ABSTRACT

THE LIBERAL PARTY OF AUSTRALIA IN NEW SOUTH WALES: A STUDY OF THE POLITICAL PARTY AS AN OFFICE-SEEKING ORGANIZATION

BY Charles John Orlebeke

This study of the Liberal Party of Australia in the state of New South Wales has two basic objectives: (1) to enlarge the body of knowledge about a particular party organization by presenting information on its structure and behavior; and (2) to analyze that organization in terms of theoretical assumptions which may be applied to party organizations generally.

The first chapter reviews some of the important economic, social, and political forces which have helped to shape the development and character of the Australian party system. Among these forces are Australia's vigorous and strife-torn Labor movement, its economic dependence on primary production, the antipathy between city and country, and the unique amalgam of British and American-derived political institutions.

In approaching the study of party organization, our central assumption is that party organization is dominated by the drive to gain control of government through the election of party candidates. Within the organization, those who win elections and exercise governmental power tend to dominate the party; and shape its structure, policies,

and strategy to meet the conditions of office-seeking. Thus, the party organization serves mainly as the instrument of those who hold public office or have the ambition to do so; and the distribution of power within the party is determined less by formal organizational structure than by the party's position with respect to control of government. Questions of party policy are usually resolved by the behavior of office-holders controlling government; when the party is in opposition, policies are selected according to their perceived impact on capturing votes in the next election.

The Liberal Party of New South Wales has shared in the consistent success of the party in national politics since 1949, but has failed--sometimes narrowly--to gain control of state government. Because of the federal system, the party has therefore achieved its objective at one level and been frustrated at the other. Chapter III discusses the patterns of behavior likely to prevail in the organization, given our assumptions about office ambitions, and given the structural character of the Australian political system. Since office-seekers and supporting organizational resources cluster around each public office, we identify the electorate organization as a basic unit of party organization. A second basic unit is the central organization, which cuts across electorate boundaries, and seeks to coordinate and direct the drive for power.

Chapters IV, V, and VI present a descriptive and
analytical review of the New South Wales Party organiza-
tion from mid-1959 to March, 1962. The introductory section
of each chapter spells out the implications of our assump-
tions for three phases of organizational activity: (1)
the mobilizing of party resources between elections;
(2) the nomination process; and (3) the campaign phase.
The main body of each chapter presents evidence supporting
the contention that party organization can best be under-
stood in terms of the office-seeking approach.

The branch development program, an intensive effort
begun in 1959 to build up party resources, is analyzed in
Chapter III. The program was conceived by the central
organization in response to repeated electoral failure at
the state level. It met with only limited success because
it threatened to upset the conditions of nomination-seeking
in electorate organizations, and was resisted by both parlia-
mentary and non-parliamentary office-holders in electorate
organizations.

Chapter IV analyzes the nomination process prior to
the 1961 national election and the 1962 state election.
The virtually uneventful nomination series prior to the
national campaign, contrasted with intensive competition
for state level nominations, suggested clearly that office-
holders controlling government are significantly less vulner-
able to nomination challenges than office-holders in opposition.

Party behavior during the 1961 national campaign and
the 1962 state campaign is discussed in Chapter VI. Office-
seekers, regardless of party label, tended to relate their
appeals and strategy to what had taken place in government,
and defined policy positions according to their perceived
electoral consequences. Thus, the campaign style and
appeals employed by the national Liberal Party in 1961
and the state Labor Party in 1962 were strikingly similar,
and characteristic of parties in power. Similarly, the
national Labor Party in 1961, and the New South Wales Liberal
Party in 1962, adopted campaign strategy typical of parties
in opposition.

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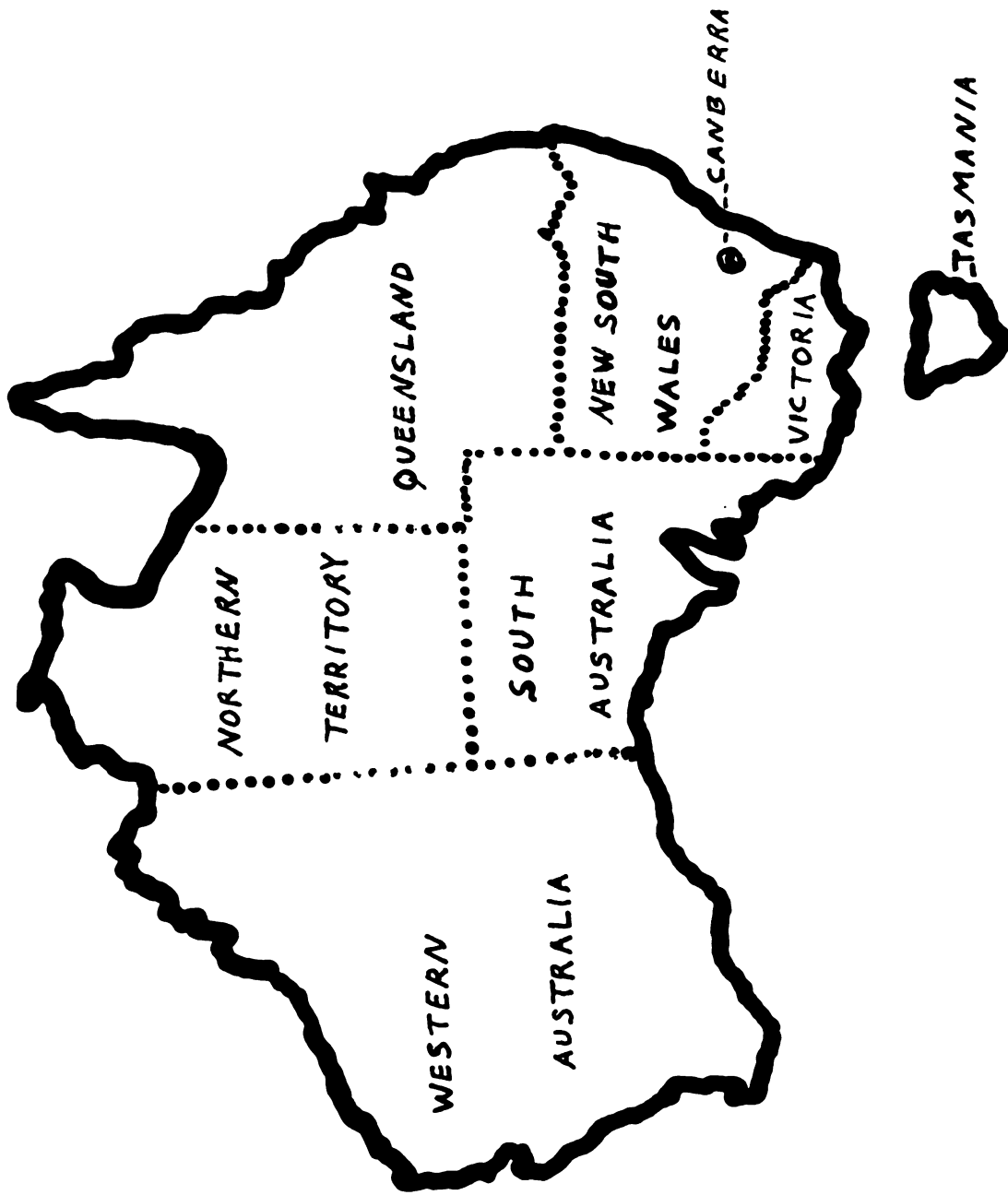for the degree of

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Introductory comment

The student of political parties is being confronted
with a growing volume of material on what parties are doing
and what they ought to be doing in relation to modern gov-
ernment throughout the world. An expanding literature now
provides an impressive body of information on political
parties both in the United States and abroad. As data on
parties accumulates, the need for a comprehensive theory
of party organization becomes more pressing; yet political
scientists have not in general concerned themselves with
developing such a theory.

The failure to develop a theory of party organization
is at least partly due to the fact that students of parties
have been preoccupied first with defending and later with
advancing the idea of party as an instrument of democratic
political action. This preoccupation necessarily implied
a concern for party reform, including prescriptions for
making parties more "effective" and "responsible."[1] It

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[1]Committee on Political Parties, American Political
Science Association, Toward a More Responsible Two-Party
System (New York: Rinehart, 1951).

rarely included a concern for developing a series of theoretical assumptions about party organization which could be tested in various political contexts.

But perhaps the main reason why a theory of party organization has not been developed is that the idea of party is so difficult to apply to all organizations which claim to be parties. Only a few students have taken on the assignment of analyzing and comparing systematically parties in various political and cultural settings. These students readily testify to the intractable nature of their task; and their work is characterized more by hedging, qualifications, and exceptions than by general propositions about party organization. Duverger, for example, states in his preface to <u>Political Parties</u>:

> The reader is therefore asked never to forget the highly conjectural nature of most of the conclusions formulated in this book--a point of which he will constantly be reminded. In fifty years' time perhaps it will be possible to describe the real working of political parties.[1]

Similarly, Newmann finds the task of theorizing about parties "overwhelming":

> The question of a proper approach to a meaningful theory of political party structure poses a dilemma because the overwhelming data of our material world fall into a conceivable pattern only if seen through the controlled order of a conceptual framework, which in turn can be conceived only in a full appreciation of the rich texture of reality. The task of attempting to systematize our knowledge,

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[1]M. Duverger, <u>Political Parties</u> (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1954), p. 4.

therefore, is confronted by almost overwhelming difficulties.[1]

Given the present development--or lack of it--of party theory, the student who looks at a particular party organization in a particular setting is hard pressed to find theoretical tools with which to work. This presents two basic alternatives. The first alternative is to analyze a given party organization within the limits set by its location in a particular political system.   Such an analysis might find a place in a volume using the country-by-country approach of Modern Political Parties. The formidable task of relating such a study to other studies would presumably be left to an editor or to some future theorist.

