armed personal and located either offshore or in remote desert towns. One of the reasons for this is to prevent refugees from mixing with the general population. This fear of refugees being "let loose" into the community often emerges quite subtly in political and media discourse, and few politicians will publicly challenge this popular mindset. It is the fear of refugees living "among us".

One significant development in refugee policy in recent times was the High Court decision in November 2010 to allow refugees being held in offshore detention the right to appeal rejections of their applications for asylum by the Department of Immigration. This was a major step forward in terms of dismantling the temporary protection regime established by the Howard Government after Labor won national elections in 2007. The extent to which Labor sought to eradicate the policy of temporary protection, however, was soon after brought into question. In April 2011 Labor's Immigration Minister Chris Bowen iterated a willingness to reintroduce temporary protection visas and stated that he was considering issuing Safe Haven Visas after asylum seekers had protested at Villawood detention centre in Sydney. It was intended to be a warning to those protesting at Villawood. The Safe Haven visa, evidently, had come full circle by 2011. It was no longer presented to the public as an instrument of the federal government's compassion and generosity but openly propagated as a form of punishment.[24]

In 2012 the Labor Gillard Government conceded to the politicking of the Coalition in Opposition and reintroduced offshore processing. It was a major signal the political initiative was regressing to Howard era policies. McAdam describes how:

> In 2012, the Labor government reinvigorated Howard's 'Pacific Solution' by opening processing centres in Nauru and PNG. The idea was that the

---

23   See A. Barbeliuk, 'No place like home', *The Daily Telegraph*, 26th June 1999, p. 121.

24   R. Carr, 'The Safe Haven Visa Policy: A Compassionate Intervention with Cruel Intentions', *Australian Policy and History*, November 2012. URL: http://aph.org.au/the-safe-haven. Accessed 12th October 2016.

inferior conditions there, lack of legal advice and review mechanisms, and delayed resettlement (around five years) would deter asylum seekers from getting on boats. But it did not work, largely because it ignored the reasons why people seek protection in the first place.[25]

A tougher stance on border protection was politically successful for the Coalition under John Howard. The Gillard Government recognised and responded to this formula for electoral success. With a crushing defeat endured by Labor in the 2013 elections retrospectivity had taken hold of policy-making as the newly elected Abbott Government reintroduced the TPV.

Refugee policy has become a casualty rather than a beneficiary of retrospectivity in the race for political success. As McAdam describes, 'Leading with the Howard-government mantra "this is our country and we determine who comes here", Tony Abbott … announced other disincentives [and] began to implement these under a military-led policy entitled "Operation Sovereign Borders", which took effect on the day the new government was sworn in.'[26] Less than a fortnight later, McAdam notes, the 'Department of Immigration and Citizenship' was renamed the 'Department of Citizenship and Border Protection'.[27] Operation Sovereign Borders, the Coalition stipulated, is premised on the notion that Australia is confronted by a 'border protection crisis' and, as such, 'a national emergency' – a 'problem [that] requires the discipline and focus of a targeted military operation'.[28]

In a globalising world one of the roles of national government is to act as a responsible global citizen and recognise the existence of and reasons for international human rights. National governments need to strive to demonstrate an awareness of the international implications of their policy responses to humanitarian issues, and whether those responses are forward-looking and capable of accommodating the changes brought about by developments in the modern world. Historically, this awareness is evident in governmental practices and policies in Australia, including Operation Safe Haven, imbued with a generosity of spirit but in ways that are complex and contradictory.

25   J. McAdam, 'Editorial: Australia and Asylum Seekers', *International Journal of Refugee Law*, 25(3), 2013, p. 493.

26   *Ibid.*, p. 440.

27   *Ibid.*

28   *Ibid.*, p. 440, citing Liberal Party of Australia, 'The Coalition's Operation Sovereign Borders Policy', July 2013, p. 2. URL: http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/download/library /partypol/2616180/upload_binary/2616180.pdf;fileType=application%2Fpdf#search=%22 library/partypol/2616180%22. Accessed 20th November 2016.

Appendix 1: Images of Kosovar Children, April to Early May 1999

FIGURES 41-46   *British army engineer with children*, The Daily Telegraph, *13*th *April 1999, p. 22; man with child*, The Daily Telegraph, *7*th *April 1999, p. 4; children lining up for food*, The Daily Telegraph, *1*st *May 1999, p. 27; children running*, The Daily Telegraph, *26*th *April 1999, p. 18; 'Children with hope'*, The Daily Telegraph, *6*th *May 1999, p. 4; 'Looking for help'*, The Daily Telegraph, *5*th *May 1999, p. 29.

Appendix 2: Images of the Kosovar Refugees Before and After Their Arrival in Australia

Hours from safety . . . Kosovo refugees heading for Sydney during a stopover in Bangkok today

FIGURE 47   *Smiling refugees board a Qantas jet during a stopover in Bangkok, from* The Daily Telegraph (*Afternoon Edition*)*, 7*[th] *May 1999, p. 1.*

FIGURES 48-50   *Photographs of Kosovar children at East Hills Safe Haven, from* The Daily Telegraph*, 9*[th] *May 1999, p. 5; below, female Australian Army Private with refugee boy at East Hills Safe Haven, from* The Australian*, 10*[th] *May 1999, p. 2.*

Appendix 3: Images of the First Kosovar Refugees to Land at Sydney Airport in the *Telegraph*

Safe at last . . . some of the Kosovo refugees at Sydney Airport last night after their 22-hour flight from Europe.   *Picture: BRETT COSTELLO*

Standing room only . . . Refugees arrive in Sydney   *Picture: GRANT TURNER*

Peace sign . . . a young refugee holds a NATO drawing last night.   *Picture: BRETT COSTELLO*

FIGURES 51-53   *'Safe at last', The Daily Telegraph, 8th May 1999, p. 5; 'Standing room only', The Daily Telegraph, 8th May 1999, p. 1; 'Peace sign... a young refugee holds a NATO drawing last night', The Daily Telegraph, 8th May 1999, p. 5.*

Appendix 4: Images of the Kosovar Refugees in *The Australian*

Heartwarming moment: A symbol of love and a victory sign from a small child, as exhausted but relieved ethnic Albanian refugees arrive in Sydney last night. Picture, JEREMY PIPER

THE Weekend Australian's photographer Grant Turner spent 22 hours flying with the ethnic Albanian refugees, after travelling to Rome to join their Qantas chartered flight. This is his account of their mixed emotions during their flight to freedom and sanctuary in Australia.

Lensman: Turner

Silent witness: An elderly woman, travelling alone, sat silently for the entire 22-hour journey. She is still dressed for the european winter — many of the refugees did not know whether it would be winter or summer in Australia. However, they were well-educated and many had good English

Newfound horizons: Passengers scramble to portholes to gain their first glimpse of the Australian coastline as landfall is announced in English and Albanian. There is frantic search for belongings in preparation for landing, as most do not realise the first destination in their new country of refuge — Sydney — is still another four hours' flying time away, across the desert

Plane speaking: Njomza Qorrolli, 17, a secondary student travelling with her family, acted as interpreter for her section of the plane. The atmosphere was upbeat and there were few tears. The refugees kept asking about the climate in Tasmania and whether there are beaches there

Rites of passage: Eleven-year-old Gardan, just after taking off from Rome, holds up his first artwork of many on the trip. It shows a NATO symbol with the words Viva NATO Viva. On the back he drew a NATO F-111 bomber and later a plane flying to Australia.

