# Working Nation, the Ethos of Competition and the Transformation of Public Policy 

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#### Abstract

Working Nation marked a pivotal shift in the public policy agenda. The policy framework articulated by Working Nation was built around the idea of 'competition'. This paper traces the lineage of competition and its roots in the thinking that shaped Working Nation. It is argued that Working Nation provided the model for how competition could be embedded in a range of policy developments.


## Introduction

From 1983 to 1996 successive labor governments restructured the fundamentals of Australian political economy. Johnson and Tonkiss (2002, p. 11) described this period as one in which 'Australian Labor successfully presented itself as ... "the natural inheritor" of capitalism'. Despite some cogent critiques of the nature, direction and impact of the sorts of policies pursued under Labor (see eg, Bell 1996, 1997; Mitchell 1999; Pusey 1991; Stilwell 1994; Kuhn 1993; Wiseman 1996) not only are the Labor policies to be distinguished as more favourable than the policy directions pursued since 1996 by the Liberal-National coalition - the supposed party of business - they are re-imagined as progressive and beneficial. Thus the Keating governments (and before them the Hawke governments), are remembered as the economic modernisers with heart, whose Prime Ministers continue to position themselves as the principal architects of Australia's economic rehabilitation in the 1980s and 1990s while at the same time renovating the safety net to keep it
in good repair. This is a view of the legacy of the Hawke and Keating governments that the recently deposed leader of the ALP, Mark Latham, pushed at every opportunity (Latham 2002). On the other hand, the Howard government, with its socially conservative agenda, is seen as having differentiated itself from the Keating government in any number of policy areas, in particular with its approach to unemployment, tax reform, refugees, and asylum seekers.

In his account of the modernisation of Labor in Britain and Australia since the 1960s Andrew Scott (2000) traces the rise of market based rhetoric and policies, and the revision of the core principles and platforms for both parties. The agenda was neither dramatic nor uncontested, instead it was an ongoing process of dismantling traditional policies combined with intensive internal political divisions and in-fighting. What the analysis reveals is that Labor in office in Australia went much further towards embracing market based policies than its counterparts in the UK and the USA through the implementation of policies aimed at cutting public expenditure, reducing the size of the public sector and redefining the role of government. In this context Working Nation represents a continuation of the redefinition of the program in office for Australian Labor (or 'work in progress' as Prime Minister Keating labelled it). Working Nation could thus be understood as an expression of a new social democratic program, one that both presages the Third Way of British Labour as well as articulating the reconfigured policy assumptions of Australian Labor (Johnson and Tonkiss 2002, p. 8).

In this paper, we argue that the social model embedded in Working Nation marked a pivotal shift in the public policy agenda. While some (eg Jose \& Quirk 2002) have suggested that Working Nation marked the adoption of a particular model for the restructuring the way in which the Commonwealth Employment Services (CES) delivered its services to the unemployed, we would suggest that Working Nation heralded much more. We would agree that Working Nation provided the framework for the essential changes that made it possible for the Howard government to push ahead with its Job Network agenda in 1996. We would argue, however, that Working Nation articulated the Keating government's policy commitment to the idea of competition and that it provided the model for how this could (and would) be embedded in a range of policy developments.

The specific application of competition to the problem of unemployment was only the beginning. Its manifestations within the Howard government's Job Network scheme are therefore not surprising. But it would be a mistake to regard this as one of the definitive products of the change of government in
1996. Granted, the Job Network appeared to be a radical shift in policy direction and it has attracted considerable interest and formed the basis for comparative analysis in the field (OECD 1997). Even those who acknowledge some degree of policy continuity between the Labor and Coalition governments concede that the creation of 'contestable markets' demonstrated 'strong elements of discontinuity' (Ramia \& Carney 2001, p. 60). Yet it is precisely this idea of 'contestable markets' that in our view marks a strong continuity. The idea of 'contestable markets' is merely a euphemism for competition, and once one approaches Working Nation from this perspective the degree of continuity is hard to ignore because the idea of competition is central to the underlying philosophy of Working Nation (Considine 2001, p. 118-9). Stilwell (1994) and Goodman (1997) certainly hinted at the idea of 'contestable markets' being clearly grounded in the policy assumptions of Working Nation. Moreover, while Working Nation did have at its core the generation of jobs through economic growth as the prime response to high unemployment rates and large numbers of long-term unemployed, it also heavily promoted key labour supply side measures of training, intensive case management and work experience in order to make the unemployed 'job ready' (Stilwell 1994). Indeed, one of the features of Working Nation was the absence of direct job creation measures and the belief that required rates of growth could be generated through orthodox economic management policies (Quiggin 1994).