The second alternative is to gather and use whatever rudimentary theoretical tools may be available, and try to learn more about the opportunities and limitations of engaging in theory-oriented research.

The two alternatives are not, of course, mutually exclusive. One cannot work with theoretical assumptions in a vacuum. The question, however, is whether or not-- given certain minimal political and cultural conditions-- a set of theoretical assumptions can be employed to illuminate the behavior patterns of a given party organiza- tion. Research efforts pursued on that basis could well

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[1] S. Neumann (ed.), Modern Political Parties (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 4.

result in new and promising ideas about what is fundamental and what is incidental to the dynamics of party organization. In any case, it is my view that party research should be directed toward enriching the body of knowledge about parties, and toward the development of theoretical assumptions on how and why parties behave as they do in a variety of political environments.

The particular focus of this study is the organization of the Liberal Party of Australia, with emphasis on the division of the Liberal Party located in the state of New South Wales, which is Australia's most populous state. Most of the data for this study was gathered during sixteen months of residence in the state capital of Sydney--from August, 1960 to December, 1961.

Fortunately for research purposes, these months spanned a period of intensive party activity including a branch development drive--an ambitious attempt to at least double the size of the party membership; a referendum campaign on the question of abolishing the upper house of the New South Wales parliament; a national election in December, 1961; and the selection of candidates for the state election of March, 1962.

Because the literature on Australian parties, and especially the Liberal Party, is rather thin; a detailed description of Liberal Party structure, together with a similarly detailed narrative of party activities would

contribute something new to present data on the party. The value of such a contribution would be considerably enhanced, however, by analyzing the data in terms of theoretical assumptions which could be applied to other parties in other countries.

The party as an organized effort to win elections and control government

The study of political parties has so far produced a confused jumble of concepts and classifications, many of them value-laden. MacDonald, for example, distinguishes between "doctrinal" and "nondoctrinal" parties.[1] Neumann distinguishes between parties of "individual representation", "democratic integration", and "total integration."[2] Duverger classifies parties according to their basic structural unit and the relationship of these units to higher levels of the organization.[3]

In a penetrating discussion of party organization theory, Joseph A. Schlesinger argues that there may be a way out of the confusion:

> Cutting through all these distinctions, there is the issue of whether a party belongs to its members and therefore out to be responsive to their interests, or

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[1] N. McDonald, *The Study of Political Parties* (Garden City: Doubleday & Co., 1955), p. 31.

[2] Neumann, *op. cit.*, pp. 404-05.

[3] Duverger, *op. cit.*, pp. 4-60.

whether it is an organization aimed at winning elections and which, therefore, ought to be responsive to the electorate.[1]

In other words, Schlesinger poses the question of whether a party organization is an instrument for party members to impose their views on government policy; or whether it is an instrument of those who hold, or are driven by the ambition of holding public office and wielding governmental power.

Schlesinger points out that the student's response to this question influences fundamentally the character of his analysis. Writers such as Michels and Duverger, who work from Marxian assumptions, tend to view parties as instruments of their members, and thus are preoccupied with structural arrangements for insuring responsibility of leaders to rank-and-file members. Lamenting the fact that socialist leaders use rather than serve the mass membership, Michels developed "the iron law of oligarchy."[2] Duverger's assumptions led him to conclude that universal suffrage creates the necessity for parties to represent a mass electorate, and thus concludes that mass membership parties with complex structures of the socialist type will eventually replace the anachronistic "cadre" parties of the "middle class."

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[1] J. A. Schlesinger, "Political Party Organization," in J. G. March (ed.), Handbook of Organizations (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1965). The quotation, and subsequent references, are drawn from a draft manuscript of Schlesinger's chapter.

[2] R. Michels, Political Parties (Glencoe: Free Press, 1958).

For those analysts such as Schumpeter and Downs who perceive party-and-electorate as the critical theoretical juncture, the concern for party organization as such fades into the background.[1] In the forefront are party elites or "teams" which compete for votes and for the privilege of holding the reins of government until the next election. Such questions as how the team was formed or how the team relates to a party organization are assumed to be, theoretically at least, irrelevant.

According to Schlesinger, the search for some kind of bridge between the member-oriented and electorate-oriented approaches to parties leads to McKenzie's careful study of British parties.[2] McKenzie describes Conservative and Labor party structure in detail, but with particular emphasis on the distribution of power between the parliamentary parties and non-parliamentary party organizations. McKenzie concludes that party structures, ideologies, and pronouncements notwithstanding, the crucial factor in the distribution of power is the party's position with respect to government. Thus parties tend to be dominated by their public office-holders, particularly when these officials are in power or close to power. McKenzie's meticulous

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[1] A. Downs, An Economic Theory of Democracy (New York: Harper & Bros., 1957); J. Schumpeter, Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy (New York: Harper & Bros., 1950).

[2] R. T. McKenzie, British Political Parties (London: William Heinemann, Ltd., 1958).

analysis is particularly significant since it sheers away much of the theoretical lumber of Duverger's structural approach, and helps to open the way toward a more elemental theory of party organization.

All party organizations have in common the objective to influence government in some way. The most obvious and effective way to influence government is to have party members holding public office and controlling the instruments of governmental power. In a democracy, the voters choose public officials from among candidates, most of whom bear a party label. We are only concerned in this study with parties which operate in the contest of democratic political systems--systems in which voters periodically have a choice among candidates for public office. Further, we are only concerned with parties which have a reasonable chance of winning elections.

We shall assume that party organization in a democracy can best be defined as an organized effort to gain control of government through the election of party candidates. The drive for office is the party organization's reason for existence, and electoral victory is the measure of its success. It flows from this assumption that men who win elections, who expect to win elections, or who know how to mobilize resources for winning elections stand high in the organization's hierarchy of values. Because they embody the organization's success, office-holders occupy important

positions in the party leadership, and tend to shape the organization to meet the conditions of office-seeking. Thus party organization becomes the means by which a man with political ambition may gain public office and stay in office if he so desires. If the office holder for some reason does not wish to stay in office, the importance of organization fades.

There are many motivations which drive a party organization into political action. But since the satisfaction of these motivations depends on the primary objective of winning office, the quest for office forces other considerations into the background. The office-seeking motivation tends to dominate when the party is close to government. The candidate who can win gets the party nomination and support; party policies and principles assume a quality of amazing elasticity as they are shaped by party leaders to meet the presumed conditions of electoral success.

Party organization provides the resources for conducting the electoral campaigns of office-seekers. The resources necessary to win may be minimal or very substantial. In a safe constituency for his party, the only "organization" necessary for an office-seeker may be the party designation on the ballot. However, a candidate for the United States presidency needs an organization which can furnish millions of dollars and millions of hours of volunteer labor. In general, the amount of organizational resources needed

increases in proportion to the competitiveness of the office and the size of the constituency served by the office.

There are many kinds of contributions an organization may provide, and the value of each depends on the political conditions of the contest. Money is an especially useful resource in almost any contest, since it is fluid and can be channeled into the purchase of goods and personal services needed for the campaign. Money buys organization.

Party organizations also need volunteer manpower to supplement the work of paid party officials. Parties need people willing to do the routine chores of party organization—clerical work, door-to-door canvassing, for example. Also needed are people with special skills such as leadership and manipulative skills.

How do office-seekers get people to contribute to party organization? Participation in a party organization offers a variety of incentives. Not all participants are interested in seeking public office, but some are. Others may have a personal loyalty to the office-seeker. Support for a particular ideological position motivates some party workers, while others may wish to support more specific policy objectives. Party organization provides a social outlet for some contributors; for many women, party work provides a respite from household tedium. Many contributors have no ambition for public office, but do value party

organization offices which involve the privilege of associating with, and being associated with, public office-holders. People join or are attracted into party organization for many reasons, but the drive which gives their collective efforts shape, direction, and purpose is the drive for public office.

We may conclude, then, that a party organization reduced to its most simple unit is that collection of cooperative efforts directed toward the winning and holding of a single public office. The important questions about who shall run on what platform and what campaign techniques shall be used--these questions are resolved in terms of their bearing on the office-seeking ambition. But they are not resolved without conflict.

The most common conflict within the party organizational unit is between competing office-seekers. When the clash is between a public office holder and a challenger, the contest is generally weighted in favor of the incumbent who has already demonstrated his ability to win.

But the potential for conflict is greatly multiplied by the fact that units of the same party rarely function completely independently of each other. A more inclusive unit such as a state gubernatorial candidate's organization defines "victory" in different terms than the constituent unit of a state legislator. Victory for the constituent unit may consist only in the election of a local legislator,

while victory for the gubernatorial organization consists
in a statewide victory. Tension and conflict exist between
the inclusive unit and its constituent units to the extent
that one office-seeker perceives his chances of nomination
and election to be reduced by the ambition of another
office-seeker. Obviously, the criss-crossing of tension
and conflict in a complex federal system such as the United
States or Australia presents a formidable task for the
analyst of party organizations.