FIGURES 54-55   *From* The Weekend Australian, *8th-9th May 1999, p. 1; and, from* The Weekend Australian, *8th-9th May 1999, p. 5.*

Appendix 5: Media Images of the Singleton Barracks

Not five-star: A barracks room converted with heater and carpet

Far from home: A family of ethnic Albanian refugees contemplate their future at the Singleton camp yesterday   Picture: GLENN CAMPBELL

FIGURES 56-57   *From* The Australian, *16*th *June 1999, p. 2; and 17*th *June 1999, p. 4.*

Appendix 6: Media Images of the Salihus

FIGURES 58-60   *Photographs of the Salihus in* The Australian, *boarding a taxi at Singleton Hospital, 18*th *June 1999, p. 4; stopping at a McDonald's restaurant on the way to Sydney, 18*th *June 1999, p. 1; and, arriving at East Hills Safe Haven, 19-20*th *June 1999, p. 6.*

FIGURE 61

Elmaze and Sabit Salihu arriving at East Hills barracks, from The Daily Telegraph, *18*th *June 1999, p. 4.*

Bibliography

Academic Sources

Aarons, M. 1989. *Sanctuary; Nazi Fugitives in Australia*. Port Melbourne: William Heinemann Australia.

Afacan, I. 2014. 'Turkey's "syrian refugees" predicament'. *Turkish Review*. 4(2): 218-221.

Akbarzadeh, S. and S. Yasmeen, eds. 2005. *Islam and the West; Reflections from Australia*. Sydney: UNSW Press.

Allcock, John B. 2000. *Explaining Yugoslavia*. London: Hurst and Co.

Anderson, B. 1991. *Imagined Communities*. 2nd Edition. London: Verso.

Anderson, S. and J. Ferng. 2013. 'No Boat: Christmas Island and the Architecture of Detention'. *Architectural Theory Review* 18(2): 212-226. DOI: 10.1080/13264826.2013.825941.

Ang, I. 2001. *On Not Speaking Chinese: Living Between Asia and the West*. London and New York: Routledge.

Aulich, C. and R. Wettenhall. 2005. *Howard's Second and Third Governments*. Sydney: UNSW Press.

Barutciski, M. and A. Suhrke. 2001. 'Lessons from the Kosovo Crisis: Innovations in Protection and Burden-sharing.' *Journal of Refugee Studies* 14(2): 95-115.

Barker, M. 1981. *The New Racism; Conservatives and the Ideology of the Tribe*. London: Junction Books.

Barnett, D. and P. Goward. 1997. *John Howard: Prime Minister*. Ringwood: Viking/Penguin Books.

Bashford, A. and C. Strange. December 2002. 'Asylum-seekers and national histories of detention.' *The Australian Journal of Politics and History* 48(4): 509-528.

Beeson, M. 2002. 'Issues in Australian Foreign Policy; July to December 2001.' *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 48(2): 226-240.

Berinsky, A.J. and D.R. Kinder. August 2006. 'Making Sense of Issues Through Media Frames: Understanding the Kosovo Crisis.' *The Journal of Politics* 68(3): 640-656.

Betts, K. 2001. 'Boatpeople and public opinion in Australia.' *People and Place* 9: 34-48.

Beilhartz, P. 2004. 'Rewriting Australia; the way we talk about fears and hopes.' *Journal of Sociology* 40(4): 432-445.

Bellamy, A.J. 2002. *Kosovo and International Society*. Houndmills and New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bellamy, A.J. and P.D. Williams. Spring 2005. 'Who's Keeping the Peace?; Regionalization and Contemporary Peace Operations.' *International Security* 29(4): 157-195.

Bieber, F. and Dasklowski, Z. 2003. *Understanding the War in Kosovo*, London and Portland: Frank Cass.

Bieler, A. and A.D. Morton. Spring 2004. 'A critical theory route to hegemony, world order and historical change: neo-Gramscian perspectives in International Relations.' *Capital and Class* 82: 85-115.

Bissett, J. Winter 2001. 'NATO's Balkan Blunder.' *Mediterranean Quarterly* 12(1): 39-50.

Bloch, A. 1999. 'Kosovan refugees in the UK: the Rolls Royce or rickshaw reception?' *Forced Migration Review*. 5: 24-26. URL: http://www.fmreview.org/sites/fmr/files /FMRdownloads/en/FMRpdfs/FMR05/fmr5full.pdf. Accessed 1st December 2016.

Bonnett, A. 2000. *Anti-Racism*. London: Routledge.

Bottomley, G. 1992. *From Another Place; Migration and the politics of culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bottomley, G. and M. de Lepervanche, eds. 1984. *Ethnicity, Class and Gender in Australia*. Sydney: George Allen and Unwin.

Bourdieu, P. 1991. *Language and Symbolic Power*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bowman, D. 1988. *The Captive Press: Our Newspapers in Crisis and the People Responsible*. Ringwood: Penguin Books.

Bowser, B.P., ed. 1995. *Racism and Anti-Racism in World Perspective*. (Volume 13.) Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Brennen, F. 2003. *Tampering With Asylum: A Universal Humanitarian Problem*. St Lucia: University of Queensland Press.

Brett, J. 2003. *Australian Liberals and the Moral Middle Class*; *From Alfred Deakin to John Howard*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Brett, J. and A. Moran. 2006. *Ordinary People's Politics*. North Melbourne: Pluto Press.

Briggs, R. and P. Dearman. 2005. 'The Question of Consent Today.' *Southern Review* 37(3): 1-7.

Briskman, L., S. Latham and C. Goddard. 2008. *Human Rights Overboard; Seeking Asylum in Australia*. Melbourne: Scribe.

Brown, G. 2002. 'Political Bigamy?: Dual Citizenship in Australia's Migrant Communities.' *People and Place* 10(1): 71-77.

Buckley, M. and S.N. Cummings eds. 2001. *Kosovo: Perceptions of War and Its Aftermath*. London and New York: Continuum.

Burchell, G., C. Gordon and Miller, P., eds. 1991. *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*. Hemel Hampstead: Harvester.

Burgmann, V. 1978. 'Capital and Labour.' In *Who Are Our Enemies; Racism and the Working Class in Australia*. A. Curthoys, and A. Markus, eds. Neutral Bay: Hale and Iremonger: 20-34.

Cahill, D. 2001. 'The Australian Right's New Class Discourse and the Construction of the Political Community.' In *Labour and Community: Historical Essays,* ed. R. Markey. Wollongong: University of Wollongong Press: 345-361.

Cahill, D. 2001. 'Why the Right Uses "Class" Against the Left.' *Arena*. 1(16): 151-162.

Cahill, D. 2002. 'Funding the Ideological Struggle.' *Overland*. 168: 21-26.

Cahill, D. April 2007. 'The Contours of Neoliberal Hegemony in Australia.' *Rethinking Marxism*. 19(2): 221-233.

Capella, N.J. and K.H. Jamieson. 1997. *Spiral of cynicism: the press and the public good.* New York Oxford: University Press.

Caplan, R. 1999. 'Kosovo: the implications for humanitarian intervention'. *Forced Migration Review*. 5: 5-7. URL: http://www.fmreview.org/sites/fmr/files /FMRdownloads/en/FMRpdfs/FMR05/fmr5full.pdf. Accessed 1st December 2016.

Carr, R. November 2010. 'Broadening the Scope of Historical Enquiry into Australian Refugee Policy.' *Australian Policy and History*. URL: http://aph.org.au/broadening -the-scope. Accessed 12th October 2016.

