Advancing Australia: Cultural Diplomacy in the Menzies Era

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Dedication

For Darren, without whom this would not be what it is, nor would I be who I am.

Acknowledgements

No thesis is written solo, and there are always many supporters to acknowledge. I was blessed to work with the Alfred Deakin Research Institute and Deakin University, where I was encouraged by some amazing people, in particular Tony Joel who put me on the path to research in my undergraduate course. Murray Noonan was ever encouraging and had a hand in editing drafts, and Chris Waters who was generous with encouragement and critical appraisal. During the course of writing I was fortunate to win a scholarship with the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House which allowed me to pursue some personal profiling of the politicians working in the Menzies era.

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Abstract

*Advancing Australia: Cultural Diplomacy in the Menzies Era* takes a look at four examples of cultural exchange which occurred during the 1950s and 60s, and examines them through the lens of cultural diplomacy theory. The Menzies Era is unique in Australian history as it was a period of almost two decades influenced by the Prime Ministership of Robert Menzies. The period shows a shift from a post-war recovery phase and moves toward a technology driven age. Menzies and the Ministers of the Department of External Affairs had a significant impact on the way Australia was seen in the world, and it was this period which saw an important refocussing of Australia’s position in the Pacific and Asian arena- advancing Australia into the international order.

The term cultural diplomacy has no clear, agreed upon definition, and as such sees considerable debate. This thesis takes a look at the journey the study of cultural diplomacy has taken in its development, through soft power and public diplomacy, to be seen as an important part of the practice of diplomacy in its own right. The field of study was initially the preserve of diplomats, and as such much of the language surrounding it has been that of politics. As other academics have entered the field, the language has changed and the focus has shifted.

Cultural diplomacy, in its simplest explanation, uses cultural exchange to support foreign policy aims. It is not designed to change or alter policy, but to complement it. This study of the current literature accepts that these cultural exchanges must be backed by government legislation and have an opportunity to build and develop long term relationships in order to be cultural diplomacy activities. Other significant considerations to the activities are that they be long term in order to endure changes in government; collaborative; contribute to nation branding or national identity; promote ideologies such as freedom, equality, or justice; consider citizen diplomats; and, by nature of involving culture as a creative expression, generally be enjoyable experiences.

The Menzies Era saw the birth of the Colombo Plan. The first of the case studies in this thesis, this project saw bilateral aid arrangements brought under one umbrella in an attempt to help underdeveloped nations in South and South East Asia. A Commonwealth backed enterprise which involved nations around the globe saw material goods, education, and on the ground support utilised to improve living conditions and provide political stability in a long term project.

Later in the decade, Australia was to host the first Olympic Games in the Southern Hemisphere in Melbourne. These games in 1956 saw a renewed push to promote Australia to an international audience and in the process reinforced the national identity domestically. As the first games to be subject to boycotts, this project highlights the role of cultural events for foreign policy. Citizen diplomats and a carnival atmosphere marked these as The Friendly Games in Olympic records.

A decade later, Expo 67 was celebrated in Montreal, Canada, and Australia’s participation had both a cultural and political focus. The best of Australian culture was exported to be presented in a pavilion along with others from around the globe, and for six months guests were able to experience Australia at this exhibition. Highlighting a wealth of natural resources as well as technological expertise the government worked on presenting a national image favourable to increased trade and tourism.

Through the whole of the Menzies Era and beyond, ran the Radio Australia broadcasts across the world. Conceived as a propaganda tool in World War Two, the Menzies government refocussed the program’s efforts to improve the Australian brand. By considering the needs of the audience, this
project began an educational program which would allow a deeper understanding of, and sympathy with, Australian culture. The foreign policy aims of the Department of External Affairs married with the broadcasting knowledge of the ABC to produce a cultural diplomacy style activity which involved collaboration, entertainment, and international understanding. As the final case study, this project highlights the ways an established cultural diplomacy style project can allow changes in message as relationships mature.

These projects are just highlights of the many cultural diplomacy style activities which could be studied. This thesis does not make judgement, nor analyse success or failure of these cultural diplomacy styled activities. By using case studies the necessity of the breadth of considerations for cultural diplomacy activities is emphasized. The projects are all cultural exchange activities which were used to support foreign policy aims, all were backed by legislation and sought long term relationships. Their methods, time frames, budgets, and participants are all varied. They all describe how cultural exchange can be directed by, and affect, foreign policy. They all show that Advancing Australia, both domestically and internationally, is a political objective which can be effectively executed by cultural exchange. While the theory of cultural diplomacy may be relatively new, in practice these methods are well established.
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List of Abbreviations

ABC: Australian Broadcasting Corporation

ACTU: Australian Council of Trade Unions

AIF: Australian Imperial Force

ANZUS: Australia, New Zealand & United States

BBC: British Broadcasting Corporation

BCE: Before the Common Era

CCDS: Center for Cultural Diplomacy Studies

CEO: Chief Executive Officer

CIA: Central Bureau of Investigation

CPD: Center for Public Diplomacy

CSIRO: Chairman of the Commonwealth Science and Industrial Research Organisation

CWA: Country Women’s Association

DEA: Department of External Affairs

DFAT: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

IOC: International Olympic Committee

KPIs: Key Performance Indicators

MCG: Melbourne Cricket Ground

MoAD: Museum of Australian Democracy

MPs: Members of Parliament

NATO: North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGO(s): Non-governmental Organisation(s)

NSW: New South Wales

PDO(s): Public Diplomacy Officer(s)

POW: Prisoner of War

PR: Public Relations

RAAF: Royal Australian Air Force

SEATO: Southeast Asia Treaty Organization

SRC: Student Representative Council

UK: United Kingdom

UN: United Nations

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

US: United States

USC: University of Southern California

USIA: United States Information Agency

VIP: Very Important Person

VOA: Voice of America

YMCA: Young Men’s Christian Association
Discovering Cultural Diplomacy in Australia

Discovering Cultural Diplomacy
Discovering Cultural Diplomacy in Australia

In 2009, Naren Chitty claimed that ‘in some ways, Australian Public diplomacy is a terra nullius,’ especially from a research perspective.¹ He wrote, however, that ‘if practice rather than research is the yardstick, the landscape is bustling with activity.’ This work attempts to redress this lack of research, define cultural diplomacy and explore examples from the Menzies Era of the Australian context. While Australian historians do not have the benefit of the large amount of resources that the United States Information Agency has, there are still numerous publicly available sources, and some exciting archives that can help tell some of the stories of Australian cultural diplomacy. Chitty is correct: the landscape is bustling with activity, and was during the 20th century, as this thesis will discuss.

The Menzies Era, commonly defined as 1949–72, is a well-studied period in Australian history. Australia participated in global and regional activities, signed treaties, welcomed visitors and migrants and saw some major shifts in foreign and domestic policy. The young Australian Department of External Affairs (DEA) was faced with challenges that had no precedent. This thesis will look at how Department staff used four activities to achieve specific policy objectives; how they understood policy problems and used aspects of Australian culture to achieve particular goals; how they involved the public and its culture, and how the public reacted. Some of the programmes that this team created would now be classed as cultural diplomacy activities.

The activities of the Colombo Plan, a regional developmental project based on bilateral agreements focusing on South and South East Asia, will be discussed as the first of these cases. This scheme was designed to run for six years from 1951, but because of its success it was extended into a considerably longer-term project. Student exchange was a significant focus of the Australian contribution to this collaborative plan, along with capital and consumable assistance. Radio Australia is also considered in this thesis, and was another long-term project for the Menzies government, intended to influence the information delivered to an international audience. The planning behind the programming shows a definite foreign policy objective to the broadcasts. These two programmes were characteristic of the Menzies Era, in that they involved the purposeful deployment of a venture to improve Australia’s reputation in the region.

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Australia’s participation in the Olympic Games in Melbourne in 1956, and the International and Universal Exposition, or Montreal Expo 67 as it was known, were long in the planning stages but short in execution time. Both events deliberately and specifically presented Australian culture to an international audience.

The four case studies in this thesis highlight that understandings of cultural diplomacy benefit from the study of a variety of cases, and that cultural diplomacy is an exceptional field. By examining two long and two short-term episodes that occurred at a specific time, we can better understand how these events fit into the larger historical context, and how cultural diplomacy activities are affected by time.

Academic thought about cultural diplomacy has developed over the last half century, and includes the use of a nation’s culture to achieve foreign policy goals. Scholars and organisational bodies have shaped the definitions and structure of this field of study, and this thesis will condense some relevant aspects of the conversation. A broad field of modern scholarship, cultural diplomacy is often misunderstood and thus overlooked. There is continued debate over the terms ‘public diplomacy’ and ‘cultural diplomacy’, and these will be discussed in the following chapter. In practice, methods of negotiating diplomatic relationships have been developing over thousands of years of international diplomatic activity.

Alexander the Great, around 300 years Before the Common Era (BCE), aimed to convince the nations he was conquering that he was not a barbarian conqueror but an agent of a superior civilisation. He spread Greek culture through the Middle East and into Asia. After his death in 323 BCE, the effects of Greek culture continued to expand through the Mediterranean: Greek became the common language, and Greek literature and science dominated scholarship. Alexander conquered lands as well as minds. His ultimate success was to spiritually unite people. The Greek armies did not just commandeer lands, but made the world Greek by undermining existing cultures and imposing belief in the superiority of

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their own. Conquering minds and cultures was considered equally important to conquering lands and assets, and is something of an antecedent to the idea of cultural diplomacy.3

Student exchange continued the idea of knowledge transfer as a way of influencing the minds of others. Not necessarily the vanquished, as in Alexander’s time, but through the influence of academics. In the 12th century, Roman Emperor Friedrich Barbarossa granted foreign students special rights and imperial protection, hoping that their ‘light’ might ‘illuminate the world.’4 Serious scholars have always sought the best institutions, and deliberately welcoming foreign students so that they go on to promote the culture of their scholarship highlights the importance of person-to-person experiences in understanding foreign cultures. Students have often been the raison d’être for philanthropic organisations and exchange programmes. Their value as channels of communication across generations and borders, skills in gathering and disseminating information, and linking of politics with the respected realm of higher education has seen student exchange move from being a private affair to becoming one of the most important cultural diplomacy activities.

Moving from the academic elite to the masses, the French government used international exhibitions from 1855 to 1900 to consolidate their political regime. They were also conscious to project a particular national image ‘in competition with other countries.’5 The exhibitors used the space to highlight contrasts: if Britain was advanced in industry, the French produced quality goods with superior taste. If Germany was a military power, then France was educated and civilised. These exhibitions also created a ‘shared experience of international community over a long time span,’ creating cultural understandings that influenced trade, economic and military policies.6 An effective tool of cultural diplomacy, international exhibitions are equally popular today.

The inspiration for my exploration into cultural diplomacy came from a more modern example. In 1999, Jessica C. E. Gienow-Hecht published Transmission Impossible, which is a fascinating history of Die Neue Zeitung, the newspaper launched by the Office of Military

3 The terms ‘public diplomacy’ and ‘cultural diplomacy’ will be defined in the next chapter. While the terms are not interchangeable, they are sometimes used interchangeably in the literature.
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Government in Germany in 1945. The purpose of this newspaper was to foster the democratic re-education of German society, informing locals of United States (US) foreign policy and the American way of life. The management team were American, the journalists and editors were predominantly American-educated Germans who had returned after the war, and the audience was the German public. They were self-conscious transmitter-interpreters in the process of cultural diplomacy. The editors, who were often ex-military staff, draped democratic notions in traditional German clothing, with the aim of appealing to the German middle class.

Instead of preaching an anti-communist message they wrote of the American way of life. Out of respect for the gulf between prosperous post-war America and ‘hopelessness in defeated Germany’, the American news did not focus on material lifestyles, but rather on political significance, culture and German-American mutual perceptions. Articles deliberately explained and explored American culture, trying to see America through German eyes. As most staff had been raised in German culture, they were able to highlight the key words of ‘happiness’, ‘optimism’ and ‘self-help’; characteristics that resonated with a German readership. There was no denazification and no blame.

The editors introduced a heart-to-heart column that allowed readers to comment. This allowed the public to contribute to the newspaper, and it often published critiques as a ‘manifestation of democratic freedom and willingness to think’. In a country newly free of censorship, the paper received mountains of letters. The central theme of the paper was the presentation of democratic behaviour in terms of *Kultur*, a concept as important to Germans as democracy was to Americans.

*Transmission Impossible* is important to any study of cultural diplomacy, in its exploration of understanding the audience’s culture, history, and feelings about current events. These were used to form and announce foreign policies. The US promoted democracy through elections, freedom of speech and material culture. Through this project, Gienow-Hecht reminds us that cultural and informational programmes are difficult to evaluate. She stresses that ‘words are

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9 ibid, pp. 63, 77.
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not material goods; their influence is beyond mathematical calculation.’ The success of cultural diplomacy programmes may be hard to measure, but that does not decrease their value.

*Transmission Impossible* proposes that while the Allied soldiers defeated Hitler’s armies, it was the ‘army of Allied teachers, journalists, advertisers and professors’ who were responsible for Germany’s lasting victory and democratisation. This scheme had a firm footing in US government policy, with a government-defined focus. The project included the involvement of government agencies and private citizens across two countries, was deployed over a long time (10 years) and, importantly, focused on people-to-people relationships. It used a cultural experience to deliver a foreign policy objective. The newspaper outlasted any individual US government, and was not expected to have a defined or quantifiable outcome. *Die Neue Zeitung* was an innovative method of winning the hearts and minds of another nation, and proved to be a valuable tool for diplomacy. It is an example of how a government initiative can be viewed and understood through a modern cultural diplomacy lens.

I had begun to develop an interest in Australian cultural diplomacy. A meeting at a conference with Tim McDonald, former Australian High Commissioner to Singapore, revealed some fascinating results of Australian cultural diplomacy. He recalled that until the early 1980s, new buildings in Singapore were dependent on bamboo scaffolding. With a boom in construction, emphasis on high-rise development, and concerns about workers’ safety, the government decided to phase out bamboo scaffolding and introduce steel. There was a need to legislate the specifications and regulations that would govern standards and use. McDonald was asked by a senior manager in a government department to provide copies of relevant Australian specifications. This individual had studied engineering in Australia under the Colombo Plan scholarship scheme, and as he was familiar with Australian standards and regulations, he wanted to adapt the scaffolding specifications for Singapore.

The Australian standards and building regulations governing its use were put directly into the new building regulations. Australian manufacturers had a considerable advantage in responding to tenders for supply of scaffolding to a booming new market. This extended to Australian builders and construction companies who were familiar with steel scaffolding as

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10 ibid, p. 169.
12 Unrecorded informal conversation with Tim McDonald, Alfred Deakin Research Institute, Geelong, 2014.
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the transition from bamboo took place. This ex-Colombo Plan student had been comfortable enough to call on Australia when he needed advice, and had trusted the information and help enough to put it into his country’s legislation. Presumably, this is the result of a positive student experience in Australia. Asian students had lived and worked with Australian students, often billeted in domestic homes. They also worked in local businesses, and spent holidays exploring Australia with organisations such as Rotary and Apex. I began to look for more stories of Australian cultural diplomacy activity.

I explored theories of cultural diplomacy, learned how it differs from public diplomacy, and began to understand the varying fields of scholarship. In Public Diplomacy: Lessons from the Past historian Nicholas Cull called for a public diplomacy playbook of examples of diplomatic endeavours, on which diplomacy practitioners could draw from accumulated experience. He believed that this could be a positive way of empowering countries and enhancing the global conversation. I determined that this thesis should contribute to a better understanding of both public and cultural diplomacy, and improve the profile of cultural diplomacy in its own right. By using a case study approach I could contribute to this playbook, adding to the conversation on cultural diplomacy by understanding historical events through a cultural diplomacy lens.

I met with people who participated in these initiatives. These people were proud of the nation they represented, enjoyed promoting it, and formed permanent friendships and understanding. It is from person-to-person relationships that national friendships develop, and can underpin cultural diplomacy’s function of pursuing foreign policy aims. I interviewed Raymond Smee, Captain of the Australian Water Polo team in the 1956 Olympic Games. Stories of comradery between teams, mixed social events, laughing about inaccurate cultural perceptions and the shared belief that they were all participating in a ‘wonderful experience’ dominated the interview with Smee. He vividly remembers the controversial Hungarian/Russian water polo match, and recounted his frustrations at not being able to communicate with other captains the importance of keeping politics out of sport. Exploring cuisines in the shared dining halls

13 Unrecorded informal conversation with Tim McDonald, Alfred Deakin Research Institute, Geelong, 2014.
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was enlightening, and he retains pen-pal relationships around the world that he cultivated during his time as an Olympian.\textsuperscript{15}

A hunt for Expo 67 memorabilia led me to Kate Bourke, who had donated items to the PowerHouse Museum in Sydney. Kate, along with Helen Clugston and Kay Gagnon (nee Swinney), had been part of the team of hostesses led by Rosemary Sinclair in the Australian Pavilion.\textsuperscript{16} A coffee morning with these cultural ambassadors produced a wealth of memorabilia and stories. They recalled the great friendships formed through their participation in the event, the enthusiasm of the visitors to the pavilion, and the fact that the staff at the Expo socialised and learned from each other. These meetings revealed a personal side to the cultural diplomacy story, and thus enriching and complementing the archival and newspaper sources that covered the event.

A scholarship from the Museum of Australian Democracy (MoAD) at Old Parliament House in Canberra allowed me to work closely with the National Archives of Australia, and source documentation relating to the case studies. Working with MoAD, I was able to follow the paths of Menzies Era ministers, listen to their speeches in context and get a sense of ‘place’, which added temporal reality to the research. Reading interdepartmental memos, suggestions, reports, plans and ideas helped give a clearer idea of the workings behind these initiatives. Investigating how the DEA was working with aid programmes, Radio Australia and non-governmental groups to bring about positive relationships reveals that in the 1950s and 1960s, what would today be called soft power diplomacy was important. I read autobiographies, biographies and personal papers of Ministers Menzies, Spender, Casey, Barwick and Hasluck. This enriched my understanding of the men behind the decisions, and the context of their decision making.

From encountering Gienow-Hecht’s book to meeting some of the participants to immersion in the archives, my own journey to understanding cultural diplomacy paralleled the breadth of the field. The academic literature on public and cultural diplomacy, communications, propaganda, soft power, diplomacy and other related fields complemented my research into the uses of specific fora and events as cultural diplomacy activities. Using the cultural experience to promote foreign policy aims is a complex and exciting field of investigation.

\textsuperscript{15} Unrecorded interview with Raymond Smee, Goulburn Valley RSL Club, 2 February, 2015.
\textsuperscript{16} Unrecorded interview with Kate Bourke, Helen Clugston, Kay Gagnon, Rosemary Sinclair, private residence, Sydney, 7 February, 2014
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The international literature included case studies from both public and cultural diplomacy, and originated in Germany, Britain, Japan, Russia, China, Central and Eastern European countries and the Middle East. Public and cultural diplomacy programmes have been practiced worldwide, from Communist states, Western nations, countries small and large, and have mixed aims and methods. Scholars who have analysed such programmes are from varied backgrounds: political scientists, communications academics, diplomatic staff, international relations theorists and practitioners. Historians add to the conversation by relating people or events to modern theories, as they are able to follow the chain of thought and action from conception to implementation, with rich historical context, then analyse effects.

Cultural exchange and understanding made a slow start in Australia. When *The Mikado* was performed in Sydney in 1885, the Japanese costumes were displayed in department store windows to attract interest. The show was a success, and the store displays were a popular attraction. In 1888, the Governor of New South Wales, Lord Carrington, nervously recognised that ‘Australian ports are within easy sail of the ports of China’ and that Australia would be attractive to the Chinese regarding the climate, trade and industry opportunities. Carrington was not anxious to encourage intermarriage between Australian-British and Chinese people. Detractors like Carrington put fear into the public, and commerce and trade were not yet ready for interaction with Asia and a culture Australians did not understand.

By 1893, Alfred Deakin claimed that the ‘intellectual give and take which is everywhere a stimulus to thought should be especially quick and prolific between Australia…and its northern continent [India].’ In a lecture at the University of Adelaide in 1908, James Currie Elles described how ‘the growth of commerce multiplied contacts between cultures, helping the spread of knowledge and fostering energy, enterprise and inventiveness.’ Twenty years after Carrington’s warnings, awareness and acceptance of Australia’s geographical neighbours was slowly beginning to be accepted through trading relationships. It would take two world wars, forced exposure to international cultures and experiences, and some

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18 At that time, residents of Australia were British citizens.
20 ibid, p. 82.
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exceptional External Affairs ministers to see the beginnings of a deliberate programme of cultural mindfulness in diplomacy, which would nowadays be called cultural diplomacy.

Historian Akira Iriye wrote that modern cultural diplomacy could be seen to begin with issues that disregard national borders. Through the 1950s and 1960s, universal notions of human rights and a shared responsibility for the protection of the natural environment were prioritised in the interests of a global community. As the whole world understood the imperative to protect oceans and endangered wildlife, so they also came to respect that different ways of life and thought should be an important agenda for international affairs. During the Menzies Era it was gradually accepted that autonomous culture positively contributes to that global community. ‘Multiculturalism’ was not really developed until the 1970s, so the subjects of this thesis predate this term, but not the idea behind it. As cultural understandings evolved, the role of cultural diplomacy also developed.

Encouraging economic relationships was, in the early 20th century, seen as the best way to prevent war. This trade would encourage cross-nation understanding. From the 1870s, the rise of international organisations (from postal unions to aid organisations) promoted Western ideology across the globe. Iriye proposes that because cultural internationalism was weaker than economic internationalism before the First World War, the champions of the former movement redoubled their efforts to place it ‘at centre stage’ after the war. The cultural internationalists believed their movement would be more successful in reducing conflict, as it focused on the ‘cultural, intellectual, and psychological underpinnings of the international order’, and that at a basic level, peace and order begins with individuals. It would begin with understanding the ideology and culture of the citizens. The war had brought into question the ‘complacent assumption that the West represented the world.’ These ideas bring culture to the forefront of international relations and diplomacy, and as such are important ideas for the discussion of cultural diplomacy.

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23 Ibid, p. 60
24 Ibid, p. 61
Discovering Cultural Diplomacy in Australia

Australian thinking about international relations has been based on Western ideology, and a national identity which is an invention, imposed upon a people and a landscape, a construct.25 When we look at ‘national identity’, it is useful to ask what the function of the identity is, and whose purpose it serves. National identity must always be seen within the global context, economically, politically and developmentally. This is important when looking at the branding of nations and international reputation as concepts within cultural diplomacy. Why would a country like to portray a certain image? What tools would it use to promote this? How can we know what a country ‘really’ is, and if we share its values? Does that determine our trade or security policies?

In the post-war era of the late 1940s, Australia found its political and trade relationships shifting focus and new relationships with Asia were emerging. Writing on cultural relations, Neil Manton stated that in 1949, an exhibition of Australian paintings went on tour in South East Asia, and was viewed with great interest by locals. This was considered Australia’s first foray into the Asian region to cement cultural ties and build multicultural understanding. High Commissioner in Colombo, J. C. G. Kevin, wrote to Minister Richard Casey that he believed this exhibition would add to Australia’s reputation as a race of sporting giants.26 Australia hoped to educate its neighbours to a larger range of its achievements. Not only did the nation produce exceptional athletes, but its creative culture was innovative and talented.

The organisers of this 1949 exhibition found that they needed to be selective in the artwork they sent, including being aware of local customs regarding nudity and other themes common in Western art. Artist Donald Friend found another problem with the exhibition: the Australian organisation had refused to print the leaflets in Sinhalese and Tamil, rendering them useless to most visitors.27 This shows that experience of other cultures and accommodation of taste, language and local cultural expectations are important for international cultural relations, and even more so if these efforts are part of a government policy of cultural diplomacy.

The importance of this ‘on the ground’ experience of other cultures was increasingly shared by university students during the Menzies Era. In 1957, the National Union of Australian

27 ibid, pp. 71–74.
University Students sent a delegation of 10 students to Malaya. This was to allow the student ambassadors to ‘help promote goodwill between Australia and the Asian countries.’ The publication of this story in Australian newspapers was designed to encourage a public appeal to raise funds to send a similar group to China. The Student Union believed they could ‘help Australia’s future wellbeing by learning something of the Chinese students.’ They also hoped to ‘teach the Chinese students and people something about Australia.’ Asian students (self-funded as well as those on Colombo Plan scholarships) in Australian Universities had raised an important point: that the Chinese public knew very little of Australia, and made several incorrect assumptions, highlighting the need for two-way exchange.

The students believed it was important for them to go, and to be distinct from the trade groups and diplomats. Students were, they suggested, an integral part of the Australian community, with an obligation to learn something of their neighbours. They argued that ‘criticism comes easy to the intolerant, the narrow-minded, and to the person who always judges another by his own standards.’ While they acknowledged the value of Asian students in Australian universities, a reciprocal arrangement would create even greater understanding. The Argus newspaper added that Australia could not avoid being involved in Asia’s future, and the best way to deal with this was to try to attain understanding.

The importance of travel and of the person-to-person contact so necessary for all cultural exchange increased as international travel became more common in the 1950s. Travel is a means of fostering international understanding and goodwill. The foreign policy objectives of international development projects, including the Colombo Plan, were complemented by the exchange of personal visits, with the resultant increase of knowledge and understanding. International tourism ‘can assist in setting a background of wide human understanding for future international relationships,’ and this is its ‘greatest responsibility and value.’ As international travel became faster and cheaper it became possible for more individuals, and provided a focus of study for those interested in international relations.

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28 David F. Martin, ‘This is why we want to visit Red China’, in The Argus, Melbourne, Monday 7 January, 1957, p. 4.
29 Ibid.
30 Ibid.
31 Martin, ‘This is why we want to visit Red China’, in The Argus, Melbourne, Monday 7 January, 1957, p. 4.
34 ‘Pacific Neighbours’.
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This new experience of travel allowed Australians to visit and be exposed to other countries, and for international visitors to explore Australia. Increased exposure to and from international audiences heightened Australia’s ongoing identity construction and projection. Graeme Davison introduced the notion of the Imaginary Grandstand, to which Australians were performing. As Australians were ‘beginning to seek the approval of new role models on the other side of the Pacific,’ they began to consider what the new audience perceived. Davison proposed that nations define themselves in relation to this imagined audience, and that the image Australians formed of themselves was a ‘product of the favourable impression they sought to create in the minds of others.’ That this was not necessarily the vision the audience received was not so important, as Australians were creating a story of national identity that they felt they needed, and this promoted a social cohesiveness and common purpose. This is one important purpose of cultural diplomacy when focused on the domestic audience. In the 1950s and 1960s, new Pacific and South East Asian relationships defined Australian culture in new ways.

The four cases researched in this thesis were chosen because they involved government departments, and thus would have a presence in the archives. They also involved the general public, so would be publicly commented on in the media. This allowed for a more balanced understanding of how culture was used to support the policy. Expo 67 and the Melbourne Olympics are present in academic scholarship, but have not been viewed through a cultural diplomacy lens. While there has been much research on the Colombo Plan, few scholars have assessed the use of culture in achieving the project’s aims. Radio Australia is little seen in academic research during the Menzies Era. This research proves Chitty’s point: Australia has participated in activities that have used aspects of the nation’s culture to achieve foreign policy aims, and the historical analysis in this thesis will bring some of them to light.

Sometimes a phenomenon is more easily understood by example than definition. As cultural diplomacy is complex, this work seeks to clarify definitions by exploring case studies. They show both regional and global exposure for cultural exchange, had very varied budgets, and

37 Ascribing motive to historical actors is always risky and historians must be wary of this. Case studies of cultural diplomacy activities will be examined in this thesis, with the understanding that the practitioners were unaware of cultural diplomacy theory.
involved both the domestic and international audience to different degrees. While the time frame for the specific activity varies, the international relationship has been long-term. Importantly, they were all initiated by government policy with the intent to broaden Australia’s international reputation. Sources used for this thesis were government archives, the private papers of Richard Casey, newspaper reports, secondary sources including books, journals, film and advertising materials. Each case has an explanation of the idea and its history, why the mechanism is valid as a scheme for cultural diplomacy activities and how it was used by the Australian government.

The Menzies Era is an appropriate focus for this type of study because there was a shift in alliances and engagement during the time that Menzies was in office. His term as Prime Minister (1949–66) saw the birth of the ANZUS Treaty, which promoted a real focus on the Pacific region, as well as the Colombo Plan and trade initiatives in Asia. These were imposed upon a ‘British’ Australia, one that celebrated when their young Queen came to visit, and that defined much of its identity in terms of Britishness. Menzies and his External Affairs ministers brought about a shift in thinking about Australia’s place in the world, as will be discussed in the first case study in Chapter 4: Presenting Australia.

Chapter 5: Developing Australia will highlight the mutual benefits of the Colombo Plan development programme, its breadth and importance to the Australian, South and South East Asian region. An analysis of a publicity booklet and documentary intended for Australian audiences is presented alongside a discussion of a journal created for the regional audience. Publicity for the plan was a priority for the Department. A sample of the activities conducted under the plan highlights the breadth of the programme, the number of individuals involved, and the potential for cultural exchange.

This was just one example of cultural diplomacy-type activities during this period. Chapter 6: Pitching Australia discusses another; the 1956 Melbourne Olympic Games, which brought athletes and visitors from all over the world to interact with the public, perform, exchange cultural ideas, bring awareness of international matters and, from an Australian perspective, show off Australia and particularly Melbourne. One highlight of these games was the mingling of athletes in the closing parade. The suggestion of a Chinese-born Australian

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38 The Australia, New Zealand and United States Security Treaty, or ANZUS Treaty, was an agreement signed in 1951 to protect the security of the Pacific and will be discussed in following chapters.
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student, this highlighted an important Australian attitude: that while we compete as separate countries in athletics, we can also be one global human family. Considering negative comments about the White Australia immigration policy, this was a clever cultural diplomacy style strategy.

Expo 67 was an international extravaganza held in Montreal, Canada, to mark the nation’s 100th birthday. As a fellow Commonwealth country, Australia sought to put on the best show possible. In a global arena, Australia established a reputation of calm competence, promotion of economic and manufacturing capabilities and celebration of natural bounty. While the purpose was to advertise Australian trade and commerce, sending koalas and kangaroos was a positive cultural drawcard. Chapter 7: Exhibiting Australia focuses on this Expo. It analyses an example in which researching audience expectations resulted in the promotion of a positive Australian identity.

Radio Australia provides the final case study in Chapter 8: Broadcasting Australia. From its inception as an apparatus for propaganda, during the Menzies Era the focus shifted to understanding audience needs, and supplying programmes that met these, as well as attaining policy goals. Public diplomacy commentator Ali Fisher explains that to create networks for long-term engagement, one must speak to the audience on the basis of their priorities. Effective communication involves listening and telling, and in relation to cultural diplomacy requires the ‘provision of projects tailored to the recipient audience through negotiation or dialogue.’ In Asia in the 1950s, the audience requested English language lessons. The scripts for these reveal a careful description of Australian culture, resources and subtle explanations of migration policy, among other issues. The audience’s experience of Australian culture was backed by deliberate foreign policy aims. As this medium was accessible to huge areas and populations of South East Asia, the message was targeted. As programmers understood much of the audience culture, they could manipulate the messages so as not to cause offence, while encouraging friendship.

The idea of exchange is inherent in the state-to-state interactions of traditional diplomacy. The interpersonal nature of the exchange experience, coupled with its inherently private character, has led to these encounters being largely written out of the documentation of

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diplomacy, but it is important to cultural diplomacy studies to return them to this public arena. Exchange in the guise of scholarship is but one aspect. The construction workers, engineers, health professionals, and others who travelled to South East Asia under the Colombo Plan and other collaborative initiatives; the staff who built, maintained, serviced and attended the pavilion at the Expo; the organisers, athletes, and visitors of the Olympic Games; the broadcasters and script writers of Radio Australia all experienced exchanges and personal interaction with the international community.

This is all summarised in the final Chapter 9: Cultivating Cultural Diplomacy in Australia. With a clearer understanding of cultural diplomacy, a glance at modern thinking on Australian cultural diplomacy activity and policy is provided as an Epilogue, highlighting the current government’s approach.

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Defining Cultural Diplomacy in Australia
Defining Cultural Diplomacy

Power is one of those terms which becomes more complex the more it is questioned. As we think about what power is, why it is desired, how it is used, how it is measured, and how it shifts, the more we question - in true Socratic style - the more questions develop. It is the relationships around power in the mid twentieth Century, how the tools of power are used and for what purpose, which lead to the formalisation of scholarship around different types of international interactions related to power relationships.

Soft power is a concept crucial to any scholarship on public and cultural diplomacy. Joseph S. Nye Jr. defined soft power as the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments.¹ Hard power includes the use of the military, trade embargoes, commerce restrictions and other command behaviours. Smart power is a term now used by some analysts to describe modern diplomacy, which combines all types of power in combination.² This thesis will focus on one element of soft power: cultural diplomacy.

The development of diplomacy and international relations, cultural and scholarly exchanges, sporting contests, exhibitions of progress and the sharing of knowledge are all ways that a country can achieve policy objectives. In a complex web of relationships, the use of culture to support foreign policy is not new. However, it has only recently been developed as a significant field of study. There have been numerous contemporary contributions to the field, and these will support the goals of this thesis, which is to understand how the initiatives of the Menzies Era might fit into modern theories of cultural diplomacy.

Public diplomacy, and to a lesser extent cultural diplomacy, have been written about from varying backgrounds. Each definition includes several related concepts, but few address all terms associated with either public or cultural diplomacy. This deficiency of definition and scope has been a challenge to those attempting to focus government and public attention on this vital aspect of diplomacy in the modern world. Public and cultural diplomacy work in conjunction with traditional diplomacy.

While both public and cultural diplomacy rely on Nye’s established definitions of soft power, the field has developed and encompasses many important scholars. As discussed earlier, Jessica C. E. Gienow-Hecht has written multiple works on cultural diplomacy, including Transmission Impossible. Historian Nicholas Cull has written on public diplomacy, including

² Cull, Public Diplomacy.
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The Cold War and the United States Information Agency: American Propaganda and Public Diplomacy 1945-1989. Simon Mark has explored cultural diplomacy. He has compared Canadian and Australian efforts, and contends that cultural diplomacy is potentially a considerably more significant diplomatic tool than is currently understood. These three scholars inform my conceptual approach in this thesis: Cull for his work on public diplomacy, and Gienow-Hecht and Mark for their explorations and clarifications of cultural diplomacy.

Other authors who have participated in the discussion differ in their priorities and approaches, mainly due to their academic focus. As communications experts, international and/or cultural relations scholars and political scientists discuss the theories of diplomacy, practitioners contribute another perspective. Historians have added an additional layer, telling stories with a long view, linking demonstrated truths with modern theories, and have the ability to reinforce messages, frame the conversation and provide an authority to practitioners and policy makers. The Clingendael Institute (Netherlands), The Institute for Cultural Diplomacy (Berlin) and the Centre for Public Diplomacy (California) are all think-tanks wherein cultural diplomacy is explored by a number of people. Their scholarship is important in establishing a context for this thesis. While the most influential of academics to this work remain Gienow-Hecht, Cull and Mark, these others whose approaches enrich the definition are also included.

As there is currently no clear classification of what public or cultural diplomacy activities are, the following types of questions are often raised:

- Is there to be one-way or two-way communication in the activity planned? If it is to be two-way communication, how is the ‘listening’ aspect to be used?
- While the target country/regional audience is generally the objective, should the domestic audience be used as part of the programme? If so, what role should they play, and are they an audience or a participant?
- Are only government operatives to be used for public diplomacy activities, or should larger international non-government organisations (NGOs) be included? Can ‘citizen diplomats’ be used?

While it is not important to categorise initiatives so tightly for the purposes of this thesis, they do raise interesting points about the potential reach of cultural diplomacy, and its importance in diplomatic practice.
Defining Cultural Diplomacy

One thing that all writers agree on or assume is that both public and cultural diplomacy are focused on medium to long-term relationships and programmes. This is not always clarified in the primary definitions that this thesis uses, highlighting the need for a comprehensive reading of other authorities. Cultural diplomacy projects and programmes are generally not measurable in any quantifiable way. This could be why governments seem to hesitate to invest significant funds to them. Long-term relationships cannot be limited to the ideologies of the government of the day, so are not the same as foreign policy. They must be in-line with the current government’s policies, but also have a longer range. This thesis combines a focus on the use of culture in support of foreign policy with an emphasis on uncovering the essential nature of long-term relationships.

Educational exchange, tourism, disaster relief and developmental aid, sporting competitions, trade and commerce agreements, radio and television broadcasts, peacekeeping initiatives and journalism all form part of the dialogue of public diplomacy. These enterprises all involve international people-to-people relationships on a long-term basis, are often guided by policy and involve multiple diplomatic practitioners, formal and informal. This explains why there are so many ‘grey’ areas to this field of study. Is sending government-funded emergency aid to an earthquake stricken area an act of public diplomacy? Is funding a press tour of a government development project a public diplomacy effort if the audience for the documentary is domestic? Is allowing the export of Hollywood films to a worldwide audience public or cultural diplomacy? Is a trade agreement to import cultural icons public or cultural diplomacy? If I listen to British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) radio in Australia, am I buying into their diplomacy programme?

As this thesis will demonstrate, it is not easy or even necessary to fit individual acts into particular areas of diplomacy. What is important is to understand how different relationships can be used to strengthen diplomatic ties, in order to promote the best possible outcomes. This work aims to contribute to the conversation on cultural diplomacy by establishing a working definition that will be used to explore relevant case studies. This chapter will discuss soft power, diplomacy and public diplomacy, leading towards a discussion on cultural diplomacy. The explorations of soft power and public diplomacy will set the scene for clarifying cultural diplomacy as an equally important, yet different, tool of diplomacy. We will then look at Australia during the Menzies Era, to establish the environment in which the
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case studies grew, and the issues the government and community were facing, to establish the context for the case studies.

**Power**

Political and social theorist Steven Lukes noted that ‘Power is at its most effective when least observable,’ and while power is a difficult concept to define, his discussion of ‘the securing of compliance to domination’ underpins his explanation.³ He claims that the significance of the outcomes which power can bring about is most often how power is measured, and that being able to avert disagreement and securing consent to domination is an important dimension of power. Power is at the heart of most international interactions, and understanding what it is, how it can be gained, and how it can be employed is a vital study. While most of us can name those we feel are powerful, it is harder to pinpoint why we think so. Thinking about power will allow us to understand how domination can be secured, why we comply, and how it changes our world.

The above definition leads to questions of how to define who or what is dominated. Lukes calls on Charles Taylor to help clarify the point, who writes that if ‘some external agency or situation wreaks some change in me that in no way lies in me athwart some such desire/purpose/aspiration/interest, then there is no call to speak of an exercise of power/domination.’⁴ Lukes notes theorists who propose that if we can further our interests without intervening in others’ actions we might speak of this as luck, however Lukes disagrees and classes this as one of the most insidious forms of power. A person, group, or country who agrees with the changes imposed upon them does not think they have been dominated, and securing domination of this type requires creating an environment where hearts and minds have been conditioned to a similar way of thinking to those wishing to impose the changes. It is the questions around how this compliance is secured which form a central part in studies of diplomacy, and are particularly important in studies of cultural diplomacy.

The most significant power struggle of the twentieth century would arguably be the Cold War. The struggle for domination between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist republics (U.S.S.R) forms the background to the political atmosphere

⁴ ibid, p. 113
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discussed in this thesis. These two superpowers had profound differences in economic and political ideology, and both determined to “secure compliance to dominion” as widely as possible.

In his book *Power Politics: How China and Russia Reshape the World*, Rob de Wijk discusses power and the global order, and particularly that when the Cold War ended America emerged as the single superpower.\(^5\) In this new world order, America found itself with the ‘unprecedented opportunity to “shape the world in accordance with American ideas.”’\(^6\) de Wijk notes that the first priority was to ‘prevent the emergence of a rival, who would curb American freedom to act in international politics,’ and with potential political strength gathering in China, a united Europe, or a Russian phoenix, America could face a multipolar world, which would come with more competition and ‘put American interests at stake.’

Working with the theory of Immanuel Kant, that ‘democratic countries do not go to war with each other,’ the new American Defence Planning Guide advises that ‘the best way to stabilise the countries in Eastern and Central Europe would be to bring them into Western [or] European institutions…’\(^7\) While this may not be a surety against armed conflict, and de Wijk notes examples which belie this point, it is the general framework of much of Western diplomatic effort. Having a similar base of cultural understanding is more likely to bring partnership than conflict. de Wijk proposes that for political aims it ‘is not essential to convince one’s opponent that they are wrong … but to manipulate and influence his politico-strategic choices.’\(^8\)

While armed conflict might be seen as the primary instrument of international power, economic sanctions (and conversely economic support) are an equally effective tool for countries to employ. A challenge de Wijk discusses is for powerful countries to carefully determine which countries may grow and shift in the international power game, and cautiously balance alliances. Countries with the greatest potential for development can be seen as a challenge to world order, particularly those with economic weight and differing

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\(^6\) Ibid, p. 19
\(^7\) Ibid, p. 21
\(^8\) Ibid, p. 63
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political systems. Developing countries are less likely to be affected by global financial crises and as they are already in growth mode are likely to continue growing during these periods, while those affected stagnate or regress.

The level of international power a country has is determined by its ‘wealth, innovation and conventional military capabilities’ and these determine how effectively a country can influence international politics, and countries lacking strength in one or more of these will often align themselves with similar geopolitical aims to bolster their position.

In international politics many tools and theories have developed and been employed for the purposes of gaining power and using it to strengthen a country’s position and diplomats are often the instrument of deployment. Soft Power, Smart Power, Public Diplomacy and Cultural Diplomacy are part of a diplomatic toolset which are based on relationships, where the more ‘powerful’ party is able to use agreements and programs to influence the other. It is this ability to influence, to be seen as the model to aspire to, to secure the compliance to domination with the minimal of disruption to ones own community, which is the aspect of power crucial to this thesis. Cultural Diplomacy theories rest on power relationships; they are less designed to create power, than to use it to spread influence to a larger audience.

de Wijk simply defines power as ‘the ability to get others to do what one wants,’ and notes that this can be done in a positive way through encouragement (incentives), or in a negative way through force (coercion). Joseph Nye’s work on Soft Power turns on the same basic definition and focuses on the incentives and encouragement angle of the power equation; and is the next focus in understanding the place of cultural diplomacy in the calculation of power.

Soft Power

The soft power prestige of a nation is successful ‘when it gives the nation pursuing it such a reputation for power as to enable it to forego the actual employment of power.’ For American political scientist H. J. Morgenthau, a policy of prestige involves revealing just enough of a nation’s power to the world to reduce the transactional costs of demonstrating it. This is soft power. To let the world know that your words are backed up by military, trade, economic, scientific and human power, which could, and would, be deployed if necessary.

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The theories of soft power are a basis for understanding the importance of cultural diplomacy.

Nye coined the term soft power, explaining that ‘it arises from the attractiveness of a country’s culture, political ideals, and policies.’\(^{10}\) It is important to understand Nye definition in full, as it is the basis for the majority of works on both public and cultural diplomacy. He notes that seduction is always more attractive than coercion, however we must be mindful not to become arrogant, as the attraction can easily turn to repulsion. Like other definitions regarding culture, Nye has seen soft power trivialised as ‘merely the influence of Coca-Cola, Hollywood, blue jeans, and money’.\(^{11}\) While these things definitely play a part in disseminating American culture in particular, it is only a small part. This aspect of culture may be a resource of soft power, but it does not belong to the ideology that produces it- and that is the key to soft power, it is not an item but an ideology. For example, millions of Chinese people have been introduced to American culture through television. In an example of Nye’s, Chinese viewers commonly saw American characters resorting to courts to resolve difficulties, and over time understood this to be a positive cultural norm that they wished to use themselves. Adopting this recourse to the legal system is a significantly more powerful cultural influence than just drinking Coca-Cola. This was a success in cultural relations, though an unintended one, and highlights the effectiveness of a long-term subtle message to influence an audience.

Nye lists daily communications, strategic communications (long-term campaigns on a policy or idea) and the development of lasting relationships on a public level as essential for soft power.\(^{12}\) The beauty of soft power is that it is available to all countries, regardless of their hard power potential. NGOs, religions and international organisations can all use soft power, as its main tool is communication. Most crucially, Nye points out that ‘soft-power resources often work indirectly by shaping the environment for policy, and sometimes take years to produce the desired outcome’.\(^{13}\) This is the element most relevant to cultural diplomacy.

Four years after the publication of *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, Nye commented on the progression of thinking about public diplomacy and soft power. He contends that soft power ‘rests on the ability to shape the preferences of others’, not merely

\(^{11}\) ibid, p. xi.
\(^{13}\) ibid, p. 104
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influencing, but enticing and attracting.\(^{14}\) A country’s soft power rests on its culture (in places where it is attractive to others), its political values (when it lives up to them at home and abroad), and its foreign policies (when they are seen as legitimate and having moral authority). Culture only becomes soft power when it is used deliberately. Like-minded states that share language and cultural norms will send and receive cultural diplomacy messages more easily, especially if they gain a reputation of practicing what they preach.\(^{15}\) This infers that a strong soft power reputation requires honesty and openness. This aspect is particularly important to cultural diplomacy, as it speaks to essential qualities in long-term relationships, in order to foster an environment for policy initiatives.

Nye explains that in recent history, the disclosure of America’s exaggeration in accusing Iraq of possessing weapons of mass destruction ‘dealt a costly blow to American credibility.’\(^{16}\) Similarly, the revelation of the treatment of prisoners in Guantanamo Bay—which was inconsistent with American values—led to perceptions of hypocrisy. Without credibility, Nye argues, ‘the instruments of public diplomacy cannot translate cultural resources into the soft power of attraction.’\(^{17}\) Long-standing friendships may allow more tolerance; sometimes friends will give you the benefit of the doubt, or forgive mistakes. Effective public diplomacy efforts endeavour to create this environment, however self-serving or arrogantly presented policies cannot be assisted by public diplomacy. The best advertising cannot sell a bad product.

Sometimes criticism of a government or particular policy is an effective way of establishing credibility. Nye writes that while it is sometimes difficult for a government to support views that are critical of its own policy, promoting this criticism can send a positive message to international publics, especially oppressed publics, thus allowing them to realise an empathetic relationship.\(^{18}\) This is an important aspect of cultural diplomacy, allowing a ‘warts-and-all’ honesty that is necessary for authentic identity, and encouraging national relationships. Should one party be exposed to the ‘faults’ of the other, a more sympathetic relationship can be forged.


\(^{16}\) Nye, ‘Public Diplomacy,’ p. 98.

\(^{17}\) Ibid.

\(^{18}\) Nye, ‘Public Diplomacy,’ p. 106
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Working with Nye’s explanations, Nicholas J. Cull notes that the advantage of Nye’s term, soft power, is that ‘it has moved the conversation around public diplomacy into the realm of national security and provided a language for arguing that attention be paid to public diplomacy.’\(^{19}\) Just as using the term ‘war on terror’ elevates participants to the rank of soldiers, the word ‘power’ gives this aspect of negotiation a specific relevance. The word ‘soft’ may have been unfortunate, as it implies a gentleness and lack of force that is inaccurate. While soft power tries to manipulate situations without resorting to arms or harsh consequences, the potential for affecting negotiations is not lenient or indulgent, and the consent to domination of traditional power is implied.

Diplomacy

In the 15th century, Europeans realised the importance of onsite diplomats. The resident embassy was born in Italy, as an economical measure that proved particularly effective.\(^{20}\) Having a trained diplomat onsite allowed a source for in-depth and continuous knowledge gathering. In the same period, French noble and statesman Cardinal Richelieu understood this as continuous negotiation, as the diplomat was not only gathering knowledge about his host, but spreading news and ideas, too. Achieving specific political and economic goals was a secondary intention- for knowledge is power. The first and most important goal was to advocate viewpoints and increase awareness in the diplomat’s employers. This suggests cultural relationships founded in diplomacy, and highlights that understanding the culture of the country you are dealing with has long been of high importance. Diplomacy brokers various relationships and serves multiple purposes. An understanding of the benefits of addressing different audiences, of listening to various publics and of establishing a respectful relationship allows a more favourable environment for the introduction of policy initiatives.

2.2.1 Public Diplomacy

Public diplomacy can be a mechanism for the deployment of soft power, but it is not the same thing.\(^{21}\) Soft power is a concept that affects the activities of public and cultural diplomacy. Public diplomacy has some distinctions from cultural diplomacy, and to appreciate the two fields, an analysis of the current academic conversation follows. It is generally accepted that

\(^{19}\) Cull, *Public Diplomacy*, p. 15.
\(^{21}\) Cull, *Public Diplomacy*. 
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Edmund Gullion, Dean of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, coined the term public diplomacy in 1965, when opening the Edward R. Murrow Centre of Public Diplomacy. He stated:

> Public diplomacy…deals with the influence of public attitudes on the formation and execution of foreign policies. It encompasses dimensions of international relations beyond traditional diplomacy; the cultivation by governments of public opinion in other countries, the interaction of private groups and interests in one country with another; the reporting of foreign affairs and its impact on policy; communication between those whose job is communication, as diplomats and foreign correspondents; and the process of intercultural communications.\(^\text{22}\)

The preeminent institution in the field is the University of Southern California’s (USC) Centre for Public Diplomacy (CPD). Their scholars explain that the traditional view of public diplomacy is as a ‘means by which a sovereign country communicates with publics in other countries aimed at informing and influencing overseas audiences for the purpose of promoting the national interest and advancing its policy goals.’\(^\text{23}\) This definition has public diplomacy as a one-way communication to a purely international audience. The audience could be either the state or the general public, but the speaker is the sovereign state. The Centre further explains that since 2001, a new concept of public diplomacy has been developed, in-line with changes in international relations, and would now include non-state actors. These are qualified as organisations that have a standing in world politics, and could include some NGOs and private companies. The activities of these organisations are classed as public diplomacy only when they engage with a foreign public to develop and promote government policies.

The Centre describes public diplomacy as a tool to be used in conjunction with the state, and not to replace traditional state-to-state diplomacy. This definition acknowledges that public diplomacy is multi-disciplinary and, as scholars come from varied backgrounds, the definition of public diplomacy is fluid. They confirm that the most common themes are a focus on soft power, reaching out to an international audience, and that initiatives have a long time frame. Nicholas J. Cull is currently the Director of the Master’s in Public Diplomacy

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programme at this institute, and his work will form the basis of discussions of public diplomacy.

Cull considers the fluid definition, reminding present practitioners and scholars of public diplomacy that their deeds and theories may not be understood in the future in the terms used today. Further, that today’s audiences may understand public diplomacy by its 1856 or 1916 meaning, or ‘may already understand the term in a 2016 sense of which we are not yet aware.’\textsuperscript{24} This suggests that definitions of public diplomacy, and cultural diplomacy, must rely on foundational purposes rather than get bogged down in attempting to clarify black-and-white examples for inclusion or exclusion. Where traditional diplomacy must depend on state-to-state official communications, determined by the government of the day, public diplomacy looks at communications that are state-to-public, in order to explain and inform in relation to policy, and creates relationships designed to last longer than one project or government.

Definitions for public diplomacy have developed over the last decade. The ‘new’ public diplomacy, Cull discusses, draws attention to key shifts in the international arena, including the increased global involvement of non-traditional actors in diplomacy, including NGOs, global technologies that increase information flow and the now-blurred line between domestic and international news. The increase of ‘marketing’ terms replaces propaganda, the incorporation of a ‘language of prestige’, with terms such as ‘nation branding’ and ‘soft power’, the increase of people-to-people communications, and the traditional ‘top-down’ approach are now being joined by a focus on ‘relationship-building’.

The dominance of the (now disbanded) United States Information Agency (USIA) in the distribution of information on behalf of the government demands that any conversation on public diplomacy be centred on this organisation. Established in 1953 with a mission statement to understand, inform and influence foreign publics in the promotion of the national interest, this agency supported varied exchange programmes, and provided information to both non-government and government departments, including the President, with staff across the world.\textsuperscript{25} In 1965, the USIA began to use the term public diplomacy, and Cull notes that ‘it was the perfect piece of propaganda about propaganda.’\textsuperscript{26} Public relations (PR) was deemed

\textsuperscript{25} Cull, \textit{The Cold War}, pp. 486-493
\textsuperscript{26} ibid, p. 260
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‘vulgar’, and by using the term diplomacy, it ‘enshrined the USIA alongside the state department’ as a legitimate organ of foreign relations.27 At its inception, the agency was an amalgamation of existing information and publicity agencies, so its early budget is not easily defined. However, by its closure in 1999, its expenditure was estimated to be US$1.109 billion. The agency covered all conceivable methods of communication, and its arena of influence was so large that the organisation is an ample resource for public diplomacy analysis. Cull inevitably explored public diplomacy through the lens of the agency. He explained that the term was little used outside the agency until the 1980s, and graduated to common usage overseas only in official circles. Public diplomacy broke into the public consciousness following the terrorist attacks on the US in September 2001.

