



Pergamon

Available online at www.sciencedirect.com

SCIENCE @ DIRECT®

Electoral Studies XX (2003) XXX–XXX

**Electoral
Studies**www.elsevier.com/locate/electstud

Economic globalization, job insecurity and the populist reaction

A. Mughan ^{a,*}, C. Bean ^b, I. McAllister ^c^a *Department of Political Science, Ohio State University, Columbus, OH 43210, USA*^b *School of Humanities and Human Services, Queensland University of Technology, Carseldine, Queensland 4034, Australia*^c *Research School of Social Sciences, Australian National University, Canberra, ACT 0200, Australia*

Abstract

A striking change in the political party systems of many established democracies in recent years has been the rise to electoral and political prominence of right-wing populist parties. Moving beyond the usual anti-statism and racism attitudinal explanatory foci, this article posits that popular support for these parties is associated with the job insecurity that populist party leaders have attributed to deepening international economic integration, or economic globalization. The conceptualization of job insecurity is discussed and its expected relationship to the mercantilism of right-wing populist parties clarified. The hypothesis is tested in the specific context of support for Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party in the 1998 election to the Australian federal House of Representatives. The article concludes with a consideration of the wider implications of its findings.

© 2002 Elsevier Science Ltd. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

The Freedom Party's highly controversial elevation in 2000 to the status of junior coalition partner in Australia's government focused public attention on a notable and recent change in the party systems of the established democracies of the West, the emergence of a wave of new parties whose success is commonly attributed to their

* Corresponding author.

E-mail address: Mughan.1@osu.edu (A. Mughan).

right-wing populist appeal.¹ Although by no means the only ones, particularly prominent among them are the French National Front, the Reform Parties of Canada and the United States, the Freedom Party of Austria, the People's Party of Switzerland, the Vlaams Blok in Belgium, the One Nation Party in Australia, and New Zealand First. These parties, of course, are not without their predecessors. The Poujadistes in Fourth Republican France and Italy's neo-fascist Social Movement spring readily to mind. This new breed of right-wing party is different from its predecessors in two important respects, however. First, their right-wing populism entails the rejection of fascism and violence at the same time as stressing their commitment to representative democracy and the constitutional order. Second, their political significance is all the greater for their appearing not to be 'flash' parties in the Poujadiste mold. Instead, their popularity is proving to be durable, they are changing the terms of political debate in their societies, and they are even found in office at various levels of government (Hainsworth, 2000b).

This article aims to extend current understanding of the appeal that these parties hold for voters and, therefore, of the kind of challenges that their popularity poses for democratic governments. It starts by highlighting the existing literature's tendency not to look beyond the domestic policy issues of anti-statism and racism in explaining the new wave of populist discontent in many of the world's established democracies. Our argument is not that these policy issues are unimportant, but that the popular attention that these parties have focused on the domestic effects of globalization also has to be factored into any explanation of their popularity. Focusing on just one of the controversial effects attributed to it by populist party leaders, job insecurity, this article specifies an important mechanism by which their parties have exploited economic globalization to attract votes².

The empirical analysis is an in-depth case study of support for Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party in the October 1998 general election to the Australian House of Representatives. The concluding section then goes beyond this one case to point to the prevalence of globalization-induced insecurity in other countries and to emphasize its importance to an understanding of both the dynamics of contemporary democratic party systems and of the economic policy quandaries facing modern democratic governments.

¹ As well as a very large journal literature, there are numerous books. See, for example, Betz and Immerfall (1998); Hainsworth (1992), Kietschelt with McGann (1995) Merkl and Weinberg (1997) Schedler (1997) and Taggart (1996). As the titles of these books suggest, while there is widespread agreement as to which parties cluster together in this group, there is some debate about how they are best labeled. A good overview of this debate is Paul Hainsworth (2000a).

² Globalization is defined as the liberalization of trade in goods, services and capital. Our purpose in this article is not to debate whether trade openness is responsible for job insecurity or whether it is better explained, for example, by technological change. Rather, it is to determine whether the link drawn, rightly or wrongly, between the two by the One Nation party had implications for the way Australians voted in the 1998 general election. For some evidence of a direct relationship between globalization and job insecurity, see fn. 20.

2. Right-wing populism

The electoral appeal of right-wing populism is commonly presented as comprising two main ingredients, economic liberalism on the one hand and racism on the other. This mainstream perspective is nicely caught in the observation that “(o)nly if they (radical right parties) choose economic free market appeals that are combined with authoritarian and ethnocentric and even racist messages will they attract a broad audience.” (Kietschelt with McGann, 1995, p. viii). More fully, the economic basis of their appeal is held to lie in their rejection of the postwar social democratic consensus. “Taking as a starting date the end of the Second World War we can, with a nod to national variations, pick out four elements that have characterised the domestic politics of Western Europe in the ensuing four decades: social democracy, corporatism, the welfare state and Keynesianism. It is on the fertile ground of the foundering of these four pillars that the new (populist) parties have taken root” (Taggart, 1996, 13. See also Betz and Immerfall, 1999, 4).

