WHO ARE THE GLOBALISERS ? A STUDY OF KEY GLOBALISERS IN AUSTRALIA[1]

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Globalisation is a relatively new idea in the social sciences, though transnational corporation executives and international business writers have been talking about it for some time. Research has focused on two sets of phenomena that have become significant in the last few decades, the globalisation of capital, financial markets and production largely through the transnational corporations, and transformations in the global scope of the mass media.

While there is widespread acknowledgment that these processes actually are at work, there is much less agreement about what it all means (for the Australian case see, for example, David and Wheelwright, 1989; Courvisanos, 1994; EPAC, 1995). Here I shall present one interpretation of globalisation, global system theory, and use this as a framework to explain how globalisation has been interpreted by a sample of people from various institutional sectors in Australia.

This paper addresses one specific question: who are the globalisers? It is particularly important to note that, while there may be academic debate about what, exactly, globalisation entails, this research showed that the agents who would generally be recognised as being involved in globalising processes, as individuals and/or in terms of their institutional locations, in any conception of globalisation do appear to have a

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relatively agreed understanding of the meaning of globalisation. The focus of this paper will be to identify who the leading globalisers are and what the shared conception of globalisation is. The body of the paper identifies and analyzes the individuals and organizations (mainly corporations, government departments and agencies) who were named by respondents as 'key globalisers'. First, a theoretical framework within which these findings can be interpreted is outlined.

Global System Theory

Global system theory is based on the concept of transnational practices (Sklair, 1995). Because the world is organized in terms of separate countries, the 'natural' approach to the 'global system' is state-centrist, emphasizing the role of the state and giving the current system of nation-states prime importance. While not ignoring the nation-state, the theory proposed here offers in addition a conception of the global system based on *transnational practices*.

Transnational practices are practices that originate with non-state actors and cross state borders. There are three aspects of all transnational practices: economic, political and cultural-ideological. In the concrete conditions of the world as it is, a world largely structured by global capitalism in its various forms, each of these is primarily, but not exclusively, characterized by a major institutional force. The transnational corporation (TNC) is the most important institutional force for economic globalisation; the transnational capitalist class (TCC) for political globalisation; and the culture-ideology of consumerism for cultural-ideological globalisation.

The research agenda of global system theory is concerned with how TNCs, the transnational capitalist class and its many local offshoots and the agents and institutions of consumerism operate systematically to transform the world in terms of the global capitalist project. The transnational capitalist class is composed of the following groups of people:

- TNC executives and their local affiliates;

- Globalising bureaucrats (local, national, international);
- Capitalist-inspired politicians and professionals;
- Consumerist elites (merchants, media, advertising).

This class sees its mission as organizing the conditions under which its interests and the interests of the system (which usually but do not always coincide) can be furthered within the context of particular regions, countries, cities and communities. Despite real geographical and sectoral conflicts, the whole of the transnational capitalist class shares a fundamental interest in the continued accumulation of private profit. I am, of course, aware that this is still a minority position even among international political economy researchers, where state-centrism (prioritising the nation-state and the international system) and the divisions and conflicts between fractions of capital (industrial, financial, etc.) are generally considered to be more important than what unites them. This paper does not set out an explicit argument for the hegemony of the global capitalist system (for which, see Peet, 1991; Ross and Trachte, 1990; Sklair, 1995) or the transnational capitalist class in Australia (Sklair, 1996) but it does attempt to illustrate two important findings. These are, first, that *globalisation* does have a relatively agreed set of common meanings for a sample of informants in various leading corporations and organizations in Australia; and, second, that patterns emerged as these informants identified *key globalisers* for Australia.

Global System Theory and Australia

In the 1980s and 1990s Australia made a rapid and deep-reaching transition from a high tariff, ultra-protectionist inward-looking economy and society to one of the most open economies in the world and, through deliberate policies of multiculturalism, one of the most ethnically mixed societies. To what extent did the transnational corporations, the transnational capitalist class and the culture-ideology of consumerism play a part in this transition? How useful is the idea of the global capitalist system, conceptualized in these terms, for explaining these changes in Australia?

Since the late-1980s there has been a great deal of attention paid to 'globalisation' in Australia. The former Prime Minister, Paul Keating (Keating, 1994), and government departments and agencies such as the Agri-Food Council Secretariat (1994), the Bureau of Industry Economics (1989, 1994), Department of Industry (Langdale, 1991; DIST, 1995), Foreign Affairs and Trade (1995) have discussed it. So too have the 'peak organizations' of business (notably the Business Council of Australia, 1994) and labour (Australian Council of Trade Unions, 1987), tripartite bodies (notably the Australian Manufacturing Council, 1990) and many think tanks (Marsh, 1991). The idea of 'globalisation' is also common in the annual reports of most of the largest corporations in the 1990s. The EPAC publication, *Globalisation: Issues for Australia* (EPAC, 1995), illustrates a variety of views about globalisation from the corporate, academic, governmental and public sectors in Australia and confirms that the globalisation process is well advanced.[2]

Despite its different emphases, the consensus of this literature is that globalisation in Australia revolves around economic and trade issues, notably ending protectionism, increasing international competitiveness and, generally, opening up to the outside world. As will be seen, the respondents in this study did recognise these as the central components of globalisation in Australia and their choices of key globalisers tells us not only which people and organizations are considered to be responsible for the changes, but also something about how these globalising practices have developed.

The Study as a Whole

This paper presents the results of a specific inquiry which formed part of a more comprehensive study on 'globalisation in Australia'. The larger study sought to explore the structure and dynamics of the institutions and processes leading to and making up the trend to globalisation in Australia, the outlines of which, as the citations above show, have been identified by many scholars, officials, corporate executives and

2   The issue of 'cultural globalisation' will not be dealt with directly here (see
         Sklair, 1995, chapters 3 and 5, and references therein).

professionals. The research   focused on the four fractions of the transnational capitalist class outlined above, and documentary work and interviews were carried out in a selection of corporations (Australian and foreign-owned), state agencies, and with political functionaries and professional and consumerist elites (see Sklair, 1996).