Cull described public diplomacy as having five main concepts: listening, advocacy, cultural diplomacy, exchange diplomacy and international broadcasting.28 Listening includes research and analysis, and feeding this information back into the policy process. The creation and dissemination of information materials to build understanding of a policy is the advocacy part of the process. In this context, cultural diplomacy is the dissemination of cultural practices designed to promote the interests of the actor. Cull included participation in World Fairs as an investment in cultural projection, which ‘became vast arenas of intercultural gladiatorial combat’.29 Exchange diplomacy involves the exchange of persons for mutual advantage, such as student exchange. Transmitting news over state-funded international radio is an important aspect of the international broadcasting portion. Both exchange and listening involve two-way communication. However, Cull’s public diplomacy as a whole is considered a one-way phenomenon. Public Diplomacy does not necessarily engage directly with the mass audience and often practitioners will engage ‘significant individuals’ with the expectation that the individual will disseminate the message more effectively due to their existing local influence.

Acknowledging the growth of public diplomacy post 9/11 as a worldwide phenomenon, Cull wrote that the primary American contribution to the phenomenon is the term ‘public diplomacy’, which is essentially a publically acceptable term for propaganda.30 He reminds us that in earlier times, the French, German and Italian communities had organisations designed to promote their culture. America’s first official forays into public diplomacy were

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27 ibid, p. 260
28 ibid, pp. xv, xv, xvi
29 ibid, p. 11
30 Cull, The Cold War, pp. xvi
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student exchanges in the 19th century. These were primarily philanthropic ventures. Evaluating each of the five aspects of public diplomacy through the life of the USIA, Cull noted that the agency became good at listening. It used opinion polls and analysis internally, all forms of one-way media and embraced changes in technology. Agents worked with Hollywood to ensure that the biggest pictures did not offend an overseas audience, although culture never sat well within the advocacy driven organisation. Most veterans of the agency list exchange as the most effective tool of public diplomacy, primarily as they were two-way endeavours, although as any results would be long-term, they were harder to implement for a short-term objective. Here, the government played the role of coordinator, and Cull raised the possibility of this as a model for the future of public diplomacy. As the agency had ‘a preoccupation with the ends of American power,’ initiatives which could not be measured against this were often not highly valued. Exchanges were treated as ‘just another way to convince a foreigner of the superiority of the American way.’

Every Director of the USIA that Cull interviewed named the ‘Voice of America as the most potent tool at the agencies disposal.’ Broadcasting American opinions, news, politics, and items of general interest across the globe was the most efficient means of sending the American message. As transistor radios were achievable acquisitions, and the transmissions reached remote and isolated people, this was an efficient means of global communication. As an arm of the advocacy function of public diplomacy, this was a powerful tool when used carefully.

Accepting the role of the citizen diplomat, Cull recognised the behaviour of any American encountering a ‘foreigner’ plays a part in US public diplomacy. While this may seem contradictory to the definition, which relied on an interest in policy, in his final words there is some room for a new understanding of public diplomacy. He writes that in the concluding analysis, ‘one is struck by the limits of public diplomacy.’ The best public diplomacy cannot make a bad policy good, although ‘if properly empowered, public diplomats might know enough to prevent a bad policy from being enacted in the first place.’ He describes

31 ibid, p. 490
32 ibid, p. 491
33 ibid, p. 492
34 As the Australian Government also found through both the Colombo Plan and Radio Australia programmes, to be discussed in chapters to follow.
35 ibid, p. 503
36 ibid.
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aspects of diplomacy that may improve public diplomacy, including more listening, exchange and establishment of relationships. This introduces aspects more often described in cultural diplomacy theories.

Along with moving towards ‘new’ public diplomacy definitions, a number of scholars have suggested we pay attention to particular aspects of public diplomacy and a summary of their main points follows. These intellectuals are often seen through the lens of a particular academic or practical focus, but they do enrich the environment of cultural diplomacy scholarship. While Cull is a leading historian on public diplomacy, Phillip M. Taylor highlights some of the limitations of public diplomacy theories. Understanding audience perception of the message, Ken S. Heller and Liza M. Persson discuss the importance of choosing the most appropriate messenger, as well as including the audience reaction in the formation of the policy. R. S. Zaharna, William P. Kiehl and Beatrice Camp promote using the audience’s language to deliver the message. Bruce Wharton and Narren Chitty discuss using public diplomacy activities to inform future policies, and involving the domestic audience. Jan Mellisen cautions that public diplomacy works best where language and other exchange relationships of economics or education already exist, and Brian Hocking highlights the importance of active audience participation. Sherry Mueller introduces the concept of the citizen diplomat, a slightly controversial but relevant addition, as governments do use it deliberately. These scholars add to Cull’s description on public diplomacy theory, and move us towards a discussion on cultural diplomacy.

The majority of modern literature on public diplomacy centres on American research. In the Routledge Handbook of Public Diplomacy, several definitions of public diplomacy can be found, and they show some differences of perspective.37 This is a very valuable compilation, as it explores definitions of public diplomacy by experts from different professional and academic backgrounds, and includes international case studies. Taylor, who specialises in International Communications, challenges the public diplomacy maxim that ‘to know us is to love us,’ as the 9/11 hijackers knew the West well, having travelled to America and been educated in Europe.38 They saw that the West was not only tolerating but also accepting, and

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even encouraging, values that were anathema to their own culture.\(^{39}\) Taylor contended that strategic communications should be more about telling people who you are and why, than demanding they be more like us. His work reminds us that there are limits and challenges to public and cultural diplomacy work, and that we must always consider these when planning new, or studying historical, case studies.

Like Taylor, Heller and Persson argue that the purpose of public diplomacy is to influence the audience. Their work highlights the importance of long-term relationships in public and cultural diplomacy programmes. They add that the purpose of this is to ‘shape the global mental environment in such a way as to shape the opinions, actions and perceptions [of others] to be more in line with U.S. national interests.’\(^{40}\) Advocates of public diplomacy propose that practitioners use activities such as sports, cultural events and exchange programmes as tools for cultural understanding, and also as a way of analysing the reception of the message. While the intent of the message is important, understanding how the audience receives that message, with the flexibility to alter delivery, is an important dimension to remember when looking at the following case studies.

Extending the motif of shaping opinions in public diplomacy, Zaharna explains that communication can be viewed as a linear process of transferring information, or a social process of building relationships.\(^{41}\) As public diplomacy is as much a communication phenomenon as a political one, Zaharna describes the information framework here as generally focusing on design and dissemination of a message to advance political objectives, often with the goal of persuasion or control. Cultural and exchange programmes are an initiative used by practitioners to build trust and relationships, usually in an effort to enhance a political message by engaging publics. Media driven informational campaigns are common in public diplomacy literature, but relationship-building cases are comparatively rare. Both linear and social processes of communication are used, which makes public diplomacy initiatives interesting for communications scholars.

\(^{39}\) As demonstrated by the 2015 case of the Australian Government and public protesting the execution of two Australian drug traffickers in Bali, it is hard to accept the laws/norms of another country when they contradict one’s own.


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Relational communication, Zaharna continues, favours the notion of ‘fellowship’ in establishing interactive communication channels. Exchange programmes and visits are the first tier of this framework, and success is often tied to the participants’ personalities. The second tier initiatives involve institutions, communities and societies, tend to be open-ended and integrate foreign participants. A benefit is that the participants often take partial ownership of the programme, and it provides valuable cultural knowledge and connections. While these communication channels are used within public diplomacy, as Zaharna’s paper explains, they are used to impose information from the top down (government to public). That communication equals information, and that communication problems can be solved by providing more or better information, appears to be a dominant Western ideology. Zaharna notes the danger of using this assumption when creating initiatives for non-western publics. She warns that more must be understood about assumptions of communications theory and practice in different cultures, confirming the importance of Heller and Persson’s work.

Looking at the activities and opinions of diplomats who are at the coalface is crucial in manifestations of cultural diplomacy. William Kiehl, editor of The Last Three Feet, writes that the modern public diplomat understands that the messenger is as important as the message. Looking at the case studies in this volume, he acknowledges that the public diplomat struggles to explain his work to the layman, because public diplomacy is so multifaceted and requires a different approach in each case. In this volume, Beatrice Camp explains that at the Shanghai Expo in 2010, the Mandarin speaking American student ambassadors in the US Pavilion joked with the crowds, and encouraged audience response ‘in a very American way.’ Camp, a former US diplomat, describes that this was ‘people to people diplomacy at its best.’ This became an opportunity for many to have a taste of ‘America’ that they would not otherwise experience. By meeting the student ambassadors who spoke a familiar language, they were able to experience cultural differences in a semi-familiar way, not unlike the readers of Die Neue Zeitung.

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42 ibid, p. 97.
44 Beatrice Camp, ‘How I Came to Love the Shanghai Expo,’ pp. 8–19, in Kiehl, The Last Three Feet.
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In the same volume, Wharton clarifies that *good* public diplomacy officers (PDOs) ‘must find productive common ground with people from cultures and histories that are not like ours.’[^46] *Great* public diplomacy officers will ‘use that understanding to inform our policies and shape our programs.’[^47] Here, Wharton is shifting from a top-down focus of a policy-centred public diplomacy to a cultural diplomacy that uses the cultural understandings to *form* policy. He continues that the next generation of PDOs will make public diplomacy programmes ‘such a natural and integral part of an embassy’s exercise of smart power that we will stop thinking about public diplomacy as a separate diplomatic function.’[^48] They will understand the policy, and how the host nation will perceive it, and will ‘use that knowledge to make policy and programs more effective.’[^49] This seems to be a revolutionary idea in definitions of public diplomacy, and fits with the definition of ‘new’ public diplomacy. Wharton adds the idea that public diplomacy can be used to shape policy, and this is an important consideration for cultural diplomacy programmes, too.

Confirming this idea, Chitty, Director of the Soft Power Advocacy & Research Centre in Australia, has written one of the few Australian contributions to the discussion. He states that ‘a strategic public diplomacy perspective should inform foreign policy development as well as the management of image and diplomatic events and activities.’[^50] There is a clear view, Chitty explains, ‘that public diplomacy needs to be directed externally,’ although it is important to involve the domestic public. The focus here is still external communications and explaining *us* to *them*, but the inclusion of elements of informing foreign policy development confirms that this is the underlying theme of public diplomacy.

In her piece for *The Last Three Feet*, Snow considers traditional public diplomacy to be governments addressing global publics to inform, influence and engage those publics in support of national objectives and foreign policy. She also acknowledges that inclusion of non-governmental entities in the discussion is a feature of a newer definition of public diplomacy. She writes that the US government does not focus on its domestic audience in its public diplomacy programme. The domestic audience is often not considered in diplomacy theories. Snow also sees a communications shift *towards* two-way interactive strategies, as

[^47]: ibid, p. 117
[^48]: ibid, p. 121
[^49]: ibid, p. 122
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social and personal persuasion develops into an effective tool.\(^{51}\) Snow has experienced several different aspects of public diplomacy in her career, which has allowed her to understand the development of theories and practice. Shifts in thought, audience and purpose are acknowledged in these ‘new’ definitions, highlighting a move in academic discussion that moves towards ideas encapsulated in cultural diplomacy theories.

Working at the Clingendael Institute, Mellisen has written and studied public diplomacy extensively.\(^{52}\) As a structural development, public diplomacy thrives in an environment of independent countries with multiple relationships. Where countries share language, trade, economic and educational exchange relationships, public diplomacy is at its most successful. Mellisen points out that examples such as German and Japanese post-war efforts to re-establish links with the international community were deliberate, integrated movements to ensure the country’s survival, and are exceptional. Mellisen also recognises that public diplomacy is moving towards two-way communications, to engage more with foreign audiences, although he acknowledges the challenge of ensuring the message is received in the way it was intended. Mellisen’s explanation of public diplomacy is that it targets the general public in foreign societies.\(^{53}\) He sees that the ‘starting point of this variant of diplomacy is…the perceiving end, with the foreign consumers of diplomacy,’ that public diplomacy focuses on the perceptions of the receiver, rather than the sender of the message. Here, ‘cultural relations’ pave the way for the establishment of relationships with foreign publics, in order to use them for the more policy-driven public diplomacy initiatives.

Also working with the Clingendael Institute, Hocking writes that developments in diplomatic communications have created an opportunity to redefine public diplomacy with a focus on an active role for foreign publics. As individuals and groups are empowered by information technology, public diplomacy, he affirms, is increasingly defined as ‘diplomacy by rather than of publics.’\(^{54}\) Traditional diplomacy emphasises a top-down process, and Hocking believes that this is reflected in public diplomacy, although this is shifting in the modern climate to include a bottom-up influence. Hocking’s point contributes to the discussion on

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52 Netherlands Institute of International Relations http://www.clingendael.nl/ retrieved 20 April, 2015
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audience participation in these new aspects of diplomacy, and how new practices are challenging traditional theories.

Another concept that involves civilian participation is citizen diplomacy, as explained by Sherry Mueller. This is the concept that each individual has the right and the responsibility to shape their country’s foreign relations ‘one handshake at a time.’\(^{55}\) This includes not only exchange programme participants and travellers, but all who interact with people from other nations: hosts and hostesses, journalists, taxi drivers and sportspeople. As the media has a wider reach, as communication technology improves, and as international travel becomes the norm, it is vital that we understand the effects of cultural diplomacy. Citizen diplomacy is generally not accepted as part of either cultural or public diplomacy definitions, as there is no policy behind it. However, this type of diplomacy can be used very deliberately by governments (as will be seen in the chapter on the Melbourne Olympic Games), highlighting the differences between theoretical debate and practical application.

Jens Nielsen Sigsgaard looks at the possibilities of the new dynamics of international relations, and how they can be affected by non-traditional means.\(^{56}\) While public diplomacy is sometimes used casually as a modern, and more palatable, term for historical propaganda activities, Sigsgaard claims that public diplomacy is considerably more complex, with propaganda traditionally focused on narrowing horizons of thought, and public diplomacy endeavouring to open them. He explores propaganda and its modern potentials in diplomacy when combined with new audiences and purposes. Hosting events like the Olympic Games and International Summits are classified as ‘strategic communications’, and a way of creating and controlling the news agenda. Sigsgaard adds that the most important relationship-building scheme is that of student exchange. Exchanges of ideas, language, art and religion have always been a vital aspect of diplomacy.\(^{57}\) He explains that cultural diplomacy is different to cultural exchange, in that the former requires a basis in an official initiative, and this important distinction makes his work particularly important for this thesis. For Sigsgaard, public diplomacy and cultural diplomacy are closely related and overlapping. Public diplomacy is a more formal, policy-driven initiative, and cultural diplomacy is an overarching

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\(^{56}\) Sigsgaard, _The New Era_, pp. 10, 17.

\(^{57}\) Sigsgaard, _The New Era_, p. 27. Sigsgaard qualifies that, for him, culture is limited to music, art, philosophy and values. ‘Values’ include political process, cultural norms and ‘ways of being’. This definition is still valid for this thesis.
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forum in which public diplomacy can be practiced and enhanced.\textsuperscript{58} The importance he places on the role of cultural diplomacy signifies the need for more focus on these studies. It is beyond the means of this thesis to elevate cultural diplomacy, or for it to be seen as an overarching forum in which to practice public diplomacy, although this is a noble aim.

These differences show how various elements contribute to the field of public diplomacy. Most are also applicable to cultural diplomacy. It is important to understand public diplomacy theories, in order to appreciate the similar but separate place of cultural diplomacy. All themes are relevant, and the multitude of diplomatic interactions require just as many solutions. Undoubtedly, as Sigsgaard claims, the academic discussion is fascinating, but when it is used as a lens through which to view actual events and historical case studies, both areas of scholarship are enhanced. These contributors are all enriching the debate by suggesting important aspects for consideration in our study. Improving and expanding communications to identify and build relationships, to shape opinions and to include wider audiences appears to be the focus of developments in public diplomacy. To listen more, in order to use communications in conjunction with policy objectives, is a way forward for the ‘new’ public diplomacy. Public diplomacy discussions do generally centre on communications in support of policy. Cultural diplomacy theories centre on using culture in promotion of policy, using relationships to support government agendas.

2.2.2 Cultural Diplomacy

At its simplest, cultural diplomacy uses cultural exchange to support foreign policy aims. The complexities of definitions and any discussion of what specifically is or is not included in either public or cultural diplomacy is ultimately a reflection of the complexities of statecraft and international relationships. Cultural diplomacy is not a new way of undertaking diplomacy, but a new way of thinking and planning. The following discussion of cultural diplomacy explains how this field differs from public diplomacy, and is a significant tool in its own right. International relationships are complex, and the more diplomats understand, the better prepared they are.

It is perhaps the words of Milton C. Cummings Jr. which are the most clear on cultural diplomacy, which he defined as ‘the exchange of ideas, information, art, and other aspects of

\textsuperscript{58} This explanation would see public diplomacy as a tool of cultural diplomacy. While this is a logical conclusion to draw, it is ambitious within the current academic conversation.
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culture among nations and their peoples in order to foster mutual understanding.\(^5^9\) In an essay entitled ‘Cultural Diplomacy and the United States Government: A survey’ published in 2003, the political scientist wrote of the history of arts and culture in US government policy and explored some of the patterns and trends from the previous seventy years. One of the most important points he noted was that ‘programs in cultural diplomacy are often strongest if they have a firm institutional base, grounded in legislation, and when they have strong support at the top of the federal government.’\(^6^0\) This is the main criteria for defining an activity as cultural diplomacy, and the contributions of other scholars extend on this.

Working at the Centre for Public Diplomacy with Nicholas J. Cull, Cynthia P. Schneider bases her work on the definition given by Cummings and explores the idea that as cultural diplomacy is based on sharing creative expression it is inherently enjoyable. This makes cultural diplomacy one of the most effective tools in the diplomacy toolbox. Academic exchange, aid, sports, tourism and cinema are all examples of cultural expression that combine pleasure with the potential for relationship-building and cultural exchange.

One of the most important works to come out of the Clingendael Institute, in regards to this thesis, is that of Simon Mark. Mark compared cultural diplomacy activities in Canada, New Zealand and Australia, and promotes the importance of cultural diplomacy as a field of diplomacy. In ‘A Greater Role for Cultural Diplomacy,’ he is disappointed when cultural diplomacy is referenced as just one of the components of public diplomacy, and argues that cultural diplomacy has the potential to become a powerful tool for ‘improving a country’s image and its relations with other countries.’\(^6^1\) Mark describes cultural diplomacy as ‘the deployment of a state’s culture in support of its foreign policy.’ He claims that one of the primary benefits of cultural diplomacy is that it can ‘overcome audience suspicion of official messages and serve to provide substance to national reputation.’ It does this by being open and honest about the speaker’s country, admitting mistakes and is committed to being ‘on the ground.’ Mark’s discussion helps capture the breadth of the field, and adds to it the overcoming of audience suspicion of official messages, to provide substance to a nation’s reputation, which makes this an important contribution to modern diplomacy.


\(^6^0\) Ibid, p. 14

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Mark points out that unfortunately, cultural diplomacy has been regarded as a lesser tool of diplomacy, which is itself often seen as a lesser tool of foreign policy. This has been exacerbated by confused definitions, and the difficulty in determining the impact of cultural diplomacy programmes has seen the potential of this field largely undervalued. The functional objectives of cultural diplomacy, as defined by Mark, include ‘advancing trade, political, diplomatic, and economic interests, developing bilateral relationships,’ and then to maintain, and possibly strengthen, these relationships in times of tension. His works seek to elevate cultural diplomacy in both theory and practice.

It is difficult to make distinctions between these theories of diplomacy. Exchanges between academics, writers, artists and intellectuals have long been regarded as cultural relations. Does this extend to journalists? If an exchange is funded by a university, which itself is government funded, is it part of a cultural diplomacy activity? Cultural exchange does not just refer to high or popular cultural exchange; all are important to cultural diplomacy, as the significance is in their purpose. If a junior cricket team receives a government grant to go to a neighbouring country to play a tournament, is that part of a cultural diplomacy programme?

Cultural diplomacy also has a domestic objective, which is to ‘build an improved identity awareness.’ Mark sees that cultural diplomacy can contribute to social cohesion, balancing the pressures of global homogenisation, and it affects domestic policies by instigating national compliance with the image being projected abroad. This is an important addition to the scholarship, as it widens the scope for activities and, importantly, looks at the effect of international exchange on the domestic audience. The chapter which looks at the Olympic Games particularly focuses on this aspect.

In Mark’s analysis, cultural diplomacy can ‘raise a state’s profile, contribute to nation branding, advance core interests, connect with the elite, mass and diaspora audiences,’ and provide powerful opportunities for minority groups. However, to reach its full potential, a change in the perception of cultural diplomacy is required. Its power rests on the intersection between national culture, values, identity and pride. While we must be careful with terms that invoke a national homogeneity, this does not decrease the potential of cultural diplomacy in practice. Mark asserts that cultural diplomacy can give substance to public diplomacy. I argue

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63 ibid, p. 28.
64 Mark, ‘A Greater Role for Cultural Diplomacy,’ p. 32.
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that it does this by adding an intimacy and acceptance that is based upon personal relationships. Cultural diplomacy, by its nature, can reflect passion and excitement; it can advertise the pleasures of creative expression, reflect the morals and attitudes of a people, and promote a state in ways that are denied to the more formal realms of diplomacy.

Mark places a high value on cultural diplomacy as a part of the public diplomacy toolkit. More importantly, his work strives to elevate cultural diplomacy from being just one part of public diplomacy into a significant phenomenon in its own right. Combined, the priorities of Mark and Cummings would see that cultural diplomacy is used to deploy a state’s culture in support of foreign policy, with the consideration that cultural exchange helps foster mutual understandings, and gives us a more comprehensive understanding of the discussion. Where Cull has helped understandings of how governments use public diplomacy, Mark has helped explore how cultural diplomacy is different and a valuable companion.

As with public diplomacy, numerous scholars contribute to the discussion, adding dimensions and exploring fields that build a dynamic patchwork of considerations. These ideas are all important in understanding how various episodes fit and are relevant as diplomatic initiatives. The following scholars enrich our understandings of what cultural diplomacy is, and what huge potential it has. In the following section, Geoffrey Cowan and Amelia Arsenault introduce collaborative projects as an important priority for cultural diplomacy. Robert J. Williams highlights that cultural exchanges can claim government resources when they are linked to foreign policy, thus forming a defining criterion of cultural diplomacy projects. Long-term relationships are the only way for a government to promote thematic cultural ideologies, as discussed by Andrew Fenton Cooper. Maki Aoki-Okabe, Yoko Kawamura and Toichi Makita agree on the importance of collaborative works, and warn of the dangers of creating a cultural hierarchy. David Ronfeldt and John Arquilla remind us that cultural diplomacy can have a dark purpose: soft power and cultural diplomacy do not necessarily have the best interests of the audience behind them. These scholars enrich our understanding of cultural diplomacy theories, which in turn enhance our understanding of this thesis’ case studies.
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Cowan and Arsenault explore the theme of moving from monologue to dialogue to collaboration as layers of diplomacy. They define collaboration as initiatives in which people work together on a joint venture or project, and assert that in some cases, this can be a more effective approach to engaging foreign publics. Collaboration is one of the most important aspects of cultural diplomacy, as exchange examples show. It is significantly more than two-way discussion, as it relies on action. Diplomacy activities are most effective when they are focused on building credibility among foreign publics, and by actively participating in creation, credibility is built into the end product. They further point out that:

individuals who engage in conversation may each leave the room with a better understanding of the other. Individuals who build or achieve something together—whether it be in building a home, a school or a church; in composing a piece of music; or in playing side by side on a sports team—are forever bound by their common experience and/or achievement.66

Cowan and Arsenault see collaboration as the most important form of creating social capital, which can be invaluable in times of crisis.

Participants in collaborative projects form bonds of trust, and are more likely to cooperate in future endeavours, thus creating a virtuous circle. This then extends from the participating individuals to their communities, and this ‘societal trust’ can become a ‘trust of a broad fabric of social institutions’, promoting shared values in society as a whole. These projects work best when there is a definable goal, suggesting that they could easily fit into a policy objective and produce measurable results. Collaborations necessarily involve negotiation and often compromise, and if the project goals are altered or the parties feel disenfranchised, the project can fail. As with any diplomatic initiative, clarity of purpose and design minimise the risk.

In Culture and International History, Schumacher and Gienow-Hecht explore how ‘culture has emerged as an attractive new variable in the study of foreign relations.’ They write that

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66 ibid, p. 21.
67 ibid, p. 23.
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the strength of this approach to international history ‘is its ability to place a narrow range of ideas and individuals in a broader context,’ and to point to the varieties of the term ‘culture’ as it is used by theorists and practitioners. Yuzo Ota describes cultural diplomacy as ‘any official and unofficial undertaking to promote a national culture among foreigners, when performed by those who identify themselves as part of the national culture at hand.’ This is a very broad and generous definition for cultural diplomacy, but the focus is on promoting national culture. Ota’s definition allows for unofficial undertakings which is generally not accepted in cultural diplomacy terms, however that he specifies that they are performed by those who identify themselves as part of the national culture provides insight into the intent-actors are deliberately portraying a cultural aspect. This speaks to the importance of cultural diplomacy on the domestic audience in belonging to and identifying with a national culture, and then exporting those ideals.

Soft power is portrayed as virtuous by Ronfeldt and Arquilla, who explain that ‘standard presentations tend to portray soft power as “good” and hard power as “bad”.’ Cultural diplomacy can, however, be used in a tough, heavy and even dark manner: to warn, embarrass, denounce or shun a target. They discuss examples in which media organisations have been infiltrated or encouraged to portray a negative depiction of a country or organisation. This is done in both public and cultural diplomacy, and the messenger/infiltrator is trained to understand the most effective means of communicating their message, including the forum, the language and the timing. Where the purpose is to win ‘hearts and minds’ and shape opinions, cultural diplomacy can be very powerful.

The Centre for Cultural Diplomacy Studies (CCDS) in Berlin is committed to the promotion and development of cultural diplomacy. It works in partnership with six universities across Europe. The CCDS’ Cultural Diplomacy Dictionary provides for the public and private sector actors in cultural diplomacy initiatives, and acknowledges that the exchange of ideas, values and traditions can strengthen relationships. This is similar to the work of Mark and

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72 Gienow-Hecht, Transmission Impossible.
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Cummings, and adds the term ‘sociocultural cooperation’ to the discussion, which is an important layer.

Vasile Puscas works with the CCDS, and he explores how:

cultural diplomacy can be defined as a track II, non-conventional diplomatic practice, aimed at identifying cultural patterns of behaviour as well as the commonalities of two or more competing groups in order to find a common ground of dialogue, while preserving culturally sensitive aspects.74

This discussion supports those that focus on using cultural diplomacy to facilitate long-term relationships. Puscas’ work addresses the importance of finding common elements in the dialogue (whether the physical or emotional needs of the negotiators) while respecting differences. This aspect must be respected in order to maintain long-term relationships, and contributes to a respectful and balanced relationship. Radio Australia did this when it altered broadcast times in consideration of the traditional prayer times of its audience.

These contributions introduce themes of collaboration, perceptions of self, promotion of national culture, cooperation across societies and cultures, and insights into the debates surrounding the images of hard and soft power to the discussion of cultural diplomacy. It is important to acknowledge these issues as part of the larger scholarship. Cultural diplomacy is not easy to describe, either in its theory or its practice. Realising the voluminous layers of cultural diplomacy has allowed a richer understanding of the value of the case studies, such as how important citizen diplomats can be, how sound and visual effects can affect an audience and how these and other aspects can be used to send a particular message. Knowing there are various theoretical viewpoints allows observers to expand their thinking, and see historical events in a new light.

Both cultural and public diplomacy incorporate a wide range of activities. Public diplomacy deals most specifically with those activities aimed at a foreign public in order to explain a course of action or present a case. Where the communication is that of an informative or explanatory nature (one-way), the action is generally not considered to be cultural diplomacy.

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These interactions, while sometimes falling within the scope of cultural diplomacy, are more closely linked to traditional or public diplomacy than they are to forging cultural relationships. Briefing diplomats and facilitating their communications are the responsibilities of public diplomacy, and do not involve the culture of the state. There are many grey areas. It is not important to categorise specific interactions, but it is to understand ways of thinking about interactions and how they can be used best.

Cultural diplomacy is able to promote ideologies that specific policy cannot. Freedom, progression, acceptance and welcoming are values that governments are keen to promote, yet they cannot be defined by a policy. In pursuit of this, culture is politicised and cultural ‘products’ (literature, film, television, radio, the arts, science, music, sports, language and natural resources for trade and tourism) are marketed and bought and sold as fora for influence and understanding. Cultural diplomacy focuses on the public relationship, and on sharing cultural experiences and understandings in order to create an environment that will endure changes in government.

Classifying cultural diplomacy as part of public diplomacy, and restricting it to the exchanges of creative cultural expressions, causes discomfort to some government institutions. Cull notes that the British Council prefers to distance itself from the term public diplomacy, as this suggests that the organisation is a pawn of the government. They prefer the term ‘cultural relations.’ A government should not use a non-government entity to push diplomatic agendas. Cultural resources are the concern of cultural relations in the exchange of ideas without a specific policy directive, even when they are government-funded and conform to a government agenda. They should not be confused with cultural diplomacy.

As the definition of public diplomacy changes, we must be wary of broadening the scope too far. Public diplomacy is an important aspect of the broader task of diplomacy. To try to add too many layers and actors may reduce its effectiveness. Definitions that include state-to-people communications for the purpose of informing publics of a national interest or policy goal should hold. Just as there have been developments in thinking that have brought about a ‘new’ public diplomacy, perhaps there is a case for a ‘new’ cultural diplomacy. The political endeavours that aim to build relationships, foster mutual understandings and embark on long-term projects, as well as those that are removed from specific policy initiatives, should be

75 Cull, Public Diplomacy, p. 19.
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given a separate place. This place is in the realm of cultural diplomacy. It is not a lesser or competing arm of diplomacy, but a complementary one.

2.2.3 Cultural Diplomacy in the Cold War era

Thoughts of using cultural exchanges to influence and inform public policy came to especial prominence as the international political atmosphere shifted from World War Two into the Cold War, and targeted campaigns of influence were employed by governments. Hugh Whitford writes of the dismay and anguish of W. Eugene Groves, who ran for president of the National Students Association (US) in 1966, and discovered that it was ‘secretly funded by the Central Intelligence Agency.’\(^{76}\) The arrangement dated back to the early years of the Cold War to combat similar activities of the Soviet Union in their efforts to ‘win the ideological allegiance of young people’ through an indirect program, financed by Moscow, using private citizens and groups to spread an ideological message.\(^{77}\)

Groves investigated further and gradually other similar relationships came to light, showing many officials in the American labour movement, anti-Communist intellectuals, writers, journalists, missionaries and activists ‘all belonged to the CIA’s covert network of front operations.’\(^{78}\) As these links were exposed, the network dissolved, with funding for these ending in 1967.

The CIA’s first chief of political warfare, Frank Wisner, had deliberately created and encouraged these relationships, calling them ‘a “Mighty Wurlitzer” organ, capable of playing any propaganda tune he desired.’\(^{79}\) Whitford explores how the subversive tactics of the Communists in Eastern Europe and the U.S.S.R. had inspired the formation of the CIA and a similar mode of operations.

With ‘academics, émigrés, and labour officials … sharing their expert knowledge and contacts in foreign countries and blurring boundaries between the official and civil realms,’ the CIA was able to influence groups of citizens which traditional diplomacy could not. William J. Donovan, Coordinator of Information appointed in 1941, believed ‘persuasion, penetration and intimidation … are the modern counterparts of sapping and mining in the

\(^{76}\) Hugh Wilford, the Mighty Wurlitzer, Harvard University Press, Massachusetts, 2008, p. 1
\(^{77}\) ibid
\(^{78}\) ibid, p. 4
\(^{79}\) ibid, p. 7
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siege warfare of former days. In a political atmosphere of the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan, Kennan’s Long Telegram, the formation and activities of the Soviet Union’s Communist Information Bureau, and the ‘alarming deterioration in American-Soviet relations,’ support was growing for a formalised central information agency.

One of the first activities of this Agency was to distribute anti-communist literature in Italy before the 1948 election, and providing scarce newsprint to pro-Western newspapers. Covert campaigns designed to influence public opinion were seen simply and justifiably as a response to the political warfare campaigns engaged in by the Kremlin. The CIA has often been depicted as exercising complete control over the recipients of their covert largess. The case studies Wilford examines, and many others related to public or cultural diplomacy style activities, suggest a more complex reality. Members of the public and the various stakeholders (particularly in international activities) will act according to their own needs and belief systems. Similarly, the contribution to the war to win hearts and minds is very much open to question, and the impact of propaganda on target populations is notoriously hard to measure.

Operating these types of programs throughout the 1950s and 60s, the CIA was certainly using cultural exchanges to support foreign policy aims, and in a very strategic way. The Australian government records do not show such a targeted approach, but the politicians, diplomats and other prominent stakeholders were certainly aware of the advantages as possibilities of this approach to diplomacy.

Interest in the concept of modernization, particularly in post-World War Two America, was so compelling to foreign policy makers, due to the ‘perceived potential to link the promotion of development with the achievement of security.’ By using development aid, technological assistance, foreign investment, and integrated planning, foreign policy makers hoped to accelerate the passage of traditional societies through to the liberal, capitalist, and democratic

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80 Hugh Wilford, the Mighty Wurlitzer, Harvard University Press, Massachusetts, 2008, p. 19
81 Hugh Wilford, the Mighty Wurlitzer, Harvard University Press, Massachusetts, 2008, p. 23
82 Hugh Wilford, the Mighty Wurlitzer, Harvard University Press, Massachusetts, 2008, p. 24/25
83 Hugh Wilford, the Mighty Wurlitzer, Harvard University Press, Massachusetts, 2008, p. 252
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ways of life of Western countries. By guiding this transition, American, or other Western governments, could guide, and protect, these emerging nations.  

Scholar Michael E. Latham argues that ‘modernization promised an altruistic solution to some the Cold War’s most vexing problems,’ and providing a forum for America to promote democracy and alleviate poverty in conjunction. This would not only contain the dangers of communism, but dramatically improve the lives of millions. He discusses how modernization theories and concepts of social progress were subjects of discussion for intellectuals such as Woodrow Wilson and Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and that these early considerations ‘helped create the framework for ideas of modernization to be developed in the challenges faced in the Cold War.’

Modern thinkers in governments of the 1950s relied more formally on studies of psychology and psychoanalysis than before, and the acknowledgement of a truly global Cold War made the demand for programmatic, policy oriented knowledge appear greater. As the political power of Mao Zedong increased, and he entered a treaty of support with the Soviet Union in 1950, ‘the jarring realization that the world’s most populous country had fallen under Communist control’ had a tremendous impact on US foreign policy. The tasks of the psychologists, psychoanalysts, front organisations of the CIA, and all those in favour of modernization development policies had their work cut out for them.

Latham acknowledges that the theory of Modernization was discredited in the wake of U.S. failures, but has made a comeback when the world has faced new crises where ‘policy makers once again linked the promotion of development with the enhancement of security.’ He also recognises the suggestions of some critics and commentators who, in the 1970s, questioned the suitability and possible effects of imposing technologies in certain cultural contexts. These challenges are valuable in recognising that while the intention of modernisation or development projects might seem honourable, understanding the cultural context and adjusting programs to suit is at the core of good public and cultural diplomacy.

86 ibid, p. 36
87 ibid, p. 37
88 ibid, p. 38
89 ibid, p. 187
90 ibid, p. 215
Defining Cultural Diplomacy

Challenges imposing US led modernisation in countries such as Afghanistan and Iraq highlight the limitations to any policy which seeks to impose cultural ideas on another. These failures ‘demonstrated that foreign societies and cultures were not so pliable, and that the United States could not easily impose its own version of modernity at the point of a gun,’\(^9\) and this must be considered when exploring all cultural diplomacy style activities.

The concepts which are fundamental to this study include understanding power relationships, the exchange of ideas and information in order to foster mutual understandings across cultures, activities which are based on legislative directives, and those which have the potential for long term international relationships form the core of cultural diplomacy activities, and will be used throughout this work.

With a clearer understanding of what cultural diplomacy is, and as a historian understanding past events and their relationship to cultural diplomacy, it is important to understand the context in which these events happened. Appreciating the political, social and economic situation of the day, and how this might affect decision-makers, helps us understand their priorities. During the Menzies Era, Australia was struggling socially and economically in the post-war and Cold War context. It had to understand a new geographical shift in relation to security and trade, and balancing old Commonwealth ties with a new Pacific focus. While the politicians and government of the 1950s and 1960s did not use the language of cultural diplomacy and did not work within modern communications theories or those of conflict resolution or national branding, they were pioneers in practice. We will meet these people while examining the case studies and their significance for theories of cultural diplomacy.

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Presenting Australia

Setting the Scene

The Main Characters

To make sense of the case studies in this thesis, it is essential to understand what cultural diplomacy is, how it is deployed in the world, and the historical context of the era. It is also helpful to understand some of the major players in External Affairs in Australia. Robert Gordon Menzies was the Prime Minister and for a short time also Minister for External Affairs. Percy Spender and Richard Casey were activist Ministers to External Affairs. These three men made significant contributions to policy and diplomacy, to understanding others and seeing that Australia was understood. They were followed by Garfield Barwick and Paul Hasluck, who faced new challenges in the 1960s. These ministers were involved in the cases studied in this thesis.

Robert Gordon Menzies

Figure 3.1: Robert Gordon Menzies
Born in the small town of Jeparit in north-western Victoria in 1894, Menzies was the son of the owners of the general store.¹ Menzies considered his birthplace to be a tiny outpost in a forgotten backwater, and the notion of being ‘forgotten’ became the cornerstone of his political rhetoric.² In the harsh environment and economic climate of his childhood, determined self-reliance was prominent, and this sentiment carried through many policies. Menzies learned fast, worked hard and did not let his circumstances disrupt his ambitions. His political experience as a Victorian State Minister, the State Deputy Premier, Federal Treasurer and first term as Prime Minister (1939-41) saw that he came to his second term in government (1949-1966) with ‘more knowledge and experience of the Australian federal system than any Prime Minister since Alfred Deakin.’³

Paul Hasluck has commented that the unfortunate Australian tendency of labelling someone who reveres anything other than beer and sport as ‘un-Australian’⁴ affected Menzies. As Menzies was careful in his speech, academically successful, and had formal manners, he struggled to be seen by his electorate as Australian. A journalist for the Melbourne Herald confirmed this, writing: ‘Menzies commanded respect, but he was too dignified, too literate, too cerebral to be thought “one of us”’.⁵ Yet overseas, Menzies was certainly considered ‘Australian,’ and not a British pawn, which was important. Menzies had a reputation for being very British. His famous quote ‘I love Britain because I love Australia’⁶ reflects his pride in the British institutions adopted by Australia. Yet he also considered the US a powerful and necessary ally.

Menzies had visited Britain, Canada and the US in his first term as Prime Minister, but had little exposure to Asia until well into his second term.⁷ Hasluck notes that late in the 1950s, Menzies began to appreciate the social and political complexities of South East Asia, likely as a result of travel to Port Moresby, Thailand, Manila and Japan.⁸ He was responsible for building further a strong civil service team, which allowed ‘some of the greatest public

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² That the word ‘outpost’ is used in the 2007 Senate Report suggests that Menzies was not alone in these thoughts, and that Australia had not freed itself from this fear. ibid, p. 135.
⁷ Hasluck has noted that it was after Menzies’ Asian tour (1958-9) that he began to fully appreciate the situation in South East Asia, and the value of ‘doing the right thing’. As discussed in A. W. Martin, Robert Menzies: A Life, Volume 2 1894-1943, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1993, p. 357.
⁸ ibid, pp. 356, 357.
servants in Australian history’ the opportunity to shape the country.\(^9\) Early in his second term, Menzies was supported in External Affairs by Spender and Casey, two men who strongly believed that personal relationships and the understanding of international cultures was important to the pursuit of diplomatic goals. Menzies himself thought more in terms of traditional diplomacy and prioritising state-to-state negotiations. However, he did not stop his ministers from initiating and participating in other diplomatic programmes.

**Percy Claude Spender**

![Figure 3.2: Percy Claude Spender](image)

Spender graduated in law, and was admitted to the Bar in 1923. Spender’s personal interests lay in discovering Asia. He made three personal trips between 1929 and 1937, and they ‘awoke an awareness of endemic poverty in these countries.’\(^10\) Entering Parliament in 1937, he was determined that Australia be more mindful of its ‘destiny in the Pacific’, and he encouraged journalists to travel ‘to the places of activity and decision making’.\(^11\) Spender advocated seeing Australia and its role ‘through world eyes’, allowing for a better approach

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\(^11\) ibid, p. 76.
to foreign affairs. Spender’s approach to international relations in the post-war period revolved around adjusting to modern technology, the need to combine foreign and defence policies, an altered relationship with Britain and the Commonwealth and proposing ‘the closest possible liaison with the United States in relation to Pacific Policy’. He argued that the best response to the problems in South and South East Asia was through both economic and military measures.

Spender was successful in Cabinet, and his legal training enabled him to argue successfully for the initiatives of his post. In 1950, Spender was authorised to commit £13 million for Colombo Plan efforts, which were yet to be stipulated. David Lowe suggests that this was testament to both his high status in the government, and possibly to ‘a certain willingness by Menzies to give Spender his head’ in matters Menzies himself deemed less crucial to national interests. After an active role in the formation of the Colombo Plan and ANZUS Treaty, Spender left his Ministerial position to take up the role of Ambassador in Washington in 1951.

13 ibid. There is no clear evidence that Menzies thought this initiative unimportant. Menzies’ later writings celebrate his policy of allowing capable officers to do their jobs, and this possibly explains his trust in Spender.
Casey joined the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) in 1914, aged 24, receiving a commission and a junior staff job. Distinguished service was followed by manufacturing and business enterprises, and a role as Australian External Affairs Liaison Officer in London, before he was encouraged to apply for the position of High Commissioner in London in 1924. He became fascinated with the way that the British Foreign Office and the Fleet Street Press interacted.\footnote{W. J. Hudson, \textit{Casey}, Melbourne, Oxford University Press, 1986, p. 69.} This was the beginning of a close relationship with journalism and Public Relations that would last his whole career, and affect the Liberal Party and Menzies considerably including encouraging Menzies to employ a PR firm in the lead-up to the 1949 elections.\footnote{As Federal President of the Liberal Party, Casey raised significant funds for the election campaign, and initiated a long-term, successful, public relations programme. ibid, p. 190.} When he was Minister for External Affairs from 1951, Casey used the press to inform the public about his policies and international relationships, in particular introducing the Australian public to South East Asian leaders as friends and neighbours.
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In Washington as Australia’s first Minister 1940-42, Casey further developed his skills to use the press to promote Australia to the American public.16 Then a post in the Middle East for the British Government, 1942-44, at the invitation of Winston Churchill, allowed Casey to become acquainted with military, political, trade, and social affairs of people of various places and cultures during the latter part of World War Two. And he continued a highly international period as Governor of Bengal 1944-46. He learned the value of speaking with citizens, understanding their religion, ways of life and understandings of their place in the world, and used his understanding to broker gainful agreements. Later, the External Affairs portfolio allowed him to take advantage of his experience and connections, and he held this position from 1951 until 1960. His first overseas trip in this role was to countries in South East Asia and this converted him to the importance of the region to Australian foreign affairs. He had inherited the ANZUS Treaty and the Colombo Plan from Spender, and worked to ensure their success.17

Casey saw diplomacy as nothing more than the application of informed common sense, ‘exercised in relation to the national interest when it is in competition with other national interests.’18 He understood that the modern diplomat should not only know his own country’s defence and trade priorities, but be practised in the arts of diplomacy-by-conference and be fluent with all stakeholders, including NGOs and the press. The diplomat’s mind ‘has to be conditioned to a degree of publicity which was unknown to his predecessors of a generation ago.’19 Casey was practising public diplomacy and cultural diplomacy long before these had been academically theorised. As he held this post for almost nine years, and is recognised as one of Australia’s most diplomatically gifted External Affairs ministers, his tenure is ideal for studying Australian cultural diplomacy.

Casey struggled to convince Cabinet of his aims and their importance to Australia. He did not have the advocate’s skill in presenting his case, and his uneasy relationship with Menzies added to his struggles in Cabinet. Christopher Waters notes that when Casey was Minister, he complained that Australians were not seriously interested in foreign policy.20 Casey’s

16 Hudson, Casey, pp. 117, 138–55, 236.
19 ibid, p. 181.
reputation and success in leading Australia’s engagement in Asia was claimed to be largely because this was a region in which Menzies felt culturally and politically uncomfortable. This enabled Casey to broker relationships and encourage programmes of cultural understanding that contributed to Australian cultural diplomacy at the time. Upon his retirement from Parliament in 1960, Menzies complimented Casey, noting that ‘he has done more than any other to cultivate friendship with our Asian neighbours, and to improve that mutual understanding which is the true foundation of peace.’

Menzies held the portfolio of External Affairs for two years 1960-61, before handing over to Garfield Barwick.

The reach of Australian external affairs was still new and growing during the Menzies Era, as the Australian Government had previously followed Britain on most issues. There were few precedents or procedures to follow. Practitioners with experience or theoretical understandings of international relations were scarce, as were professional diplomats. Yet during this period, and because of their lack of experience, several ideas and programmes were developed that incorporated what we now consider to be cultural diplomacy.

International Relations as a discipline was introduced to Australian universities from the 1930s, and became more popular after World War Two. The war had brought South East Asia sharply into focus for Australians, and understanding poverty, ideological conflict, and social change became essential. By the 1930s, the link between trade performance and cultural knowledge of Asia was becoming widely accepted.

The Australian Institute of International Affairs, formed with momentum grown from State-based organisations in 1933, considered Australia’s place in the world. The name of its first journal, published in 1946, was ‘Australian Outlook’. This title combined the idea that Australia observes the wider world, with a suggestion that a distinctive Australian perspective exists. As trading relationships shifted towards customers and producers in the Western Pacific, recognition that Australia’s future required closer relations with its northern neighbours increased. By the 1950s, the Institute produced articles such as ‘China and the World Community’ and ‘Asia and the Western Pacific,’ as well as articles on the US and the

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United Nations (UN). In the 1950s, a series titled ‘Australia in World Affairs’ was produced, aiming to place Australian policies in the international sphere. Unfortunately, according to John Legge, the institution assumed that ‘western inquiry could identify and solve the problems of the Third World,’ and there was little appreciation of the difficulties of understanding cultures. Casey was the first External Affairs Minister to gain for himself, and encourage in others, an intimate understanding of South East Asia. The initiatives of the Department and its ministers suggest that this is an appropriate period to begin looking for cultural diplomacy initiatives, they were becoming aware of a new role for Australia in world affairs, and searched for the best ways to achieve new diplomatic relationships.

Australia in the World Under Menzies

The Cabinet that Menzies led in 1949 was strengthened by young members from a military background. The Australia that emerged from World War Two was impatient for change, and the new generation of politicians would implement it. During the Menzies Era, the population grew from eight million to around 11.5 million, and became more culturally diverse. The period was marked by the testing of orthodoxies such as the as changes to the British Empire and Commonwealth relations in a new era of Sub-continental independence and republicanism, the spread of communism and the Cold War, and a shift in Australian defence orientation, as evidenced in pacts such as like the ANZUS (1951) and the Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation SEATO (1954) pact.

In 1954, Queen Elizabeth II toured the country and the effusive and popular response to the young queen seemed to remind the world of Australia’s Britishness, but this may have also covered over substantive changes at work. The Cold War and communist threat provided the framework for foreign policy, and Judith Brett believes that this masked the decline of Britain’s global power and the rise of nationalism in Asia. Australian membership of the

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25 Legge, Australian Outlook, p. 16.
28 Brett, pp. 118, 120. The ‘Petrov Affair’ relates to the defection of a Soviet Ambassador, seeking to trade secrets for asylum. This famous incident is covered in many works on the period, including Judith Brett as referenced.
29 Ibid.
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SEATO later that year was framed by concerns of communist containment, as many of the European powers had left the region.  

As both economic and security fears eased from 1955, the domestic economy focused more on manufacturing, the building of suburbs and the accompanying consumer durables that formed the backbone of the Australian ‘way of life.’ Social mobility of female and migrant workers changed the shape of the workforce and of suburbs during the Menzies Era. Immigration laws shifted to include the wider European community, and race issues were a challenge for Australians. How could the country work with post-colonial Asia while maintaining a White Australia policy? How could it resolve the position of the Indigenous population while encouraging migrants from Europe? English-educated Indians were insulted by the policy, Japanese war brides were not granted entry until 1952, and the international goodwill promoted by the Colombo Plan was compromised by this issue.

Beside the increased movement of people, trade of commodities was expanding too. The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade saw global trade expand and traditional trading partners shift. Early on, the Australian Government wanted to retain the imperial preference system, whereas the wool and wheat growers were keen to diversify markets. The Department of Trade was established in 1956, and by 1967 Japan had replaced Britain as Australia’s leading trade partner.

In a similar expansion effort mode were other fields. In 1943 there were approximately 500 research sites in Australia for scientific, technical and medical studies, and this doubled by 1966. National cultural institutions, such as the National Ballet, Opera Company and Institute of Dramatic Art, were also initiated in the Menzies Era. Financially things were

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30 For example, Malaya and British Borneo remained British colonies and Papua New Guinea was governed by Australia. Many Australians, including Cabinet members, found it difficult to deal with other races without condescension, and in initial dealings with South and South East Asia, saw the countries of the region more as new export markets than political partners. Brett, ‘The Menzies Era, 1950-66,’ p. 130.

31 SEATO was a collective defence treaty signed in 1954, designed to block and contain communist powers. Most of the eight member countries were outside of the region but had commercial and defence interests in it. The pact was dissolved in 1977. U.S. Department of State, Office of the Historian, Bureau of Public Affairs, United States Department of State. https://history.state.gov/milestones/1953-1960/seato


33 These questions are proposed as a framework of government and community thought in order to build a context for the case studies, and are not discussed in detail in this thesis.


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looking positive for many Australians during what became known as ‘the long boom’ - a Holden family car, made in Australia and launched in 1948, cost £760, and by 1960 the price had increased by a third while male wages had quadrupled.\textsuperscript{36} In 1961, newly appointed External Affairs Minister Barwick noted that Australia is ‘at the one time a granary and a highly industrialised country’, with a European background and an ‘intimate geographical propinquity to Asia.’\textsuperscript{37} Australia experienced a resource shift in the Menzies Era, moving from a primary industry focus towards a mineral trade concern in the late 1960s.

Not all the items in the headlines were so positive though. Australian forces were in Japan, Korea, Indonesia and Vietnam at various times during this period, so the first experience of Australia for a lot of Asians was in a military context. Cold War concerns dominated the newspapers, and news of communist activities across Asia brought the region into focus for Australians. Shifts like these help explain the progress of the Menzies Era, from the security concerns that formed the basis of Colombo Plan Policy, to the projections of the future displayed at Expo 67. Domestic and international issues progress produced both challenges and opportunities- and what makes this era particularly useful for a study on cultural diplomacy activities is that this was a time of also marked by increased air travel and communications generally. And enhanced scale of human interaction was made possible by developments in mobility.

Substantial cultural diplomacy activity occurred in mid-20th century Australia. Regionally, there were political and economic shifts, and the Pacific became a focus for national security policy. In 1949, Australians elected a Prime Minister who would hold office for 16 years. Australia’s place in the region, its relationship with the Commonwealth and Pacific powers, the post-war/Cold War social and political environment and the youth of the DEA are all significant in understanding the following case studies.

The Menzies Era was also an era of continued decolonisation. Akira Iriye notes that more than twenty new states were created in the South and South East Asian region between 1945 and 1949, and another thirty in the following decade.\textsuperscript{38} The majority of ‘new’ nations were


\textsuperscript{38} Iriye, \textit{Cultural Internationalism}, pp. 161, 164.
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non-European, non-Western and generally underdeveloped. They would represent a vast array of ethnic, religious, and linguistic traditions. As these nations presented their own perspectives on international events, understanding cultural diversity became essential for governments and internationalists.

In the post-war period, when a new international order was being determined, Australia had a chance to form new relationships. Waters writes that before Menzies, the Chifley Government supported Asian nationalists and rejected military intervention in the region.\textsuperscript{39} Unfortunately, this policy of friendship was not backed by economic or social aid on any significant level. The Colombo Plan instigated under Menzies in 1951 went some way to tangibly backing up these overtures of support. Australian support of new states economically and developmentally helped establish a regional reputation, and affected both domestic and international ideas about Australian identity.