Drawing mainly from Schlesinger's discussion of party
organization, we have sketched in a very general way our
approach to the study of party organization. A theory of
party organization based on the office-seeking ambition
should be applicable to any party in a democracy which has
a prospect of gaining control of government. But conflicts
between office-seekers occur within the contest of very
different political systems. The political and cultural
environment which produces alternative governing parties
also imparts to these parties distinctive characters and
traditions. The challenge posed by this thesis is to
illuminate the process by which the drive for office works
through and shapes the Liberal Party organization of Australia.

In the next section of this chapter we shall describe
some of the broad historical, cultural, and political forces
which have helped to mold Australian parties. We shall
complete the chapter with a general review of Australian
party organizations.

Politics and parties in Australia

Introduction.--The political history of Australia
began with the establishment in 1788 of a British convict
colony at Sydney, New South Wales. Although remnants of
the convict system lingered until the mid-nineteenth century,
the number of free settlers equalled convicts already by
1828, and outnumbered them four-to-one by 1841.[1]

Settlers from the original colony of New South Wales
pressed southward to establish the colony of Victoria, and
northward to establish Queensland. Free men arriving from
Great Britain formed colonies in Western Australia and South
Australia. The island colony of Tasmania, located some 100
miles off the southeastern tip of the continent, developed
like New South Wales from a convict settlement.

The early Australian colonies were administered by
the British Colonial Office through military Governors
vested with absolute authority.[2] Almost from the beginning,
however, the Governors with their unruly militia were unable
to impose orderly administration. As Marjorie Barnard
points out, "The convict system, fortunately, never got
into smooth working order."[3] Convicts arriving in Sydney

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[1]J. D. B. Miller, Australian Government and Politics
(London: Gerald Duckworth & Co., Ltd., 1959), p.40.

[2]Marjorie Barnard has written a fascinating account of
Governor Lachlan Macquarie's tenure as Governor of New South
Wales, 1810-1821. See Macquarie's World (Melbourne:
Melbourne University Press, 1961).

[3]Barnard, op. cit., p. 103.

were confronted by varying degrees and kinds of servitude.
Skilled tradesmen were quickly put to work by the colonial
government on such projects as public buildings, roads,
bridges and docks. Other convicts were employed as clerks
and secretaries in government offices. Unskilled convicts
often were assigned as servants to free settlers, who paid
them a small wage for their work. In general, most convicts
who did not get into trouble could look forward to a gradual
relaxing of penal restraints until the expiration of their
sentences.[1] Incorrigibles were consigned to hard labor on
chain gangs, or worse, were exiled to Newcastle to work in
coal mines under overseers known for brutality.[2] Adminis-
tration of the convict system was a hopelessly cumbersome
task for the colonial government, and the net result was
that convicts were more speedily assimilated into the free
community.

> In short a system as complex, as muddled, as much at
> the mercy of external circumstances as that in force
> in New South Wales afforded many loopholes for hope.
> It was a troubled water in which, if many sank, many
> also fished with success.[3]

Venturesome settlers, both free men and emancipated
convicts, left the coastal towns to tap the potential of
Australia's vast interior. The unique suitability of the

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[1]A convict was eligible for a "ticket-of-leave" after
serving at least three years of his sentence. A ticket-of-
leave holder was practically a free man unless he committed
a crime. Conditional pardon gave a convict his freedom, but
did not permit return to England. Absolute pardon could also
be granted by the Governor in exceptional cases. Barnard,
op. cit., pp. 119-20.

[2]Ibid., p. 117.

[3]Ibid., pp. 101-2.

country for raising sheep soon resulted in a lucrative wool trade with Great Britain. The best pastoral land was appropriated by squatters, who eventually gained title to huge land holdings and formed what Australians call the "squattocracy." In addition to sheep-raising, wheat farming was an important element in the early Australian economy. Near the cities, settlers raised food crops and established dairy farms to serve the population centers.

Governmental institutions developed rapidly in the colonies. In 1855 and 1856, the British Parliament approved self-governing status for New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, and Tasmania. Queensland, which was formerly a part of New South Wales, became self-governing in 1859; and Western Australia in 1890.[1] The model for each colonial constitution was, and still is, the British constitution: a constitutional monarchy with an appointive Governor representing the Crown; a representative parliament as the legislative body; and an executive directly responsible to parliament. Colonial parliaments were bicameral, the Lower House elected on a popular franchise, and the Upper House either nominated by the Governor or elected on a property franchise.[2]

[1]H. R. Anderson, "The Constitutional Framework," The Government of the Australian States, ed. S. R. Davis (London: Longmans, Green & Co., Ltd., 1960), p. 4.

[2]The Lower House is called the Legislative Assembly in New South Wales, Western Australia, Victoria, and Queensland; and called the House of Assembly in Tasmania and South Australia. The Upper House is called the Legislative Council in all states (Queensland abolished its Upper House in 1922).

The establishment of colonial governments coincided with the discovery of gold in New South Wales and Victoria, and later in Western Australia. The lure of quick fortunes brought thousands of new immigrants to Australia, and mining communities quickly sprang up. As the gold deposits were depleted, the settlers attracted to the mining districts had to seek other means of livelihood. Some bought land from squatters and took up farming, although these ventures often failed because of erratic and inadequate rainfall, and because transportation facilities were often lacking. Small industries were established in some country towns, but development was inhibited because finished products could be more cheaply imported from Great Britain in exchange for wool and wheat.[1]

It was in the period of 1860 to 1890 that many of the main currents of Australian economic, social, and political life were formed. The economy of the colonies came to be dependent upon the production and export of primary products, especially wool and wheat. Primary producers were deeply committed to a policy of free trade. But struggling manufacturing interests demanded a protective tariff wall until they could compete with foreign manufactured imports. The protectionists found an early champion in David Syme, a Victorian publisher, who believed that severe unemployment among "diggers" (miners) could be solved by the development

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[1]F. W. Eggleston, Reflections of an Australian Liberal (Melbourne: F. W. Cheshire Pty. Ltd., 1953), p. 27.

of tariff-protected industries.[1] The issue of free trade versus protection, more than any other single issue, tended to dominate Australian politics until 1910; moreover, it remains as a significant issue at the present time.

The second half of the nineteenth century also saw the emergence of the "White Australia" immigration policy. The discovery of gold attracted large numbers of Chinese immigrants until the colonies passed restrictive legislation in the 1870's. In Queensland, however, the importation of cheap labor from the South Sea islands to work on sugar plantations continued until the formation of the Commonwealth in 1901.[2] Since federation, the "White Australia" policy has been embraced by all parties, and supported by a vast popular consensus--challenged by few besides a bearded student fringe.[3]

Another characteristic social current of this period was the rising antipathy between the "country" and the capital cities. New immigrants clustered in capital cities, which served not only as a state's vital land and sea transportation nexus, but also as the center of manufacturing, business, and finance, as well as the seat of state government. Country interests soon came to fear city

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[1] Louise Overacker, The Australian Party System (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952), pp. 34-36; Miller, op. cit., pp. 45-46.

[2] Overacker, op. cit., pp. 46-47.

[3] See for example: Sydney Morning Herald, November 16-17, 1961.

domination of government policies on roads, railroads, irrigation schemes, tariffs, and credit--all issues which have a crucial impact on rural development. But rural hostility toward the capital cities was--and is--only partly the result of clashing economic interests: the "man on the land" and the country townsman possess a nebulous but deep-seated feeling that life "outback" is somehow more authentically and uniquely Australian than the more ordered, comfortable life of the city dweller. The peculiar kinship shared by rural Australians, together with the press of economic issues, helped to nourish political action with a distinctively rural stamp. Eventually, the Country Party which organized in 1919 "gave form to the old division between the city and the bush."[1]

The vigorous Australian labor movement also took shape in the second half of the nineteenth century. The first labor organizations were unions of skilled tradesmen which by 1874 had won the eight-hour day in every colony except Western Australia.[2] Meanwhile, the labor movement also gathered strength in the country. The Amalgamated Miners' Association organized in 1874 in Victoria, and under the driving leadership of William Spence, the miners' union movement extended into other states. Spence also worked to

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[1]Marjorie Barnard, A History of Australia (Sydney: Angus & Robertson Ltd., 1962), p. 526.

[2]Ibid., p. 416; Overacker, op. cit., p.40.

organize the shearers, who in 1886 formed the Amalgamated Shearers' Union.[1] The burgeoning union movement in Australia encountered little real resistance from employers during the economic boom of the 1870's and early 1880's. But in 1885, the world market prices on wool and metals began to fall, and the economy skidded toward Depression. Economic crisis brought labor unrest: in 1890 a strike by maritime workers touched off walkouts by miners' and shearers' unions, who had grievances of their own. Business came to a standstill, but the general strike proved to be a failure as far as the unions were concerned. Employers readily found non-union workers to break the strikes, and the unions had insufficient funds to finance a prolonged strike. After three months the unions caved in, and went back to work under terms dictated by employers.[2]

The bitter labor strife of the early 1890's brought to a head a class division which probably had its roots in the old master-convict relationship. Prior to 1890, the labor movement grew easily, nourished by the fruits of prosperity and inspired by the heady visions of Henry George and Edward Bellamy.[3] But economic decline brought the unions

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[1]Barnard, op. cit., 420-21.

[2]Ibid., pp. 422-24. See also C. H. Grattan, (ed.), Australia (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1947), pp. 62-64.