But despite being widely shared, this diagnosis of the economic roots of public support for right-wing populist parties is incomplete insofar as it ignores the essential contradiction at the heart of their *laissez-faire* economic philosophy and popular appeal. Put briefly, right-wing populists may be liberal in domestic economic matters, but, as economic nationalists, they are mercantilist in international ones. They favor free market economics when it comes to dismantling the postwar social-democratic consensus to create a weaker state that accords better with their preference for greater individual autonomy and self-reliance. At the same time, though, as nationalists they resist this same brand of liberal economics in the international sphere for fear of the weak state that ensues, leaving domestic economic and political choices open to undue influence from international economic actors and forces. Specifically, they condemn the established parties are condemned for subscribing to a globalist economic philosophy and practice that erodes national economic independence and thereby necessarily undermines the nation’s political and cultural sovereignty. In practical terms, this economic nationalism translates, among other things, into a defense of native workers whose employment prospects are held to be under threat from “cheap” foreign labor (Capling, 1997).³ By virtue of their commitment to economic internationalization, the established parties of government are blamed by populists for turning a blind eye and a deaf ear to workers’ legitimate concerns for their job security in an increasingly global, competitive, and volatile labor market.

Blaming it on established parties’ commitment to economic globalization, in other words, right-wing populist parties have commonly sought electoral advantage by

³ This aversion to foreign labor can manifest itself in opposition to the importation of immigrants to compete for jobs at home as well as in the exportation of jobs to low-wage economies. It must be emphasized, however, that opposition to immigration is about much more than just jobs. Not unusually, for example, the Canadian Reform Party supported free trade in principle, while at the same time rejecting the free movement of labor in its calls for a more restrictive immigration policy (Manning, 1992). This analysis is concerned with one specific facet of populist parties’ economic nationalism, job insecurity, and makes no attempt to unravel its relationship to the more general and complex immigration issue.

turning job insecurity into a political issue. After expanding upon the meaning of job insecurity, the success of this strategy in the specific context of the 1998 Australian general election will be demonstrated.

3. Job insecurity and the One Nation party

In an era when “(p)lant closures with mass redundancies are now the order of the day, while mergers and restructuring plans threaten the jobs of many thousands more,” job insecurity has become a ubiquitous phenomenon (DeWitte, 1999, p. 156. See also Scheve and Slaughter, 2001 and Mughan and Lacy (2002). The reason is simple; labor market conditions have changed for the worse for many workers. After a social democratic interlude spanning several decades, workers in advanced industrial economies now find themselves thrust into, for them, an unprecedentedly competitive, unprotected and unpredictable labor market. Their common experience, and fear, is that economic globalization means not opportunity or progress, but the unimpeded ability of firms and corporations to transfer jobs, capital and technology abroad so that the secure, well-paying jobs that have underwritten a high standard of living and favorable economic prospects for them and their children are transferred to countries with lower wages, relatively unregulated working conditions and higher profits.

Job insecurity itself is a well-established concept in economics, psychology and sociology where it is generally defined in terms of individuals’ fear of job loss (De Witte, 1999; Hartley et al., 1991; and Gallie et al. (1994). Of course, having always been an integral feature of the labor market, the threat of unemployment is hardly new. The achievement of right-wing populist leaders, however, has been to put a new spin on it. Accepting that the fear of becoming unemployed lies at the root of job insecurity, they compound this fear by holding that the liberalized international economy makes it harder for workers to find as secure and well-paying a job as their current one, should they become unemployed. Their argument, in other words, is that workers in affluent countries have not only become more vulnerable to the play of international economic actors and forces over which they have no influence and against which they have little protection, but in addition they have to cope with good jobs having become scarcer as the result of globalization’s promoting their flight overseas and their replacement, if at all, by inferior labor market opportunities at home⁴. Thus, in her speech opening One Nation’s 1998 general election campaign, Pauline Hanson, its leader, proclaimed: “For many years successive Liberal/National

⁴ The definition of what constitutes a good job varies from one national context to another. In the United States, such a job “offers excellent wages and fringe benefits, healthy prospects of promotion, pleasant working conditions, and long-term job security” (Burtless et al., 1998, p. 51). However, in other countries, like Australia, governments often provide the benefits that private employers do in the US so that unemployment does not bring the fear of loss of, for example, health and old-age pension benefits. The desire to focus popular attention on good jobs is one reason why Pauline Hanson differentiates between “real long-term jobs” that she exemplifies by “real apprenticeships” and “the short-term action of simply creating government funded positions” under various employment schemes.

and Labor governments with their policies of globalisation and economic rationalism have positioned Australia so our industries would close and our jobs would be exported to benefit the workers and families of foreign lands at the expense of our own people.”⁵

The upshot is that two distinct definitions of individual-level job insecurity can be identified. For the sake of convenience, the first of them will be labeled ‘fear of job loss’ and the second ‘personal job insecurity’⁶. Since the political effects of both are moot, the two will be examined separately in the analysis to come. Also taken into account will be the possibility that, as with evaluations of economic performance, job insecurity resonates with voters at the level of the national community as well as of the individual⁷. In this regard, Pauline Hanson’s rhetoric is noteworthy for not appealing to individual self-interest directly. Instead, it expresses a concern for a collectivity, usually identified by phrases like “ordinary” or “mainstream” Australians and “little Aussie battlers” (Scalmer, 1999).

The question that now needs to be addressed is why job insecurity can be expected to fuel populist sentiment in Australia. Importantly, economic theory plays no role in answering this question. It might be argued, for example, that contemporary changes in the labor market are better explained by technological change than heightened international economic integration (Richardson, 1995)⁸. The crucial point is that over an extended period Pauline Hanson repeatedly promoted to voters the view that globalization was the culprit. Moreover, her condemnation of both Labor and the Liberal-National Coalition for their shared commitment to free trade placed her party in the position of potentially acting as a lightning rod on the issue. It remains to be seen whether it did.