Carr, R. November 2012. 'The Safe Haven Visa Policy: A Compassionate Intervention with Cruel Intentions'. *Australian Policy and History*. URL: http://aph.org.au /the-safe-haven. Accessed 12th October 2016.

Cashmore, E. and J. Jennings. 2001. *Racism: Essential Readings*. London: Sage Publications.

Castles, S. 1993. 'Racism: A Global Analysis.' *Occasional Paper Series No. 28*. Wollongong: Centre for Multicultural Studies, University of Wollongong.

Castles, S. October 1990. 'Global Workforce, New Racism and the Declining Nation State.' *Occasional Paper Series No. 23*. Wollongong: University of Wollongong Centre for Multicultural Studies.

Castles, S. and A. Davidson. 2000. *Citizenship and Migration; Globalization and the politics of belonging*. London: MacMillan Press.

Castles, S., M. Kalantzis, B. Cope, B. and M. Morrissey. [1988] 1992. *Mistaken Identity; Multiculturalism and the Demise of Nationalism in Australia*. Reprint. Leichhardt: Pluto Press.

Charlesworth, H. 2006. 'Human rights: Australia versus the UN.' *Discussion Paper 22/06*. Canberra: Democratic Audit of Australia, Australian National University.

Chimni, B.S. 2000. 'Globalization, Humanitarianism and the Erosion of Refugee Protection.' *Journal of Refugee Studies*. 13(3): 243-263.

Chomsky, N. 1999. *The New Military Humanism; Lessons From Kosovo*. Monroe: Common Courage Press.

Chomsky, N. 2000. *A New Generation Draws the Line: Kosovo, East Timor and the Standards of the West*. London: Verso.

Clark, H. 2000. *Civil Resistance in Kosovo*. London: Pluto Press.

Collins, J., G. Noble, S. Poynting and P. Tabar. 2000. *Kebabs, Kids, Cops and Crime; Youth, Ethnicity and Crime*. Annandale: Pluto Press.

Coughlin, J., A. Wells and J. Minns, John, eds. 2005. *Seeking Refuge; Asylum Seekers and Politics in a Globalising World*. Wollongong: University of Wollongong Press.

Couldry, N. 2003. *Media Rituals: A Critical Approach*. London: Routledge.

Couldry, N. 2000. *The Place of Media Power: Pilgrims and Witnesses of the Media Age*. London and New York: Routledge.

Cox, R.W. and T.J. Sinclair. 1996. *Approaches to World Order*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Crock, M., B. Saul and A. Dastyari. 2006. *Future Seekers II; Refugees and Irregular Migration in Australia*. Annandale: The Federated Press.

Curran, J. and M. Gurevitch, eds. 2000. *Mass Media and Society*. 3rd Edition. London: Edward Arnold.

Curren, L. March 2000. 'Hordes or Human Beings?; A Discussion of Some of the Problems Surrounding Australia's Response to Asylum Seekers and Possible Solutions to Those Problems.' (Discussion Paper 8.) Mebourne: Catholic Mission for Justice, Development and Peace.

Curthoys, A. 1985. 'Racism and class in the nineteenth-century immigration debate'. In *Surrender Australia?; Essays in the study and uses of history*. A. Markus and M.C. Ricklefs, eds. North Sydney: George Allen and Unwin: 94-100.

Danforth, L.M. 1995. *The Macedonian Conflict; Ethnic Nationalism in a Transnational World*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

D'Arma, A. 2011. 'Global media, business and politics: A comparative analysis of News Corporation's strategy in Italy and the UK'. *International Communication Gazette*. 73(8): 670-684.

Davidson, A. 1971. *Antonio Gramsci: Towards an Intellectual Biography*. London: Merlin Press.

Denich, B. 1994. 'dismembering Yugoslavia: nationalist ideologies and the symbolic revival of genocide.' *American Ethnologist*. 21(2): 367-390.

Derrida, J. 2000. 'Hostipitality'. *Angelaki* 5(3): 3-18.

Derrida, J. 2002. *Acts of Religion*. ed. G. Anidjar. London and New York: Routledge.

Devetak, R., A. Burke and J. George eds. 2007. *An Introduction to International Relations: Australian Perspectives*. Port Melbourne: Cambridge University Press.

Dickey, B. 1987. *No Charity There; A Short History of Social Welfare in Australia*. North Sydney: Allen and Unwin.

Dreher, T. November 2003. 'Speaking up and Talking Back: News Media Interventions in Sydney's "Othered" Communities.' *Media International Australia incorporating Culture and Policy*. 109: 121-137.

Durieux, J.F. 2014. 'Temporary Protection: Hovering at the Edges of Refugee Law'. In M. Ambrus and R.A. Wessel eds. *Netherlands Yearbook of International Law*. 45: 221-253.

Dyer, R. 1997. *White*. London: Routledge, London.

Edgar, P. 1979. *Politics of the Press*. South Melbourne: Sun Books.

Einarsen, T. 2001. 'Refugee Protection Beyond Kosovo: Quo Vadis' (Responses to Barutciski and Suhrke). *Journal of Refugee Studies*. 14(2): 119-127.

Einfeld, M. 2000. 'Is There a Role for Compassion in Refugee Policy?' *UNSW Law Journal*. 23(3): 303-314.

Entman, R.M. 2007. 'Framing Bias: Media in the Distribution of Power', *Journal of Communication*. 57: 163-173.

Ericson, R.V., P.M. Baranek and J.B.L. Chan. 1996. *Representing Order: Crime, Law and Justice in the News Media*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Essed, P. 1991. *Understanding Everyday Racism; an Interdisciplinary Theory*. Newbury Park: Sage Publications.

Fields, B.J. Fall 2001. 'Whiteness, Race and Identity', *International Labor and Working-Class History*. 60: 48-56.

Fitzpatrick, J. 2000. 'Temporary protection of refugees: elements of a formalized regime'. *American Journal of International Law*. 94: 279-306.

Fleming, K.E. October 2000. 'Orientalism, the Balkans, and Balkan Historiography'. *American Historical Review*. 105(4): 1218-1233.

Foucault, M. [1972] 1997. *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. Reprint. London: Routledge.

Frankenburg, R. 2001. 'The mirage of unmarked whiteness.' In *The making and unmaking of whiteness*. B.B. Rasmussen, E. Klineberg, I.J. Nixica and M. Wray, eds. Durham, NC: Duke University Press: 72-96.

Gale, P. 2006. 'Fear, Race, and National Identity.' *Dialogue*. 25(3): 35-42.

Gale, P. 2004. 'The refugee crisis and fear; Populist politics and media discourse.' *Journal of Sociology*. 40(4): 321-340.

Gamson, W.A. and D. Stuart. March 1992. 'Media Discourse as a Symbolic Contest: The Bomb in Political Cartoons.' *Sociological Forum*. 7(1): 55-86.

Gibney, M.J. 1999. 'Kosovo and beyond: popular and unpopular refugees'. *Forced Migration Review*. 5: 28-30. URL: http://www.fmreview.org/sites/fmr/files/FMRdownloads/en/FMRpdfs/FMR05/fmr5full.pdf. Accessed 1st December 2016.

Gibson, S. 2003. 'Accommodating strangers: British hospitality and the asylum hotel debate', *Journal for Cultural Research*, 7(4): 367-386. DOI: 10.1080/1479758032000165039.