Our paper focuses on the idea of competitive or 'contestable markets', to demonstrate that it constitutes a clear policy thread that connects Working Nation with the Job Network. Moreover, it is part of the overall framework of dismantling and redefining the function of the State, and indeed the Labor policy program. This included tariff cuts, deregulating the banking system, privatisation and reforming the tax system. This represents an ongoing program of modernising Labor policies, taking the 'tough' decisions and enhancing the electoral appeal of the party (Johnson and Tonkiss 2002, p. 8). The embedding of the ethos of competition within Working Nation also represents a pivotal moment in the development of public policy in Australia.

On some accounts, the Howard government's approach to the unemployed is portrayed as punitive, tough with no heart; implying that the Keating regime was less punitive, tough, but just. The position outlined by Michael Raper (2002), Director of the National Rights Centre, in a public lecture hosted by the Centre of Full Employment \& Equity at the University of Newcastle, typified the demonisation of the Howard government and the selective remembering of Labor's approach to managing the unemployed. The supposed saving grace for the Keating government was that it did not dispense with the
safety net in so far as it was mindful of the need to portray itself as committed to social justice. This theme recurs time and again in Don Watson's insider account of the Keating years. For example, 'Keating Labor was concerned with "civilising capitalism" in much the same degree as Billy Hughes and Andrew Fisher were, or John Curtin and Ben Chifley, albeit with less formal (and pointless) obeisance to the socialist ideal' (Watson 2002, p. 317). It is arguable that Keating Labor can lay claim to a 'civilising capitalism' tradition allegedly mapped out by these predecessors. That tradition was premised on the need for the government to take responsibility for controlling market forces, for ensuring that the excesses of the social relations of the market were eliminated by reforming and controlling them to maximise the general welfare of the society. The direction and rationale was more clearly focused on a collective ethos (Nairn 1973)

In contrast, the Keating governments (and before it the Hawke governments) positioned themselves as the liberators of market relations, and indeed as did the Whitlam government with its across the board tariff cut (Scott 2000). Both Hawke and Keating saw their role as modernisers, the architects of an economic transformation that brought the economy into a late twentieth century competitive efflorescence. If it was following in any tradition it was that of the Whitlam governments of 1972-75. True, the Whitlam years are rightly seen as a landmark in the pursuit of social reform and a 'buy back the farm' ethos. But those goals were predicated on clearly stated aims of modernising Australian capitalism, of implementing the sorts of economic reforms to the market that the Hawke and Keating governments pursued with gusto. This represents a process of renewal and redefinition of political Labor towards welding together neoliberalism with social democracy (Pierson and Castles 2001; Jose 2003, p. 98-100). Rather than 'civilising capitalism' the Hawke and Keating years were about cultivating capitalism. That is the key theme of this paper that will be demonstrated through tracing the lineage of competition and its roots in the thinking that shaped Working Nation. Working Nation continued the trajectory of redefining the role of the state and, as Latham depicted that trajectory, of re-positioning Labor as the champion of reform, the moderniser of the economy and the facilitator of community through public-private partnerships, life-time learning, the development of social capital and more active and targeted social policies (Latham 2001).

## Working Nation and Competition

One of the key dimensions of the policy frame embedded within Working Nation was the advocacy of a competition-based policy model. As the Prime Minister stated explicitly in the Preamble to the first volume of the White Paper, the targets of Working Nation were 'employment and growth'; the problem of unemployment would only be solved by 'sustained economic growth' which in turn could only be achieved through 'improved competitiveness and productivity' (1994a, p. 2-3). Keating went on to emphasise that the goals of employment and economic growth were 'indivisible' and that the White Paper marked the beginning of an era in which 'new goals of economic efficiency' were to be set and pursued (1994a, p. 3).

