

PRESS RELEASE

8 September 2010

Victoria University conducts offensive survey ‘in partnership’ with nationalist lobby group, the ‘United Macedonian Diaspora’

AMAC was disappointed to discover the content of a survey conducted by the Centre for Strategic Economic Studies, a research centre of Victoria University, for people of Slav-Macedonian background: <http://www.cfses.com/survey-macedonia-2010.htm>. According to this link, the survey was conducted “in partnership with the Macedonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the United Macedonian Diaspora”.

The UMD is a nationalist, US-based lobby group with its head office in Washington DC. The UMD is well-known for their supporting territorial claims by the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia against Greece and Bulgaria.

Question 1 asks for the respondent’s country of birth and gives the option “Aegean Macedonia (in Greece)”. This sort of terminology is highly inappropriate. The term “Aegean Macedonia” is a term coined by the Communist Party of Yugoslavia in order to legitimise its claims on the Greek province of Macedonia and, in particular, the port of Thessaloniki.

Question 15 then asks the respondent to what extent it agrees with the *‘Roadmap for Advancing Australia-Macedonia Relations’*. The ‘Roadmap’ is a 14 point plan a lobbyist construction of the UMD which it announced earlier this year. One of the Roadmap’s points which the survey asks the respondent to state the extent to which they agree is “Australia should recognise Macedonia's constitutional name without delay”.

AMAC fails to see how the nationalistic formulations of a lobby group such as the UMD and offensive, racist terminology could form part of an anthropological research project which purports to examine “how people maintain links with a homeland which represents an important part of their family background, identity or cultural heritage.”

AMAC has written to Victoria University and those conducting the survey and awaits a response to our concerns.

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End Release.