

Australia's Handling of Tensions between Islam and the West under the Howard Government

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This article examines the impact of international conflicts involving the Muslim world upon Australia's multicultural society by studying the Howard government's responses to tensions between Islam and the West since September 11. Specifically, it surveys the Howard government's participation in the 'War on Terror', other aspects of Australia's foreign and security policies, including the relationship with the United States, the emergence of immigration and refugee flows as national security issues, and the subsequent impact of all this on multiculturalism and in particular on Australia's Muslim community. At a broader level, the article challenges the argument that foreign policy is inconsequential for social policy, intercommunal, inter-ethnic and inter-religious relations. The internalization of the 'War on Terror' has reinforced a negative portrayal of Islam and Muslims in Australia by blurring the dividing line between 'Islam' on the one hand and 'extremism' and 'terrorism' on the other. The evidence suggests that government statements and policies, more generally had provoked apprehension amongst a wide cross-section of the Australian Muslim community. A major finding of this article is that unless care is taken, it is not inconceivable that the hitherto harmonious relationship between Muslims and other sections of Australia's community could be unnecessarily endangered.

Keywords: Muslim; War on Terror; Counter Terrorism; September 11; Australian Government; John Howard

Introduction

Three days prior to the 2007 Australian federal elections, five men, including the husbands of the retiring Liberal MP and her anointed successor, were caught

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distributing bogus pro-Muslim leaflets in the marginal western Sydney seat of Lindsay. Purporting to be from the Islamic Australian Federation, the flyer proclaimed its ardent support for the Australian Labor Party (ALP) for being sympathetic to the Islamic Bali terrorists,¹ the construction of a local mosque and the entry into Australia of controversial cleric Sheikh Taj al-Din al-Hilali (Sydney Morning Herald, 2007). Aside from the jitteriness, a fatigued government and the providence befalling one of Howard's protégés, the scandal single-handedly, transformed the 'politics of fear' into the 'politics of desperation'.² In its aftermath, the Lindsay pamphlet affair signed-off a decade of Howardism that since 2001 had placed terrorism—in its various guises at home and abroad—at the epicentre of its political cosmology (Manne, 2004: 41–44; Camilleri, 2004).

Until September 2001, there was little by way of governmental policy pertaining to the threat—whether internal or external—of terrorism to Australia. The last wave of international terrorism occurred during the 1970s as an outgrowth of radical Marxism, asymmetrical national liberation struggles and technological developments. Despite sporadic incidents of terrorism during the 1970s and 1980s, terrorism was considered a foreign phenomenon restricted to monitoring the Palestine Liberation Organization, Ustashi, Kurdistan Workers' Party and African National Congress sympathizers in Australia.³

The terrorist attacks in the United States on 11 September 2001 changed all that. For John Howard, who was in Washington, DC, for a state visit, September 11 had a profound personal effect.⁴ Prior to becoming prime minister, Howard had shown little interest in foreign affairs, which sat uncomfortably with his preference for a pragmatic approach to domestic politics. However, September 11 would prove an epiphany for Howard, transforming him into the staunchest member of the 'coalition of the willing' and one of the strongest advocates of the 'War on Terror'.

This article focuses on how the Australian government under Howard, handled the tensions between Islam and the West since September 11. In particular, it assesses the Australian government's response to international conflicts involving Islam and examines how this external domain was internalized, and its impact in the area of community relations generally and multicultural affairs in particular.

The key questions to be addressed include: What has been the Australian government's response to international conflicts involving the Muslim factor? How has the 'War on Terror' been internalized in Australia? How have these international conflicts affected Australia's relations with its Muslim neighbours? How has the Australian government handled Muslim–non-Muslim community relations? How have Muslim communities responded to government policies? Is there a correlation between governmental policy and the emergence of 'Islamophobia' in Australia? Is there a correlation between the government's handling of the 'War on Terror', intercommunal relations, the rise of nationalism, the difficulties besetting multiculturalism and electoral politics?

The analysis to be pursued here is distinctive in three ways: it connects international relations and foreign and national security policy with domestic

and intercommunal relations. Furthermore, it explores whether the actions and pronouncements of political leaders may have, unwittingly, infused or perpetuated a climate of insecurity in Australia. Finally, it examines how governmental public policy has vilified a community by association through blurring the difference between 'moderate' and 'fundamentalist' Muslims.

The Road to Baghdad

To comprehend Australia's response on a range of issues, directly or indirectly related to Islam and the 'War on Terror', it is first necessary to understand the government's underlying mindset, profoundly influenced by Howard's own understanding of Australia's place in the world. Like US President George W. Bush, Howard believed that 11 September 2001 was a historical turning point that changed the world, propelling it into an 'age of terror', heralding a 'struggle for civilization'.⁵ Nowhere is this best charted than in the prime minister's October 2001 address to the Australian Defence Association, professing to the 'profound [personal] impact' of September 11. In this landmark speech, September 11 was framed in biblical terms as a 'rare moment when evil' challenged the human decency of Western democracy. For Howard, September 11 'was not simply an attack on America' (Howard, 2001a), but 'on all of us', which demanded an 'effective' response (Howard, 2001d).

Echoing his prime minister's doctrine, Foreign Minister Alexander Downer was more astute in pronouncing that Australia's response rested on the premise that: 'We help the United States because it's in Australia's national interest that the war against terrorism should be successful. . . . It is not in our interest to have the civilisation that we belong to be attacked' (2002).

Although the threat posed by Islamic terrorism required Australia signing up to a mission to save the future of the world, Howard made the pertinent point that the 'War on Terror' should not be misconstrued as a war against Islam itself or Australia's Muslim neighbours. According to the prime minister, this 'new kind of war' was against an enemy who falsely portrayed anti-terrorism 'as an assault upon Islam' (Howard, 2001a). In addition to reassuring Australia's Muslim neighbours, Howard conveyed to 'Australians of Islamic faith and Arab decent' that they were 'just as much a part of [Australian] society as anyone else' (Howard, 2001a). Propagating the point further, Downer (2003) argued that Islamist-inspired terrorism threatened 'moderate Islam and moderate Muslims' as much as it did the West and that 'rather than promot[e] conflict between Islam and the West', terrorism had inevitably encouraged co-operation.

The conclusion that can be drawn from the above statements is that they exemplify the profound impact that September 11 had on the Howard government's world-view, their deep-held conviction of the moral sanctity of the War on Terror, which would underline all subsequent internal and external policies and pronouncements.