James Curran explains that as British identity lost its vitality, it became important to find an Australian ‘distinctiveness’ that would ‘transcend postcard stereotypes.’\textsuperscript{40} It was important that Australia participate in world events on its own, as ‘Australia’, and in as many different fora as possible. The focus was on showing ‘Australia’ as an individual nation that was part of, but not dependant on, the British Empire. Belonging to the Commonwealth, the Pacific region and bordering and trading with South East Asia would become part of Australian identity in the 1950s and 1960s.

Being a British colony had been an integral part of Australian identity. From the late 19th century to the early 1960s, schoolchildren sang the British national anthem God Save the King (or Queen), oaths of loyalty to the crown were an integral part of public ceremonies and Australians were secure in their ‘Britishness’. Prime Ministers repeated the story of Australia as an outpost of the British Empire.\textsuperscript{41} While there may have been debate about whether London directed affairs as the centre of the imperial metropolis or if each dominion held equal status, the fact was that Australian residents were British citizens, and this was not questioned. National identity was a focus of the age, both in understanding domestically who


\textsuperscript{40} James Curran, \textit{The Power of Speech: Australian Prime Ministers Defining the National Image}, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 2006, p. 46.

\textsuperscript{41} ibid, pp. 4, 6. In 1947, most people preferred to be known as British rather than Australian.
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Australians were and in establishing this reputation to an international audience. Shifting perceptions of identity throughout the Menzies Era would affect foreign policy.

As Australian governments reluctantly endured their own ‘de-dominionisation’, they became more empathetic to South East Asian states fighting for independence. Australia was emerging as a nation, and the focus was on establishing international status and claiming a measure of influence in international affairs. Many nations—including the US and the Soviet Union—considered Australia to be a dominion of the British Empire in the 1940s. The ‘battle’ for status as a sovereign nation still had to be ‘fought and won’, and this occurred to some extent in the 1950s and 1960s.

In 1950, Menzies gave the Roy Milne Memorial Lecture in Adelaide, highlighting that Australian institutional structures were based upon those of Britain, and that Australian identity therefore had a British foundation. In this speech he noted the debt owed to America, and the ‘particular interests’ in South East Asia and the South West Pacific. Although he was fiercely loyal to Britain, he understood that shifting global forces would not allow Australia to play any significant role, should it continue to be tied to one alliance.

The Cold War and spread of communism was probably the most significant paradigm for the developed world during the Menzies Era. In 1949, Communist Party leader Mao Zedong proclaimed the establishment of the People’s Republic of China. In 1950, the Chinese and Soviets signed a Treaty of Mutual Friendship, and Mao proceeded to model China’s economic development along Soviet lines. A huge portion of the global population came under communist control, and, at a level of popular fears and also some strategic and intelligence analyses, the influence was moving south. Australians read about this in newspapers and heard about it on the radio. They understood that with political upheaval to the north, the spread of communism to Australia was a real possibility.

Early in Menzies’ second term as Prime Minister, the Cold War dominated political thought. Communism meant the end of everything that Western democratic capitalist culture valued. It restricted religion, free enterprise and international markets. Having fought two wars to preserve the established way of life, fear of communism was real in 1950s Australia. Menzies

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42 Waters, *The Empire Fractures*, p. 29.
44 ibid
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himself was anti-communist and tried to ban the Communist Party in Australia. He had the support of his government, but the Act could not pass as the High Court determined it to be unconstitutional. Menzies was a constitutional lawyer, so for him to have attempted this move signifies his fear. Cabinet was ‘crowded with ministers’ who had either served in the armed forces, or as ministers during World War Two.\(^{45}\) In 1948, 67 per cent of voters believed another world war was likely in the following 10 years.

In 1948, as leader of the opposition, Menzies arrived in London a few weeks after the Russian blockade of the western sections of Berlin.\(^{46}\) This was seen as an act of war by Russia. Later, as Prime Minister, Menzies delivered a Defence call to the Nation, in which he emphasised the Cold War’s capacity to ruin the Australian economy and change the ‘way of life’ so important to the people.\(^{47}\)

Menzies attended the Commonwealth Prime Minister’s meeting in Britain in 1951, and heard Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru explain that in Asia, ‘communism was the product of bad living conditions’.\(^{48}\) By 1953, the prospect of global war was receding, and the Australian Government turned its efforts to developing Australian diplomatic missions across South East Asia. Membership of the Colombo Plan also grew. While this remained strongly anti-communist, it was the ‘bridge building’ focus of international goodwill that Richard Casey later publicised.\(^{49}\) This is an example of a cultural diplomacy activity that was based on a policy to prevent communist incursions into Australia, but enacted with person-to-person relationships, using soft power strategies. By its very nature the Cold War promoted soft power negotiations over hard power aggression, as well as the development of international friendships as security buffers.

Australia’s engagement with regional diplomatic initiatives, however, was not unreserved. The Bandung Conference in Indonesia in 1955 was a gathering of African and Asian leaders. Leaders of 29 countries met to discuss colonialism and communism, as well as the reluctance of Western leaders to include Asian leaders in global discussions. The core discussions related to political self-determination, mutual respect for sovereignty, non-aggression, non-

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\(^{49}\) This is likely to have affected Menzies’ support of the Colombo Plan. Martin, *Robert Menzies*, p. 177.

\(^{49}\) Lowe, *Menzies and the ‘Great World Struggle’*, p. 158.
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interference in internal affairs and equality. The delegates condemned colonialism in all of its manifestations. A ten-point declaration on the promotion of world peace and cooperation was unanimously adopted. This was based on the UN Charter and included principles of mutual respect for other nations, non-aggression, non-interference in internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence. Australia sent no official representatives, but was present as an observer to the proceedings. On behalf of Radio Australia, Hood reported that Australia was regarded by other participants as an ‘absent party,’ and that this was a theme that Radio Australia should bear in mind: ‘to what extent does Australia “belong to Asia?”’.

Australia held a unique position as a Western country within the Asian geographic area, and could have used this opportunity to have a greater effect on Asian friendships and decision making. This was part of the identity that Australians were negotiating in the 1950s, culturally and politically, and several themes of Australian cultural diplomacy focus on activities in this geographic region.

![Figure 3.4: Participants of the Bandung Conference](image)

The ANZUS initiative showed a shift towards Pacific thinking for security issues. Menzies supported the ANZUS initiative as a guarantee of support in the event of a resurgent Japan. This alliance—which ensured that each member country would come together to consult should the territorial integrity of either be threatened—was to inform the direction of

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50 Minutes of Meeting, Department of External Affairs and the ABC, May 6, 1955, Series A1838, 570/1/2 Part 2, NAA. Hood was from the Department of External Affairs, and his first name is not mentioned in the file.

Australian foreign policy throughout the Cold War. Roger Bell states that this alliance drew American political and cultural forms into Australia, contrasting with the existing British influence.\textsuperscript{52}

In the US, the Truman Administration was determined to tie up the world in security pacts.\textsuperscript{53} The ANZUS initiative was made possible by a combination of circumstances, including US gratitude for Australia’s early response in Korea, and anxiety over a Japanese peace treaty.\textsuperscript{54}

At the end of World War Two, the Soviets were granted control of the north of Korea and the Americans the south, following the Japanese defeat and subsequent removal from Korea. As tensions rose between the West and communist countries, the border between North and South Korea became the focus of hostilities. In June 1950, the Korean People’s Army in the North launched a military offensive, and Australian troops were swiftly sent to assist the local and American forces in South Korea. While in general Australians were still anxious about Japanese atrocities in World War Two, it was also appreciated that a Western-controlled Japan was security against communist threats. A treaty that involved US military support was welcomed as providing hard power to protect Australia’s security interests.\textsuperscript{55}

Menzies came to see the ANZUS initiative as vital to Australia’s security, physically and emotionally. He believed that the ANZUS Treaty was the keystone of the Pacific structure.\textsuperscript{56}

At the end of his Prime Ministership, Menzies believed that without it, Australian apprehension over Communist China ‘would be much greater and more oppressive’.\textsuperscript{57}

Regional relationships were developing in a new way, and treaties and agreements tied many countries together.

Understanding the reasons for the shift towards the Asia Pacific region while staying within the Commonwealth family is important to understanding the motives behind Australia’s participation in various cultural diplomacy-style programmes. Participation in global, regional and Commonwealth events during the Menzies Era highlights the political focus on establishing a global space for Australia, and how it was both presented and perceived by the

\textsuperscript{52} Bell, ‘Australian-US Relations and the Transformation of the Asia-Pacific Region,’ p. 14

\textsuperscript{53} Lowe, Menzies and the ‘Great World Struggle’, p. 71.

\textsuperscript{54} Martin, Robert Menzies, p. 204.

\textsuperscript{55} ibid

\textsuperscript{56} Menzies, The Measure, p. 54.

\textsuperscript{57} ibid.
Presenting Australia domestic audience. By advancing Australian interests in the international sphere, the nation adjusted its reputation, and cultural diplomacy style activities were used to do this.

Current Scholarship on the Menzies Era

The US Department of State and the United Kingdom (UK) Foreign Office have, according to Joan Beaumont, ‘generated a vast and often sparkling literature.’\(^{58}\) In Australia, the ‘history of foreign policy and diplomacy has a far weaker tradition,’\(^{59}\) and the collection *Ministers, Mandarins and Diplomats, Australian Foreign Policy Making, 1941-69* goes some way to remedying this absence. The volume looks at the contributions of the External Affairs Ministers of the Menzies Era to Australian foreign policy. It is a valuable resource for understanding not only the lack of diplomatic scholarship available, but also the issues the Menzies governments faced and the difficulties in forming foreign policy. Beaumont attempts to uncover the reasons for this lack of discussion, explaining that as scholarship on Australian political history is fairly new, and academic study has tended to focus on social histories, traditional foreign policy studies have been unfashionable. Another reason she mentions is Australia’s record in diplomacy and foreign policy.\(^{60}\) Mainstream historians have been concerned with the ‘dependent and derivative quality of Australian culture,’\(^{61}\) and this dependence is discernible in its foreign policy. The simple view that has affected academic thinking is that as an Anglophile, Menzies’ foreign policy narrowed to alliances, moving towards US relationships as the UK withdrew their interests.

In fact, the growth of the DEA, both in size and professionalism, is reflected in the maturity of the foreign policy it delivered. David Lee writes that Australian governments of the 1940s and 1950s sought to secure the nation from military threats while ‘simultaneously promoting Australia’s economic prosperity in a changing world.’\(^{62}\) All of Australia’s external relations were multidimensional, providing for a complex and challenging environment for staff. That other ministers and Members of Parliament (MPs) questioned the value-for-money that the Australian public were receiving from the External Affairs Department highlights the

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\(^{58}\) Joan Beaumont, ‘Making Foreign Policy, 1941-69’, pp. 1–18, in Beaumont et al., *Ministers, Mandarins and Diplomats, Australian Foreign Policy Making, 1941-69*.

\(^{59}\) Beaumont, ‘Making Foreign Policy, p. 1

\(^{60}\) ibid, p. 2

\(^{61}\) Ibid, p. 2

\(^{62}\) ibid, p. 5
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difficulties of establishing positive international relationships at this time, and in this context
the successes of the ministers and diplomats involved are even more noteworthy.\footnote{Beaumont, ‘Making Foreign Policy, p. 6}

The capacity of the diplomat to affect foreign policy was dependent upon the posting, the
capabilities of the individual, the Minister and the current importance of the relationship with
the government that the diplomat was accredited to. Beaumont writes that ‘diplomacy is the
interests, manage negotiations and report relevant intelligence. In 1949, Australia had 28
overseas posts, mainly due to the activism of H. V. Evatt.\footnote{Herbert Vere Evatt was Minister for External Affairs from 1941 to 1949, Australian judge, lawyer, parliamentarian and writer.} During Casey’s time as Minister,
a further 12 Asian posts were added, and by 1966, Australia had diplomatic representation in
all Asian countries except China, North Korea and North Vietnam.

Australian diplomats were to promote, explain and attempt to make palatable Australian
policy ‘to the government to which the diplomat was accredited.’\footnote{Beaumont, ‘The Champagne Trail?’ p. 161.} The focus on government-
to-government communications conforms to a traditional diplomatic role. However, in
practice, personal relationships were formed, collaborative projects designed and, in some
cases, a programme of cultural diplomacy begun. Australian culture was used to support
foreign policy aims, ideas were shared and cultural awareness was improved, as the case
studies will show. Domestically, Australians understood a new geographic role and were
being introduced to more of their Asian and Pacific neighbours at home. The conflux of
foreign policy and domestic culture has been little explored, but we can gain insight from
some works written about the period.

David Walker’s\textit{Anxious Nation} and Alan Renouf’s\textit{The Frightened Country}\footnote{Alan Renouf, \textit{The Frightened Country}, Adelaide, The Macmillan Company of Australia, 1979.} explore
Australian’s history in its region. In\textit{Anxious Nation (1999)}, Walker describes the contrasting
opinions of politicians and other leaders working with the Asian community, and notes that in
the mid-nineteenth century there was a general domestic fear of being invaded both
physically and culturally.\footnote{Walker, \textit{Anxious Nation: Australia and the Rise of Asia 1850-1939}, 1999} Earlier, in 1979, Alan Renouf explored the foreign policy

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\begin{itemize}
  \item Beaumont, ‘Making Foreign Policy, p. 6
  \item Herbert Vere Evatt was Minister for External Affairs from 1941 to 1949, Australian judge, lawyer, parliamentarian and writer.
  \item Walker, \textit{Anxious Nation: Australia and the Rise of Asia 1850-1939}, 1999
\end{itemize}
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objectives of physical security, economic and social wellbeing in *The Frightened Country*, and the effects of an insular and dogmatically nationalistic foreign relations agenda.

Before 1970, most Australians who travelled to Asia did so as warriors or peacekeepers.69 Military personnel had been deployed in South East Asia almost continuously since the 1940s, ‘not only because of altruism, but also because of widespread fear.’70 Often those who had begun their deployment with colonial pretensions became sympathetic to Asian demands for independence. Agnieszka Sobocinska notes that during the Menzies Era, book titles often referred to the region as a neighbourhood, allowing individuals to participate in international relations just as they would with their more local neighbours. Private travel increased during the period, and in 1968, for the first time, more Australians travelled to Asia than to Europe.

Introducing a cultural aspect to the foreign affairs agenda is former diplomat Neil Manton’s *Cultural Relations: The Other Side of the Diplomatic Coin*.71 He discusses art exhibitions, sporting and other tours of Australians to Asia in the 1950s and 1960s, and claims that despite the lack of a formal programme linking cultural activities with policy initiatives, some activities had taken place that served the department’s overall diplomatic objectives. He discovered a file in the archives (authorless, but dated 1942) that describes a cultural relations policy including exchanges, and the establishment of a committee to oversee such interactions. This project was not embraced at the time, and Manton found that every few years, someone in the Department would recycle this idea and propose a submission for cultural activities overseas, only to have it rejected by other departments.72

Elsewhere, Lowe explores the deliberate connection between culture and policy.73 He suggests that information activities related to these initiatives bred a new form of PR between member countries during the 1950s. His paper blends the idea of soft power with the spaces explored by Gienow-Hecht on the role of information provision and dissemination in Cold War examples of cultural diplomacy.74 Both the overseas and domestic images of Australia

70 ibid, p. 57
72 Ibid
74 This is a general theme in the works of Gienow-Hecht.
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were challenged and shaped by these publicity efforts. The international relationships forged by this programme have been insufficiently understood, and Lowe highlights the importance of examining the soft power effects of foreign policy events on the people upon which they are imposed.

These works encourage the view that the Menzies Era was one of establishment. In the early 20th century, Australia was viewed as a frightened, anxious, unknown nation negotiating a changed world. It is undeniable that World War Two, new technologies, the speed of communications and movement and the Cold War all affected Australia domestically and politically. Ideas behind more recent cultural diplomacy theory, including how the Australian way of life and culture were used to sponsor policy initiatives, beg more sustained examination by scholars.

In the 1950s no one was using the term cultural diplomacy, as the concept had not been developed. What language politicians, diplomats, and other stakeholders did use, however, shows that the concepts of cultural diplomacy were certainly understood, and believed to be an important angle for diplomatic activity. The idea of ‘winning hearts and minds’ is at the core of these activities, most especially where they could encourage peace and thus national security. If the border to Australia’s north could be protected by nations friendly to Australian ideologies, then the Australian government would be able to shift the focus and energies away from defence and security and on to growth and other areas which would strengthen its position in the international community.

To understand how politicians thought of the ideas now encompassed in cultural diplomacy theories, we must look at the comments they made and uncover their thoughts on cultural and political activities of the day. While there are many similar comments to be found, written or spoken by various diplomats and public figures, special attention is given to those politicians who tell of the attitude of those with the power and influence to make changes - if the definition of cultural diplomacy activities is that they be backed by government initiatives, the words of the Department of External Affairs (DEA), Spender and Casey should be considered in particular.

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In a paper written by staff at the DEA in 1949, discussions on the repercussions of large scale armed conflict or disorder in any part of South East Asia were followed with the conclusion that Australian national security would be directly threatened, and policies ‘fostering friendly relations with the governments and peoples of South East Asia’ have become a priority. ‘In this way,’ the paper continues, ‘foreign policy considerations would have a major share in determining the commercial, defence and other policies which should be pursued.’

If the best form of defence is a good offence, the strategy of ‘offence’ would be to encourage economic development alongside influencing political ideology.

A further note in the DEA files on the Colombo Plan, dated 1956, claimed quite clearly ‘The aim is political, the means only are economic. The provision of aid may have good, bad or no results, according to political factors.’

An assessment of the Colombo Plan written in Australian Outlook (an academic journal) explained that to achieve such progress ‘required grafting onto Asian societies … the best in capitalist thinking and attitudes, as well as techniques.’ For this reason ‘the importance of education and the mass media in helping to disseminate the Western Cultural and attitudinal qualities’ was essential.

And in a memoir from John Rowland, Charge d’Affairs in Saigon, Rowland noted that Australia’s Colombo plan contributions ‘relatively small though they may be, have a political importance that they possess nowhere else.’

It is clear that Percy Spender saw many benefits to the Colombo Plan, and it is from his comments we can understand much of the focus of this activity as a cultural diplomacy style activity. Writing in 1969, Percy Spender noted that ‘by concerted action, we … can help the countries of South East Asia to develop their own democratic institutions and their own economies and thus protect them against those opportunistic and subversive elements which take advantage of changing political situations and low living standards.’ He also commented ‘the story of the Colombo Plan provides a dramatic example of how a small nation, as Australia still is, may influence history.’

Linking to theories of power and influence, and understanding the benefits of having democratically governed neighbours on

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75 ‘Australia and South East Asia,’ Canberra 13 Nov, 1959, ‘Paper by Department Staff,’ seen in Lowe & Oakman, Australia and the Colombo Plan
76 ‘Some Political Aspects of Economic Assistance,’ Canberra, 15 March, 1956, ‘Note by the Department of External Affairs,’ seen in Lowe & Oakman, Australia and the Colombo Plan
77 Oakman, Facing Asia, p. 85
78 Memo, J. B. Rowland to A Tange, 4 Dec, 1954, A4529, 65/1/1/1954, NAN, seen in Oakman, Facing Asia
79 Spender, Exercises in Diplomacy, p. 199
80 Spender, Exercises in Diplomacy, p. 200
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peace and security, Spender’s prioritisation of spreading democratic governance suggests he understood the relevance of this cultural exchange as a tool of foreign policy.

After receiving food donations from the Australian government, Indian Prime Minister Nehru spoke of the ‘importance of fraternal consultations’ and that it is ‘from the psychological impact as much as from the actual economic contribution’ that projects like the Colombo Plan derive their importance.\(^81\) Nehru’s comments confirm that the manner of delivery of assistance would have benefits above and beyond that of a simple charitable donation- as the underlying purpose was to assist the country to be more independent into the future, with the added benefit of political alliance, or at least sympathy.

Spender had also remarked ‘It was, moreover, fundamental in my thinking that recipient countries should, to the extent of their resources, as their development permitted, also become donor countries, thus furthering national self-respect and confidence and good relations between member countries’.\(^82\) If Spender had thought in the terms of using a cultural exchange to promote a foreign policy, comments such as this would link easily to the ideas that as the Australian aid and influence had been disseminated in one place through one project, that this influence and way of thinking might be further promoted by the beneficiaries of the original aid.

The third and very important aspect of the Colombo Plan, to Spender’s way of thinking, was ‘that Australia be given responsibility of convening the first meeting of the consultative committee; in that way, Australia could keep its hand upon the tiller.’\(^83\) This would allow Australia the most influence over the languages, technologies, and aid the recipient countries were exposed to, further highlighting links to cultural diplomacy theories surrounding the influence of publics of other nations and influencing political support or sympathy.

In *Friends and Neighbours*, Casey writes of Australia’s relationships with all the Asian countries which are our nearest neighbours that ‘we need to understand these nations, to be understood by them, and to live on terms of friendly co-operation with them. Our ideas of

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\(^{81}\) Greenwood & Harper, *Australia in World Affairs*, p. 78

\(^{82}\) Spender, *Exercises in Diplomacy*, p. 215

\(^{83}\) ibid, p. 215
security arising from our geographical isolation have been greatly altered [by the events of WW2].

Casey also acknowledged in the early 1950s that the Australian government ‘recognised that security must be sought not in one single direction, but through several.’ This included ‘strengthening individual countries, dependence on the US, and our thinking had to be in much broader terms than military strength. We had to recognise that security was not a military matter only, but entailed international cooperation to improve economic and social conditions, and with full political aspirations and rights of the peoples of the region.

Exploring the idea that peace and resistance to Communism would not be a purely military issue for the South East Asian countries, Casey stated that ‘we need to win and retain the confidence of the free countries of Asia by showing them that our only object is to help them to strengthen their economies in a way which will enable them to reinforce their political independence and deal with the pressing social problems of their peoples.

In a similar vein, Robert Menzies wrote; ‘it seems to be to be clear … that our foreign policy should be to cultivate friendly relations with our neighbours; to do what we could to help with development and stability; to encourage every means of peaceful economic and financial so-operation,’ among other things. However, he noted, in the event that conflict does erupt, ‘that the business of foreign policy is to see that we enter it with great and powerful friends.’ While this was written at the end on Menzies’ political career, it seems, at least in hindsight, he understood the driving force behind Spender and Casey, and the ideas around using cultural exchange to support foreign policy.

Neither politicians nor the public in Post-War Australian knew that they were at the beginning of an unprecedented economic boom that would last until the 1970s. They did not know that the Cold War would not turn into a ‘hot’ war, and they did not know that Menzies would be their Prime Minister for 16 years. A historical perspective allows us to

84 Casey, Friends and Neighbours, p. 14
85 Casey, Friends and Neighbours, p. 88
86 ibid, p. 93
87 Menzies, The Measure of the Years, p. 44
88 John Murphy, Imagining the Fifties- Private Sentiment and Political Culture in Menzies’ Australia, Sydney, UNSW Press, 2000, p. 5.
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follow the shifts in thinking, watch policy ideas unfold and examine how Australian culture might have been used to advance those aims. The following chapters will explore case studies, look at why particular activities are valuable to cultural diplomacy programmes and how Australia has used these as part of successful diplomatic activities. Cultural diplomacy may be a modern academic field, but the activity was certainly practised during the Menzies Era. From an exploration of the concepts involved in cultural diplomacy theory, the Australian political environment and role of the influential figures in External Affairs, we move to understanding how particular activities sponsored by the Federal and State Government played out.
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The history of international aid is short, and most assistance given to other countries before the 20th century was related to colonial possession. The promotion of international relationships through long-term collaborative projects earns these activities a right to be called cultural diplomacy when aid can serve a foreign policy aim. Australia’s first major aid project was the Colombo Plan, an umbrella term for bilateral agreements providing assistance to South and South East Asian countries. As a step toward gaining political sympathies and loyalties, this effort to involve Australian ideologies into the everyday lives of millions of people was also a play for strengthening ties and influencing power relationships. This scheme served broad international and domestic objectives for both donor and recipient countries, which will be explored in the chapter.

The origins of the Plan lie in the rapid political, economic and social changes that occurred in South and South East Asia during the 1930s and 1940s, and in consideration of ways to address causes of instability while promoting national and regional development.¹ It was important to develop workable aid plans quickly as a counter to communist influence on underdeveloped nations in the region, and to be seen to be helpful neighbours in the effort to win the battle for hearts and minds. In a submission to Cabinet dated 1950, Spender described that ‘short of armed force, economic assistance and technical advice directed to improving the efficiency and administrations are the only methods open to us of maintaining stable democratic governments in the area.’² The Australian Government was determined to make the largest impact possible with the resources available, to manage efforts in such a way that the risk of being accused of imperialism was minimised, and to avoid the impression of a preoccupation with fighting communism. The Colombo Plan was ideal for these aims.

Australian governments wanted to be identified as a good neighbour, so participation in projects such as the Colombo Plan was an important part of helping establish this reputation. The giving of aid demonstrates that a country has commodities to spare. In an era when it was important to highlight the benefits of a democratic system, and that democratic countries could produce enough to spare, giving aid was a practical example of these benefits. Colombo Plan activities can easily be related to modern cultural diplomacy theories. It was a cultural exchange backed by foreign policy and a long-term collaborative project involving

² ‘Economic Development in South and South East Asia,’ Canberra, 26 July, 1950, ‘Submission from Spender to Cabinet,’ seen in Lowe & Oakman, Australia and the Colombo Plan
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people-to-people relationships and funded by governments with specific aims. This chapter analyses some of the political motivations and methods, and reveals the stories of some people involved in the activities of the Plan.

For Australia, the foreign policy objectives of the Colombo Plan involved Cold War security fears and increased trade agreements, and the methods concentrated on people-to-people relationships and education. The media had a significant role to play in recording and reporting on the methods and objectives of the Plan (particularly *Hemisphere*, ‘The Seed of Freedom’, and ‘The Builders’ which are examined as a focus in this chapter), and in providing valuable insights along with the archival records. A look at the history of international aid and its relevance to cultural diplomacy is followed by an exploration of Australia’s efforts in the Colombo Plan. The effect on some local and international participants is discussed, in order to highlight the human element of this endeavour. The following will show that not all benefits were physical or economic, and that cultural exchanges and long-term positive relationships were as valid as outcomes as the infrastructure and training.

**History of International Aid**

The first recorded example of foreign aid was when the US passed the ‘Act for the Relief of citizens of Venezuela’ in 1812. Such aid differed from gifts from one country’s rulers to another’s, in that the aid is ‘seen as a general benefit to the population of the recipient country.’ From here, modern international aid has been shaped by international activities after World War Two. The massive destruction across the world and the first wave of independence of many former colonies re-structured the map and created new ruling regimes. New political leadership in former colonies was often confronted by massive population disruption, infrastructure damage and agricultural destruction. This was of particular concern in South and South East Asia, where these newly formed governments led over 600 million people. With two significant communist regimes to Australia’s north—China and the Soviet Union—the political, economic and humanitarian issues accompanying this wave of independence were ripe to be influenced.

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4 ibid.

5 ibid.
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The motives behind international aid are the base of many academic studies. Peter Hjertholm and Howard White discuss the focus of different models, and have determined that donors will support a country based on the attainment of specific objectives. Donor-recipient trade relations, geographic proximity to a communist state, political and strategic importance of the recipient, the year of independence, foreign exchange reserves, UN voting behaviour and consistency with donor characteristics are just some of the reasons for determining how aid is offered, and on what scale. Most studies treat aid as a foreign policy instrument, ‘applied to (help) achieve a range of political, strategic, economic, as well as genuinely humanitarian objectives.’ Hjertholm and White claim that over the past five decades, donor self-interest has been the enduring feature of aid programmes, whether bilateral or multilateral. This is important to keep in mind when examining aid programmes.

Foreign aid can take various forms, including the transfer of financial resources or commodities, technical advice, and training. The primary form is bilateral grants determined by the donor and recipient countries. Countries often provide foreign aid to enhance their own security or to prevent a friendly government from falling under the influence of a country that they considered to be unfriendly. Foreign aid also may be used to achieve a country’s diplomatic recognition, or to increase its diplomats’ access to foreign officials. It is also a tool for promoting exports, spreading language, culture and religion. As most foreign aid programs are complex and designed to serve multiple purposes, it is impossible to determine a hierarchy of motives.

After World War Two, the aid programmes of former colonial powers grew out of the development assistance they provided to their colonial possessions. The US implemented the Marshall Plan to assist the reconstruction of much of Europe. The Cold War saw foreign aid used as a diplomatic tool to foster political alliances and strategic advantages. It was withheld to punish states that seemed too close to the opposing side. The nations of South East Asia were in dire need of assistance, and all world powers recognised the opportunity to affect the region.

The Colombo Plan aimed to empower the people of South and South East Asia by providing the necessary training for establishing stable governments and agricultural, manufacturing,

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6 Ibid.
7 Ibid.
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industrial and educational institutions. This, in turn, would provide stability and security for individuals, families and the nation. By understanding and respecting the cultures of Asia, Australia used the Colombo Plan as part of a diplomatic programme to foster positive, peaceful relations. Before the Colombo Plan, the major international development plan was part of an American scheme known as the ‘Point Four Programme’, which is important here because it prioritised the sharing of knowledge.

Point Four

‘Development’ came to be used in its current sense in the mid-20th century. President Truman’s inauguration speech in 1949 included three significant points of foreign policy, including support of the UN, the continuation of the Marshall Plan and the Creation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) to meet the Soviet threat. Gilbert Rist notes: ‘a civil servant suggested adding that the technical assistance already granted to parts of Latin America would be extended to poorer parts of the world.’ This civil servant had included what would become the famous ‘Point Four’, which gained a lot of attention and established what would become known as the ‘Development Age.’

Point Four emphasised the sharing of technical knowledge due to the scarcity of material resources in the post-war world. It was designed to help people produce what they needed in a cooperative enterprise. Truman’s speech focused on the idea that ‘greater production is the key to prosperity and peace,’ and that only by helping less fortunate people can we achieve a satisfying life for all. Here, Truman proposes a new way of conceiving international relations, one that would see development and aid as cooperative ventures. The speech also introduced the term ‘underdeveloped’ as an alternative to ‘economically backward’. This changed the perception of the word development. The change in terminology from ‘coloniser/colonised’ to ‘developed/underdeveloped’ was a small semantic shift that proposed a new, equal relationship. The underdeveloped could become developed, which was a positive, forward-thinking and modern term.

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10 ibid.
11 ibid. This ‘Development Age’ would see aid given not in the form of charity, but tools to develop independence- the theory of teaching a man to fish rather than giving him a fish.
12 ibid.
13 ibid, p. 72.
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Rist explains that the speech’s style was based on religious discourse, offering hope and salvation to the condemned, so long as they adhere to the demands of the faith. He explored the place of development in modern philosophies, and explained how a ‘belief’ in development creates a situation in which the process is more important than the outcome.\(^\text{14}\) Development was a way of making the world better and attaining salvation, and individuals could participate in this. Development implied hope, which was vital and inviting in the post-war era.

Point Four is significant to the history of international aid and development, as it was the first public interpretation of the new way of dealing with underdevelopment. It redefined the problem, creating an atmosphere of change. The term underdeveloped did not apportion blame, but promoted an orientation towards the future, and development policy became the answer. This helps explain the motives behind the Colombo Plan. By helping underdeveloped nations become developed, Australia had the opportunity to realise the foreign policy objective of creating political and social stability in its near northern neighbours. This was the objective of the Departments of Trade, Immigration, Defence and External Affairs.

Some might consider that the newly independent nations sold their right to economic autonomy and were forced to travel the development path mapped out by others.\(^\text{15}\) The Colombo Plan, developed soon after the Point Four speech, countered this idea by being based on a bilateral system of agreements, where the underdeveloped country was able to specify the aid it wanted. Some recipient countries sought assistance from both Western and communist sources. The Colombo Plan’s donor countries were careful not to define strategies for other nations, and respect for autonomous rule was a guiding principal.

In the early stages of the Cold War, US diplomat George F. Kennan promoted the notion that cultural exchange would combat ‘the negative impressions about [the US] that mark so much of world opinion’.\(^\text{16}\) Kennan was keen to encourage and expand cultural exchange programmes, in order to promote understanding of the US and thus ease reception of some foreign policies. And in an article published in 1999 Liping Bu noted that as ‘the newly independent nations formed in the mid twentieth century, both the United States and Soviet

\(^{14}\) ibid, p. 21.
\(^{15}\) Rist, The History of Development: p. 79
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Union eagerly offered them educational resources and political ideologies. Educational exchange has long been a popular forum for cultural interchange.

The American Advisory Commission of Educational Exchange listed the different purposes of the exchange programme: transplanting American methods and techniques to other countries in order to ‘Americanise’ them; acquainting other nations with the accomplishments of the US in fine arts and scholarship to impress them with their cultural achievements; helping other countries meet education problems guided mainly by local needs; and implementing a special form of the information programme of the State Department. If educational bodies protested being used for political purposes, Bu notes that they had to consider the funding the students brought them.

In the introduction to a booklet written by student delegates at an international student conference in 1959, a contributor asks:

How is Australia going to fare with the Asian peoples, two-thirds of the earth’s population, our nearest neighbours? [...] We can no longer cling to our isolationism and ignorance of Asia or hide our subconscious fear of Asia. We must win the confidence and friendship of the Asian Peoples.

Students were very conscious of their role in changing international relations, so even if their institutions balked at being used for political aims, the students themselves were happy with the new ambassadorial role.

Werner Levi noted that as a programme of cultural diplomacy, the Colombo Plan was ‘the path of least resistance to the sympathies of the Asian peoples’ and the Australian Government were aware of this. Economics and culture are less controversial areas of international relations, in which ‘good relations’ can be more easily built. The Colombo Plan enabled the Australian Government to affect the thinking of the South and South East Asian peoples in a way that bypassed the more formal areas of diplomacy in security and trade. While the programme may have been initiated (politically) as the path of least

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17 ibid.
18 Bu, ‘Educational Exchange and Cultural Diplomacy in the Cold War,’
19 Fifth and Sixth International Students’ Conference in Japan: An Account by the Australian Delegates. ‘Magazine for Asian Students—Liaison—Student Organization,’ 1959, National Union of Australian University Students, A1361, 50/2/8 Part 1, Barcode 4662910, NLA
20 Werner Levi, Australia’s Outlook on Asia, Melbourne, Angus & Robertson, 1958, p. 175.
21 ibid.
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resistance, its success saw a shift towards a celebration of the cultural exchange aspects of the project. These are areas in which the soft power of individual contact can be well employed. Aid and development necessarily involve personal relationships of individuals and companies in both countries. Cultural exchange—in this case students, teachers and welfare workers—exposed thousands of individuals to the ‘other’ cultural experience.

These personal relationships are the most important aspect of cultural diplomacy, according to Edward R. Murrow, who claimed ‘the really crucial link in the international communication chain is the last three feet, which is bridged by personal contact, one person talking to another.’ Murrow was a journalist chosen to be Director of the USIA when John F. Kennedy ‘needed to…rebuild the international image of America’. Murrow was influenced by the credo that ‘education is the only certain road to the attainment of world peace’. He was well-known for his succinct, telling phrases, such as his warning that ‘we cannot judge our success [in cultural diplomacy] by sales, no cash register rings when a man changes his mind.’ Cultural diplomacy activities are not easily quantified; however this does not mean they are not successful or important.

As the Western nations in the late 1940s and 1950s hoped to improve their reputations, provide political stability and security and increase trade, many under-developed nations focused more on new domestic situations. New leaders in former colonies were often Western-educated and had been exposed to Western forms of government and organisation. Often nations were recovering from the physical destruction of wars on their soil. All had rich cultural histories that pre-dated colonial times. Recent events taught leaders that they would need to combine their country’s heritage with modern forms of governance, which would enable them to trade with their neighbours.

In this post war era, the centre of gravity of international matters was moving towards the Middle East and Asia, and away from the West. At the 1950 Commonwealth Foreign Ministers Meeting, Commonwealth Foreign Ministers determined that the political and

22 Cull, The Cold War, pp. 189
23 ibid, 190.
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economic situation in Asia required further investigation, and took recommendations for economic development in this region to their respective governments.\(^{27}\) The meeting was significant in other ways, too. The newly independent South and South East Asian nations who were a part of the Commonwealth brokered a relationship that allowed influence and assistance to other Asian nations who previously had no connections to Commonwealth or Western support. Ensuring the political allegiance of these developing countries contributed to the power relations of the great- and superpowers of the international political community—for if the West did not take them under its wing, the Kremlin certainly would.

Interactive communication and relational initiatives that focus on continuity and stability tend to be a focus of cultural diplomacy activities. Cultural diplomacy activities show the rich variety of ways that political entities communicate with publics.\(^{28}\) There are graduated levels of participation (individual, institution or community), degrees of coordination, scope, duration and policy objective. These relationships represent the ‘spectrum of relational initiatives’, which R. S. Zaharna claims is considerably broader and more sophisticated than current cultural diplomacy discourse acknowledges.\(^{29}\) This explains how aid, development and exchange are important aspects of cultural diplomacy, and the relevance of the Colombo Plan in a study of Australian cultural diplomacy.

**The Colombo Plan**

Aid is a central part of cultural diplomacy. It puts the donor country’s ambassadors on the ground assisting those in need. Goodwill is generated as hungry people are fed, medicines administered and homes constructed. By creating an atmosphere where an external agency can impose change where the subject feels no overt domination or subjugation is one of those examples of power relationships which can only occur when the hearts and minds of both parties are similarly aligned. Collaborating on a programme to achieve these aims enables shared cultural experiences and promotes the foreign policy objectives of encouraging political stability and empathy.


\(^{29}\) ibid, pp. 92–93.
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In 1947, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) proposed that countries like Australia, ‘whose educational systems had been left intact by the war’, might be in a position to offer assistance to less fortunate countries by taking in students. In 1948, Australia set aside money for a few such educational opportunities. William MacMahon Ball argued that ‘to win the friendship and goodwill of the students and technicians is to win the goodwill of people with great political influence,’ and as a forerunner to future collaborative efforts, the existing scholarship scheme was expanded and upgraded. In this way, the Australian Government was able to train those who would go on to have political influence. The scholarship scheme became one of the most important aspects of the Colombo Plan, with the first students arriving in 1951.

The Colombo Plan was Australia’s first real venture into international aid. It was originally administered by the Departments of External Territories, Education, and the Treasury, and was also guided by the DEA, reflecting the diverse nature and extent of the project. As the first serious effort to assist overseas nations, the Colombo Plan was complex. Various nations with different cultures and governmental structures, and differing levels of need, were involved. As a long-term programme, it encouraged ongoing international relationships, something that simple charitable donations do not.

Spender became the Foreign Affairs Minister in December 1949, just before the Foreign Ministers meeting in Colombo, the agenda of which focused on South and South East Asian challenges. Spender had spent time in various Asian countries prior to his appointment, and had become ‘convinced of the need to bridge with human understanding and sympathy the vast gulf of ignorance and apathy which divided Asia and the West.’ He made his intent known as soon as he was appointed, and set to work devising possible strategies. He wrote that to ensure the security in the Pacific, ‘economic and technical aid and political stability in Southeast Asia were…rather like two sides of one coin.’ If Australia wanted to encourage political stability, an aid programme was the most appropriate tool.

33 ibid.
34 ibid.
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South and South East Asian countries faced the immense task of creating new economic structures. The Prime Minister of Ceylon, Don Stephen Senanayake, claimed that the fundamental problems faced by Asia were economic not political, which was something that Spender could work with. On the flight to Colombo, Spender began to formulate a plan and write a proposal. He envisioned long-term bilateral aid, with countries donating and receiving as their needs and resources required. Just as it had been important for Senanayake to ensure that Colombo was the host of meetings and organisation, so was it essential to Spender that Australia maintain leadership. 35

Spender did not want to impose aid programmes on each country, but rather encourage that ‘initiatives should come separately from each of the Asian countries themselves’, thus allowing each to determine the best course of economic development. 36 This shows a respect for the new nation states, and also highlights that while Spender planned to take charge, he did not want to do so in such a way that the newly independent nations would feel controlled or oppressed, reminding them of their colonial past.

A secondary part of Spender’s plan was ‘to induce the participation the United States’ who had previously been reluctant to assist in the region, insisting that initiatives must come from the region. 37 This is further confirmed in a cablegram Spender sent to Menzies, where among other things, he claimed, ‘we should use the great potential Asian influence of the Commonwealth as a cohesive force progressively to bind Asia to the West in a way which has so far been impossible by direct political pressure…’ and that ‘we must regard this plan as part of foreign policy designed to deny this important part of the world to Soviet Russian influence.’ 38 Spender saw the scheme as one which would both encourage political allegiances in the near north, and bring the might of the US into a defence scheme for Australia. As a scheme that involved exchanging cultural experiences to meet specific long-term policy aims, the Plan is worthy of historical analysis through a cultural diplomacy lens.

In May 1950, a few months after the Plan was proposed, the first meeting of the Consultative Committee was held in Sydney. It was held at Admiralty House, near the Sydney Harbour

35 ibid, pp. 208, 215.
36 ibid, p. 221.
37 ‘Economic Development in South and South East Asia,’ Canberra, 26 July, 1950, ‘Submission from Spender to Cabinet,’ NAA
38 ‘Consultative Committee,’ London, 27 September, 1950, ‘Cablegram from Spender to Menzies,’ NAA
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Bridge, where British settlers had established their first colony 160 years earlier. It was a location chosen to convey a connection to British heritage as well as the advances made by an independent people, and the thriving city of Sydney was an example of possible achievements.

From the beginning, governments who contributed to the project determined that promotion of the virtues of the Plan was a priority. As most had limited resources, they wished to arrive at a scheme that ‘made the biggest impact with the resources available, in terms of publicity, and political, social and economic benefits.’ For Australia, the focus was on traineeships and fellowships, as they were relatively cheap but enabled the person-to-person contact so essential for good relationships and, more importantly, the opportunity to influence. The Australian Government also admitted that the rise of communism in Asia was of concern, and a motive for the aid programme. The belief that stability was gained when living standards were raised was a key motivator. Before World War Two the South and South East Asian region had supplied rubber, jute, tea, tin and other key products, and reinstating this trade was essential. These industries would make available an export industry that would provide employment and economic resources, thus helping raise living standards.

In a small booklet produced by the Australian Government, New Hope for Asia, the Colombo Plan was brought to the attention of the Australian people. It highlighted that the South and South East Asian nations were used to hardships, and that new democratic governments had to be supported. The development plans proposed to raise the quality of life in underdeveloped countries, but not challenge Australian prosperity. The stories in the booklet explained that each nation had differing needs, not all of them financial. By claiming that the peoples of South and South East Asia, with the support of other free peoples, could achieve a measure of prosperity, the publication drew support on a humanist level and also accommodated Western feelings of superiority. With so many ideologies and cultures involved, and budgets and political allegiances to consider, Spender’s sense of urgency was tempered by the caution of the Asian delegates. In 1950, the Colombo Plan was discussed in

39 Spender, Exercises in Diplomacy, p. 244.
40 Lowe & Oakman (eds), Documents on Australian Foreign Policy, pp. xxx–xxxi.
42 ibid.
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Sydney. The developing nations asked for plans to be presented at the following year’s meeting in London.

As Spender moved to another political appointment, Casey became Minister of the External Affairs Department. With similar zeal to Spender, he promoted the Colombo Plan as a priority. His talents lay in PR, and specific and measurable projects became a focus of Australian aid.

Figure 4.1: Casey and the Colombo Plan signatories at Parliament House

Daniel Oakman has written the chief study on the Colombo Plan in his book, *Facing Asia,* He covered the public and private motives for the Plan, the Australian and Asian audience and the personalities of the main players. He noted that Casey’s prime objective was to ‘give Australia a visible presence in Asia and secure long-lasting political dividends.’ This echoes contemporary definitions of cultural diplomacy, and it is easy to explore the aims of the protagonists in terms of a modern ideology. While Spender, Casey, Menzies and others understood that cultural relationships became political ones, the terminology of cultural diplomacy is recent, and in this thesis has been imposed upon them.

44 Oakman, *Facing Asia,* p. 94.
Between 1950 and 1960, the Australian Government spent £40,000,000 on technical assistance and capital aid. In this 10 year period, 3,816 awards for training had been granted to South and South East Asian students across varying fields of scholarship. A further 2,704 students had participated in sponsored correspondence courses. The government claimed that the scholarships stimulated interest in private funding of students in Australian educational institutions. As Australia operated a White Australia immigration policy, the students were on strict visas, with the expectation that when they had completed their studies they would return home and be of social benefit to their communities. Each contributing country operated with a different foreign aid budget, resources and political and geographical focus. Australia’s contribution prioritised technical training and human resources.

Casey used the media to promote the Colombo Plan activities, a skill he had learned in Washington. He informed the domestic public of the merits of the Plan frequently and informally. Newspaper reports of student successes gave a human edge to the programme. By advertising individuals and their academic achievements, Australians felt included in the regional development programme, participating in the hope and salvation it offered. The Colombo Plan students made it easy for Casey, as their accomplishments were often noteworthy.

The English language was, for Casey, ‘a fundamental political and psychological tool, a “weapon in our hands.”’ He claimed that ‘Australia’s strength lay in the fact that it was not a major colonial power, but the successful product of a colonial regime serving as a model to the region.’ This is supported by comments in Friends and Neighbours where Casey wrote ‘We sincerely believe that the survival and progress of our present civilization depends substantially on the English-speaking peoples…’

Despite English being a new language and learning in a different cultural environment away from their families, some students were still able to gain credits in exams. The heads of universities and colleges in Adelaide spoke highly of the students’ conduct and work. Predicting that his local and international students would take leadership positions in the

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47 Casey, Friends and Neighbours, p. 10
future, the Master of Lincoln College said: ‘they’ll have a far better understanding of each other by sharing a way of life’. And by learning, and learning to think, in the English language, the students had moved toward thinking like other English speaking peoples of the West.

Figure 4.2: Indonesian Colombo Plan students in Sydney

The Asian students who came to Australia stayed in different types of accommodation, sometimes boarding at private residences, organised privately or through the Plan. Casey publicly thanked those who took students into their homes, announcing that the ‘promotion of friendship between Australians and Asians was no less important than the training the visitors received.’ This also encouraged visiting students and their hosts to feel they were part of a collaborative enterprise, working together to achieve a goal that would benefit all. International House, a boarding house for students, was completed in Melbourne in 1957, with Colombo Plan funds. Other similar houses followed in major capitals.

Frequently students were guests at the functions of the Rotary and Apex clubs, Country Women’s Association (CWA) and Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA). They were often taken on tours of the region with club members, including visits to stone quarries, mills,

50 Indonesian Colombo Plan students in Sydney, uncredited, 1965, NAA, A1501, A6095/8, 7572410
52 Oakman, Facing Asia, p. 184.
dairy farms, lakes, caves, bushwalking and beach days, often ending with a specially prepared luncheon or dinner, such as an Australian barbecue. At some of these events the students would give talks about their experiences studying in Australia, and provide some insight into their lives in Asia. In 1954, Sydney University arts graduate Adelina Agbayani addressed the Goulburn Rotary Club, highlighting the similarities in culture between the Philippines and Australia, and commenting that sharing a common cultural and political heritage would help ‘that precious seed of Australian-Philippine cooperation…grow in stature and strength’. This hope of continued goodwill and shared progress was a common theme of these speeches. The Apex Club of Moree enjoyed taking Colombo Plan student visitors out to the vast grazing areas, to ‘show them what our country was really like’. Club president John Adrian felt that offering the students hospitality was a good thing for Australia, as they ‘would be ambassadors of goodwill towards us when they returned to their own lands’. He was supportive of the CWA’s call for members to host students in their homes during vacations.

The Colombo Plan students were seen as a bridge to Asia by those who understood that the Australian public had an opportunity to promote their culture. William Douglas, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, warned that as Communist China built its industries, India was poised between both worlds. ‘The outcome of communism depends on who does the best job. What happens to India will determine the history of Asia,’ he said. The Colombo Plan students were an important way that Australia could help tip the balance away from communism. The person-to-person contact that was an essential component of Australian Colombo Plan efforts would help strengthen the soft power objectives of the aid programme. There is no direct evidence that Australia’s support of Indian students achieved this Cold War aim, but the intent was to generate a positive relationship with Australia and its political ideologies, to influence political thought, and gain sympathetic political relationships.

56 ibid.
58 ibid.
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Not all media coverage was initiated by the Government or its organisations. The students found that writing to newspapers and journals was a good way of imparting their messages and opinions. Some student experiences were quite negative, mostly relating to loneliness and the difficulties of adjusting to cultural differences. Such experiences highlighted that there are limits to cultural diplomacy programmes, and they do not guarantee the outcomes for all participants. The publication of these letters shows an honesty that allows criticism and helps a nation build realistic long-term relationships, and this is discussed in modern cultural diplomacy theories.

The Colombo Plan worked as a tool of cultural diplomacy because it allowed personal contact on many levels. While the majority of experiences were positive, some surveys conducted by the University of New South Wales show the students’ mixed experiences students. One student surveyed in the late 1990s states how they had had few Australian friends at university because they ‘felt ostracised because of different cultural backgrounds and misperceptions of Asian students’.59 As a result of this, it became common for students to join clubs. One recounts enjoying the international students’ organisation because meeting other Asian students ‘helped me to get rid of prejudice about them, especially toward Chinese.’60 This comment reminds us that the Asian students in Australia were often just as foreign to each other as they were to domestic students.

The High Commissioner for India in Canberra wrote to Casey in 1956, noting that some students were struggling in the Australian university system because it was so different from theirs.61 He suggested that some of the trainers might find value in visiting other Asian countries, in order to modify some of their methods. Language and cultural differences created problems for even the best students. By listening to the needs and experiences of the recipient countries, donor countries could better operate and adjust the aid programme. Feedback is a vital aspect of cultural diplomacy, and while this highlights a caution in cultural diplomacy plans, it also provides an opportunity to develop and improve.

Often of the friendships formed by students during their years at university lasted for life. There are many stories of students continuing to write to their landlady, and ex-students enjoyed hosting their Australian friends when they travelled to Asia. Business and leisure

59 Anonymous survey, ‘Students in the 1960s: A Survey of Student Experience at UNSW’, prepared by the University Oral History Project for the UNSW Archives, University of New South Wales.
60 Ibid.
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trips to Australia were made later, and the familiarity of the culture would probably have made these subsequent trips more relaxed. One student remembers being irked by the regulation that students must return to their home country after the completion of their studies, and some students found the re-adjustment quite difficult. This student, and most others, came to understand that this was the ‘right thing to do,’ as their home counties needed their new skills and knowledge to continue the development process.62

Overt racism or discrimination was the exception rather than the rule experienced by Colombo Plan students, with most hosts sympathetic to the challenges the students faced.63 The students became a non-threatening challenge to stereotypes, and most who hosted or entertained them became their advocates. The governmental publicity mill was happy to publish success stories. This encouraged the students and their hosts to feel that they were part of a collaborative enterprise, working together to achieve a goal that would benefit all.

The students were not the only reason why the Colombo Plan was in the media. When Casey travelled to India in 1953, he said that ‘not by any means the least of the benefits of the Colombo Plan is the fact that it provides opportunity for us to get to know you and you to get to know us’.64 Casey also noted that Australia was still in a developmental stage (subtly explaining the limited resources available for the Plan), but highlighted his enthusiasm for Australia and India to work together. This story was published in an Indian newspaper, where the Indian public were assured that Australians saw the Plan not as charity or opportunity for domination, but for mutual growth and development. The Hindustan Times reported Indian Prime Minister Nehru saying that the Indian Government welcomed assistance under the Colombo Plan, in part because ‘it brings us into cooperative effort with various countries and also helps in avoiding development in compartments, which leads to isolation.’65 It was the cooperative nature of this Plan that made it attractive. Recipient countries were encouraged to become donor countries, as their circumstances allowed.

In the early years of the Colombo Plan, newspapers reported the excitement of nurses heading overseas, telecommunications equipment going to Pakistan, Australian-made tractors

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62 Anonymous Survey, ‘Students in the 1960s’.
63 Oakman, Facing Asia, p. 192.
64 ‘World Impressed by India’s Progress: Casey’s Plea for Closer Ties with Australia,’ Indian Express, October 19, 1953, ‘Colombo Plan Press Cuttings’, Series A1838/1, item 555/6/4 Part 1, National Archives of Australia.
65 ‘Rapid Economic Changes Needed: Nehru’s Address to Colombo Plan Body,’ The Hindustan Times, Wednesday October 14, 1953, in ibid.
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exported to help modernise farming practices, a plastic surgeon flying to Malaya\textsuperscript{66} and other positive stories. The media brought about a shift in the Australian public’s thinking about South and South East Asia, with stories highlighting the enthusiasm of those participating in the initiative. Most of the publicity served to justify the Australian money being sent overseas, as there were those who felt that the money would be better spent domestically. These attitudes do not take into account the foreign policy aims of the Plan, such as political stability, national friendships and trade agreements that resulted from person-to-person contacts. Domestic publicity and media stories highlighted the foreign policy benefits. The Australian Government ensured that local infrastructure projects and donations were clearly advertised as a gift from Australia. The locomotives exported under the Plan were promoted in the \textit{Pakistani News}, and as they would travel over countless miles of Pakistan, ‘they would be seen by many people and wherever they went they would carry the good name of Australia and tangible proof of their interest in Pakistan’s great task of national development.’\textsuperscript{67} The publicity that stated which nations were actively and practically assisting Asian development was an important aspect of the Plan.