Glenny, M. 1992. *The Fall of Yugoslavia: the Third Balkan War*. London: Penguin.

Gramsci, A. 1971. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. [Q. Hoare and G. Nowell Smith eds.] London: Lawrence & Wishart.

Gramsci, A. 1994. *Pre-Prison Writings*. [R. Bellamy ed.] Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gramsci, A. 1996. *Prison Notebooks: Volume II*. [ed. and translated J.A. Buttigieg] New York: Columbia University Press.

Gramsci, A. 1999. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. [Q. Hoare and G. Nowell Smith eds.] New York: International Publishers.

Green, L. November 2003. 'The New "Others": Media and Society Post-September 11.' *Media International Australia Incorporating Culture and Policy*. 109: 7-13.

Hage, G. 1998. *White Nation, Fantasies of White Supremacy in a Multicultural Society*. Annandale: Pluto Press.

Hage, G., ed. 2002. *Arab-Australians Today: Citizenship and Belonging*. Carlton: Melbourne University Press.

Hage, G. 2003. *Against Paranoid Nationalism: Searching for Hope in a Shrinking Society*. Annandale: Pluto Press.

Haigh, B. 2001. *The Great Australian Blight; Losing the plot in Australian Foreign Policy*. Otford: Otford Press.

Hamilton, C. and R. Denniss. 2005. *Affluenza: When Too Much is Never Enough*. Crows Nest: Allen and Unwin.

Hamilton, C. and S. Maddison eds. 2007. *Silencing Dissent; How the Australian Government is controlling public opinion and stifling debate*. Crows Nest: Allen and Unwin.

Hammond, P. and E.S. Herman, eds. 2000. *Degraded Capability: The Media and the Kosovo Crisis*. London: Pluto Press.

Hall, S. 1990. 'The Whites of their Eyes: Racist Ideologies and the Media.' In *The Media Reader*. M. Alvarado and J.O. Thompson, eds. London: British Film Institute: 7-23.

Hall, S., C. Critcher, T. Jefferson, J. Clarke, and B. Roberts. 1978. *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State and Law and Order*. London: Macmillan.

Hansen, A., S. Cottle, R. Negrine and C. Newbold. 1998. 'Content Analysis.' In *Mass Communication Research Methods*. London: Macmillan: 91-129.

Hasani, Enver. Fall 2006. 'The Evolution of the Succession Process in Former Yugoslavia'. *Thomas Jefferson Law Review*. 29.1: 111-150.

Head, M. December 1999. 'The Kosovar and Timorese "Safe Haven" Refugees.' *Alternative Law Journal*. 24(6): 279-283.

Heinemann-Gruder, A. Summer 2001. 'Germany's Anti-Hitler Coalition in Kosovo.' *Mediterranean Quarterly*. 12(3): 31-46.

Herman, E.S. and N. Chomsky. [1988] 2008. *Manufacturing Consent; the Political Economy of the Mass Media*. Reprint. London: The Bodley Head.

Hill, M. ed. 1997. *Whiteness; A Critical Reader*. New York and London: New York University Press.

Hodge, B. and J. O'Carroll. 2006. *Borderwork in Multicultural Australia*. Crows Nest: Allen and Unwin.

Holland, T. 2015. 'Social Networks as Sites of eParticipation in Local Government'. *Global Media Journal – Australian Edition*. 9: 1. URL: http://www.hca.uws.edu.au/gmjau/?p=1782. Accessed 15th December 2016.

Humpage, L. and G. Marston. Winter 2005. 'Contested Belonging: Temporary Protection in Australia.' *Refuge*. 22(2): 67-76.

Ignatieff, M. [2000] 2002. *Virtual War; Kosovo and Beyond*. Reprint. London: Vintage Random House.

Ineli-Ciger, M. 2016. 'Time to Activate the Temporary Protection Directive: Why the

Directive can Play a Key Role in Solving the Migration Crisis in Europe'. *European Journal of Migration and Law*. 18: 1-33.

Ingram, P. 2001. 'Racializing Babylon: Settler Whiteness and the "New Racism".' *New Literary History*. 32(1): 157-176.

Jackson Lears, T.J. June 1985. 'The Concept of Cultural Hegemony: Problems and Possibilities'. *The American Historical Review*. 90(3): 567-593.

Jakubowicz, A. 1984. 'State and ethnicity: multiculturalism as ideology.' In *Ethnic Politics in Australia*. J. Jupp, ed. Sydney: George Allen and Unwin.

Jayasuriya, L., D. Walker and J. Gothard. 2003. *Legacies of White Australia; Race, Culture and Nation*. Crawley: University of Western Australia Press.

Jenkins, F. 2002. 'Gesture Beyond Tolerance: generosity, fatality and the logic of the state'. *Angelaki*. 7(3): 119-129.

Jha, P.S. Summer 2000. 'In Defense of the Westphalian State: From Kosovo to Kashmir.' *Mediterranean Quarterly*. 11(3): 62-86.

Johnson, C. 2000. *Governing Change; Keating to Howard*. St Lucia: University of Queensland Press.

Joly, D. 1998. 'Temporary Protection within the Framework of a New European Asylum Regime'. *International Journal of Human Rights*. 2(3): 49-76.

Judah, Tim. [1997] 2009. *The Serbs: History, Myth and The Destruction of Yugoslavia*, Reprint. Padstow: Yale University Press.

Jupp, J. ed. 2001. *The Australian People: An Encyclopedia of the Nation, Its People and Their Origins*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Jupp, J. 2006. *From White Australia to Woomera*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Jupp, J. and M. Kabal. 1993. *The Politics of Australian Immigration*. Canberra: Bureau of Immigration Research, Australian Government Publishing Service.

Kalantzis, M. and B. Cope. eds. 2001. *Reconciliation, Multiculturalism and Identities: Difficult Dialogues, Sensible Solutions*. Australia: Common Ground.

Kampmark, B. June 2006. 'Refugee Identities and the MV Tampa.' *Antipodes:* 66-71.

Kelly, D. 2008. 'The 2007 Federal Election in Australia: Framing Industrial Relations.' *Social Alternatives*. 27(2): 33-40.

Kelly, P. 1992. *The End of Certainty: The Story of the 1980s*. St Leonards: Allen and Unwin.

Kevin, T. 2004. *A Certain Maritime Incident; the sinking of the SIEV X*. Melbourne: Scribe Publications.

King, J. 2001. 'The Temporary Safe Haven – An Australian Perspective'. *Refuge*. 19(2): 17-22. URL: http://refuge.journals.yorku.ca/index.php/refuge/article/viewFile /22074/20742. Accessed 10th October 2016.

King, J. 2003. 'Australia and Canada compared: the reaction to the Kosovar crisis.' *Australian Journal of Human Rights*. 15. URL: https://web.archive.org/web

/20060917134745/http://austlii.law.uts.edu.au/au/journals/AJHR/2003/15.html.   Accessed 10th October 2016.

Kjaerum, M. 1993. 'Temporary Protection of Refugees in Europe in the '90s', *Helsinki Monitor* 4(3): 31-38.

Kjaerum. M. 1994. 'Temporary protection in Europe in the 1990s'. *International Journal of Refugee Law*. 6: 444-456.

Kjaerum, M. 2001. 'Human Rights, State Security and Burden-Sharing: People or States First?' (Responses to Barutciski and Suhrke). *Journal of Refugee Studies*. 14(2): 116-119.