Commenting on Working Nation, Wearing and Smyth (1998, p. 236) noted the 'eleventh hour' appearance of this endorsement of competition, as if it was an unexpected bolt from the blue. However, this policy shift, though 'eleventh hour', was not entirely out of the blue. Competition as a guiding principle for all policy considerations was definitely in the ascendancy as, only nine months earlier in August of 1993, the Report of the Independent Committee of Inquiry on National Competition Policy, prepared by Professor Fred Hilmer, had been released. Hilmer's (1993) views on competition were strongly endorsed by the Keating government and taken up almost as eagerly by the various Australian governments through the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in February 1994. But more importantly, the Hilmer Report was identified and specifically cited by Keating in the second volume of Working Nation where the devil's detail is to be found. In the second chapter where the environment for economic growth was mapped there was a section specifically entitled 'Competition and efficiency: a new approach to reform' that explicitly reproduced key recommendations from the Hilmer Report (Working Nation 1994b, p. 38-39). These recommendations formed the elements of what would become the national competition policy framework - a framework that would be applied to all areas of economic activity. Throughout the second volume of Working Nation there are numerous references to competition and how it would be applied to the government's policy framework (1994b, pps.38, 39, $50,52,53,61,68,110,113,115,127,128,131,133,173)$.

This framework was seen to be essential because in the government's view 'broadening the scope of competition and enhancing the speed and suppleness with which our economy responds to it, are the twin keys to improving efficiency' (1994b, p. 50). The medicine of competition, however, was not to be restricted to industries but was also to cover the provision of services,
including those provided by government. Government provision of social welfare and employment services was to be subjected to the new regime of competition based norms. For example, the competition based model was to be applied to the case management of the long term unemployed who would be 'managed' by a corporatised off-shoot of the Commonwealth Employment Service (CES), Employment Assistance Australia, private providers and community agencies. This was a significant policy innovation. According to Edwards et al. (2001, p. 152) 'contentious issues' such as subjecting CES to competition 'were put into the public arena' for discussion. But one will search the Green Paper on unemployment, Restoring Full Employment (CEO 1993), in vain to find any mention of a competition-based model for the operations of the CES. There was no recommendation or policy option that advocated that the public provider compete for contracts or that it be set up on the basis of outcomes-based funding. While the Green Paper did discuss the contractingout of external service provision this was in the context of complementing the public provision of employment services, but this did not mean that the public provider should compete for contracts or outcomes-based funding (CEO 1993, p. 152-153). Neither this nor the concomitant administrative changes foreshadowed in Working Nation featured within the Green Paper (Wearing \& Smyth 1998); nor was it featured in the subsequently published summary of the consultation process (CEO 1994 cited in Stilwell 1994). The 1994-1995 Budget followed almost immediately and put into practice some of the policy ideas of Working Nation, including the various privatisation measures that tied in with the government's overall conservative fiscal strategy (Stilwell 1994, pps. 111, 113).

While it is clear that the Hilmer Report provided a serious and significant policy context for the thinking surrounding Working Nation, there was another influence that has received very little attention apart from Wearing and Smyth (1998) and Jose and Quirk (2002). This was a report submitted to the Keating cabinet by the Minister for Social Security, Peter Baldwin. The report in question was From Client to Customer: An Approach to Re-Engineering the Delivery of Employment Services, prepared by Paul Twomey (hereafter referred to as the Twomey Report). Just why a Minister with no responsibilities for the portfolio covering the employment services should have taken it upon himself to commission a report at a cost of $\$ 203,200$ (CALC 1994) that was aimed at re-engineering that department is itself curious. Perhaps this underlines the view that Working Nation was understood by some to be more an opportunity to revise the provision of social security than it was about creating jobs (see Pixley 1994; Howard 2001). However, according to a member of the Committee producing the Green Paper, Baldwin was not really interested in the income support reforms under development in
his own Department, but rather with 'some way out ideas that didn't fit with any of the things we were dealing with' (cited in Howard 2001, p. 63). Furthermore, according to Meredith Edwards, the former Deputy Secretary of Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Minister 'had a very different vision' in that 'he had ideas about how new technologies could assist the unemployed and give them greater choice' (cited in Howard 2001, p. 62). Indeed, Edwards, as reported by Howard, went so far as to say that it was not that the Minister's ideas 'weren't good ideas or that people didn't like them', but that they evidently appeared too late in the piece to be incorporated into the White Paper; nevertheless she noted that 'many of these ideas have been taken up since Working Nation' (Howard 2001, p. 63).