[3]George's Progress and Poverty and Bellamy's Looking Backward were widely read in Australia. George visited Australia in 1890 and received "a tumultuous welcome." Barnard, op. cit., p. 417. Cf. Overacker, op. cit., p. 49; and A. A. Calwell, "The Australian Labour Party," The Australian Political Party System, S. R. Davis et al. (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1954), pp. 54-56.

face to face with the superior financial resources and political power of organized employer groups. When the 1890 strike was crushed with the help of anti-labor colonial governments, labor turned to direct political action as the means for realizing its social and economic goals. A "Political Labor League" was hastily organized in New South Wales to contest the general election of 1891. The labor movement's first large-scale venture into politics was an astonishing success: the League captured 36 out of 45 seats contested in the 120-member Legislative Assembly.[1] In Victoria, a "Political Labor Council" elected 16 out of a 90-member Assembly in 1894, and political Labor organizations in the other four colonies also secured some parliamentary representation in the 1890's.[2]

Politics in the Australian colonies between 1850 and 1900 was characterized by turbulence and instability. In the 45 years preceding federation in 1901, Barnard reports that New South Wales had 30 changes in government, Victoria had 29, South Australia had 42, Tasmania had 20, and Queensland had 22.[3] "The party system barely existed."[4] In the early colonial governments, political groups formed around the

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[1]Calwell, loc. cit., p.57.

[2]Ibid. In South Australia the labor party organization was known as the "United Labour Party"; in Western Australia, the "Australian Labour Federation"; in Queensland and Tasmania, the "Workers' Political Organization." After federation in 1901, the state labor parties retained their individual names until 1918, when a federal conference of the party adopted the name it bears today--Australian Labor Party.

[3]p. 431.   [4]Ibid.

issue of Free Trade versus Protection; however:

> By the 1880's the old slogans "free trade" and
> "protection" had lost their significance, "great
> names" were more important than issues, election
> manifestoes were tailor-made to suit the exigencies
> of the moment and what passed for "parties" were
> really "rival syndicates" more concerned with the
> perquisites of office than the implementation of
> policy. Although the labels "Liberal," "National,"
> "Conservative," and "Radical" were used, in election
> campaigns the two sides were more often referred to
> as "ministerialist" and "opposition."[1]

In spite of the appearance of political chaos, colonial

governments were able to resolve issues and face the

peculiar problems involved in developing a new continent.

Australian settlers could not "unlock the land" without land

reform laws, irrigation systems, roads, railroads, and

harbors; the people turned to government because there was

nowhere else to turn. Moreover, the challenge of development

was too great to be met by local governments; there was

therefore a fundamental thrust toward centralized planning

and administration.

> Irrigation was a typical case where the State had not
> only to supply advice but to build works and establish
> huge administrations, and, as the railways and roads and
> harbours were also managed by public authorities, a
> constructive State policy of what is called a socialistic
> character became an incident of Australian politics.
> This involved not only State planning of a technical
> order but also dealing with settlers and financing them,
> and thus the control of vast services with multitudes
> of officials and complicated finance.[2]

Colonial government programs were undertaken during times

of political instability, and were necessarily characterized

by experimentation and improvisation. But they learned from

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[1]Overacker, op. cit., p. 37.

[2]Eggleston, op. cit., p. 24.

their mistakes, and managed to build a tradition of active, pragmatic government, manned by a sprawling bureaucracy and committed to a policy of "development."[1]

The movement toward federation of the six colonies slowly gathered impetus as Australia approached the turn of the century. In 1891, a convention of colonial politicians drew up a draft constitution which would transfer to a central government such minimal functions as tariff control, immigration, foreign affairs, currency, and national defense. During the 1890's the draft constitution was debated and amended in a series of conventions, as well as in the colonial parliaments. Finally, in 1899, the colonies voted in separate referendums to adopt the constitution which united them into a single Australian nation.[2] The British parliament acted favorably on the new constitution in 1900, and the first Australian parliament convened in 1901.

The Australian federal system.--The Australian constitution reflects "an amalgam of concepts derived from the Constitution of the United States and of the British concept

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[1]Miller calls "development" a "native concept"--not to be confused with "socialism." "The Australian style in politics may be characterized as...a habit of neglecting theoretical arguments on policy, in favor of discussions on concrete proposals, summed up in the word 'development'" (pp. 224-25).

[2]For an excellent review of events leading up to federation, see L. F. Crisp, The Parliamentary Government of the Commonwealth of Australia (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1954), pp. 1-37. Also see Riker's discussion of the military and defense considerations involved in the decision to federate, in Federalism (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1964), pp. 27-28.

of responsible government."[1] It provides for a central
government with specified powers; the state (formerly
colonial) constitutions and powers were left intact, except
those powers superceded by the federal constitution.

Executive authority is vested in a Governor-General,
who is appointed by the Crown on the recommendation of the
Australian government.[2] The Governor-General exercises
formal powers similar to those of the British monarch: he
designates the Prime Minister, formally opens and dissolves
parliament, and gives the royal assent to acts of parliament.
Actual executive authority is exercised by the Prime Minister
and his fellow ministers of state who form the Cabinet. The
Cabinet may be drawn from either house of parliament, but
it is responsible only to the lower house--the House of
Representatives.

Legislative authority is vested in a bicameral parlia-
ment composed of the House of Representatives and the Senate.
In 1948 the membership of both bodies was increased in size:
the House from 75 to 122 members,[3] and the Senate from 36

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[1]H. R. Anderson, loc. cit., p. 31.

[2]The Governor-General is usually a titled Englishman.
Two exceptions occurred (in 1931 and 1946) when Labor gov-
ernments requested the appointment of Australian-born
Governors-General.

[3]In addition, the Northern Territory and the
Australian Capital Territory each elects one representative
with restricted voting privileges.

to 60 members.[1]

The members of the House of Representatives are elected from single member districts for 3-year terms. Districts are apportioned on a population basis, and each state is represented on the basis of its population. Currently, New South Wales elects the largest number of representatives--46; Victoria elects 33; Queensland elects 18; South Australia elects 11; Western Australia elects 9; and Tasmania elects 5. Representatives are elected under a "preferential system" of voting, by which the voter numbers each candidate on the ballot in the order of his preference. If no candidate receives an absolute majority of first preference votes, the candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated, and his second preference votes are distributed among the remaining candidates. The process continues until one of the candidates receives a majority.[2]

Members of the Senate are elected for 6-year terms, and under normal circumstances, half of the membership stands for election every 3 years. The Senate is composed of 10 members from each state, and is elected under a

[1]The Australian constitution provides that the House of Representatives should be approximately twice the size of the Senate.

[2]D. W. Rawson, Australia Votes (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1961), p.62.

complicated system of proportional representation.[1]

The Senate may originate legislation with the exception
of money bills, which it may reject but not amend. All
other bills are subject to Senate amendment or rejection,
and none may become law without Senate approval. In the
event of a deadlock between the two chambers, the government
may call for a "double dissolution" followed by a general
election of both chambers.[2]

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[1]The system for electing the Senate is described in
Rawson, op. cit., pp. 62-63:

> "Within each state a quota for election is determined
> by dividing the number of formal valid votes by one more
> than the number of senators to be elected and adding
> one. The first candidates listed by the two major
> parties will normally have polled a higher number of
> first preference votes than the quota, and are therefore
> elected. In each case a 'transfer fraction' is calcula-
> ted by dividing the surplus of votes above the quota by
> the total number of votes received by the candidate.
> All his second preferences are then examined to see how
> the second preferences of his supporters were distributed,
> and in each case the number of second preferences is
> multiplied by the 'transfer fraction'...When the
> surplus of all elected candidates, including those
> brought above the quota by the distribution of these
> preferences, have been distributed, the candidate with
> fewest first preference votes is eliminated and his
> preferences distributed as for the House of Representa-
> tives."

The process continues until all vacancies are filled.

[2]The Prime Minister may ask the Governor-General to
dissolve both chambers if the Senate rejects a House-passed
bill twice in a three-month period. If new elections do not
result in breaking the deadlock, the bill is put to a vote
in a joint session. Double dissolutions have occurred
twice: in 1914 and 1951.

The ultimate judicial authority in Australia is exercised by the High Court, which consists of a Chief Justice and six associate justices appointed by the government. A justice holds office for life unless he wishes to retire. The High Court acts as a court of appeal from state Supreme Courts, and has original jurisdiction in actions against the federal government or actions involving more than one state. The most important function of the High Court is to interpret the constitution, and in so doing to hand down decisions which have helped to determine the balance of power between federal and state governments.[1]

The framers of the Australian constitution spelled out certain powers held exclusively by the federal government. These include the exclusive power to levy customs duties; the determination of legal tender; the administration of the postal service; and the maintenance of the armed forces. The constitution also provides that most other powers are held concurrently by the state and federal governments, either or both of which may legislate in such areas as taxation, banking, naturalization and immigration, marriage and divorce, education, and social services.[2] At the time of federation, according to Davies:

> The states meant to go on governing largely as before, looking after development, land policy and agriculture, labour relations, education, health and social welfare, having merely shed to a convenient joint subsidiary certain dullish chores. A picture of federal-state relations, of course, which was to become completely

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[1]Cf. Crisp, op. cit., pp. 262-280.