The research methodology of global system theory prioritizes corporate executives and their local affiliates, globalising bureaucrats, capitalist-inspired politicians and professionals and consumerist elites, and these were the groups approached. Much of the discussion around globalisation in Australia suggests that it has been driven by foreign TNCs and the policies of the Labor governments from the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s. Here, one test of these arguments is explored, by giving space in the debate for domestic TNCs.

This study sets out to discover whether the idea of globalisation has any meaning for the sample and to test this concretely by inviting the respondents to name names, of individuals and organizations. The logic of this argument is that when people actually name names (and most of the informants did) this tells us a good deal both about what their views are on what counts as globalisation and who or what has been driving globalisation in Australia. We can deduce that most of the informants, by agreeing to be interviewed on *globalisation* (the refusal rate was extremely low and not a single person questioned the importance of a study on 'globalisation in Australia'), appeared to believe that the subject is of salience in understanding contemporary Australia and its place in the world. Thus, it is a plausible hypothesis that the people and social forces driving globalisation in Australia wield considerable power and influence in the society. The concept of the transnational capitalist class identifies a structure within which such people operate, and the institutional forces, notably transnational corporations, business organizations and government agencies that serve as their corporate bases. This is some distance from a demonstration that they act as a class, let alone a ruling class. This would entail close studies of key decisions that have affected the central features of social life in Australia, such as employment, community building and weakening, industry and finance. Nevertheless, my argument is that it is a starting place for such a demonstration.

The Sample

Between January and August 1995, 84 interviews on 'globalisation in Australia' were carried out in Sydney, Melbourne, Canberra and Adelaide.[3] The distribution of the sample of respondents is given in Table 1.

A good deal of general information was sought in the interviews and many respondents volunteered names of individual and organizational globalisers. In the cases where this did not happen in the course of the interview I put the following question directly:

Table 1: Sectors, Organizations (and Individual Respondents)

(1) TNCs, Australian-owned manufacturing	13 (14)*
(2) TNCs, Foreign and NZ-owned manufacturing	14 (17)
(3) TNCs, Financial services	9 (9)
(4) TNCs, Media	3 (3)
(5) TNCs, Private	2 (2)
(6) TNCs, Business services	9 (10)
TOTAL TNC	50 (55)
Government agencies	16 (23)
(8) MFP	7 (7)
TOTAL GOVERNMENT	23 (30)
(9) Other organizations	6 (6)
(10) Individuals	5 (5)
TOTAL OTHERS	11 (11)
TOTAL SAMPLE	**84 (96)**

* Numbers in brackets here refer to total number of respondents, so in this sector in one interview there were two respondents present.

3   The seven Adelaide interviews were at the headquarters of the Multifunction Polis. These focused entirely in the MFP and its contribution to the globalisation debate and practice and, not surprisingly, most of these respondents identified the MFP as a key globaliser, I count this as a single citation. On the 'global dreams' of the original MFP and their relevance for globalisation in Australia, see James (1990).

'I am trying to compile a list of key globalisers in Australia, people and organizations from any sector of Australian life over the past few decades, who have done most to push forward the globalising agenda of tariff reduction, international competitiveness and opening up to the outside world. What names come into your head?'[4]

In all, 74 individuals and 45 organizations were mentioned by the 96 respondents in the 84 separate interviews. The majority of these names were mentioned only once and the bulk of the following analysis is focused on the 34 individuals and 18 organizations who were cited more than once. My reasons for excluding the organizations and individuals with only single mentions are both analytical and practical. Analytically, it is the case that some respondents gave a name that was very much a function of their personal occupational experience, often people not well-known outside specialist circles and, sometimes, a self-citation. There is an idiosyncratic element with this methodology and eliminating these singletons is one way to control for this. On the other hand, as the singletons lists at the foot of Tables 2 and 3 indicate, there are others who could reasonably have been expected to score more highly. The practical reason is that the 40 individual and 27 institutional singletons would have more than doubled the data to be dealt with. First let us examine the organizations which were selected by the sample as key globalisers in Australia over recent decades.

The Organizational Globalisers

In all, 18 organizations of various types were cited more than once by the respondents plus another 27 singletons. These 18 attracted 87 citations and can be broken down into the following categories:

- **Transnational corporations** (BHP, Pacific Dunlop, CRA, National Australia Bank, Amcor, CSR, Coca-Cola Amatil, Telstra, TNT,

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4   While global system theory conceptualizes internationalisation and globalisation as two distinct, if sometimes complementary processes (see Sklair, 1995, chapter 1 and *passim.*) in the interviews I followed the usage of most of the respondents in using the two terms more or less interchangeably.

Australia New Zealand Bank, Boral, Leighton, Transfield, NewsCorp) with 73 citations;

- **Business association** (Business Council of Australia) with 4 citations;
- **Government** (Australian Labor Party, Australian Manufacturing Council, Austrade) with 10 citations.

BHP, with 24 out of 87 citations (28 per cent of the total institutional count) is clearly the dominant globalising force among the organizations in Australia according to this study. Not only does it top the list of organizations, but also it is the only name to have been cited at least once by every sector. This should not come as a great surprise to anybody with a rudimentary knowledge of the political economy of Australia. BHP is, after all, the largest company operating in Australia, ranked 303 in the *Fortune Global 500* (7 August 1995),[5] the eleventh largest metal company in the world and, according to *Fortune*, the most profitable metal company in the world in 1994. Even a cursory glance at recent Annual Reports signals BHP's aspirations to be a global player in its fields of operation. Like most of the largest Australian-owned corporations, BHP increasingly tries to portray itself as global, for example, 'BHP is a global company with headquarters in Australia' (Annual Report 1994).[6]

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5   By 1996, BHP had moved up to number 284, and eight largest metal company in the world. Before the *Fortune* listings were altered to amalgamate manufacturing and service corporations in the one list in 1995, BHP had ranked as the 126th largest manufacturing company in the world. Incidentally, this change in classification resulted in the exclusion of several Australian companies from the *Fortune Global 500*, for example CSR, much to their chagrin.