A further positive feature of the Plan was that it provided extra work for Australian industries. Heavy machinery had to be manufactured and then purchased by the government. An article in the \textit{Herald Sun} requested that the government subsidise the export of milk powder to Asian countries, thereby helping Australian dairy farmers.\textsuperscript{68} In July 1956, both \textit{The Herald} and \textit{The Age} ran articles promoting the Colombo Plan. \textit{The Herald} wrote that while the nation was mindful of the economic benefits, ‘thoughtful Australians will not agree…that our annual contribution…to the Colombo Plan should be cut back’, noting that other countries ‘less closely related to Asia are giving more.’\textsuperscript{69} \textit{The Age} described the same anticipated budget cuts, proposing that in ‘years to come it may well be that this small gesture of help and goodwill towards our Asian neighbours will be worth more to us—and to them—than a far greater investment in rifles and bombs.’\textsuperscript{70} Asian students in Australia were seen as

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{67}‘Diesel-Electric Locomotives for Pakistan: Colombo Plan Aid to Help Raise Living Standards,’ \textit{Pakistan News}, Vol. 6, No. 5, April 1, 1955, Casey Press, manuscripts 6150, NLA.
  \item \textsuperscript{68}‘Farmers Seek Defence Aid,’ \textit{Melbourne Herald}, May 21, 1954, Colombo Plan Press Clippings, A5954/69, 2077/7 1953-55, item 658976.
  \item \textsuperscript{69}‘Don’t Drop Asian Aid’, \textit{The Herald}, July 16, 1956, A10302 1956/170, NAA.
  \item \textsuperscript{70}‘Colombo Plan Should Not Be Axed,’ \textit{The Age}, July 17, 1956, A10302 1956/170, NAA.
\end{itemize}
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‘potential ambassadors of goodwill’, and their very presence should be a constant reminder of ‘the simple facts of Asia’s geography.’\(^{71}\) The Australian public were frequently reminded what their government was doing about the perceived communist threat to the north.

The Australian Government wanted to avoid the impression that the *only* purpose of the Colombo Plan was ‘the establishment of a buffer to Communist expansion’, or that recipient countries were expected to enter defensive alliances with the West, although these were significant motivations.\(^{72}\) Sir Ian Clunies Ross, Chairman of the CSIRO 1949-59, delivered a lecture in Adelaide, in which he asked his audience if they would contemplate a larger investment in human welfare in other countries if it would make their own future more secure, fortifying the world against communism and expanding trade and commerce. His presentation indicates that the Australian people would agree to this if the issues were presented to them in clear terms. This would see aid shift from philanthropic motives to a deliberate tool used in a play for power and political security.

Some letters to newspapers from the public reflected the realisation that defence and security were the primary aims behind gifts of wheat and university training. D. J. Bartels wrote to the *Sydney Morning Herald*: ‘If this laudable scheme is white-anted by…people who only have a mean knowledge of what the Colombo Plan is doing, then Australia will be the first nation to suffer.’\(^{73}\) He continued, ‘the communistic countries will cash in on this grievous error.’ The *Melbourne Herald* supported this argument, stating that the ‘communists are busy opening their coffers’ to the ‘uncommitted peoples of the world.’\(^{74}\) Among very generous donations to Asian countries, Denis Warner claimed that ‘in the past month the tiny Kingdom of Cambodia has been offered more aid by Communist China than Australia contributes each year to all the Asian countries in the Colombo Plan.’\(^{75}\) He pointed out that Australia’s security could only be attained with its capacity to defend itself militarily, or ‘by our efforts to help create in these same neighbouring countries a standard of living that will make their people impervious to Soviet blandishments.’\(^{76}\) Similarly, an editorial in the *Argus* commented

\(^{71}\) ‘Colombo Plan Should Not Be Axed,’ *The Age*, July 17, 1956, A10302 1956/170, NAA.
\(^{72}\) ‘First Task in Asia is Conquest of Poverty,’ *The Argus*, October 16, 1954, Colombo Plan Press Clippings, A5954/69, 2077/7 1953-55; item 658976, NAA.
\(^{74}\) Dennis Warner, ‘Co-existence: We’re Losing this Battle,’ *Melbourne Herald*, July 17, 1956, ‘Colombo Plan Press Cuttings,’ Series A1838/266, item 555/6/4 Attachment, NAA.a
\(^{75}\) ibid.
\(^{76}\) ibid.
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that ‘if we want to make an investment in national security we should forget racial nonsense and see how help we can give our Asian neighbours. It will be a sound investment.’

The Melbourne Herald stated that ‘these gestures of goodwill should be made on a spectacular basis. They might be costly, but much cheaper than the price of a single air squadron or warship.’

Casey added to this, claiming that most South East Asian political problems were fundamentally economic problems. He noted that the US, Britain, Canada and New Zealand joined Australia in an international effort ‘directed at producing stability and security in the area, and that is very much to Australia’s advantage.’ He highlighted that the burden did not rest solely on Australia, but that the country would likely experience the greatest advantages because of its geography.

Not all letters and comments regarding Australian participation in the Colombo Plan were from Australians. Japan had joined the programme in 1954, and the Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida warned that aid to South East Asia as a whole should be increased, or else individual countries could fall victim to Chinese communism. Chinese economic progress was substantial, and Yoshida believed that the influence would be hard to resist. ‘Somewhere, somehow,’ he warned, ‘a way must be found to increase this help if these underdeveloped areas are to survive in the free world.’ Dulles, Secretary of State in Washington, agreed. He described the vast improvements in infrastructure in China, but at the cost of individual liberties and freedom. He described how hundreds of thousands of Chinese people died during this work, ‘but they are forgotten as the infrastructure remains.’ This is how communism was presented and contrasted with Colombo Plan aid, under which similar achievements could be made with a free economy.

77 ‘Bombs Alone Will Not Decide,’ The Argus, October 16, 1953, Colombo Plan Press Clippings, A5954/69, 2077/7 1953-55, item 658976;
78 ‘Colombo Plan is Only “Gesture of Goodwill,”’ Melbourne Herald, September 29, 1953, Colombo Plan Press Clippings, A5954/69, 2077/7 1953-55, item 658976;
80 ibid.
81 ‘Japanese Prime Minister Warns: Aid S E Asia- Or It Must Go Red,’ The Argus, November 9, 1954, Colombo Plan Press Clippings, A5954/69, 2077/7 1953-55, item 658976, NAA.
82 ibid.
83 ‘Aid Plan Counter to Red’s Feats,’ The Age, July 9, 1955, Colombo Plan Press Clippings, A5954/69, 2077/7 1953-55, item 658976, NAA.
84 ibid.
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This period saw a fundamental shift in Australia-Asian relations and foreign policy, with issues of economic security overshadowing military threats. The pursuit of economic interdependence would hopefully take the pressure off military defence. By inviting the future political and business leaders of Asia to live and study in Australia, and to train them in a way that would increase their individual economic prosperity, international scholarships would see economic and personal ties do the work of aggressive defence policies. That is, soft power replaced hard power. Newspaper articles and letters show that the Australian public were aware of the political, economic and personal aspects of the Plan, and that the majority supported the government initiative.

Ten Years On

Expansion of the diplomatic service, friendship missions, official visits, radio broadcasts, the creation of Australia-Asia associations and the introduction of Asian Studies at universities were all included in the diplomatic programme of the 1950s and 1960s. Levi noted that trade and investment opportunities were ‘supplemented by a bipartisan good neighbour policy which left out no paragraph in the modern text book on the creation of good will among nations.’ Efforts to create cultural ties attested to the success of governmental efforts and the open mindedness of the Australian public in their increasing contacts with Asians.

As new self-governing states were created to the north of Australia, it was vital for the Australian people to present an image of themselves as good neighbours, and to quietly suppress its history as a coloniser. Walker notes that by the 1960s, the Australian public were very concerned about their reputation, but focused more on self-definition. The idea was to shape opinion of Australia as a favourable trading partner. Australia was defining ‘Australia’ to its own people, inasmuch as it projected an image of itself to the world. Politically and socially, domestically and internationally, the Menzies Era was important in advancing Australia’s reputation. Being good neighbours was an integral part of that definition.

The Colombo Plan’s 10th annual report surveyed its progress. While it was always noted that improvements would not be measured easily, the report does highlight positive developments.

86 Levi, Australia’s Outlook, p. 175.
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in all countries. The committee concluded that the most significant achievement ‘could well be the awareness growing throughout the area...of the urgent need for more rapid development.’88 By 1961, 3,816 scholarships had been awarded, and almost 10,000 privately funded students had attended Australian educational institutions. Australian contributions were largely Australian made, such as equipment for development projects or gifts of commodities that have then been sold to the public to raise funds for local projects. The Australian Government sponsored irrigation projects, electricity and thermal power plants, transport, communications and broadcasting initiatives. The report was supplemented by the more user-friendly booklet *The Seed of Freedom* (by Osmar White and James Fitzpatrick), and the documentary ‘The Builders’, sponsored by the Australian Government.

By sending machinery made in Australia, local jobs were created. This allowed manufacturers to take pride in being part of the development of another country through making tractors, medical equipment or tools. Australian nurses, Red Cross workers and technical experts who worked in South East Asia also played an important role, imparting the Australian way of life. This reflects the idea of development as hope and saviour, and the Colombo Plan’s encouragement of individual participation.

The political benefits and promotion of Western values were always discussed officially. Publicity and propaganda were essential components. *Seed of Freedom* was a user-friendly report on different projects within the Plan, and its complementary documentary, ‘The Builders’, gives a visual insight into the programme. Each told an important story in relation to the audience, purpose, national identity, communication strategies, shared cultural experiences and political aims involved in the regional collaborative project. The newspapers and Radio Australia were engaged, and person-to-person contact was endorsed.

*Hemisphere*

The magazine *Hemisphere* was created with the abovementioned cross-cultural understanding in mind. The promotion of Australia’s involvement in the Colombo Plan in the international and domestic media was vital. As discussed earlier, Australian newspapers, both urban and rural, published numerous articles on the Asian students’ activities. A publication specific to the needs of the visiting students sent messages to a targeted Asian audience, and

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88 Australia’s Part in the Colombo Plan, Progress Report to 31st December 1961, Canberra, Catalogue 01568116, NAA.
the Overseas Planning Committee, formed by Casey in 1955, supported the formation of *Hemisphere*. The editorial team often worked with Radio Australia, to provide complementary messages. *Hemisphere* was designed to specifically influence the student body, encourage Asian readers and inform Australian audiences. It contained articles on both Australia and Asian countries, and covered topics of interest to both groups. It was sponsored by the Australian Government and private advertisers. Articles were sourced from Asian students, Australian contributors and Asian specialists, providing a shared cultural experience.

The Department of External Affairs discovered that the US already freely provided abundant English literature to Asian countries. It was noted that Indonesians did not appreciate these beautifully produced shiny brochures, as they resented the implication that they could not produce the same standard themselves. It was decided that an Australian publication should look and feel more like local productions. This would enable the publication to feel familiar, boosting readership and thus increasing its publicity value. The target audience would be the mainstream public, not just the educated elite.

*Hemisphere*’s first editor was journalist C. C. D. Brammall. He wanted the journal to inform Asians about Australian culture and other Asian cultures, and he proposed recording student activities that would ‘augment mutual understanding and good will…by drawing attention to the exchange of ideas…and the cultural contacts…being made.’ His advisor, Norman Bartlett, also realised that many readers might not have a firm command of English or Australian culture, and suggested that articles should be written simply. He also advised Brammall not to make assumptions about level of knowledge, especially of Australia, and to remember that to the readers, Australia was a foreign subject. Brammall understood that ‘the magazine [did] not desire nor intend to enter the field of controversy, but confined itself to furtherance of understanding.’ It avoided contentious political issues, but noted that ‘there was no reason why it should not deal with broad economic interests as well as the purely

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90 Unnamed author, Hemisphere-Magazine for Asian Students Distribution: General & Policy, A1361/1, 50/9/1 Part 1, Barcode 4662917, NAA.
92 ‘Letter from Norman Bartlett to CCD Brammall,’ 7 June, 1956, Hemisphere-Magazine for Asian Students-Liaison-Officers Overseas, A1361, 50/2/5 Part 1, Barcode 4662907, NAA.
93 Brammall, ‘Draft Letter.’
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cultural.' This was, in part, to help *Hemisphere* avoid charges of censorship, and to present it as respectable journalism. While the foreign policy aim was clearly a focus, the magazine’s political connection was not meant to be obvious.

In 1958, after the publication of 19 volumes, editor Selwyn Speight conducted a review of *Hemisphere*. Its articles had been criticised as too simple, or read as propaganda, and some Asian journalists commented that the style should be more personal. He recommended more articles from Asian experts, to balance the contributors. He also noted the amount of Chinese and Russian literature which was available in the target Asian countries, and that its predominant theme was that the Western world was crumbling, while the Asian peoples would ‘march together into a brave new world.’ This gave Speight an impetus to update the content. Publications were available for the Asian public from numerous international publishers. *Hemisphere* was among a number of free publications distributed to students and diplomats. Speight understood its potential to explain and win respect for Australia’s outlook and policy. He interviewed Asian students in Australia, and found that many had little understanding of the historical factors affecting their home county’s economic position. The students enjoyed articles on spectacular projects and historical Asian materials. Generally, personal stories attracted Asian readers, not ‘dull facts and figures.’ Speight also proposed to pay more attention to student activities, and introduce a letters page. Writing in 1999 about post-war Germany, Gienow-Hecht noted a similar tactic in the US-run German newspaper *Die Neue Zeitung*. By allowing readers to criticise or comment, a forum for discussion was opened that the communist-oriented papers did not have. It provided a freedom of speech aspect that was taken for granted in democratic countries. Speight allowed legitimate criticism of Australia. Titles such as ‘Australian diplomats do not know enough about Asia’ allowed Asians to feel that their voices were heard and respected.

Speight believed that a key theme for the magazine should be ‘that in the new world taking shape, Australia and Asia have common problems.’ As no other publication took this focus, he believed that this would create mutual sympathy. This tactic adds a dimension of cultural

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94 Brammall, ‘Hemisphere.’
98 Speight, ‘Report on Hemisphere.’
99 ibid.
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diplomacy to the more overt and conscious need for Australian publicity. By relating to the problems of Asian countries, and by showing empathy and vulnerability, Speight would use Hemisphere to win over the Asian readership. The terminology of cultural diplomacy is contemporary, but the objective is not.

From 1960, Hemisphere promoted Australian policies sympathetically. It was hoped that by explaining Australia’s lack of water, some of the reasoning behind a limited migration policy could be explained. Articles showing that Australia was proud of its British heritage and yet developing a ‘special character of its own’ would show identification with the recently independent Asian nations. Speight noted that ‘some themes…must obviously be developed by implication rather than by direct statement.’ The editorial team often worked with the Radio Australia writers and editors to produce complementary materials, in a coordinated programme to deliver a consistent message.

The advisory committee of Hemisphere met monthly to comment on the previous issue and propose suggestions for further issues. They were careful to be balanced and not favour one Asian country or culture over another. Speight felt responsible for evaluating the response of the Asian audience, researching other Asian magazines and interviewing students who had returned to Asia. The editors also realised that as a government publication, it had to balance caution with internationally contentious issues and retaining the interest of readers. Speight notes that his interviews with students ‘are designed to make [it] clear…that we do welcome their opinions.’ This contrasted with the communist publications available to Asian readers.

The inclusion of advertisements in Hemisphere gave the magazine a ‘more spontaneous, less official, flavour.’ A 1957 special edition includes on its first page an advertisement for ‘Holden, Australia’s Own Car’, depicting a happy Australian family and their new purchase. There is also a prominent advertisement for ‘Angus and Robertson, booksellers, for all your fiction, non-fiction and textbook needs’, and the new New South Wales University of Technology. These examples promoted Australia as a developed country with a high standard of living, possibly something to emulate.

100 Speight, ‘Hemisphere.’
101 ibid.
102 Unnamed author, ‘Hemisphere-Magazine for Asian Students-General Advisory Committee’, A1361, 50/1/5 Part 1, Barcode 4674483, NAA.
103 Brammall, ‘Draft Letter.’
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The articles included topics such as an Indian scientist returning to India after making his name in Australian universities; the role of Radio Australia, its Asian language programmes and easy accessibility for Asian audiences; the formation of the Oriental Society of Australia; the election of a Malayan student as Student Representative Council (SRC) President; Melbourne University Law School’s completion of a Land Code for Brunei; Asian students’ revival of badminton as a sport in Australia; the Melbourne Olympic Games; the tin and rubber industries in Malaya; Burmese students studying mining techniques in Queensland; scientists studying the viability of Ceylonese clay for the production of tiles and bricks; Pakistani engineering students studying earth dams; and an Asian student concert in Sydney to raise money for an Australian charity. The readers were exposed to the breadth of Australian society and culture, as well as the variety of activities available to Asian students.

In 1964, R. J. Maguire compiled a selection of Hemisphere’s articles. His intent was to distil the essence of the magazine. He wrote that ‘it has always been considered that the magazine could best fulfil its function by concerning itself with telling Australians about Asia, and Asians about Australia, and keeping itself free from national bias.’ His selection shows that the editors were quite successful. Articles stating that Indonesians and Australians have been trading since the 16th century added an element of traditional cooperation. Archaeological and anthropological studies from throughout Asia highlighted a respect for the ancient (and pre-colonial) cultures of Asia, and corresponded to articles on Australian Aborigines. Stories exploring Buddhist, Japanese, Pakistani and Australian paintings showed that art transcends borders. Articles covering tropical architecture in Malaya, the beauty of Muslim architecture in Pakistan and the development of Modernist architecture in Australia equalised the countries, while still subtly suggesting Australian progress.

Topics were designed to show, as Speight had intended, that Asia and Australia all struggled with common issues. A story titled ‘The Search for Australian Identity’ followed one called ‘In search of Indonesian identity.’ Language, literature, poetry, music and philosophy were viewed through the lens of multiple countries, highlighting commonality. With the view that to most readers, Australians were the foreigners, articles describing the typical Australian family, social classes in Australia and urban society aimed to bring a measure of understanding to Australian culture. Sharing cultural experiences showed that all peoples faced challenges, and that the Colombo Plan community would help each other. As a

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collaborative project, the camaraderie it fostered contributed to established foreign policy aims. In conjunction with the broadcasts of Radio Australia, Hemisphere gave a regional focus, and highlighted how Australia was an integral part of Asian development. It is difficult to know how many people read the magazine, but approximately 5000 copies were distributed each year. Hemisphere was aimed at the Asian audience, whereas The Seed of Freedom and ‘The Builders’ were created for the Australian audience.

![Figure 4.3: Teaching construction methods](image)

**The Seed of Freedom**

In 1961, after 10 years of contributing to and refining the Colombo Plan, the Australian Government sent prominent journalist Osmar White and photographer James Fitzpatrick on a tour of South East Asian countries, to report on progress. Designed as a promotional tour rather than an assessment of effectiveness, the pair toured fourteen countries participating in the Colombo Plan. They were shocked by the poverty they witnessed, the inadequacy of institutions and the desolation of the land. They were also ‘disheartened by the waste and neglect in Australian-funded projects and equipment’- on discussing their findings with Casey he replied that this was not unexpected in Asian countries, and encouraged the journalist to ‘emphasise the non-political nature of the aid.’

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105 International Relations-Overseas Aid-Colombo Plan Tour, 1958, A1768, CPT248, 11804243, NAA.
106 Oakman, p. 157, 158
As the tour progressed, White’s view of the plan improved, and together they reconciled what they saw with the aims of the Plan, and produced a short book and documentary of their journey. *The Seed of Freedom* (the booklet) and ‘The Builders’ (the film) were distributed to schools, libraries, government staff, community and student groups in Australia. Menzies wrote the prologue for the booklet, highlighting that South East Asian nations ‘must chart their own paths to progress.’ The overriding message was that donor nations were not attempting to control or influence the political position of the governments or people, but were respectful of their sovereignty. He wrote that ‘the impetus that brought them to independence is inspiring them to economic and social progress,’ and that this progress was respectful of the ‘spiritual heritage built up by Asian civilisations over many centuries.’ Menzies set the tone for White’s story, which was that Australia was assisting fellow newly independent neighbours, that this was a long-term but not permanent project, and that Australia was respectful of the political and social implications of colonialism.

While White may have seen his role as provider of an impartial assessment, the DEA saw the production ‘of good publicity as White’s principal function,’ and in 1960 the DEA funded the publication of 70,000 copies. In a book produced primarily for Australians, Fitzpatrick and White added the human element to the government data. White described the purpose of the Plan as reconciling ‘proper pride in national sovereignty with the advantages of international planning.’ These newly independent states had rich cultural histories but needed to enter international markets in order to feed growing populations. The infrastructure, administrative institutions and human knowledge bases of these countries had to be developed at an impossible pace. White noted that it would be ‘an empty gesture to approve the emergence of Asian nationalism without helping to make Asian nationalism economically viable.’ The former colonial governments, and by extension the Commonwealth, had a responsibility to ensure that the underdeveloped nations would prosper.

White clarified the purposes for and reasoning of the Plan to Australian taxpayers, who were funding it. He enabled the reader to feel a part of the progress, part of the solution. He

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107 ibid, pp. 2–3.
108 Oakman, p. 159, 165
109 50,000 of the copies produced were for the domestic audience, 20,000 sent overseas. Ibid, p. 165
110 White, p. 5.
111 ibid, p. 6.
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described that the ‘causes and symptoms of poverty in south east asia are as varied as the languages, customs, beliefs and skin colours found there’, explaining the diversity of the assistance. he emphasised that the plan was not charity, but really ‘hardly more than a supplement to local effort’, and it ‘depends on interdependence as well as independence.’ this stress on international community and cooperation, and highlighting the efforts of the locals, was meant to set the context for the individual stories that followed.

farmers in south east asia and australia faced many of the same challenges, such as flood, drought and a rising salt table. the solutions sought were shown as relevant and logical, such as the building of dams, diversion of waterways, desert reclamation and construction of tube wells. all of these solutions required hard labour and heavy machinery. australian farmers were encouraged to feel empathy for fellow food producers. fitzpatrick’s photographs show human labour, and that the recipients participated in their development. white highlighted that the plan was more than just of practical benefit, as those receiving modern skills would transfer their new knowledge to affecting other beneficial social changes. sharing the experience and the solution enables cultural familiarity and rapport, as well as the objective of economic independence.

figure 4.4: new technologies

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114 white, the seed of freedom, p. 8.
115 ibid, p. 9.
116 international relations-overseas aid-colombo plan tour, a1768, cpt230, 11804240, naa.
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The booklet included pictures of armed soldiers guarding farmers in Burma, camels transporting feed for sheep, frontier tribesmen learning to operate tractors, and overcrowded tents with people jostling for space with cattle. Sharing normal cultural experiences and adding layers of specific foreign problems was a way of allowing Australian readers to understand the problems faced by Asian farmers. The farmers were humanised and the Australian public came to understand the individual challenges. White and Fitzpatrick brought understanding of the Plan’s progress over its decade of operation, and developed enthusiasm for continued support. This highlights how shared cultural experiences were used as a tool to garner support for a diplomatic programme.

The poor healthcare situation across Asia was also described in the text. White noted that a campaign for hospitals must be part of a wider strategy that included combatting the causes of malnutrition, overcrowding, polluted water supplies and poor sanitation.117 Plans to deliver clean water where it was needed most, the reduction of bacteria in the Bombay milk supply and screening for tuberculosis were steps taken within this wider strategy. White highlighted that Australian nurses shared their medical skills and also demonstrated administrative systems that allowed the new hospitals to be more effective.118 Australia supplied equipment for x-rays as well as washing machines, typewriters, refrigerators, sterilisers and baths. Modern stabling for dairy cattle and buffalo, standardisation of prices and production and instruction on how to make concrete water pipes were all instrumental in preventing disease and supporting new healthcare initiatives.

Watching a child smile over the luxury of a bowl of clean water prompted White to label Pakistan’s water pipeline project a ‘pipeline of hope.’119 The gift of £2,000,000 of wheat to the Pakistani Government both staved off famine and allowed the proceeds of the sale to fund the construction of water pipes. White also described that the governments of New Zealand, Canada and the US contributed to the provision of equipment, raw materials and technical knowledge, in order to bring the project to fruition. This highlighted to Australians that the burden of assistance did not rest solely on their shoulders—or finances—and that this was a project of international importance, in which they played a vital role. Further, Australia was helping foster economic stability to its north, and thus securing its borders.

118 ibid, p. 25.
119 ibid, p. 28.
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Stories in *The Seed of Freedom* projected education as a seed of future development. Nepali chemist Purna Prasad Lamsal, a former Colombo Plan scholarship student to Australia, had returned to Nepal with new knowledge to help its government improve its sugar industry. He declared: ‘my Government is planning for the future and my years of study in Australia were part of the plan.’\textsuperscript{120} White highlighted the value of the scholarships from an educational, technical and social perspective. Lamsal said of his Australian education: ‘I was equipped tremendously with knowledge of the sugar industry and my life has been enriched by the many good friends made inside and outside the industry.’\textsuperscript{121} The *Seed of Freedom* asserted that ‘the paramount objective [of the Colombo Plan] is to equip the under-developed nations to reach and maintain equality by the skilled exploitation of their own natural resources.’\textsuperscript{122}

The importance of literacy skills and communications was also emphasised. As the content of books became accessible, people became enlightened to modern sciences, replacing primitive superstition with logical beliefs and enlightened social codes. Communities exposed to radio broadcasts in local languages had already shown signs of social change. It was believed that these social changes would help form stable governments, industrial development and a way of life beneficial to all citizens. By exchanging knowledge and skills, participants shared personal and cultural experiences. As skill sets grew and developed, lives improved. This was a vital step towards achieving the policy aims of the Plan.

Colombo Plan students were important cultural diplomats. They both educated the Australian community they lived in and took Australian stories and ideals home. White noted that a high proportion of the Plan’s students returned home and took positions as leaders, or were involved in assisted productive enterprises. Others brought greater skill to essential routine responsibilities, with knowledge of new tools and techniques. That international peace can be achieved through transnational understanding and mutual respect between people of different cultures was a vital aspect of the Plan, and is a foundation of modern theories of cultural diplomacy. Local community groups such as Apex, Rotary and the CWA, combined with universities and host families, all influenced these envoys, and became Australian ambassadors themselves. White argued that success was ‘measured by the number who

\textsuperscript{120} White, *The Seed of Freedom*, p. 32.
\textsuperscript{121} ibid.
\textsuperscript{122} ibid, p. 37.
complete prescribed courses and by the friendships so many young people from Asia continued to have with Australian fellow students, their families and friends.123

The Colombo Plan students often contributed to Australian development activities while they were studying. One student developed an inoculation technique for pasture plants that increased crops in north-western New South Wales; another helped breed pigs suited to tropical areas (benefitting both Australia and South East Asia); another made developments in the fight against rust in wheat crops. ‘These are merely a few random instances’, White noted, citing several other examples of distinction in radiophysics, biochemistry, architecture and other fields within Australian universities.124 Australians saw great value for their investment, and could appreciate Asian students as individuals.

The Australian financial contribution over the first 10-year period, according to White, was equivalent to six shillings a year per person. This is a tiny amount compared to the benefits it brought. The Plan was not designed to be a handout, but rather a seed to be planted. It was not to challenge political attitudes, but to foster a sense of independence. The readers were informed that while there were stories of waste regarding equipment and materials, the importance lay in the fact that donor governments worked with recipient governments on holistic, long-term solutions. The Plan was needed precisely because the structures designed to minimise waste and increase industrial efficiency were not in place.125 These messages were complemented by the short documentary ‘The Builders’. It is important to examine these works when trying to understand how the Plan worked as a tool of cultural diplomacy, as they focus on personal stories of individual, neighbourhood and national friendships.

‘The Builders’

‘The Builders’126 accompanied The Seed of Freedom. It illuminated the Colombo Plan, showed examples of Australia’s contribution and explained that ‘only a generation ago these were the far away places’ and that ‘today the world is smaller, there are no faraway places anymore.’127 The viewer was told that no-one could afford to ignore their neighbours, ‘or the

124 ibid, p. 41.
125 ibid, pp. 44–46.
127 ibid.
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path they choose to travel’, which served as a reminder that there were security and political reasons for the Plan.

This film showed audiences the before and after visions of how irrigation was the most significant issue facing almost every nation that received assistance. The issue was very familiar to Australia, and likely to receive the most empathy. Some areas had an abundant supply of water that they needed help storing, while others faced drought conditions. Australians were familiar with both. The different schemes resonated with the viewers, and using this issue as the introduction to the film was a clever way of immediately showing the relevance of the struggle, and why Australian technical assistance was valued. It presented a shared experience and common human struggles.

The narration enthused that ‘stronger nations undertook to help the weaker’, placing the Australian audience in a superior position, one from which it would have been difficult to argue against giving the necessary money for the Plan. Many areas of Asian life would have been uncommon to Australians—religion, cuisine, language and political structure—but by highlighting the similarities, this documentary provided a cultural link between the donor and receiver communities. The subtle message was that it was preferable to make the South and South East Asian countries productive and capable of supporting growing populations, thus avoiding a mass migration that Australia was ill equipped for. The consequence of ‘700 million people’ to Australia’s north was repeatedly stressed throughout the film, as well as the fact that so often people were hungry. New food production methods that used irrigation, fertilisers and mechanical harvesting could feed the increasing population. This was coupled with the new roads, railways, airfields and ports required to ship goods for domestic use and international trade. These developments would lead to improvements in living standards that would, it was hoped, promote political stability in the region.
The film showed new, Western style hospitals with staff being trained by Australian nurses, including tuberculosis screenings and vaccination programmes and support for victims of disease and physical injury. Such hospitals would only be of use to the community when nutrition was improved and disease could be controlled. It was as important to have nurses and doctors, just as it was to have food technicians, irrigation engineers, road builders, administrators, forestry managers, truck drivers and architects. Journalists and teachers were especially important to the Plan. All of these professions would contribute to improved standards of living.

Australian technical instructors were sent to trade schools and universities, and worked in the field. Teachers supported local staff in schools, teaching English and following a Western education system. Narrator Don Crosbie stated that ‘No part of the Colombo Plan is more vital than the support it gives to schools’. The ‘builders of tomorrow’ had to be educated by modern methods. For those areas in which there were not adequate local facilities, scholarships were awarded to bring students to Australian universities. This was Australia’s most significant area of contribution. Formal Western education allowed Australia to expose Colombo Plan students to Australian culture, whatever the setting. Students who learnt English could be influenced by Western propaganda in newspapers, radio broadcasts and television programmes. As with *The Seed of Freedom*, publicity was a motivating force behind specific programmes. Plaques and signs were prominently displayed on all donations,

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with the wording placed within a map of Australia to ensure that even the illiterate understood the message. The film showed the plaques at least four times within 30 minutes, highlighting Australian generosity.

![Image of a plaque with a map of Australia](image1.jpg)

**Figure 4.6: A gift from Australia**

‘The Builders’ showed all Asian peoples working hard physically. Their homes and manner of dress may have appeared primitive and novel to the Western audience. Students and nurses were dressed in Western clothing and were shown in Western-style buildings. The film contrasted the modern and the traditional, Western and Eastern. The Colombo Plan donors were respectful of Eastern cultures, but added the best Western technology to it. For both the Australian audience and the Asian recipients of aid, the aim was to show an understanding of ‘their’ culture and the benefits of ‘ours’.

Evoking Roosevelt’s Four Freedoms, ‘The Builders’ closed with the assertion that Australia were helping Asia ‘build this future of freedom’, the freedom to seek understanding and tolerance of human differences’, ‘freedom from wants’, ‘freedom to enjoy earned leisure’, ‘freedom from fear’, ‘freedom to worship’, ‘freedom to rest and be content’, that ‘we and our neighbours’ are building these freedoms for all Asian peoples, allowing them to enjoy the ‘earth’s beauty, the common inheritance of all men.’ This positive ending used inclusive language, promoted commonality and reduced Australian fear of 700 million Asians, turning

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129 Cliff Bottomley, 1957, NAA, A1501, A797/4, 8909686. Two Australian made excavators, for use by the Public Works Department in Laos, were shipped from Melbourne via Bangkok. With accessories and spare parts, they cost £A32,847. The plaque on the driver’s cabin of each excavator shows a map of Australia, with an inscription indicating that the machine is a gift given under the Colombo Plan.
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them into a team working together to solve challenges for the benefit of all. It was a subtle reminder that the ‘freedoms’ of the first world might be challenged by communism to the north, the Colombo Plan’s role in preventing that and reminding the audience of the foreign policy aims behind the stories of cultural experience. One benefit of cultural diplomacy programmes is the ability to promote political and cultural ideologies, as they allow a long-term relationship that other forms of diplomacy may not.

Both the booklet and the film used understandings of Asian and Australian cultures to create an aid programme beneficial to both. Only with such a broad programme could the Australian Government influence so many people on numerous levels. The provision of transport, infrastructure, communication systems and government institutions would affect the nations well into the future. The relationship between Australia and Asia was firmly established, and whatever political changes might occur in the future, there was a deep cultural understanding upon which to base further relations.

The foreign policy aim of the Colombo Plan was to provide economic and social development and stability in South East Asian countries, in an effort to stem the spread of communism. The Australian Government established exchange programmes to share skills, ideas, knowledge and the Australian way of life. Australians learnt about various South East Asian cultures, and this sharing of cultural experiences was a deliberate programme of the DEA, in pursuit of foreign policy. While the focus for Australian participation in the Colombo Plan was on training, the journal and film highlight the breadth of the programme.

Summary

Balancing political aims and immediate needs was a feature for both donor and recipient countries. During the first decade of Ceylonese independence, the government and people were not concerned with the battles between the West and communism as they were more focused on their own immediate domestic needs. Ceylon, like many other Asian countries, sought assistance from both the West and the communist countries. They participated in the aid and development programmes offered by other nations based on their own needs, and were not highly affected by the political aims of the donor countries, which was a clever balance for them to strike.

130 Wriggins, Ceylon, pp. 414, 457.
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Cultural diplomacy initiatives can be viewed from multiple perspectives. Money and propaganda attempted to win over peoples and governments. Personal relationships were the tool that enabled effective and direct communication of ideas and sympathies, with the greatest power to affect political influence. South and South East Asian governments were in a difficult position, balancing Western and communist objectives, and to show favour to either would have suggested a political allegiance. Acceptance of the rights of the states to govern themselves, and declaring respect for the independence of the new democratic governments, was an important aspect of the Colombo Plan. While bilateral agreements made it possible to deal more frequently with some countries than others (for example, Malaya), the Australian Government wanted to be seen to encourage all countries within the Plan.

There is an important story in *The Seed of Freedom* which relates to a journalists’ travel through Tibet.\(^{131}\) Travelling in a jeep, they encountered a Hindu man hurrying up the road. He asked for a ride to Kathmandu, and while they travelled he entertained with recounting tales (through their interpreter). When they asked him why he was in a hurry to get to Kathmandu, he replied that he was a very holy person, and that it was his business to ‘observe the inscrutable ways of God. There was to be an election in Kathmandu and he wanted to see democracy working.’\(^{132}\) White commented that a Buddhist monk riding in a jeep with Westerners and a democratic election in Nepal highlighted a changing Asia- and possibly a shift in political thinking and influence.

White also noted that there were three simple components to development in South and South East Asia. The region possessed rich natural resources that could be exploited by modern technology. The locals did not currently possess the equipment or skills to take advantage of those resources. And finally, ‘while they remain handicapped by poverty and ignorance they will remain disturbed, discontented, and a hazard to peace.’\(^{133}\) It was in the best interests of other nations to assist South and South East Asia help themselves out of dire poverty. Education and training programmes were vital, and the Australian Government prioritised this.

\(^{131}\) White, *The Seed of Freedom*, p. 31.
\(^{132}\) ibid.
\(^{133}\) ibid, p. 7
The Colombo Plan treated wellbeing as the priority, with irrigation, health, food production and education the key areas to target. While products exported by South and South East Asian countries were likely a welcome addition to the market, the states now owned the resources, not the former British Empire. As people became empowered and were raised out of dire poverty, they were able to control and expand their economies. The exchange of people, both to and from Colombo Plan participant countries, opened the way for development, aid, trade and growth, which would have been impossible without external influences.

The Colombo Plan exchanges allowed relationships to extend beyond conventional boundaries. They necessarily involved professionals, but the most important effects were on the ground: the landladies who gained a better understanding of, and sympathy towards, South and South East Asia; the villager whose child was cured by an Australian nurse; the Australian tractor factory whose business was boosted by the contract for machinery sent overseas. In each of these relationships, the intersections, transactions and exchange of ideas made this programme such a valuable example of cultural diplomacy. Collaborative projects bring greater understandings and benefits than imposed ones, and show that when political demands may be made in the future, this common understanding is more likely to receive positive acceptance, bringing to mind Lukes’ theories on power and consent to domination. As Asian nations participated in development programmes with representatives from donor countries, both groups shared cultural experiences and understandings. As the feedback was received by the External Affairs Department, projects were adjusted. The published stories show that Australia was seen as a good neighbour, which was a consistent objective of Australian foreign affairs policy.

The Colombo Plan created a situation in which millions of people were affected by Australian culture through soft power enterprises. People are unlikely to forget assistance feeding their families or educating their children, and this is why the Plan was an example of what today would be called cultural diplomacy. The goodwill that this type of endeavour engenders can last for generations. Technical and educational exchange programmes anticipated that the relationships formed would positively affect the relations of the nations involved, as was seen in the scaffolding story in chapter 1. As an aspect of the diplomatic

134 The restrictive immigration policy was explained as necessary because of the limitations on natural resources and infrastructure.
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programme, the Colombo Plan initiated by Spender, and its maturation under Casey, used understandings of culture to create a positive view of Australia around the world.

Sporadic and inconsistent assessment of the Colombo Plan within official circles resulted in undue emphasis on abject failure or glowing success according to Daniel Oakman.¹³⁵ He comments that this tended to obscure any underlying pattern of efficacy. Using this project to ‘chart a quiet but persistent path through seemingly intractable regional disputes,’ became an important feature in Australian diplomacy.¹³⁶ Oakman explains that the Plan as a whole ‘did little to alter the trajectory of South and South East Asia’s economic revolution,’ however it did serve to identify Australia separately from Britain and the United States.¹³⁷

As the Colombo Plan was being established, another great enterprise of Australian cultural experience was being organised. This was a singular event on Australian soil. The Olympic Games came to Melbourne in 1956, and were an entirely different way of sharing cultural experiences with an international audience and supporting other foreign policy goals.

¹³⁵ Oakman, *Facing Asia*, p. 220
¹³⁶ Oakman, *Facing Asia*, p. 244
¹³⁷ Ibid, p. 244, 272, 273
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So long as a man lives, he has no Greater Glory than what he wins with his feet or his hands in the Games. Homer, _The Iliad_.

The Olympic Games is another tool in the cultural diplomacy toolkit. By looking at the organisations, media, stories of the participants and political manoeuvring surrounding the Games, we can see how governments influence sports, sports influence governments and international reputations are established. Governments and corporations can use the Games to make a political stand or affect opinions, meaning that sport is part of power/cultural diplomacy programmes. This is evident in both the Ancient and the Modern Games. Boycotts, the Olympic truce, the bid process of hosting and sponsoring the games and other organisational aspects have been used to promote political beliefs. The cultural exchange integral to the Olympic Games targets foreign policy aims, including tourism and trade, as well as the ideals of fair play, sportsmanship, integrity and equality. Sport is commonly used for five main political purposes: as a vehicle for propaganda, to promote nationalism, as a vehicle for change and as a socialising agent. The advertising of political ideologies, the increase (or decrease) of national reputations, the joining together of millions of people in a common enterprise, the initiation of a shift in social norms or perspectives and the inclusion of people in one aim will all be discussed in this study of the 1956 Melbourne Games, and the events leading to it.

Sports hold an important place in Australian society. To be ‘sporting’ is to be generous, honourable, decent, honest, even-handed and fair. These are the qualities expected from sports: the organisation, rules, participants, spectators and supporters. Governments who involve themselves in sports both associate themselves with these qualities and position themselves for scrutiny along these same criteria. To hold or participate in an event such as the Olympic Games, governments are held to these high principles. In examining the 1956 Games, it is evident that the Australian Government was conscious of this obligation, and presented a nation that complied with the Olympic ideal. The Games were deliberately used to promote a national objective, which was the projection of Australia as a ‘good sport’, a fair and honest player and a skilful team.

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2 In this chapter, Ancient refers to the period of the Olympic Games, 776 BCE to 384 CE.
4 This is the idealised goal, in modern tenders much is made of the corruption and underhand deals made as the commercial and political benefits of hosting the games is great.
Pitching Australia

This chapter will explore why sport is an important cultural phenomenon, and how it has been used by governments. The history of the Olympic Games will illuminate the power of participation in the ancient tradition. Discussion of the Melbourne Games follows, with a focus on why they were important as a tool of cultural diplomacy. Sports are a shared cultural experience as language barriers are eliminated and the rules universal. The Olympic Games’ long history of political involvement means they are ideal for inclusion in cultural diplomacy programmes. Generations have been exposed to the ideals of the Games and the cultural integration that goes with them. All nations are invited to attend. The Games are held in a different city every four years, so the spectacle is accessible to audiences worldwide, and the Games’ ideology of international competition and mutual respect and understanding are visible.

Sport Matters

Sport is extremely important because it can help encourage fundamental values among young people…So sportsmen [sic] have a responsibility: they must make of sport an occasion for meeting and dialogue, beyond any barriers of language, race and culture.5

These are the words of Pope John Paul II, in a call for sports to be used as a tool to promote understanding and peace. Sports permit participation regardless of language, race, religion, financial status, gender or age. Participation comes in various forms: as players, umpires, coaches, supporters, spectators, club members, commentators and reporters, organising committees, fundraising groups, caterers and even governments. Sports are part of most societies, from a group of five-year-olds participating in a Saturday-morning Little Athletics meeting, to international sporting festivals such as the Olympic Games. J. A. Mangan, Boria Majumdar and Mark Dyreson claim that for many, ‘sport has replaced religion as a source of catharsis and spiritual passion.’6 The appeal and values sport brings to an individual can be likened to religious worship. As the Olympics evolved as a festival to celebrate religious worship, the link is not surprising.

5 Quote of Pope John Paul II, found in Roger Levermore, ‘Sport’s Role in Constructing the “Inter-state” Worldview,’ pp. 16–30, in Roger Levermore & Adrian Budd, Sport and International Relations: An Emerging Relationship, New York, Routledge, 2004, p. 27.

Sport is often among the earliest childhood memories, so infiltrates national and personal characters. A family picnic at the horse races, sitting on dad’s shoulders to watch football, running in a race and being cheered on by your parents and friendly rivalries at school swimming sports are common experiences for Australian children. Sport builds enthusiasm and loyalty, enables bonding with others, facilitates team membership, helps form alliances and promotes fantasies of participation. Some of the most famous Australians are sportspeople, and arenas have become international travel icons. Don Bradman and Pharlap are two of Australia’s most important exports. Sport is part of Australian culture, with the ‘great outdoors’ and fabulous beaches prompting engagement in sporting activity. Such experiences are shared by people across the world, although the form that sport takes differs.7

Roger Levermore and Adrian Budd edited a collection of essays that highlight the relationship that sport has with international relations.8 While this is a recent compilation, the theory is as relevant to the 1956 Olympic Games and even earlier sporting competitions. Levermore and Budd consider that while sport does not provide an answer to understanding international relations, it provides an access point to understanding.9

Sport is accessible to almost all people. Rules are universal and game-specific; acceptance of these rules is often the only qualification for participation. Nelson Mandela observed that ‘sport is probably the most effective means of communication in the modern world, bypassing both verbal and written communication and reaching directly out to billions of people worldwide.’10 The rules of the game are applicable to and accessible by all participants, regardless of nation, gender, language or religion. As a means of communication, they can be manipulated by event organisers, especially when on the scale of the Olympics.

Over the last century and a half, sport has developed into a rule-bound, competitive affair. Barbara Keys has noted that where there was once a ‘rich diversity of traditional games and

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7 It has been well documented that industrialised nations are more likely to focus resources on sports. See Joseph Maguire, ‘The Social Construction and Impact of Champions,’ pp. 142–156, in Ramón Spaaij, The Social Impact of Sport: Cross Cultural Perspectives, New York, Routledge, 2011, p. 144.
8 Levermore & Budd, ‘Sport and International Relations,’ pp. 6–15
9 ibid.
contests based on varied body cultures…modern sport now occupies a near monopoly.’

Modern sport developed out of the quantification and standardisation of games. Participation focused on creating a concrete, measurable result. The modern world demands more of sports than just athletic participation; it also involves venues and organisation of events and participation in international tournaments. Sport has become big business, and international reputations revolve around the skills and success of hosting such events. Keys states that during the 1920s and 1930s, sport ‘became a mass phenomenon throughout Europe.’

A heightened concern for physical fitness and public health sparked government funding for physical activity programmes, and as spectatorship grew, stadiums followed. She adds that ‘like music, art, film, and other forms of culture, sport joined the repertoire of traditional diplomacy in the 1920s’ when governments promoted international competitions ‘as a way of publicizing national cultural achievements.’ As sport offered a universal standard of achievement, victories ‘became a barometer of a nation’s overall power and prestige.’

Performance could produce a measurable result, just as export sales could. Politicians realised that international sporting competition ‘had much greater visibility than other forms of cultural propaganda’, with millions already following international soccer by the 1930s.

Membership of an international sporting organisation supposes submission to the dictates of a global authority, and an acceptance of the philosophical and moral values that accompany modern sport. Keys explains that particularly during the Cold War, entry to the International Olympic Committee (IOC) ‘became a portal to international recognition and legitimacy for new nations.’ Socialism, communism and capitalism have all been claimed as the reason for an athlete’s success. International sporting contests provide an arena for the ‘direct comparison of athletes representing different societies,’ by spectators who understand the common rules of the sport. Conversely, the rules of culture may differ. Those who play unfairly tend to be marked as villains, as do athletes who bring political enmity to the contest, or those who seek an unfair advantage. The hero is the athlete who succeeds honestly despite

12 ibid, p. 208.
13 ibid.
14 ibid.
15 ibid.
16 ibid, p. 209
18 ibid.
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challenges. Fair play, which is not often met in other areas of life, is essential in the sporting arena. By capturing all of these ideals and ideologies for a limited time, audiences are able to judge the heroes and villains of the international arena by the behaviour of their athletes. Spectators become targets for deliberate ideological comparison, and are the target of propaganda.19

International people-to-people relationships are encouraged by sports, and are a forum for introducing cultures to the masses. Steven J. Jackson and Stephen Haigh claim that sport is perhaps the only endeavour in which labourers are ‘recruited as citizens specifically for their short-term potential to enhance the nation’s international standing.’20 The trend of importing players from other nations or states highlights the universality of sport,21 and some players have been granted citizenship purely on the basis of their agreement to play a sport for a particular team.

Modern media is full of sports reporting, commentary and debate, reflecting the influence that sport has on society. Records of the ancient world also portray sporting contests with a similar level of social significance. The Ancient Greeks decorated vases and bowls showing athletes in action, Homer wrote of athletic contests in his poetry, and the popularity of athletic sculptures prove the importance of sporting contests. Nowadays, supporters wear scarves in team colours, pin up posters of players and watch matches from their lounge or the stadium. Hosting an international event or supporting a popular team can immediately sway an audience towards, or away from, a particular nation, depending on the team’s behaviour and perception as heroes or villains.

Athletes have become icons that transcend national boundaries. They are often glamorous, wealthy, healthy and deified.22 Nations employ individuals and teams as symbols of political and cultural supremacy. The example of the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games highlights this, as does the Melbourne Games. The ability of sport to capture the popular imagination, to infuse a common commitment in the outcome of a contest and to provide a mutual dialogue are all important. A national team is seen as a representative for the nation, and its behaviour can turn the event into a political statement. These events can promote ideologies. If the team

19 Lowe, et al., Sport and International Relations, p. v
20 Steven J. Jackson & Stephen Haigh, ‘Between and Beyond Politics: Sport and Foreign Policy in a Globalizing World,’ pp. 1–10, in Jackson & Haigh (eds.), Sport and Foreign Policy, p. 3.
21 Levermore, ‘Sport’s Role,’ p. 27.
22 J. A. Mangan et al., ‘Foreword.’
Pitching Australia displays unsporting behaviour, the nation can be tainted. Joseph Maguire has written that national champions are used to promote the values and status of a nation, and to foster what he calls ‘soft diplomacy.’\textsuperscript{23} He explains that sports offer a symbolic dialogue: there are strict requirements regarding how the dialogue is conducted (the rules), which involve a ‘dramatic representation of who we are and who we would like to be.’\textsuperscript{24} Sport’s rules and codes of play allow for a fair contest and a true test of ability, which is not the case in other areas of social life. In real life, class, race, gender and religion ‘interfere and rig the game of social life and its outcomes.’\textsuperscript{25} International sporting competitions are seen to level the playing field. Spectator sports are dramatic displays for the entertainment of the audience, and as in all dramas there are heroes and villains.

1.1.2 Sport as Cultural Diplomacy

Australian public records are light in the political motivations for the Olympic Games, questioning the objectives behind the Melbourne Games as part of a cultural diplomacy program. From the United States, however, the journal of \textit{Diplomatic History}, highlights many examples of the use of sports as an avenue for cultural diplomacy focusing on the 1970s. Sports as cultural diplomacy are more complex to plan, as the private stakeholders are often very powerful and influential in their own right. As with investigating aid as a form of cultural diplomacy, the stakeholders here are likely to be international organisations and not controllable by any one nation or political ideology.

The introduction of the journal volume advises ‘sport, as a social phenomenon, cannot be contained by the narratives set out by politics and diplomacy,’ so while political agencies are aware of the potential for ‘both generating and thwarting goodwill,’ they cannot set the rules of the games, nor how the participants could act or be used for other motives. As the examples in the journal show, ‘sport provides another valuable window onto the changing position of the united States within the international flux,’ and how ‘by accident or design, public and private authorities tried to make use of its potential in alliance-building, image-making, and norm-transcending ways.’\textsuperscript{26}

\textsuperscript{23} Maguire, ‘The Social Construction,’ p. 154
\textsuperscript{24} ibid.
\textsuperscript{25} ibid.
Anne M. Blaschke writes ‘Olympians had affected U.S. foreign policy since 1945. As celebrities and cultural politicians, athletes compelled presidential administrations to consider their power to cast abroad positive impressions of the United States. Presidents fostered connections with athletes who supported their agendas, and avoided contact with Olympians they disliked.’ She notes that President Ford’s administration ‘depended on multiracial athletes, male and female, to communicate nuances in foreign policy.’

In a commentary of the case studies looking at sports as avenues for cultural diplomacy, Mario Del Pero writes ‘the relevance of sport as a medium of cultural diplomacy,’ and ‘the function of sport as an instrument of patriotic mobilisation or, even, national identity building,’ cannot be denied. Often private interest drives these sporting events, and politicians and diplomats make use of them. The Olympic Games is driven by private stakeholders. He notes that huge imbalances in documentary evidence can often leave these stories imbalanced, and stimulate questions of the opposing viewpoint. This does not negate the importance of studying sport in relation to cultural diplomacy, but highlights that more work should be done to challenge the current limitations of the scholarship.

**Ekecheiria: The Olympic Truce**

Whether we consider the asceticism of training, the ideal of balanced personality, the sense of justice implicit in obedience to rules, or the brotherhood of classes, races and peoples evinced on the field in spectator sport, these major ethical values are sustained in our modern civilization by sport more than by anything else. I know of no social, ideological or intellectual movement able to bring home the gamut of these basic values so directly to the young, to every class and, overcoming political barriers and differences of race and language, to all peoples of the world.

Here, René Maheu—French philosopher, Professor of History and Director General of UNESCO 1962-74—acknowledges that there is nothing like sport to bring together diverse people under one goal. The reputations of individuals, teams, states and nations are all dependent on one game, race or tournament.