Immigration, Refugees and Perceptions of National Security

Historically, immigration and population have been linked to Australia's anxieties about national security. The logic of 'defensive immigration' ended with the dismantling of the White Australia Policy in the 1960s and the emergence of multiculturalism in the 1970s. As a consequence, from the 1970s to the 1990s, immigration and national security were more or less decoupled, and Australia's refugee and migrant intake was structured according to new principles, typically economic and humanitarian. However, the Australian government's response to the sharp increase in the number of unauthorized boat arrivals—largely from conflict areas in the Middle East—in the late 1990s and early 2000s suggested that immigration and national security once again became firmly fused in Australia's political consciousness. Moreover, the issue of Middle Eastern asylum-seekers became radically politicized in the period following September 11 and the subsequent US-led military campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq, to which Australia was keenly committed.

As the coalition government's political fortunes waned in early 2001, the issue of Middle Eastern 'boat people' simmered, with intermittent media reports of well-off refugees paying people smugglers to come to Australia. In August 2001, the issue exploded following the international incident aboard the MV Tampa, a Norwegian cargo vessel, in the waters to Australia's north, which had rescued 438 Afghani asylum seekers from their sinking boat. On 26 August, the government argued that Australia was under no obligation to receive the stranded vessel and refused entry to Australian territorial waters. Sensing an opportunity to play to its political strengths in the electorate, the government was quick to use the idea that the refugees were engaged in stand-over tactics. Howard (2001e) declared: 'We cannot allow situations to be created where we run the risk of losing control of our borders and losing control of our undoubted . . . right to control who comes to this country'.

Amidst the heightened sense of vulnerability and insecurity following the September 11 terror attacks, the Tampa incident, and the subsequent 'children overboard' affairs, which broke just after the announcement of the 2001 federal election campaign, provided the catalyst for the adoption of the strictest border-protection regime in Australian peacetime history. The government dispatched military equipment and personnel to the north, with a 'ring of steel' to 'protect' Australia from boat people arriving in small, often barely sea-worthy fishing vessels.

Indeed, the government's success at the 2001 election has been largely attributed to the conflation of immigration and national security issues after nearly three decades in which these issues had been more or less decoupled.⁶ This break with the recent past was not without its critics. Commenting on the coalition's campaign strategy, Tony Walker (2001: 7) of the *Australian Financial Review* characterized it as a 'blatant attempt to push hot-button community concerns: refugees, drugs, security'. This reading of the situation was echoed by the *Sydney Morning Herald* (2001: 16), which described the linking of defence and immigration as 'nakedly opportunistic'.⁷

Similarly, former Labor Prime Minister Paul Keating declared that the 2001 'election was won on appeal to racism' (ABC, 2001c). This view was also shared by former Liberal Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser who 'never thought (he'll) see the day when discrimination and race would play such a large part in an election' (ABC, 2001a). Finally, former Liberal leader, John Hewson (2001: 74), declared that the 2001 election was 'a victory of prejudice over policy'.

All this having been said, the fact remained that the Howard government's attitudes and perceptions mirrored and resonated with a significant cross-section of the Australian community. What these difficult events demonstrated is that much of Australian society was still uneasy about the deeper implications of multiculturalism.

The Usage of Language

It is not possible to properly understand Australian politics over the Howard decade without reference to the use of political language. In particular, the emergence of dual coded political language (sometimes referred to as 'dog-whistle' politics), which can be understood as rhetorical devices which appear to have one general meaning whilst simultaneously containing a different 'subliminal' message targeting a specific subgroup.

A key element of the Liberal-National Coalition's 1996 victory was Howard's ability to speak to the grievances of a particular domestic political constituency in Australia: the disaffected population of typically white, Anglo-Saxon blue-collar communities, many of whom consider themselves to be victims of the unprecedented economic, social, political and cultural transformations during the last three decades. The Liberal and National parties campaigned successfully by, more or less, presenting themselves as the voice of the commonly held view amongst these communities that traditional Australian values and culture had come under attack from cosmopolitan, 'politically correct' elites determined to favour immigrants and Indigenous Australians and remake Australia as an 'Asian nation'.

Nevertheless, even a liberal government led by a conservative prime minister was unable to entirely capture this constituency, and its electoral influence was demonstrated most dramatically with the rise of the right-wing populist One Nation party, led by Pauline Hanson, in 1997. Hanson's One Nation spoke more directly and clearly, albeit in highly simplistic and provocative terms, to the traditional farming and blue-collar communities of Australia, acting as a vehicle for the expression of their anxieties about race and immigration, globalization and the 'hollowing out' of Australian manufacturing, and rapid social and cultural change in general. Initially, One Nation was extraordinarily successful electorally, particularly in the 1998 Queensland state (22.7%) and national elections (8.4%) (Newman, 1998; Australian Electoral Commission [AEC], 1998), but by 1999 the party's fortunes were in serious decline.

Even though by early 2000 One Nation had entirely collapsed as a political force, it revealed that on social and cultural issues Australia was a deeply divided and polarized society. The demise of One Nation did not signify the eradication of its core

constituency. It was absorbed, in large part, into the government's constituency—known as the 'Howard battlers'. To recapture and hold onto this constituency, the Liberal government, led by its prime minister, pursued a firmer conservative posture. As an editorial in the *Age* (2003: 16) newspaper explained: 'By co-opting some of her less savoury ideas by stealth, the Prime Minister helped to neutralise One Nation as a political force'. A critical element of this dynamic had been the use of subtly coded language by the prime minister and other members of the government on issues of concern to the 'battler' constituency. Within what are typically inoffensive statements or assertions meant for the general Australian audience, a second layer of meaning can often be inferred—one that speaks, however subtly, to the typically marginalized and disaffected.

In the context of the moral panic over Islam in Australian society since 2001, questions of Arab and Muslim identity and culture featured heavily whenever politicians or journalists brought out the 'dog-whistle'. The reporting of the Sydney gang rapes, and the subsequent trials of the Lebanese-Australian youths charged with them, is a case in point. Intercultural tensions between the Lebanese and Anglo-Saxon communities of Sydney surfaced again in 2005, with the racially charged riots in Cronulla and surrounding beach suburbs.

While most media and political commentators interpreted the violence as racially charged and suggestive of a strongly anti-immigrant and xenophobic strain in many sections of Australian society, Howard was at pains to play down the existence of racism in Australia fuelling the riots. Furthermore, the prime minister employed coded-language on a number of occasions following the riots, condemning the loutish behaviour of the white Australian rioters in a reasonable manner while failing to denounce the racist content of their motivations, actions and language.⁸

This was also evident during the prime minister's 2006 Australia Day address when, speaking to the broader Australian public, he said: 'Within limits, all Australians have the right to participate freely in our national life . . . [to be] coupled with an absolute determination that all sections of the Australian community are fully integrated into the mainstream of our national life' (Howard, 2006a).

Whilst focusing on a narrower constituency, he spoke of the importance of re-affirming Australia's Judeo-Christian and British cultural core and of not being 'too obsessed with diversity' (Howard, 2006a). Paradoxically, this message also resonated with many non-Anglo ethnic communities who, for different reasons, were themselves highly critical of the Muslim community.