Klocker, N. 2004. 'Community antagonism towards asylum seekers in Port Augusta, South Australia.' *Australian Geographical Studies*. 42: 1-17.

Knightley, P. [1975] 2004. *The First Casualty; The War Correspondent as Hero and Myth-Maker from the Crimea to Iraq*. Reprint. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Knudsen, T.B. and C.B. Lausten, eds. 2006. *Kosovo between War and Peace; Nationalism, Peacebuilding and International Trusteeship*. London and New York: Routledge.

Kolchin, P. 2002. 'Whiteness studies: The new history of race in America.' *The Journal of American History*. 89(1): 154-163.

Koser, K. 2007. 'Refugees, Transnationalism and the State', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*. 33(2): 233-254.

Koser, K.M. Walsh and R. Black. 1998. 'Temporary Protection and the Assisted Return of Refugees from the European Union'. *International Journal of Refugee Law*. 10(3): 444-461.

Kramer, L., ed. 2003. *The Multicultural Experiment; Immigrants, Refugees and National Identity*, Sydney: Macleay Press.

Kukathas, C., ed. 1993. *Multicultural Citizens: The Philosophy and Politics of Identity*, St Leonards: The Centre for Independent Studies.

Kunz, E.F. 1988. *Displaced Persons; Calwell's New Australians*, Rushcutters Bay: Australian National University Press.

Kushner, T. 2003. 'Meaning nothing but good: ethics, history and asylum-seeker phobia in Britain'. *Patterns of Prejudice* 37(3): 257-276. DOI: 10.1080/00313220307593.

Kymlicka, W. 1995. *Multicultural Citizenship*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lang, B., ed. 2000. *Race and Racism in Theory and Practice*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Levy, J. 2000. *The Multiculturalism of Fear*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lichtman, R. December 2000. 'Noam Chomsky's politics'. *Capitalism, Nature, Socialism*. 11.4: 141-152.

Loescher, G. and L. Monahan eds. 1989. *Refugees and International Relations*. Oxford: Clarenden Press.

Lyons, M., M. McGregor-Lowndes and P. O'Donoghue. Summer 2006. 'Researching

Giving and Volunteering in Australia.' *Australian Journal of Social Issues*. 41(4): 385-397.

Lygo, I. 2004. *News Overboard; The Tabloid Media, Race Politics and Islam*. Marrickville: Southwood Press.

MacLeod, C.L. 2006. *Multiethnic Australia, Its History and Future*. North Carolina: MacFarland & Co.

Maddox, G. 2005. *Australian Democracy in Theory and Practice*. 5th Edition. Sydney: Pearson Longman.

Maddox, M. 2005. 'God Under Howard.' In *Market Values*. Crows Nest: Allen and Unwin: 260-294.

Malcolm, N. [1998] 2002. *Kosovo: A Short History*. Reprint. London: Pan Books.

Manne, R., ed. 2004. *The Howard Years*. Melbourne: Black Inc. Agenda.

Manning, P. November 2003. 'Arabic and Muslim People in Sydney's Daily Newspapers, Before and After September 11.' *Media International Australia Incorporating Culture and Policy*. 109: 50-70.

Mansbach, R.W. and K.L. Rafferty. 2008. *Introduction to Global Politics*. New York: Routledge.

Manulak, M.W. Spring 2009. 'Canada and the Kosovo crisis; a "golden moment" in Canadian foreign policy.' *International Journal*: 565-581.

Mares, P. 2002. *Borderline: Australia's response to refugees and asylum seekers in the wake of the Tampa*. Sydney: UNSW Press.

Mares, P. 2015. 'Safe Havens: Two Cautionary Tales'. *Inside Story*. URL: http://insidestory.org.au/safe-havens-two-cautionary-tales. Accessed 1st December 2016.

Mares, S. and L. Newman. 2007. *Acting from the heart; Australian advocates for asylum seekers tell their stories*. Sydney: Finch Publishing.

Markus, A. 1994. *Australian Race Relations, 1788-1993*. St Leonards: Allen and Unwin.

Markus, A., J. Jupp and P. McDonald. 2009. *Australia's Immigration Revolution*. Crows Nest: Allen and Unwin.

Marr, D. and M. Wilkinson. 2003. *Dark Victory*. Crows Nest: Allen and Unwin.

Martin, B. May 1989. 'Gene Sharp's Theory of Power.' *Journal of Peace Research*. 26(2): 213-222.

Martin, J.I. 1978. *The Migrant Presence*. Sydney: George Allen and Unwin.

Martin, J.R. 1995. 'Interpersonal Meaning, Persuasion and Public Discourse: Packing Semiotic Punch.' *Australian Journal of Linguistics*. 15: 33-67.

Matthes, J. and M. Kohring. 2008. 'The Content Analysis of Media Frames: Toward Improving Reliability and Validity.' *Journal of Communication*. 58: 258-279.

Mayer, H. [1964] 1968. *The Press in Australia*. Reprint. Melbourne: Lansdowne Press.

Mazower, M. 2000. *The Balkans: A Short History*. New York: Random House.

McAdam, J. 2013. 'Editorial: Australia and Asylum Seekers'. *International Journal of Refugee Law* 25(3): 435-448.

McMaster, D. [2001] 2002. *Asylum Seekers: Australia's Response to Refugees*. Reprint. Carlton South: Melbourne University Press.

McQueen, H. 1970. *A New Britannia: An argument concerning the social origins of Australian radicalism and nationalism*. Ringwood: Penguin.

Meaney, N. April 2001. 'Britishness and Australian Identity; the Problem of Nationalism in Australian History and Historiography.' *Australian Historical Studies*. 32(116): 76-90.

Mehmeti, Leandrit. 2013. 'Democratization in Kosovo: The Role of International Institutions.' In *Europe and the Post-Yugoslav Space*. Radeljić, B., ed. Surrey: Ashgate: 183-209.

Melleuish, G. 1998. *The Packaging of Australia; Politics and Culture Wars*. Sydney: University of New South Wales Press.

Mendes, P. 1999/2000. 'The Ideology of the Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS): from the charity model to welfarism to social justice.' *Melbourne Journal of Politics*. 26: 27-58.

Mendes, P. 2003. *Australia's Welfare Wars: the Players, the Politics, and the Ideologies*. Sydney: UNSW Press.

Mertus, J.A. 1999. *Kosovo; How Myths and Truths Started a War*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Mickler, S. 10th-11th July 2003. 'Talkback Radio and Anti-elitism: A Fatal Paradox' (Workshop Paper). Canberra: Australian National University, Academy of Social Sciences in Australia and the National Institute of Social Sciences and Law.

Moran, A. 2005. *Australia: Nation, Belonging and Globalisation*. New York and London: Routledge.

Moreton-Robinson, A. 2000. *Talkin' Up to the White Woman: Indigenous Women and White Feminism*. St Lucia: University of Queensland Press.

Moreton-Robinson, A. [1999] 2004. 'Unmasking whiteness: A Goori Jondal's look at some duggai business.' In *Unmasking Whiteness: Race Relations and Reconciliation*. B. McKay ed. Reprint. Brisbane: Griffith University: 28-38.

Moreton-Robinson, A. ed. 2004. *Whitening Race: Essays in Social and Cultural Criticism*, Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press.

Moreton-Robinson, A. 2005. 'The whiteness of Windschuttle's worries: Aboriginal history and the national character.' In *The Ideas Book*. P. Adams ed. St Lucia: University of Queensland Press: 51-67.