The One Nation party emerged in 1997. Its founder, Pauline Hanson, had pre-

⁵ This quotation comes from *Pauline Hanson’s One Nation Launch Speech* delivered on 29 September 1998 at the beginning of the 1998 federal election campaign. It was accessed at www.gwb.com.au/onenation/speech.html.

⁶ The data used in this analysis come from the 1998 Australian Election Study. For full details, see Bean et al. (1998). Based on a self-completion questionnaire, it is a random sample of the electorate, representative of all states and territories, and was conducted immediately after the October 1998 federal election. There were 1897 completed responses, an effective response rate of 58%. In it, fear of job loss is measured by the question “How worried are you that in the next 12 months you or someone else in your household might be out of work and looking for a job for any reason—very worried, somewhat worried, or not worried at all?” The measure of ‘personal job insecurity’ is the interaction term obtained by multiplying the responses to this fear of job loss question by the responses to “In your community these days how easy is it for someone who is trying to find a job to get a good job at good wages—very easy, somewhat easy, somewhat hard, or very hard?” The coding on the job loss variable is reversed before the multiplication so that a high score on the interaction term indicates greater job insecurity.

⁷ The wording of the national job insecurity question is “When it comes to the availability of good jobs for Australian workers, some say the best years are behind us. Others say the best years are yet to come. What do you think?” The response categories are “Best years definitely behind,” “Best years probably behind,” “Best years probably yet to come,” and “Best years definitely to come.” In the analysis, the coding is reversed.

⁸ That perceived globalization does play a direct role in promoting job insecurity is suggested by evidence presented in fn. 20.

viously been the Liberal candidate for the safe Labor seat of Oxley in south east Queensland, but was dropped just before the 1996 general election because of her allegedly racist views (Jackman, 1998). She contested the seat as an independent, and won. She reiterated her controversial views on aborigines and immigrants in her maiden speech to Parliament and at the same time expanded her concerns to include, among other things, unemployment and the role of “(r)educed tariffs on foreign goods that compete with local products” in making it worse⁹. The Hanson bandwagon started rolling immediately. She launched her One Nation party in April 1997 and, to the astonishment of most political observers, it won 23% of the vote in the Queensland state election only 15 months later. It then contested all but nine of 148 seats in the federal election in October of that same year and won 8.4% of the first-preference vote nationwide.

Despite the vast attention that the media paid to Hanson’s views on aboriginal and immigration matters, these ranked at the bottom of the list of the Australian electorate’s concerns at the time of the 1998 election. Perhaps for this reason, she announced, on 30th August, that One Nation would focus its campaign on jobs-related issues (Jupp, 2000, p. 166; Niesche and Bitá, 1998; and Toohey (1998). This was an area in which Australia’s established parties of government were vulnerable. For a start. After 13 years of Labor (1983–96) and two (1996–98) of Liberal-National government, the Australian rate of unemployment remained at an embarrassingly high 8.0%, which was not much of an improvement over the average 8.7% for the entire post-1983 period. The matching figure for the years 1969–1980 inclusive had been 2.9%¹⁰. As well, recent years had witnessed profound structural change, often to the detriment of workers, in the Australian labor market. One Nation propaganda placed responsibility for these developments squarely in the laps of the established parties. It painted a picture of a country in which unemployment remained unacceptably high, in which a large number of good jobs had been lost through downsizing and outsourcing, and in which the remaining jobs had taken on a stronger casual, or short-term, character. The scale and rapidity of these changes are nicely captured by the following summary of labor market developments over the course of the 1980s and 1990s:

As a result of downsizing and outsourcing work, in a mere 12 years between 1986 and 1997, 3.3 million full-time workers were retrenched...By the mid-1990s, more than half of all Australian organizations had been downsized...By 1994, it was estimated that about 25% of the Australian workforce had been casualized. Over the decade of global engagement, nearly all industries realized a significant growth in the proportion of casuals... Australia’s growth in temporary employment, or short-term jobs, ...rose from 16 to 24% between 1983 and 1994”

⁹ The full text of the speech can be found in Pasquarelli (1998).

¹⁰ The source for these unemployment data is the International Labor Organization and the address where they were found is <http://laborsta.ilo.org/cgi-bin/broker.exe>.

(Lambert, 2000, 102–103. See also Capling and Galligan, 1992 and McAllister and Bean (2000).

In short, Pauline Hanson was not tilting at windmills in her condemnation of the established parties' unequivocal commitment to the economic globalization that she declaimed as being largely responsible for high levels of both unemployment and job insecurity. Put simply, her message was that it is not enough simply to get more people into work; also imperative was the need to counter the harmful effects of globalization by creating and retaining good jobs in Australia for Australians. "Unemployment and the need to pro-actively create *real long-term* (our emphasis) jobs must be our number one priority."¹¹

4. The results

Before testing whether the job insecurity issue did help to boost One Nation's vote at the expense of Labor and the Coalition, two possible validity problems in the data have to be discussed first. The first centers around the hypothesis that the job insecurity measures, being prospective, are confounded in voters' minds with short-term economic performance judgments that are also prospective, and the second around the hypothesis that job insecurity, being an artefact of widespread racism among Australians, has no independent existence in their electoral calculus. These hypotheses will now be put to the empirical test, and rejected one by one.