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28 ibid
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The Ancient Olympic Games were considered ‘struggles’ rather than ‘sports’. The nucleus and mainstay of the Modern Olympics—track and field sports—arose from a conscious imitation of Ancient Greek practices. Children naturally compete over who can run the fastest or throw a stone the furthest, ‘but the Greeks differed from other ancient…cultures in making resolutions to these questions a serious activity for grown men.’ David C. Young has explained that many features of modern culture have evolved from the Ancient Greeks—such as drama, democracy and medicine—‘yet it seemed that we have revived no other Greek institution’ besides the Games. Modern societies have revived the need to measure and celebrate athletic achievement. The Games are such a high international priority that it is an honour to host and participate in the event.

Victory at the Ancient Games was highly valued. The most powerful states in the ancient world believed that an Olympic victory brought great honour to the State, ‘therefore a conqueror usually had immunities and privileges conferred upon him by fellow citizens.’ Records of the winners of the short foot race were kept. The Games were, to the Greeks, a tribute to the god Zeus, and were held since 776 BCE. The Romans banned the games in 426 of the Common Era (CE) in an effort to stamp out paganism. When the proposal of a revival was presented to the Greek Foreign Minister in 1856, he replied that athletics was simply not done in the modern world. At the time, athletics was not practiced anywhere. While some Greeks were keen to revive the Games, it was Englishman W. P. Brookes who held a successful revival of the Games in Athens in 1859. Though these did not continue in Greece for various reasons, Brookes eventually organised a ‘National Olympic Games’ in London in 1866, which attracted 10,000 spectators.

In 1870, the Greeks tried again, excavating the Panathenaic Stadium and attracting 30,000 spectators. Both amateur and professional athletes competed. After numerous meetings, deliberations, rejections and considerable persistence, the international Olympic Games were held in 1896, and were an ‘astonishing success.’ Brooks’ efforts show that sports were hugely popular with citizens, but it took a while for governments and organisers to see their

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31 Young, A Brief History, p. 4.
32 ibid, p. 138
34 Young, A Brief History, p. 142
35 ibid, p. 145
36 ibid, p. 183
alternative uses in soft power and diplomacy. Once they did, they were happy to provide resources and to encourage international sporting events. Pierre de Coubertin is said to be the founder of the Modern Olympic Games. As an educator, he believed that the competition might inspire both patriotism and peaceful internationalism, and that athletes would participate both for ‘the glory of their country’ and ‘develop a mutual understanding’ that could be an ‘indirect factor in securing universal peace.’ At a keynote address to the first Modern Games, de Coubertin announced that ‘it is important that we should preserve in sport those characteristics of nobility and chivalry which have distinguished it in the past, in order to contribute to the education of peoples of today.’ These ideals of mutual understanding and universal peace remained relevant to (and beyond) Melbourne at the 1956 Games.

The organisers of the Modern Games had the example of the Ancient Games to follow. The prototypes of modern sporting arenas are the stadiums and hippodromes of Ancient Greece. Many followed the pattern of Greek theatres, with seating cut out of the hillside. The arenas were designed for the ‘pursuit of human excellence.’ The stadiums for all successive Games reflected the original arena for the pursuit of human excellence, linking all Games (and sporting contests) together. The ancient and modern stadiums are tourist attractions that link the present to the past, help provide an anchor for the future and provide a reference to a cultural experience that people can share, regardless of language or political persuasion.

Integral to the Ancient Games was the concept of *ekecheiria*, or the Olympic truce. This was the time either side of the Games in which competitors and visitors ‘were to be granted safe passage to and from Olympia.’ This did not mean that wars stopped, but does suggest that the Games held at least equal status to political conflicts. In modern times, the ideals of the Olympic truce have inspired ceasefires in war-torn areas, allowing aid workers to help civilians. Spaaij argued that the truce ‘reminds us of the power of idealism and its capacity

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37 Young notes there were really five men instrumental in this task. ibid, p. 157.
38 Keys, ‘The Internationalization of Sport,’ p. 207.
41 ibid
43 Spaaij, ‘Olympic Rings of Peace?’, p. 6
Pitching Australia

to inspire a new generation at a time of diminishing confidence in political institutions." The Olympic Games is a gathering of people from almost every country in the world, not of political leaders or commercial giants, but of young men and women, people who take home an appreciation for the achievements of their equals across the world.

There is no official point scoring system in the Olympic Games. Baron de Coubertin’s dictum was that the Games be revived so that the ‘spirit of international comity should be advanced by chivalrous and peaceful contests.’ While certain countries or individuals have gained reputations for being successful in certain sports, the spirit of the competition is the focus. To be able to participate in the Games and to be a member of the IOC, a nation must accept the principles associated with it, including ‘universalism and equality of opportunity under the conditions of competition.’ All participating nations have had to satisfy the committee that they adhere to these ideologies, and will put this to the test when the spotlight is on the athletes-participation and adherence to these ideologies is now a part of the international political power play of the participating nations, and in its own way, highlights the countries who might choose not to participate. In 1956 Melbourne, and by extension Australia, claimed these ideologies as part of its culture.

The Olympic Games are a sporting event that encourages the exchange of cultures and cultural experiences. As it is an international event and often backed by significant government funding, it must also meet some political objectives. The principles of the Olympic ideal have had some interesting manifestations in the history of the Modern Games. The 1936 Olympic Games held in Berlin are the most important in understanding the power of sport as a cultural experience deliberately and obviously designed to promote a policy ideal. That the Nazi regime could so easily tap into the ancient philosophy of the Games and alter the ways that people thought about sport is reflective of the power of the Games as an ideal and the possibilities of using this forum to promote a political ideology and state a claim for power in the international arena. Treated as a glorification of the physical, the ‘belief in the centrality of struggle’ was prioritised in the Berlin Games. The ‘anti-

44 ibid.
46 Keys, ‘The Internationalization of Sport,’ p. 213.
47 ‘Blending sport with culture and education, Olympism seeks to create a way of life based on the joy of effort, the educational value of good example, social responsibility and respect for universal fundamental ethical principles.’ International Olympic Committee, Olympic Charter, retrieved 2 August 2015, p. 13 http://www.olympic.org/Documents/olympic_charter_en.pdf While the Nazi Party in Germany promoted the joy of effort, their record for respecting universal fundamental ethical principles was dire.
intellectual’ sporting contest provided a forum for asserting power on an international stage.\textsuperscript{48} The Nazi’s efficiency and flagrant politicisation of Olympic ideals led not only to the Nazification of the Olympics, it also saw Nazi ideology ‘sportified,’\textsuperscript{49} with sports being given the essence of Nazi ideology.

The Berlin Games introduced the torch relay, which is now an integral part of the Olympics. ‘[A]s a way of linking this event to the glory and prestige of classical Greece,’\textsuperscript{50} the German organising committee decided to relay the Olympic flame from Olympia to Berlin. Carl Diem, principal organiser of the 1936 Olympics, combined the metaphor of ‘passing the torch’ of traditions from one event to another with the actual Olympic flame that had burned throughout the 1928 Amsterdam Games.\textsuperscript{51} Diem was inspired to use the flame from the original site of the Ancient Games and literally bring it to Berlin. This innovation brought the power of the symbol to the Modern Games, drew attention to the Games before they began and legitimised the Modern Olympics by linking it with the Ancient Games. It highlighted the connection of the Nazi regime to the glorification of discipline, the ‘struggle’ that was the impetus for the first Games and made a clear link to a glorious and powerful ancient civilisation. Its prime success lay in the fact that the relay has only increased in importance for all subsequent Games, and is a persistent symbol of German innovation, thought and influence- one of those examples of power being most effective when least observable.\textsuperscript{52}

Using ancient history to anchor the future is often done by international exhibitions, and is an effective way of legitimising ideas. German efficiency and organisation has become almost a brand, it has become so successful and well-known. Hosting an event such as the Olympics cements national qualities in international history. The torch relay is a modern tradition, and the Modern Games would not be the same without it. The foreign policy objective of marketing German culture to an international audience was achieved.

\textit{Citius, Altius, Fortius}

The Olympic Games are held every four years, and assemble sportspeople from many nations in fair and equal competition, under conditions that are as near perfect as possible. No

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{48} Keys, ‘The Internationalization of Sport,’ p. 212.
\item \textsuperscript{49} ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{50} Marcus Marsden, \textit{Carrying the Torch; 1956 Melbourne Olympic Games}, Fitzroy, Marsden Publishing, p. x.
\item \textsuperscript{51} Young, \textit{A Brief History}, p. 167.
\item \textsuperscript{52} Lukes, \textit{Power: A Radical View}, p. 1
\end{itemize}
discrimination is allowed against any country or person on the grounds of colour, religion or politics. This is the edict of the IOC, a group formed at the beginning of the Modern Olympic Movement, designed to regulate and promote the competition.

Australia’s ‘extravagant addiction to sport’ is part of a reputation earned through countless international sporting events, many hosted in Australia, and culminating in hosting the Melbourne Games. Bruce Howard described the Melbourne Olympics as a ‘birthday party to celebrate the coming of age of our nation’, ‘the world on parade’ and ‘the biggest shop window in the world’. Writing in 1956, Howard relayed the excitement felt by participants. The prestige associated with hosting a successful international sporting event was no doubt as important to the organisers as the athletics themselves. Only 10 years after the end of World War Two, Australians were still recovering and rebuilding—economically and emotionally. Food rationing and material shortages contrasted with developments in new technologies; these were the first games in which television would play a role. Howard highlights the power of sport as a unifier through recounting a story of the lack of ‘national’ concern of the German cyclists, for when the German bicycles were damaged the Australian team loaned them theirs without hesitation to ensure the German team to continue competing.

Television was introduced to Australia just in time for the 1956 Games. People often crowded around television shop windows to watch news broadcasts at that time, as few owned their own sets. The time delay in shipping film to international audiences unfortunately reduced the visual impact of the Games to international audiences. However, film is a useful resource for looking back at crowd reactions and commentary of the Games. Olympic Glory: The Golden Years suggests that very few people were interested in the nationality of the athletes, as athletic skill was paramount. Venues filled, even when no Australian was participating. The film shows the end of the marathon, and the athletes who had finished clapped and encouraged others.

The 1956 Games were not free from international controversy, and the organising committee had to deal with political intrusions. The Olympics was used by some nations to make

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55 ibid.
56 ibid, p. 172. There were other similar stories, with athletes from competing nations assisting and encouraging one another.
ideological comments and highlight political allegiances. This was the first Games at which countries chose not to send athletes in order to make a stand on political issues. Seven countries boycotted the Games over three different issues, demonstrating the connection between sport and politics.\textsuperscript{58} One such incident involved the US retracting funding for the Aswan Dam in July 1956, which was being constructed at Egypt. In response, the Egyptian Government nationalised the Suez Canal, restricting international use. French and British politicians understood it to be significant to their shipping trade, and fearing the loss of this route, planned to invade Egypt. The Israeli Government made similar plans, invading Egypt on October 29, 1956.\textsuperscript{59} Menzies had led negotiations with the Egyptian Government earlier in the year. Among other things, the episode resulted in Egypt, Lebanon and Iraq boycotting the Melbourne Olympics.\textsuperscript{60}

Other international troubles also affected the Games. Political enmity between the People’s Republic of China and the Chinese in Taiwan intensified. Disputes over state legitimacy cost thousands of lives, and no resolution was in sight. When the Peoples Republic of China learnt that the Taiwanese (Republic of China) planned to send a team to the Melbourne Games, the former withdrew. Conflict in Europe also led to countries making a political stand through sports.

The third political issue which cause a boycott of the Melbourne Games involved Eastern Europe. The Hungarian Revolution was sparked when students unhappy with the communist regime called for a democratic government and the withdrawal of Russian troops from Hungary. The students brought down a statue of Stalin, and the Soviet forces imposed martial law. In November 1956, just before the Games opened, Soviet troops seized control of Budapest and deposed the government. While athletes from both Hungary and Russia participated—as they had been \textit{en route} when fighting began—Spain, Switzerland and the Netherlands did not send their athletes, in order to protest the Soviet response.

The Games themselves were not the place to conduct political struggles. This is reflected in the reaction of the crowd to and the commentary on a water polo match between Hungary and Russia, known as the ‘blood in the water’ match.\textsuperscript{61} Many competing athletes were concerned

\textsuperscript{58} Uncredited author, British Library, ‘The Bloody Olympics.’
\textsuperscript{59} Which, it later emerged, was with active encouragement and agreement from the British and French governments.
\textsuperscript{60} ibid. This is an extremely simplified version of the incident.
\textsuperscript{61} \textit{Olympic Glory}. This is the match referred to in the interview with Raymond Smee, Chapter 1.
about their families back home. Violence erupted in the pool. As this was filmed, the match commentary referred to the political struggles. Five players were evicted and the police called to intervene. There was a ‘frenzy of protest’\textsuperscript{62} by the crowd. Whatever the crowd thought of the political conflict, they did not consider that this was the place to air grievances. The narrator states that this was ‘violent proof that if war was the extension of politics by other means, then sport, despite the Olympic ideal, can be the extension of war by other means.’\textsuperscript{63}

![Image of a water polo match]

\textbf{Figure 5.1: The ‘blood in the water’ water polo match between Hungary and Russia}\textsuperscript{64}

Only some of these political issues had a negative impression. Generally, participation in the Olympics sends a positive foreign policy message of friendly international competition and participation. The Melbourne Games were the first since World War One which saw East and West Germany compete as one. This was considered a positive and progressive move, but it did not last.\textsuperscript{65}

The Melbourne Games made Olympic history with an important change to the closing ceremony. On the suggestion of Chinese Australian student John Ian Wing, the organising committee encouraged the athletes to march together as one body, regardless of nationality, in ‘a fiesta of friendship’\textsuperscript{66} and celebration of universal participation. ‘This action became a

\textsuperscript{63} ibid.
\textsuperscript{64} ibid.
\textsuperscript{65} British Library, ‘The Bloody Olympics.’ Unfortunately this alliance lasted only for the 1956 games.
symbol of international unity,67 and was a fitting end to the Games. As President of the Melbourne Games, Menzies commented on the change in proceedings. He wrote that on the first day of the Games, athletes marched as competitors, preserving their national identity, but ‘on the last day they went around the arena as men and women who had learned to be friends.’68

Living, eating and competing together helped break down some barriers of language and prejudice. The crises faced by athletes were made more real to other athletes and spectators. Newspapers reported the international events with a heightened significance, as people from those nations read the papers, stayed in the city and visited the pubs, shops and beaches. Melburnians and visitors were shocked into a collision of sympathies and antipathies. People from across the world had come together in a forum in which they faced the struggles of people that they might never normally consider. These face-to-face interactions made the issues more real and the solutions a global and personal concern. Using the Games to promote a political ideal, display unity or show solidarity was a way of establishing the issues in international history. It solidified the political climate and position of nations; brought public awareness to issues and consolidated nations’ positions. The boycotts linked with the Suez crisis, the Hungarian Revolution, and the dispute between China and Taiwan, along with the celebration of athletic unity at the closing ceremony, are inextricably connected to the mid-20th century, Melbourne and the international significance of the Olympic Games.

The linkage of sport, war and politics recalls the Olympic truce, the glorification of the ‘struggle’, the encouragement of athletics as a way of ensuring that nations have healthy potential soldiers at the ready, and the maintains the reputation of ‘great sportsmen as peaceful warriors.’69 The efforts to re-unite Germany and the closing ceremony celebration that united all athletes regardless of nationality further established the link. When sport is linked to politics, it becomes a tool of cultural diplomacy. Melbourne has always been a sporting city, and modern cultural diplomacy agendas clearly state that sports diplomacy is a priority.70 In hosting the Games, Melbourne—and Australia—were establishing an international reputation as hosts of premier sporting events. The country was able to promote the ideals of competence and fair play, teamwork and athletic prowess. These are the kinds of

68 The Organising Committee of the XVI Olympiad, The Official Report.
69 Graeme Davison, ‘Welcoming the World,' p. 67
70 Modern cultural diplomacy agendas are discussed in the Epilogue.
ideals that are difficult for diplomats to address, so need an inclusive cultural diplomacy programme to achieve.

**The Friendly Games**

The bid for the Melbourne Games had been officially announced in 1946, when the Victorian Olympic Council decided to pursue enquiries about holding the Games in Melbourne. Community leaders including Sir Frank Beaurepaire (businessman and former Olympian), Sir Keith Murdoch (newspaper magnate), Sir Harold Luxton (retailer, former city councillor and IOC delegate), Premier John Cain Senior, Sir Raymond Connolly (Lord Mayor and businessman), Edgar Tanner (ex-Olympian and former prisoner of war) and Kent Hughes (AIF veteran and ex-Olympian) were all involved in the bid process. They flew to London with hampers of Australian produce to lobby delegates still enduring food rationing at home.

The delegation had commissioned a 13-minute film of Melbourne’s attractions to accompany their presentation at the IOC meeting in Rome in 1949. This was as unique as the accompanying gifts of food hampers, and would have made them stand out. Their proposal was accompanied by the signatures and support of leading Melbourne citizens who represented various sectors. This allowed Melbourne to promote its status as a profitable and successful entity capable of hosting a large international event. Davison states that the bid for the Games was a ‘bid for international recognition […] and] also a bid by the city’s new business elite for social recognition.’ The city and its supporters entered the world stage. In putting itself forward as the host of such an event, Melbourne was inviting the spotlight and scrutiny of the international audience. Geographical distance insulated Melbourne from any significant recognition and criticism from US and British journalists, although by mid-century, the speed of travel and introduction of new technologies was closing the gap. Simon Plant considered that at this time, Melburnians had begun to look outward ‘for broader definitions of themselves’, confirming Davidson’s assertion that the

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71 Graeme Davison, ‘Welcoming the World,’ p. 67
72 Beaurepaire passed away in May 1956, before he could see his plans come to fruition. He was the first ex-Olympian to preside over an Olympic host city, held 14 swimming world records and participated in three Olympic Games. ‘He’s Melbourne’s Mr. Olympics!’ The Argus, Monday 30 April, 1956, p. 4.
73 Murphy & Smart (Eds.), The Forgotten Fifties.
nation Australia was to become was ‘fashioned as much by our desire to please others...as it is by the desire to please ourselves.’  

The Games provided a focus for a visual and cultural turning point that symbolised a social shift. The Olympic Games symbolically drew a line ‘between the grey austerities of post-war life and a brighter, prosperous and more modern future.’ Victorian verandas were stripped from buildings in the name of modernisation, and Melbourne’s streets were festooned with bunting. Local and major daily newspapers carried stories about the Games, the Olympic Village, the expected tourist influx and other general preparations. The Australian Women’s Weekly ran an article stating that ‘Melbourne goes gay’ with festivities. Shop displays were designed to entice visitors and houses wore Olympic colours, to ‘dispel forever the legend the Melbourne is a grey city, of dull dignity and extreme conservatism.’ A dance was held at the traditionally men-only Melbourne Club, bands played continuously and music and arts festivals held. Private homes accommodating international visitors were spruced up, with one resident installing ramps when she learnt that her international guest was wheelchair-bound.

The famous Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) was chosen as the main stadium, and was given a significant upgrade to make it suitable for an international audience. A triple deck stand would increase the spectator capacity by half again. New dressing rooms and medical facilities made participation easier for athletes and other users, and a new cafeteria and bar made the space more attractive to visitors. Following the design of ancient stadiums, Melbourne brought its facilities into the 20th century. The Olympic Village was constructed in Heidelberg, a ‘desolate tract of land’ north of Melbourne. This was an innovative concept for the Olympics, and making the athletes feel welcome and comfortable was meant to allow contestants to give their best performances. Commandant of the Olympic Village, Philip Miskin, noted that it was a matter of national and international importance, as:

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76 Davison, ‘Welcoming the World,’ p. 76.
77 Plant, p. 9
79 Newspapers that reported on the Games in the years leading up to them included: The Launceston Examiner, Wednesday March 18, 1953; Queensland Times, Monday May 10, 1954; Sunday Mail, Sunday July 11, 1954; Western Star, Friday September 10, 1954; The Longreach Leader, Friday September 10, 1954; Wodonga and Towong Sentinel, Friday September 17, 1954, p. 3.
81 ibid.
we are to be hosts to the young men and young women of about seventy nations, without distinction of race, colour, politics, and creed. We have to provide their accommodation and training facilities and their performance will depend on the quality of what we provide.  

Miskin was conscious that food and living conditions be the very best, as ‘when they [international visitors] leave us, we want them all to be good ambassadors for Australia.’ At an estimated cost of £2 million, the Victorian Housing Commission worked with the Olympic organising committee to provide comfortable accommodation for guests and a functional neighbourhood. This allowed the public, who would occupy the houses in the future, to become a part of Olympic history.

On 5 November, 1956, the flame was lit at a ceremony in Olympia, and the torch began its long journey to Melbourne. The final runner was to arrive at the MCG at exactly 4.33 pm. The organisers estimated a mile run of between six and seven minutes for over 3000 Australian runners, who followed 350 Greek runners carry the flame, which was symbolic of the link between the Ancient and Modern Games.

The greatest quantity of archival resources regarding the Melbourne Games relate the concerns of the organising committee of the Games which ranged from the installation of

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84 Ballard, *Nation with Nation,* p. 6.
85 ibid, p. 7.
87 ‘Carrying the Torch to Melbourne,’ *The Australian Women’s Weekly,* Wednesday November 7, 1956, p. 35.
showers at sporting stadiums, landscaping, replacement of an electric sub-station, supply of flood lighting, dredging of lakes and construction of grandstands, to feeding athletes with strict dietary requirements. They also had to build sporting facilities that would service Victorians well after the Games ended. Funded by the Commonwealth and State Governments and the Melbourne City Council, each sub-committee had to maximise the results of their projects. These political bodies all recognised a range of political, economic and other non-sporting benefits that could arise from hosting the Games. From early in the discussions, it was argued that the Games could be used to develop tourism, generate income through ticket sales and be an opportunity to gain national and international prestige and attract global visibility.

Melbourne newspapers announced to the public that the city would be the host of the 1956 Olympic Games as early as 1950, and advised the city to begin preparations. Menzies confirmed Federal support of the event with an offer of financial support. Recognising that the ‘Commonwealth was interested in the success of the games,’ the Federal Government was pleased to be involved in discussions with the organising committee. Former serviceman, Deputy Premier of Victoria and Olympian, Federal Minister Kent Hughes, was appointed Chairman of the Organising Committee, brokering a relationship between the Commonwealth, State and local governments. Lieutenant General William Bridgeford returned to public service to take up the post of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Games. The organising committee established smaller sub-committees to look after each area. Finance, building and publicity were the busiest of these, and their records show the complexity of hosting the Games.

The building sub-committee was concerned with providing world-class venues, within budget, that would be useful to the city after the Games. The MCG was chosen as the main stadium, but as this was already a well-used and valued institution, the Games organisers had to consider the needs of the existing users. Olympic Park became a new centre for various sports, with the construction of an indoor swimming and diving pool, a new velodrome and a soccer field. The nearby Exhibition Building (completed for the 1880 international exhibition) was used for wrestling and weightlifting. The organisers went further afield for

89 Levermore, ‘Sport’s Role,’ p. 81.
90 ‘Plan Ahead,’ The Advertiser, Monday January 2, 1956, p. 3.
92 ‘Olympic Games: Melbourne, Australia. 22 November-8 December. 1956,’ in ‘Medical/Press Publicity,’ 10743/P/0000, V/AB/140/01/06, PROV.
other sports: the road cycling race was held around the suburb of Broadmeadows, clay pigeon shooting at Laverton and other shooting events at Williamstown. Port Phillip Bay saw the yachting events and Lake Wendouree in Ballarat hosted the rowing and canoeing. In this way, the organisers used some existing resources, ensured more Victorians would be involved in the Games, spread resources across City Councils and allowed visitors to see more of the State.

The Press and Publicity sub-committee of the organising committee was formed in May 1955. Commercial Consultants, a division of J. Walter Thompson, offered to act for the committee free of charge. At various times the sub-committee was joined by representatives of each of the major newspapers and press associations, the Australian Broadcasting Commission (ABC), the Australian National Travel Association and banking groups. As the Games were a short-term project, it made sense to use existing organisations, their staff, infrastructure and equipment. The Australian Army Signals Branch and the Australian Post Office supplied invaluable assistance. At the first meeting of the new sub-committee, the Managing Director of the Australian National Publicity Association suggested that the planning of an international publicity campaign should be ‘on a selective basis to reach the people most likely to be interested in coming to Australia for the Games.’ The twin aims were to impress the international audience that the Games would be well-organised, and to generate local enthusiasm. The Managing Editor of Australia United Press expressed ‘that the first job was to advise on facilities necessary for local and overseas press.’ It was early recognised that the world press would play a vital role in promoting the Games and Melbourne, and the rules of the IOC provided that adequate arrangements be made. The international publicity of the Games would affect attendance as well as future visitors and investors.

93 The Organising Committee for the XVIth Olympiad, Melbourne, 1956, Minutes of the Twenty-Third Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, May 13, 1955, in ‘Olympic Park Works and Specifications,’ 10743/P/0000, V/AB/140/01/05, PROV.
94 Draft Report of the Press and Publications Sub-Committee for the XVIth Olympiad, ‘Press Information and Regulations,’ in ‘Medical/Press Publicity’, 10743/P/0000, V/AB/140/01/06, PROV.
95 The Organising Committee for the XVIth Olympiad. Press and Publicity Sub-committee, Melbourne, 1956, Minutes of the First Meeting of the Press and Publicity Sub-committee, 26 January, 1954, in ‘Medical/Press Publicity’, PROV.
97 ibid.
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One of the most significant concerns of the organisers was the accommodation of ‘pressmen,’ especially international reporters, with an understanding that these journalists could make or break the international interpretation of these Games. Concerns included the suitable supply of work desks, provision of clocks showing international time zones, stenographers, transportation and ensuring that cafés and bars would be open around the clock. Reserved seating for sporting events had to be placed around the stadium, to give journalists full coverage, and good access to ‘finish line’ seats had to be available. Coca-Cola ran their own publicity campaign in conjunction with the Games, constantly servicing the 1000-strong press contingent by supplying them with cold soft drinks.

Members of the Australian Journalists Association met visiting press at the airport, and guided them to the Press Administration Office and various arenas. The professional network allowed the Australian journalists to present a positive environment so that the visiting journalists could promote Australia and the Melbourne Games. The writers had an ideal circumstance in which to explore cultural exchanges and tell stories that would affect audiences. While there were political pressures upon editorial teams, journalists also

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98 The Organising Committee for the XVIth Olympiad. Press and Publicity Sub-committee, Melbourne, 1956, Minutes of meeting, 19 May, 1955, in ‘Medical/Press Publicity’, PROV.
101 Draft Report of the Press and Publications Sub-Committee, in ‘Medical/Press Publicity,’ PROV.
commented on the political reasons for the boycotts, thus highlighting a link between cultural experience and foreign policy. These reporters had a unique position—while local press would highlight successes to the local audience, the international reporters would tell of Melbourne’s rise to modernity, its attractiveness to investors, its stability, security, allegiances, and could either rise or dash the city’s hopes to be one to the major players as an international centre for business and influence.

The organising committee had been supplied with the ‘Postal and Telecommunications Facilities’ report from the 1952 Helsinki Games. This noted that both the 1948 London and 1952 Helsinki Games were underequipped with cabling and wiring, which was frustrating for the press, and the Melbourne committee used this information to provide adequate facilities. It was highlighted that ‘apart from any other consideration, the national prestige abroad will depend to a very great extent on the nature of press and radio reports,’ and that failing to adequately accommodate the press would have ‘unfortunate results.’ Journalists had become an essential feature of international sporting events—almost as important as the athletes themselves. The publicity efforts of the Press and Publicity sub-committee were assisted by a large number of self-styled correspondents in those recently arrived European migrants to Melbourne. They appointed themselves Olympic correspondents for European journals, and provided valuable commentary to an international audience. This group of journalists understood the cultural expectations of their audiences, so were more informative and entertaining.

Financial constraints necessitated a careful publicity programme. A poster campaign was considered an ‘indulgence’, but adding ‘strips’ to existing billboards was acceptable, ‘provided no charge was made for the hire of hoardings.’ As airlines and box office agents promoted their package deals, the Olympic organisers were relieved of this cost and obligation. The committee did not seek advertisements in theatres or on trains, but did encourage advertisers to mention any Olympic involvement. The co-ordinators of the new Moomba Festival incorporated an Olympic Games float, providing yet more free
advertising. They encouraged journals which already had international distribution to include Olympic stories—articles were prepared for *Australia Today*, the *Rotarian International* magazine and the journals of the Lions Organisation, the Melbourne Harbour Trust and the Australia America Association. This highlights the wide reach aimed for by the sub-committee, and the astute ways that they used existing entities to extend their budget.

The sub-committee hoped to convince manufacturers to add logos to their products, at their own cost. They suggested firms incorporate wording such as ‘We supplied competitors with… for the Helsinki Olympics’ in their own advertising campaigns. The Education Department added the Games into their programmes, and the requests the organising committee received for educational materials attest to the popularity of this programme with teachers. The sub-committee aimed for saturation of the Olympic message: ‘It is more essential to get people talking Olympics, faced with the words “Olympic Games” wherever they turn.’ Radio interviews with Olympic athletes on commercial radio stations prior to the Games were considered an ‘important factor in stimulating public interest.’ Half-minute announcements with a fanfare preceded news bulletins, and broadcast in various languages. Commercial stations were encouraged to provide similar celebratory announcements. Amalgamated Wireless (Australia) Limited recorded Olympic messages for commercial stations and recorded the opening ceremonies—they offered materials, services and staff without charge, with the Olympic organising committee only responsible for distribution costs. Radio Australia, while being a cultural diplomacy-style programme in its own right, used its resources to promote other projects to the regional audience. It produced a series of six half-hour sessions to be aired weekly, under the title ‘Olympic Games: A look through the program.’ This was sent to partners in Singapore, Sarawak, the Philippines, British North Borneo, Hong Kong, Burma, Ceylon, Pakistan and the US.

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108 These were the Games held in 1952
109 The Organising Committee, Minutes of Meeting, 7 December, 1955, in ‘Medical/Press Publicity,’ PROV.
110 ibid.
111 ibid.
112 E. A. Doyle, Press and Publicity Sub-Committee, ‘Press Publicity Committee Folder,’ Minutes of the 27th Meeting of the Press and Publicity Sub-Committee, 5 June, 1956, in ‘Medical/Press Publicity,’ PROV.
113 ibid.
Pitching Australia

Interviews with various Olympic athletes, past and present, were included within the broadcaster’s regular sporting programmes. 114

Commercial televising of sporting events was a new phenomenon at the time, and the press sub-committee decided to prioritise the information media in order to ‘give the Melbourne Games the fullest publicity throughout the world’ 115 rather than enter into a profitmaking contract. While this move has been criticised as a missed publicity opportunity, it must be remembered that protocols had not been established for the committee. Their decision confirms the focus on the Games as an athletic and international celebration, rather than an opportunity for monetary or commercial gain.

All visitors to Australia were seen as potential ambassadors, so the organising committee and the Press and Publicity sub-committee paid special attention to their needs. A ‘Pocket Compendium’ was produced as a publicity handout. 116 The committee supplied over 65,000 copies to airlines, travel agents, tourist bureaus, the New Zealand High Commission, American Express, news agencies in London, New York, Paris, Tokyo, Cologne, Lausanne, Rome, South Africa and the Hague. The booklet described Melbourne as a ‘busy seaport and industrial metropolis’, ‘an important financial and trading centre’ and ‘a modern, well-planned city of 150,000 people.’ 117 The city had a reputation for friendliness and quality theatres, hotels, restaurants, art galleries, libraries, electric railways and (impressively) 230 square miles of suburbs. 118 The Olympic Games provided an opportunity for Australia to build a carefully coordinated advertising campaign, sending images of Australia to domestic and international audiences.

Australian airline Qantas was a Games ambassador, agreeing to hand every outgoing passenger an Olympic envelope that contained a booklet on the Games and a personal letter from General Bridgeford, asking them to act as unofficial spokespeople for the Games. 119

The Press and Publicity sub-committee recruited the public as international PR personnel, acting as the ‘citizen diplomat’, a contentious issue in cultural diplomacy theory that

114 Doyle, Minutes of the 27th Meeting.
115 The Organising Committee, Minutes of Meeting, 7 December, 1955, in ‘Medical/Press Publicity,’ PROV.
116 Letter from P. W. Nette, Administrative Director, to Commonwealth Statistician, Canberra, dated 14 December, 1955, in ‘Medical/Press Publicity,’ PROV.
117 ‘Olympic Games: Melbourne, Australia. 22 November-8 December. 1956,’ in ‘Medical/Press Publicity,’ PROV.
118 ibid.
119 Chairman’s Report on Press and Publicity Activities, 10 November, 1955, in ‘Medical/Press Publicity,’ PROV.
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highlights the role of citizens in the cultural diplomacy process. As the people of Melbourne and its suburbs mixed with visitors in restaurants, trains and trams, the development of the Australian ‘Olympic conscious’ became a diplomatic tool, supporting the theme of the Friendly Games, and promoting Australian culture.

As the first Games held in the Southern Hemisphere, the Melbourne Games shifted the focus to the Asia Pacific region. The journal *Pacific Neighbours* commented that interest in the Melbourne Games is ‘particularly high in the countries of South-East Asia.’ The lower cost of sending an Olympic team from South East Asia to Australia would undoubtedly affect the size of Asian teams- with a predicted six-fold increase on the Helsinki teams according to Percy Spender, Australian Ambassador to the United States. *Pacific Neighbours* proposed that this would grow an ‘enthusiasm for sport generally and for the ideals of amateurism will be spread more widely among the youth of Asia.’ The Melbourne Games were the first to bring together a ‘more even cross section of the Olympic world,’ giving greater opportunity than any Games before for the youth of different cultures to mingle freely. This opened up the audience, and Radio Australia broadcast interviews and almost instantaneous event results to Asian listeners.

A 1955 article in the *Argus* supported the use of sport in encouraging friendships with Australia’s Asian neighbours, and referred to Baron de Coubertin’s aim of bringing the youth of the world together for the benefit of the world. Journalist Ken Moses encouraged engagement with Asian athletes, and noted that some had formidable sporting skills, often in areas that Australia did not typically excel in. He highlighted the existing exchange of sportspeople, and ended with the assertion that ‘goodwill fostered with neighbors [sic] who could prove very handy friends, could never be estimated in cold cash.’ Such media coverage shows that the public was aware of the diplomatic benefits of positive face-to-face interactions, and that sports were a valid forum for connections. The Melbourne Games

121 *Pacific Neighbours*, Vol. 9, No. 3, 1954, PROV.
123 ibid
124 ‘Strong Asian Teams for Olympics,’ Queensland Times
125 As communist, Western and underdeveloped countries were all participating in the Olympics, and listener records are not precise, it is hard to discern whether this broadcasting had any effect on the Cold War.
127 ibid.
Pitching Australia

coincided with Australia’s increased presence in South and South East Asia through the Colombo Plan, Radio Australia and other media, and it is likely that this contact amplified excitement for the Games in the region.

Another important area in which the Games encouraged cultures to mingle freely and to get to know one another was the Olympic Village. Housed in this £2 million housing project were six thousand athletes.\textsuperscript{128} Shared facilities encouraged athletes to socialise. The communal aspect had been appreciated by athletes at the 1952 Helsinki Games, with John Treloar commenting that ‘at meal times we were able not only to indulge in marvellous food but to fraternise with athletes from every corner of the world…which enabled us to appreciate fully the ideals of Baron de Coubertin.’\textsuperscript{129}

\textbf{Figure 5.4: Olympic Village scene}\textsuperscript{130}

Marvellous Melbourne

As the Duke of Edinburgh announced ‘I declare open the Olympic Games of Melbourne celebrating the sixteenth Olympiad of the Modern Era,’ thousands of pigeons were released into the air. Symbolically, the birds were ‘winged messengers carrying to the world the message that the peace of Ekecheiria…had descended on Olympia.’\textsuperscript{131} Reporters noted that the crowd cheered all athletes and all nations, with no hint of partisanship. A milk bar near

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{129} Donald & Selth, \textit{Olympic Saga}, p. 63.
\textsuperscript{130} NAA, A7135, OG1306/9, 11859725
\textsuperscript{131} ‘Here Was the Majesty,’ \textit{The Argus}, Friday November 23, 1956, p. 23.
\end{footnotesize}
the MCG became a miniature UN, as members of international teams bought drinks there.\textsuperscript{132} Melbourne has always been a sporting city. The Melbourne Cricket Club was founded in 1845, only 10 years after the city itself.\textsuperscript{133} By the 1950s, crowds of 100,000 at sporting events were not uncommon. The city was presented to the international media, and to the rest of Australia, as the sporting capital. It is in this context that both international and domestic audiences came to understand the Australian culture—should the Games be a success, then Australia would consolidate a position as one of the centres of influence and its standing in the international political community.

Prior to the Games, the sporting community in Melbourne sorely lacked world-class venues.\textsuperscript{134} Hosting of the Games encouraged the Federal Government to invest in sporting venues for Victoria, ‘elevate Melbourne to world city status,’\textsuperscript{135} and attract tourists. There was considerable negative debate around investing such a significant sum of money in the Games when there was a dire housing shortage in the city, and the organising committee cleverly combined the proposed athlete’s village with a public housing project, which was partly funded by the State housing department.

As an opportunity to stake a claim in the world tourist trade, the Games were a valuable event for the hospitality industry. Newspapers announced that ‘staging the Games in Australia should certainly put us on the tourist map.’\textsuperscript{136} Concerns arose that ‘nothing could do us more harm than to disappoint our visitors after undertaking to play host at the 1956 Games.’\textsuperscript{137} Anxiety over inadequate hotel facilities and early public bar closing times due to local laws was often expressed in the newspapers, as Melburnians anticipated international scrutiny. Such statements reinforced the importance of the opportunity that Australia and Melbourne had: to use the 16 days of the Games to increase and establish an international reputation as a modern, cosmopolitan city and meet policy objectives.

In ‘Welcoming the World,’ Graeme Davison discussed the challenges facing Melbourne in hosting such a prominent international sporting event as the Olympic Games. He highlights that particularly in mid part of the 20\textsuperscript{th} Century Melbourne ‘exemplified the Fordist paradigm

\textsuperscript{132}‘The Duke Had Lots to See,’ The Argus, Friday November 23, 1956, p. 24.
\textsuperscript{134}Bob McAuley (producer), Lies, Spies & Olympics, Film Australia, 1999.
\textsuperscript{135}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{136}‘Planning for Melbourne Olympics,’ Cootamundra Herald, Monday August 11, 1952, p. 2
\textsuperscript{137}Ibid.
or urban growth—high investment in manufacturing … high levels of immigration, high levels of home ownership and high levels of government intervention in the provision of infrastructure.' Melborne had become the ‘main beach-head’ of American influence, and the leading centre of modernist innovation in art, architecture and design. The Olympic Games would be a chance to show this off to the world.

The games were ‘pivotal to the process of self-definition,’ and there were two factions eager to present Melbourne at its best. One faction, ‘entrepreneurial, futuristic and international’ in outlook was led by Sir Frank Beaurepaire, and the other, led by Sir Kent Hughes, was the ‘official guardian of the Olympic spirit [and] were more militaristic, traditional and imperial.’

What the world would think of Melbourne was of primary concern, and was a ‘powerful weapon in the hands of local modernisers,’ who pointed out that simple washbasins and linoleum floors in hotels would be an embarrassment to American visitors who were used to central heating and prompt room service. The imagined foreign visitor had shifted from the English gentleman to the American expert, and Melbourne had to shift to keep up with these new expectations.

Davison notes that the Opening Ceremony program presents this juxtaposition of Melbourne, highlighting American style supermarkets and drive ins, ‘an ideally English roses and lavender setting of home and garden,’ the Grecian glory of the Shrine of Remembrance, and the ‘city of the future’ whose great buildings of ‘steel and concrete, bronze and glass’ would dominate the landscape.

International media coverage of the Games was disappointing, even by standards of the day—Melbourne had sought the Games in order to impress the rest of the world, but as Douglas Wilkie observes, ‘it is now clear that what the world may gain from adjusting itself to Melbourne is nothing compared with Melbourne’s gain from adjusting itself to the world.’

Davison has also written of the ‘imaginary grandstand’ to which Melbourne was performing as hosts of the Olympics. The imaginary grandstand is the audience to which Australia

139 ibid
140 ibid
Pitching Australia

promoted its culture and identity, and was more for the benefit of the participants than the audience. During the 1950s and 60s, it was important for Australians to create something with which they could identify and belong. Performing to this grandstand allowed them to create a cohesive message. One of the most important messages was that Australia was a nation of superior sportspeople. Early in the Australian story, cricket test matches ‘were much more than a trial of strength between rival teams; they were also a test of colonial character.’\(^\text{142}\) They allowed strength, resolution, cooperation and other desirable traits to be proven to an audience. That audience was occasionally international—the Ashes being the most famous such forum—but the audience was more often Australian. The spectators saw the teamwork, commitment, endurance and sportspersonship, especially of the Australian teams, and extend the values to all Australians and Australian actions in international politics.

The focus on the Australian audience was highlighted by the decision not to undertake overseas advertising campaigns for the Games. Supporting Davison’s theories on the imaginary grandstand, local publicity was aimed to promote ‘awareness of the international significance of the Games among the Australian public.’\(^\text{143}\) Internationally, the Australian News and Information Bureau and the Australian National Overseas Information Service worked with the local Olympic organising committee to ensure the highest publicity for Melbourne and the Games. They were attended by an estimated 100,000 spectators. Due to distance and expense, few private visitors were expected, although the organising committee did try to ensure that hotels and private accommodation met international standards. The eagerness of individuals to be part of the venture confirmed that the Australian public wanted to be included in this event. They wanted their hospitality to be recognised by the world, as well by as their neighbours.

Published guides pointed out important sights for visitors to the city: parks, bridges, gardens, historic houses, the Shrine of Remembrance, Captain Cook’s Cottage, the Melbourne trams, St. Kilda Beach, the Dandenong Ranges, Healesville Sanctuary, Phillip Island and the mountains of Warburton.\(^\text{144}\) While international visitors were encouraged to explore surrounding areas, it is more likely that these guides were intended for local readers, as a reminder that Melbourne is as culturally significant and naturally beautiful as anywhere in the

\(^{142}\) ibid.


world. This encouraged the locals to feel part of the great nation that was being promoted, and provided proof of the message to visitors.

Just before the Games began, the *Argus* published some international articles showing local readers what the world was reading about Melbourne.¹⁴⁵ Nat Fleischer from America’s *Ring* magazine was ‘much impressed with the cordiality of the people’ he met in Melbourne, noting that ‘nothing has been left undone to please visitors, the competing athletes and the army of newspapermen from all parts of the world.’¹⁴⁶ The push for American visitors was assisted by the reports of Rose, sports correspondent for the American Associated Press, who commented that ‘[a]n American feels right at home here’ and that ‘the town is sports crazy.’¹⁴⁷ An image was created of Melbourne as a fitting host.

The menus of Melbourne restaurants started to offer exotic dishes from America, France, Holland, Hawaii, India, Indonesia, Italy, Poland, Russia and Sweden.¹⁴⁸ Newspaper reviewers noted restaurants’ international flair, providing advertising along with confirmation that international visitors and local migrants fully approved the offerings. Dancing and tea ceremony customs were enjoyed, thus leading to the sharing of cultures. By using chopsticks, eating unfamiliar foods and participating in customs that appeared glamorous, Melburnians could experience other cultures and be reminded of their own culture, which they proudly advertised. The enthusiasm of Melbourne’s participation in this spectacle speaks to the ideas of Davison’s international grandstand: that the people displayed their cosmopolitan and modern selves as much for themselves as for an international audience. The city exhibited the best of its culture, in an effort to meet the foreign policy aims of increasing tourism, inviting trade and presenting a world-class city.

¹⁴⁶ ibid.
¹⁴⁷ ibid. This is does not appear to be the Murray Rose of international swimming fame, as the writing is that of a visiting American in this article. Rose won three gold medals in the 1956 games, and this article does not read as if it was written by an athlete in training for his first Olympics.
Following World War Two, ‘the Olympic ideal took on a new meaning, especially for those athletes who had survived combat and the degradation of POW [prisoner of war] camps.’ The Games important in providing a forum for patriotic virtues and encouraging a community of physically and mentally strong individuals ready to defend their country. This was coupled with the heightened need for cultural understanding. The organising committee noted that the financial outlay for the Games was insignificant ‘compared with the dividend in goodwill,’ not just in sports, but also notoriety, ‘in the hearts of men and women...everywhere.’ Several of the staff of the committee were ex-service personnel, and this projected a level of military precision and discipline to these Games, as skills obtained in war created something positive. As noted by the Ancient Greeks, the Games were a form of ‘struggle’ or ‘combat’, but one that they could be proud of competing in. Once the ‘struggles’ were over, all competitors celebrated their participation in a show of international comradeship.

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150 Graeme Davison, interview, in McAuley, Lies, Spies & Olympics.
151 The Organising Committee, The Official Report.
Summary

International sporting events are so important to societies because they provide a forum in which to present how things should be. An even contest with clear rules and boundaries, indisputable judgement and success based on effort and skill combine to create a transparent display of meritocracy. ‘Villains’, or anyone who tries to fool the crowd or play unfairly, are scorned, ostracised and stripped of their rewards in a way that often does not happen in other areas of life. While hosting and participating in an international sporting event is of significance in itself, it is the perceptions of the host, the athletes and spectators representing the host nation, which are shared with the world which can have longer lasting effects on the international political arena. Behaviours, attitudes and the spirit of fairness and good sportsmanship shown on the field are often associated with a country’s political spirit too.\footnote{This lifts a simple sporting event to the level of international power play.}

Sport has the potential to convey many messages, allows an examination of dominant power structures and questioning of inter-state world views.\footnote{Noting that the private stakeholders are not under the control of the governments in question, but may be being taken advantage of for political purpose, as discussed earlier in the chapter.} It exposes young people to international governments and the complexities of international organisational bodies. International power struggles saw the Ancient Games cancelled. The Modern Games have suffered almost from their inception from international political disagreements. International conflicts have determined the participation of some nations’ athletes, and spectators with no interest in political or foreign affairs are drawn into conflicts when their favourite athletes or sports are involved. The 1956 Melbourne Olympics were styled as the ‘Friendly Games’ because this was the image of the sporting event and the nation as a whole that was projected. The cultural experience mirrored the political objective of welcoming visitors and traders and establishing an international reputation.

International sporting festivals are a meeting place where ‘prejudice and ignorance could be overcome’ and an understanding of other cultures achieved.\footnote{Ramón Spaaij wrote that such events were an opportunity for international understanding, where global human solidarity could be promoted. The Melbourne Games, and especially the closing ceremony, proved this point. The Friendly Games were hosted in the friendly nation. Davison explained that ‘part of...}
the attraction of international sport is that it provides a test of national prowess rather less lethal than armed combat. In the 20th century, sport became ‘an almost universal language of national identity’ and nations now look to their ‘sportspeople rather than their soldiers and businessmen to defend their honour.’ National representation, Davison explained, is ‘a question of both patriotism and national promotion.’ This was as relevant to the 1956 audience as it is today. Sportspeople are aware that they represent a nation, and in the absence of war, sport is the forum for demonstrating physical prowess, where ‘faster, higher, stronger’ is combined with a strict code. To place such an importance on the business of sport is to confer upon it a status that is tied up with international politics and diplomacy.

As an international event on home soil, the Olympic Games allowed Melbourne the chance to present Australian culture. The domestic and international media portrayed a city ripe for tourism and trade, a city that was optimistically recovering from the challenges of war and swiftly becoming a modern metropolis; this was exactly the message that the Government hoped the Games would send. The DEA continued to organise and promote successful international events, both at home and abroad. Creative art and performance tours, along with Royal and celebrity visits, continued to display Australian culture through the following decade. Ten years later, Australia was again preparing a cultural presentation for an international exhibition: Expo 67 in Montreal. The following chapter looks at international exhibitions, the Australian Pavilion and shows yet another aspect of government activities that focused on highlighting the national culture in support of foreign policies. Australian culture had to be chosen, boxed and shipped to foreign shores, so the challenge became how Australia would be packaged.

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156 Ibid.
157 Ibid, p. 16
Figure 5.6: Olympic athletes march together during the closing ceremony of the Melbourne Olympics, MCG, 1956

Exhibiting Australia
Exhibiting Australia

Expositions are the timekeepers of progress. They record the world’s advancement. They stimulate the energy, enterprise and intellect of the people and quicken human genius. They go into the home. They broaden and brighten the daily life of the people. They open mighty store houses of information to the student. Every exposition, great or small, has helped this onward step.¹

These words were spoken by US President William McKinley in 1901. Before television, the internet or air travel, World’s Fairs or International Exhibitions were the culmination of advancements in knowledge, technology and progress. Organising exhibitions was expensive, displaying at one was logistically challenging, and attending required an effort in travel and economics. Nevertheless, corporations and governments were eager to organise such fairs,² and the public flocked to attend. As collaborative events, with organisers from various countries and cultures involved, organisational success required working together.

When Australia presented at the Great Exhibition in London in 1851, the contribution was ‘a motley collection of uncoordinated items’ representing the small colony of Van Diemen’s Land.³ Kate Darian-Smith notes that from these modest beginnings, Australia embraced the international exhibition as a marketing tool for trade, migration and tourism, and used international displays to ‘define us to ourselves, as citizens of Australia and of the world.’⁴

Expositions, or expos, are a forum for a global audience to share multiple and varied cultural experiences in a limited time. Governments want to highlight progress, resources and ideology as well as improve tourism and trade opportunities. As a cultural diplomacy activity, modern expos allow for the portrayal of a carefully chosen national identity- and a chance to shift or challenge impressions of power in the global theatre. The following discussion of international exhibitions—a study of the Universal and International Exhibition in Montreal 1967, and Australian participation—will explore commonalities between this forum and ideas of cultural diplomacy. It will be demonstrated that international exhibitions are a valid tool for cultural diplomacy programmes, through analysis of the effects of such displays in context with cultural diplomacy theory, and their effectiveness in promoting national identity.

² Rydell states that for governments and social leaders, the fairs were vehicles for maintaining, or raising, their status as leaders, and for winning acceptance across class lines for their authority and priorities. ibid, p. 235.
⁴ ibid.
Exhibiting Australia

The word ‘fair’ derives from the Latin *feria*, holy day. In a discussion of early World’s Fairs in the US, Robert W. Rydell claimed that they resembled ‘religious celebrations in their emphasis on symbols and ritualistic behaviour.’\(^5\) The ritual affirmed fairgoers’ faith in the institutions and social organisation displayed. Rydell explained that fairs were so influential because of the social status of the organisers and sponsors, and that ‘intellectual leaders offered these ideas as the proper interpretation of social and political reality.’\(^6\) As these fairs became part of the national story, attending them and collecting souvenirs became a way for the public to belong to a greater entity, and to be part of the creation of political and social development. Rydell explained that historically, the World’s Fairs were arenas for the assertion of moral authority, but that displays of military exhibits suggested that there was force to back up these ideals.\(^7\) While pavilion descriptions for Montreal’s Expo ’67 do not mention military might, they certainly celebrate technological advances during the space race, in agricultural machinery, and in media technology. This machinery, rather than weaponry, could be seen as the ‘hard power’ that supported the softer power of cultural ideals.

Exhibitions are full of symbolism, and displays are chosen carefully. Katherine Smits and Alix Jansen explain that exhibit criteria included items that ‘suggest a grounded and legitimised past, and an enduring future for technological prowess.’\(^8\) They claim this is ‘explicit in the concept of nation branding’ and ‘reflects the marriage of nationalism and corporate promotion.’\(^9\) It is important for the nation and its commercial enterprises to establish a historical story that will ground them and place them in context, while advertising their longevity and prospects for the future. Other nations and corporations will thus be encouraged to enter relationships based on both trust and hope. This cultural exchange is an important aspect of diplomacy. International exhibitions allow a forum for cultural understanding, which can be used as a basis for diplomatic programmes.

\(^5\) Rydell, *All the World’s a Fair*, p. 3.
\(^6\) ibid.
\(^7\) ibid.
\(^9\) ibid, p. 177
Exhibiting Australia

Exhibitions as Diplomacy

World Fairs and International Exhibitions have been studied from the perspective of their architecture, spectacle, trade and tourism advantages, connections with memory and challenges of international image. This study will look at these aspects as well as focusing on cultural representations and understandings of Expo 67, in order to examine Australian deployment of what is now called cultural diplomacy. International expos are designed as public spectacles. They are celebrations of nations, peoples and cultures, and are a spotlight on time and space, representative of humanity’s story. Museum curator David Anderson has explained that expos convey ‘the culture, hopes and desires of people of the era, and the political voices of nations.’ The combination of people and cultures in an international display, at a specific moment, make them an ideal case study of cultural diplomacy.