Within the context of simmering leadership tension, the Treasurer and Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party, Peter Costello, in an attempt to burnish his leadership credentials beyond his economic portfolio, waded into the multiculturalism debate. Soon after the prime minister's Australia Day comments, and in the wake of the Danish cartoons controversy, Costello (2006a: 15) hit the headlines with the statement: 'subscribe to Australian values or don't bother coming here'. In his February 2006 speech to the Sydney Institute, he couched his demands in general terms for 'all those who call themselves Australians to subscribe [to Australian

values]’, but then turned his focus to ‘terrorists’, Muslims and ‘confused, mushy, misguided multiculturalism’ (Costello, 2006b).

We now turn our attention to the way language has been used by the government during the ‘War on Terror’ with particular focus on the relationship between the West and Islam. For this purpose, we identified key terms pertaining to the ‘War on Terror’ throughout the speeches and statements of relevant government ministers and assess their impact on the broader West and Islam discourse.

Terrorism was the common thread that permeated the prime minister’s speeches, occurring 762 times between September 2001 and April 2006.⁹ Initially Howard avoided the use of the term the ‘War on Terror’. Instead he used derivatives such as ‘campaign against terror’ and the ‘war against terror’. The phrase ‘War on Terror’ entered the prime minister’s lexicon on the eve of the US-led Iraq offensive (18 March 2003), in the context of linking weapons of mass destruction (WMD) with international terrorism.

Throughout the foreign minister’s language, a clear distinction was made between the West and moderate Islam as constituting civilization and terrorism, weapons of mass destruction and extremism as their irreconcilable enemies. The division between extreme and moderate Islam was bridged when the minister referred to a ‘Muslim’ or ‘Islamic’ ‘system of government’ in reference to the Iranian or Taliban regimes. Downer’s discourse differed slightly from that of Howard’s in that he linked terrorism and WMD much earlier: from 3 February 2002 onwards, WMD was frequently accompanied with a discourse on terrorism and radical Islam.

When the prime minister, other government ministers or a senior public official spoke, the language they deployed resonated with a wide cross-section of Australian society. Use of language especially by figures in positions of authority had long-term psychological ramifications and inevitably helped to shape the tenor of political discourse.

Shaping policies and using rhetoric primarily with a view to securing short-term electoral advantage contains serious implications when it comes to handling the sensitive area of cultural and religious diversity, especially in the highly volatile post-September 11 climate. The frequent repetition of messages that were open to conflicting interpretations—something which media coverage often amplified and sensationalized—reinforced attitudes of mistrust and alienation, and led in certain circumstances to socially damaging behaviour.

At this point, it is important to consider the government’s usage of language within the context of the global media’s configuration of the ‘War on Terror’. Such representations construct the Muslim world as ‘closed spaces’, projecting it as a source/cause of conflict that propagates the ‘politics of fear’.¹⁰ The dissemination of an essentialist perception of Islam, intrinsically conducive to violence, institutionalizes a culture of Islamophobia (Anderson, 2008). By globally framing Muslims and Islam as a ‘problem’, you automatically internalize the ‘War on Terror’, allowing the insertion of domestic events in a perpetual cycle that reinforces

preconceived notions that Islam and Muslims constitute a problematic, and therefore threatening, proposition (Lynch and McGoldrick, 2005: 216).

This became evident throughout 2007 as the Howard government sought to evoke Islamophobia as an election issue. Undoubtedly the incident that best exemplified the government's politicization of an Islam-terrorism nexus was the detention of Indian Muslim doctor Mohammed Haneef accused of aiding the Glasgow Airport bombers. Displaying all the hallmarks of a Tampa-style vote winner, the Haneef case quickly descended into a public affairs debacle for a government steadfast in expediting a conviction under Australia's untried counter-terrorist laws. As with David Hicks, the Australian held for five years in Guantanamo Bay before being charged, the Haneef case exposed a government veering for public approval in its rigid pursuit of its 'War on Terror'.

However, in contrast to the 2004 and 2001 elections, media response was remarkably different and critical of the government's mishandling of the Haneef case.¹¹ Reassured by the Labor alternative, there appeared to be a growing concern within Australian elite circles over politicization of the nation's security-intelligence apparatus and the federal public service. The situation became so charged that Fraser (2007) publicly accused the Howard government of using 'language that create[d] a divide between the rest of the community and Islam', warning that 2007 was being transformed into 'a Muslim election'.

'War on Terror': The External Dimension

The coalition government came to office in 1996 following a period of unprecedented transformation in the global strategic environment, but was nevertheless resolutely determined to re-establish the pattern of deep defence and security relations between Canberra and Washington. The end of the bi-polar order had given rise to a much more independent Australian foreign policy framework and a more fluid relationship with the United States, which had been the principal element in Australian defence and security strategy during the Cold War. Under the Keating government, Australian foreign policy assumed a much clearer regional focus, reflecting the government's assessment that Australia's security interests lay in the development of a 'cooperative security' framework in the region (McDougall, 1998: 11). In a historic speech in March 1994, Keating gave voice to this new dispensation when he declared: 'No country is more important to Australia than Indonesia' (Kelly, 2005: 15). Highly critical while in opposition of what it called Keating's 'Asia-only' policy, the coalition campaigned in 1996 with a strong policy commitment to reinstate the United States as Australia's dominant defence and security partner and the substantial 'upgrading of the US-Australian alliance' (Coalition Foreign Policy Group, 1996: 3).

Shortly after assuming office, a crisis in the Taiwan Strait offered the government the opportunity to give expression to its strong commitment to the US alliance. It wasted no time, rehearsing its alliance credentials with vehement diplomatic and

political support for the heightened US naval presence in the East China Sea, a decision that exposed sharp differences between Australia and its neighbours and which the government later deeply regretted (Dobell, 2000: 96–98). Similarly, following a request from Washington in February 1998, the Howard government immediately agreed to participate in an international coalition for proposed military action against Iraq (Howard, 1998). However, the initiative stalled in the UN Security Council and the United States and Britain proceeded with punitive air strikes against Baghdad without Australian involvement later that year.

Nevertheless, in the fluid strategic environment of the post–Cold War era, the Clinton administration remained deeply ambivalent towards the Howard government's vision of the alliance (Tow, 2005: 207–208). Attempts by the government to draw the United States into deeper security co-operation were repeatedly rebuffed, notably when the Clinton administration declined to commit ground forces to the International Force for East Timor (INTERFET) mission in 1999. George W. Bush's assumption of the presidency in 2001, presented the Howard government with the prospect of a more enthusiastic partner in its alliance vision, based on a shared perspective on the projection of American power abroad and the overriding importance of the national interest in the pursuit of foreign policy, and a common scepticism of the efficacy of multilateral institutions in international affairs. The Howard government's view that foreign policy ought to reflect 'the hard-headed pursuit of . . . interests' over the development of 'grand constructs' (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade [DFAT], 1997: iii), outlined in its 1997 foreign policy white paper, *In the National Interest*, bears a striking resemblance to the perspectives presented in Condoleezza Rice's (2000) widely read article, 'Campaign 2000: Promoting the National Interest', establishing the basis for American foreign policy under the Bush administration.