There is little doubt that, conceptually, the insecurity and performance measures are distinct. In terms of question wording, the latter have a strictly defined time perspective, namely, the next 12 months, while their insecurity counterparts compare the past with an economic future that is relatively indefinite in duration. To claim that they are distinct does not imply their empirical independence, however. Negative assessments of short-term, individual and collective economic performance might, for example, compound over time into a belief that the economy had taken a permanent turn for the worse. Similarly, a sense of job insecurity could well color perceptions of short-term economic performance.

There is always the possibility, therefore, that individuals do not really distinguish between the two types of judgment when coming to a voting decision. As it turns out, this kind of pessimism is unwarranted. For a start, the performance and insecurity measures have different distributions in the population at large. Take performance first. In 1998, only 40% of Australians thought that the economic situation in Australia as a whole would be "a little" or "a lot" worse in 12 months' time, and an even smaller, 35%, of them were of the view that their household's financial situation would be "a little" or "a lot" worse by then. By contrast, a much larger 64% feared

¹¹ See Pauline Hanson's *One Nation Launch Speech* delivered on 29 September 1998 at the beginning of the 1998 federal election campaign. The speech was found on the internet at www.gwb.com.au/onenation/speech.html.

Table 1
Zero-order correlations between economic judgments^a

	National economy worsen	Household finances worsen	National job insecurity	Personal job insecurity	Fear of job loss
Household finances worsen	0.63				
National job insecurity	0.29	0.34			
Personal job insecurity	-0.10	-0.12	-0.16		
Fear of job loss	0.22	0.31	0.20	-0.05	
Good jobs scarce	0.29	0.36	0.33	-0.42	0.36

^a Source: 1998 Australian Election Study

imminent unemployment for themselves or someone in their household in the course of the next 12 months, and fully 79% were sociotropically insecure in the sense that they thought the best years for good jobs for Australian workers were in the past.

Given these distributions, it is not surprising that the zero-order correlations between the two sets of economic measures are generally not strong (see Table 1)¹². There is little in the table to suggest that the insecurity and performance measures are tapping the same economic judgments. Leaving aside the personal job insecurity variable which is barely related to the egocentric and sociotropic performance measures, the single largest correlation, 0.63, is between the two short-term performance judgments. In no other case, is any single correlation much higher than 0.4. Indeed, ignoring the direction of the relationship, the average correlation between prospective national economic performance and the four individual insecurity measures is 0.23 and that between these same measures and prospective individual economic performance is 0.28. It would seem, in other words, that the two sets of economic judgments overlap sufficiently that we would want to take them all into account in order to arrive at more reliable estimates of their relative impact on populist party voting, but at the same time they can hardly be claimed to be interchangeable.

A second potential inferential problem is that even if a relationship between job insecurity and populist party voting were to emerge, the claim could still be made that it is not conclusive evidence of a direct causal relationship between the two. That is, while it may be the case that the insecure heard One Nation's anti-globalization message and responded to it at the polls, it is equally plausible *prima facie* that, blaming immigrants for their problems, they were responding more to the party's racist message. Put differently, the source of Australians' job insecurity may

¹² All analyses are carried out over Coalition, Labor and One Nation voters only. Since creating interaction terms can generate severe collinearity problems, the fear of job loss and good jobs scarce variables are centered prior to creating the personal job insecurity interaction term so as to alleviate the potential collinearity problem (Friedrich, 1982). It should be noted that our substantive conclusions concerning the impact of the economic insecurity and performance measures would be the same had we entered the uncentered variables and interaction term into the analyses in Tables 2 and 3. Details are available from the authors on request.

be racism, not free trade. However, if racism and not globalization is indeed the source of job insecurity, two inter-related empirical regularities would be expected to follow. First, job insecurity should predict strongly to the variable for which it is ostensibly acting as a surrogate, racism. Second, job insecurity should have little or no effect on support for limiting imports since voters' views on protectionism and racism, being correlated at a modest 0.06, are to all intents and purposes independent of each other¹³.

Table 2 puts these expectations to the empirical test, using ordered probit analysis. The dependent variables are support for protectionism and racism. The predictor variables include ideological self-placement on a left-right scale¹⁴. Gender, age, union membership and being unemployed are also included to allow for the possibility that men, older people, union members, and the unemployed can be expected to be especially resistant to the changes associated with free markets. The same should be true of other traditional "winners" in Australia, the native-born (Australians and New Zealanders) and those harking from its longest-standing source of migrants, the British Isles. The rural residence variable is included because One Nation made its initial impact in rural Queensland¹⁵. Education is included as a measure of the skills needed to cope effectively in an internationally competitive economy and is expected to be negatively associated with both protectionism and racism¹⁶. Finally, egocentric and sociotropic economic performance variables are included because reliable estimation requires that account be taken of their overlap with the job insecurity measures that are also found in the table (see Table 1). The analyses are run separately for the competing definitions of individual-level job insecurity, fear of job loss and personal job insecurity.

¹³ The wording of the question tapping views on limiting imports is "Australia should limit the import of foreign products in order to protect its national economy" and the response options are "strongly agree," "agree," "neither," "disagree" and "strongly disagree." The coding is reversed to measure pro-protectionist sentiment in the analysis. As for the racism question, respondents were asked to choose "strongly agree," "agree," "neither," "disagree" or "strongly disagree" in reply to a question: "When it comes to things that count most, all races are certainly equal". The coding reflects approval of both import limitation and racism. It is worth noting here that the Australian Election Study data is collected by means of mail questionnaires, which should make responses to this sensitive question more reliable since the pressure to give a socially acceptable response to an interviewer would not be the consideration for the respondent that it would be in a face-to-face or telephone interview.

