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Though Canada is having second thoughts about dual citizenship, Australia is moving to embrace it. This could legitimate conflicts of allegiance of the kind shown in the recent conduct of Greek Australian MPs (including Andrew Theophanous and Samos Tourlak). If it were possible to abolish nation states, and give every human being universal global citizenship, such conflicts might not matter. But Garrett Hardin presents arguments showing that this is not possible.

In Canada and Australia immigrants with permanent residence have most of the rights of citizens; citizenship adds the right to vote and confers a new passport but gives little more by way of tangible benefits. The vote and a passport are not trivial benefits but, because permanent residents have most of the social and civil rights of citizens, the symbolic meaning of citizenship is now assuming greater relative importance. The two countries have each recently produced reports emphasising this symbolic meaning, arguing that immigrants and native-born alike should be encouraged to value citizenship as marking a common bond of membership within their national community.

The titles of these reports make their purpose clear: Canadian Citizenship: A Sense of Belonging1 and Australians All: Enhancing Australian Citizenship.2 But, though they seem to share a common aim, on one question which has both practical and symbolic implications they come to different conclusions: they do not agree on dual citizenship. (Both reports speak of ‘dual’ citizenship but, if more than one citizenship is sanctioned, there is no reason to stop at two; neither of the reports suggest a mechanism to ensure that holders of more than one passport limit themselves to two.)

The current situation differs in each country. While some naturalised immigrants in Australia have de facto dual citizenship because their country of origin does not withdraw their original citizenship when they become Australians, Australian law does not recognise dual citizenship. The Australian report argues that it should. Canadian law
has in fact, nearly two decades ago in 1977, taken the step the Australian report recommends. Feelings about this now are mixed and the Canadian report recommends that the government explore the possibility of restoring the former provision which stipulated that Canadians who voluntarily acquired another nationality or citizenship (except by marriage) lost their Canadian citizenship. Further, the authors recommend that people who hold dual citizenship by virtue of events beyond their control (by birth elsewhere, marriage and so on) must, while living in Canada, accord primacy to their Canadian citizenship as should other Canadians with dual citizenship.3

It seems then that the step Australia is contemplating is one that Canada now regrets, though the Canadian paper does include a dissenting report. The Bloc Quebecois are keen to retain dual citizenship. They present a number of reasons for this: the problem of what to do about existing dual citizens; the argument that dual nationality does not mean diminished loyalty to Canada; the argument that removing it would mean loss of flexibility and openness; and so on. One may, however, speculate about an unstated reason for their dissent. Before the end of 1995 the people of Quebec will vote in a referendum on whether the province should or should not secede from Canada. If the provisions for dual citizenship are still in place, a vote for secession would present the residents of Quebec who contemplate secession with a diminished risk. Wave relations could be reassured that they could leave the union and yet still retain the rights and privileges of Canadian citizenship.

Is national citizenship an anachronism in an increasingly global world? The reluctance of the Bloc Quebecois to surrender access to Canadian citizenship suggests that it is not. Many people may feel cosmopolitan but most find a need for some label in a global filing system still organised under national headings. But why not be filed under more than one heading? Why not have multiple entries? Dual or multiple citizenship could be a good strategy for certain individuals to pursue. It may help them as they strive to maximise economic goals in different national market places, by providing them with access to privileges unavailable to competitors still classed as foreigners. It may also have emotional advantages for people who want to make a symbolic statement about their diverse affections for different nations. As long as the search for personal benefits in economics, and in matters of the heart, continues to pay, multiple citizenship should maximise an individual’s utility.

But, as Fred Hirsch pointed out some years ago, market systems which allow selfish individuals and corporations to continue to maximise their self-interest depend on a moral legacy inherited from earlier times. This legacy teaches that self-interest should be governed and restrained by the values of truth and honesty. Without rules and values based on some concern for others the free market would collapse into a cut-throat struggle of cheats and robbers and in such circumstances would cease to function as a wealth-producing mechanism. Hirsch argues that the pursuit of material self-interest is indeed eroding the traditional moral base and that we do risk this kind of moral collapse.4 If he is right, taking out multiple citizenships to help wrest profits from the global market place may pay off for some people for a while longer but it will continue to add to the erosion of social values and political and legal structures. This could take us to the point where none but gangsters with private armies could hope that business associates would keep their word.