[2]Anderson, loc. cit., pp. 33-34.

browned over within twenty years.[1]

Since federation, the federal government has gradually
expanded its activities in many of the concurrent fields
at the expense of state power. In addition, the defense
powers of the federal government have been broadly construed
by the High Court "to justify Commonwealth control over
almost every aspect of economic, industrial, and social
life during time of war."[2]

The most significant shift in the balance of federal
power has occurred in the area of intergovernmental finan-
cial relations.[3] In the first ten years after federation
in 1901, the federal government was required by constitu-
tional provision (Section 87) to return to the states three-
quarters of all customs and excise revenue. This system was
replaced in 1911 by federal grants of 25 shillings per
capita to each state. Between 1911 and 1927, the states
sank deeply into debt while the federal government, which
needed funds to pursue World War I, began to encroach upon
such important sources of state revenue as the income and
inheritance taxes. In 1927 the federal government ended
the per capita grants, and agreed to assume existing and
future state indebtedness. However, all future borrowing
by both federal and state governments was to be regulated

[1]A. F. Davies, Australian Democracy (London: Longmans,
Green & Co., 1958), p. 67.

[2]Anderson, loc. cit., p. 34.

[3]For discussions of federal-state financial relations,
see L. F. Giblin, "Financial Aspects of the Constitution,"
Federalism in Australia (Melbourne: F. W. Cheshire Pty. Ltd.,
1949), pp. 89-108; Davies, op. cit., pp. 81-96; Anderson,
loc. cit., pp. 40-52.

by a new agency, the Loan Council, consisting of the
Premier of each state and the Prime Minister. In 1934 the
federal government also established the Commonwealth Grants
Commission, a three-member body responsible for recommending
outright federal grants to the so-called "claimant states":
Western Australia, South Australia, and Tasmania.[1]

The heavy financial pressures occasioned by the second
World War caused a further extension of federal fiscal power.
In 1942 the federal government passed legislation estab-
lishing itself as the sole taxing authority in the income
tax field, and providing that the states would be compen-
sated by grants equal to the average of their income tax
collections in the two previous years. Four states chal-
lenged the constitutionality of the uniform income tax,
but the High Court upheld the system. The principle of
federal "reimbursement" was abandoned after the war in favor
of a formula based on "need." "It is significant that a
substantial sum over the formula has nevertheless been pro-
duced every year since 1946 to mollify premiers at the last
moment."[2]

The proportion of state revenue received from federal
grants has steadily increased. In 1962-63 the federal budget

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[1]"Claimant states" receive special assistance because
of their dependence upon primary production, and because of
the claimed adverse effect of high tariffs on their economy.
The recommendations of the Grants Commission have invariably
been adopted without change.

[2]Davies, op. cit., p. 94. The amounts of federal grants
are negotiated each year at the Premiers' Conference, which
is a meeting of the six state Premiers with the federal
government.

called for a total of ₤477.2 million (approximately $1 billion) in grants to the states. Although it is difficult to measure the precise federal-state proportion, the federal Treasurer estimated that in the previous fiscal year (1961-62) states received 56.7 percent of their revenue from the federal government. The bulk of the funds granted by the federal government is not earmarked for specific purposes and does not require matching state funds. For example, about two-thirds (₤353 million) of the 1962-63 grants were made without any strings attached, while less than one-third (₤113 million) was for specific public works projects. The balance (₤11.2 million) was granted to the "claimant states."[1]

It is clear that although the <u>collection</u> of public revenue has devolved mainly upon the federal government, the state governments continue to make most policy decisions on how the money is to be <u>spent</u>. Within the general boundaries of public borrowing and spending established by the federal government, the states are relatively free to determine spending priorities, and in addition, are chiefly responsible for the <u>administration</u> of public services. Thus,

> "the growth of Federal power has not meant a decline in State power, if we measure State power by the number of people employed by state government, the amount of money spent by them, and the extent to which their activities impinge on the average citizen."[2]

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[1]Budget figures are quoted from "Australia: Financial Powers of the Commonwealth," <u>Round Table</u>, No. 210 (March, 1963), pp. 191-197.

[2]Miller, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 159.

Australian Political Parties

Four major parties contest Australian elections: the Labor Party, the Country Party, the Liberal Party, and the Democratic Labor Party. In this section we shall give a brief background statement on each party. This will be followed by a historical sketch of the party struggle since federation. Finally, we shall present a review of party structure at the federal level and in the individual states, with particular attention to New South Wales.

The Labor Party has been in existence continuously since federation (1901), and is generally regarded by students of Australian politics as the lodestar of the party system. Louise Overacker's view is typical:

> The character of the party system and the functioning of parliamentary democracy have been profoundly affected by the A.L.P. Whether for better or worse, its doctrine, machinery, and traditions have penetrated the institutions of its present-day rivals.[1]

The Labor Party has, however, been subject to a series of organizational convulsions arising from bitter disputes between militant socialists and those who seek piecemeal social reforms within a private enterprise system.[2] These

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[1]p. 312. See also W. K. Hancock, _Australia_ (Sydney: Australasian Publishing Company Pty. Ltd., 1945), pp. 185-198. Hancock's influential study of Australian history, politics, and culture was first published in 1930. Hancock labelled the National Party and Country Party as "parties of resistance"--a term Overacker accepts as "apt." The "initiative-resistance" concept as a dominant theme in Australian political analysis is critically examined by Henry Mayer, "Some Conceptions of the Australian Party System," _Historical Studies_, VII (November, 1956), 235-270.

[2]Crisp, _op. cit._,pp. 74-115.

disputes have been complicated--and aggravated--by sectarian strife which led to the formation of the Democratic Labor Party; as well as by interstate party conflicts resulting in part from the divisive forces inherent in federal structure.[1] Internal disruptions have severely limited Labor's ability to gain and retain control of the federal government. Yet the party has also demonstrated a long-term resilience, and its status as a potential governing party has never been seriously threatened.

The Country Party was first organized in 1919 and currently maintains organizations in all states except Tasmania and South Australia. As we have seen, the Country Party became the political expression of rural economic interests as well as rural distrust of city-based politicians--both Labor and non-Labor.

Mayer has said of the Country Party that "its disappearance has been prophesied since its inception, yet it has shown very great persistence."[2] Rawson calls the Country Party

> a standing affront to the tidy-minded. Its support
> is spread over the country districts...in a manner
> which refutes all simple explanations, including those
> from within the party itself. It has been described
> at various times as a party of country people generally,
> or as a party of primary producers, or as a party of
> certain kinds of primary producers, and each description
> is almost equally easy to confirm and to refute. Most
> country people in Australia, including most of the

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[1] A. Wildavsky, "Party Discipline under Federalism: Implications of the Australian Experience," Social Research, XXVIII (Winter, 1961), 437-458.

[2] Mayer, loc. cit., p. 266.

farmers, vote for the parties other than the Country Party. It is a party held together by regional, industrial, and personal interests and loyalties, in all kinds of combinations, but with the regional factors usually predominating.[1]

Although the Country Party is a completely distinct political organization, it generally enters into mutual agreements not to contest parliamentary seats held by incumbents from the major non-Labor party--presently the Liberal Party. At the parliamentary level, Country Party members jealously guard their separate identity, but they nearly always ally themselves, either in government or in opposition, with the Liberal Party.

The Liberal Party was formed in 1944 and is active in all six Australian states. As the major non-Labor party, the Liberal Party occupies the place in the party system formerly held by the "Fusion" or "Liberal Party" (1909-1916), the National Party (1917-1930), and the United Australia Party (1931-1944). Yet the Liberal Party has been largely successful in fighting off "the constant jibes that we have merely changed our name, that we are an old party in a new guise."[2]

The Liberal Party has been able to shuck the "resistance" image of its antecedents by developing a distinctive body of policy since coming to power in 1949, and also by developing a party organization which consciously seeks to avoid the pitfalls of the old non-Labor parties. In the area of

[1]Rawson, op. cit., p. 49.

[2]J. L. Carrick, "The Liberal Way of Progress," a Liberal Party pamphlet, 1948?, p. 5.

public policy, the Liberal Party has clung to its claim as a "private enterprise" party, but has nevertheless placed "a very great reliance upon fiscal controls, especially over imports, banking policy and taxation, as a means of assisting rapid economic growth with only moderate inflation."[1] At the same time, the Liberal government has established new social service benefits and liberalized others, and pursued an active policy of "national development."[2] Organizationally, the Liberal Party has built a much larger rank-and-file membership than its predecessors; it has broadened its base of financial support by accepting money only from individuals or single business concerns, but not associations or fund-raising committees operating outside the party structure.[3] Ideologically, the Liberal Party has tried to turn the tables on Labor by espousing a "positive Liberal philosophy" as opposed to the "reactionary" socialism of the Labor Party.[4]

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[1] Rawson, op. cit., p. 34.

[2] In Australia the term "national development" covers a broad range of programs including highway construction, irrigation, hydroelectric power projects, and the discovery and development of natural resources.

[3] B. D. Graham, "The Place of Finance Committees in Non-Labor Politics, 1910-1930," Australian Journal of Politics and History, VI (May, 1960), pp. 41-52; Overacker, op. cit., pp. 217-218, 255-257; Crisp, op. cit., 132-136.

[4] The idea of Liberal ideological ascendency has been developed by W. K. Anderson in a series of presidential addresses to the Federal Conference of the Liberal Party. See especially "Liberals Lead a Revolution" (1953) and "Liberal Lead to an Expanding Nation" (1956), which have been published in pamphlet form by the Federal Secretariat of the Liberal Party.