¹⁴ An alternative measure of long-term political predispositions is party identification. This measure could not be used, however, since, as might be expected with a party new to the political scene, relatively few (46) respondents claim to identify with One Nation and virtually all of its identifiers also voted for it.

¹⁵ . The measure of rurality is the size of the community in which the respondent lives. The categories are "a rural area or village," "a small country town (under 10,000 people)," "a larger country town (over 10,000 people)," "a large town (over 25,000 people)," and "a major city (over 100,000 people)." In the case of country of birth, the comparison group comprises those respondents born anywhere other than Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom or Ireland. The countries listed in the question are Italy, Germany, Greece, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Yugoslavia (former), Vietnam, and Other. 14.4 percent of all respondents come from the specific countries listed and 9.3% fall into the "Other" category

¹⁶ The categories of the education measure are "no qualification," "non-trade qualification," "trade qualification," "associate diploma," "undergraduate diploma," "bachelor degree," and "postgraduate degree or postgraduate diploma."

Table 2

Predictors of protectionist and racist sentiment by different definitions of individual-level job insecurity: ordered probit estimates^a

	Equation I		Equation II	
	Limit Imports	Racist	Limit Imports	Racist
Rightist	0.00 (0.02)	0.03* (0.02)	-0.00 (0.02)	0.03* (0.02)
Male	0.24*** (0.07)	0.22*** (0.07)	-0.24*** (0.07)	0.22*** (0.07)
Age in years	0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)
Educational qualifications	-0.08*** (0.02)	-0.06*** (0.02)	-0.08*** (0.02)	-0.06*** (0.02)
Union member	-0.00 (0.08)	-0.03 (0.08)	0.01 (0.08)	-0.02 (0.08)
Unemployed	0.10 (0.20)	0.13 (0.20)	0.08 (0.20)	0.13 (0.20)
Rural residence	0.04 (0.02)	0.03 (0.02)	0.04* (0.02)	0.02 (0.02)
Bom Austraha/NZ	0.02 (0.10)	0.50*** (0.11)	0.04 (0.10)	0.53*** (0.11)
Born UK /Ireland	-0.20 (0.15)	0.40** (0.15)	-0.16 (0.15)	0.43** (0.15)
National economy worsen	-0.04 (0.04)	-0.02 (0.04)	-0.03 (0.04)	-0.02 (0.04)
Personal economy worsen	0.18*** (0.05)	0.05 (0.05)	0.19*** (0.05)	0.06 (0.05)
Fear of job loss	0.07 (0.05)	-0.04 (0.05)	0.08 (0.05)	-0.02 (0.05)
Good jobs hard to find	-	-	0.01 (0.06)	-0.04 (0.06)
Personal job insecurity	-	-	0.24*** (0.06)	0.09 (0.06)
National job insecurity	0.16*** (0.04)	0.03 (0.04)	0.18*** (0.04)	0.04 (0.05)
Log likelihood	-1363.79	-1432.02	-1349.57	-1423.82
LR chi ² (13, 15)	120.89***	62.45***	139.48***	67.74***
Number of cases	1041	1033	1037	1038

^a $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$ one-tailed test). Source: 1998 Australian Election Study

Looking at Table 2, three important conclusions stand out. First, people seem to differentiate between what is good for them individually and what is good for the country as a whole. That is, they embrace protectionism, in the form of limiting imports, when they are pessimistic about their own immediate economic prospects, but do not do so when they are pessimistic in the short term about the national economy. This may reflect popular acceptance of the orthodox liberal economic doctrine that free trade is good for the country, even if it means hardship for some individuals and groups. Second, when individual-level job insecurity is defined sim-

ply as the fear of job loss, it has no role to play in the explanation of either protectionist or racist sentiment. By contrast, when it is defined interactively (the product of fear of job loss and the perception that good jobs are hard to come by locally), it can be seen to promote support for the continuation of a trade policy limiting imports. Thus, the way job insecurity is defined is critical for concluding whether or not it is related to support for right-wing populist ideology. Third, job insecurity, in all its forms, is unrelated to racism, whereas, in both its egocentric and sociotropic forms, it predicts strongly to the endorsement of protectionism in Equation II. In other words, people who worry about the future for good jobs for either themselves or for Australians generally are likely to endorse the limitation of imports, presumably as a means of protecting the country's industry and their own and others' jobs. Now, given that voters' views on protectionism and racism are barely related empirically, the fact that job insecurity predicts to them very differently undercuts the argument that protectionist sentiment is nothing more than an epiphenomenon, a by-product of voters' views on equality of the races. Thus, should job insecurity turn out to be associated with populist party voting, it is reasonable to assume that the relationship is testament to the success of One Nation's anti-globalization campaign propaganda in turning the job insecurity issue to its electoral advantage. With this in mind, it is to the question of job insecurity's impact on the vote that we now turn.