Moreton-Robinson, A., ed. 2007. *Sovereign Subjects: Indigenous Sovereignty Matters*. Crows Nest: Allen and Unwin.

Morris, N. 1999. 'UNHCR and Kosovo: a personal view from within UNHCR'. *Forced Migration Review*. 5: 14-17. URL: http://www.fmreview.org/sites/fmr/files/FMRdownloads/en/FMRpdfs/FMR05/fmr5full.pdf. Accessed 1st December 2016.

Morris, P. 'Humanitarian interventions in Macedonia: an NGO perspective'. *Forced*

Migration Review. 5: 18-19. URL: http://www.fmreview.org/sites/fmr/files/FMRdownloads/en/FMRpdfs/FMR05/fmr5full.pdf. Accessed 1st December 2016.

Morton, A.D. 1999. 'On Gramsci.' *Politics*. 19(1): 1-8.

Murphy, P. 2005. 'Communication and Self-Organisation: Why the Manufacture of Consent Has Always Been a Sunset Industry.' *Southern Review*. 37(3): 87-102.

Naimark, N.M. 2002. *Fires of Hatred; Ethnic Cleansing in Twentieth-Century Europe*. Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press.

Nakayama, T.K. and J.N. Martin eds. 1999. *Whiteness: The Communication of Social Identity*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Neumann, K. August 2010. 'Historians to the Fore, Or How to Inform a Much-needed Debate about Australia's Response to Refugees.' *Australian Policy and History; Linking the past with the present for the future*. URL: http://aph.org.au/historians-to-the-fore. Accessed 12th October 2016.

Neumann, K. 2015. *Across the Seas: Australia's Response to Refugees: A History*. Carlton: Black Inc.

Neumann, K., S.M. Gifford, A. Lems and S. Scherr. 2014. 'Refugee Settlement in Australia: Policy, Scholarship and the Production of Knowledge, 1952-2013'. *Journal of Intercultural Studies*. 35(1): 1-17.

Nightingale, V. 1996. *Studying Audiences: the Shock of the Real*. London and New York: Routledge.

Noble, G. and S. Poynting. November 2010. 'White Lines: The Intercultural Politics of Everyday Movement in Social Spaces.' *Journal of Intercultural Studies*. 31(5): 489-505.

Oliver, Ian. 2005. *War and Peace in The Balkans: The Diplomacy of Conflict in the Former Yugoslavia*. London and New York: I.B. Tauris.

O'Neill, W.G. 2002. *Kosovo; An Unfinished Peace*. Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Parekh, B. 2000. *Rethinking Multiculturalism*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Pederson, A., S. Watt and S. Hansen. Autumn 2006. 'The role of false beliefs in the community's and the federal government's attitudes toward Australian asylum seekers.' *Australian Journal of Social Issues*. 41(1): 105-124.

Perenti, M. Fall 2002. 'Slobodan Milosevic and the Destruction of Yugoslavia.' (Review) *Mediterranean Quarterly*. 13(4): 116-122.

Perera, S. 2005. 'Who will I become? The multiple formations of Australian Whiteness.' *ACRAWSA Journal*. 1(1): 30-39.

Perera, S. and J. Stratton. October 2009. 'Introduction: Heterochronotopes of exception and the frontiers and faultlines of citizenship.' *Continuum: Journal of Media and Cultural Studies*. 23(5): 583-595.

Perluss, D. and J.F. Hartman. 1986. 'Temporary Refuge: Emergence of a Customary Norm'. *Virginia Journal of International Law*. 26(3): 551-626.

Persian, J. 2012. 'Bonegilla: A Failed Narrative.' *History Australia*. 9(1): 64-83.

Persian, J. 2012. 'Displaced persons and the politics of international categorisation(s).' *Australian Journal of Politics and History*. 58(4): 481-496.

Persian, J. 2015. '"Chifley liked them Blond": DP Immigrants for Australia'. *History Australia*. 12(2): 80-101.

Pickering, S. 2001. 'Common Sense and Original Deviancy: News Discourses and Asylum Seekers in Australia.' *Journal of Refugee Studies*. 14(2): 169-186.

Poynting, S. 2002. 'Bin Laden in the suburbs: Attacks on Arab and Muslim Australians before and after 11 September.' *Current Issues in Criminal Justice*. 14: 43-64.

Poynting, S. and V. Mason. November 2006. '"Tolerance, Freedom, Justice and Peace?": Britain, Australia and Anti-Muslim Racism since 11 September 2001.' *Journal of Intercultural Studies*. 27(4): 365-391.

Poynting, S. and V. Mason. 2007. 'The resistible rise of Islamophobia; Anti-Muslim racism in the UK and Australia before 11 September 2001.' *Journal of Sociology*. 43(1): 61-86.

Poynting, S. and V. Mason. 2008. 'The New Integrationism, the State and Islamophobia: Retreat from multiculturalism in Australia.' *International Journal of Law, Crime and Justice*. 36: 230-246.

Poynting, S. and G. Morgan. eds. 2007. *Outrages! Moral Panics in Australia*. Hobart: ACYS Publishing, University of Tasmania.

Poynting, S., P. Tabar and J. Collins. 2004. *Bin Laden in the Suburbs; Criminalising the Arab Other*. Sydney Institute of Criminology Series No. 18. Sydney: University of Sydney Faculty of Law.

Procter, N.G. 2000. *Serbian Australians in the Shadow of the Balkan War*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Rai, M. 1995. *Chomsky's Politics*. London and New York: Verso.

Rex, J. 1996. *Ethnic Minorities in the Modern Nation State; Working Papers in the Theory of Multiculturalism and Political Integration*. London: Macmillan Press.

Richardson, J.E. 2001. '"Now is the Time to put an End to all this": Argumentative Discourse Theory and "Letters to the Editor".' *Discourse and Society*. 12: 143-168.

Rose, M. and F.R. Baumgartner. 2013. 'Framing the Poor: Media Coverage and U.S. Poverty Policy, 1960-2008'. *The Policy Studies Journal* 41(1): 22-53.

Rose, N. 1999. *Powers of Freedom; Reframing political thought*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rothenberg, P.S. ed. 2002. *White Privilege, Essential Readings on the Other Side of Racism*. New York: Worth Publishers.

Salter, C. 2012. *Whiteness and Social Change: Remnant Colonialisms and White Civility in Australia and Canada*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publications.

Saxton, A. November 2003. '"I certainly don't want people like that here": the Discursive Construction of "Asylum Seekers".' *Media International Australia incorporating Culture and Policy*. 109: 109-120.

Scholte, J.A. 2000. *Globalization; a critical introduction*. New York: Palgrave.

Shuurman, F.J. 2001. *Globalization and Development Studies; Challenges for the 21ˢᵗ century*. London: SAGE.

Singer, P. and T. Gregg. 2004. *How Ethical is Australia? An Examination of Australia's Record as a Global Citizen*. Melbourne: Australian Collaboration in Conjunction with Black Inc.

Singleton, G. ed. 2000. *The Howard Government*. Sydney: UNSW Press.

Skrbis, Z. 1999. *Long-distance Nationalism; Diasporas, homelands and identities*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Skrbis, Z., L. Baldassar and S. Poynting. August 2007. 'Introduction – Negotiating Belonging: Migration and Generations.' *Journal of Intercultural Studies*. 28(3): 261-269.

Smith, G. and D. Lowe. September 2005. 'Howard, Downer and the Liberals' realist tradition (foreign policy realism).' *The Australian Journal of Politics and History*. 51(3): 459-472.