September 11 established the basis for a realization of the Howard government's longstanding alliance aspirations. Since then, official US–Australian relations had been as close as at any time since the Second World War. The Australian response was profoundly influenced by Howard's presence in the United States at the time of the attacks. As Paul Kelly (2001: 24) noted, 'Howard was in the shadow of the terror and he felt it'. The day after the attacks, while still in Washington, the prime minister's rhetoric was understandably emotional: 'I just can't overstate the sympathy, the solidarity, the empathy I feel for the American nation and the American people at the present time' (Howard, 2001d). In addition, he established a cultural and political distinction that became a template for all future responses to terror attacks against Western targets:

Of course, it's an attack on all of us. And no imaginable political grievance what ever it is, real or imagined, can justify this kind of behaviour. And it does represent an attack on all of us and it does represent an attack on the civilised world. (Howard, 2001d)

The Australian government's political response was unequivocal. The government readily adopted the metaphor of war chosen by the Bush administration to frame its

response to the September 11 attacks and committed Australia to military action even before such assurances had been formally sought by the Americans. Following the lead of the NATO powers, Howard (2001f) announced the government's decision to invoke the provisions of the ANZUS Treaty under Article IV.

Australia made a sizeable contribution to the United States' 'Operation Enduring Freedom' against the Taliban regime in October 2001, and the subsequent invasion of Afghanistan. The Australian contingent numbered some 1,500 personnel, including 150 SAS soldiers. While initial military operations were generally regarded as successful, the United States came under fire towards the end of 2001 as credible reports of between 1,000 and 1,300 civilian casualties in the bombing of Afghanistan emerged (Campbell, 2002; Conetta, 2002). This was not entirely unexpected. In a media interview Downer (2001) strongly emphasized the desire to minimize civilian casualties but warned that some innocent deaths were probably inevitable. When pressed on the issue, Howard (2001e) and Downer (ABC, 2002b) were quick to point out the many thousands of civilians killed in the September 11 attacks.

On 12 October 2002, 202 people—including 88 Australians—were killed and a further 209 injured when the militant Indonesian Islamist organization Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) operatives exploded a series of truck-bombs in the resort town of Kuta on the Indonesian island of Bali. Bali became Australia's September 11, and the ensuing response established a 'second front' for the 'War on Terror' in South-east Asia. At this juncture, Australia found itself oscillating between an overt war framework and a law-enforcement and criminal justice approach, with the prime minister ruling in pre-emptive strikes in South-east Asia but also emphasizing police and intelligence angles.

Indeed, since Bali, South-east Asia and Indonesia, in particular, became the focus of government interest in the 'War on Terror', the bombings of the Marriott Hotel (5 August 2003) and outside the Australian Embassy (9 September 2004) in Jakarta confirmed this trend. Again in 2005, with the second Bali attacks in Kuta and Jimbaran beach, the South-east Asia link was strong. South-east Asia was the primary lens through which the Australian government focused its institutional and political efforts in the 'War on Terror'. The personalities of South-east Asian terror were the focus of the government's attention. The government sought to make much of the capture of Riduan Isamuddin (Hambali) on 11 August 2003 and the killing of Azahari bin Husin on 9 November 2005.

Australian responses to events at home and abroad also had a visible impact on relations with the South-east Asian region and in particular with two of Australia's nearest neighbours with large Muslim populations, Indonesia and Malaysia. Though reactions in Jakarta and Kuala Lumpur differed in both tone and content, Australian policies had generally been greeted by government elites, media commentators and by the wider public with dismay and irritation. The repeated diplomatic snubs directed against the Australian prime minister and other senior ministers and the obstacles placed in the path of Australia's admission to a number of regional bodies are but

outward manifestations of the profound ambivalence with which Australia is perceived regionally.

The Australian government's response to September 11 included a more assertive stance in support of US global and regional policies, a more interventionist regional role, a declared willingness to pursue pre-emptive strikes against terrorist threats emanating in South-east Asia and the commitment of forces to both the Afghanistan and Iraq wars. Relations with South-east Asian countries gave increasing prominence to 'counter-terrorism' collaboration, including joint exercises with Singapore and the deployment of special forces in the Philippines. As we will see below, these policies were paralleled at home by tough anti-terrorist legislation and until recently an unbending attitude in the treatment of asylum seekers. All of this raised profound questions about Australia's relationship with Islam, in terms of its relations with Muslim neighbours abroad and the rapidly rising Muslim minority at home.

When terror attacks occurred outside Australia's region, particularly the Madrid train and the London bombings (March 2004 and July 2005), the government's response had been largely rhetorical, following the same template. It expressed solidarity with the community in which the attacks occurred, emphasizing the uncivilized nature of the militants and establishing the key elements of its linkages to Iraq and Al Qaeda.

Australia had also been very receptive to the Israeli line on the question of Lebanon and Hezbollah. The prime minister categorically refused to unlist the armed wing of Hezbollah as a prescribed terrorist organization despite appeals by the government's Muslim Community Reference Group (MCRG) (*Advertiser*, 2006).

What we can conclude from the above survey is that Australia under the Howard government, had, especially after September 11, tied its foreign, defence and security policy to that of the United States. Australia's involvement in the 'War on Terror', irrespective of the merits or otherwise of the case, was motivated primarily and exclusively by its alliance with the United States.

'War on Terror': The Domestic Front

Nowhere was the link between the 'War on Terror' and its domestic implication more astutely illustrated than in the prime minister's appearance on a TV breakfast show a month after September 11. Quizzed about whether there was a 'local focus' of 'up to 100 Sydney residents' having 'links with terrorist organisations associated with Osama bin Laden', Howard warned: 'People should not imagine that there aren't sympathisers to people like bin Laden in Australia and nobody should imagine that this country is immune either now or in the future from some kind of terrorist attack' (Howard, 2001b).

The internalization of the 'War on Terror' saw the government set out to convince Australian public opinion of the need for far-reaching anti-terrorist legislation. Prior to 2002, Australia lacked a dedicated legislative anti-terrorism regime. While existing Commonwealth¹² and state legislation contained a number of provisions relating to

terrorism, only the Northern Territory had an offence of committing a terrorist attack (Australian Parliament, 2006: 2). Over the next six years, Australian governments moved to establish a comprehensive anti-terrorism framework, which expanded incrementally during this time, typically with increased strengthening in the wake of 'peak' terrorist events around the globe.