The focus of [Table 3](#) is voting patterns in the 1998 election. Guided by the logic of Pauline Hanson's refusal to differentiate between the established parties in her campaign rhetoric, the dependent variable is coded "1" for One Nation voters and "0" for Labor and Coalition voters combined¹⁷. It contains the same predictors as [Table 2](#), plus two others. These control for the more conventional, domestic explanations of right-wing populist support than job insecurity. The first of them is labeled "less taxes" and it taps the anti-statism that is held to be one of the two defining characteristics of right-wing populism (see fn. 5 above)¹⁸. The other is "racism" and it is included to control for the alleged racial prejudice of those attracted to One Nation ([Jackman, 1998](#)). The analytical technique used is logit analysis, which is appropriate when the dependent variable is dichotomous. As in [Table 2](#), the results are presented under the two different definitions of individual job insecurity, the conventional fear of job loss measure and the one derived from populist party rhet-

¹⁷ A second reason for coding the dependent variable in this way concerns its distribution. With no more than 7.26% of our sample reporting having voted for One Nation, the use of [King and Zeng's \(2001\)](#) "rare events" logit analysis allows us to determine whether this skewed distribution affects the results we get. It does not, so we present in [Table 3](#) the results of the more familiar conventional logit analysis. It might also be noted that conducting a multinomial logit analysis in which Coalition and Labor voters are differentiated separately from their One Nation counterparts does not change our conclusions about the economic determinants of voting for Mrs. Hanson's party. Details are available from the authors on request.

¹⁸ The wording of the anti-statism question is "If the government had a choice between reducing taxes or spending more on social services, which do you think it should do?" The possible responses are "Strongly for reducing tax," "Mildly for reducing tax," "Depends," "Mildly for social services" and "Strongly for social services." The variable is coded so that high values signal support for reducing taxes.

Table 3

Predictors of 1998 House of Representatives vote under different definitions of individual-level job insecurity: logit estimates^a

	Equation I	Equation II
Constant	-7.63*** (1.32)	-8.16*** (1.36)
Rightist	0.20** (0.07)	0.19** (0.07)
Male	0.60* (0.39)	0.56* (0.28)
Age in years	-0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.01)
Educational qualifications	-0.01 (0.07)	-0.01 (0.08)
Union member	0.33 (0.28)	0.37 (0.29)
Unemployed	1.08* (0.57)	0.99* (0.57)
Rural residence	0.16* (0.08)	0.17* (0.09)
Born Australia/NZ	0.89* (0.55)	1.02* (0.56)
Born UK/Ireland	0.39 (0.76)	0.53 (0.77)
Less taxes	0.10 (.10)	0.07 (0.10)
Racism	0.30** (0.11)	0.28** (0.11)
National economy worsen	0.37** (0.16)	0.33* (0.16)
Personal economy worsen	0.21 (0.18)	0.21 (0.18)
Fear of job loss	-0.01 (0.18)	-0.05 (0.21)
Good jobs hard to find	-	0.13 (0.25)
Personal job insecurity	-	0.71*** (0.24)
National job insecurity	0.33* (0.25)	0.42* (0.20)
Log likelihood	-230.04	-224.53
LRchi ² (15), (17)	69.95***	80.51***
Number of cases	1015	1012

^a * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$ (one-tailed test). Source: 1998 Australian Election Study

oric, personal job insecurity. Voting is compulsory in Australia, so there is no role for job insecurity in the explanation of general election turnout there.

A number of conclusions flow immediately from Table 3. First, insofar as support for One Nation is more common among those placing themselves on the right of the ideological spectrum and among those believing that races are unequal, conventional explanations of right-wing populist party voting are confirmed. The exception is that anti-statism, as reflected in the desire to pay less taxes, does not loom large in the calculus of One Nation voters, a reflection perhaps of both Labor and the Coalition having advocated free-market economics in recent years. Second, despite conventional emphasis on the anti-statist and racist underpinning of right-wing populist party voting, a striking feature of Equation II is the economic character of the One Nation vote. Not only is support for this party influenced by both forms of job insecurity in Equation II, but also there is more than a hint of short-term protest voting in its being more popular than its established counterparts among the unemployed and those pessimistic about national economic performance in the near future. Third, the competing definitions of individual-level job insecurity again perform very differently in predicting to the dependent variable. Equation I is estimated using the conventional fear of job loss measure and it is notable for this variable's irrelevance to the explanation of One Nation voting. This should not lead to the conclusion that job insecurity per se has no electoral implications, however. As is evident from Equation II, when conceptualized interactively (i.e., as the product of the fear of job loss and the belief that good jobs are scarce locally) to reflect the way populist party leaders define the term, personal job insecurity is the single most powerful influence on opting for the populist alternative over both established parties.

In short, the principal hypothesis of this study is starkly confirmed; the insecure would indeed seem to have listened to Pauline Hanson and, like her, blamed their predicament on the international economic policies pursued by Labor and the Coalition alike¹⁹. Moving beyond hypothesis confirmation, however, Table 3 is interesting for suggesting that, in direct contrast to the short-term performance measures, it is personal more than national insecurity that drives populist party support. For this reason, it is worth specifying the nature of personal job insecurity's impact on One Nation voting in more detail. This can be done by calculating the interaction term conditionally so that the estimate of the fear of job loss's effect is allowed to vary for each category of the other variable in the interaction, the perceived difficulty of finding good jobs locally, and vice versa. In other words, one variable's effect

¹⁹ The question, raised earlier, remains as to whether Australians' sense of job insecurity is rooted in the country's deeper integration into a liberal international economy since it might equally be argued to be a function of technological change. If globalization is to be given any responsibility for it, then taking opposition to it into account in Table 3 should at least moderate the effects of job insecurity on the One Nation vote, which it does. Adding to the equations in Table 3 even as limited and partial an indicator of opposition to globalization as support for limiting imports (see Table 2) produces non-trivial changes in the impact of sociotropic job insecurity in particular. That is, falling from a *t*-statistic of 2.08 to 1.74, sociotropic job insecurity ceases to matter at conventional levels of statistical significance, while the same statistic for personal job insecurity drops more modestly from 2.92 to 2.62.

can be calculated for each level of the other variable in the interaction term and we would expect that effect to be higher the more pessimistic voters are about future job loss or finding good jobs in their community.