The earliest exhibitions were organised for educational purposes. In the largely illiterate society of industrial northern England, mechanics’ institutes and artisans’ schools employed the principle of learning by observation, to display progress and innovation. As literacy increased, so did the method and scope of such exhibitions, leading to the Great Exhibition in London in 1851. This is often considered to be the beginning of the modern expo, and was the first exhibition that invited the participation of other nations.

International exhibitions are not concerned so much with trade than with the representation of culture. Numerous countries are invited to present a pavilion, a miniature ‘world’ in which to display themselves. The guides and programmes highlight the architecture, art, technology, leisure, food, music and people that comprise a country’s character. Moreover, visitors are encapsulated in the atmosphere of a country’s story within the pavilion. Representations are highly contrived and deliberately designed. Details are agonised over, from the nature of the external building to the mannerisms of the staff, all designed to present a cultural story. Organisers of such events seek the participation of all nations, and the success of the Expo is

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12 ‘The Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations’ was the event’s official name.
13 Smits & Jansen, ‘Staging the Nation,’ p. 177.
14 Davison, ‘Festivals of Nationhood,’ p. 158.
Exhibiting Australia

generally based on both the ‘quality and quantity’ of the participants.\textsuperscript{15} National governments are involved, and this effectively turns the display into an exercise in diplomacy, thus creating an expectation that other governments will respond. Maurice Roche described expos as ‘mega-events,’ and discusses their importance as key elements in official versions of public culture.\textsuperscript{16} He argued that they allow understanding of ‘structure, change and agency in modern society,’\textsuperscript{17} and can help pinpoint the interpretation of culture in a specific time and place.

**Inspiration**

Even with eyes protected by the green spectacles Dorothy and her friends were at first dazzled by the brilliancy of the wonderful City. The streets were lined with beautiful houses all built of green marble and studded everywhere with emeralds. They walked over a pavement of the same green marble, and where the blocks were joined together were rows of emeralds, set closely and glittering in the brightness of the sun.\textsuperscript{18}

When the World’s Fair of 1893 opened in Chicago, author L. Frank Baum was amazed. Electric streetlights made the buildings ‘sparkle like diamonds,’ and the world’s first Ferris wheel and prototype motion picture camera all fed his imagination. The ‘spirit and substance’ of the World Fair found their way into his novel, *The Wizard of Oz*.\textsuperscript{19} Baum thought that the white city—built of wood and painted to look like marble—was a fabulous fake. He saw both the grand illusion and the impermanence, and noted them as important lessons. He recognised the magic of technology in film, photography and electricity, and wondered how he could use this in his own work. Baum was fascinated by the world and constantly sought inspiration. Attending a World’s Fair, a place in which marvels were focused and on display, was a time of intense inspiration. The Emerald City in Oz was inspired by the White City in Chicago. While this is the most famous example of a World’s Fair inspiring an author, it confirms the value of the events as fora for cultural exchange, and the breadth of the audience that can be reached.

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{16} ibid, p. 1.
\textsuperscript{17} ibid, p. 7.
\textsuperscript{19} Anne McGregor, (producer and director), *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz: The True Story*, BBC, Moondance Films and Prospect Cymru Wales, MMX, aired on ABC2, 2320h Thursday 26 June, 2014.
\end{flushleft}
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Sharing cultural experiences, food, costume, trade, innovation, knowledge, ideas and heritage helps visitors understand their place in the world, and to appreciate the cultures of others. There are few fora in which so many cultural experiences can be shared in such a short time, with so little effort. The purposes of trade and the promotion of political aims (relationship-building, reputation) underlie the displays, and clever choices for a nation’s presentation can tell a clear message about a nation. Extra benefits of hosting such expos can be improved infrastructure, innovative architecture and increased tourism.

International expos are essentially a cultural display, and can be viewed like a museum. Once inside the miniaturised world, visitors are guided to experience the world in a specific context. Michel Foucault defined this situation as a ‘heterotopia’, a place in which ‘all other real sites that can be found within the culture are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted.’ He explained that this idea of accumulating a general archive that encloses the whole of a society in what is effectively a time capsule is a modern idea. Within this capsule, observers experience the product of contemporary society in which the story was created, the story as told by the inhabitants of the culture and the particular cultural constructs specific to the time in which it was created. Visitors see which parts of the past, present and hopeful future are important to contemporary society, positioning the display at a particular point in a nation’s history and political ideal, and within an international setting. Individuals collect souvenirs and tell stories. And children read fairy tales inspired by the extravaganza.

As exercises in cultural diplomacy, expos provide a way of viewing a deliberately-told story. As every item is deliberated upon—with teams of people designing, costing, and transporting—every detail is indicative of the ideal being portrayed. Journalist Robert Fulford noted that expos are not so much an opportunity to present reality, but to present the way organisers would like their nation to be seen. Organisers are restricted by the theme of the exhibition, the available space and what is offered for display. They must carefully consider the story they are trying to tell. Are they portraying a rich and proud history? A bright future? The ravages inflicted upon a landscape? A focus on human enterprise or mechanical reliance? Does the space available allow full-scale examples? Are performances a viable medium, or would film or photographs be more appropriate? Is there concession for audio or only visual representation? And importantly, who is paying for the display and what is the motivation?

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21 Robert Fulford, *This was Expo*, Toronto, McClelland and Stewart, 1968, p. 175.
Exhibiting Australia

The projected image is only fully understood when cultural assumptions allow for this. For example, mood music or particular scents have culturally symbolic meanings that do not always translate.22 Parts of a display may be dismissed if they do not fit an audience’s understanding, especially items of magic, religion or legend specific to a culture. Curators must be sure to tell the story in a simple way, while highlighting what makes that nation different. Complexity could overwhelm an audience, especially when attention is shared with many other nations’ pavilions, and the audience may explore a dozen varied cultures in one day. This is why this study examines more than one display or pavilion, in order to understand the messages of each in the context of the others. The most successful displays at expos are not necessarily those with the best items, but those that best tell the story of a nation creating an image as a favourable international partner. Nicholas Cull explained that the ‘clearing houses for international image-making in the second half of the nineteenth century were the great World’s Fairs’, and that ‘the abstract desire for prestige and the concrete quest for trade intertwined.’23 This story is further disseminated through the media. At an international exhibition the media are both local and international, each with their own prevailing world view (and readership) which colours their coverage.

Roche has described the benefits of hosting an expo in the form of tourist consumerism: all participants, from builders to snack vendors, diplomats to entertainers, visitors and staff, had to travel and become tourists to attend.24 All participants are exposed to forms of consumerism and political ideology outside of their culture. There are elements of virtual tourism as participants are exposed to other cultures not only through static objects on display but also the staff, diplomats, entertainers, lecturers and international visitors. Each participating country must be aware of the image they are projecting at every level in order to show the best cultural experience and support their foreign policy aims.

The introduction of foreign cultures necessarily affects the worldview of the host city, just as the host city is determined to show their personality. The host city typically uses the exhibition to promote its status and position in the world order. At the World’s Fair in Brussels in 1958, on Canada Day, Senator Mark Drouin announced that Montreal would seek

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24 While local employees were not tourists in the form of travelling away from home, within the expo site they had travelled to an international experience.
Exhibiting Australia to host the Universal and International Exhibition of 1967 (Expo ’67). Supporters lobbied for funding, which was sourced from the Canadian, Quebec and Montreal governments. In 1962, Montreal was officially awarded the honour of hosting the fair.\textsuperscript{25}

Australians are good at linking national history with prospects for the future and the Montreal Expo highlights this. The organisers took great care to understand the message they wanted to project, the prospective audience, and the trade and diplomatic goals they desired. This following discusses how and why Expo ’67 was an important part of Australia’s diplomatic programme.\textsuperscript{26}

\textbf{The Australian Contribution}

The Australian Pavilion was fitted with high-quality, hardwearing wool carpet; the windows were covered with sheer wool curtaining; staff were dressed impeccably in wool suits; and ‘sound chairs’\textsuperscript{27} were upholstered in robust wool fabric. Merino sheep and rams were displayed, and the skills of Australian sheepdogs were on show. Australia was branded as a producer of fine raw materials, and sheep in particular had been responsible for considerable national and personal wealth, so the production of superior animals was a source of national pride. Technological developments demonstrated what the nation could develop from wool and other raw materials, both confirming a national reputation and stimulating future trade opportunities. While in the planning stages, Menzies had hoped for a ‘greater international awareness of Australia and its opportunities.’\textsuperscript{28} After, Westminster Carpet Sales representative Bevis Walters, working in Canada, confirmed that the Expo had ‘brought notice’ to the quality of Australian goods, and was likely to increase sales.\textsuperscript{29} These before and after comments suggest that Expo ’67 was a significant opportunity for ‘international image making,’\textsuperscript{30} and would successfully stimulate trade.

\textsuperscript{25} Uncredited author, ‘Expo 67 Man and His World,’ \url{www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/expo/05330201_e.html} retrieved 6 May, 2014
\textsuperscript{26} This event was decided upon by Menzies, planned while he was in office and conducted during the period that is generally referred to by historians as ‘the Menzies Era.’ Therefore, it fits in the time frame of this study.
\textsuperscript{27} Will be discussed further later in this chapter.
\textsuperscript{28} Information Paper ‘Australian Participation at Expo,’ Prime Minister’s Department, Cabinet Secretariat C3973, 19 April, 1968, Australian Exposition Montreal 1967, NAA, 65-1499.
\textsuperscript{29} Bevis Walters, Letter to Sir Valsten Hancock, 15 November, 1967, Department of Works Australian Exposition Montreal, 1967, NAA, 65-1499.
\textsuperscript{30} ibid.
Some Expos are used to commemorate an occasion, which is a chance to inscribe local or national history into ‘the primary narrative of world history.’ Many Australians attach their own bicentenary of nationhood with Expo 88; the Canadian people will connect their own Centenary of Federation with Expo 67, even if they are unlikely to remember the historical date. Other historical events are more easily placed in relation to international events such as the moon landing or significant political upheaval. Fashion, too, can be connected with international events. For example, the reporting of Expo 67 commented on the prevalence of the miniskirt, thus placing the fashion in context with the era. The media also marry situations, events, commentary and architecture, and the combination is remembered.

While expo architecture is designed to be temporary, there are examples that have become a permanent fixture and thus a site of pilgrimage in their own right. The Eiffel Tower was built for the Paris World Fair of 1889 as a salute to industry, and is still one of the most popular tourist destinations in the world. The Atomium in Brussels celebrates the 1958 World Fair held there, and is a common tourist attraction and a permanent reminder of significant scientific development at the time of the Fair. These structures help consolidate the past and provide a platform from which futures can be launched, thus functioning as an important aspect of creating and maintaining national identity. This is crucial for cultural diplomacy programmes.

For Canada, who placed their Centenary of Federation on the world stage, the ‘67 Expo was a ‘coming of age’ in the world. Smits and Jansen claim that ‘Expos not only reflect the nation, they actively shape history, culture and identity.’ The previously little-publicised nation received international acclaim. In the planning stages, the government was challenged to create an event on a larger scale than ever before, revise and develop infrastructure and even create a new land mass. However, as one journalist noted, citizens took personal ownership of the event. Citizens became excited about their individual place in national and international history. The achievement of hosting a successful international event is still a source of national pride.

33 The organisers artificially created a land mass in the river in order to accommodate pavilions.
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Expos are a form of modern pilgrimage, and souvenirs offer an authenticity of experience, just as pilgrimages to holy places once had.\(^{34}\) The importance of souvenirs in challenging the impermanence of fairs is discussed by John B. Zachman.\(^{35}\) He noted that while other materials documenting fairs are often scarce, there is a wealth of material memorabilia.\(^ {36}\) By comparing the type and quality of souvenirs, the values and interests of the era can be explored. Which souvenirs are purchased highlight what types of objects visitors are willing to part with money for, on an already expensive day, so as to take part of the experience home.\(^ {37}\) We can also see which objects were understood as suitable for production in conjunction with the telling of the national story. In ephemera such as brochures and tickets, we see the value placed on attending the event or a specific venue. Souvenirs from Expo ’67 were kept in Canada but also had an international audience, thus connecting both domestic and international audiences to this place and time. They remind and educate about a country’s culture and history in an entertaining way. Smits and Jansen consider this a ‘crucial example of the emergence of “Edutainment”.’\(^ {38}\) This is the phenomena whereby media and film technology are used as an educational medium. The use of new technologies has a double effect: they can add detail and context to educational materials not experienced before, and the new medium itself makes the lesson more memorable. It is particularly effective because the message is perceived through more than one sense.\(^ {39}\) As expos are essentially a competitive arena, with each nation attempting to get as much attention as possible, the introduction of technologies was a practical idea. Edutainment is an apt descriptor for this event.

Edutainment is characterised by its use of technology. At Expo 67, most pavilions used audio recordings and film to display some part of their story. Complemented by working models of local inventions, machinery and tools—the traditional learning by observing—displays had with a modern technological edge. Examples include the film display in Britain’s Cave of History, cinemas in the US Pavilion, and the Soviet Union’s Cosmos Hall which provided a

\(^{34}\) Gilbert, ‘World’s Fairs,’ pp. 13–27.


\(^{36}\) An online search confirmed this. It is often easier to find research materials on a World’s Fair or international event in the form of memorabilia than in libraries.

\(^{37}\) A quick internet search reveals guide books, flags, ashtrays, key-rings, dolls, mugs, pins, and travel bags are the most popular souvenirs from this particular event.

\(^{38}\) Smits & Jansen, ‘Staging the Nation,’ p. 181.

simulated journey to outer space. As edutainment is particularly characterised by interactivity between audience and technology, Australians openly took advantage of this with their ‘sound chairs.’

These innovative chairs incorporated a headset into the design and played a recording as visitors sat down. Recordings about the Australian way of life were narrated by various Australians, and were both informative and entertaining. They were covered in eucalyptus-coloured wool. A quarter of the chairs played recordings in French, and these were distinguished by desert-orange-coloured cushioning. Sixty chairs focused on the four main display themes: science, national development, the arts and lifestyle. Encouraging the visitor to remain static and receive the Australian story made the Pavilion appear calm and ordered. The activation of the recordings being at the control of the visitor, the quiet atmosphere and the subdued display all signalled respect for the visitor, and seemed to say ‘when you are ready, we will tell you our story’. Tables also dotted the space, ‘bearing books on Australian society and ashtrays of modern Australian design,’\(^40\) further contributing to the relaxed atmosphere. By promoting the lifestyle and values of the Australian people, and by using regular citizens (pavilion staff and visiting entertainers) rather than formal diplomats, the exhibition became more real. There was no attempt to coerce or make profit, no obvious infiltration of the audience’s culture or belief system, no obvious attempt to make diplomatic gains. It was simply an offering of experience.

\(^{40}\) Smits & Jansen, ‘Staging the Nation,’ p. 186.
Ambitious projects often lead to great technological developments. As part of a competition to create the world’s first truly large-screen experience at Expo 67, a small group of filmmakers came together to design a multi-screen film. Syncing nine projectors, they created a spectacular installation, and went on to form the IMAX Company. Now seen by millions across the world, this is a noteworthy legacy of Expo 67.

Several studies have been conducted on the promotion of cultural diplomacy immediately after a significant conflict, both domestically and internationally. The formation of the Soviet Union, shifting international relationships after World War Two and the political restructuring of South East Asia were significant turning points for nations, and resulted in the wish to create ‘new’ national identities. For Australia in the 1950s and 1960s there was no such turning point, but they were dealing with a move away from Britain and towards their Asia Pacific neighbours: reinvention of national identity and establishing a revised position in international politics was prompted by sending troops to Vietnam, political instability to the north, the increased cultural diversity of new immigrants and changes in leadership. As a

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41 NAA, AA1982/206, 35, 5281193.
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geographically isolated nation, this period saw Australians looking outward for a broader definition of themselves.43

Australia played a significant role in the UN and other world affairs, and also felt a sense of responsibility to their South East Asian neighbours. However, a government-commissioned survey of Australia in the 1960s noted that for the most part the people had ‘ideals and aspirations [that] are in tune with those of the people of Great Britain.’44 It claimed that the relationship with America was ‘strategic, economic and social’ and was leading to increasingly closer ties, but overall ‘it is [the Australian] desire to strengthen all Commonwealth relationships while living in amity with other nations.’45 While this attitude shifted throughout the decade, it was a starting point for the motivations for attending Expo ’67. The report records that ‘not so long ago’, Australia did not have edible grains or seeds, fruit or vegetables, nuts or fibres of any note, ‘hooved animals,’ an unreliable water supply, unworkable timbers and scant evidence of mineral resources.46 It explained that the population was augmented by men and women who were ‘venturesome and imaginative’, with ‘initiative and enterprise’,47 and praised the great courage and pioneering spirit that led to all manner of food being produced to perfection, minerals sourced and water harnessed. Like a proud parent, the account praised artistic, music and sporting achievements, a success out of proportion with the small population. The report dismissed suggestions that the population had become ‘Americanised’, and highlights an ‘ingrained affection’ for British forebears.48 Air travel had helped ‘close the gap’ culturally, and it states that the modern Australian (of the time of writing) was significantly more ‘sophisticated’ than in the 1920s. This is relevant because the Expo, which occurred just five years later, showed incredible technology to the world and a determinedly forward-looking nation. To have objects, music and people on display and interacting with an international audience was an opportunity to tell a national story. The Australian displays did not attempt to overtly criticise or contrast any other political regime or nation,49 and this resulted in the transfer of cultural ideals in a gentle and almost subversive fashion.

46 Ibid, p. xvii.
48 Ibid, p. 340-41
49 For many cultural diplomacy efforts the prime goal is to affect opinion and often to disparage contrasting ideals. This is highlighted in Gienow-Hecht, Transmission Impossible.
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Expo 67 was not just a government or commercial exercise because the general public were major stakeholders. The government put in the initial financial investment, but the public paid to attend. The government and general public were both contributors and audiences. The government had the chance to influence the thoughts and opinions of millions of individuals, heads of state and diplomats from at least 60 other nations, and countless representatives of commercial interests.

A unique experience, Expos are both formal and informal, structured and loose. They are an example of a formal setting in which audience members decide meaning. At Expo 67, Australia’s simple pavilion design, the relaxing but informative sound chairs, the calm and clear displays and the lack of fuss all imply that doing business with, or travelling to, Australia will be a simple, relaxed and uncluttered affair. The diverse offerings—from raw materials to high-tech machinery and varied cultural entertainments—suggest that Australians can overcome adversity and then produce almost anything. This subtle message would have influenced visitors, and was repeated in the media. While not quantifiable, the effects of an international exposition on its audience cannot be underestimated. Exposure to new ideas and technology can spark various reactions in the visitor. One visitor explained that attending had prompted a change in career trajectory, from the corporate world to that of design.50 It can open up markets for some manufacturers, excited others to travel and inspired yet others to write. This is why the planning of what to display and then how to present it is so important for an expo, and particularly when part of a cultural diplomacy style strategy.

Organising any display is necessarily a challenge of choice. As in a museum, the displays are out of context and some meaning must then be added to them. A radio telescope indoors is an oxymoron, but when placed next to a painting of the night sky, it is again in context and its message can be understood. Overall, there appeared to be few reported disappointments, and the Australian Government could be quite confident that it had achieved its aims.

The Australian Pavilion

Participating at the Universal and International Exhibition allowed the Australian Government and people to understand how they fitted into the world. It was a public display of technological advancement, grounding history, expressions of cultural interest and ideas. It

brought the world to the attention of domestic media, and presented Australia to the attention of international media. Importantly, it provided a forum for Australia to discuss the self-image of the nation. Australia was able to position itself as a middle power in world affairs, as influential but not intimidating. The Pavilion and displays at the Expo echoed this. The pavilion was not large or showy, but small, comfortable and uncluttered. There were no displays of military might or connected to the space race; there was agricultural machinery and telescopes. Art displays were interesting but subdued. The sound chairs displayed innovative technology and allowed visitors to control the conversation. Exploring the contents of the Pavilion and Australian participation at Expo 67 in detail helps illustrate how international exhibitions act as a forum for cultural diplomacy.

The gradual shift in political alignment and identity in the post-war decades saw Australia independently exhibiting in Montreal at Expo 67. As the exportation of raw materials to Britain declined, Australian trade and enterprise began to highlight scientific and technological advances. The progress of local designers and architects was highlighted in the Pavilion itself. An emphasis on Australian character, culture and productivity was presented in a compact exhibition— a shift for Australia publically, away from a dominion of the British, and towards an identity as a middle power in the world forum.

In 1964, Minister for External Affairs Barwick acknowledged that Australia was a middle power in international affairs, claiming that it was ‘at one time a granary and a highly industrialised country.’ The objects displayed at Expo 67—including the artwork, technology, entertainment and history—all contributed to this message. From an open-cut mine and Merino sheep demonstrating how the nation harvests raw materials, to the radio telescope and sound chairs, which highlighted technological advancement, Australia straddled two worlds. Situating the displays in a quiet, constructed oasis of calm above a natural bushland setting, the world was shown to be a combination of created urban spaces and raw landscape. As the nation was part of the British Empire and also exploring the Asia Pacific region, these contrasts are fitting. Participation in Expo 67 allowed Australia to express this cultural ideal to an international audience. More importantly, it created a forum for this cultural ideal to be analysed, debated and recognised domestically. Forced to

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51 Darian-Smith, ‘Seize the Day,’ p. 10. Previously Australia had participated as part of the British exhibition.
53 Barwick, ‘Statement to the House.’
condense the national culture into one pavilion in a foreign space for six months provided a
valuable opportunity to discuss cultural identity and promote it as part of a diplomatic
programme.

Initially, the Australian Government rejected the invitation to exhibit in Montreal. The
expense was deemed in excess of the expected benefits, with ‘little trade, tourist or publicity
grounds’ to warrant the cost. Hasluck, at the time Minister for External Affairs, determined
that most visitors would be from Canada and North America, and advised that this audience
was not a ‘primary target for information activity.’ He considered that it would be difficult
to compete for attention with the other larger, richer countries, so the cost would not be
justified. However, on 19 July, 1964, Menzies argued that Australia could not afford not to
attend. Curran noted that the deliberations swung from economic advantage to the
‘imperative of cultural diplomacy and national self-definition.’ Three days later, Cabinet
formally announced that Australia would participate in Expo 67, ‘being commemorative of
federation’ and in regard to the ‘Australian/Canadian relations and terms of Commonwealth
relations’. It was most likely that the appeals to ‘the Commonwealth’ that the Canadian
Prime Minister Lester Pearson used eventually swayed the decision-makers. In a submission
to Cabinet, Menzies wrote that as this was an event designed to celebrate Canada’s centenary,
a ‘refusal to participate may result in some loss of Canadian goodwill.’ He disagreed with
Hasluck, and explained that the Canadian and North American audiences were a ‘very
important target’ for information efforts, highlighting that the press coverage provided by
these groups would be extensive. Menzies noted that ‘an imaginative exhibit could therefore
be somewhat of an image builder.’ Although the budget would be tight, consideration

54 Notes on Submission 232, ‘Universal and International Exhibition, Montreal 1967,’ Prime Minister’s
Department, 8 June 1964; ‘Notes on Cabinet Submission No. 527, Universal and International Exhibition,
Montreal 1967,’ Prime Minister’s Department, R. P. Deane, 4 December, 1964, in ‘Australian Exposition
55 Paul Hasluck, Minister for External Affairs, For Cabinet: Submission 232 C3973, ‘Universal and International
1499,’ NAA.
57 Curran, ‘Australia Should be There: Expo ’67 and the Search for a New National Image’, pp. 72-90,
‘Australian Historical Studies,’ 39, March 2008, University of Sydney, p. 78. In a detailed summation of the
Australian social and political position of the time, and the importance of participating in this event, Curran also
noted that attendance of the Brussels International Exhibition in 1958 was dismissed as having little benefit to
national prestige, especially regarding the expected cost. The swing in focus from economic to social benefits is
important for a study of shifting attitudes towards cultural diplomacy.
58 Submission 947, 22 July 1965, Eighth Menzies Ministry Cabinet Decisions, A5828, Vol. 4, 1051-1400, NAA.
59 Menzies, Submission 527 C 3973, for Cabinet, ‘Universal and International Exhibition, Montreal 1967,’ in
60 ibid.
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would be given to the fact that ‘Australia would have to stand comparison with other countries,’ and the government would have to be a little flexible regarding costs. The aim was to create an image of a new Australia.

The advisory committee was comprised of prominent Australian academics, professionals and businessmen. Kenneth Slessor was joined by Campbell from the National Gallery in Adelaide; Judge Adrian Curlewis from Sydney; the chairman of Fairfax, Warwick Fairfax; the Commissioner of the Snow Mountains Hydro-Electric Authority, Sir William Hudson; Professor La Nauze, a Melbourne University historian; Sir Maurice Mawby of Rio Tinto; Seppelt of Seppelt and Sons; Simpson of Simpson Pope Holdings; and Souter from the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) in Melbourne. These men came from various occupations and from across the country. They were selected because they brought varied experience and perspectives which enabled them to present a relevant national cultural ideal. In an Information Paper submitted to the Cabinet, it was acknowledged that ‘our effort at Expo 67 is in an intensely competitive field with each nation seeking to show its best and achieve maximum publicity.’ It is to the credit of the government and organising committee that they were not overcome by this challenge, but saw it as an opportunity.

While acknowledging that there were other countries with interesting history and more glamour, the organisers set out to show what made Australia unique. To comply with the overarching theme of ‘Man and his World,’ they decided to focus on adventure: the country was promoted as the foremost ‘land of adventure.’ Public Relations Officer Mel Pratt announced that ‘the basic theme is adventure and the ways in which adventure still attracts and impels Australians today—in the arts, in sport, in science, in industry and in other fields.’ The designers and collaborators began to create a new definition of Australia for the post-war, post-imperial era. Curran wrote that this was a chance to promote a ‘new face to the world: distinctive, mature, and culturally sophisticated.’ For a country at a cross-road, this was a unique opportunity to examine cultural ideals, to informs both national and international

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61 Submission 947, NAA.
63 Information Paper, ‘Australian Participation at Expo’67,’ Prime Minister’s Department Cabinet Secretariat, C3973, 19 April, 1967, in ibid.
64 Kenneth Slessor, ‘Synopsis,’ attached to a letter from W. R. Carney to the Prime Minister, 19 October, 1965, in ibid.
66 Curran, ‘Australia Should be There,’ p. 75.
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audiences. It was to be a forward-looking enterprise. Ten years after hosting a world-class Olympic Games, Australia was showing that not only had it modernised to a comparable level to other leading places, but that it was a serious innovator and leader in numerous fields.

Commentators including Donald Horne and Stuart Ward have discussed the difficulties that Australian identity faced at this time: including the ‘decline of the British framework’ produced a feeling that Australia needed to begin again. The subsequent ‘scramble for a national culture’ meant the organisers saw the Expo as an opportunity. While they knew that the audience expected a traditional and familiar Australia, with a harsh landscape with peculiar flora and fauna, it was time to show that the people had come a long way, from ‘the Stone Age to the Space Age.’ This became the motto for the Australian Pavilion. Displays about exploration in Antarctica, Nobel Prizes for medicine, technological invention and the establishment of cultural institutions all highlighted that Australia was no insignificant backwater. When asked to propose the theme for the displays, Kenneth Slessor suggested that ‘the picture of Australia which we wish to leave […] included] the challenge of adventure, set in the present and future and offering opportunities.’ Organisers wanted to acknowledge the difficulty of the Australian landscape for its inhabitants. The planning team agreed that the displays must easily be understood by an international audience, and would essentially be ‘a sideshow at a public fair for the purpose of advertising Australia’ to an audience that would vary in age and experience, and ‘whose interest and imagination must be aroused by the first hit.’ Themes that were too specifically Australian would not be displayed, such as the legend of Ned Kelly or the exploits of the earliest explorers, as it was too difficult to explain these stories without context.

For the first time, Australia exhibited in its own purpose-built space, and not as an annex of the British Pavilion. Architect James MacCormick designed a floating square box:

The broad concept of the exhibition is that the open air and undercroft areas are devoted to a representation of the Australian background. The native trees, plants, and animals and

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70 ibid.
71 Kenneth Slessor, ‘Australian Display at the Montreal Exhibition 1967.’
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mineral resources—while the pavilion proper on the raised level is devoted to a survey of what man has done with this part of the globe. 72

The exhibits reflected human achievements contrasted with a distinctive homeland. The exterior of the building was decorated with four large painted panels. 73 Created by prominent artists, these were meant to be informative and original. The first, ‘Australia in the World,’ was a map, and placed the continent in the centre to highlight Australia’s relationship to neighbouring countries and oceans. The second, ‘The Australian Land,’ was a landscape indicating geological and mineral characteristics. The third, ‘Australia and North America,’ was another map that compared the geographical mass of the two nations. Finally, ‘Pacific Communications’ highlighted the cabling, sea lanes, air routes and satellites between Australia and the US. They repositioned Australia as geographically Asiatic, and highlighted the close relationship with the US.

After reviewing various scale models for the pavilion, ‘scheme A’ was decided upon, which was a ‘floating box.’ This had two walls of glass that provided natural light, and was determined to be ‘exciting without being freakish’. 74 Architect Robin Boyd reported that the aim was ‘to have the most luxurious and civilised salon at Expo 67’. 75 Although the architecture discouraged dramatic staging or numerous exhibits, 76 Boyd used the light and openness as a display in itself, creating the atmosphere of calm and refuge from the bustle of the rest of the Expo. The Pavilion’s design was a clear and focused way of promoting a national message; the approval of Boyd’s design is reflective of the message the government wanted to send the world.

The Pavilion may not have been as grand as some others, but organisers noted that the staff played the most important role in presenting Australia. 77 Twenty-two hostesses ushered visitors and explained the displays. The desert orange uniforms were often commented on in the press. Six hosts assisted, dressed in eucalyptus green suits. Staff were at least bilingual.

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77 Information Paper, 19 April, 1967, ‘Australian Participation in Expo ’67,’ ‘Prime Minister’s Department: Cabinet Secretariat,’ C3973, NAA.
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and tertiary educated, and were trained to have a thorough knowledge of the exhibits. This focus on the people who represented the country was important, as it showed that while what visitors saw and heard was carefully chosen, it was the Australian people, their culture and way of life that was prioritised.

Figure 6.2: A hostess looking at artwork at the Australian Pavilion, Expo 67, Montreal

A significant feature throughout the Pavilion was the use of wool, from the carpeting, sheer curtaining and upholstery to the staff uniforms. This highlighted the versatility of Australian products and design. It was a modern display of a traditional reputation: Australia’s success rode ‘on the sheep’s back.’ Development and innovation meant that the nation not only exported raw materials but also designed and manufactured high-quality goods.

Also on display was a scale replica of the radio telescope at Parkes, New South Wales (NSW), which had played an important role in recent astronomical discoveries. As the space race was a predominant feature in the Pavilions of the US and Soviet Union, Australia showed that it was progressing in the same technological areas. Tracking spacecraft, cosmic radio sources, discovering magnetic fields and determining the positions of quasars were

78 Female employees also had to be attractive, reflecting the time, as such a requirement could not be publicly advertised today. The hostesses interviewed stated that the academic requirements were generally not adhered to.
80 Casey had spent years fighting for funding for the CSIRO, and his inventions such as the radio telescope and discovery of new chemical processes demonstrated Australian innovation at the Expo. Richard Casey, Casey Family Papers, NAA, MS 6150, Series 4, Vol. 21, October 56-August 57, Box 28, 13 May 1957, p. 180.
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among the achievements of this relatively new equipment. Above the telescope hung a painting of the Australian night sky. While putting the telescope into context, this was also relevant, as most Northern Hemisphere visitors were not used to the Southern Hemisphere’s astrological arrangements.

Figure 6.3: Model of the dish radio telescope at Parkes, NSW, at the Australian Pavilion at Expo 67, Montreal

Scale models of the Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric scheme, and also of the newly built capital city of Canberra, highlighted the change from wilderness to a civilised, industrial, and modern culture were displayed. Aboriginal bark paintings were shown along with a collection of contemporary art, and a series of photographs depicted other developmental projects, agricultural progress, architecture and modern living. While the Australian Pavilion did not have a restaurant like some others, part was a designated VIP dining area that provided Australian fare. Direct trade was not part of the Expo, but retailer David Jones did host the ‘Australia Boutique,’ the only place where Australian merchandise was available. The stock was recognisably Australian, and ‘would present a good fashion image.’

82 NAA, AA1982/206, 43, 5281058.
83 Information Paper, 19 April, 1967, ‘Australian Participation in Expo ’67’, Prime Minister’s Department: Cabinet Secretariat C3973, NAA.
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Jones, who represented the retailer, noted: ‘we are undertaking this as a national venture to put Australia in the best light at the exhibition.’

On Australia’s special day, 6 June, various attractions were organised, all recognisably Australian. A popular music concert called ‘Pop Goes Australia’ featured Bobby Limb, Rolf Harris, The Seekers, and Normie Rowe. A boomerang-throwing exhibition, mock sheep dog trials and a wood chopping competition were organised, as well as a lawn tennis tournament with champion players. Events were telecast directly to Australian audiences, the first direct international telecast for the nation.

Australia was asked to sponsor sections of the themed pavilions at the Expo. These were not hosted by any one nation, but included exhibits on a particular theme. Sponsorship was not possible due to limited finances, but Australia did make display contributions. To the pavilion called ‘Man the Explorer’ Australia loaned a scale model of the Antarctic Base, Aboriginal artefacts and opals. To the ‘Man in the Community’ pavilion they sent a film on surf lifesaving, information on Australia’s Royal Flying Doctor Service and the School of the Air, all of which highlighted the enormity of the country. They contributed to the ‘Man the Producer’ pavilion demonstration models of unique agricultural equipment, a scale model of a coal dredge and a film on the Yallorn open-cut coal field. Merino sheep were displayed in the ‘Man the Provider’ space, illustrating wool and meat production. Lectures were also given by Nobel Prize winners Sir Macfarlane Burnett and Sir John Eccles.

The Canadian Expo organisers staged the World Festival of Performing Arts, which showcased various entertainments from across the world. Australian performers included the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) Central Band, the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and the Australian Ballet. This festival included premier performers from across the globe, and the Australian contingent performed alongside long-established acts such as the Bolshoi Ballet, Vienna State Opera, Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam and The Supremes.

The official documents and press releases recorded the official intentions of the exhibition, but it is the opinions of the general public and social groups that determine the success of

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85 ibid.
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cultural diplomacy-style activities. Therefore, it is important to consider such opinions after experiencing the event, to acknowledge public understandings of official messages. According to the Australian Exhibit Organisation Staff Manual, the primary communication aim was that ‘the visitor to the Australian Pavilion at Expo will come away with the knowledge that Australia is no longer an isolated wilderness but a sophisticated, self-reliant nation equal to any in the world.’\(^8^8\) The articles in newspapers, magazines and journals would confirm whether the scheme was successful.

Aerial photographs of the site were published in newspapers, highlighting the positioning and size of the Australian Pavilion.\(^8^9\) Journalists commented on Expo visits by celebrities, wrote with wonder at the spectacular Soviet and US Pavilions and commented on the juxtaposition between traditional and modern architecture that used expensive, exotic materials. The thoughtful planning of the whole site—which included parks, lakes, canals, rivers and transport systems—was admired. The external architecture was written about before the exhibits opened. This was a show of buildings ‘with architects from all over the world expressing…their country’s story,’ with few participating nations using the ready-made spaces provided by the local government.\(^9^0\) The pavilions themselves were capsules in which visitors were embraced and educated, so were a significant investment. The Australian Pavilion was generally praised by architects and organisers, but there were some negative comments from the media, who called it a ‘small black box,’ ‘squat’ and ‘smug and overly comfortable,’ with displays that were ‘dull and undistinguished’.\(^9^1\) The pavilion was not competing with the more glamorous structures. One local correspondent disagreed however, noting that ‘visitors appear unimpressed with the verdict of the critics,’\(^9^2\) and that long lines of visitors quickly formed to see inside the Australian Pavilion.

\(^9^2\) ibid.
Visitors to the Australian Pavilion were warned by a plaque at the entrance: ‘The mood of this pavilion is a deliberately relaxed one, offering, we hope, a moment’s rest from the bustle of the outside world’. This aim seems to have been achieved, as an article in *The Montreal Star* stated: ‘There’s nothing in the Australian Pavilion to astound, excite, confuse or exhaust the visitor—only the feeling of space and tranquillity borrowed from the vastness of its country.’ Its location *en route* to the most popular exhibits was also unexpectedly beneficial. This prime location contrasted with the calm atmosphere inside the pavilion, which became the most popular reason for visiting.

During the planning stages, the Australian public were excited by the entertainers that would be sent to the Expo, with the newspapers and magazines in Australia proudly reporting those selected. The artistic designers of the Australian Ballet were delighted to have been chosen, along with those from the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. The Ballet was a fairly new troupe, and to be performing in the same arena as the Bolshoi Ballet was an honour. After the

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93 NAA, AA1982/206, 43, 5281074.
performance, the tour manager for the Orchestra enthused: ‘the standing ovations we got for our concerts mean we have “arrived” in North America,’\(^95\) and hoped that more overseas trips would result. This optimism was confirmed by the Canadian newspapers, which praised the performances, claiming the young troupe had ‘developed a distinctive style,’ and praising the ‘solidly classical’ performance with ‘lavish costumes and décor,’ and soloists who had played for European audiences.\(^96\) The Symphony Orchestra and soloist Marie Collier were described as fresh and striking.\(^97\)

In Australia, the Australian-Canada Society celebrated the opening of the Expo on 28 April, 1967, with fireworks over Lake Burley Griffin in Canberra.\(^98\) Headlines such as ‘10,000 see pavilion’\(^99\) helped build Australian enthusiasm for the event. On the eve of the opening the Prime Minister delivered a statement that highlighted the natural bush setting and unique fauna, the displays of traditional Australian activities planned for the special day and commented that Australia’s national image was well represented.\(^100\) The organisers were proud of the Australian cultural experience they had presented to the world, were satisfied that the government’s aims of encouraging trade and tourism would be realised and that domestic media coverage assured the public that money had been well spent.

As the Expo progressed, the *Australian Women’s Weekly* published an interview with some of the hostesses, noting the general admiration for the bright orange uniforms that had been designed by Zara Holt, wife of the new Prime Minister. Skirt length was a big issue; British hostesses wore their skirts very short, and while some of the Australian hostesses shortened theirs, they noted that ‘we aren’t entering any competitions,’ and were pleased with the ‘striking but not too flamboyant’ colour.\(^101\) The women interviewed spoke of the higher cost


\(^97\) ‘Marie Collier Soloist in Ravel “Scheherazade,”’ Local Press Clippings: *Montreal Star*, NAA.


of living, and compared French Canadian, British Canadian and other North American men. They were surprised by some ignorance of Australia, even from fellow Commonwealth countries, and recalled: ‘When we visited the Ceylon pavilion we were complimented on our good command of English.’ The hostesses enthused: ‘where else would we ever get the chance to meet and work with people from just about every country in the world?’ dismissing reports that they were unhappy with their wages or accommodation.

There was some debate in the newspapers regarding the absence of any Aboriginal staff. Advisory council member R. P. Greenish believed that such a presence would ‘show the world that we had at long last learned to respect equality and not discriminate,’ as well as be ‘a step towards ending racial discrimination and improving Australia’s world image.’

Anthony, Minister for the Interior, noted that they could not specially select Aboriginal women as staff, as a decision had been made to select Australian hostesses who would already be in Canada for the duration of the Expo. All hostesses had to meet the employment criteria, and if the government were to make exceptions on the basis of race, this could send a negative or confusing message. This reveals just one of the struggles over race and immigration of the 1960s. While immigration laws had broadened to included non-European migrants, and the displays at the Expo showed Aboriginal artefacts, the Expo staff reflected a youthful, white Australia.

On 6 June, Prime Minister Harold Holt attended the particularly ‘Australian’ celebrations, stating that ‘the Australian image had been well presented.’ In *The Canberra Times* Holt was shown holding a kangaroo and beaming proudly, noting that it had been ‘a wonderful day.’

The Canadian newspapers reported that while Australians had a reputation for courage, stamina and sporting skills, ‘the Australian contribution to Expo also revealed...’

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102 This was refuted by all hostesses that I interviewed.
103 ‘Australian Hostesses at Expo 67,’ *Australian Women’s Weekly*
104 ibid.
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successes in the realm of arts.\textsuperscript{109} This day was also a highlight for Australian technology. When Canberra television stations broadcast the programme, it was ‘the first direct telecast from another country seen by Australian viewers,’\textsuperscript{110} and many woke especially early to be part of the event.

In an interview with Australian entertainer Bobby Limb, \textit{Women’s Weekly} readers had been introduced to the plans for the ‘Pop Goes Australia’ concert. While Limb had been honoured to have been asked to work in America (‘for the first time the quality of Australian show business has been recognised and performers sent abroad to represent their country’\textsuperscript{111}), he turned the offer down in order to work for his home country.\textsuperscript{112} Limb was very proud to be working with traditional Aboriginal musical instruments, and planned to play them ‘in a modern band combination.’\textsuperscript{113} He noted that this would create a ‘real Australian sound, a new combination of primitive and modern,’ which was entirely new and unique; he hoped the international audience would agree.\textsuperscript{114} However, Canadian reviewer Joan Irwin seemed unimpressed by this concert, claiming that some of the performers were ‘only pale imitations of current North American, British and French rock-and-roll stars.’\textsuperscript{115} Hope for the entertainment industry appeared in the form of The Seekers, who were certainly in the same league as the major folk-singing groups of North America, ‘although they do not show much imagination.’\textsuperscript{116} Irwin did not mention Limb’s ‘real Australian sound,’ as the significance of this composition was possibly lost in cultural translation.

At the half-way point of the Expo, staff reported to the Australian Government that visits had far exceeded all estimates, and that there had been high praise for the internal exhibition of the Australian Pavillion. The sound chairs were reported as ‘novel and informative—an effective way of telling the story.’\textsuperscript{117} The inch-thick wool carpeting was holding up to the


\textsuperscript{112} ibid.

\textsuperscript{113} ibid.

\textsuperscript{114} Even the plans for music combined the ancient and the modern, highlighting that contrasting the two was a challenge.


\textsuperscript{116} ibid.

\textsuperscript{117} E. J. Bunting, Secretary to Mr Ferrari, ‘Prime Minister’s Department,’ dated 14 September 1967, 65-1499, NAA.
greater than expected traffic, and *The Montreal Star* recorded that a baby kangaroo was born on site; it was promptly named ‘Expo.’

At the conclusion of Expo, there was disappointment that the Pavilion would not return to Canberra as an exhibition hall. The prohibitive transport costs were cited as the primary reason for leaving the building in Montreal. The Mayor of Montreal, Jean Drapeau, asked that the Pavilion be left in his city when the Expo ended in October. The Pavilion was gifted to the City of Montreal, and the plaque read: ‘This building, the Australian pavilion at Expo ’67, is a gift from the Australian people to the City of Montreal and stands as a symbol of the lasting friendship between the peoples of Canada and Australia.’ North American architects had been enthusiastic about the Pavilion, and the Canadian Government determined that the ‘small smug black box’ was better suited as an exhibition centre than the more flamboyant pavilions.

Expo Commissioner General Pierre Dupuy told Holt that ‘without your presence we could not have called it a family party,’ confirming the thoughts of Menzies when considering whether to attend. As a fellow member of the Commonwealth, attendance at a significant family birthday party was essential. The Canadian newspapers reported that there was much disappointment that New Zealand had decided not to attend, and reports gave ‘prominence to the fact that New Zealand is the only member of the “old Commonwealth” not represented.’ On 19 May, three young New Zealanders visiting the Expo noted ‘an obvious gap in Expo’s international line-up,’ and set up a ‘New Zealand Pavilion’ near the Australian Pavilion’s kangaroo pit. The makeshift pavilion, at which the hosts toasted with champagne and performed an ‘authentic Maori War Dance,’ stood for 20 minutes before security guards arrived and dismantled it. That the youths chose the Australian Pavilion to do this at shows the close bond between the two nations shared. This anecdote suggests that

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121 Letter dated 7 March, 1967, Prime Minister’s Department, 67/7021 s446 14/1/1s, NAA.
125 ibid.
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the general public saw significant value in having their nation’s story told and preserved in international history.

Menzies was no longer Prime Minister by the time the Expo was staged, although he toured it in October as an honoured guest, and was one of the 20 million people to visit the Australian Pavilion. There were over 50 million paid admissions to the Expo, not including the dignitaries, performers and staff who were the primary witness to the spectacle, and countless others who experienced the event through the media. Curran noted that the design of the Australian Pavilion ‘showed that the tensions between its past and its future, its bush myth and its urban reality…were not to be easily resolved.’126 The issue the organisers had was in combining displays that were familiar and comfortably ‘Australian’ with an advertisement that the country was cosmopolitan, ‘cultured’ and a leading member of the Commonwealth. By displaying the inescapable landscape and unchangeable heritage within the modern Pavilion, organisers highlighted the foundation upon which all else was built. This was a clever way of displaying the contrast of Australian culture; it played on the tensions and contradictions as an inescapable fact, and one that the nation chose to celebrate. The Australian Pavilion was described by Anderson, Federal Director of Chambers, as ‘a portrayal of Australia’s three million square miles, of its history and achievements.’127 The varied geography was equalled by the variety of human endeavour the country had seen in its relatively short history of European settlement. By displaying the tension in the culture, and by highlighting the progress in all ‘modern’ areas of human enterprise, the organisers showed Australian character and culture to be diverse and contradictory, energetic and accomplished. By presenting what was important to Australians, the Expo invited the world to judge the nation and to understand what sort of country they were dealing with.

The World in 1000 Acres128

Examination of some of the other pavilions at the Expo helps contextualise the ‘small black box.’ The Pavilions of the US, Great Britain, Soviet Union, host nation Canada, the UN and other international organisations put Australia’s efforts within an international framework. While the US and British presentations were superior in terms of budget and international

126 Curran, ‘Australia Should be There,’ p. 83.
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reputation, they were the two major powers that were significant in establishing Australia’s international place. Canada was a fellow Commonwealth country that was similarly young in its nationhood, and comparable to Australia in its development. It is interesting to examine the Soviet Union’s Pavilion in the context of the Cold War and also as a republic with a newly established political ideology. Pavilion design had evolved over the century since the first Expo in 1851. The 1878 Paris Exposition was the first at which dedicated national pavilions were erected. Prior to this, exhibits were held in a shared space. With this development came the opportunity to create not only a display that would describe the national culture, but an enclosure that would encompass the story, present national identity in one neat spectacle and show a whole culture as one experience. A quick tour of Expo 67 will help demonstrate why the Australian Pavilion was so successful.

Several pavilions celebrated the people and regions of Canada. Each province was presented independently, but the central exhibit was the Katimavik, an inverted pyramid, named from an indigenous word for a gathering place. Outside visitors were enthralled by a fire-breathing Uki (a two-headed monster) in the lagoon, or watching an icebreaker rescuing a trapped freighter. A six-storey stylised maple tree could be climbed by patrons, and 500 of its 1500 shimmering leaves contained portraits of Canadians. There were also five theatres, a meditative sanctuary and a super-computer. A map of Canada was marked with 128 geological and mineral samples.

The official guidebook for Expo ’67 described the overall concept of the event. Themed, national and corporate pavilions would present displays exploring ‘[m]an and his ideological, cultural and scientific relationship to his environment.’ The themed pavilions were sponsored by various countries, either financially or with exhibits, and were fundamentally concerned with the activities of humanity rather than nation. National pavilions provided fora for lectures and displays. As well as numerous public spaces, Expo ’67 had more corporate and private pavilions than national exhibits. For example, visitors could experience the Polymer, Brewers, Air Canada, Christian, Jewish and Canadian Kodak Pavilions. Quebec Industries celebrated over 100 different industries in its Pavilion; the Canadian National Transport Corporation highlighted ‘Time and Motion’; the Pavilion of Economic Progress

129 Smits & Jansen, ‘Staging the Nation at Expos and World’s Fairs,’ pp. 173–188.
131 ibid.
told the story of competitive enterprise; the Steel Industries and Pulp and Paper Pavilions celebrated raw materials and innovative products; and the scouting movement gave youths the opportunity to assist celebrations while highlighting the movement’s achievements.

The Place des Nations was an open-air arena for use by any nation or organisation. It was the starting point for all national celebration days, where VIPs were greeted, parades and concerts were held and bands played. The calendar of events for this arena combined government organisations and NGOs, small and large countries. International celebratory days—such as Children’s Day, the World Red Cross Special Day, the Scout Jamboree and International Agriculture Day—were celebrated by the global community, and the opening and closing ceremonies of the Expo were also held in this neutral space. Princess Christina of Sweden declared during her visit that the Expo was ‘a look on the world of today and a projection of tomorrow.’

Grounding themselves with traditional objects and historic culture, most pavilions told the story of their past while announcing their plans for the future and their role in the world. It appeared that showing how a country had progressed as a civilisation lent authority to its visions of the future. This was a common theme through the national, corporate and private pavilions.

The displays in each pavilion were determined by their expected audience. For host nations, the expectation was that the audience would mostly be domestic, so their exhibitions were primarily educational and entertaining. For visiting nations, the focus was on foreign visitors, particularly those of the host country. Political and cultural ideals had to be considered, to ensure that the story was told and received as desired. International organisations celebrated a unity of human purpose and a confirmation of global bonds. The UN Pavilion was a circular construction surrounded by the flags of 122 member nations. A 330-seat theatre showed films, and an international restaurant served food from around the world. Exhibits included the UN Charter and displays of the work of UN agencies around the world. The purpose of the Pavilion was to ‘reflect the desire and determination of ordinary people to see that their governments use the U. N. to help bring order, justice, peace and decency into the affairs of mankind.’ An award-winning documentary was shown in the in-house cinema. The
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Canadian Government allowed the UN to issue special stamps so that visitors to the Pavilion could mail letters and cards, making this international display unique.

As the US was Canada’s nearest geographical neighbour, Canadians were familiar with North American ways of life through the media. To advertise this further at the Expo would have been a waste of effort and opportunity. Most of the audience were Canadian or North American, so the organisers of this Pavilion faced the challenge of displaying something that would inform those unfamiliar with the culture, and entertain those who were, while celebrating that which they were most proud of. Visitors were greeted with a giant eagle, with golden disks fluttering in the breeze, making it appear to shimmer. The displays comprised of various collections, including hats representing regions and occupations, musical instruments belonging to celebrities, presidential campaign memorabilia, dolls and Native American artefacts. Michigan Governor George Romney expressed disappointment at the display, explaining that it was ‘pretty on the outside, but full of trivia on the inside.’ Other media claimed that ‘[t]his iconoclastic approach shocked many visitors, especially Americans, who found it too frivolous and in bad taste.’ However, it seemed to delight the general public, as this was one of the most popular Expo destinations. These contrasts suggest that the sense of national identity the US public felt did not match what the global public saw.

The US displayed its innovation. The space observation deck highlighted the technologies that would be used in the planned lunar landings, the actual Apollo and Gemini capsules, audio recordings of spacecraft launches, a photographic display and scale models of equipment. The art exhibition comprised large, colourful modern art. Abstract expressionism, pop, hard edge and geometric art were on display. The film industry was also celebrated with movie posters, props and short films shown in mini-theatres. These were accompanied by visits from film stars that created a flurry of media attention. The 20 storey US Pavilion was enclosed in a metal-framed biosphere. It was the only enclosure to straddle the monorail, which was the fastest way to see the interior. It highlighted several facets of a forward-

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140 It is beyond the scope of this thesis to comprehensively analyse this topic, although it is touched upon throughout.
141 Jeffrey Stanton, ‘The United States Pavilion,’ 1997, britton.disted.camosun.bc.ca/expo67/unitedstates.html
looking nation, and the exploration of progress through collections is a theme that provides insight into the national story. Visitors saw a bright, diverse, colourful display, full of speed, technology and national pride. While there was a nod to historical roots and tradition, the Pavilion’s message was of a nation moving forward.

Visitors crossed a moat to enter the British Pavilion, reminding visitors of the nation’s island heritage. It told the story of a disparate people who became a great nation, and who ‘helped shape the history of the world.’ Visitors entered the Pavilion through the ‘Cave of History,’ where the story of kings and armies and the conquests of 10 dynasties was projected onto the walls. Moving through to the ‘Genius of Britain’ hall, a large jet engine was surrounded by portraits of Britain’s greatest men, with descriptions of their achievements. Following the theme of ‘The Challenge of Change’, the ‘Britain Today’ display presented the culture of the day, including Eton rowers, an elderly lady watching television, The Beatles and models wearing miniskirts. Circular illuminated signs and short soundtracks poked fun at everything British, and highlighted the contrast between a reputedly traditional and stiff culture with an ability to laugh at themselves. In the ‘Industrial Britain’ display, brief films and scale models of hovercraft, radio telescopes, nuclear power equipment, computers, the Concorde aircraft and The Queen Elizabeth II cruise liner highlighted the achievements of the industrial revolution and modern design. The area called ‘Britain in the World’ comprised 10, 18-foot tall aluminium nude figures, and ‘at their feet were exhibits showing the unifying influence of Britain’s language, governmental systems, laws and traditions on the world.’ Organisers hoped that they could portray something quirky and fun in what had been a difficult time for the nation in the post-war, post-industrial, post-colonial world.