6   Another distinction, which BHP will be less pleased about, is that it has been identified by *Multinational Monitor* (December 1995) as one of the `ten worst corporations' in the world for its activities at the Ok Tedi mine in PNG. For more information about the globalisation of BHP, see Stewardson's chapter in EPAC (1995). The business press in Australia devotes a great deal of space to BHP and to its CEO, John Prescott, about whom more later.

Table 2: Organizational Globalisers

	SECTOR		
	Business	Government and Others	Total
BHP	21	3	24
Pacdunlop	6	1	7
ALP	5	1	6
CRA	4	2	6
NAB	4	1	5
BCA	2	2	4
Amcor	3	1	4
CSR	3	1	4
ANZ	2	1	3
Boral	3	0	3
CCA	2	1	3
Newscorp	3	0	3
Telstra	2	1	3
TNT	3	0	3
Transfield	2	1	3
AMC	1	1	2
Austrade	2	0	2
Leighton	2	0	2

The following organizations received one mention each:

corporations: AMP, AWA, PIONEER, DU PONT, FOSTERS, GOODMAN FIELDER, NATIONAL MUTUAL, ARNOTTS, JAMES HARDIE, ARTHUR ANDERSON, BURNS PHILP, BRAMBLES, MIM, JOHN HOLLAND, PRICE WATERHOUSE, BAKER MCKENZIE and KPMG;

government agencies: Office of Prime Minister & Cabinet; Department of Industry, Science and Technology, Treasury; Industry Commission, ECGD, EFIC, MFP;

employers' associations: MTIA and ACCI.

Far behind, with seven citations, is Pacific Dunlop, a company whose global strategy came in for a good deal of criticism in the course of 1995,

when it decided to sell off its food division.[7]   Two rather different
organizations followed, with 6 citations each. CRA, formerly Conzinc
Riotinto Australia, has a long-standing though not entirely transparent
relationship to the British-based conglomerate, RTZ. At the time of the
interview CRA was 49 per cent owned by RTZ, which had two seats on
the board.[8] I is also of interest that a previous CEO of the company,
Roderick Carnegie, is also cited as a notable individual globaliser, and I
shall discuss his role in more detail below.

The other organization scoring six citations, perhaps more surprisingly,
is the Australian Labor Party, credited as a positive globalising force by
five business and one non-business respondents. While all of these
mentioned the Labor Party by name, it is clear that most if not all of
them made little distinction between the ALP and the then-existing
Labor government. This is confirmed by the fact that Labor ministers,
and particularly the Prime Minister, attracted a large proportion of the
total individual globalisers score, as we shall see below.

The top-ranking bank, NAB, is widely seen as the first Australian bank
to globalise in a serious fashion, and it attracted five citations. This raises
an interesting global-local issue in the context of the radical deregulation
of the banking sector in Australia in the 1980s (see Reinecke, 1988).
While NAB is the largest bank in Australia in terms of revenue and
assets, globally it is relatively small, not even making the list of the 59
banks in the *Fortune Global 500* for 1995. The bank's stated

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7   My interview at Pacific Dunlop took place in April 1995, shortly before the
        company announced its intention to sell off its food division. The subsequent
        heavy business press and general news coverage of this sensitive issue raised the
        interlinked questions of foreign ownership of Australian brands and the varying
        types of globalisation that Australian companies pursued (see, on this issue,
        David and Wheelwright, 1989). It is interesting to note that the penultimate
        sentence of the biography of the company commissioned from a leading
        Australian historian reads: 'No other manufacturing company in the history of
        Australia has become so global' (Blainey, 1993, p. 314).

8   The official listing of the top 100 Australian companies describes I thus: CRA
        Limited was 'Formed to acquire the Australian interests of The Consolidated Zinc
        Corporation Limited and the Australian interests of the Rio Tinto Company Ltd'
        (Australian Stock Exchange, 1995, 38). In the latter part of 1995, RTZ Plc
        announced that it would be upgrading its involvement in CRA.

globalisation policy is that it aims to become one of the top 10-20 banks in the world, which seems unlikely in the foreseeable future, by building up a group of strong regional banks in important markets. This it has certainly begun to do, buying up the Clydesdale Bank in Scotland, Yorkshire Bank in England and two Irish banks in the 1980s and the Michigan National Bank in the US and the Bank of New Zealand in the 1990s. Thus, it is identified as a key globaliser not so much for its global presence (though it does operate in more than a dozen countries) but for its global strategy, perhaps more befitting the modest nature of the Australian banking sector.

Two corporations, Amcor and CSR, and one business association, BCA, attracted four citations each. Amcor, Australia's leading paper and packaging products company, began to move offshore, to New Zealand, in the early 1970s, and in the 1980s made the move to Asia with a New Zealand partner. There are basically two routes that a company wishing to globalise can take, either the conglomerate (buying into other companies irrespective of industry) or the geographical (offshore investment in the core business). Amcor took the geographical diversification route. Given that Amcor and Pratt Industries (a private company and another respondent) shared the Australian paper packaging market about half and half, any significant growth for either company probably had to be offshore. By the mid-1990s, 35 per cent of Amcor's sales and 25 per cent of group profits were said to derive from offshore operations in 28 countries.[9]

CSR, while a venerable Australian company (incorporated as The Colonial Sugar Refining Co. in 1887), would not, I suspect, be on many lists of key globalisers. Its main activities are in building materials, sugar and aluminium and though it is active offshore in a variety of small-scale enterprises it appears to have little of a global reputation. Why, then, does it score higher than some other more obviously global corporations like Coca-Cola, NewsCorp or even Telstra? The answer may lie in the fact that CSR, under a particularly forceful CEO (who, however, does not rate a single mention in the individual globalisers ranking), pushed

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9   The last chapter of the commissioned history of the company is entitled: 'Offshore-up and away' (Sinclair, 1991, ch.33).

forward a programme of benchmarking well-known and well-respected in Australian business circles. *Benchmarking* is a system of continuous improvements derived from systematic comparisons with world best practice. It tends to be industry-based, but the most progressive enterprises will benchmark processes and activities from anywhere. For example, in order to improve the operation of its mobile equipment workshop in Newman, WA, BHP discovered that the critical process was hydraulics. The World Best Practice site for hydraulics was found to be in Disneyland, California and so BHP benchmarked itself against Disneyland. Benchmarking became in the 1990s a central part of the CSR corporate culture. 'Building in Quality' is a customized CSR Total Quality Management programme, developed with a global leader, Motorola (and to lesser extent Xerox). CSR commissioned the Motorola University as consultants and with Xerox materials from the public record, introduced one of the most far-reaching benchmarking systems in Australia.[10]