Following Jaccard (2001, pp. 59–60), Table 4 decomposes the interaction term in Table 3 to present a detailed account of how its two component variables combine to effect One Nation voting, with the other variables in Table 3 set at their mean. The coefficients are the actual effect of the variable named at the top of each column within each of the categories of the variable at the side. Thus, for example, the size of fear of job loss’s effect on One Nation voting increases linearly, indicating a larger substantive effect for it as voters are more pessimistic about finding good jobs locally. Pessimism about finding a good job shows a similarly steep progression from those not at all worried about losing their job in the next 12 months to those very worried about it. Put differently, Table 4 confirms that One Nation voting becomes more likely as pessimism about keeping one’s job and the availability of good jobs locally intensify jointly and linearly²⁰.

In sum, two clear and important political conclusions follow from the results presented in Tables 3 and 4. First, job insecurity, at both the personal and national levels, matters for One Nation voting, and it matters more than the anti-statism and racism that are the more commonly acknowledged correlates of a populist response at the polls. Second, political parties play a key role in defining what voters see to be reality in election campaigns. This is evident in the finding that the kind of individual-level job insecurity that exercises voters is not the threat of job loss, which is the mainstream academic version of this concept, but rather the more pessimistic, anti-free trade version defined for voters by Pauline Hanson and her party in the heat of the campaign.

Table 4
Conditional coefficients for personal job insecurity interaction term

		Job Loss (–0.05) ^a			Good Job (0.13) ^a
Find good job	Very easy	0.66	Worried lose job	Not at all	0.84
	S’what easy	1.37		Somewhat	1.55
	S’what hard	2.08		very	2.26
	Very hard	2.79			

^a These are taken from Table 3 and are the aggregate coefficients for the separate components of the personal job insecurity interaction term.

²⁰ A marginal effects analysis using the Clarify program shows One Nation voting to increase linearly with a sense of national insecurity. The probability of a person very optimistic about the future for good jobs for Australian voting One Nation is 0.021 and of one very pessimistic 0.066.

5. Conclusion

This article has presented an alternative explanation of voting support for populist right-wing alternatives in preference to established parties of government, namely, job insecurity. There is a number of reasons why its conclusions have practical and theoretical implications beyond Australia's One Nation party, however. First, Australia is not unique in seeing a sense of job insecurity threaten the stability of its established party system. A few brief examples will suffice to make this point. In Britain, a recent internal study by the Labour party found "endemic insecurity" focusing on jobs and concluded that "(i)nsecurity is now a major recurring theme" ([The Sunday Times](#), (2000)). France too has proved susceptible insofar as LePen's Front National "manipulates workers' fears about the changing global economy" ([DeClair](#), 1999, p. 131), witness the key role played by "insecurity" in his defeat of the incumbent Socialist prime minister to proceed to the second round of France's 2002 presidential election. In the United States, the protection of good jobs has been on the political agenda since 1992 when the Reform Party's candidate, Ross Perot, famously drew attention to the North American Free Trade Agreement's "giant sucking sound as the remainder of our manufacturing jobs—what's left after the two million that went to Asia in the 1980s—get pulled across our southern border" ([Perot](#), 1993, p. 133; see also [Mughan and Lacy](#), 2002). Nor is the politicization of job insecurity unique to wealthy, established democracies. "The impact of global laissez-faire on job security is no longer primarily on First World labour forces. As the mass demonstrations of workers in Seoul in January 1997 testified, the reduction of job security is worldwide" ([Gray](#) 1998, p. 85).

Second, now that the international economy's relevance to mass politics has been established, sight should not be lost of the fact that it likely has implications for political attitudes and behaviors that go beyond job insecurity per se and populist party voting. Insecurity itself is a multi-faceted phenomenon and a number of its other forms may have political consequences of their own. One study, for example, sees job insecurity as being but one of three dimensions of the larger phenomenon of economic insecurity, the other two being health insecurity and victimization by burglary ([Dominitz and Manski](#), 1997). Economic globalization has also gone hand in hand with an increase in the international mobility of labor, one consequence of which has been a highly visible cultural insecurity in affluent democracies rooted in the fear of "being 'swamped' by" refugees and illegal migrants from less developed countries ([Betz and Immerfall](#), 1998). Finally, a possible source of support for green parties is the environmental insecurity generated by the weakened regulation of business and industry as governments compete to attract highly mobile capital and foreign direct investment.

In sum while this article has focused on job insecurity's role in explaining why Australians endorsed right-wing populism in the form of the One Nation party, political scientists need to be as aware as economists of the part that globalization plays in promoting sharper income inequality and in reshaping the dimensions of political debate, the policy positions of the major parties, and ethnic group relations within a large number of societies ([Kapstein](#), 2000). If established parties of government

are to stave off the threat to free trade, to the neoliberal economic agenda and perhaps even to social stability that right-wing populism represents, then the study of the impact of capital movements, and the like on the policy autonomy of governments needs to be complemented by investigation of how international economic forces create winners and losers among ordinary people, influence their attitudes, expectations and behaviors and thereby constrain or broaden this same governmental policy autonomy. A better-rounded understanding of the internationalization of domestic politics requires that the people be brought back into the study frame.