Solomos, J. and L. Black. 1996. *Racism and Society*. London: MacMillan Press.

Stankov, L. and G. Knezevic. August 2005. 'Amoral social attitudes and value systems among Serbs and Australians.' *Australian Journal of Psychology*. 57(2): 115-128.

Stokes, A. 2003. *The Australian on Australia*. Milton: Wiley.

Stokes, G., J. Lamp, D. Rusinow and J. Mostov. Spring 1996. 'Instant History: Understanding the Wars of Yugoslav Succession'. *Slavic Review*. 55.1: 136-160.

Stratton, J. 1998. *Race Daze*. Annandale: Pluto Press.

Stratton, J. and I. Ang. 1998. 'Multicultural Imagined Communities: Cultural Difference and National Identity in the USA and Australia.' In *Multicultural States: Rethinking Difference and Identity*. D. Bennett, ed. London and New York: Routledge: 135-162.

Stuart, D.T. March 2004. 'NATO and the wider world: from regional collective defence to global coalitions of the willing.' *Australian Journal of International Affairs*. 58(1): 33-46.

Tabar, P., G. Noble and S. Poynting. 2003. 'The Rise and Falter of the Field of Ethnic Politics in Australia: the case of Lebanese community leadership.' *Journal of Intercultural Studies*. 24(3): 267-287.

Tascon, S. 2004. 'Refugees and the coloniality of power: border-crossers of postcolonial whiteness.' In *Whitening Race: Essays in Social and Cultural Criticism*. A. Moreton-Robinson, ed. Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press: 239-253.

Tavan, G. 2005. *The Long, Slow Death of White Australia*. Carlton North: Scribe.

Taylor, A. 2004. 'Readers Writing *The First Stone* Media Event: Letters to the Editor, Australian Feminism and Mediated Citizenship.' In *Construction Works: Journal of Australian Studies*. R. Nile and D. Tallis, eds. St Lucia: Australian Public Intellectuals (API) Network and University of Queensland Press (UQP): 75-87.

Taylor, B. 2016. '"Their Only Words of English Were 'Thank You'": Rights, Gratitude

and "Deserving" Hungarian Refugees to Britain in 1956'. *Journal of British Studies* 55: 120-144. DOI: 10.1017/jbr.2015.172.

Taylor, S. 2000. 'Protection or Prevention? A Close Look at the Temporary Safe Haven Visa Class.' *UNSW Law Journal*. 23(3): 75-102.

Thomas, W.I. and F. Znaniecki. 1996. *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America; A Classic Work in Immigration History*. [ed. E. Zaretsky] Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

Thorburn, J. 1995. 'Transcending Boundaries: Temporary Protection and Burden-sharing in Europe'. *International Journal of Refugee Law*. 7(3): 459-480.

Turner, G. 2003. 'After Hybridity: Muslim-Australians and the imagined community.' *Continuum: Journal of Media and Cultural Studies*. 17(4): 411-418.

Tyler, H. 2003. *Asylum; Voices behind the razor wire*. South Melbourne: Lothian Books.

Ungerer, C. 2007. 'The "Middle Power" Concept in Australian Foreign Policy.' *Australian Journal of Politics and History*. 53(4): 538-551.

Valenta, M. and N. Bunar. 2010. 'State Assisted Integration: Refugee Integration Policies in Scandinavian Welfare States: the Swedish and Norwegian Experience'. *Journal of Refugee Studies*. 23(4): 463-483.

Van Dijk, T.A. 1993. *Elite Discourse and Racism*, Sage Series on Race and Ethnic Relations. Vol. 6. Newbury Park: Sage Publications.

Van Selm, J. ed. 2000. *Kosovo's Refugees in the European Union*. London and New York: Pinter.

Vasta, E. and S. Castles. 1996. *The Teeth are Smiling; The Persistence of Racism in Multicultural Australia*. Sydney: Allen and Unwin.

Warner, K. 2004. 'Gang Rape in Sydney: Crime, The Media, Politics, Race and Sentencing.' *The Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology*. 37(3): 344-361.

Wazana, R. March 2004. 'Fear and Loathing Down Under: Australian Refuge Policy and the National Imagination.' *Refuge*. 2(1): 83-95.

Wesley, M. 2002. 'Perspectives on Australian foreign policy, 2001.' *Australian Journal of International Affairs*. 56(1): 47-63.

Whitaker, R. 1998. 'Refugees: The Security Dimension'. *Citizenship Studies* 2(3): 413-434.

Whittaker, D.J. 2006. *Asylum Seekers in the Contemporary World*. Milton Park: Routledge.

Wolff, L. 1994. *Inventing Eastern Europe; The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Young, S. 2007. *Government Communication in Australia*. Port Melbourne: Cambridge University Press.

Zhou, Y. and P. Moy. 2007. 'Parsing Framing Processes: The Interplay Between Online Public Opinion and Media Coverage.' *Journal of Communication*. 57: 79-98.

Governmental and Organisational Reports

ABS [Australian Bureau of Statistics]. 2001. 'Australian Ancenstries: 2001'. *Census 2001*, 2054.0. URL: http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/2054.0Main +Features12001?OpenDocument. Accessed 10th October 2016.

ACPEA [Australian Council on Population and Ethnic Affairs]. 1982. *Multiculturalism for All Australians: Our Developing Nationhood*. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Services.

Australian Government. 1999. *A New Agenda for Multicultural Australia*. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service.

Australian Government, Bureau of Meteorology. 2010. 'Climate statistics for Australian locations; Singleton Army.' URL: http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/averages/tables /cw_061275.shtml. Accessed 12th October 2016.

Department of State, United States of America (USA). May 1999. 'Erasing History: Ethnic Cleansing in Kosovo'. Washington: Government of the United States of America.

Department of Environment and Water Resources. 6th July 2004. 'Australian Heritage Database; Places for Decision; Class: Historic (Bonegilla Migrant Camp)'. Canberra: Australian Government.

DFAT [Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade]. 1997. *In the National Interest; Australia's Foreign and Trade Policy White Paper*. Canberra: Australian Government.

DIMA [Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs]. 1999. 'Annual Report 1998-99; "Operation Safe Haven"'. URL: https://web.archive.org/web/20060911190216 /http://www.immi.gov.au/about/reports/annual/1998-99/html/safe.htm. Accessed 13th October 2016.

Fitzgerald, S. 1988. *Immigration: A Commitment to Australia. The Report of the Committee to Advise on Australia's Immigration Policies*. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Services.

Galbally, F. 1978. *Migrant Services and Programs: Report of the Review of Post-Arrival Programs and Services for Migrants*. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Services.

McHugh, L.B. and J. Vialet. 1999. 'Kosovo: Refugee Assistance and Temporary Resettlement'. Washington: Congressional Research Services – Library of Congress. 1st September: 1-6.

NMAC [National Multicultural Advisory Committee]. 1999. *Australian Multiculturalism for a New Century*: *Towards Inclusiveness*. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service.

OMA [Office of Multicultural Affairs]. 1989. *National Agenda For a Multicultural Australia – Sharing Our Future*. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service.

Özden, S. 2013. 'Syrian Refugees in Turkey', *MPC Research Reports*, 2013/05: 1-12. URL:

http://www.migrationpolicycentre.eu/docs/MPC-RR-2013-05.pdf. Accessed 20th November 2016.