There is an intimate connection between benchmarking and globalisation in Australia. In a highly protected economy where capitalist firms reap easy profits by sheltering behind tariff barriers that exclude foreign competition there is little need to benchmark globally. However, when the tariff walls begin to come down and foreign goods and services, often of higher quality and lower prices, begin to enter the economy, local firms cannot always rely on the loyalty of their customers, particularly if these customers begin to appreciate that they have been paying unnecessarily high prices for their purchases. Even more so, when Australian companies began to compete with overseas producers in external markets and were found wanting, the need to benchmark against world best practice rapidly assumed a very great importance in the politics of production and trade in Australia.

Several government departments and agencies (for example, DIR, Industry Commission, Bureau of Industry Economics) and quasi-

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10   The Federal Government has sponsored a 'Best Practice Programme' through the Department of Industrial Relations in Canberra and supporting offices in all State capitals and territories. For information on the programme and a taste of its rhetoric, see 'Benchmark. The magazine of Workplace Reform' published by the DIR.

governmental bodies (for example, Australian Manufacturing Council) have become directly involved in benchmarking, and more or less all branches of the government and public service appear to be involved in some type of benchmarking exercise. In the mid-1990s, the BIE published a series of studies on the benchmarking of publically-run infrastructural facilities. The political agenda of which this is a part is clear, and the fact that the DIR (and the polity as a whole) defines benchmarking as a problem of 'workplace reform' and thus a justification for downsizing, rationalization and all the other labour control devices of global capitalism, should not be under-estimated. As a leader in this process, CSR deserves its place as a key globaliser in late twentieth century Australia.

The Business Council of Australia also deserves its place. Formed out of an amalgamation of employers' organizations at a time when business, in contrast to the Labor Party and the labour movement, was widely seen to be in disarray (see McEachern, 1991, *passim*) since the mid-1980s the BCA has carved out for itself the undisputed role as the voice of big business in Australia. Modelled on the Business Roundtable in the USA, it is an exclusive group of about 80 CEOs of the most important companies in Australia, mostly public, but some private and a few 'government business enterprises' (to use BCA's own terminology) have been admitted. The BCA has been an enthusiastic proponent of benchmarking, world best practice, international competitiveness and globalisation and has published some influential reports on these subjects (for example, BCA, 1991, 1994, 1995), all of which take up these themes. Indeed, the BCA jointly with the Bureau of Industry Economics set up the International Benchmarking Advisory Committee in 1991-92 in response to the then Prime Minister Bob Hawke's 'Competitive Nation' statement. This Committee was originally chaired by Philip Aiken from BOC Australia, who went on to become the CEO of BTR Nylex, a top ten Australian company, 62.8 per cent owned by BTR Plc (UK). Aiken was succeeded as chair of the Committee by Tony Daniels, CEO of Tubemakers, 49 per cent owned by BHP (another 20 per cent of

the shares are owned by the Japanese group, Sumitomo), all of whom are prominent benchmarkers.[11]

Seven companies attracted three citations each. ANZ (Australia & New Zealand Banking Group) was actually headquartered in London until 1976 and a substantial number of its shares are still held in the UK. In common with several other Australian companies, it lost a great deal of money on foreign adventures in the 1980s. ANZ retains an overseas presence through its ownership of part of Grindleys Bank, but in common with other Australian companies its global strategy appears to be Asia-focused rather than geographically global. Boral, one of the leaders in the building materials industry, is active in a variety of markets. In 1993 the company appointed a new young, dynamic CEO, Tony Berg, a man with a clear and relatively global business strategy who appears to have livened up its image. A press report of Boral's purchase of an American company which made Boral the biggest clay brickmaker in the United States asserted that this acquisition showed Berg's 'commitment to being a global leader in building materials' (*Sydney Morning Herald*, Business Section, 14 March 1995).

Coca-Cola Amatil (CCA) and NewsCorp, certainly two of the most global companies in the world, were clearly considered to be only modest globalisers in Australia by my respondents. CCA, while now 49 per cent owned by Coca-Cola Holdings (Overseas) Ltd., has its origins in the Wills and British-Australian Tobacco Companies in the 1920s. They diversified into beverages and snack foods in the 1960s and Amatil (Allied Manufacturing & Trading Industries Ltd) was created in the 1970s. In 1989 the company was restructured, the tobacco business was sold off (as was snack foods later) and Coca-Cola took control. CCA now manufactures, distributes and markets Coca-Cola products in Australasia, Indonesia, parts of the South Pacific, Slovenia, and parts of the former Soviet Union and eastern Europe. The News Corporation Ltd

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11   Also influential in the history of bechmarking is the global consulting company McKinsey. invited to join the Benchmarking Advisory Committee as the acknowledged 'leaders of operations practice' in Australia. McKinsey was brought to Australia by Roderick Carnegie, who will be discussed in more detail in the section on individual globalisers. For the role of the company in globalisation in general see the journal of the company, *The McKinsey Quarterly*.

(NewsCorp), Chairman and CEO K.R. Murdoch, is, of course, the quintessential global corporation. Why, then, did it attract only 3 citations?[12]   This can be partly explained by the fact that several respondents volunteered the view that while companies like NewsCorp (and CCA for that matter) took advantage of the trend to globalisation in Australia they did not play much of a part in forcing the pace. CCA and Newscorp were being judged in the context of Australia rather than globally. This is a significant indicator of the way in which globalisation is interpreted, locally.