In order to help place today's Australian parties
in historical perspective, we now turn to a brief sketch
of the party struggle since federation.

In the first decade after federation, there were three
political parties which contended for control of the
Commonwealth government: the Protectionist party, the Free
Trade party, and the Labor Party. The three parliamentary
groupings were roughly equal in size, and each jockeyed for
leadership in a series of shifting coalition governments.
The Protectionists led by Alfred Deakin governed with Labor
support until 1904 when a Labor Prime Minister, J. C. Watson,
headed a government lasting less than four months. Watson
was succeeded by G. H. Reid, a Free Trader who governed
almost a year with Protectionist support. In 1905, Deakin
again became Prime Minister with Labor support and held
office for over three years. Labor returned to power briefly
in 1908 under A. Fisher; Deakin was back in 1909 for his
final year as Prime Minister--this time supported by a
"fusion" of Protectionists and Free Traders, which took the
name "Liberal." In the election of 1910, the Labor Party
led by Fisher decisively defeated the Liberals.[1]

The Labor Party, opposed by the Liberal Party, domina-
ted the federal government until 1917 when the conscription
issue brought about a split in Labor's parliamentary ranks.
The Labor Prime Minister, W. M. Hughes, who favored
conscription in the face of strong opposition from within

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[1]Overacker, op. cit., pp. 197-203.

his party, bolted the Labor Party.[1] Hughes formed a new Cabinet composed of six Liberals and five former members of the Labor Party. In the national election of 1917, the Hughes government was returned under a new party banner-- the Nationalist Party. The Country Party made its debut in 1919, electing eleven members to federal parliament and thereby holding the balance of power. Country Party members gave the Hughes government grudging support; but in 1922, with its parliamentary strength increased to fourteen, the Country Party withdrew support from Hughes. The federal Treasurer, S. M. Bruce, succeeded Hughes as Prime Minister, and the Leader of the Country Party, Earle Page, became Deputy Prime Minister and Treasurer. The Country Party insisted on four additional Cabinet posts in return for its support.[2] The Bruce-Page "composite" government[3] remained in office until 1929 when Labor was swept into power.

Labor's triumph was short-lived. Battered by the depression crisis, J. M. Scullin's government floundered its way toward certain defeat. Once again, internal Labor dissension produced a split which provided the opposition with new leadership: the Treasurer, J. A. Lyons, and

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[1]Overacker, op. cit., pp. 115-128.

[2]Ulrich Ellis, A History of the Australian Country Party (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1963), pp. 98-99.

[3]Country Party spokesmen prefer to speak of "composite" governments rather than "coalition" governments, since the Country Party tends to be jealous of its status as an "independent" Party.

several of his followers joined the opposition. Under Lyons' leadership, the United Australia Party was formed, and the new party won an overwhelming victory in 1931.[1] Lyons led a United Australia-Country Party government until his death in 1939.

When Robert G. Menzies succeeded Lyons as Prime Minister, relations between the coalition partners steadily deteriorated. Interparty differences on policy, as well as bitter personal conflicts between Menzies and Country Party leaders, led to the downfall of the government.[2] Three weeks before Pearl Harbor, a Labor government under the leadership of John Curtin took office. The opposition parties continued in disarray during the war years, and the 1943 election reduced the United Australia Party to a mere fourteen members and the Country Party to nine members.

In October, 1944, Menzies as Leader of the Opposition called a conference of eighteen political and semi-political organizations active in the various states. Menzies urged the organizations to disband and form a "new movement."[3] Two months later a second conference was held, and the participating organizations agreed on a constitution for a party to be named the Liberal Party of Australia.

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[1] Overacker, op. cit., 213-14.

[2] Ellis, op. cit., pp. 233-257; Overacker, op. cit., pp. 214-215.

[3] Excerpts of Menzies' address to the conference are quoted in "Forming the Liberal Party of Australia," a Liberal Party pamphlet (undated).

The newly organized Liberal Party contested its
first election in 1946, and captured eighteen seats while
improving the popular vote received by the United Australia
Party in 1943 by 13.6 percent.[1] Following its re-election,
the Labor government became embroiled in a series of contro-
versies involving bank nationalization, the lifting of
wartime controls, and labor unrest caused by Communist-
dominated unions.[2] In the 1949 election, an anti-Labor
landslide put a Liberal-Country coalition securely into
power under Menzies' leadership.

The Menzies government has remained in power since
1949 by winning elections in 1951, 1954, 1955, 1958, 1961,
and 1963. In 1961, the Menzies government suffered heavy
losses in Queensland and New South Wales, but retained a
tenuous one-seat parliamentary majority.[3] Two years later
the government called another election and received a
thumping endorsement from the voters: party strength fol-
lowing the election of December, 1963 stood at 52 seats for
the Liberals, 20 for the Country Party, and 50 for the Labor
Party.

Since 1955 the Labor Party's efforts to unseat the

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[1]Overacker, op. cit., p. 297. In 1946 the Liberal
Party received 33 percent of the popular vote; the Country
Party, 10.9 percent; the Labor Party, 49.9 percent; other,
6.2 percent.

[2]Overacker, op. cit., pp. 292-296.

[3]The 1961 federal election is analyzed in Chapter VI.

Menzies government have been impeded by a damaging split in its own ranks, which led to the formation of the Democratic Labor Party. The upheaval occurred after Catholic-led "Industrial Groups" wrested control of several key industrial unions from Communist officers. The "Groupers", as they were called, were strongest in the state of Victoria where their control of Labor Party-affiliated unions led to control of the party state executive. Militantly anti-Communist, the "Groupers" also turned their fire on non-Communist union members who would join with Communists in forming a so-called "unity ticket"--a slate of candidates in a union election. Finally, the growing power of the Industrial Groups, together with mounting criticism of the federal parliamentary Leader, H. V. Evatt, by leading Victorian Catholics, culminated in the Labor split.

In October, 1954, Dr. Evatt issued a statement attacking "a small group of Labor members...disloyal to the Labor movement and to Labor leadership...deflecting the Labor movement from the pursuit of established Labor objectives and ideals.

"It seems certain," Evatt went on, "that the activities of this small group are largely directed from outside the Labor Movement."[1]

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[1]B. A. Santamaria, "'The Movement': 1941-1960--An Outline," Catholics and the Free Society, ed. Henry Mayer (Melbourne: F. W. Cheshire, 1961), p.88.

Evatt's denunciation of the Industrial Groups was followed in 1955 by action of the Labor Party Federal Executive to dissolve the Victorian State Executive and confirm the appointment of a new Executive purged of "Groupers". The Labor split in Victoria reverberated throughout the Labor movement in Australia, but generally with less serious consequences for existing Labor Party organizations in other states.[1] Dissident factions in Western Australia, Tasmania, and South Australia formed political organizations known as the Australian Labor Party (Anti-Communist) and made token appearances in the 1955 federal elections. In Victoria, the A.L.P. (A-C) polled 15 percent? of the vote in 1955, but all of its candidates for the House of Representatives (including seven incumbents) were defeated by official Labor Party candidates.[2]

The Labor Party State Executive of New South Wales was also reshuffled in 1956 as a result of action taken by the Federal Executive of the Labor Party. This reduced the strength of "Groupers" in New South Wales, but did not bring about a deep split in the party organization, partly because the Roman Catholic hierarchy in New South Wales did not support the D.L.P. movement. A nucleus of a few party officials did leave the regular party organization, however,

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[1] The development of the D.L.P. in each state is summarized by D. W. Rawson, op. cit., pp. 37-49.

[2] One D.L.P. candidate for the Senate, F. J. McManus, was elected because of the system of proportional representation by which Australian Senators are elected.

and formed the Democratic Labor Party--the name which was eventually adopted in all states except Queensland.[1]

In the last three elections of the federal House of Representatives in 1958, 1961, and 1963, the D.L.P. has fielded a slate of candidates in each state; however, its share of the total vote has gradually waned from 9.4 percent in 1958, to 8.5 percent in 1961, and 7.3 in 1963. The D.L.P. has polled as high as 14.8 percent of the vote in Victoria (1958 and 1961), and as low as 4.3 percent in New South Wales (1963).

It is difficult to assess either the electoral impact of the D.L.P., or the place the D.L.P. has occupied and will occupy in the Australian party stem. Rawson's analysis of the 1958 election concludes that "had there been only one Labor Party the government would very probably still have been returned."[2] And Labor's strong showing in 1961 seemed to disprove the notion that the existence of the D.L.P. necessarily relegates Labor to permanent opposition. Nevertheless, the D.L.P. has unquestionably been a troublesome, even if not insurmountable, roadblock in the path of the Labor Party.

We shall complete our discussion of Australian parties with a brief review of party structure in the individual

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[1]The A.L.P. split in Queensland occurred in 1957 as a result of conflict between the incumbent Labor government and the party's State Executive. The Labor Premier, V. C. Gair, was expelled, and he and his followers formed the Queensland Labor Party. See A. A. Morrison, "The Government of Queensland," in Davis, op. cit., pp. 288-292.

[2]Rawson, op. cit., p. 223.

states and at the federal level.