Seven years later when writing about the policy process underpinning the creation of the Green Paper and its transformation into the White Paper, Edwards' detailed and otherwise informative discussion made no mention of the Minister of Social Security's interest in the CES (Edwards et al. 2001). Nor did her discussion give much attention to the idea of a competitive model for the CES apart from the brief mention noted above. Indeed, her comments might lead one to conclude that the idea of introducing a competitive basis to the operations of the CES was clearly a part of the Green Paper process. And hence that the alleged discrepancy between the Green Paper and the White Paper on this point was nowhere near as marked as suggested by Wearing and Smyth (1998). Yet only two pages later, in a section of her analysis on the Green Paper subtitled 'Policies and Proposals', Edwards reproduced a journal entry that suggested otherwise. The entry for 13 November 1993 read:

> It was clear that Derek Volker [Secretary of DEET] and Mike Keating [Secretary of the Department of Prime Minister \& Cabinet and Chair of the CEO] had got together before the meeting and agreed on, at least, not using the word 'competition' in relation to the CES (Edwards et al. 2001, p. 155).

This was clearly at odds with her view noted above that a competition model was open for public debate.

As noted the Green Paper did not embrace a competition model, nor did it even suggest one for public debate. While it did argue for the development of a case management approach, the Green Paper emphasised that this needed to be met by enhancing the CES's capacities through improving training and expertise of CES staff (CEO 1993, pps.148, 151-2, 160). Competition as a means for the CES to develop and deliver employment placements was simply not part of what was published in the Green Paper. To imply otherwise is to apply an after the event interpretation of the development of the Green Paper.

In our view, the Twomey Report gives an important insight into the 'eleventh hour development' noted by Wearing and Smyth (1998). The Twomey Report explicitly embraced the ethos of competition (Twomey 1994, p. 54-55) and provided an opportunity for the Minister for Social Security to present an analysis for the restructuring of the CES. But even more significantly, the Twomey Report provided the Labor government with a specific application of Hilmer's competition philosophy to employment service provision. We now turn to a consideration of the Twomey Report and its advocacy of competition.

## The Twomey Report and Re-Engineering Service Delivery

The author of the report, Paul Twomey, has become an influential corporate consultant who is founder and Director of Argo P@cific and is also president of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN). Amongst other things he was the founding Chief Executive Officer of the government's National Office for the Information Economy, an adviser to the Ralph Review of Business Taxation during 1998-99, and an executive manager within Austrade from 1994 to 1997. Prior to preparing his report for the Minister of Social Security in 1994 he had been a corporate consultant with McKinsey and Company in which capacity he advised major corporations in the telecommunications, financial service and tourism sectors in Australia, the USA, Japan, and Hong Kong on key aspects of management and organisational structure (Argo P@cific 2004). In 1994 nothing in his consultancy background suggested any expertise in public sector service delivery, knowledge of the operational workings of the CES, or any particular experience in social policy development. Despite this Twomey's consultancy and his expertise were defended by the Department of Social Security (the department that commissioned the Report) on the grounds that Twomey 'came to the department very highly recommended as a person with expertise - and very recent expertise - in an area of interest in developing community based interest within the White Paper context' (CALC 1994).

Twomey adopted a 'business re-engineering approach' which he explained involved 'taking a blank sheet of paper and redrawing how organisations can deliver services that customers, rather than managers or internal systems, value and desire' (Twomey 1994, p. 2). This might be regarded as an insightful approach insofar as it enabled the organisational structure to be reconfigured or 're-engineered' as a thought experiment without any preconceptions or past assumptions getting in the way. In this way the organisation could be reimagined in ways that could subsequently be adopted in actuality to ensure
that what it did in practice met a market-based need and hence enabled it to stay profitable. More circumspect advocates of re-engineering, such as Hammer (1990, p. 105), might well caution that it is 'an all-or-nothing proposition with an uncertain result'. However, once the slate has been wiped clean in reality such circumspection is of little moment because the subsequent results have no reference point.