Two communications companies also scored three mentions, Telstra, the Australian public telephone corporation, and TNT, a global leader in the time sensitive freight business. Telstra was established in 1993 as the international identity of Telecom Australia, with its own distinctive name, logo and global strategy. Through its high profile advertising, and its obvious leadership of a globalising industry in Australia the prospects are that it will increasingly be seen a key globaliser. TNT has much more mundane origins in the Thomas Nationwide Transport company incorporated in 1961. By the 1990s, TNT had become the industry leader in Australasia and its global presence is illustrated by subsidiaries all over Europe and in Brazil. The final company with three citations is Transfield, the only privately-owned company on the list. One of the many successful companies created by post-1945 immigrants (see Ostrow, 1987) who came into their businesses with an existing international orientation and network of contacts, Transfield has been particularly active in the 1990s in large-scale infrastructure projects in Asia, often with Australian government foreign aid funds. In 1993, Transfield opened up an Asian headquarters in Kuala Lumpur.

Of the three organizations with two citations each only one, Leighton, is a business corporation, in fact in the same business as Transfield. Leighton Holdings is 49 per cent owned by Hochtief, the German engineering firm, who are represented on the board and appear to be closely involved in the company's global operations. Leighton Asia, based in Hong Kong, is engaged in many important civil engineering

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12   Murdoch himself got nine, third equal on the individuals list (see below).

projects in the region, notably the very high profile new Hong Kong airport scheme.

The Australian Manufacturing Council and Austrade are both government initiatives, but of rather different types. The AMC was actually created under the Liberal government of Malcolm Fraser in the 1970s as a tripartite (corporatist, in the language of political science) body with government, business and labour representation. Under Bob Hawke's premiership in the 1980s the tripartite process was taken more seriously than had previously been the case and, subsequently, in the 1990s the AMC began to actively pursue a more positive and in some ways explicitly globalising agenda. The publication of *Global Challenge* (AMC, 1990) established it as a leading voice in the debate about the future of Australia's economy and society. The weight of the AMC is often (and, I think, correctly) attributed to the corporate leadership it has been able to attract. While the ACTU nominates the labour representatives, business leaders are directly invited by government to serve on the AMC. Under the chairmanship of Will Dix, formerly the top man in Ford Australia and latterly chair of Qantas and director of several other important companies, and then John Prescott, CEO of BHP, the AMC became a force to be reckoned with. *Global Challenge* was widely discussed, and was followed by a spate of reports promoting the benchmarking, best practice and globalisation agenda (see AMC, 1993, 1994) and may have influenced some government action and institution building, such as the Best Practice Program referred to above, the creation of AusIndustry, and the campaign on elaborately transformed manufactures exports, one of Paul Keating's 'big ideas'.

Austrade, whose origins reach back to the 1930s, was a result of the restructuring of the Trade Commission in the late 1980s and a review by McKinsey in 1991. As a symbol of Australia in the global marketplace, Austrade has few serious rivals. In 1995 alone it was said to have handled 150,000 trade inquiries in Australia and 500,000 abroad in its chain of 82 representative offices in 65 countries around the world. While some of its services are free, it is increasingly a fee-based commercial agency, truly a government business enterprise.

What, then, can we conclude from the 18 organizations cited as key globalisers in Australia? The fact that 14 of these, attracting fully 84 per

cent of the total citations, are business corporations suggests that the widespread view that globalisation in Australia has been driven by bureaucrats and government needs to be qualified (see Pusey, 1991). Clearly, the fact that Paul Keating and Labor Party ministers scored heavily as individual globalisers (see next section), suggests that there is some truth in this view, but it should be balanced by the finding that the corporate sector, led by some of the largest corporations in Australia, is seen by many respondents as comprising the dominant globalisers. Also relevant is the fact that corporations attracted 60 of their 70 citations from other corporate respondents and 13 of the total of 17 citations from non-corporate respondents. It should also be noted that people in the corporate sector were much more likely to cite anyone than those in government or other sectors. I shall resume this discussion in the conclusion, when organizational and individual globalisers are compared.

The Individual Globalisers

Excluding the singletons, we can divide the key individual globalisers, perhaps a little contentiously, into the following categories reflecting the situation at the time of the interviews:

- **Labor Party** (Keating, Button, Hawke, Dawkins, Evans, Cook, McMullen and Kelty) with 50 citations;[13]

- **Corporate elite** (Prescott, Murdoch, Brass, Ralph, Loton, Warburton, Abeles, Argus, Clark, Johnson, Morgan, Blount, Bond, Elliot, Joss, Packer, Parbo) with 70 citations;

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13   Kelty was the most prominent Trades Union leader throughout the Hawke-Keating period. His virtually unswerving support for the Labor leadership justifies his inclusion in this category. While some of these individuals may well be 'capitalist-inspired' and thus would be better placed in that category, for present purposes, given that none of them is very closely allied to big business, it is more appropriate to retain this separate category. The only exception here appears to be Gareth Fitzgerald, who resigned his government post and took up a lucrative position in public relations with Kerry Packer's Publishing and Broadcasting Ltd.

- **Capitalist-inspired politicians and professionals** (Kelly, Hyde, McLaughlin and Carnegie, Garnaut, Crawford, Hilmer, Fels) with 24 citations;
- **Globalising bureaucrat** (Rattigan) with 2 citations.

Of the total of 146 mentions of 75 separate names volunteered by the respondents, the former PM, Paul Keating and John Button, the reforming industry minister who arguably did more than anyone else to undermine protectionism in the 1980s (see Kelly, 1992, and Capling and Galligan, 1992), garnered 34 citations between them, scoring top and third equal respectively. Others in the Labor Party added 16 more mentions.

Of all the citations for individual globalisers, about half (48 per cent) were for members of the corporate elite while capitalist-inspired politicians and professionals attracted 16 per cent. The apparently minimal showing of the group I have labelled 'globalising bureaucrats' is somewhat deceptive. At least three of the 'capitalist-inspired professionals' named above, Garnaut, Crawford and Hilmer (16 citations between them) might well be seen as 'globalising bureaucrats' for although they all worked in universities their 'globalising' reputations came about mainly in connection with having their names on influential government-sponsored reports. The fact that the top scorer in the individual category (and top scorer overall by one) was Paul Keating, Prime Minister at the time of the study, may come as something of a surprise to readers, especially those from outside Australia. The fact that he outscored the second-placed individual globaliser, the CEO of BHP, 25 to 11 overall, and 19 to 9 in the corporate sector as a whole, may appear even more surprising. In the interviews, several of the corporate respondents who cited Paul Keating as a, often *the*, key globaliser did so with some reluctance, pointing out the irony that the Labor Party should have emerged in the 1980s and 1990s as the party of modernization and, latterly, globalisation.