According to Davis:

> The foundation of the Australian political parties is deeply rooted in the States. This is a fact of first importance...Each major party...has created a federal organization, but in each case it is a tight or loose coalescence of State parties in a superstructure which ultimately enjoys only the strength and meaning that its State organizations choose to give it.[1]

Party organizations within each state virtually monopolize the functions of candidate selection, fund raising, and campaign organization for both federal and state elections. Although the structure of a given party is generally similar from state to state, there are numerous variations growing out of a particular state's political traditions.

Typically, the Liberal and Country parties are organized in local branches which elect delegates to a constituency or electorate organization. The electorate organization sends delegates to a central council, which exercises the formal responsibility for party policy and management. In most states, the central council elects a smaller central executive which is responsible for the day-to-day management of the organization. All parties hold an annual conference or convention composed of delegates from party branches; the annual conference hears speeches by party leaders, debates policy resolutions, and usually elects part of the central council. State and federal parliamentary parties

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[1] Davis, op. cit., p. 578. Variations among state party organizations are outlined in pp. 578 - 603.

have substantial representation on all central bodies,
but members of parliament are specifically prohibited from
acting as state president.

Each state Liberal Party organization sends seven
delegates to the federal council, which usually meets annu-
ally and elects a smaller federal executive including a
federal president, one delegate from each state, and a
women's chairman. The federal organs of the Liberal Party
provide state organizations with some access to and influ-
ence on the federal policy-making process; however, the
primary responsibility for shaping policy--both in theory
and practice--rests with the parliamentary leadership.
In addition, the federal organization does not exercise
supervisory or disciplinary authority over state parties.

The Country Party, as Overacker has pointed out —

> is hardly more than a loose alliance of independent
> state chieftains...Outside of parliament [it] is little
> more than a loose confederation of very independent
> state groups linked together by a federal council, a
> federal president, and a headquarters office in
> Sydney...[1]

Thus, the federal organization of the Country Party con-
sists mainly of its parliamentary party, which under a
series of strong parliamentary leaders, has demonstrated
remarkable cohesion.

Labor Party organizations at the state level also
form branches as the basic structural unit. Branches elect
delegates to state and federal electorate committees, and
these committees in turn elect delegates to the annual

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[1]Overacker, op. cit., pp. 222, 231.

conference. Unions affiliated with the Labor Party also have direct representation at the annual conference in proportion to the size of their membership, the result being that union delegates far exceed the number of non-union delegates. As the collective voice of the party, the annual conference is vested with "supreme ruling authority" and may instruct members of parliament on policy questions. The annual conference also elects the central executive which has broad supervision over the party organization including the power to expel members, dissolve branches, and refuse party endorsement to candidates.

At the federal level a conference is held biennially consisting of six delegates from each state. The federal conference elects federal party officers and an executive with two delegates from each state. These federal bodies also have broad powers which include the right to determine party policy and to restructure state organizations.[1]

Within the borders of each state, party organizations expend a major share of their energies and resources in order to capture control of state governments. In spite of the fact that in four states one party has been in power for extended periods, most election campaigns are genuine

[1]The recurring crises in Labor Party organization, both at state and federal levels, have received much attention from students of Australian politics. In addition to Overacker's excellent study, see L. F. Crisp, The Australian Federal Labour Party 1901-1951 (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1955). Also see J. D. B. Miller, "Party Discipline in Australia," Political Science, V (March and September, 1953), 3-15, 21-36.

contests which offer a reasonable prospect of victory to both parties.[1]

In South Australia, the Liberal and Country League[2] has maintained an unbroken hold on the state government since 1933, thanks largely to a gerrymandered system of representation which gives twice as many seats to the country as to the capital city of Adelaide. Even so, the L.C.L. narrowly missed defeat in 1962. The second longest period of one-party control has occurred in Tasmania, where a Labor government has been in power since 1935. The Labor Party controlled the Queensland government from 1932 to 1957, but lost control to a Country-Liberal coalition after the Labor split. Changes in party control have been most frequent in Western Australia and Victoria; both currently have Liberal-Country governments since 1958 and 1955 respectively.

New South Wales has a population of about four million people, which is well over a third of Australia's total population. The state is bounded on the east by some 700 miles of Pacific coastline, and extends approximately the same distance into the interior of the continent. In general, the state is characterized by a pattern of decreasing population density and economic development from east to west. The mid-coastal region, which comprises three

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[1]Davis, op. cit., pp.579-583.

[2]In 1932 the two non-Labor parties in South Australia, the Liberal Federation and the Country Party, merged to form the Liberal and Country League--the name it has used ever since.

percent of the area, "holds seventy per cent of its

population and ninety per cent of its industrial strength."[1]

In the center of the region lies the state capital of Sydney,

a metropolis of more than two million people; to the north

is Newcastle, with a population of 150,000, and to the south

is Wollongong-Port Kembla with a population of 130,000.

Over 95 percent of the people outside the three

largest cities live within 250 miles of the coast. Dairy-

ing is the main industry in the north and south coastal

areas. Parallel with most of the coastline is a sharply-

raised tableland, which contains important sheep and cattle

grazing districts as well as closely settled mixed farming

areas. Wheat farming is a major rural industry along the

western slopes of the tablelands, while the vast, dry plains

in western New South Wales are suitable only for sheep

grazing. According to Parker, "less than 15,000 people live

in the unincorporated portions of the Western Division,

covering over fourty per cent of the State."[2]

New South Wales has a bicameral parliament consisting

of a 94-member Legislative Assembly elected from single-

member districts, and a 60-member Legislative Council.[3]

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[1]R. S. Parker, "The Government of New South Wales,"
Government of the Australian States, p. 59.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Legislative Councillors are elected for life; vacan-
cies are filled by a joint vote of the Legislative Assembly
and Legislative Council. The Council may amend or reject
all bills except the annual appropriation bill, which can
be delayed for one month. The Labor Party has long been
committed to abolition of the Council, but a bloc of Labor
Councillors has refused to vote themselves out of existence
by approving an abolition bill. In 1961, a referendum on
the question of abolition was soundly defeated.

Since 1949, the Legislative Assembly has been elected under
an apportionment system which gives 48 seats to the Sydney
metropolitan area, and 46 seats to the remainder of the
state. Within these two major divisions, electorate
boundaries are determined on a population basis by an
Electoral Districts Commission.[1]

The Labor Party has controlled the Legislative
Assembly since 1941. Its principal strength lies in the
major industrial complexes of Sydney, Newcastle, and
Wollongong; however, its strength has also penetrated sig-
nificantly into the more densely populated country areas.
In addition, the Labor Party commands the allegiance of the
sparsely-settled, far-western electorates. The Liberal
Party is based mainly in the middle and upper-middle class
suburbs in the Sydney metropolitan area. Other Liberal
strongholds include prosperous, semi-rural electorates
adjacent to the Sydney area, as well as the south coast
dairying area. The Country Party does not contest metro-
politan electorates, but it controls most of the electorates
forming a broad belt from the wealthy northeastern New
England area to the southern agricultural districts.[2]

In spite of Labor's extended grip on the New South
Wales government, the contest for power has been by no means
one-sided. The 1950 election resulted in a 46-46 split

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[1]This Commission is a three-member body composed of
the Electoral Commissioner _ex officio_, a judge and a
surveyor appointed by the government.

[2]Parker, _op. cit._, pp. 83-94.

between Labor and its non-Labor opponents, but the support
of two "Independent Labor" members kept the government in
power. In the elections of 1956 and 1959, the "adjusted"
Liberal and Country Party vote combined very nearly equalled
the vote for the Labor Party; yet the Labor government
received a 52-42 parliamentary majority in 1956, and a
50-44 majority in 1959.[1] In each election, a handful of
additional Liberal and Country votes in "swing" seats could
have tipped the election in their favor. As a result,
Liberal leaders have consistently maintained that the
apportionment system is weighted in Labor's favor, and also
that electorate boundaries are deliberately drawn to give
Labor the edge in critical swing seats. While this claim
is difficult to document conclusively, it does reflect the
frustration of a party organization which has always been
within reach of power, but has fallen just short of grasping
it.

Summary

In the opening chapter of this study, we have outlined
our theoretical approach to the analysis of party organiza-
tion. Our central assumption is that party organization is
an organized effort to gain control of government through

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[1]It is difficult to arrive at an accurate breakdown
of the party vote because of several uncontested electorates
and the presence of independent and splinter party candidates
on the ballot. Joan Rydon attempts to take these factors
into consideration in computing party strength in elections.
See her chapter "The Results," State Ballot, Ian Campbell
(Sydney: Australian Political Studies Association Monograph
No. 7, 1963), pp. 46-51.

the election of party candidates. The drive for public office is the party organization's reason for existence, and electoral victory is the measure of success. Thus, those who win elections and hold governmental power tend to dominate the party organization, and tend to shape party structure and policies to meet the conditions of office-seeking.

The contest among parties for control of government occurs within the framework of differing traditions, cultures, and political institutions. This particular study of party organization is devoted to an analysis of the Liberal Party of New South Wales, Australia. We have reviewed some of the important economic, social, and political forces which have had a bearing on the development and character of the party system in Australia. Among these are its vigorous and stormy labor movement, the antipathy between city and country, the economic dependence on primary production, and the unique mixture of British and American-derived political institutions.

Within the state of New South Wales, we have seen that the Liberal Party has shared in the consistent success of the party in national politics since 1949, but has failed--sometimes narrowly--to gain control of state government. The objective of this study is to examine the response of the party to this position, and to analyze that response in terms of our concept of party as an office-seeking organization.

