

■ Contributors this issue: David North and Charles Price

A COMMENT ON ALLEN'S 'ETHNIC RECRUITMENT OR ETHNIC STACKING? FACTIONALISM AND ETHNICITY IN THE VICTORIAN ALP'
by David North

Let me cast a little North American perspective on Lyle Allan's intriguing paper 'Ethnic recruitment or ethnic branch stacking? Factionalism and ethnicity in the Victorian ALP' (vol. 8, no. 1)

Allan shows that ethnic loyalties and community organization can and do play a role in the pre-selection of party nominees in Victoria; I am sure that is accurate. What the paper suggests to me, however, is that, by U.S. standards, these factors are quite muted because of the political system in which they operate.

As I see it, there are four muting factors in Victoria which do NOT operate in the comparable segment of the American system, the primaries by which party nominees for the Congress and other positions are selected prior to the bipartisan elections (typically in November of even-numbered years).

- In the U.S. there is little delay between recruitment and voting; one only needs to be a registered voter to take part in the primaries, though in some states one must be enrolled in the party in question. But most voters are already enrolled, so there is nothing comparable to the 12 month initial wait Allan described in Victoria.
- Nor is there a cost barrier, as in Victoria. Since the death, thankfully, of the poll tax, no money is involved in joining the electorate.

- *Every* time an office is to be filled in the U.S., not just when there is an open seat (i.e. one without an incumbent) there is, or can be, a primary election to choose the party's candidate. In the Victorian system, the only time that a pre-selection takes place, I gather, is when there is no incumbent legislator.
- Finally, there is typically no formal role by the party establishment in the U.S., while 50 per cent of the votes cast in the pre-selection process represent the party's state-wide organization in Victoria.

This is not to say that in the U.S. there is no role for the party, but it is rarely as significant as it appears to be in Victoria, and what little role exists is dwindling. Party organizations can endorse, and bring out voters, but these factors can be overcome, as Senator John McCain showed recently in (our) New England and in Michigan.

It is a rare state in which a party caucus or convention plays a role in the nominating process; sometimes this happens in Virginia, where I live (as in the Republicans' ill-fate nomination, at a convention, of that non-relation of mine, Oliver North, for the U.S. Senate in 1994); there is a role for party conventions in New York (for state-wide offices only) and in Connecticut as well.

Speaking broadly, then, it strikes me that there would be a lot more ethnic involvement in the pre-selection process in Victoria if the rules were like those that exist in the U.S.

- Three other thoughts:
- In the U.S. there is often something like ‘ethnic stacking’ for non-ethnic reasons in the nominating process; on the right, the evangelical Christians have taken over segments of the Republican Party, and, much, much more rarely, on the left, gay voters have dominated a few Democratic selection processes. (The nomination for City Council in New York’s Greenwich Village district was once hotly contested by a young male who was HIV positive and by a lesbian woman; she apparently lost largely because she was accused of being slow to ‘come out of the closet’. The woman, in this case was the daughter of a famed liberal former member of Congress, Bella Abzug, but the family ties were not enough to bring victory).
 - Sometimes a well respected majority incumbent (such as Congressman Peter Rodino in Newark, or Lindy Boggs in New Orleans) can hold a seat in Congress long after the ethnic balance tips. Both were replaced when they left office (on their own motion) by Blacks. This factor probably works in Australia as well.
 - In the U.S. it is possible that ethnic considerations, given the right combination of circumstances, do not lead to a victory by a minority member even in a minority-majority constituency. Last year, for example, the predominantly Black city of Baltimore elected an Irish-American mayor — partially because of his skills and his Black allies, but largely because he was the only white candidate running against many blacks in the Democratic primary. A little later he won the general election easily.

■ FOREIGN BORN PERSONS IN AUSTRALIA 1861-1996

by Charles Price

The following table is drawn from Charles Price’s publication, *Australian’s All: Who on Earth Are We?*. The various tables in the publication, along with the accompanying discussion, provide an invaluable source for the exploration of Australia’s demographic history.

Notes for table displayed on next page:

For countries in Other categories, see C.A. Price, *Australians all: who on earth are we?* (Available from C.A. Price, 31 Rawson Street, Deakin, ACT, 2600)

Sources: Percentages for 1861, 1891, 1921, 1947, and 1971 are based on birthplace totals set out in Working Papers in Demography, No. 13, Charles A. Price et al. Department of Demography, Australian National University, 1984. The notes to Table 1 of that document explain how the working distributes those not stating a birthplace and those inadequately describing it. The notes also explain how the working deals with inconsistent, combined or missing categories and with those born at sea. The notes explain, too, how the working deals with boundary changes and with census under-enumeration.