Table 3: Individual Globalisers

	Business	Government and Others	Total
P. Keating	19	6	25
J. Prescott	9	2	11
J. Button	7	2	9
R. Murdoch	8	1	9
R. Carnegie	3	5	8
R. Garnaut	2	6	8
J. Ralph	5	1	6
R. Hawke	1	4	5
P. Brass	4	0	4
J. Crawford	0	4	4
B. Loton	3	1	4
P. Abeles	2	1	3
D. Argus	3	0	3
J. Dawkins	2	1	3
F. Hilmer	1	2	3
B. Kelly	2	1	3
D. Warburton	2	1	3
H. Morgan	2	1	3
F. Blount	1	1	2
A. Bond	1	1	2
N. Clark	1	1	2
P. Cook	2	0	2
M. Corden	2	0	2
J. Elliot	1	1	2
G. Evans	2	0	2
A. Fels	0	2	2
J. Hyde	2	0	2
B. Joss	1	1	2
B. Johnston	1	1	2
B. Kelty	1	1	2
R. McMullen	2	0	2
K. Packer	1	1	2
A. Parbo	0	2	2
A. Rattigan	0	2	2

Note: The following individuals received one mention each: **corporate sector:** T. Antico, T. Berg, J. Gough, A. Jackson, B. Keen, T. Kunkel, P. Simons, B. Vaughan, B. Vines, R. Chadwick, C. Chapman, K. Gosper, G. Jackson, H. Nowick; D. Mercer; K. Cowley, G. Trumbull; J. H. A'Court, R. Charlton, P. Drysdale, B. Kelman, R. Sims, W. Smith, J. Uhrig, S. Wallis, P. Wilcox, P. Lynch, R. McNeilly, P. Harris; **politicians and professionals:** G. Fitzgerald, G. Whitlam, C. Court, F. Argy, N. Coombs, S. Crean, J. MacLennan, R. Snape, R. Willis; J. McLaughlin; **globalising bureaucrat:** B. Ferris.

Keating's reputation as a globaliser comes, paradoxically, from his famous 'banana republic' speech in 1986 when he warned that Australia was in danger of becoming a failure globally. His conversion to a more positive view of globalisation is of more recent vintage, but few doubt the sincerity of his belief that Australia can only prosper to the extent that it carves out for itself a dynamic role in the global economy. The fact that almost as many business respondents cited him as cited BHP, a key globaliser, suggests that he successfully communicated this, by words and deeds, to the business community. It also suggests that his model of globalisation is more or less the corporate model. This is also confirmed by his words and deeds.

John Prescott, CEO of BHP and certainly one of the leading business personalities in Australia, received fewer than half as many citations as Keating. While Keating's views and doings were covered daily in the mass media, Prescott and BHP also attracted substantial media coverage. As previously noted, Prescott has served as chair of the AMC, and is prominent in a variety of other private and official functions, but it was clearly his connection with BHP, as was Keating's connection with the then governing party, that gave him his pre-eminence as a key globaliser in the public domain.

The relatively high score of John Button, Labor's industry minister in the 1980s, reflects both the historical perspective of several of the respondents and the implicit connection between the fight against protectionism and the globalising spirit in Australian corporate and political circles. Button's name is rarely mentioned in the media today, but the instincts of those who identified him as a key actor in the globalisation of Australia are surely correct. By preparing the way for key Australian industries to survive the lowering of tariffs, the Button Plans did as much as anything else to open up Australia to the global winds of change. These winds are still blowing and the survival of some of these key industries is still in doubt. Button's successors in the industry policy ministries, Peter Cook and Bob McMullen, both attracted two mentions. (While this does not sound much of an achievement, it is notable that not a single contemporary Liberal politician rated as much as a single mention, although former Liberals did. 'The honourable

member' Bert Kelly attracted three and John Hyde two citations from the very historically minded).

Third equal with John Button was Rupert Murdoch whose name is, in some quarters, almost synonymous with globalisation. As with Keating and the Labor Party and Prescott and BHP, it is difficult to separate out Murdoch and NewsCorp, though the fact that his individual score is three times NewsCorp's organizational score does suggest that he is seen personally as a globaliser more than his corporation. This is not surprising as Murdoch, although he has adopted US citizenship, is still very active in Australia and is a regular visitor. His public profile is enhanced by his long-standing public antagonism to the other great Australian media magnate, Kerry Packer, which makes good headlines. Murdoch is also well-known for his forays in the UK, Asia and the USA and is a relentless self-publicist in the global arena. Murdoch's credo bears study: 'News Corporation's future is to be the preeminent supplier of first class creative and editorial product to readers and viewers around the world. We believe that we are uniquely positioned to fulfil this destiny' (News Corporation Annual Report, 1994).

The careers of Rod Carnegie and Ross Garnaut seem to have converged to some extent in the mid-1990s. Sir Roderick Carnegie, as he is now, worked for McKinsey in New York in the 1960s and when he wanted to return to Australia, McKinsey set him up as their man in Melbourne, from where after a few lean years the agency and the man prospered. Carnegie's major corporate job was as chair and CEO of CRA in the 1980s, also serving as a founding member, President and very active participant in the BCA, as well as being on the boards of a host of other companies and other organizations. He has certainly been one of Australia's most vocal proponents of globalisation and international competitiveness (Carnegie, 1994). He is also on the board of a new venture, Australia United Steel Industry Ltd, as is Ross Garnaut. Garnaut, a professor in the policy-oriented Research School of Pacific Studies at the Australian National University in Canberra, is best known for the Garnaut Report (Garnaut, 1989), an overview of Australia's relations with Northeast Asia and its clarion call for zero tariffs by the year 2000. He has slipped easily between the public and the private sector, having been an economic advisor to Prime Minister Hawke,

Ambassador to China, academic, chairman of minor banks and, latterly, involved in the above-mentioned project, reportedly valued at one billion dollars, with Rod Carnegie. When Keating came to power, Garnaut appeared to have been dropped by those at the top of the political hierarchy, though he is clearly still held in high regard in some circles, attracting two citations from business but six from government and others.