RCOA [Refugee Council of Australia]. 1999. '1999 – Background Information on Kosovar Refugees.' URL: https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/r/rpt/1999-Kosovars .pdf. Accessed 12th October 2016.

RCOA [Refugee Council of Australia]. 5th November 1999. 'Position on Return of Kosovar Evacuees.' URL: https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/docs/resources/pp-kosovar -rtn-nov99.pdf. Accessed 12th October 2016.

RCOA [Refugee Council of Australia]. November 1999. 'Report on RCOA field visit to Kosovo and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.' URL: https://www .refugeecouncil.org.au/r/rpt/1999-Kosovo-field.pdf. Accessed 12th October 2016.

RCOA [Refugee Council of Australia]. January 2000. 'KOSOVO SAFE HAVENS: Views from the Community Sector.' URL: http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/r/rpt/2000 -Kosovo-Havens.pdf. Accessed 12th October 2016.

RCOA [Refugee Council of Australia]. 13th April 2000. 'Media Release (Return of the Kosovars).' URL: https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/n/mr/000413-Kosovars.pdf. Accessed 12th October 2016.

Roy Morgan. 'Readership – December 1999; Media Release.'

United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR). 1999. 'Kosovo Emergency'. *UNHCR Global Report 1999*: 345-347. URL: http://www.unhcr.org/3e2d4d5f7.pdf. Accessed 10th December 2016.

USCRI [The Mission of U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants]. 'About Refugees.' URL: http://www.refugees.org/counrtyreports.aspx?id=559. Accessed 5th April 2009.

York, B. 16th June 2003. 'Australia and Refugees, 1901-2002: An Annotated Chronology Based on Official Sources.' Canberra: Information and Research Services, Department of the Parliamentary Library.

Doctoral Theses

Cahill, D. 2004. 'The Radical Neo-liberal Movement as a Hegemonic Force in Australia, 1976-1996' (Doctoral Thesis). Wollongong: University of Wollongong.

Driscoll, C. 2015. 'Drawing race and refugees: making sense of political cartoons of Australian refugee policy 1886-2001' (Doctoral Thesis). Melbourne: RMIT University.

Palmer, D. 2007. 'The Values Shaping Australian Asylum Policy: A Historical and Ethical Inquiry' (Doctoral Thesis). Sydney: University of New South Wales.

Pratt, A. 2003. '"Indigenous Sovereignty – Never Ceded" – Sovereignty, Nationhood and Whiteness in Australia' (Doctoral Thesis). Wollongong: University of Wollongong.

Salter, C. 2009. 'In Terms Most Familiar: Technologies of Whiteness in Australia and

Canada, A Comparative Analysis' (Doctoral Thesis), Wollongong: University of Wollongong.

Parliamentary Debates (Hansard)

'Appropriation (Parliamentary Departments) Bill 1999-2000; Second Reading.' *Senate: Official Hansard*. Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 30th June 1999: 6849-6886.

'Australian Constitution: New Preamble.' *House of Representatives: Official Hansard*. Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 11th August 1999: 8469-8470.

'Balkans Conflict.' *Senate: Official Hansard*. Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 31st March 1999: 3610-3611.

'Federal Republic of Yugoslavia: NATO Air Strikes.' *House of Representatives: Official Hansard*. Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 25th March 1999: 4423-4424.

'Kosovar Refugees.' *House of Representatives: Official Hansard*. Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 17th February 2000: 13869-13870.

'Kosovo: Refugees.' *House of Representatives: Official Hansard*. Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 18th October 1999: 11723-11724.

'Kosovar refugees.' *Senate: Official Hansard*. Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 20th April 1999: 3853-3854.

'Kosovo Refugees: Clermont Patchwork and Quilters Group.' *House of Representatives: Official Hansard*. Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 28th June 1999: 7565.

'Kosovo Refugees: Hampstead Safe Haven.' *House of Representatives: Official Hansard*. Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 28th June 1999: 7566.

'Kosovo Safe Haven Program.' *Senate: Official Hansard*. Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 21st June 1999: 5830-5832.

'Migration Legislation Amendment (Temporary Safe Haven Visas) Bill 1999.' *Senate: Official Hansard*. Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 21st April 1999: 3966-3967.

'Migration Legislation Amendment (Temporary Safe Haven Visas) Bill 1999; In Committee.' *Senate: Official Hansard*. Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 30th April 1999: 4637-4652.

'Migration Legislation Amendment (Temporary Safe Haven Visas) Bill 1999; Second Reading.' *House of Representatives: Official Hansard*. Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 11th May 1999: 5022-5041.

'Migration Legislation Amendment (Temporary Safe Haven Visas) Bill 1999; Second

Reading.' *Senate: Official Hansard.* Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 29th April 1999: 4551-4563.

'Migration Legislation Amendment Bill; Second Reading.' *House of Representatives: Official Hansard.* Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 6th March 2000: 13976-14002.

'Refugees: Kosovo.' *House of Representatives: Official Hansard.* Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 6th April 2000: 15479-15480.

'Refugees: Kosovo.' *House of Representatives: Official Hansard.* Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 13th April 2000: 15991.

'Refugees: Kosovo.' *House of Representatives: Official Hansard.* Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 13th April 2000: 15992.

'Refugees: Kosovo.' *House of Representatives: Official Hansard.* Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 13th April 2000: 15995-15996.

'Refugees: Kosovo.' *House of Representatives: Official Hansard.* Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 13th April 2000: 16030-16031.

'Refugees: Kosovo.' *House of Representatives: Official Hansard.* Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 29th May 2000: 16516-16517.

'Refugees: Kosovo.' *House of Representatives: Official Hansard.* Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 29th May 2000: 16431-16433.

'Refugees: Kosovo.' *Senate: Official Hansard.* Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 10th April 2000: 13731-13733.

'Refugees: Kosovo.' *Senate: Official Hansard.* Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 10th April 2000: 13735-13736.

'Refugees: Kosovo.' *Senate: Official Hansard.* Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 12th April 2000: 13923-13924.

'Refugees: Safe Havens.' *Senate: Official Hansard.* Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 26th November 1999: 10870-10872.

'Telstra Legal Action [and] Kosovo: Refugees.' *House of Representatives: Official Hansard.* Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, 18th October 1999: 11764-11766.

International Conventions and Treaties

OHCHR [Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights]. 1966. 'International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights' (ICCPR). URL: http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/ccpr.aspx. Accessed 12th October 2016.

OHCHR [Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights]. 1984.

'Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Punish-
    ment' (CAT). URL: http://www.ohchr.org/en/ProfessionalInterest/pages/cat.aspx.
    Accessed 12th October 2016.

UN [United Nations]. 1948. 'Universal Declaration of Human Rights'. URL: http://www
    .un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/. Accessed 12th October 2016.

UNHCR [United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees]. 1951 and 1967. 'UNHCR –
    Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees'. URL: http://www
    .unhcr.org/protect/PROTECTION/3b66c2aa10.pdf. Accessed 12th October 2016.

Digital Media Sources

Davis, S. [broadcast date unspecified]. 'Flight from Kosovo' (Radio Documentary).
    Crossing Boundaries, Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC). Reproduced
    online by *Soundprint*. 14th August 2005. URL: http://www.soundprint.org/radio
    /display_show/ID/39/name/Digital+Darwinism. Accessed 13th October 2016.

Fairfax Media. December 2008. 'Kosovar refugees agonising choice' (Video Documen-
    tary). URL: http://media.smh.com.au/lifestyle/in-the-moment/kosovar-refugees
    -agonising-choice-314762.html. Accessed 13th October 2016.

Index