The 1996 proportions are based on the 1996 census totals published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (Catalogue 2022.0 of 1997) with the 623,161 person not stating their birthplace, or describing it inadequately, distributed according to my estimate of where such persons mainly come from, viz. Australia, New Zealand, Briton and Ireland, former Yugoslavia and other eastern Europe. Smaller numbers, I concluded, came from various Asian countries and the Pacific.

Foreign-born persons in Australia, 1861-1996, percentages

Birthplace	1861	1891	1921	1947	1971	1996
New Zealand	0.19	2.38	4.60	5.86	3.12	7.67
England	47.41	45.30	53.37	51.34	32.56	23.01
Ireland	24.53	22.73	12.62	6.06	2.48	2.08
Scotland	13.44	12.40	13.02	13.86	6.18	3.93
Other	1.75	1.85	1.97	1.82	0.99	0.79
BRITAIN & IRELAND	87.13	82.28	80.98	73.08	42.21	29.81
Germany	3.82	4.50	2.68	1.96	4.30	2.79
Other	1.33	2.45	2.60	2.40	6.23	3.96
NORTH & WEST	5.15	6.95	5.28	4.36	10.53	6.75
Poland	-	-	0.21	0.88	2.31	1.65
Yugoslavia	-	-	0.10	0.79	5.03	4.44
Other	-	-	0.79	1.60	4.62	2.81
EAST EUROPE	0.18	0.47	1.10	3.27	11.96	8.90
Italy	0.16	0.39	0.97	4.52	11.22	6.02
Greece, Cyprus	0.06	0.09	0.44	1.65	6.68	3.66
Other	0.11	0.14	0.34	0.93	3.09	2.19
SOUTH EUROPE	0.33	0.62	1.75	7.10	20.99	11.87
Lebanon	-	0.03	0.21	0.24	0.94	1.78
Other	-	0.03	0.04	0.26	0.85	2.07
SOUTH-WEST ASIA	0.01	0.06	0.25	0.50	1.79	3.85
India	0.35	0.57	0.82	1.00	1.13	1.96
Sri Lanka	0.03	0.04	0.08	0.09	0.35	1.19
Other	-	0.01	0.04	0.06	0.26	0.80
SOUTH ASIA	0.38	0.62	0.94	1.15	1.74	3.95
China & Taiwan	5.36	3.58	1.81	0.86	0.68	3.30
Indo-China	-	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.07	4.61
Philippines	0.05	0.05	0.04	0.02	0.10	2.35
Other	-	0.28	0.55	0.59	1.59	7.40
N.E. and S.E. ASIA	5.41	3.92	2.41	1.48	2.44	17.66
South Africa	0.12	0.14	0.65	0.79	0.49	1.41
Mauritius	0.07	0.08	0.07	0.03	0.30	0.43
Egypt	0.01	0.01	0.04	0.11	1.09	0.87
Other	0.02	0.06	0.04	0.08	0.52	0.89
AFRICA	0.22	0.29	0.80	1.01	2.40	3.60
U.S.A.	0.59	0.79	0.79	0.84	1.16	1.25
Canada	0.35	0.35	0.44	0.55	0.50	0.63
Other America	0.04	0.22	0.21	0.17	0.50	1.89
AMERICAS	0.98	1.36	1.44	1.56	2.16	3.77
Papua New Guinea	-	0.01	0.06	0.17	0.35	0.62
Fiji	-	0.05	0.14	0.20	0.16	0.94
Other	-	0.99	0.25	0.26	0.15	0.61
PACIFIC (excl. N.Z.)	0.02	1.05	0.45	0.63	0.66	2.17
Total foreign born	Per cent 723,152	100 1,008,133	100 841,803	100 744,187	100 2,579,318	100 3,960,849
Foreign born as % of population	62.8	31.8	15.5	9.8	20.2	22.2
Australian-born	Number 428,954	2,166,259	4,953,931	6,835,171	10,176,320	13,791,951
Total population	Number 1,152,106	3,174,392	5,435,734	7,579,358	12,755,638	17,752,800

Notes: See previous page.