Neither individuals nor nations would profit from this anarchy. But perhaps Hirsch overstates his case. If we assume that nations can continue to maintain some governance of their sections of the global market, is multiple citizenship a good aim for diminished nation states to support? Will relaxed citizenship laws bring eager entrepreneurs to their shores so that the more compliant nations prosper, while those which hold fast to the principle of single citizenship lapse into genteel poverty or worse?

Much hinges on the question of whether nations and their members have interests which may be compromised by conflicting allegiances. Robin Fitzsimmons makes an analogy between dual citizenship and dual parenthood; just as a child can love two parents so may a dual national love two countries.5 But what if the parents separate? The possibility of conflict between two ‘parent’ nations is not simply a question to be raised in time of war. Nations frequently have competing economic, cultural and political interests. One wants to execute

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Salma Rushdie, another wants to protect him; one adheres to principles of human rights derived from the Enlightenment, another denounces these as Western Imperialism; one signs extradition treaties, another does not; and so on.

Nearly two decades ago the authors of the Green Paper on immigration commented on some of the problems which immigration and multiculturalism could pose for the nation. While they did not speak of dual citizenship, they reminded us that 'Ministers are under pressure from ethnic groups to favor one side or the other in international disputes to which Australia is not directly a party, but in which migrants' countries of origin are involved'.

B. A. Santamaria has recently drawn our attention to the effects of conflicting loyalties on a prominent Australian national of Greek-Cypriot origin, Andrew Theophanous. Because of his status as an Australian Member of Parliament, Theophanous, even if the Australia Citizenship Act were changed, could not have dual citizenship: the Constitution forbids it. Section 44 (1) states that parliamentarians may not be 'under any acknowledgment of allegiance, obedience, or adherence to a foreign power'. Despite this, Theophanous, with Michalis Michael, has written a paper titled 'The Greek community and Australian foreign policy'. It reports on the way in which Greek community leaders were able to persuade the Australian Government to take positions on Pine Gap and on Cyprus which were not necessarily in the interest of the Australian people but were very much in the interest of the Government of Greece. Indeed the authors single out the question of the Pine Gap installation (which had been implicated in accusations of spying by the CIA on the Greek Government) as a test case. It is one thing, they say, to persuade the Australian Government to take actions which might have been taken in any case. But such policy 'changes' would be merely 'tokenism'. The real test comes when the ethnic imperatives clash with other goals of foreign policy and require the government to adjust its foreign policy stance.

Theophanous and Michael are also convinced that Government policy could not have been swayed had it not been for the election of MPs of Greek origin: they cite George Georges, Theophanous himself, Senator Bolkus and the Morris brothers (described as being of 'part-Greek' background). This enabled the Greek community to have access through these MPs to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the various parliamentary and party committees involved in foreign policy formulation. During the 1980s the Hawke Government responded to this pressure and altered Australia's policy on Pine Gap and on Cyprus: today we could add Australia's policy on Macedonia to the list.

Does dual citizenship make any difference to the operation of special interests of this kind? At a practical level probably not; the Greek-Australian MPs who achieved these policy shifts are formally forbidden to be under allegiance to foreign powers. But, at the symbolic level, dual citizenship for their Greek-Australian constituents could legitimate their activity.

In a truly global world where we could talk of universal global citizenship as well as global markets, the question of who belongs to which nation and on what terms would be absolute. But the nation state is still an important political unit, steering foreign and domestic policy, and presiding over the distribution of resources within its borders. It also makes and enforces laws, including those designed to protect its citizens and their natural environment. The hour of universal sharing of global resources under global government has not arrived.

Could we hasten its arrival by clearing the way for multinational citizens? Perhaps the assumption that people only seek multiple citizenships for private purposes is too narrow; maybe some would use their expanded opportunities to give, as well as get? Good people could take up plural nationalities, not for selfish reasons alone, but as a way to contribute to more than one political unit. Could this happen and would it advance the common good? This is a big question and a short answer cannot do it justice. But it is a version of the question: is pure, universal altruism possible?