Following September 11, the Australian government moved quickly to review existing anti-terrorism measures and to strengthen Australia's counter-terrorism capabilities. On 6 October 2001, the Commonwealth implemented the provisions of the UN's Security Council Resolution 1378, calling on member states to introduce specific anti-terrorism legislation.

In mid-December 2001, the federal cabinet endorsed a range of measures to strengthen the Commonwealth's anti-terrorism legislative regime and to expand domestic intelligence-gathering and surveillance mechanisms, with particular emphasis on a much-enhanced role for the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO). Almost immediately, fears of an excessive response by the government to September 11 prompted some journalists and a range of civil libertarians to warn of the potential threat to individual rights and freedoms arising from the proposals to dramatically expand the ASIO's powers of arrest and detention. In view of the fact that ASIO was not subject to the checks and balances that hold state and federal police accountable, concerns were raised that the organization could become a 'secret police' (ABC, 2001b).

The Commonwealth sought co-operation from the states and territories to co-ordinate those aspects of counter-terrorism subject to their jurisdiction, particularly surveillance and arrest. On 5 April 2002, the prime minister met with state and territory leaders and agreed to work together to establish a national legislative and inter-agency framework to combat terrorism. Nevertheless, the principal focus remained with the Commonwealth and in mid-2002, the federal government unveiled its proposed new anti-terrorism regime, tabling a package of five bills containing a raft of new statutory terrorism offences and mechanisms to combat terrorist financing. The bulk of this package was passed by the federal parliament in early July 2002. However, the issue of civil liberties presented a critical stumbling block for the government, which was forced to postpone its ASIO legislation after an all-party parliamentary committee ruled that the proposed length of detention without charge and the provisions for the detention and strip-searching of children were unacceptable (ABC, 2004a).

The Bali bombings of October 2002 radically shifted Australia's perception of the security environment. Amidst a heightened sense of insecurity and vulnerability to Islamist terror in Australia's region, the federal government moved to further strengthen the anti-terrorism regime it had only recently implemented. The government's focus shifted to the security of Australians abroad, and one month after the Bali attacks the Commonwealth parliament passed legislation making it a criminal offence under Australian law to murder, commit manslaughter or intentionally or recklessly cause serious harm to an Australian outside Australia.

Following the Bali attacks, the Australian government listed JI as a proscribed terrorist organization under the new anti-terrorism legislation (Ruddock, 2002). Following revelations that JI leader Abu Bakar Bashir had visited Australia on at least 12 occasions since 1992, the Australian government's counter-terrorism efforts shifted to uncovering any possible JI operatives or associates living in Australia. In late October 2002, the ASIO launched a series of dramatic early-morning raids in Melbourne and Sydney on the homes of suspected JI sympathizers, all of whom were Muslim Indonesian-Australians. Amidst widespread concern expressed in the media that Australia's Muslim community was being victimized and potentially alienated by the dramatic and intimidating nature of the raids (ABC, 2002a), and concerns raised by the Indonesian government regarding police heavy-handedness, Howard asserted that the raids were:

not targeting Muslims. That is ridiculous. These raids relate to investigations concerning individuals. People who claim that this is in some way targeting Islamic sections of Australia are just, in my opinion, deliberately trying to create a difficulty that does not and ought not to exist. We have no argument with decent law-abiding Islamic Australians. (Howard, 2002)

In 2003, the focus in Australia shifted squarely to the threat of domestic terrorism and, in particular, the intense debate over the federal government's highly contentious ASIO legislation that had been delayed repeatedly due to ongoing concerns about civil liberties. While the Greens and the Democrats opposed the legislation outright, an agreement between the government and the Labor opposition secured the legislation's passage through the parliament on 26 June 2003—14 months after its introduction. Later in 2003, the government was severely embarrassed by revelations that Willie Virgile Brigitte, a French terrorist suspect with links to Al-Qaeda, had been allowed to enter Australia under a tourist visa issued by the Australian Embassy in Paris. In the wake of his deportation to France in mid-October, the ASIO's behaviour yet again came under intense criticism when raids on six of Brigitte's associates became the subject of a complaint to the Inspector-General of Intelligence, Australia's security watchdog (ABC, 2003).

In late 2003 and into 2004, the Australian government again sought to tighten the domestic anti-terror regime, with a particular focus on transport security. The *Maritime Transport and Offshore Facilities Security Act (2003)*, passed two days before Christmas 2003 and the *Aviation Transport Security Amendment Act (2004)*, passed on 10 March 2004, were the central focus of this effort. The Madrid train bombing by Al-Qaeda on 11 March dramatically heightened transport security fears and appeared to vindicate the government's attention to Australian infrastructure security. With a renewed sense of vulnerability to the possibility of a terror attack on Australian soil, the prime minister mooted a further expansion of the ASIO's powers and new and severe limits on the civil liberties of those charged with terrorism offences, including the extraordinary provision making it a criminal offence for those convicted of terrorist offences to profit from media interviews or selling books and memoirs, and

moves to remove the presumption of bail for those charged under terrorist offences (ABC, 2004b). Three anti-terrorism bills, passed between June and August 2004, largely gave effect to these proposals.

Following its re-election, the government sought to take advantage of its pending control of the Senate to re-introduce legislation to limit national security-related information from entering the public domain and restrict the use, communication and publication of information obtained through the use of surveillance devices. However, the *National Security Information (Criminal and Civil Proceedings) Act 2004*, designed to protect information from disclosure in federal criminal proceedings, where the disclosure would be likely to prejudice Australia's national security, was amended considerably following strong lobbying from the Australian Press Council and the Fairfax Media organization (Walters, 2004). The Act also provided a definitional application of national security as 'Australia's defence, international relations or law enforcement interests' (Attorney General, 2005: 7). Drawing on the *Australian Security Intelligence Organisation Act 1979*, security included protection against espionage, sabotage, politically motivated violence, promotion of communal violence, attacks on Australia's defence system and acts of foreign interference whether committed within or directed from Australia (Attorney General, 2002: 4–5).

The London bombings dramatically altered the security landscape yet again and set the stage for an unprecedented toughening of Australia's counter-terrorism regime. Taking its lead directly from the United Kingdom, on 8 September 2005 the government announced a range of proposed changes to Australian anti-terror laws, much of which were based on British legislation (Howard, 2005a).¹³ These measures—including control orders, preventative detention and electronic tracking of terror suspects not yet charged or tried for offences, as well as new sedition provisions designed to prohibit 'inciting' terrorist acts against Australia or Australians—were all highly controversial and were the subject of dire warnings from civil libertarians and the media (Australian Lawyers for Human Rights, 2005a, 2005b; Hull, 2005).