Twomey's re-engineering approach to the problem of unemployment redefined the problem in terms of the 'Government's need to find a solution'. This avoided the difficulties of 'amending the existing systems'. Rather it asked questions concerning 'the needs of unemployed people', what 'outcomes unemployed people value', what 'inputs' are required to achieve them, and 'what are the processes' needed to transform 'inputs into valued outputs' (Twomey 1994, p. 11). On the blank slate, Twomey sketched a new, radically different organisational structure that would operate according to market principles. It would coordinate the activities of private and community based providers who would be contracted on a pay-by-performance basis to place unemployed people in jobs (Twomey 1994, p. 47-50). The new structure would be facilitated by two major units: the Unemployment Market Analysis Unit (AMAU) and the Unemployment Services Unit (USU). Twomey's suite of recommendations amounted to a 'final solution' to the problems that he perceived to be affecting the CES. The weaknesses of Twomey's analysis and the flawed basis of its reasoning concerning the operational procedures of the CES have already been cogently criticised by Jose and Quirk (2002) and need not be rehearsed here. Our focus is with Twomey's discussion of competition and the recommendations that flowed from it.

## The Twomey Report and the Framework of Competition

Twomey commented critically on the Green Paper's approach and suggested that its 'one-stop shop model with ubiquitous service delivery' that implied 'a 'one size fits all' approach' was no longer appropriate in the contemporary 'commercial world' it was essentially a 'no choice, no competition model' (Twomey 1994, p. 54). Why it was no longer appropriate was not addressed by Twomey. As far as he was concerned the ideas and policy approaches that informed the Green Paper were themselves a part of the problem. Similar sentiments, in particular the phrase 'one size fits all approach', were also expressed by one of the Working Nation architects in a subsequent ministerial paper that addressed case management and public sector reform (cited in Considine 2001, p. 119). Just as importantly, noted Twomey, 'community
action is already introducing competition to the CES' in the form of community based groups and charities securing private and government funds to assist their provision of job placement services (Twomey 1994, pp. 54 \& 58). What was needed, asserted Twomey, was 'some government encouragement' to enable these sorts of developments to 'proliferate'. However, he believed that this could not happen under the prevailing CES model because his 'research data' indicated that 'the key to success' lay in the twofold process of understanding accurately the needs of business and matching 'unemployed people to the specific skills and attitudes required. Given that for Twomey it was fundamental that 'the introduction of competition is the great driver of improved customer service and innovation' it was self-evident that an organisation that was inimical to a competitive model would not be able to adapt to what was needed (Twomey 1994, p. 54). We need to note here that the research data to which Twomey appealed was that produced by the same management consulting group, McKinsey and Company, that both he and Hilmer were closely associated with. Clearly this was hardly independent corroboration of his assertions and the analysis based on them.

Twomey then moved on to discuss briefly the Hilmer Report and to outline its relevant recommendations for his own discussion, in much the same way as emerged subsequently in Working Nation. Twomey noted that the Hilmer Report recommended that 'governments should cooperatively implement a mechanism for facilitating pro-competitive structural reforms of public monopolies' (Twomey 1994, p. 55). Not only would this improve the efficiency of the delivery of employment placement undertaken by the CES, 'it would likely drive out the high level of administration costs presently embedded in the CES' (Twomey 1994, p. 55). However, it needs to be noted that at no stage does Twomey demonstrate that the CES experienced these high levels of administration costs or that these contributed to its alleged inability to place unemployed people in jobs. Indeed, as Jose and Quirk (2002) have demonstrated, Twomey's analysis of the CES's operational functions misrepresented their success rates as well as completely misunderstanding how the CES delivered its services. Twomey's (1994, p. 58) assertion that 'most labour market activity takes place without CES involvement' does not bear scrutiny. That problem notwithstanding, Twomey went on to claim that 'the Hilmer Committee put[.] forward a compelling case for introducing competition to areas of government services previously held in monopoly' (Twomey 1994, p. 55).

At no stage did Twomey offer any argument to demonstrate a positive correlation between competition and efficiency. This pillar of free market
rhetoric was simply assumed to be in no need of further discussion. After citing several passages from the Hilmer Report in which government provided 'welfare and community services' were clearly identified as in need of microeconomic reform Twomey noted that a 'competitive customer-supplier relationship' was the 'the key to establishing a sound commercial environment' for solving the problem of unemployment (Twomey 1994, p. 55). Twomey also asserted that 'competition between government and other providers would enhance services to the unemployed and potential employers' (Twomey 1994, p. 56). To buttress his account he suggested that the Green Paper agreed with his views on the role of private providers but noted that the Green Paper did not go far enough. Indeed the Green Paper 'failed to grasp the key question' when it suggested that private providers should complement the activities of the CES. The key question was the need for competition. In Twomey's words:

The issue is not to define the area of dominance of the public agency, but rather to find a cost-effective means to make it profitable for private agencies to assist the long-term unemployed. The best way this can be achieved is to enable public funding to follow the unemployed person either directly or through service contracts with providers.