The distinguished ecologist and ethicist, Garrett Hardin, has written extensively on this. His argument can be summarised briefly here. Logically, pure altruism is an unstable trait because it is always open to exploitation by pure selfishness. A gene for laying down one's life for strangers would be quickly

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driven from the gene pool. In the same way, a culturally acquired tendency for altruistic self-sacrifice in the interests of strangers would be driven from the pool of shared ideas and practices. The meek do not inherit the Earth unless they can organise themselves against exploitation by the strong.

But various forms of ‘impure’ altruism can flourish. We can commit ourselves to the welfare of others, provided we are able to trust that they will not simply exploit us, accepting our generosity yet giving nothing in return when they are able. Hardin calls this giving to groups and communities we can trust ‘discriminating altruism’ and giving to nameless strangers ‘promiscuous altruism’. He argues that for unselfishness to flourish we need bounded communities and that nations are the largest communities which seem viable at present. Even if we could arrange larger units than existing nation states, a universally organised one-world government would almost immediately collapse. He offers three reasons for this. Discriminating altruism can endure because, in the long run, they benefit the altruist. Familism offers selective advantages because the costs which individuals pay in sacrificing for their relatives are more than repaid by the advantages of family solidarity. The same principle applies to the wider loyalties of tribalism and patriotism. But what selective advantage would an individual gain from global sacrifice? Second, impure altruism (or reciprocal altruism) depends on trust, trust that the recipients of our generosity are sincere partners in a social bond. One of the ways of strengthening that trust is through loyalty to the group (kin, friends, tribe, nation). But, as the group grows larger, its power to inspire loyalty decreases. For this reason patriotism will almost always be weaker than loyalty to family and friends and global loyalties will be weakest of all. The third reason one-world universalism could not persist is that it would promote the tragedy of the commons.

If the logic of Hardin’s theory holds, generous multinational citizens anxious to do good in whichever one of their nations they happen temporarily to find themselves, are unlikely to stay generous for long. This is because they are attempting unilateral universal altruism. Indeed Robert Reich talks of affluent professionals (his ‘symbolic analysts’) who think that they might like to do this, when the demands on their time permit. In fact, they become ‘impassive cosmopolitans’, worried about the world’s difficulties but doing nothing to resolve them because the problems are too large and too remote and do not impinge on them directly. Reich argues that positive-sum nationalism, where people care for their neighbours and then build on this to care for outsiders is a much more promising strategy. Communities that work have boundaries. Their members feel a commitment to each other and to their shared piece of Earth. They can, if they wish, make this commitment a secure base for offering help to the world beyond their borders. But blurred membership leads to blurred loyalty. It feeds short-term selfishness and starves serious commitment to goals beyond our own immediate egoistic needs. The world could gain far more from patriotism’s impure altruism than it ever would from pure and impassive cosmopolitanism.

The committees established by Canada and Australia both stress the need to strengthen the symbolic ties binding members of their nations to a common community. This new interest in social cohesion may spring from impressions that national loyalties are weakening, diluted by the competing claims of local ethnic groups and overseas allegiances. Canada’s re appraisal of dual citizenship suggests that the sense of dissolution has grown more acute for them than it has for us. But does the Australian Government, at the same time as it recognises the need for stronger feelings of commitment, need to change the law in ways which weaken national loyalty and legitimate conflicts of allegiance? The ‘vast majority’ of the 339 submissions received by the Australian committee argued that it does. The Australian people may not agree.

References
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2 Joint Standing Committee on Migration, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1994
3 ibid., pp. 15-16
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7 B. A. Santamaria, 'Can Ferguson unify the left?', *The Weekend Australian*, 19-20 August 1985, p. 26

8 See K. Betts, 'The new citizenship report', *People and Place*, vol. 2, no. 4, 1994, pp. 54-5.


10 ibid., p. 90

11 ibid., pp. 93-94


14 ibid., pp. 103-4

15 ibid., p. 110


17 Joint Standing Committee on Migration, op. cit., p. 198