The government introduced the *Anti-Terrorism Act (2005)* on 14 October 2005, following agreement with the states and territories over the proposals at a Council of Australian Governments (COAG) meeting on 27 September. Nevertheless, opposition to the legislation was strong and the government faced a barrage of criticism from civil libertarians, the opposition and minor parties, state and territory governments (the legislation had been significantly amended from what had been agreed at COAG), and indeed from a small number of Liberal parliamentarians, the most vocal being Victorian backbencher Petro Georgiou (ABC, 2005b). In late October, the president of Australia's Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission (HREOC) announced that the legislation would need to be reconsidered as it failed to adequately protect suspects under preventative detention (ABC, 2005a).

Eager to implement as much of its agenda as possible, but under significant pressure from coalition backbenchers, the government extracted elements of the

original legislation and re-introduced them as a separate, much smaller bill, on 2 November 2005. The prime minister declared:

The Government has received specific intelligence and police information this week which gives cause for serious concern about a potential terrorist threat . . . The Government is satisfied on the advice provided to it that the immediate passage of [the extracted elements] would strengthen the capacity of law enforcement agencies to effectively respond to this threat. . . . [T]hese specific elements have taken on a greater degree of urgency and on that basis the Government intends to secure their passage immediately. (Howard, 2005b)

The smaller *Anti-Terrorism (No. 1) Act (2005)* was passed on 4 November amidst controversy of the federal government's dramatic announcement of this 'specific intelligence'—and the strong warning of a terrorist threat associated with it. By introducing the bill in the same week as these 'revelations' the government was accused of political expediency to hasten passage of the legislation (ABC, 2005a; O'Brien and Kearney, 2003; Shanahan, 2005). The government's original, much more comprehensive, legislation was then referred to a Senate committee for inquiry. Despite its Senate majority, the government faced difficulty moving the legislation through and was forced by coalition senators to make significant amendments to the proposed sedition provisions, which were deemed too broad (Nicholson, 2005). Nevertheless, the amended legislation was passed as the *Anti-Terrorism (No. 2) Act (2005)* on 14 December 2005.

'Good' Muslims and 'Bad' Muslims: 'Moderates' and 'Fundamentalists'

Until 2001, Muslims in Australia were primarily perceived according to their ethnicity rather than their religious identity. Suddenly, after September 11 they went from being migrants to 'Muslims'.¹⁴ Comprising 1.7% of Australia's population, Muslims in Australia are not a homogeneous group but constitute a diverse minority of Australia's society (ABS, 2007). In 2006, Muslims in Australia numbered 340,394 compared with 200,885 in 1996, the great majority residing in Sydney (47.3%) and Melbourne (30.3%) (ABS, 2000; ABS, 2008).¹⁵

Deriving from 180 different birthplaces, the largest group (37.9%) were born in Australia and the rest had migrated from Lebanon (8.9%), Turkey (6.8%), Afghanistan (4.7%), Pakistan (4%), Bangladesh (4%), Iraq (3%), Indonesia (2.5%) and Bosnia-Herzegovina (2.2%) (DFAT, 2008).

Despite relatively successful multicultural policies, the last decade has brought to view the problems that minority groups in Australia face when external crises are internalized as hostility directed against particular ethnic or religious groups, a trend reflected in media commentary (Myconos, 2007; Aly, 2007). September 11 was followed by a marked increase in the number and intensity of reported instances of attacks, harassment and culturally offensive behaviour aimed at Muslims generally

and Muslim women in particular (Islamic Council of Victoria [ICV], 2002; Poynting and Noble, 2004; Bedar and El Matrah, 2005; HREOC, 2004).

In the wake of the London terrorist attacks, the Australian government, concerned about the prospect of home grown terrorism, embarked on a consultation process with moderate leaders of Australia's Muslim community. Emulating the UK government's Preventing Extremism Together (PET) initiative, it sought to develop a strategy aimed at curtailing extremism amongst the Muslim community.

On 23 August 2005, Howard met with representatives of the Muslim community and agreed on a statement of principles. The statement declared 'overriding loyalty to Australia', 'its traditions, values and institutions', denounced terrorism, and committed the signatories to 'protect Australia against violence, terrorism and intolerance' (Department of Immigration and Citizenship [DIAC], 2005). The statement also declared that: 'members of the Muslim faith, and in particular its leaders, have a responsibility to challenge and counteract those who seek to encourage the use of violence and terrorism in the name of Islam'.

Finally, the statement committed those present to 'take a lead with their communities and other Islamic organisations to promote harmony, mutual understanding and Australian values...and to challenge violence and extremism' (DIAC, 2005). At their joint press conference with the president of the Australian Federation of Islamic Councils Ameer Ali, the prime minister reiterated his intention of embarking on an 'ongoing dialogue and contact between the Australian Government and the Islamic Community of Australia' to 'tackle the problem and the potential for difficulty arising from the terrorist threat within our community' (Howard, 2005c). This led to the establishment (September 2005) of the Muslim Community Reference Group (MCRG) and its subgroups¹⁶ which concluded its tenure with the report, 'Building on Social Cohesion, Harmony and Security: An Action Plan by the Muslim Community Reference Group' (Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs [DIMA], 2005).¹⁷

Although the initiative was warmly welcomed by the great majority of Islamic organizations in Australia, there was disquiet and a questioning of whether the process should have included Muslim leaders with harder political dispositions. However, this proposition was ruled out by the government's attitude that such outspoken figures not be granted the credibility, and therefore legitimacy, by participating in a government committee.

External events also began to impinge on the workings of the MCRG and its subgroups. Inevitably tension with members of the group began to flare up especially at times of heightened international crises. The government's policies, especially pertaining to the Middle East, had an impact on the cohesiveness of the group and eventually affected its relationship with the government. Nowhere was this more evident than during the 2006 Israel-Lebanon war.¹⁸

In ascertaining the government's rationale for embarking on the MCRG initiative, a three-prong strategy emerged: (1) to consolidate its anti-terrorist legislation and more widely its foreign and national security policies, including its counter terrorism

program, by securing at least the tacit support of the Muslim ‘community’; (2) to deflect ‘ownership’ and therefore responsibility for home-grown extremism on to the Muslim community. However well intentioned or politically expedient these objectives may have been, the net effect was to divide Muslims into two groups: the ‘moderates’ and the ‘extremists’; whilst further sharpening the ‘us’ (Australian) and ‘them’ (Muslims) dichotomy. Here, Muslims were identified not only as the ‘other’ but their separateness was accentuated by the fact that ‘we’ enter into a dialogue with ‘them’ as a distinct entity; (3) to send a message to mainstream (non-Muslim) Australia that the government was pro-active when dealing with potential home-grown Muslim extremism.