John Ralph (six citations) joined CRA when he was 16 years of age and became managing director and CEO in the 1980s. He was also deeply involved with the BCA, serves on various important boards and has been a vice-president of the Commonwealth Bank. He was active as president of the BCA's Australia-Japan Business Cooperation Committee and was an enthusiastic proponent of the BCA's globalising agenda. Similarly, Philip Brass and Brian Loton (four citations each) are both members of the Australian corporate elite. Brass, CEO of Pacific Dunlop since the 1980s, has developed a profile as a globalist as a member of the Mayor of Shanghai's International Business Leaders Advisory Council, reflecting PacDunlop's considerable Chinese interests. Brass is also a member of the APEC Business Forum and the Regional Headquarters Leaders Network (both government-sponsored bodies). Loton joined BHP in the 1970s and worked his way up to the top, where he was CEO from 1989 to 1991. He also served as president of BCA in the early 1990s. He sits on various boards, including that of IBM Asia Pacific.

With five citations, one from business and four from government and other sectors, the former Prime Minister Bob Hawke is still seen as a key globaliser, both for his real achievements in bringing down tariffs and for his sometimes exaggerated international perspectives. Also from outside the corporate sector, Sir John Crawford, with four citations all from the government and others sector, was an important figure historically in the battle against tariffs in the 1970s. His influential report, the Crawford Commission on Structural Adjustment (1978), was considered by some as the ideological death blow to protectionism, but it had to wait for the election of a reforming Labor government for implementation. Garnaut, for example, worked on the Crawford Commission. Also important in this story, with two citations each, are Max Corden, the free-trade academic economist, and Alf Rattigan, the tariff-slashing head of the

Tariff Board, forerunner of the Industry Commission, from 1963 to 1976 (see Glezer, 1982 and Rattigan, 1986).

Of the seven individuals who attracted three citations, four are members of the corporate elite. Sir Peter Abeles, an immigrant success story who built up TNT into a global corporation (see Ostrow, 1986) and became one of Bob Hawke's 'business mates' (McEachern, 1991) has sat on the board of the Commonwealth Bank. Harvard-educated Don Argus, became CEO of the country's biggest bank, the NAB, in 1990 and as such is a powerful influence on the financial system that funds overseas investment in Australia. Hugh Morgan, managing director of Western Mining Corporation (WMC) since 1986, is a relatively high profile leader of the Australian corporate New Right (see Kelly, 1982) and a trustee of the Centre for Independent Studies. Having survived various embarrassing setbacks,[14] Morgan is often in the news defending the mining industry against environmentalists and attacking progressive causes. Dick Warburton, interestingly one of the few executives of foreign TNCs on the list, is the former chief executive and subsequently chairman of DuPont Australia. Dupont was an early and enthusiastic supporter of benchmarking and the Best Practice Program in Australia and Warburton was very active in pushing this in the company, through the BCA and the Australian Manufacturing Council, of which he was a member. He also served in several other official bodies, for example the AusIndustry Board, the RHQ Leaders Network and the board of the Reserve Bank of Australia.

John Dawkins, a former Labor minister, is probably best known to readers of this *Journal* for the 'Dawkinization of higher education' and his contribution to the globalisation debate appears to rest on his energetic promotion of privatization and commercialization policies. Fred Hilmer can be regarded as a rising star in the professional elite that services the transnational capitalist class in Australia. Hilmer was a scholarship student at the University of Pennsylvania and worked for a

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14   See his notorious speech on Mabo ('All sides condemn Morgan outburst' *Australian*, 14 October 1992). The most prestigious business paper in Australia went so far as to demand his resignation when a court in Canada condemned the WMC's actions as a 'civil conspiracy' against a Canadian company it had taken over ('Morgan must go from WMC' *Financial Review*, 21 January 1994).

time in MacKinsey, where he wrote several books on management. As an adjunct lecturer at the University of New South Wales' Graduate School of Management he clearly impressed the right people and was invited to be Dean. His major claim to fame is the Hilmer Report for COAG on competitiveness in Australia (Hilmer, 1993), which catapulted him into the national headlines. He sits on several boards (TNT, Lend Lease, Westfield), was appointed the chairman of Pacific Power in 1995 and occupies a rather special place in the pantheon of BCA business heroes. Given the volume of press coverage he received during the period of the survey and his growing reputation as a devotee of benchmarking and the opening up of the Australian economy, especially its public sector, to international competition, it is perhaps a little surprising that he attracted only three citations.

Sixteen people attracted two mentions each. Half of these are past (Alan Bond, John Elliot) or present members of the corporate elite. Frank Blount, the American who was lured from a senior position with AT&T in 1992 to bring Telstra into the age of globalisation and Bob Joss, who was similarly lured from Wells Fargo Bank to restructure Westpac, represent the new breed of foreign corporate executives who have been brought to Australia with a specific mandate to globalise what were seen as companies relatively naive in the global arena.

The rest of the list with two citations were four businessmen, three Labor ministers, one trade union leader, two officials and Max Corden and John Hyde (see above). Nobby Clark, is a former CEO of National Australia Bank[15] and chair of Fosters since 1990, along with an impressive collection of other board memberships in important Australian companies; Bob Johnston, who died in 1995, was formerly CEO and then chair of Toyota in Australia and also chaired Austrade; Kerry Packer, the high-profile media magnate has significant publishing

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15   Clarke argued in 1986 that the 'distinction between domestic and international business would become increasingly meaningless' (quoted in Reinecke, 1988, p.137).

and television interests; and Sir Arvi Parbo, formerly chairman of WMC, Alcoa of Australia and BHP, was a founding president of the BCA.[16]

The Labor ministers were Senators Peter Cook and Bob McMullan (both holding important economic policy portfolios at the time) and Gareth Evans, an internationalist foreign minister. All of their citations came from the corporate sector. Bill Kelty of the ACTU attracted one mention from the corporate and one from the government sector. His role in bringing labour on side during the transition to globalising policies was clearly appreciated. The officials were Alf Rattigan (see above) and Alan Fels, chair of the powerful Trades Practices Commission.[17]