All the significant characteristics of Britain’s reputation were challenged and changed, and this display was an opportunity for reinvention and redefinition of cultural understandings. The organisers took a light-hearted approach, and contrasted a powerful past and a more collaborative future. Transforming the Place des Nations into a scale model of Trafalgar Square guarded by giant bulldogs with a miniskirted Britannia, the producer of Britain’s special day ceremonies wanted to bring amusement to the anachronisms of British history. By having the Navy march in to ‘We all live in a Yellow Submarine,’ the Roman invasion portrayed by centurions on roller skates, and the Norman Conquest recounted by squads

144 Stanton, ‘The United States Pavilion.’
roaring into the square on tractors, to the tune of ‘La Marseillaise,’ the British were showing that while they were proud of their cultural story, they could celebrate it with humour.146

The main feature of the British Pavilion was a large tower with a jagged top, sealed with a three-dimensional Union Jack. This represented the fact that the British role in the world was unfinished,147 and that the UK was still under construction.148 This was a common theme, as many nations with long histories shifted politically to meet the demands of the era.

The year 1967 was the 50th anniversary of the formation of the Soviet Union. Moscow had bid for the honour of hosting the Expo, but had to withdraw due to financial reasons. When planning to attend in Canada, organisers had to present a broad image of the whole Soviet Union while dazzling visitors with technological achievements.149 A communist display in a capitalist host nation during the Cold War would be a challenge. Described in the Expo guidebook as having a scope of exhibits ‘on a scale commensurate with the activity of a dynamic country of 230 million inhabitants,’150 this exhibit was one of Expo’s most visited.151 The Soviet Pavilion was constructed from glass and aluminium. It had a sweeping roof representing the Union’s ‘take off’ into the future. The overarching theme was ‘all in the name of man, for the good of man,’ and comprised three major sections: the sea, earth and sky. As visitors walked in to the earth display, they were confronted with a giant portrait of Vladimir Lenin, who watched over all. This floor contained displays of raw materials, films, photographs, maps, models and machines, and all sought to demonstrate Soviet achievements across diverse fields. Down one level to the sea, and models of a desalinisation plant, the atomic icebreaker Lenin and a tank full of the famous caviar-producing Sturgeon fish were on display. On the mezzanine level, the space programme was celebrated with Yuri Gagarin’s fire-damaged space capsule. Cosmos Hall was a specially designed theatre that took visitors on a simulated ride to outer space.152

148 The Black and Asian migrants who were a significant part of the British population ‘had no presence’ in the exhibition. Considering the British Empire was dependent on such people and cultures, their absence is noteworthy. Darling, ‘Britain Today,’ p. 93.
151 The title of ‘most visited’ is unclear, as both the Soviets and the US Pavilion claimed it.
Interestingly for a communist nation, the Soviets advertised their souvenirs prominently in the official guidebook. A newspaper article reported that boutiques specialising in traditional food and hats were full of visitors making purchases. In an interview, the son of a Soviet staff member recalls that American department store mail order catalogues were such entertainment for young visitors that they were smuggled back home as souvenirs, as they provided a window to a foreign world. This particular exposure to the global community may not have been welcomed by Soviet officials, but it was a purpose of the Expo and increased international understanding. The Soviet Pavilion did not celebrate one specific ‘special day,’ but had many. Each of the republics within the Union staged a celebration within the Pavilion, allowing celebration to be a constant theme within the Soviet Pavilion and providing people with continuous reasons to visit. This Pavilion is particularly interesting as it represented a shared political ideology, and was a celebration of individual national cultural experiences.

While nations were showing their best, they were also being seen. The Expo was an opportunity to examine displays and analyse culture, attitudes and behaviour. It was an opening for businessmen, diplomats and travellers to discover resources and opportunities, and a chance to judge and form opinions of nations in a compact space. The global media coverage was important, and some stories told more about the cultures of the nations than the individual events they described.

On 30 May, a fire destroyed the interior of the Pavilion of the Republic of China (Taiwan). One hundred firefighters kept the blaze contained but the displays were all destroyed. Newspapers reported that other countries quickly offered help in rebuilding the pavilion, and volunteers from the local Chinese community helped the Pavilion staff wash the blackened exterior. Government officials decided to ship the exhibition on display in

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Vancouver to Montreal, and re-opened within a month.\textsuperscript{157} That this pavilion was rebuilt its display so quickly is testament to the nation’s resolve and efficiency.

At one point in the year, a prankster swapped the passport stamping machines in the Algerian and Israeli Pavilions. Although there had been a diplomatic ‘deep-freeze’ since the Arab/Israeli Six-Day War in June, an Israeli Pavilion official telephoned the Algerian Pavilion to suggest they check their machine, resulting in officials exchanging machines. While a minor event, a news report noted that this managed ‘to get an Arab state to negotiate with Israel,’\textsuperscript{158} in an attempt to highlight the importance of person-to-person communication in international diplomacy. However, just one month after opening, Commissioner General F. M. Fahad Al-Sarawi announced that the Government of Kuwait had decided to close its Pavilion, in protest of ‘the West’s hostile stand against the Arabs in the Middle East crisis.’\textsuperscript{159} Expo authorities worried that the international crisis might cause other Arab nations to copy this gesture. The Kuwaiti contingent formally left on 14 June.\textsuperscript{160} Using this very public forum to convey a political message was akin to boycotting an Olympic Games, and ensured worldwide media coverage.

By the time the Expo opened in 1967, most of the 62 participating countries had their own national pavilions, with some hosting combined national and regional pavilions. For example, 15 African countries came together in the Africa Place. Themed and industrial pavilions provided subject interest rather than a cultural focus. The largest manufacturers created pavilions, and coupled with retail outlets, restaurants, parks, international space, playgrounds, and practical amenities, the Expo covered 1000 acres. While separate from the world, the Expo was of the world. These ‘1000 acres’ were an opportunity to condense the best and most interesting aspects of the world as a snapshot of history, progress and hope. Pavilion size, location, and composition would quickly announce to visitors and the media of the place that particular nation occupied in international power relations. It was an opportunity to present an ideal national culture, and was funded by governments with various foreign policy objectives. The international media played the most important part, distributing messages to

\textsuperscript{160} ibid.
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the world and providing stories that would be immortalised in the archives. Visitors, hosts, diplomats and other staff would go on to confirm the media stories when they returned home. For the host nation, as was the case with Melbourne when hosting the Olympic Games, it was a chance to carve a space in international history.

A sample of newspaper articles reveals national pride and camaraderie. Journalists commented that this Expo was the ‘greatest world’s fair in history’ and that it gave all Canadians something to boast about, with attendance almost double what the planners had predicted. During preparations, the local media proclaimed that the major benefits of the Expo would be increased tourism and better foreign understanding of Canada, as international media had ‘spread knowledge of Canada as never before.’ Canadians also had a chance to experience other nations in a ‘collection of foreign achievement one could otherwise never hope to see in a lifetime of travel.’ The policy objectives of hosting the event were to increase awareness and interest in Canadian culture in order to improve Canada’s international image and encourage trade and tourism, while consolidating local culture to the domestic audience.

For Canada in 1967, the Expo was a chance to stand out. A journalist working for the Toronto Star noted that all other great fairs had been in cities that already had an established international reputation. Montreal’s fair would change the world’ view of a quaint, out-of-the-way city (and by extension, country) to a ‘city with an exciting present and a limitless future.’ For the first time, Canadians saw themselves on US television and were praised in international newspapers. For one journalist ‘this mark[ed] the point where the nation’s maturity [was] recognised by her own people and by the rest of the world.’ Expo 67 also

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161 A sample of newspaper articles can be found at [www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/expo/05330205_e.html](http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/expo/05330205_e.html) Retrieved 25 February, 2014
162 ibid.
163 Australian media also promoted that the Canadian Pavilion, describing it as ‘superb’ and noting that it was ‘designed to achieve a scale and quality suitable to Canada’s role as host country’ in an article highlighting the grandiose design, futuristic technology and revolutionary theatre. ‘Canadian Expo 67 Pavilion Superb,’ The Canberra Times, Monday 2 Jan, 1967, p. 8, [http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article106955147](http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article106955147) Retrieved 22 February, 2014
164 Robert Fulford, This was Expo, p. 30.
165 ibid, pp. 26–27.
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attracted a host of international celebrities, royals, and political leaders.\textsuperscript{167} The attendance of celebrities alone brought Montreal to the international media’s attention.

**Summary**

The Expo was significant on a local, national and international scale. It affected everything from local businesses and transport infrastructure to national reputations. It was also expensive and disruptive. Expo 67 was an excuse for Montreal to build a much-needed subway system and a public housing project.\textsuperscript{168} With the constructed islands, amusement parks and pavilions still in use, Montreal continues to enjoy the infrastructure and innovation developed for the exhibition. Expo 67 is still used as a reference point in news articles on various topics, and is always discussed with pride.\textsuperscript{169}

While the effects of cultural diplomacy are notoriously difficult to measure, it can be argued that the process of its creation and execution bring the real value in a case such as Expo 67. It was a chance to determine the story told to both domestic and international audiences. By being encouraged to select particular cultural aspects to advertise to others, the organisers chose to highlight the very best of their culture to their domestic audience. Another benefit of participation included becoming part of the story of international history. Being involved in significant international events signifies that nations also contribute to the international arena on a broader scale. International expos truly are ‘the world in 1000 acres’, a targeted forum for presenting a foreign policy objective in the guise of culture. The calm of the Australian Pavilion is still remembered by attendees, and colours their perception of the Australian way of life. Each pavilion highlighted the benefits of trade and tourism. The Australian Pavilion’s prioritisation of wool, manufacturing, the landscape of bushland and the Great Barrier Reef and an atmosphere of calm were cultural experiences designed to encourage the foreign policy objectives of increasing trade and tourism.

All cultural diplomacy programmes need some way of promoting their message. Newspapers provided stories and images but they took time to prepare, print and deliver. Radio was a far

\textsuperscript{167} Including Grace Kelly and Prince Rainier of Monaco, Queen Elizabeth II, Princess Margaret and Lord Snowdon of England, Haile Selassie the Emperor of Ethiopia, Prince Albert and Princess Paola of Belgium, Robert and Jackie Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson, Bing Crosby, Jack Lemmon and Marlene Dietrich.


\textsuperscript{169} Montreal Gazette, various news stories found on \url{www.montrealgazette.com/search/search.html?q=expo+67} Retrieved 26 February, 2014
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quicker method of information dissemination. The Radio Australia programme used local languages to tailor messages to the audience, and that announced Australian participation in regional and international events like the Expo, advertised the great works of the Colombo Plan and broadcasted the results of the Olympic Games and other sports almost instantaneously. Radio Australia was a forum through which the Australian Government deliberately promoted Australian culture in support of foreign policies, and as this function was the raison d'être for the organisation, it provides a fitting final case study to this work on cultural diplomacy in the Menzies Era.
Broadcasting Australia
Broadcasting Australia

Radio has a considerably shorter history than sports, expositions, international aid or student exchange, so is present in fewer cultural histories—there was no date for its invention, however by the early 1900s it was in regular use. As an Australian Government initiative, Radio Australia (created in 1939 and still broadcasting today) has a presence in the archives, although little has been written about it in the domestic press and its audience was primarily international. The effects of Radio Australia are difficult to ascertain, but the intention is clear and the methods were recorded. The acceptance of the programme by international audiences has been gauged by the letters received by the organisation and its continued popularity in polls. A history of radio and its development in Australia, and the conjunction of propaganda and radio, are addressed in this chapter, followed by an investigation into the archival material, to tell the story of Radio Australia’s role in the Menzies Era. The foreign policy objective was clearly stated in regards to Radio Australia, and particular interest lies in how the broadcaster used Australian culture to soften the foreign policy message and create a tool of diplomacy.

The Progress of Radio

Radio allows an extension of the powerful oratory that has been used for centuries to inform and influence the masses. John Potts tells us that ‘in all societies the control of sound is connected to power.’ Public spaces have been formed into auditoriums to spread a leader’s words to a large audience. Towns and communities across the world use religious centres, town squares, assembly halls and fora as listening spaces. Potts states that for Plato, the ‘ideal size of a city was such that all citizens could hear a speaker,’ and regulation of the city was assured in an ‘aural zone of restricted size.’ Contemporary societies have developed the capacity to record and reproduce sound, and this makes control and power more complex. As King George’s 1936 New Year Speech was broadcast to Australia, ‘it was celebrated by the broadcasting industry as demonstrating radio’s role as the unifying voice of the Empire.’ The ‘ideal size of a city’ stretches across the globe.

The introduction of radio widened the aural reach of speakers, and conversely shrunk the aural experience. From listening in a public forum in the company of a community, people can now listen to speakers individually and privately, with nobody knowing what they are

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2 ibid.
3 ibid, p. 104
listening to. As with all technology when it is first introduced, radio has been ‘considered in terms of cause and effect’.\(^4\) Does the technology change a culture? Or do changes in society lead to demand for the technology? Technology is undoubtedly an agent of social change, highlighted by the common practice of regarding historical periods in terms of the dominant technology of the time. Physical distance is no longer an impediment to communication, and people can simultaneously hear domestic and international news. From the initial experiments with sound waves, radio became one of the most influential media of the 20th century.

Radio was not ‘invented’ per se, as it developed from the work of various thinkers.\(^5\) In 1895, Guglielmo Marconi sent a radio signal across the garden of his father’s home; two years later, he had increased the distance to two miles, and by 1907 ‘the Atlantic was alive with Radio telegrams between England and Canada.’\(^6\) Once developed, the technology proved incredibly popular, with professionals and amateur enthusiasts developing transceivers and receivers. Battles for the control of transceivers and the establishment of defined broadcasting stations saw the establishment of 131 such stations across Australia by the end of the 1930s, with approximately 310,000 receivers. An early radio enthusiast, Billy Hughes, commented that ‘wireless is the Spirit of Civilisation made manifest.’\(^7\) As a carrier of knowledge, Hughes explained that it would ‘help all men to know one another, to understand each other’s point of view.’\(^8\) He believed that broadcasting would be a powerful tool for reaching out to distant parts of Australia, and could exert more influence than any other agency. From very early on, the government saw radio’s potential and acted upon it. Hughes did not work for a programme of cultural diplomacy, but he did see the potential of this medium to affect opinions and create relationships. Australian radio went on to serve two important aspects of cultural diplomacy: by broadcasting the successes of other Australian diplomacy projects, it reinforced the policies Australia supported; and international programming promoted foreign policy aims by projecting cultural explanations.\(^9\)

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\(^6\) ibid, p. 6.


\(^8\) ibid.

\(^9\) This is highlighted in the scripts of the language lessons provided by Radio Australia, discussed further in this chapter.
In Australia, the government found that it needed to regulate the new flow of communications, tasking the Postmaster General with the responsibility in 1923\textsuperscript{10} and then establishing the ABC in 1932\textsuperscript{11}. The public quickly saw the potential of this medium, and quiz and variety shows, plays, comedians, expert speakers and news bulletins were broadcast, along with live and recorded music. Sports reporting provided immediate results unavailable to newspapers, and horse racing was broadcast live from the late 1920s. Educational programmes, initiated in 1924 by the Education Department, proved very popular in remote areas, and the government committed resources to these.\textsuperscript{12} The best of Australian culture was consolidated and broadcast.

In September 1939, Menzies made the most significant announcement in Australian radio history, and his words shook the nation: ‘It is my melancholy duty to inform you officially in that consequence of the persistence by Germany and her invasion of Poland, Great Britain has declared war upon her, and that, as a result, Australia is also at war.’\textsuperscript{13} This announcement immediately saw a shift in radio broadcasting, and brought to prominence radio’s value as an instrument of propaganda. The previously popular Italian tenors and Wagnerian Operas were banned from the airwaves in a show of patriotism. Commentary was careful to avoid any military details, in case broadcasts designed for domestic audiences were picked up by international transceivers. As Japan entered the war in 1941, more caution was exercised, and R. R. Walker noted that no mention of the state of the weather could be made on air,\textsuperscript{14} out of fear of giving the enemy information about local flying or shipping conditions.

The Department of Information, created in 1939, began producing programmes for domestic propaganda: ‘Anti-Complacency,’ ‘Vegetable growing,’ ‘Absenteeism’ and ‘Anti-gossip’ were a few examples. These were complemented by advertisements for war bonds and armed forces recruitment campaigns. ‘Australia Calling’ was a psychological warfare project, broadcasting to international audiences in Japanese, Thai, Indonesian and Mandarin. When Curtin announced the project, he said its purpose was simple: as much of the propaganda on

\textsuperscript{10} Jones, \textit{Something in the Air}, p. 15.
\textsuperscript{11} Walker, \textit{The Magic Spark}, p. 32.
\textsuperscript{12} Jones, \textit{Something in the Air}, p. 23.
\textsuperscript{13} Walker, \textit{The Magic Spark}, p. 40.
\textsuperscript{14} ibid, p. 42.
Australia and Britain was incorrect, it was time for them to speak for themselves.15 Both the domestic and international scripts supported government objectives.

The Australian Government funded Radio Australia, which was managed by the ABC, with advice from the DEA, throughout the Menzies Era. This created tension between the organisations, as the Department wanted more focus on foreign policy objectives, while the Commission wanted to be seen as independent professional journalists, focusing on the ‘truth’ and integrity of reporting. Both sides had to compromise and the intentions were always to share ideas and information, to form long-term people-to-people relationships, to listen to audience needs and adjust the programme in a collaborative project and to promote Australian culture in the service of government policy. The story of Radio Australia is the story of an exchange of cultural experiences for the benefit of a foreign policy programme, in what would now be known as a cultural diplomacy programme. The struggle for Radio Australia is described by Errol Hodge in *Radio Wars*, which explores the aims and uses of the station.16 International broadcasts are most effective when local broadcasts are inadequate, especially in developing countries, where large audiences tune in to international broadcasts. Authoritarian governments and national crises mean that people look to international broadcasts for reliable news.17 Radio Australia’s news broadcasts combined those from their own correspondents and from other Western news agencies.

Created in 1939, Radio Australia was from its conception a product of war and propaganda. The service was originally named ‘Australia Calling’ and was ‘immediately thrust into bureaucratic politics without a tradition to sustain autonomy.’18 By 1949, the executives were operating within the politics of the Cold War. Hodge noted that control of the service in Australia was a ‘perpetual struggle between the ABC and the DEA.’19 This is supported by archival evidence, with the Department’s view that Radio Australia ‘should be used sensitively in a way that supported Australian foreign policy.’20 ABC executives were loath to be controlled by a political entity. Guided by the BBC21, the ABC was determined to set its

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15 Jones, *Something in the Air*, p. 49.
17 ibid, p. 1.
18 ibid, p. 8.
19 ibid, p. 34.
21 The history and influence of the BBC is discussed by Simon Potter, *Broadcasting Empire: The BBC and the British World, 1922-1970*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2012- this volume highlights the significance of
own agenda. The international broadcasting service of the BBC was ‘an exercise in cultural imperialism in the literal sense of the words,’ with broadcasts designed to strengthen the cultural, political and economic bonds between Britain and its dominions, with close collaboration between the BBC and the Foreign Office. The Voice of America (VOA) radio programmes were known to be government-sponsored propaganda, with its messages directly dictated by the State Department. The BBC’s idea of ‘collaboration,’ as opposed to government sponsorship, suggested reliability of information but not government-manufactured information, and the ABC benefitted from this reputation.

Percy Spender was keen for Radio Australia to ‘make a useful contribution to the government’s policy,’ especially regarding the encouragement of cooperation in South East Asia. He argued that this special overseas service had the ability to transmit Australia’s viewpoint and complement the political and economic policies designed to stabilise the area. Spender supported foreign-language transmissions, with news and commentaries designed for the region. He encouraged its expansion and collaboration with the BBC and the VOA, especially as the ANZUS Treaty was established and while the war in Korea escalated. Both the DEA and the Defence Department saw Radio Australia as an important tool in Australia’s security, and expected that it would provide ‘a link in the propaganda chain of the democracies.’ Casey, Tange and Hasluck were all advocates of the American model of international broadcasting, in which there was little effort to conceal the connection to foreign policy. Hasluck stated in an interview that the service ‘was created and funds [were] provided to serve the ends of national policy. The programmes and especially the news broadcasts to Asia should be devised accordingly.’ The ABC was less keen to be a government voice. James Darling, Chairman of the ABC, argued that the VOA ‘lacked acceptability’ in Asia because of its obvious political association, and he strongly resisted the Department’s ‘attempts to bring ABC correspondents under the control of various embassies.’ While he believed that Radio Australia should be an independent entity, consultation with the

international broadcasting, the BBC’s influence on the structure of the ABC, and notes the use of the broadcaster as a ‘subcontractor for cultural diplomacy,’ p. 7.

22 Arthur Tange, 1988, in Hodge, Radio Wars, p. 36

23 ibid, p. 37.

24 ibid, pp. 45, 51.

25 Interview with Paul Hasluck, 1988, in ibid, p. 36.

26 ibid, p. 39.
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Department provided information that may have prevented unsuitable or controversial broadcasts. Darling saw Radio Australia as the ‘brightest jewel in the ABC crown.’

From the ABC’s perspective, trust was the prime motivator for these broadcasts. Walter Hamilton, long-time MP in Victoria and South Australia, claimed that Radio Australia was listened to because it was trusted, particularly throughout Asia. At a seminar in Adelaide in 1972, Hamilton said: ‘we simply could not agree to Radio Australia becoming a propaganda medium,’ and that he felt that the Department ‘could not understand that once we started to tamper with the news, people would stop trusting Radio Australia and it would become utterly useless.’ The credibility important to professional communicators, and the propaganda motives of the Department, would see Radio Australia walk a permanent tightrope. Noel Goss, the Department’s Liaison Officer, walked this tightrope. The Department needed him to put forward a message of anti-communism, and his job was to encourage Radio Australia executives to do so. He proposed that communism be seen ‘as a new kind of imperialism,’ and that countries who had recently won their independence should be wary of the new threat. The message he delivered was not that communism is bad, but that democracy is better, using Australian successes under a democratic government as an example.

Another purpose of Radio Australia was to establish contacts and relationships, and to further develop and install technology, all of which could be deployed in the event of hostilities; this was a direct instrument of Australia’s military security. By creating a reputation as a source of information separate from government, Radio Australia had the opportunity to establish its reputation as the ‘Voice of Australia,’ not a particular section of society or aligned with any specific party. This further increased its validity as a source for reliable information and friendliness, and indirectly increased Australian government standing against others attempting to gain control or power over the audience.

Radio Australia publicised the activities of the Colombo Plan students. As part of this Plan, they also distributed radio transmitters to teachers and village leaders in some participating

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27 ibid, p. 40. Darling was Chairman of the ABC from 1961 to 1967.
28 ibid, p. 40.
30 ibid, p. 51.
31 ibid, p. 53.
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countries. Casey noted that he made recordings on Colombo Plan activities to be broadcast on Radio Australia, and in 1955, Radio Australia considered using Colombo Plan students in Australia as staff, as their knowledge of audience culture would be invaluable. This shows two ways in which Radio Australia was used as a tool of what we would now call cultural diplomacy. By providing technology to selected countries under the Colombo Plan, the Australian Government ensured that communities heard messages they otherwise would not. As the provider of the technology was Australia, it is likely that the radios were tuned to Radio Australia. Listeners would hear of the adventures and accomplishments of local students studying in Australia, thus promoting both the Plan and the Australian way of life.

![Figure 7.1 Asian students take part in a Radio Australia broadcast, 1957](image)

Radio Australia also entertained its listeners- recalling the idea that cultural diplomacy efforts should be enjoyable. Recordings of Australian musical artists were sometimes complemented by other Western artists, as recorded music discs were limited at that time. Plays and serial shows were broadcast for both the domestic and international audience, and English language lessons were a popular introduction in 1959. Casey agreed that the entertainment component of Radio Australia was of high quality, but he regarded the entertainment merely as a ‘carrier’ for the political content. Recent studies show that music is invaluable to the retention of aural messages. Had Casey understood the importance of

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32 ibid, pp. 59, 67.
34 Notes of meeting between the DEA and the ABC, Friday 5 August, 1955, Series A1838, 570/1/2 Part 3, NAA.
35 NAA, A1501, A610/2, 8907386.
36 See p. 38 of this work
entertainment in supporting information, he may have realised that this ‘carrier’ should be a priority. This limitation was acknowledged in planning the modern cultural diplomacy programme.  

As it combined entertainment and support for foreign policy efforts, Radio Australia included sports reporting. This was especially popular for international matches, where results could be relayed almost instantaneously while promoting Australia as a ‘sporting’ nation in all senses of the word. Radio Australia also became an important agent for broadcasting news about the Melbourne Olympic Games. This was of particular benefit to South East Asian countries, who could not afford to send their own commentary teams to the Games. As the first Games in the Southern Hemisphere, this was the first at which there was significant Asian participation, and Radio Australia listeners in South East Asia were keen for news.

The Department sent guidelines of the official government position on news items and international relations to Radio Australia staff. When Hasluck suggested in 1964 that Radio Australia move to Canberra, separating it from the ABC and placing it under Cabinet control, his reasoning was that service should be seen as an instrument of national policy. Patrick Shaw at the DEA felt that there would be considerable disadvantages if the entity became an obvious instrument of government. This suggestion made no real progress, but it highlights the tussle between the authorities for control of the valuable tool. Radio is an instrument of propaganda, and when funded by governments it would be expected to project the government’s messages. By using an external party to manage this, some distance was created. A little criticism of government decisions, a focus on social issues and a sharing of cultural experiences kept this service from being solely a propaganda tool.

Radio Australia was born from the need for a government-controlled vehicle for propaganda. While the ABC management pushed their professional journalism, storytelling and priority of presenting unbiased programmes, it was Radio Australia’s purpose as an instrument of propaganda, meant to influence the audience about the government’s way of thinking, which kept the programme on air. Understanding the role of radio in propaganda, and judiciously steering content to be more acceptable to the audience, is what made Radio Australia a successful programme.

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38 Discussed in the Epilogue.
39 ibid, p. 81.
40 The ABC is an agency of the Government, but it is not a Department.
Radio, Propaganda and Cultural Diplomacy

Shortwave radio could spread news, and reactions to it, across the world quicker than any other medium. Radio is able to convey the sound of the human voice with inflections and moods, so is considerably more effective at raising emotions than print media. The Nazis in pre-war Germany were the first to see, and then develop, radio as a means of international propaganda, and used it as an extension of diplomacy. Joseph Goebbels even claimed that radio propaganda was ‘virtually a substitute for diplomacy.’ There was no two-way communication and no negotiation: the government informed the public of policies on a mass scale, using impassioned speeches to excite them. And whenever there is propaganda, there is a struggle for power.

Propaganda is defined ‘as any organized or concerted group effort or movement to spread a particular doctrine or...principle.’ In German hands, the word propaganda became associated with deceit and corruption, whereas American efforts were portrayed as ‘educational and informative.’ There was no medium of appeal that the US Committee of Public Information did not use to encourage public support for entry into World War One, commandeering ‘print, radio, motion pictures, telegraph, cable messages and worldwide circulation of Presidential addresses, posters, signboards, and a volunteer corps of speakers who worked across thousands of communities giving short speeches.’ Propaganda is intentional, advantageous to the sender, and usually one-way and informational. It is not two-way, interactive communication, hence its relationship with radio. Walter Lippman noted that without some censorship, propaganda is impossible, as someone needs to decide what the propaganda message will be and what it will not be. Effective propaganda involves some barrier between the public and the event. Propaganda is more easily injected into the news from the inside than the outside, and between 1945 and 1970, the most valued Central Bureau of Investigation (CIA) agents belonged to big media outlets, passing as journalists, who shaped information to suit the government’s purposes. The challenge for most news media is that it has five audiences—the reporters, general public, target nation, enemy and

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43 ibid.
44 ibid, p. 61.
45 ibid, p. 37.
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troops/emissaries/expats.46 Radio Australia did involve the injection of some propaganda elements from government agencies, but it also prioritised two-way communication by incorporating audience feedback.

World War Two was a testing-ground for psychological warfare, and many nations used radio to promote their political programmes. This type of propaganda can be osmotic, with its influence ‘percolating into the mind persistently but painlessly,’ or it can be an ‘explosive weapon’ in a struggle for freedom or an aggressive diplomacy.47 The Nazis had determined to convince the masses of their cause as quickly as possible, in order to achieve specific political ends in a short time. At the opposite end of the scale, the BBC continued with a long-term programme of gaining trust and loyalty, and continued this throughout that war. The VOA and Soviet broadcasters operated in a middle ground, pushing propaganda messages less forcefully than the Germans but more obviously than the British. Radio Australia followed the lead of the BBC in these early years, focusing on gaining loyalty and a reputation for trustworthiness and using the knowledge of the audience to regulate messages.

An understanding of the audience is essential for any international communications to be effective. Case studies have shown that the closer a programme is linked to a government or its agenda, the less legitimacy it has among its target audience.48 Gienow-Hecht and Mark Donfried explain that in general, ‘citizens of any country tend to dislike messages distributed by foreign governments,’ often associating them with propaganda.49 This is important to cultural diplomacy, as programmes are removed from specific policy objectives and become more aligned with national and individual relationships. It is not possible to win the hearts and minds of others without trust, and trust is based on good relationships and positive influences. The best way to influence an audience is through entertainment, as the principles of edutainment explain.50 A branch of cultural diplomacy that looks at musical diplomacy highlights the confluence of entertainment and information, which is through radio. Radio Australia promoted Australian artists in its music programming, and supplemented them with American and British performances. These decisions were based on availability and letters of

47 Hale, Radio Power, p. 163.
49 ibid.
50 See Chapter 7: Exhibiting Australia, and the work of Michela Addis.
request. Music is easy to listen to and remember, and the combination of music’s broad appeal and its seeming political neutrality make it a special form of propaganda.51

The jazz movement in America was a particularly powerful tool of cultural diplomacy. Lisa E. Davenport explores how the ‘cultural expression of one of the nation’s most oppressed minorities came to symbolize the cultural superiority of American democracy.’52 She writes that the US addressed the issue of race in a global context, and through this aligned its domestic cultural policies with the anti-communist agenda of the Cold War. America could not condemn other regimes while its own society allowed for segregation. This would be seen as hypocritical in any cultural diplomacy programmes that rely on the image of the protagonist. Ignoring this paradox would undermine its effectiveness in counteracting Soviet initiatives, and would seriously hamper US efforts to promote cultural understanding between nations if it could not do this at home. In order to belong to—and in some respects to lead—an international community, some universal rules must be adhered to, such as human rights and equality.

The effect of music and the relationships between musicians and their audience is powerful. Gienow-Hecht explores this in her study of music diplomacy, with a focus on German-American relations in the 19th century. She argues that the emotions contained in non-verbal communication provide a more intense and enduring relationship than political encounters, creating bonds that have ‘surviv[ed] broken treaties, mutual alienation, and even several wars.’53 Cultural anthropologists argue that emotions are not just part of the psychological system but attain meaning through context: the music is given power because it is associated with the listener’s other physical experiences, such as location and company. This highlights the power that the emotion caused by music can have, and the ways that it can effect more formal political decisions. Gienow-Hecht discusses the effects of ‘emotional history,’ and how this can influence political decision-makers and cultural relations between countries. By the 20th century, radio broadcasts allowed a broader reach for musical exchange. A mix of verbal and non-verbal communication could produce a similar emotional attachment, and broadcast management teams manipulated this in programmes that supported foreign policy aims.

52 Lisa E. Davenport, Jazz Diplomacy, University Press of Mississippi, Jackson, MS, 2009.
While Radio Australia did not focus particularly on its musical selection, this does not affect its effect as a cultural diplomacy style programme. Radio Australia writers did include songs in their language programmes, showing that there were the beginnings of an understanding of the importance of sharing music in friendly relationships. Casey believed that the musical component was simply a carrier for political comment, so it is not surprising that there was little direct focus. Music was shared, and the above image illustrates the gift of Filipino music to Radio Australia. Without an archival record of music, we cannot know how influential particular selections might have been to audiences. A closer examination of musical selections would help understandings of the effects of music and entertainment on the reception of the more formal broadcasting messages. These modern music theories suggest that the insistence of ABC management to control programming and produce an entertaining broadcast may have been more successful than a propaganda-focused government offering.

54 NAA, A1501, A1411/4, 11433520.
55 Hodge, Radio Wars, p. 71.
As the primary intention of international radio is to inform rather than to entertain, music is a small part of broadcasting schedules. However, it helps to connect information to emotions, making it significantly more powerful. Radio Australia used music and entertainment as part of the programme of winning the hearts and minds of its audiences. The directives and communications in the archives clearly show that this was a propaganda machine, but that the methods used were meant to promote international friendships, educate and entertain audiences and promote the messages of the government. The newspaper articles and letters received by the station attest to its success.

**Australia Calling**

Radio Australia had an estimated two million listeners in 1947, although ‘from a policy point of view’ the composition of the audience was more important than the quantity. In Western countries, all types of people listened to the radio, from blue-collar workers to political leaders. However, this was not the case in Asia. Government officials, teachers and merchants were most likely to have a transceiver, as well as be most likely to have some knowledge of English. Radio Australia broadcasts were often translated into local languages and re-quoted by newspapers and radio stations. These other media outlets soon relied on Radio Australia as the official source of news on Australia.

In 1948, Robin Wood at the Commonwealth Department of Information presented a report on Radio Australia, with the purpose of examining the impact that radio was making on the lives of people throughout the world. He noted that broadcasting had ended isolation, and that people who had felt ‘separate and separated, now have a sense of belonging.’ Broadcasting, which was seen as a vital instrument for realising democracy, was powerful. Its success as a tool of psychological warfare demonstrated the value of retaining a ‘properly organised radio division within the government’s control.’ In peacetime it was considered vital to use the medium to familiarise Australia’s nearest neighbours of ‘our way of living, our commercial policies, our developmental undertakings, and our industrial and agricultural potentials, as

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56 This was the name of Radio Australia’s international broadcasts.
57 H Dow, Radio Australia’s Audience,’ Series A1838, 555/3/4, NAA.
58 Robin Wood, to G. S. Bridgeland, 26 October 1948, ‘Radio Australia and Programmes Report,’ Series A1838, 570/1/2 Part 1A, NAA.
59 ibid.
60 ibid.
well as Australia’s aim to strengthen and help preserve world peace.’ Wood argued that while news and reviews were important, it was with the featured entertainment programmes that ‘we must endeavour to maintain the listener’s lively interest.’ The ABC was able to obtain without cost some of the entertaining serials and music from commercial stations. As Wood stated: ‘all of these units…are an excellent medium for painting a picture of our national life.’ The Amateur Hour was immensely popular with listeners. A weekly devotional service and sports reporting saw Radio Australia provide a well-rounded picture of Australian culture. Wood also noted that listeners included Australian Defence Force personnel serving overseas, who welcomed broadcasts from home.

As early as 1948, Radio Australia was one of the most popular broadcasters in the Asia Pacific region. Wood’s account confirmed that this forum of communication, so important for war propaganda, had an equally important purpose in establishing a national picture of Australia and promoting its reputation of goodwill and friendship, in order to gain the sympathy and understanding of other nations. A similar letter from inside the Department of Information agreed that Radio Australia should ‘concentrate on building up a receptive listening audience until such time as we have a greater need,’ and perhaps a need to revert to political propaganda. While other countries still pushed overtly propagandistic programmes, and the best option for Australia was to differentiate its offerings, creating programmes that were more informative and entertaining, and less obviously political.

In this period, Moscow also broadcast a special Far Eastern programme, with at least 15 hours relayed daily over 20 stations. By far the greatest attention was given to the Japanese sessions, followed by Chinese and Korean. While the Russians invested in Japanese transmissions, Radio Australia transcriptions occupied up to one-quarter of the Japanese Radiopress bulletins to its own news agencies. The Japanese audience heard news and

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61 Wood to Bridgeland, 26 October 1948, ‘Radio Australia and Programmes Report,’
62 ibid.
63 ibid.
64 Memorandum from the Secretary to the Director General, Department of Information, Canberra, 5 October, 1948, Series A1838, 555/3/4, NAA.
65 ‘Shortwave Broadcasting to South and East Asia,’ 21 September 1949, Series A1838, 555/3/4, NAA.
66 Dow, ‘Radio Australia’s Audience,’ Series A1838, 555/3/4, NAA. Radiopress is the news distribution tool of Japanese newspapers.
views from the whole world. Radio Australia had two distinct advantages: it was the strongest signal in the region due to powerful transmitters, and it had a good reputation gained during the war as an ‘impartial and reliable provider of news.’\(^{67}\) In contrast to the big powers of the US and Russia, Australia was not seen to have any ‘particular axe to grind.’\(^{68}\)

The Department of Information kept Radio Australia informed about international events and relevant government policies. For example, a note from October 1949 reads: ‘We have received from the Office of our High Commissioner in New Delhi a suggestion that Radio Australia should treat news of the fighting in Burma with very great caution.’\(^{69}\) The Commissioner advised that the fighting was on a smaller scale than was being broadcast, and wanted to ensure that the accuracy of Radio Australia was maintained. This liaison between the local posts of the DEA and Radio Australia was vital. Similarly, a letter from the Head of the Australian Mission in Japan, Patrick Shaw, discussed the concerns that ‘ill-will towards our country engendered by enemy propaganda during the war should be perpetuated by our own news and publicity concerning administrative details.’\(^{70}\) By this he was referring to immigration policy, and that references to this policy had the effect of drawing attention to the exclusion of Asians from Australia. Shaw stated that the term White Australia ‘exacerbate[d] the temper of Asians already ill disposed’\(^{71}\) towards this policy. In response, Radio Australia checked the transcripts of their international broadcasts and found very few references to this term. Further investigation raised the point that some of the ABC’s domestic broadcasts could be picked up by Asian transmitters, highlighting the need to be mindful of the wording of all broadcasts.\(^{72}\) In a draft letter to the Minister of Defence, P. A. McBride, Spender wrote that neither Radio Australia nor the Listening Post\(^{73}\) was in a position to meet any wartime needs. He felt that this could only be achieved ‘by the operation in peacetime of at least a skeleton of the larger organisation required in the event of war.’\(^{74}\)

The expansion of both entities was hoped for; one to broadcast Australian ideas and the other

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\(^{67}\) ‘Shortwave Broadcasting to South and East Asia.’

\(^{68}\) ibid.

\(^{69}\) Memorandum from the Secretary to the Director of Radio Australia, 6 October, 1949, Series A1838, 570/1/2 Part 2A, NAA.

\(^{70}\) Letter from the Secretary, DEA, to the Chairman, ABC, 2 May, 1949, Series A1838, 570/1/2 Part 2A, NAA.

\(^{71}\) ibid.

\(^{72}\) Uncredited author, ‘Policy Guideline for Radio Australia,’ undated. (1955), Series A1838, 570/1/2 Part 3, NAA. It was noted that ‘to maintain silence on our policies is probably regarded in Asia as tacit admission that we find them indefensible,’ and so they ‘should not be altogether avoided,’ but also not given any prominence.

\(^{73}\) The Listening Post monitored shortwave broadcasts from all over the world, and in 1950 was part of the DEA. Hodge, p. 42.

\(^{74}\) Spender, Draft Letter to the Hon. P. A. McBride, Minister of Defence, September 1950, Series A1838, 570/1/2 Part 5A, NAA.
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to check reactions. In war time, Spender noted, ‘such a check on the results of propaganda and psychological warfare would be essential,’\textsuperscript{75} emphasising the need for listening as well as projecting. As Minister for External Affairs, Spender saw the importance of ensuring that the message was understood as it was intended, and that this was best gauged by seeking local opinion.\textsuperscript{76}

A memo to all Australian posts in Asia dispatched in April 1954 suggested that overseas posts could be of great assistance to Radio Australia if they would send information on special topics or events.\textsuperscript{77} The ABC and Radio Australia would also ‘find helpful any reports which posts might be able to provide with regard to the general atmosphere of the country in which they are stationed, what the people of the country are feeling and what they are talking about.’\textsuperscript{78} This background information on the general atmosphere would be useful to scriptwriters, and it did not need to be ‘of a formal nature and could be supplemented from time to time as it was thought appropriate.’\textsuperscript{79} The memo suggests the local activity of the Colombo Plan, any major achievements of the new democracies in the region and any events that may make clear the Australian point of view. Liaison is a valuable aspect of all collaborative projects, and that between the ABC and the Department was vital to Radio Australia’s success.

\textsuperscript{75} Spender, Draft Letter to the Hon. P. A. McBride, Minister of Defence, September 1950, Series A1838, 570/1/2 Part 5A, NAA.

\textsuperscript{76} Experience from World War Two had taught Spender, and many other Cabinet members, that means of defence—whether military hardware or efficient communications systems—should be in place, so that they could be expanded quickly if necessary. As there was always the potential for the Cold War to erupt into violence, the need for this broadcast service was a military defence strategy, and the information gathered may have been needed for military purposes.

\textsuperscript{77} Memorandum to All Asian Posts, DEA, 23 April, 1954, Series A1838, 570/1/2 Part 2, NAA.

\textsuperscript{78} ibid.

\textsuperscript{79} ibid.
The collaboration between the DEA and the ABC regarding Radio Australia was confirmed by the appointment of a dedicated liaison officer in 1950. The Minister of External Affairs would give his liaison officer an indication of policy lines, and they would then be responsible for drawing ‘the attention of the editorial staff to matters which appear to conflict with foreign policy.’ The idea was to ensure that Australia’s image as a ‘good neighbour’ was maintained, and that there would be no confusing or contradictory messages. All formal decisions and responsibility would rest with the editor. Noel Goss was appointed to this post, and his communications discussed the reluctance of Radio Australia staff to accept Department interference. Goss understood that the job of the liaison officer was to ensure that the material broadcast would not have any adverse effects on Australia, or cause undesired reactions from listeners. This collaboration was not obvious or publicised. Radio Australia did work with the editors of Hemisphere magazine though, to share knowledge and stories. This association would be expected, as both were targeted at an Asia Pacific audience, and both encouraged audience participation in producing content.

The Department provided suggestions as to how to treat news items and commentaries on particular international events that may have been contentious. In 1954, regarding general and specific concerns about the Middle East, the ‘over-riding objective [was to] be a reduction in
tension’ with the broad hope that an outbreak in hostilities be avoided.\textsuperscript{85} Any judgement over right or wrong was to be sidestepped. Wording should be used that defence strategies were being arranged by the countries involved, and not that they were being ‘imposed’ on them by external powers (this would remove suggestions of interference by colonial oppressors and encourage ideas of independence in those nations). Regarding Egypt, although the Australian Government was not supportive of the actions of the military regime, it acknowledged a country’s right to determine its own political path, so advised that the Egyptian regime be viewed with ‘relative favour.’\textsuperscript{86} In general, Radio Australia was to broadcast favourably on the important ‘constitutional advances’ made by non-self-governing territories, to encourage them. The Australian Government wished to make clear its support of ‘Asian claims to independence and self-government,’ and wished to aid those countries in their struggle for freedom.\textsuperscript{87} This advice from the Department was not always adhered to, and there were some slips. Department of External Affairs (DEA) Officer Woolcott wrote to Radio Australia regarding the breakfast session by Russ Tyson.\textsuperscript{88} Tyson had a habit of including potentially offensive ‘Ah Too’ jokes, which could ‘imply an attitude of superiority’ and ‘could be offensive to Asian audiences.’\textsuperscript{89} These jokes were contrary to the image that Radio Australia and the Department were trying to project, and it was strongly advised that Tyson find a new subject of humour.

The tussle of control between the ABC and the DEA was to continue through the decade, with the Department struggling for cooperation and the ABC resisting it. The Department did not want to establish a public relationship as Radio Australia’s independence was one of the primary reasons for its success.\textsuperscript{90} But as both organisations were working for the same national interests, a relationship of trust between them was essential. The Department was also careful to acknowledge that ‘there is a real and important distinction between the roles of

\textsuperscript{85} DEA, ‘Treatment of Middle Eastern Questions By Radio Australia,’ 9 June, 1954, Series A1838, 570/1/2 Part 2, NAA.
\textsuperscript{86} ibid.
\textsuperscript{87} This memo also contained notes on the personality traits of the leaders of various countries in the region, and ideas that might appeal to them. This was before the Suez Crisis, when Australian attitudes changed.
\textsuperscript{88} R. A. Woolcott, Public Information Officer, DEA, letter to Mr Harry, Radio Australia, 25 September, 1964, Series A1838/2, 558/3/11 Part 1, NAA.
\textsuperscript{89} ibid. Ah Too was an Asian character, and Tyson used various Asian-style mispronunciations of English to make Ah Too look foolish. No specific example was given in Woolcott’s letter, only an explanation of the type of joke.
\textsuperscript{90} D. O. Hay, Draft of ‘Proposed Discussion with the General Manager of the ABC on Department Liaison with Radio Australia,’ 11 May, 1965, Series 1838/2, 558/3/11 Part 2, NAA.
the ABC and Radio Australia.\(^9^1\) The Department did not have control over the voice of this diplomatic tool, increasing the importance that they be acknowledged and consulted by Radio Australia executives.

The Department was ‘keenly aware’ of the size of the audience Radio Australia attracted.\(^9^2\) Woolcott was at pains to reassure Radio Australia that they appreciated its approach to overseas broadcasting, but were ‘concerned to see that due account is taken of our views and that Radio Australia does not broadcast material’ that might be harmful to Australian interests or may have run counter to foreign policy.\(^9^3\) A note in the file for June 1965 suggests that consultations had resumed.\(^9^4\)

In 1953, it was proposed that a series of commentaries be given immediately after the news broadcast, to support government policy ideals. These would be given by a small panel of speakers who were ‘willing to accept Departmental suggestions of policy.’\(^9^5\) University staff and other influential speakers comprised the panel, and were chosen because of their knowledge and authority. The debate over whether to have a panel of commentators (preferred by the ABC) or a single authoritative speaker (preferred by the Department) was continual. Charles Moses of the ABC wrote to Arthur Tange of the Department, stating that the listener:

> derives most of his confidence in “Radio Australia” from his belief that it comes from a country that is so free and straightforward that it is willing to put on all sorts of people and give them full reign to say what they thing about Australia and all the countries in the world.\(^9^6\)

Moses saw this as a particular selling point because none of the countries in the region had as much individual freedom as Australia, and this contributed to the policies of democracy that the government encouraged. A single spokesman, he warned, would come to be seen as a

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\(^9^1\) Hay, Draft of ‘Proposed Discussion with the General Manager of the ABC on Department Liaison with Radio Australia,’ 11 May, 1965, Series 1838/2, 558/3/11 Part 2, NAA.
\(^9^3\) Ibid.
\(^9^4\) K. McDonald, Public Information Secretary, Note to the DEA,’ Series 1838/2, 558/3/11 Part 2, NAA.
\(^9^5\) ‘Radio Australia—Weekly Commentary,’ 30 April, 1953, Series A1838, 570/1/2 Part 4, NAA.
\(^9^6\) Charles Moses, General Manager, ABC, Letter to Arthur Tange, Secretary of the DEA, 15 February, 1956, Series A1838A, 570/1/2 Part 5, NAA.
'spokesman for the government of the day,' negating the image Radio Australia was trying to project. Tange responded that the general education levels in South East Asia were at quite a different level to what the commentators projected, and this must be addressed. Moses felt that this was easily remedied, and the panel of commentateurs continued.

The Department compiled a list of dates important to their international audience. By recognising various significant political and religious holidays, the Department and Radio Australia showed respect to their audience. Understanding the local situation could determine success or failure. A proposed broadcast to Indonesia between 1.30 and 2.30 pm local time would likely not be heard. When the broadcaster learned that the local meal hour lasts ‘roughly from 1.30-2.30, the siesta from 2.30-3.30,’ the programme was moved to a more suitable time. This local knowledge worked both ways, to provide the most effective programme for government policy.

Richard Boyer wrote to Casey in 1953 that the response from Indonesian listeners to Radio Australia showed a very keen interest in Australia, its history, institutions and way of life. He wrote: ‘I think we can claim some of the credit for the awakening and fostering of this interest.’ This is somewhat confirmed in a 1954 DEA memo to all Asian posts, advising them that in Canberra they had had a number of visits from representatives of the US Embassy, ‘seeking information about Radio Australia’ and searching for transcripts and schedules. The Embassy officials stated that the reason for their interest was that so many of their own Asian posts had reported to them the effectiveness of Radio Australia. Letters from Indonesian listeners suggested that the audience had grown from the merchants,
teachers and government officials of 1947, to including shop workers, homemakers and farmers.104

The success of the broadcasts continued to grow throughout the Menzies Era. In 1956 the DEA proposed that Wood, by now Director of Radio Australia, attend the SEATO meeting in Bangkok in order to boost the perception of Australia’s commitment to the group, and to the field of information and anti-subversion.105 One of the planned items on the agenda for the meeting was dealing with propaganda plans and programmes. As Radio Australia had a considerable audience in Asia, having its Director at these meetings would ‘show that we [were] prepared to make some effort to stimulate activity.’106 Wood had never travelled to Asia before, ‘and a visit…would give him direct knowledge of the area to which the bulk of his broadcasts [were] being directed.’107 First-hand knowledge of the listening audience would make this programme of cultural exchange more effective in supporting foreign policy. Also on the trip, Wood became a reality to the numerous Asians who wrote to him, and possibly stimulated more interest in Radio Australia.108 The opportunity of ‘making direct contact with the directors of broadcasting in Asian countries’ complemented the current correspondence exchanges. An overseas visit would ensure that Wood was able to help select new local staff, thus ensuring that a cohesive ideology was maintained. A representative stationed in Singapore would have the advantage of obtaining recordings of local events for broadcast, arrange ABC transcriptions for use by local stations and report on general requirements of the area ‘with a view to ensuring the maximum impact of Radio Australia programmes.’109 Wood’s input into the selection of these staff would ensure that government aims were met.

At the conclusion of this tour, Wood submitted a comprehensive report.110 He found that listeners were ‘prone to accept the station with the clearest signal,’111 thus highlighting the importance of booster stations and powerful transmitters in ensuring that the Australian message was favoured. Not providing this risked the deterioration of reception, so a possible

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105 Kevin, Memorandum to the Secretary, 19 December, 1955, Series A1838, 570/1/2 Part 3, NAA.
106 ibid.
107 ibid.
108 ibid.
109 Extract from Cabinet Submission, DEA, 11 May, 1955, Series A1838, 570/1/2 Part 3, NAA.
110 Robin Wood, ‘General Survey of Broadcasting,’ Series A1838, 570/1/2 Part 4, NAA.
111 ibid.
decline in the audience, which could have left a forum for communist activities. Wood had had the opportunity to listen to lots of local music, and suggested that Australian orchestras might arrange some Chinese, Malay and Indonesian tunes that ‘appear[ed] to lend themselves admirably to Western treatment.’¹¹² He thought that ‘such a programme of songs performed by our own orchestras and singers and devised in an interesting way might have a certain appeal for ABC domestic listeners apart from having high entertainment value for Radio Australia’s Asian audience.’¹¹³ This shows particular insight into music diplomacy theories, which were highly influential in creating social bonds and embracing emotional relationships between performers and audiences. While programmed music was rarely a topic of official discussion, because the entertainment aspect of the broadcast was valued by listeners it was certainly worthy of consideration.¹¹⁴ There is no evidence that this was acted upon, so it appears to have been a missed opportunity for cultural exchange and a possible collaborative project.

Wood also noted that there was a lot of Asian interest in the forthcoming Melbourne Olympic Games, stating that ‘Radio Australia broadcasts on Olympic topics have been appreciated.’¹¹⁵ Listeners wanted more of these, along with news of star athletes and overseas teams. The Melbourne Games brought the Olympic spectacle closer to the South East Asian nations than they had ever been before, and the viability of sending their own teams created great excitement. Radio Australia had an opportunity to capitalise on this event, using one cultural celebration to promote its own policy objectives of teamwork and friendship.