Although it is early to ascertain the impact of engaging the Muslim community in the government’s counter-terrorism strategy, there is deep-seated scepticism over its overall effectiveness especially closer to the convergence of the terrorist pyramid (Bergin *et al.*, 2007: 8). In a comparative study of UK and Australian practices, Basia Spalek and Alia Imtoul (2007: 194) view such policies as problematic and highly elusive. Admittedly, they have persuaded government authorities to review their tough dispositions towards tackling radicalisation amongst young Muslims by abandoning the provocative—and sensationalist—language of ‘Islamic terrorism’ (Pickering *et al.*, 2007: 112; Norton-Taylor, 2007). However, the whole anti-terrorism discourse is fraught with social and political ramifications for Australian Muslims. Attempts to construct and superimpose a singular communal structure contrary to the history, composition and demography of Muslims in Australia, is in the long-term unsustainable, fraught with uncertainties and damaging implications.

Conclusion

Having surveyed the Howard government’s handling of tensions between the Muslim world and the West, we are increasingly conscious of the wider pressures that foreign and security policy-making can exert on the fabric of Australian society. It is the recognition of these deeper and longer-term implications that suggests the need for a much better understanding of the complex relationship between foreign and domestic policy, indeed between all areas of policy. Dealing with Australia’s cultural diversity requires a ‘whole-of-government’ and a ‘whole-of-society’ approach. From the above, we ascertain a series of findings that intercross foreign and national security policy, Australia’s general communal attitudes and Australia’s Muslim communities, and at the epicentre is the debate on multiculturalism.

In an age of rapid globalization where the delineation between domestic and external policy has become more and more blurred, governments are confronted with the perennial dilemma of reconciling national interests and the demands of social policy. Increasingly, governments are discovering the difficulties of handling the social implications of foreign policy-making with its multiple linkages to Australia’s domestic situation.

The Howard government's overall foreign and security policies following September 11, especially but not exclusively, in relation to the Muslim world, and its participation in the 'War on Terror', became a source of concern and apprehension, even discontent, amongst many Australian-Muslims.

There was a growing sentiment across a significant section of the Australian community, as reflected in several opinion surveys,¹⁹ that Australia's foreign, defence and national security policies became too closely aligned with those of the United States, and that in the process Australia had alienated itself from its Muslim neighbours, Indonesia and Malaysia, several member-states of the European Union, and the majority view in the UN system.

In responding to the terrorist threat emanating from September 11, government pronouncements helped to create a climate of insecurity, suspicion and xenophobia amongst some sections of Australian society (sometimes referred to as 'Islamophobia'). The internalization of the 'War on Terror' contributed to a negative perception of Muslims and Islam, whose image has been tarnished by the vague use of such labels as 'terrorism', 'fanaticism', 'fundamentalism', 'radicalism' and 'extremism'. The elusiveness of identifying an 'enemy' in the 'War on Terror' has made locating and identifying the enemy especially difficult. Despite public assurances to the contrary, this has resulted in a widespread perception that the 'enemy' is the 'other', and that this 'other' is Muslim.

The Howard government's failure to explain adequately to the Muslim communities the logic of its policies on the Iraq war, the Palestinian issue, Lebanon and other sensitive issues of deep concern to Muslims may have compounded the problem (Issues Deliberation Australia/America, 2007: 8). September 11 and the attention thrust upon Islam and Muslims in Australia have had two opposing effects: on the one hand, they have forced Muslim-Australians to organize themselves and engage with other faiths and the non-Muslim community at large; on the other hand, they have deepened Muslim-Australians' sense of insecurity, and in the case of some produced a virtual siege mentality, especially amongst sections of the young and socio-economically underprivileged. The increasingly negative depiction of Muslims is resonating with young Muslims; this taken in conjunction with other identity-related factors constitutes a recipe for radicalization around a seemingly religious cause.

The Howard government's intervention to superimpose a centralized structure on Muslim communities created a number of social and psychological conditions with medium and long-term consequences. One such consequence was to sharpen the division between 'moderate' ('liberal' or 'progressive') Muslims and those with harder political dispositions ('fundamentalists', 'extremists' or 'radicals') along an artificially constructed continuum—a policy which caused avoidable social tensions.

Unless care is taken, a point may soon be reached where open conflict develops between Muslims and other sections of the community. We are witnessing the beginnings of a potentially conflictual relationship, which may in time give way to rising tension and ultimately confrontation. Deployment of cross-cultural training,

monitoring and dialogical negotiation had not been sufficiently applied, with the result that the conflict may, with relatively little warning or added provocation, cross the threshold from unstable peace to social turmoil.

In a broader context, 'Islam' was used as a metaphor for multiculturalism in the debate over cultural values, which led to added confusion as to the meaning of multiculturalism and unnecessary division as to how Australia should handle its religious and cultural diversity.

Whilst Howard's ideological campaign against postmodernism and relativism loitered throughout his first terms, September 11 provided him with the momentum to re-assert his cultural (and history) wars on the national agenda. By replicating Bush's teleological doctrine, Howard was able to exclusively surmount public policy under the concealment of national security (McCarthy, 2006).

During the Howard decade, Australian society and polity had undergone a subtle but important re-alignment of relations with the outside world and with its region. A certain introversion and retrospectivity had set in, perhaps in response to the policies of an earlier period, beginning with the Gordon and later Whitlam governments—a trend reinforced during the Fraser years and subsequent Hawke-Keating Labor governments. September 11, the 'War on Terror' and Australia's closer identification with the Anglo-West, strengthened attitudes and perceptions reminiscent of an earlier period, including a suspicion of outsiders, a fear of 'enemies' within and without, and a certain unease in dealing with cultural and religious diversity in its midst.

Postscript

On 24 November 2007, a Labor government led by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd was elected, putting an end to 11 years of Howardism and lending credence to Paul Keating's proverb that when 'you change the government, you change the country' (Brett, 2008: 111). A year on, the contours of what can be described as the 'Rudd doctrine'—founded on his three-pillar foreign policy of US alliance, UN multilateralism and Asia Pacific engagement (Rudd, 2008)—has meant an overhaul of Australia's foreign policy orientation. Ratification of the Kyoto Protocol, withdrawal of Australian combat troops from Iraq and the ending of the Pacific solution by closing the offshore refugee processing detention centres in Papua New Guinea and Nauru constitute the main hallmarks of a new orientation that projects Australia as a middle power. Furthermore, the prime minister's attendance at the UN's General Assembly and Millennium Development Goals Summit, in conjunction with the establishment of the International Commission of Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament and the proposal for a new Asia-Pacific community are aimed at reasserting Australia's credentials as a significant regional and international player (Australian Government, 2008).

International developments, in particular the global financial crisis, mounting environmental and energy security concerns, and the election of a new US president,

also enabled the Rudd government to begin decoupling Australia's foreign and security focus from the exclusivity of the 'War on Terror'. Whilst still engaged in combating terrorism through its increased commitment in Afghanistan and its counter-terrorist collaboration with key Association of Southeast Asian Nation (ASEAN) regional partners, the government's overall rhetoric and attitude across the foreign affairs, national security and immigration silo has led to a gradual depoliticization of the 'Muslim problem'.