Acknowledgements

The Mershon Center at Ohio State University provided financial support for this project. The authors would also like to thank Natalie Kistner and Kevin Sweeney for their assistance and advice and the journal's referees for comments that improved the paper.

References

- Betz, H-G., Immerfall, S. (Eds.), 1998. *The New Politics of the Right: Neo-Populist Parties and Movements in Established Democracies*. St Martin's Press, New York.
- Burtless, G., Lawrence, R.Z., Litan, R.E., Shapiro, R.J., 1998. *Globophobia: Confronting Fears about Open Trade*. Brookings, Washington, DC.
- Capling, A., 1997. Economic Nationalism in the 1990s. *Australian Quarterly* 69 (1), 3–14.
- Capling, A., Galligan, B., 1992. *Beyond the Protective State: The Political Economy of Australia's Manufacturing Industry Policy*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- DeClair, E.G., 1999. *Politics on the Fringe: The People, Policies, and Organization of the French National Front*. Duke University Press, Durham.
- De Witte, H., 1999. Job insecurity and psychological well-being: review of the literature and exploration of some unresolved issues. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology* 8 (2), 155–178.
- Dominitz, J., Manski, C.F., 1997. Perceptions of economic insecurity: Evidence from the survey of economic expectations. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 61 (3), 261–287.
- Friedrich, R.J., 1982. In defense of multiplicative terms in multiple regression equations. *American Journal of Political Science* 26 (4), 797–833.
- Gallie, D., Marsh, C., Vogler, C. (Eds.), 1994. *Social Change and the Experience of Unemployment*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Gray, J., 1998. *False Dawn: The Delusions of Global Capitalism*. The New Press, New York.
- Hainsworth, P. (Ed.), 1992. *The Extreme Right in Europe and the USA*. St Martin's Press, New York.
- Hainsworth, P., 2000a. Introduction. In: Hainsworth, P., (Ed.), *The Politics of the Extreme Right: From the Margins to the Mainstream*. Pinter, London.
- Hainsworth, P. (Ed.), 2000b. *The Politics of the Extreme Right: From the Margins to the Mainstream*. Pinter, London.
- Hartley, J., Jacobson, D., Klandermans, B., van Vuuren, T., 1991. *Job Insecurity: Coping With Jobs at Risk*. Sage, London.
- Jaccard, J., 2001. *Interaction Effects in Logistic Regression*. Sage Quantitative Applications in the Social Sciences no 135. Sage, Thousand Oaks.
- Jackman, S., 1998. Pauline Hanson, the Mainstream and Political Elites: The Place of Race in Australian Political Ideology. *Australian Journal of Political Science* 33 (2), 167–186.

- Jupp, J., 1998. Ethnic and immigration aspects. In: Simms, M., Warhurst, J. (Eds.), *Howard's Agenda: The 1998 Australian Election*. University of Queensland Press, Brisbane, Australia.
- Kapstein, E., 2000. Winners and losers in the global economy. *International Organization* 54 (2), 359–384.
- Kietschelt, H., McGann, A., 1995. *The Radical Right in Western Europe*. University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, MI.
- King, G., Zeng, L., 2001. Explaining Rare Events in International Relations. *International Organization* 55 (3), 693–716.
- Lambert, R., 2000. Globalization and the erosion of class compromise in contemporary Australia. *Politics & Society* 28 (1), 93–118.
- Manning, P., 1992. *The New Canada*. Macmillan Canada, Toronto.
- McAllister, I., Bean, C., 2000. The electoral politics of economic reform in Australia: The 1998 Election. *Australian Journal of Political Science* 35 (3), 383–399.
- Merkel, P.H., Weinberg, L. (Eds.), 1997. *The Revival of Right-Wing Extremism in the Nineties*. Frank Cass, London.
- Mughan, A., Lacy, D., 2002. Economic performance, job insecurity and electoral choice. *British Journal of Political Science* 32 (3), 513–533.
- Niesche, C., Bitá, N., 1998. Tax Reform A Smoke Screen, Says Hanson. *The Australian*, August 31.
- Pasquarelli, J., 1998. *The Pauline Hanson Story...by the Man Who Knows*. New Holland Publishers, Sydney.
- Perot, R., 1993. *Not For Sale At Any Price: How We Can Save America for Our Children*. Hyperion, New York.
- Richardson, J.D., 1995. Income inequality and trade: how to think, what to conclude. *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 9 (1), 33–55.
- Scalmer, S., 1999. The Production of a Founding Event: The Case of Pauline Hanson's Maiden Parliamentary Speech. *Theory and Event* 3 (2). Also available on the internet at <http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/theory—%20—event/v003/3.2scalmer.html>.
- Schedler, A. (Ed.), 1997. *The End of Politics? Explorations into Modern Antipolitics*. St Martin's Press, New York.
- Scheve, K.F., Slaughter, M.J., 2001. *Globalization and the Perceptions of American Workers*. Institute for International Economics, Washington, DC.
- Taggart, P.A., 1996. *The New Populism and the New Politics*. St Martin's Press, New York.
- The Sunday Times, 2000. Secret Memo Shows Labour Fear of Hague. May 28.
- Toohy, B., 1998. Jobs Ground Swell Swamps Tax Issue. *The Sun Herald*, September 31.