Conclusion

The clear result of this study is that one individual, the then Prime Minister Paul Keating, and one organization, the largest company in Australia, BHP, are out on their own as key globalisers. The comparison between the leaders provides some interesting detail, though the nature of the sample and the small numbers involved make it difficult to draw any firm conclusions. BHP scores highest in all sectors bar two. The first of these is the 6 'other organizations', in fact mainly business associations of various types where Keating outscored BHP by 5 to 2. It is also noteworthy that Keating outscored BHP by 6 to 4 in the 14 foreign and New Zealand-owned manufacturing TNCs, while in the corporate sector as a whole Keating attracted 19 citations to BHP's 21. Government agencies of various types, yielding 23 interviews with 30 respondents, cited BHP and Keating (and three other individuals) only twice each, but it should be noted that these respondents cited very few people, relatively speaking, for either category.

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16   The fact that Parbo, chair of WMC at the time of the legal censure in 1993, was associated with the New Right was clearly not unhelpful to Hugh Morgan. Parbo's globalising instincts are well-expressed in his statement that: 'There is no such thing as the Australian economy. We are linked to the world' (quoted in Ostrow, 1987, 214).

17   Professor Fels got neither of his two citations from the corporate sector and my impression is that he is seen more as an anti-globalisation force by businessmen. For a useful survey of the work of the TPC, see Baxt (1994).

One finding is clear. Not a single woman was cited as a key globaliser. The only woman mentioned at all in the interviews was Professor Helen Hughes, a prestigious economist with World Bank connections and allied to the New Right in Australia. She was referred to by a couple of respondents in the context of the debate over dumping and Australian exports, on which she chaired a government inquiry. But she was not seen as a key globaliser by anyone.[18]

These results are suggestive in the context of current debates about 'who drives globalisation' and the 'relative autonomy of the state'. The strong impression gained from the 84 interviews was that posing the question in terms of: 'was it the state (bureaucrats, politicians etc.) or the corporations (manufacturing companies, banks etc.) that drove globalisation in Australia ?' is not very helpful. Clearly, it was both. Globalisation was driven by the largest corporations (particularly BHP which, everyone agrees, changed its strategy in the direction of globalisation in the 1980s) and the leading politicians (Hawke, Button and, especially, Keating) aided, perhaps, but certainly not driven by their officials.[19] Many of the corporate respondents were business executives who had experience of working with government and quasi-governmental agencies and, of course, all the government respondents would also have been in a position to cite officials as key globalisers, and a few did. However, the overwhelming impression from the survey was that globalisation in Australia was not driven by such people. In the Australian case the rapidity, success and ease of the transition to globalisation is clearly explicable in terms of the continuity and congruence of interests between the corporate and the political elites. Naturally, there were disagreements and conflicts of interests, sometimes quite serious, between these groups during the period under discussion (as there were within the Labor Party, the labour movement and the

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18   For the record, there were 12 women among the 96 respondents in the survey.

19   It is interesting that none of the New Right think tanks (see Marsh, 1991, Kelly, 1992) received even a single citation, as at least one of them claims a large degree of the responsibility for popularizing parts of the globalising agenda in Australia. However, several of the individual globalisers were connected with them, and some of the corporations and official agencies were probably influenced by them. For the wider context of New Right ideology see Cockett (1994) and Ted Wheelwright's excellent review (Wheelwright, 1994).

administration on the one hand and between various parts of the corporate sector on the other hand) but from the mid-1980s on it appears that those who were ruling Australia's key institutional sectors were in basic agreement about the need to globalise and the general form that the globalisation of Australia should take. This is, I would claim, modest but nonetheless suggestive evidence for the existence and power of a globalising transnational capitalist class in Australia.

This evidence is relevant also for the long-standing debate about the role and influence of 'foreign' transnational corporations in Australia. It is notable that very few 'foreign' TNCs or corporate executives were cited as key globalisers, while 'Australian' TNCs and corporate executives were prominent in both the organizational and the individual globaliser lists. This suggests that the global corporation is coming of age in Australia, whether it is 'foreign' or 'Australian' owned and, perhaps, that ownership is becoming less important than transnational practices and global strategy today. Traditionally, many foreign TNCs in Australia, notably car and electrical goods makers, have been prominent protectionists and were more likely to impede than drive the globalisation agenda. It was the emergence of the Australian corporations onto the global stage that made the difference.

The concept of the transnational capitalist class and the thrust of global system theory are both incompatible with the idea of the 'relative autonomy of the state'. The role of the state in the TCC is bound up with the struggle between the outward-oriented globalising bureaucrats who are promoting the globalisation agenda of the transnational corporations against the inner-oriented bureaucrats who are promoting the domestic agenda of protectionist local industries (in the Australian case, the economic rationalists versus the economic nationalists). Despite some recent illuminating research on this issue (Pusey, 1991; Capling and Galligan, 1992) there is little evidence that the administrative elite (or, for that matter, the political elite) could ever carry such an agenda to a successful conclusion without the support of the corporate elite. In Australia, up to the 1970s the corporate elite - a combination of local companies and foreign transnationals all benefitting from high tariffs and a generally protectionist economy and society - were united with the administrative and the political elites (with the exceptions of Rattigan

and a few political and academic free marketeers). By the 1980s this had changed as the Australian TNCs, notably BHP, and resident 'foreign' corporations began to see more clearly the limitations of the domestic market for continued profitability and the political and administrative elites shifted the economic rules and practices in their favour. The point is not that 'the state' has or has not relative autonomy in this case, but that the transnational capitalist class works through various institutional sectors, including various agencies of the state, to further its global interests, and that it wins some battles and loses others. It appears to be winning the battle for globalisation in Australia.

The conclusion to be drawn from the argument in this paper is that those who would understand (or oppose) globalisation, on this view, are ill-advised to focus on 'the state' as the prime mover, and would be much better advised to focus on where the real power in the global system lies, the transnational capitalist class and the transnational corporations that sustain its global hegemony.

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