Partly as a consequence of its inoculation against intellectualism, the Rudd government, wittingly or otherwise, has been rather cautious when dealing with the question of Islam and, by extension, with the whole question of multiculturalism, especially in the Australian context. The government has maintained a low-profile engagement, primarily through such agencies and programs as the DFAT's counter-terrorism programme and the DIAC's National Action Plan, both of which were instituted by the previous government.

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Notes

- [1] A month earlier, the treasurer and deputy leader of the Liberal Party, Peter Costello, had accused the Labor Party of supporting the Bali bombers after the opposition foreign affairs spokesperson, Robert McClelland, criticized the Howard government for its double stance on capital punishment (ABC, 2007a).
- [2] At the 2007 elections, Lindsay was lost to the Australian Labor Party (ALP) with a 9.7% swing.
- [3] On 17 December 1980, the Turkish Consul General Sarik Ariyak and his bodyguard Engin Sever were assassinated in Sydney; the Justice Commandos against Armenian Genocide (JCAG) claimed responsibility. Six years later on 23 November a bomb exploded outside the Turkish Consulate General in Melbourne with one fatality—presumed to be the perpetrator. Similarly, in 1972 a bomb exploded at the Yugoslav General Trade and Tourist Agency in

- Sydney with 16 wounded, whilst in December 1982 the Israeli Consulate-General and the Hakoah Club in Sydney were bombed.
- [4] The first attack on the World Trade Center in New York found the Australian prime minister in his hotel room preparing for a press conference. Later, whilst in the middle of a press conference, Howard was informed by his press secretary that the second tower and the Pentagon were hit. He then went back to his room and could see the smoke billowing out of the Pentagon; he had been at the Pentagon the previous afternoon visiting the defence secretary. The PM's party then went to the Australian embassy and was joined by the new American Ambassador to Australia Tom Schieffer. There Howard (2001c) conducted a news conference and asked the acting prime minister to convene a meeting of the security group.
 - [5] In his televised address to the nation to mark the fifth anniversary of September 11, US President George W. Bush (2006) declared: 'This struggle has been called a clash of civilizations. In truth, it is a struggle for civilization'. This notion was not new but an extension of his original declaration: 'We [meaning the US] wage a war to save civilization, itself' (Bush, 2001).
 - [6] Both Newpoll and Morgan polls placed the coalition's primary vote prior to August–September 2001 hovering around the 30–40% range. This figure leaped into the 40–50% zone from September 2001 until the election on 30 November of the same year.
 - [7] The link between immigration and defence was borne out in the Parliamentary Library's research that placed the coalition as surging ahead on both issues from June 2001 onwards (Miskins, 2003–2004).
 - [8] In its editorial, the *Age* (2005: 20) expressed this most cogently: 'The problem is not so much with what Howard has said but with what he has failed to say. Consider his response to images of rioters draped in the Australian flag: "I would never condemn people for being proud of the Australian flag. What I condemn is loutish behaviour, criminal behaviour"'.
 - [9] This figure is based on a project by La Trobe University's Centre for Dialogue which tabulated the usage of the word 'terror' and its derivatives in the speeches of Australia's PM between 1 September 2001 and 30 April 2006 (Martin, 2006).
 - [10] In 2001, out of the seven states listed by the US Department of State (2002: 63) for sponsoring terrorism (Cuba, Iran, Iraq, North Korea, Libya, Syria and Sudan), five were Muslim. Seven years later, although Iraq and Libya were removed from the list (US Department of State, 2008: 171–176), the Muslim world still dominated the department's terrorist safe heavens (Somalia, Trans-Sahara [Algeria and Libya], Sulu/Sulawesi Seas Littoral [between Philippines-Malaysia-Indonesia], Southern Philippines, Indonesia, Iraq, Lebanon, Yemen, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Colombia, Venezuela and the tri-border area between Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay) (US Department of State, 2008: 184–189).
 - [11] See, for example, news headlines at the time: 'Public Doubts Howard's Way', *Courier Mail* (2007); 'PM Ducks for Cover Over Haneef', *News Limited* (2007); 'Farewell Dr Mohamed Haneef, from the Land of the "Fair Go"' (Koutsoukis, 2007) and 'Haneef Pressure Mounts on Andrews', ABC News (2007).
 - [12] In the Australian context, 'Commonwealth' refers to the national federal tier.
 - [13] The government's proposed changes were largely modelled on the UK's controversial *Prevention of Terrorism Act (2005)*, which introduced preventative detention and control orders, and its proposed *Terrorism Bill (2005–06)*, which was introduced into the House of Commons on 12 October 2005 and proposed changes to sedition provisions, including the prohibition of 'fomenting' terrorism against Britain or allied nations. *The Terrorism Act (2006)* came into effect on 30 March 2006 (United Kingdom, 2005).
 - [14] For this comment, I am indebted to the federal Labor member for Calwell Maria Vamvakinou. For a sample of the 'Muslim debate', see Stone (2006) and Manne (2006).
 - [15] In Sydney, the majority of Muslims are clustered in the Western suburbs (Bankstown, Canterbury, Auburn, Liverpool, Blacktown and Paramatta) whilst in Melbourne in its outer

- North-western and Southern regions (Hume, Moreland, Dandenong, Brimbank and Casey) (Wise and Ali, 2008: 10).
- [16] The six subgroups were: Engaging with Youth, Engaging with Women, Education and Training of Clerical and Lay Teachers and Leaders, Issues Related to Schooling, Improving Employment Outcomes and Workplace Issues, Improving Crisis Management, and Family and Community.
- [17] Although the report was finalized in September, it was not posted on DIMA's website until 15 December 2006.
- [18] Queried during a doorstep interview about MCRG's chair Ameer Ali's call for the government to rethink its proscription of Hezbollah, the prime minister angrily responded: 'Rethink our proscription of it, what as a terrorist organisation? No chance. Full stop. No chance at all' (Howard, 2006b).
- [19] For example, the Lowy Institute's 2005 and 2006 polls found that 68–69% of Australians believed that Australia took too much notice of the United States in its foreign policy (Cook, 2005: 8–9; 2006: 9). Also an international poll commissioned by the BBC and the *Age* across 25 countries found that 60% of Australians held a negative view of the US's role in the world (Gordon, 2007). Negative sentiment towards US foreign policy in Australia reached such a point that News Corporation chair Rupert Murdoch admitted at an American Australian Association dinner that he was 'well aware that the Iraq war was . . . unpopular among many Australians' and that 'not every Australia [saw] the . . . American Administration in a favourable light' (Murdoch, 2006). For an earlier survey of Australian attitudes towards the United States, see Goot (2003).

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