When Wood met with the editor of the Times of Viet-Nam, Nguyen M. Thai, he was encouraged by the requests for material, ‘particularly of the literary type.’¹¹⁶ Thai offered to print the Radio Australia schedule regularly and free of charge. This friendliness was found everywhere Wood went, and is a testament to the reputation of the organisation. Wood suggested that broadcasts to Asia ‘could perhaps draw more attention to the similarities between Australia and Asian countries,’ particularly in ‘showing that we have much to learn from the latter, as well as much to impart to them.’¹¹⁷ This would be seen favourable, as

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¹¹² Wood, ‘General Survey of Broadcasting.’
¹¹³ ibid.
¹¹⁴ Casey makes clear to Tange that he saw ‘the entertainment content of Radio Australia as the “carrier” for its political content.’ Casey, Letter to Arthur Tange, 26 February, 1959, Series A1838, 570/1/2 Part 6, NAA.
¹¹⁵ Wood, ‘General Survey of Broadcasting.’
¹¹⁶ ibid.
¹¹⁷ ibid.
Asians—particularly the Chinese—disliked the ‘blowing of the national trumpet,’ so humility was more appropriate. Understanding local values was a key to success.

In 1955, Casey wrote to Tange explaining that it was more important to ‘sell democracy’ than to ‘criticise communism.’ Casey advised that it would be best for Radio Australia to not allow the day’s headlines to determine the content of the Daily Commentary too rigidly, as this forum allowed comment on less public events or other ideas that the Department hoped to promote. He also saw that making Radio Australia ‘a mouthpiece for Asian opinion would contribute to Australian reputation.’ Casey used the same tactics as other successful media in allowing audience contribution, in order to remove any accusation of propaganda.

The ‘Policy Guide for Radio Australia,’ was written in 1955, and noted that the dominant purpose of the entity was to increase understanding of Australia overseas, assist in external relations, ‘and generally create an atmosphere favourable to its policies.’ This endorsed a very definite relation to modern theories of cultural diplomacy. It also suggested that overseas broadcasts ‘should provide a subtle counter to communist propaganda.’ Broadcasts ‘should aim at building up the determination of uncommitted or friendly nations, particularly in Asia, to maintain their freedom in the face of communist menace,’ and imply that other ‘free democratic countries’ would support them economically and militarily in these aims. Throughout, ‘it is a primary requisite that Radio Australia should maintain its reputation for integrity and accuracy.’ The broadcasts must appear to function as a service to the listeners by providing entertainment, reliable news and informative talks. Moreover, Radio Australia had to avoid gaining a reputation as a propaganda station.

The difficulty in converting confirmed communists was noted in the Guide, so instead it recommended appealing to those who were ‘wavering between the West and Communism, [were] mildly anti-pathetic to the West, or [were] with no opinions of their own.’ Audiences to be targeted in order of importance were the Indian listening public and the Indonesian audience, followed by other South East Asian audiences, including overseas Chinese, Japanese, Ceylonese, Pakistani, overseas Indians, those in the British Dependent Territories.

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118 Casey, Letter to Arthur Tange, 11 November, 1955, Series A1838, 570/1/2 Part 4, NAA.
119 ibid.
120 “Policy Guideline for Radio Australia,” undated (1955), Series A1838, 570/1/2 Part 3, NAA.
121 ibid. Emphasis in the original.
122 ibid.
123 ibid.
124 ibid.
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Territories and the Chinese in China. The order of this list highlights areas where Australia already had friends, or thought it could make little impact. The Guide specifically noted that these broadcasts ‘must take into account of special factors affecting opinion in the area.’

The issues included fear of war and invasion, anti-imperialism and anti-colonialism, terrorism, ‘a substantial lack of any idea of mutual co-operation and interdependence,’ low standards of living, a mixture of races and religions, a great degree of illiteracy and a desire to learn English. Asians do not generally fear communism, the Guide noted, except insofar as it is militarily powerful, and they tended to admire the achievements of communism in China.

The audience commonly aspired to unrestricted political independence, desired economic and social development and appreciated individual liberties and freedom of the press. As a rule, the Guide advised, the Asian audience ‘desired to remain neutral in the East-West dispute,’ and wished to be ‘left in peace to work out their own destiny.’ These are all themes and general ideas rather than specific tasks, and this is what made Radio Australia the perfect vehicle for this type of cultural diplomacy-style scheme. Careful programming would ensure that all of these themes were addressed, that the audience felt respected and that Australian policy goals were met.

The members of the DEA had a flair for propaganda. The Policy Guide for Radio Australia stated that it was ‘possible to actively counter communism in the area.’ The best way to do this was to ‘not necessarily refute communist theory directly or to criticise communist activities,’ but to use ‘the more subtle one of judiciously selecting and backgrounding of news items, and putting in a positive manner the views of the Free World in commentaries or talks.’ These views, if at all possible, ‘should be presented as Asian views, where suitable statements by Asian leaders are available.’ This is reminiscent of the Die Neue Zeitung programmed in post-war Germany, described by Gienow-Hecht.

Radio Australia promoted Australia as a ‘relatively small nation, not well endowed by nature, which should therefore neither be feared nor envied.’ It was a champion of freedom, had

125 ibid.
126 ibid.
127 ‘Policy Guideline for Radio Australia,’ undated, (1955), Series A1838, 570/1/2 Part 3, NAA.
128 ibid.
129 ibid.
130 ibid.
131 See Chapter 2: Discovering Cultural Diplomacy in Australia.
132 ‘Policy Guideline for Radio Australia.’
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developed its own democratic self-government, overcome communist threats and was prepared and ‘eager to lay its resources in technical “know how” and equipment at the disposal of its Asian neighbours.’\textsuperscript{133} This subtly advertised that Australia would not ‘buy’ Asian friendship, but would share and help those countries who wished to grow in the same way that Australia had. Australia was non-threatening, independent and helpful. All letters to Radio Australia were answered, even technical ones. This maintained a close personal touch, and was important to Wood.\textsuperscript{134}

The idea for broadcasting English language lessons was raised within the Department in May 1955, and this was likely the single most powerful act of the programme. Casey firmly believed that the English language was Australia’s most powerful weapon in the war for hearts and minds. Discussions with the BBC suggested that they would make available to the ABC transcriptions and booklets, significantly reducing costs.\textsuperscript{135} Initiated finally in 1959, Peter Homfray noted that English language teaching broadcasts ‘had excelled expectations.’\textsuperscript{136} The first series began in October, and by December the initial estimates of 35,000 required booklets had risen to 85,000.\textsuperscript{137}

\begin{footnotesize}
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  \item \textsuperscript{133} ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{134} ‘Radio Australia,’ Notes from a Conversation with Wood, 1955, Series A1838, 570/1/2 Part 2, NAA.
  \item \textsuperscript{135} Extract from Cabinet Submission, DEA, 11 May, 1955, Series A1838, 570/1/2 Part 3, NAA.
  \item \textsuperscript{136} R. G. Casey, ‘Record of Conversation with Mr P Homfray, Radio Australia,’ 1 December, 1959, Series A1838, 570/1/2 Part 6, NAA. Funding for these programmes was difficult to find, and often took years to materialise even after approval.
  \item \textsuperscript{137} ‘Policy Guideline for Radio Australia.’
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Transcripts of the English language lessons provide an important insight into how Radio Australia used its domestic and international knowledge, combined with government policy, to create cultural diplomacy. Whether due to lack of funding or another unstated reason, lesson no. 104, broadcast in 1960, was the last session of the programme. Beginning with three voices—an English-speaking man and woman and an Indonesian speaker—listeners were welcomed to the show and asked to take out their workbooks. Learners were invited to repeat the English phrases as the Indonesian voice explained their meaning and purpose. The lesson moved on to a play, where students Jim and Betty have a party. They congratulate each other on passing their final exams, and say to one of the Indonesian students: ‘we’ll be very sad when you go home Hadi.’ They discuss with another Indonesian student, Jati, his progress in learning English over the course of his stay. He attributes his proficiency to practicing English with friends, and practicing listening to English in order to understand his lectures. He listened to the radio, had lunch with Australian students and ‘listened and listened.’ Australian student Jim asked Hadi what he would do when he went back to Indonesia: ‘What sort of job will you get?’ Hadi suggested employment in ‘some government department,’ and enthuses: ‘Oh, it’ll be good to be home again.’

138 Neil Murray, NAA, A1501, A1791/1, 8903878.
139 Draft of ‘English for Indonesians,’ Radio Lesson No. 104, sent by J. Weedon, Director, Office of Education, to Mr Peters, Department of Immigration, 23 August, 1960, series A1838, 570/5/2/1 Part 5, NAA. The following study relies upon this script.
As Australian students Tom and Nancy join this group, they tell the others of their recent holiday in Indonesia, and Betty and Jim note that they also hope to holiday there. Another domestic student, Margaret, plans to go to and work in Indonesia as a journalist. To close the party they sing an English song they all enjoy:

The more we are together, together, together

The more we are together the happier we’ll be

For your friends are my friends

And my friends are your friends

And the more we are together the happier we’ll be.

The group laugh and confirm their friendship, then sing ‘Auld Lang Syne’ for Hadi who is leaving, explaining that English people everywhere sing this old Scottish song, especially at New Year's Eve and partings. The students learn that this Scottish song is in a particular dialect, and spend time practising each line. These songs help reinforce friendships as they will be easy to remember when the friends part, and are an example of the fun of creative expression in cultural diplomacy projects and the power of music diplomacy. The programme then returns to the narrators, who remind the listeners how much they enjoyed teaching them English, that there is so a lot more to learn and that ‘we believe that a better understanding of a foreign language gives a better understanding of the people who speak that language.’ The hosts hope that the course helped them understand not only the English language, but the Australian people. This lesson cleverly encouraged international friendships, suggested to all listeners that students return home to good government positions, confirmed a British relationship (including a traditional Scottish traditional song suggests an ancient culture) and highlighted that Australia wants to be understood by the Indonesians (putting Indonesians in the position of power). This transcript shows the skills of the scriptwriters in this cultural diplomacy-style programme, which includes following government policy lines while establishing long-term relationships, promoting a favourable atmosphere for international trade and commerce and showing respect for the audience by understanding cultural values.

The play in lesson no. 99 describes a very long journey by a trucker, and the dusty, barren terrain. This subtly reminds the Asian audience that much of Australia is uninhabitable. Draft transcripts were checked to ensure that the Australian messages were directed by policy, and also to ensure that they were not likely to cause offence. P. Peters, Department of
Immigration, wrote to Osman at Radio Australia, concerned that in one script a café is called the ‘Black Cat Café’ and should be renamed, as ‘I believe black is an unlucky colour and that cats are despised animals in the Muslim way of thinking.’

A letter from Richard Boyer to Casey in 1956 celebrated the results of the most recent census conducted by the International Shortwave Club. Measured every three years, Radio Australia had come out on top for three consecutive awards, each time moving further ahead of the nearest competitors. Boyer wrote: ‘I do feel this is something of which we can really be proud of and of which your government might take adequate notice.’ He assured Casey that ‘we have won the franchise of international listening to a point which cannot be ignored.’ Boyer believed that this popularity was to be found in the objectivity and reliability of the material they broadcasted. Boyer assured Casey that this did not mean that they were not selling democracy as opposed to communism, but that their method was to do so in a positive fashion, not in the negative way followed by the VOA. The ABC extolled the virtues of democracy and the benefits it had brought to Australia. Acknowledging that Casey and some others in the Department had ‘been somewhat critical’ of ABC policy in respect to Radio Australia broadcasts, Boyer was at pains to reassure that the policy objectives were at the forefront of their purpose. Communism and the Cold War were the two focal areas for government propaganda, and Radio Australia handled both thoughtfully.

Continuing with the theme of people-to-people relationships formed by visiting different countries, a tour of Radio Australia staff in 1961 examined the effects of Radio Australia in South East Asia. The intention was to understand the popularity of the broadcasts and adjust them if necessary, to discern which programmes had had an effect on the Cold War, if their frequency should be increased or decreased, and ‘to determine whether there is a visible return for Radio Australia and hence to provide a case to Treasury to make available additional funds for an extension of either English or foreign language programs or both.’

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140 Peters, Telegram to Osman, Regarding Lessons 90/91, July 1960, Series A1838, 570/5/2/1 Part 5, NAA.
141 Richard Boyer, Letter to R. G. Casey, Minister for External Affairs, 7 February, 1956, Series A1838. 570/1/2 Part 4, NAA.
142 ibid.
143 ibid.
145 ibid.
While cultural diplomacy projects are generally designed to outlast governments, they must still be justified to the Ministers responsible for funding. By listening to the audience and adjusting programming, Radio Australia was making this a collaborative project, in-line with modern theories of cultural diplomacy.

In the 1960s Radio Australia programmes were expanding. ‘Talk’ programmes had progressed from a single speaker to interviews, short documentaries were presented by several speakers and ‘magazine’ programmes comprised several short items. Moses created a submission for Cabinet, explaining that the primary purpose of the talks was ‘to project Australia overseas,’ and the subject matter includes various aspects of Australian life and institutions, including literature and history, scientific developments, interviews with Asians studying and working in Australia, economic reviews, and programs on international affairs. Radio Australia was the most quoted news media in South East Asia, Moses advised, and ‘many daily newspapers and radio stations in the region monitor the service and translate it’ where necessary. This was due to the fact that it was ‘independent of the Federal Government,’ and its only task was to present the facts that matter. As Moses wrote, Radio Australia played ‘an increasingly important role in Australia’s good neighbour policy towards the nations in Asia, Africa and the Pacific.’

Moses was pleased that the talk programmes covered such a variety of topics, and not just those related to Australia. He advised that such enquiries indicated that Radio Australia was ‘considered a source of information on general subjects,’ and that both the enquiries themselves, and the considered responses, added to the prestige of Radio Australia. The individual needs of specific countries were considered and special programmes were prepared on request. In this draft submission to Cabinet in July 1962, Moses highlighted that ‘by far the most important development of Australian Broadcasting Commission extension services through Radio Australia has been the English language teaching program for Indonesians.’

147 ibid.
148 ibid.
149 ibid.
150 ibid.
151 ibid.
152 ibid.
While the Australian Radio programme was very popular overseas, domestically many would not have known much about the purpose or content of the overseas broadcasts. Few stories appeared in domestic newspapers. One confirmed that to most Australians, ‘Radio Australia is some mysterious station which is broadcasting radio programmes from this country, but it is here that their knowledge of the organisation ends.’\footnote{Radio Australia Reaches the World,} In 1954 The Watch informed its readers that it had recently discovered that Radio Australia began operations in 1944, and by that time transmitted Australian news and information all over the world. It proceeded to detail the equipment that carries these transmissions. Another newspaper reported that a spokesman for the DEA stated that radio was ‘one of the most important means of informing neighbouring countries of the Australian way of life,’ and confirmed that the DEA provided ‘some of the material for broadcasting and actively co-operate[d] with ABC radio in Australian broadcasts.’\footnote{Information Given on Radio Australia,}

The Northern Standard in Darwin published an informative piece on Radio Australia, describing the powerful transmitters and relay stations used to transmit the programmes to Asia.\footnote{This is Radio Australia,} The author explained how recorded concerts can be broadcast to the world, and along with plays, variety shows and features, ‘form an integral part of the carefully planned programmes of the Overseas Service.’\footnote{This is Radio Australia,} News, talks and documentaries were prepared ‘because they have the special purpose of projecting to other countries a picture of the Australian scene and way of life and of reflecting the attitude of the Australian people to national and international events.’\footnote{This is Radio Australia,} Radio Australia’s presentation of ‘news and commentaries is impartial and objective; the ABC is not concerned with propaganda,’\footnote{Asians Like to Hear Us,} and for this it had earned the commendation of listeners overseas.

In Australia, the success of Radio Australia in the International Shortwave Club survey was celebrated in 1956 by The Argus. Wood attributed some of this success to the ‘good entertaining programmes at good signal strength.’\footnote{Asians Like to Hear Us,} Again in 1962, The Age informed the
domestic audience of the continued success of the enterprise.\footnote{160} Another triumph in the International Shortwave Club’s polling saw Radio Australia with the ‘most popular service in the world.’\footnote{161} Australian readers were assured that the policy had always been to maintain accuracy and fair-mindedness in the treatment of the news, to allow individual comment and to ‘provide services which will be genuinely useful to listeners.’\footnote{162} Its distance from the Department was appreciated, and as a journalist commented: ‘this small enterprise is doing Australia great good in the world, and we should be careful that no attempt is made to tamper with it for propagandist purposes.’\footnote{163} Giving the domestic audience pride in such a successful programme encouraged further government support, which was the intention.

**Summary**

By the end of the Menzies Era, more than eight million radio sets serviced a population of approximately 11.3 million Australians. The introduction of television did not make radio obsolete; instead, radio focused on the voice to penetrate ‘the world of the mind, the world of ideas that could be sparked by sound,’\footnote{164} without distracting visual images. Another advantage of radio was that one could still perform other chores while listening, and was not confined to one room or the location of the receiver, making it more practical than newspapers. The distribution of images and sound via electronic media ‘transformed humanity’ and allowed an ‘immediate sensory perception of far-away events,’ giving individuals opportunities to engage with those events.\footnote{165} The city limits and community to be controlled by Plato’s aural limits had few restrictions by the mid-20th century. While nations established identities and international relationships, radio broadcasts were used to convey messages beyond borders.

The aims of cultural diplomacy are to exchange ideas, values, traditions and other aspects of culture or identity, in order to strengthen relationships, enhance cooperation and promote international interests. Radio Australia acted as the Voice of Australia, the voice of not just the government but the whole community. Programmes considered the needs and values of the audience while promoting Australian culture. The English language lessons were a

\footnote{160}{‘Australia’s Voice is Not So Small,’ *The Melbourne Age*, 11 January, 1965, Series A1838, 570/1/2 Part 7, NAA.}
\footnote{161}{ibid.}
\footnote{162}{ibid.}
\footnote{163}{ibid.}
\footnote{164}{Walker, *The Magic Spark*, p. 94.}
\footnote{165}{Fosler-Lussier, *Music in America’s Cold War Diplomacy*, p. 205.}
highlight of this project, and in the effort to ‘win hearts and minds,’ familiar language is essential. As Julian Hale states, radio propaganda is only effective when it reflects the traditions and the psychology of the country it represents. 166 It must echo the way of life of the speaker. Just as the jazz movement affected both the American and international audiences with its anti-racism message, so too could Australians share the common struggles of an unforgiving landscape, the challenges of developing infrastructure on a restricted budget and promote the benefits of a democratic society. As a political agenda, the anti-communist message was heard as a pro-democracy message, in a deliberate campaign to secure Australian borders.

By broadcasting in local languages, responding to all correspondence and visiting its audience, Radio Australia became part of the lives of its international listeners. It literally gave them a voice in interviews and chat shows. Radios were switched on in cafés and other public places, allowing a shared experience. The longevity of the project suggests its success as a relationship-building tool, and its reliance on government funding supposes that it met government policy directives. As an exercise in the deployment of a state’s culture in support of its foreign policy, Radio Australia is an appropriate case study.

**Postscript**

Radio Australia continued without major changes until the mid-1990s, when its purpose was questioned in an independent review examining the effectiveness of the ABC. 167 This prompted a 1997 Senate Report, called ‘The Role and Future of Radio Australia and Australian Television.’ 168 Hampered by a lack of cooperation from the Minister of Foreign Affairs and other Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) staff, the committee nonetheless discussed the origins of media broadcasting in Australia, its purposes and future directions. They discovered that the past and present functions had not changed greatly. Wood, the broadcast writer, told the committee: ‘Today, the bulk of the 100 or so countries engaged in information broadcasting use it as an instrument of foreign policy, projecting the positive side of the country’s character to the rest of the world.’ 169 Radio and other electronic

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169 ibid.
media, could ‘extend [a country’s] zone of political, cultural and economic beliefs into territorial areas of other nations and distant continents.’\textsuperscript{170} The success of these broadcasts relies on ‘the credibility of the broadcaster’s product as perceived by the listener.’\textsuperscript{171}

Following the history of Radio Australia, from its inception as support for the BBC External Service, through its growth in the 1950s and 1960s and the tussle over control between the ABC and DEA, its role as an important tool in foreign policy has never been questioned. Its success as a tool in cultural diplomacy-style projects is largely a result of the refusal of the ABC to allow Radio Australia to become a direct tool of propaganda, and in its insistence that its broadcasting represent all of Australian society, not just its government. The Report acknowledged that the inclusion of foreign-language broadcasting allowed it to ‘reach the listener at every level of society, to promote human rights, regional trade and development and universal peace.’\textsuperscript{172} By distancing itself from an overt foreign policy stance, it allowed listeners to trust its English lessons and business programmes and enjoy cultural and educational presentations without feeling that they were victims of a propaganda campaign. Presenting programmes in the language of the listener shows respect for their culture, and this would encourage favourable opinions. Adhering to local customs and acknowledging local religious or political holidays confirms this respect. The Executive Producer of the Vietnamese Service also confirmed this, informing the committee that tailoring and presenting information in a format easily understood by the audience was appreciated.\textsuperscript{173}

Radio Australia was seen by its Asia Pacific audience as an independent broadcaster providing news and information that was neither propaganda nor censored.\textsuperscript{174} That this is the modern view of the institution is largely due to the hard work and strong will of all stakeholders in the Menzies Era. The programming is not simply entertaining and educational, Andrew Clark wrote, but ‘designed to give an Australian view on the region and the world.’\textsuperscript{175} He highlighted the outpouring of support from the international audience for the Radio Australia programme when budget cuts suggested the service would close. Former ABC chairman Donald McDonald argued that Radio Australia accumulated an ‘impressive

\textsuperscript{170} ibid, pp. 7, 2.4, 2.6.
\textsuperscript{171} ibid, pp. 7, 2.7.
\textsuperscript{172} ibid, pp. 60, 5.83.
\textsuperscript{173} ibid, pp. 64, 5.101.
\textsuperscript{174} ibid, pp. 67, 5.109.
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capital of goodwill for Australia,\textsuperscript{176} and this was due to the foresight of the executives who managed the service in the Menzies Era.

The instigation of language lessons in 1959 enabled future expansion of the topics covered. Economics, digital communications, development strategies and other modern concerns are now discussed and developed.\textsuperscript{177} This is only possible because of the long-range vision of these early programmes. The government responded to requests for English language lessons and is now able to use the knowledge gained by these to further affect the education of the audience. This is cultural diplomacy at its best, and while not measurable, is an undeniable success.

The programming was also designed to enhance foreign policy, to reflect Australian culture and society and to serve as an ambassador for the Australian Government.\textsuperscript{178} Although enthusiasm for the project diminished in the 1990s, broadcasts were revived in 2001 by popular demand, much of it from the Asia Pacific region.\textsuperscript{179} While still funded in part by DFAT, the ABC provides a buffer, allowing it to retain a neutrality and independence that makes it useful as an ongoing cultural diplomacy programme. While meeting budget targets is a more significant demand now, the service still broadcasts in six languages, focused on South East Asia. One submission to the Senate Report stated that ‘respect, loyalty, empathy and trust cannot be bought,’\textsuperscript{180} nor easily measured, as they are not tangible. The continued existence of this medium attests to its success as a government voice, as well as a successful forum for cultural exchange.

\textsuperscript{176} Clark, ‘Radio Australia: Remaining Competitive in a Changing Media Environment,’
\textsuperscript{177} ibid.
\textsuperscript{178} ibid.
\textsuperscript{179} ibid.
\textsuperscript{180} ibid.
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Cultural diplomacy practice is as broad and inclusive as the scholarly debate. These cases enrich the conversation, and while this is not strictly a theoretical thesis, the philosophy provides a context and relevance to the examples. The stories highlight the public participation in foreign policy decisions, the impact of a government programme on individuals and the legacy of international activities. After exploring these four cultural diplomacy projects, some of the definitions can be put into perspective and the literature made sense of, to further understand the Menzies Era activities in light of modern ideas of cultural diplomacy.

The theoretical examination proposed a series of questions about the role of cultural diplomacy regarding channels of communication and listening, whether the focus was on the international or domestic audience and who could participate in cultural diplomacy activities. The case studies explored these questions and found that each activity required different methods, although there were similarities. Two-way communication encourages collaboration and strengthens relationships, both domestic and international audiences were needed for a comprehensive programme and all citizens could participate, from foreign aid workers to those who shared their homes with international visitors during the Olympics.

The Colombo Plan, the Olympic Games, the Pavilion at Expo 67 and the efforts of Radio Australia all promoted a cultural experience to achieve some foreign policy goals. They used collaborative projects to encourage long-term people-to-people relationships. They utilised the exchange of ideas, values and traditions to strengthen relationships, enhance sociocultural cooperation and promote national interests. While modern theory and ideas of cultural diplomacy scholarship have been imposed on the events, the intention, purpose and methods used in these activities clearly show that the activities were designed with the motives of cultural exchange to facilitate foreign policy. There were limitations, failures, missed opportunities and dark purposes. Cultural diplomacy is often a positive international interaction, but it is necessary to view programmes with caution.

In Chapter 5: Developing Australia, international aid was discussed as a forum for cultural diplomacy. Aid can have countless purposes but is generally linked to political objectives, to encourage a government to favour the donor’s priorities. Political affiliation, access to natural resources or controlling trade can be a motive for the developmental or humanitarian face of international aid. During the Menzies Era, the most significant aid project for Australia was
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the Colombo Plan, a collaborative project focusing on developing the South and South East Asian region. This series of bilateral agreements had as many purposes as participants. From the perspective of the Australian Government in 1949, the principal security issue was to halt the spread of communism to Australia’s north, and to create a buffer zone for defence. This project encompassed material aid and knowledge sharing. The receiving countries understood that accepting aid could compromise their rights to economic autonomy, and in several newly independent countries this was a consideration when accepting aid. The governments of China and Russia also offered developmental assistance, and some South East Asian countries balanced assistance from both communist and Western countries, in order to show political neutrality and independence.

The Colombo Plan followed the old adage of ‘give a man a fish and feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and feed him for life.’ While some needs were immediate and required urgent implementation, the extension to the original plan allowed knowledge sharing, which has seen significant benefits. After a decade of the Plan, a relational shift was observed, with economic security displacing the initial military concerns. By improving the quality of life for South and South East Asian residents such as through developing infrastructure, food supply and health facilities, political stability was also encouraged, thus discouraging the spread of communism. The recipients of aid were encouraged to participate in their own progress, not only in the labour but also the decision-making process, as governments were encouraged to devise their own development plans.

Media advertising was an important aspect of the plan, and targeted both domestic and international audiences. The magazine Hemisphere was produced for South and South East Asian students. Its purpose was to exchange cultural explanations, as a reminder that the students came from varied backgrounds with individual cultures, and that South and South East Asia is not a homogenous whole but a region of rich and varied cultures as different to each other as to Australia. The magazine did not enter into controversy but focused on personal stories of success and challenge. The introduction of a Letters to the Editor page turned it into a collaborative work.

The Australian audience read The Seed of Freedom and watched ‘The Builders.’ The film highlighted commonalities between cultures, such as the struggles with irrigation and harsh landscapes, food production and community health, and this helped the audience understand
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the human aspect of the foreign policy project. Australians feared that the Cold War would become a ‘hot’ war, so the political objectives of the plan were understood. Sharing Australian cultural experiences and ideologies as a pathway to achieving political stability, and the incorporation of collaborative and long-term projects, qualifies this programme as a cultural diplomacy activity.

The Colombo Plan built freedom: freedom from want, from fear, to worship and to seek tolerance and understanding. Freedom is ingrained in Australian culture, and as an ideology it is not easy to negotiate under traditional diplomatic schemes. Sharing the ideology of freedom by sharing culture was a success of cultural diplomacy. Australian generosity coupled with foreign policy objectives allowed participation in a regional aid scheme. A restricted budget promoted a shift of focus towards knowledge transfer. Limited personal knowledge of South and South East Asian cultures was improved by exchanges of students, professionals, labourers and politicians. While there were criticisms of financial and material waste, the success lay in the person-to-person relationships that were created, and in the growth in cultural understanding. That the Colombo Plan scholarship scheme has recently been revitalised speaks to the successes of the early activities, and the importance of the regional relationships formed.

Cultural diplomacy can also be understood through examples of international sporting events, such as the Olympic Games. During the Menzies Era, Australia had already established an international sporting reputation, with Don Bradman, Pharlap, the Melbourne Cup and rivalry with England over the Ashes test cricket series being iconic Australian achievements. The Olympic Games combined an ancient tradition that involved universal rules, concepts of fair play, sportspersonship and contest in an ideal playing field, with the prospect of displaying a national culture internationally. A small team of government staff worked with businesses and the broader community to promote nationalism and an Australian cultural experience at the iconic event.

The 1956 Melbourne Games were the first to suffer from boycotts, a definite example of political statement affecting a cultural event. Two decades after the highly politicised Berlin Games—where the German Government prioritised the promotion of Nazi ideology—the international crises of the Suez Canal closure, communist aggression in Hungary and Chinese political unrest saw governments choose not to participate in the Games in order to publicise
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their political perspectives. While the Games were designed to spread the spirit of comity through peaceful contests and share cultural experiences, international relationships are not always friendly. As a forum for cultural diplomacy, the Games provide opportunities to promote political ideology, and the media can also be used to explain foreign policy agendas related to a sporting event. This shows a less optimistic result of cultural diplomacy, but one that nevertheless fits the theory, where the state’s foreign policy aims are supported by a cultural experience—in this case the public rejection of participation in a cultural event.

The accommodation of the media was one of the greatest concerns for the organisers of the Melbourne Games. Providing adequate facilities—from desks and telephones to radio transmitters, film crews, accommodation, transport and meals—was a high priority. The media were VIPs with the power to make or break Melbourne’s reputation as a sporting city. Newspaper articles reminded the locals that Australia was on show, that the world would be watching and that the success of the Games would bring further economic benefits to the country. The Games also helped consolidate Melbourne’s identity (and self-perception) as a sporting, accommodating and progressive city. It contributed to the domestic cultural diplomacy objectives of establishing a cohesive Australian identity and present to international audiences the international efforts.

The most significant contribution of the Melbourne Games to Olympic history was the change made to the closing ceremony when the traditional team march was replaced by a communal celebration of all athletes mingling together. This placed these Games, known as the Friendly Games, in international history and established Australia’s cultural and political ideology as a country of sportspersonship, fair play, honesty even contest on a level playing field. The Australian political and foreign policy ideals were projected onto a cultural event, allowing the world to understand Australia and promoting the message beyond that of traditional diplomacy.

The Melbourne Games brought the ancient tradition to the Southern Hemisphere and the Asian region for the first time. They incited interest in South East Asian countries as it was more affordable to send athletes, journalists and spectators to Australia. This had the benefit of exposing more regional visitors to Australian culture (which had already begun with the Colombo Plan exchange) and of legitimising Radio Australia’s commentary on the Games in its Asian broadcasts. Besides the exposure of Melbourne’s progress to Western audiences, the
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Games provided a forum for conversation and the sharing of cultural experiences in the Asia Pacific region.

Financial constraints meant that the organisers developed a careful publicity campaign, encouraging businesses to promote the Games on their products for import and export, and individual citizens on international Qantas flights were given promotion packs to distribute. The organising committee collaborated with the Department of Housing to create the Olympic Village, with the dual purpose of becoming a community housing project post-Games. While there were considerable financial limitations on this project, Australians had become very good at being creative with limited funds, especially in a remote location, and the Games prove this. The Olympic Games were a metaphorical battleground on which nations determined the strengths and weaknesses of others while displaying their own. Hosting the Games allows the international promotion of the sporting ethics of a nation and connection to its wider culture, so speaks to its trading and economic relationships.

An illustration of the international significance of the Melbourne Games came from Texas. As the new Olympic pool was being built, the organising committee received a request from the Houston suburb of Sharpstown, which was building its own Olympic-sized pool. The PR officer requested that a memento of the Melbourne pool be sent to Texas to be incorporated into the pool and link the two facilities. The committee obliged with a special tile decorated with the Olympic rings, and the inscription: ‘This tile from Melbourne’s new Olympic swimming pool was sent to Sharpstown, Texas, from the Organising Committee, Melbourne, 1956.’

Definitions of cultural diplomacy include the exchange of ideas, information, art and other aspects of culture among nations and their peoples, in order to encourage mutual understanding. These are perfectly presented in international exhibitions, including Expo 67, which are a forum for a global audience to share multiple and varied cultural experiences in a limited time. Organisation of a mega-event is necessarily collaborative, involving politicians and government staff, private agencies, construction staff and media representatives. They are an opportunity to open international markets as they evolved from instructional and trade fairs. This purpose still holds, although it is less obvious in modern examples.

1 ‘One Little Tile from Melbourne,’ The Argus, Friday 13 July, 1956, p. 18.
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Expositions of this kind are a temporary spectacle. What makes them important as cultural diplomacy activities is the creation of display. Nations offer presentations of their national cultures in a limited space and time. The content is vital as the messages presented in the displays are likely to be the only exposure many visitors will have to that particular national culture. Planning a pavilion for an international expo requires the whole of a culture to be condensed into one story, in one pavilion, over a six month period. Organisers are often working out of context to the landscape, climate, and even the language to be displayed. But this also is a forum to promote national resources, manufacturing and technological advancement, and to encourage trade and tourism. The message has to be clear to all prospective audiences. Deciding on the displays for the Australian Pavilion at Expo 67 was an opportunity to debate the cultural messages promoted. The DEA collaborated with businesses and influential citizens to create the best story in support of government directives. Ideas related to the challenges of the landscape, the vastness of the country, the mystery of the outback and the civilising influence of the cities and suburbs were all proposed. A simple box shape for the pavilion was selected, built out of glass and steel to show manufacturing excellence. Set above bushland complete with kangaroos, the message was that the Australian people would not destroy the natural heritage but would rise above the challenges it presented. Visitors were warned that the mood inside was deliberately relaxed, offering a reprieve from the busy-ness of the rest of the world. A woollen cocoon of quality carpet greeted visitors through subdued and subtle displays of art, technology, exploration and manufacturing innovation. The story of the Australian Pavilion was the story of Australian culture. It was a story of progress in a harsh landscape, of quality manufacturing and of a quiet confidence in achievement.

This Expo was a birthday party for Canada, and as a Commonwealth sibling, Menzies decided it was important that Australia attend despite budgetary limitations. The restrictions compromised the scale of the pavilion, but as is clear from the successful display, the organisers were able to turn the financial disadvantage into a message suiting their intent. Australia did not need ostentatious displays to show the skill and quality of its manufacturing, technological design or the beauty of its landscape. The purposes of advertising trade and tourism opportunities were well served by the calm environment. The reception of the musical arrangements on Australia’s special day disappointed some participants, as they found that some of the performance’s uniqueness was lost on the wider audience. This was a
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minor setback, and only barely touched upon in the newspapers, but it highlights that sharing culture, especially in an artificial context, requires consideration.

The hosts and hostesses who attended were not trained diplomats and came from various walks of life. The voices heard through the innovative sound chairs also offered the opportunity to hear Australian voices, the inflections, accents, mood and tone of the people. The stories told were diverse, about Australian nature, the way of life of ordinary people, exploration and the battle to tame the landscape. It was the Australian people who told the story of Australian culture.

The foreign policy aims behind participating at Expo 67, such as the exchange of ideas and culture, are supported by examples of increased trade opportunities. The exposure to Australian native animals and the display of the Great Barrier Reef was designed to encourage tourism, and while it is difficult to measure actual tourist numbers, as a marketing exercise the exposure was exceptional. Although the event itself was short-term, the international relationships formed by the visitors and participating countries were beyond monetary value. The historical record will show that Australia participated in Canada’s centenary celebrations with a sophisticated and calm presence.

The sound chairs at Expo 67 highlighted the value of the human voice in telling a story, and this is also an advantage of radio programmes. Good diplomacy practitioners will find productive common ground with people from various cultures and operate within this to achieve their goals. Skilled diplomacy practitioners working with cultural diplomacy theories will use their cultural understanding to inform policies and shape programmes. The Radio Australia staff combined the value of the human voice with cultural understandings, to produce a collaborative venture that supported foreign policy. As the aural zone for information was expanded by the new technology of radio, so too was the zone of possible influence. Countries with the power to broadcast messages had the power to affect the thinking of a targeted audience. Australian broadcasters were able to place transmitters in areas that had the strongest signals for South East Asian audiences, thus supporting the regional focus of other cultural diplomacy programmes like the Colombo Plan. As the Plan supplied radio sets to many communities, the Radio Australia broadcasts were popular, and as with the Colombo Plan, pro-democracy messages were a feature of all programming. This aspect of government propaganda was tempered by the management of the ABC.
A long management tussle between the DEA and the ABC saw a liaison officer bridge the two entities. This collaboration resulted in a balance between government needs and a reputation for independence and reliable journalism, which benefitted Radio Australia as it came to be relied upon for honest and objective reporting. The success of the station is credited to this balance. Billy Hughes commented that radio is a medium through which all people can know one another and understand each other’s point of view. Radio Australia determined to understand its audience and responded to the numerous letters it received. The audience asked for language lessons so they received them. It asked for more popular music, so that was delivered. The Department informed the station of important holy and national days, and these were noted and celebrated in programming. Daily routines were taken into account, and broadcasts were scheduled around prayer and siesta times in some countries. Although these were not part of Australian culture, it was important to the audience, so respected by the broadcaster.

Serials and musicals from Australian commercial stations were obtained to help paint a picture of Australian life, and these were complemented by Radio Australia’s own programming, which sought to understand its international audience. The official guidelines for Radio Australia were to create an atmosphere favourable to government policy, and the manifesto reads like a cultural diplomacy text. Themes such as political independence, economic and social development, individual liberties and freedom of the press were included, with a judicious selection of news with positive views of the free world. These would be presented wherever possible from a South East Asian viewpoint and with a South East Asian commentary. The idea was to broadcast into homes, schools and communal places the cultural ideals of Australia.

The success of Radio Australia as a cultural diplomacy activity rested on the decision to collaborate with the audience. To deliver the language programmes the listeners wanted and then use the scripts to portray certain Australian values or messages. The lessons also allowed discussions to progress and become more detailed, moving towards lessons of economics, development and politics, all steered by government intention. Collaborating with government departments rather than being under their control allowed an element of distance. The possibility of questioning or criticising government decisions contributed to a national culture of honesty and imperfection, which is important in cultural diplomacy relationships.
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As radio is a perfect tool for advertising, culture and ideals came to be sold in plays, commentaries, interviews and news items. Radio would provide news of Australia to families who had sent students to study, report on Colombo Plan projects and explain the Australian way of life. As a projected cultural image, it was able to carefully structure the culture it delivered, as could an expo. By listening to audience feedback, Radio Australia was able to assess and refine the message in response.

Radio Australia was a successful forum for cultural diplomacy, both in its own programming and in its promotion of other activities. In the Menzies Era, Radio Australia shaped its programmes to affect public opinion. The Australian cultural experience was the backdrop for government messages. This project did not design or change foreign policy, but as a cultural diplomacy-style activity it supported policy aims and decisions.

The project of Radio Australia necessitated the creation of a liaison officer between the ABC and the DEA. The Colombo Plan initially involved five government departments, and Casey notes in his diaries that the Colombo Plan took a substantial amount of administrative effort. During preparations for the 1956 Olympic Games, a mini ministry sprung up around him to take on organisational duties. As the DEA grew into its role, it found itself managing various cultural diplomacy-type projects, with little knowledge of the countries being dealt with and few established protocols. Budget was always hard fought for, never generous, and it appears that this primary restriction produced the innovative and creative projects of the Menzies Era.

Moving through theory to policy and on to the actions associated with cultural diplomacy, we see that there are possibilities as well as limitations. Cultural diplomacy is not intended to create or change policy, but to support it. During the Cold War, cultural diplomacy efforts did not alter global politics but were an attempt to produce a positive atmosphere of growth and understanding through collaborative projects that would outlast specific governments. These activities did not change or end the White Australia immigration policy, but they did try to explain the policy decision and create a general environment of acceptance. Treaties, trade, and security agreements still had to focus on the government’s needs. Cultural diplomacy does not seek to displace traditional diplomacy, only to support it.

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Cultural diplomacy can develop long-term relationships that outlast governments and bad decisions, but it cannot sell bad policy. It should be used in support of policy to create a receptive environment, but should not use cultural institutions to push government policy. It can promote ideologies and themes that are difficult to put into a short-term diplomatic project. National brands and reputations—such as engineering excellence in Germany, Swiss precision, Chinese industriousness, and American freedom—are all types of thematic messages that cultural diplomacy programmes can help promote. They are messages that are difficult to put into a single trade or economic policy, and require different treatment.

This thesis is full of terms relating to power: Western Powers, Pacific powers, European powers, Commonwealth powers, Communist powers, regional powers, external powers, economic powers, power blocs, post-colonial power, middle power, the powers, these powers, the powerful, halls of power, decision making power, purchasing power, industrial power, great powers, superpowers, major powers, military powers, soft power, hard power, smart power, and activities designed to empower. Cultural diplomacy uses cultural exchanges to support foreign policy- and this is all about power relationships. It can allow cultural understanding and engagement to target messages and gain understandings, to promote ideas and a way of life, and influence opinion, and, when used in a strategic manner, can affect the perceived power of a culture or nation. Cultural diplomacy is one of the tools with which diplomats and politicians can complement other foreign policy objectives.

This thesis began with a term that was difficult to define and measure. In a world of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), spreadsheets and graphs, where does cultural diplomacy fit? The literature discussion identified some relevant points. It is not important to say whether one activity is cultural diplomacy and another is not; what is important is the intent of the project, the methods used and the expected result. If the foreign policy objective requires the sharing of a national culture to achieve a long-term relationship, then activities and projects will form a cultural diplomacy programme. If, for trade or security purposes, a closer relationship with a particular country or region is required, then traditional diplomacy agreements can be supported by a range of international projects that encourage the relationship. The traditional diplomatic negotiations might arrange the formal agreements, while the cultural exchange projects are able to inform public acceptance and possibly enthusiasm for the relationship.
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No archival records have examined the end of any of these case studies and determined their effectiveness. Cultural diplomacy theories are contemporary, and so are their assessments. We can only evaluate achievement by weighing the intent with the observable result. Each case study had a definite political aim. Each of the examples contained newspaper or first-hand stories of how individuals were affected by the experience of Australian culture, as well as government department notes on the public reception of the plan, acknowledging that there were some complaints, mistakes and missed opportunities. In all, there was observable appreciation of Australian culture, and a favourable reception of further political and trade relationships.

Most important in the cultural diplomacy structure is to encourage the link between policy making and research. Policies will determine the focus of an activity; for example, which countries to trade with? Which countries are considered to be a security threat? Which tourism or immigration markets should be engaged with? Cultural diplomacy studies can provide some ideas and theories behind the activities, and raise questions such as should domestic or international audiences be focused on? How can audience feedback be incorporated into the programme? Should communications be from the government to the people or the people to the government? Historical analysis of some specific international programmes highlights how some of these questions were dealt with in the Menzies Era, by viewing them through the lens of cultural diplomacy.

Securing political stability in Australia’s north was a priority in the Menzies Era, and the Colombo Plan and Radio Australia were used to complement other diplomatic efforts. An objective of participating in the international sporting community and displaying a friendly and capable country was strengthened by hosting an Olympic Games. Participation in Expo 67 enabled the projection of an image of a forward-looking, technologically developing country. Audience needs contributed to Colombo Plan Policy, whereas the Expo focused more on the image the government wanted to send. Radio Australia was designed for an international audience, and the Olympics drew more of a domestic audience, although neither was exclusive. The Colombo Plan and Radio Australia were collaborative projects, and urged in increased understanding of audience needs. Cultural diplomacy need not be a black-and-white endeavour. Modern political scientists can take these case studies and determine future possibilities.
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Countries have always interacted with each other when there is a need. Diplomatic missions have been part of international relationships for thousands of years. As the modern world contains technology that delivers instant news, allows mass public opinion on policy decisions and governments are more dependent on the favour of publics to implement policy, methods of diplomacy must incorporate these new circumstances. Cultural diplomacy offers a forum for exploring alternative methods of diplomatic interaction. In the Menzies Era, it was clear that cultural diplomacy-style activities advanced Australia’s influence and reputation in the international arena, by sharing cultural experiences in pursuit of foreign policy goals.

Epilogue

Cultural diplomacy has had a difficult entrance into Australian politics, in part due to inadequate definitions and confusion over terminology. ‘Culture’ is often demoted to the creative arts, and as such, the potential for this type of diplomacy has been underrated. With a clearer understanding of the potential of cultural diplomacy and its rise in international discussions, new moves to deliberately incorporate this type of programme have seen exciting advances in the field. In the following discussion on Australian senate reports, the term public diplomacy is used as an umbrella term, covering many activities that are now seen as cultural diplomacy.

Australia’s Public Diplomacy: Building Our Image

A 2007 Australian Senate Report defined public diplomacy as a way to ‘influence the perceptions, opinions and attitudes of people in other countries in a way that will serve the home country’s foreign policy interests.’ Drawing on descriptions used by the US, Canada and UK, the writers remark that public diplomacy ‘works outside the bounds of traditional diplomacy.’ The Report discussed the definitions of public diplomacy, how it is used in Australia, what possibilities it has, how it has been used in the past and how it may be useful in future foreign affairs. Cultural diplomacy is described as the creative arts, so is only a minor aspect of public diplomacy. The Report noted a lack of Australian scholarship on public diplomacy, particularly in diplomatic literature. The ‘real absence of discourse about public diplomacy in Australia’ was particularly noticed against a growing body of

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4 ibid.
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international literature and international conferences and seminars on the subject. 5 Confusion over definitions may have contributed to the poor response to the Government’s call for submissions to the Senate Inquiry, even from within government. This lack of awareness of theory did not prevent the ‘diplomacy of the deed,’ as described by DFAT. Australians quickly and generously respond to disaster relief efforts, augmenting its image as ‘good international citizens.’ 6 Student exchange has proven fundamental to the Australian education system, international sporting contests are well attended and Australian media is well received overseas.

The Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology submission suggested that historic links to Britain and the US may have created problems for Australia’s public diplomacy, and that Australia may be viewed as an ‘outpost,’ with ‘little to distinguish it from its powerful allies.’ 7 Even though Australia has been working to establish an individual national identity, there is still work to be done. The focus on public diplomacy for the Australian Government is to direct an international reputation as ‘a responsible member of the international community, committed to the rule of law, ready to assist in cases of humanitarian need, and as a constructive contributor to the economic development of its neighbourhood.’ 8 The committee wrote that they would like to see Australia thought of as ‘a thoughtful and creative country, genuinely committed to peace and prosperity of its region and a source of practical ideas.’ 9 This fits with the assumed positioning of middle powers in international relations.

Former Australian diplomat Dr Alison Broinowski stressed the need to understand what people in the receiving countries are seeking from Australia, rather than just deciding what to give them. 10 Field practitioners have noted this need. Analysing the effectiveness of the message is vital to the success of public diplomacy: it is about engagement and relationships ‘that ensure that links and communications systems between countries continue to function despite tensions or breakdowns in formal diplomacy.’ 11 The committee acknowledged that public diplomacy was about ‘cultivating good relations against the day you need them,’ and that this cannot be done remotely. 12 This connects to other definitions that see public and

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5 Ibid, p. 28.
6 Ibid, p. 34. Though the recent treatment of asylum seekers in recent years has tainted its image abroad.
8 Ibid.
9 Ibid, p. 54
11 Ibid, p. 79.
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cultural diplomacy as a long-term investment, with person-to-person relationships creating a stronger human connection and distancing the specific political agenda. It is easier to influence people if you understand their language and culture, and to present new ideas in a familiar forum. This was part of the success of *Die Neue Zeitung* newspaper. The Senate Report acknowledged this idea, highlighting the importance of the Last Three Feet, known to be vital to all diplomatic relationships, but especially to public and cultural diplomacy efforts.

The Australian Government approach to public diplomacy is fragmented, and this may compromise its effect. One member of the committee described bikini-clad girls competing with educational, trade and investment seminars. In a coordinated marketing campaign this diversity could be celebrated. As many of the agents of public diplomacy are not under government control—NGOs, citizen diplomats, international organisations—it is up to the government to find ways of shaping messages into an overall ideology. Implementing policies that use public and cultural diplomacy as tools alongside traditional diplomacy would help focus all international relationships. The lack of formal policy and agreed definitions contributes to the underutilisation of cultural diplomacy.

Cultural diplomacy, as defined by the Report, includes ‘the exchange of ideas, information, art and other aspects of culture among nations and their peoples in order to foster mutual understanding.’ This definition was taken from a US report on cultural diplomacy, titled ‘Cultural Diplomacy: The Linchpin of Public Diplomacy,’ and is based on that of Milton Cummings. It recognises that cultural diplomacy enhances a country’s image and can be used to build a ‘foundation of trust’ between nations. An expansion of this beyond traditional creative arts, and using this mutual understanding to influence the deployment and formation of policy, would see cultural diplomacy reach its potential. Through this Senate Report, cultural diplomacy is seen as a lesser tool of public diplomacy, rather than a programme in its own right. The 2014-16 Strategy discusses cultural diplomacy initiatives in support of public diplomacy programmes. This recognition of a more powerful role of cultural diplomacy goes some way to establishing its difference from public diplomacy. By using case studies and highlighting well-known events in Australian history as significant cases for cultural diplomacy, this thesis has aimed to lift the profile of cultural diplomacy. The importance of

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13 ibid, p. 107.
15 ibid.
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this type of diplomacy increases as it is formally included in legislation. As its potential becomes clearer, so too will its achievements.

**Australia Unlimited**

Early in 2015, the Australian DFAT launched the Australian Cultural Diplomacy Grants Program. Using Australia’s creative culture, DFAT seeks to engage overseas audiences and increase awareness of Australia’s contemporary identity. Cultural exchange and creative collaboration are seen as a positive way of strengthening people-to-people linkages, and to reinforce Australia’s image as ‘a stable, sophisticated, multicultural and creative nation with a rich and diverse culture.’ This programme offers grants to creative individuals and groups whose projects focus on specific cultural relations objectives that contribute to advancing Australia’s policy priorities and enhancing understanding of Australia. The cultural exchange is intended for an international audience, and is to be acted upon by non-government agencies.

The Department aims to project a contemporary image of Australia and its capabilities internationally, through the delivery of high-quality, innovative collaborative projects; strengthening long-term cultural relationships with key regional partners; enhancing market access and developing strategies for Australian exports; and strengthening commercial agreements in target areas. The Australian Government seeks to develop a sporting diplomacy strategy, including Australia’s sports ‘brand,’ which includes the ideals of innovation and integrity. A science diplomacy programme hopes to raise Australia’s profile as a partner for scientific research, collaboration and exchange. It is hoped that as well as promoting Australia as a preferred destination for education, it would also enhance the country’s reputation for competitiveness.

The success of cultural diplomacy in Australia will be determined by the degree to which the government integrates personal relationships into the core business of diplomacy. By using a more comprehensive understanding of the power of cultural diplomacy, the Department

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17 ibid.

18 Department of Foreign Affairs, ‘Australian Cultural Diplomacy Grants Program,’ ibid.

19 ibid.

20 ibid.
might discover other collaborations that could help them meet these goals. The mission statement for Australia’s public diplomacy strategy 2014-16 states that its goals are to ‘strengthen Australia’s influence, reputation and relationships internationally by promoting a clear, creative and confident vision for Australia’s international policy agenda that reflects our core national interests and improves domestic understanding of DFAT’s role.’

To achieve this, the Department will employ soft power strategies. By targeting international governments; businesses; NGOs, research, science and medical institutions; education bodies; commentators; host nations; women’s organisations; and sporting and education groups, the government aims to facilitate networks and collaborations that will build understanding, trust and advance Australia’s national interests. DFAT ‘will advance targeted public diplomacy initiatives which promote our economic, artistic and cultural, sporting, scientific and education assets to underline Australia’s credentials as a destination for business, investment, tourism and study.’

With a desire to promote a contemporary, creative and tolerant nation, DFAT hopes this will also show Australia as an attractive place to study, work, visit, live and invest. This displays an understanding of the importance of broader interpersonal relations in the success of specific government goals, and its effects on the consideration of government policy.

Both public and cultural diplomacy are important tools for the Australian Government. As a middle power in international politics, personal relationships, reputation and the national ‘brand’ are vital to Australia’s trade and economic progress, as well as to the country’s physical security. DFAT sees that cultural diplomacy can provide a forum for forging alliances, along with those that are built on economic or geographic connections. In a world focused on budgets and measurability, they have placed a three year time frame on the majority of these projects, in order to be able to assess their effectiveness and adjust them if necessary. The outcomes of this programme would be strengthened by a broader understanding of cultural diplomacy, its breadth and scope. A look at DFAT’s thinking less than a decade ago shows that the perceptions of cultural diplomacy possibilities have definitely expanded. This progression is exciting, and a focused approach to cultural diplomacy in its ‘new’ iterations has the potential to be a positive addition to foreign affairs.

21 ibid.
22 Department of Foreign Affairs, ‘Australian Cultural Diplomacy Grants Program’
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