It is likely that competition for providing of return-to-work consultancy services will result in providers pursuing niche opportunities [sic]. Over time, one would expect to see case managers specialising in such client groups as small business start-ups, high risk clients, and industry-specific employment (Twomey 1994, p. 56).

This was the basic approach that underpinned Twomey's analysis of the CES and his recommendations to the Minister of Social Security. Twomey was adamant that such an approach of competitive case-management would yield 'greater financial flexibility, product innovation, and client-choice' (Twomey 1994, p. 59).

We would also note that it was not just Twomey's model that found expression within Working Nation, but his language and terminology. Thus the unemployed became 'clients' and programs were to become 'client focussed' (Working Nation 1994b, p. 127). This is not surprising given it was very much the language of microeconomic reform as can be seen from the Hilmer Report. Working Nation also reproduced aspects of Twomey's negative assessment of the CES, though it did acknowledge the difficulties faced by the CES in dealing with 'nearly a fourfold increase in the labour market program activity for unemployed people' (1994b, p. 131).

By and large, however, Working Nation articulated a need to re-vitalise the CES. It also very strongly echoed Twomey's re-engineering interpretation of 'revitalisation' that could only be achieved through competitive casemanagement and a commercial orientation of the delivery of employment services. This competitive ethos would also be applied to (or imposed on) the unemployed themselves to the extent that '[j]ob seekers will take an active role in deciding the type of assistance they require' (Working Nation 1994b, p. 128); but just as important would be the emphasis on 'improv[ing] the skills and competitiveness of those assisted' (Working Nation 1994b, p. 115). Not just the system of managing the unemployed but the unemployed themselves would be made more competitive. The means to achieve this would be a complete re-engineering of the CES, a 'revitalisation' in the more sober words of Working Nation.

## Conclusion

Clearly, the ethos of competition was central to the thinking underlying Working Nation. And as we have demonstrated, some of this underlying thinking was clearly expressed within the Twomey Report. Competition-based policy prescriptions formed the heart of Twomey's analysis. The core principle of competition, of marketisation, that was embedded in Working Nation can be traced back to the ideas promoted in his report and before that to the Hilmer Report. Twomey's report therefore gave an important rationale for the recommendations announced within Working Nation.

Labor's 1994 Employment Services Act put into legislative form the measures announced in Working Nation. This Act gave the Howard government the legislative basis to implement the Job Network. In this sense then it can be said that the outgoing Labor government had already put in place the necessary measures that enabled the Howard government to pursue its own, more intensified version of this marketised agenda. Of course one could argue that legislation put in place by one government by definition provides a basis for any subsequent legislation of its successor government. Hence it is no indictment of the Keating government that the incoming Howard government used the already existing legislative framework to empower its policy directions for the delivery of unemployment services.

However, it has been our argument that the privatised competition model for the delivery of employment (and other) services embedded in Working Nation involved more than just the re-engineering of the delivery of employment
services. Working Nation provided the social model for how competition could be embedded in a range of policy developments. It can thus be concluded that Working Nation marked a new and distinctive approach to framing social policy for this was precisely how Working Nation was understood by its architects. As Considine noted, the Prime Minister 'and others directing it' aimed at creating a policy approach that would be seen as 'the most important OECD initiative in social policy in the post-war period' (Considine 2001, p. 117). Indeed, as a number of scholars have noted, Working Nation provided a model that has been widely studied by numerous governments for the lessons it might provide for welfare reform (eg, Ramia \& Carney 2001; Finn 1999; Goodman 1997). The ongoing development and evolution of the Labour agenda from Hawke and Keating to Latham and beyond places it well within the trajectory of the Third Way. Working Nation embraced a reformist rhetoric in a context of global change, a context to which it was an active contributor - at least as far as the development of social security and welfare policy was concerned. Yet at the same time Labor remained enthralled by an economic orthodoxy that aimed to locate policy solutions to serious social issues within the dynamics of competitive market relations. Far from perpetuating a tradition of 'civilising capitalism', Working Nation remained within the more recent Labor tradition of cultivating capitalism.

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