CHAPTER II

THE NEW SOUTH WALES LIBERAL PARTY:

STRUCTURE, ADMINISTRATION

AND PERSONNEL

Introduction

Political parties operate within an established
organizational structure, which provides for units and
levels of organization, and also provides for procedures
by which the party chooses leaders, evolves policy, conducts
campaigns, and makes decisions about the internal operation
of the organization. In this chapter, we are concerned
with the formal structure of the New South Wales Liberal
Party, and the procedural mechanisms by which the party
operates and makes decisions.

Liberal Party branches are the smallest units of
organization, and form the foundation of the party structure.
The next level of organization is the electorate conference,
which is composed of delegates from branches located within
a given electorate. The governing body of the organization
is State Council, which is composed mainly of delegates
elected by state electorate conferences. A much smaller
body, the State Executive, is elected by State Council, and
is responsible for party operation between meetings of State
Council. Among the members of the Executive elected by the

Council are the State President and four vice-presidents, who may not be members of parliament, and the State Treasurer.

Liberal members of state parliament form the state parliamentary party, elect their own Leader, and have direct representation on the central bodies of the party organization. The state Leader has the final responsibility for spelling out party policy. Liberal members of federal parliament from New South Wales also select a Leader and have direct representation on State Council and the State Executive. The federal Leader is the chief spokesman for Liberal Party policy at the federal level.

These are the main outlines of the party structure; we turn now to a more detailed examination of the component units, and their relationship to each other.[1]

The branch organization

A Liberal Party branch consists of at least ten members who, with the consent of the state electorate conference, pass a resolution that a branch be formed. Membership is open to any person who indicates his desire to join by signing a prescribed application form, and paying the annual membership fee of ₤1 (approximately $2.25).

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[1]Party structure and procedures are spelled out in the party constitution, a document containing 236 articles when it was issued in printed form in 1957. The constitution has since been amended frequently, and an updated version is currently being prepared. The discussion in this chapter reflects the latest information available; however, specific references and quotations are drawn from the 1957 version unless otherwise indicated.

Upon the formation of a branch, the members elect a branch committee consisting of a president, two vice-presidents, secretary, treasurer, and at least two other members. The branch also elects from three to eight delegates (depending on the size of its membership) to the state and federal electorate conferences in which the branch is located. In addition, the five branch officers are ex officio delegates to electorate conferences. Finally, the branch elects three to five delegates to the party annual conference.

Branch officers are responsible for the leadership and administration of branch affairs. The branch president acts as chairman of all branch meetings, and provides over-all leadership of branch activities. The branch secretary takes charge of all correspondence, records, documents, and keeps the minutes of all branch meetings. The branch treasurer receives membership fees and other monies, keeps the branch bank account, and presents an annual financial statement to the branch. Delegates to electorate conferences and the annual convention transmit to these bodies the resolutions and ideas of the branch, and are responsible for reporting back to the branch the proceedings of such meetings. All of these office-bearers, sitting as the branch committee, are responsible for meeting separately between general branch meetings in order to plan a program of branch activities, prepare reports for the general branch, and dispose of routine branch administration.

The functions of a Liberal Party branch as outlined in Clause 45 of the party constitution are as follows:

(a) To promote the objects, policy and platform of the Organisation.

(b) To work for the election to Parliament of the selected and endorsed candidates of the Organisation, and for that purpose to co-operate with all the other Branches and the State Electorate Conference within the Electorate and with the Executive and committees in organising the electorate to that end.

(c) To enlist supporters of the Organisation as members of the Branch.

(d) To raise funds for the purpose of the Organisation and for the furtherance of its objects.

(e) To secure the enrolment of every person eligible as an elector and the removal from the Electoral Roll of the names of all unqualified persons.

(f) To keep an Electoral Roll for the Electorate in which shall be marked the known supporters of the Organisation.

(g) To encourage within the Branch and the Organisation all educational work of a political, social, and economic character.

(h) To adopt resolutions for submission to the State Council, to Convention, or the Electorate Conference or Regional Conference concerned.

A review of these eight functions indicates that the principal object of the branch organization is electoral: six of the eight functions are directly or indirectly concerned with the mobilization of maximum Liberal electoral support in the branch area.

Functions other than electoral responsibilities are notably less prominent in the list: one such function is the "educational work of a political, social, and economic

character" which the branch should encourage. This catch-all statement includes branch activities ranging from the staging of debates to the annual Christmas social. The other non-electoral function is the discussion of policy resolutions, and the submission of such resolutions to the higher levels of the party organization.

In order to remain in good standing with the party, a branch is required by the constitution to hold an annual general meeting sometime before August 31. The quorum for such a meeting is eight members. At the annual meeting, branch members elect or re-elect office-bearers, hear reports from the treasurer and the branch committee, and discuss general business. The branch is also required by the constitution to keep its membership records and financial affairs in good order. If a branch ceases to function satisfactorily, or ceases to function at all, it may be investigated by the State Executive, which has the power to disband a branch and confiscate its records and funds (if any).

The discussion so far has focused Liberal Party branches in general; it is necessary, however, to differentiate among four types of branches, some of which have somewhat different functions and privileges. The most common type is the general branch, which draws its membership from both sexes. The functions and privileges of general branches are those which have already been outlined.

In addition to the general branches, there are Special Branches, Young Liberal Branches, and Women's Branches.

Clause 28 of the party constitution provides that Special Branches, "based not upon geographical areas, but upon community of cultural, occupational, or other interests" may be formed with the consent of the State Executive. Special Branches are governed by the same provisions as general branches, except that Special Branches are entitled to send one delegate to State Council. They are the only branches with such direct representation on the governing body of the party organization. At this writing, there are only three Special Branches: the City of Sydney Special Branch, the Northern Suburbs Club (Sydney), and the Sydney University Liberal Club. Members of Special Branches may also be members with full voting privileges in general branches, but persons holding dual membership must pay the membership fee to both branches.

Membership in Young Liberal Branches is open to anyone in the 16-26 age group. Young Liberal Branches elect their own officers and conduct their own affairs--mainly social functions; they do not have the electoral responsibilities of general branches, although they often co-operate with general branches in the performance of such functions. Each Young Liberal Branch elects three delegates to Youth Council, the function of which is "to co-ordinate the work of Young Liberal Branches, and generally to promote and stimulate the progress of the Organisation and of the Young

Liberal Movement."[1] Youth Council also elects five

delegates to State Council and one delegate to the State

Executive. The chairman of Youth Council is a member of

the State Executive appointed by the State Executive.

An annual Young Liberal Convention has been held since

1954. The convention spans two successive evenings: one

evening is devoted to the debating of resolutions submitted

by Young Liberal Branches; the second evening is devoted to

the annual Young Liberal Ball. All Young Liberals are

eligible to attend both functions.

The fourth type of Liberal Party branch is the Women's

Branch. Like Young Liberal Branches, Women's Branches do

not elect delegates to electorate conferences; each Women's

Branch sends one delegate to a co-ordinating body called

the "Women's Group".[2] The Women's Group meets monthly to

hear guest speakers--usually members of parliament, discuss

policy proposals, and plan social activities designed to

raise money for the party. Women's Group elects three

delegates to represent it in State Council. Liberal Party

women held their first Women's Convention in 1960, and it

has since become an annual event. The convention debates

branch resolutions covering a wide range of subjects--as

one report puts it--"from children to beer, from education

[1]Constitution, Clause 37.

[2]The "Women's Committee" of a general branch may also
send one delegate to the Women's Group.

to pensions, and from census papers to flogging."[1]

Annual Convention

The Liberal Party annual convention is an assembly of delegates elected directly by party branches. All branch presidents and secretaries are <u>ex officio</u> delegates, and additional delegates (three to five) are elected by branches of varying size.

Any branch or state electorate conference may submit motions to be included on the convention agenda. Convention delegates discuss and vote on each motion; however, there is no provision in the constitution for the incorporation of convention decisions into party policy. Lacking any formal power, the role of the convention is to "bring to our policy-making bodies the topical thinking of the community on a wide variety of subjects" and to "provide a fund of ideas for future discussion in the course of our everyday life."[2]

The annual convention is normally held on a weekend, with the first session on Friday evening and the closing session on Saturday evening. The State President occupies the chair. Motions submitted to the convention total at least 100--the 1960 convention, for example, considered a record 241 motions--and cover a wide range of topics: immigration policy, decimal currency, social services,

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[1]<u>Sydney Morning Herald</u> Editorial, August 1, 1961.

[2]R. C. Cotton (then State President), "A Message to Convention Delegates" in the 1960 Convention Agenda.

aboriginal welfare, Sydney Harbor Bridge toll, and mouth-to-mouth resuscitation—to mention a few examples from the 1960 convention. Because of the large number of motions, the relative brevity of the convention, and the attendance of several hundred delegates, it is impossible to debate motions with any thoroughness. According to the convention standing orders, the mover of a motion is limited to five minutes to present his case, and all other speakers are limited to three minutes. The time limit for debate on any single motion is thirty minutes. The convention agenda groups motions according to subject matter, and includes a time-table giving the amount of time to be devoted to each group of motions. In the 1960 agenda, for example, the time-table allowed thirty minutes for seven motions dealing with immigration.[1] With the help of these procedural rules, together with an alert and sometimes ruthless chairman, the annual convention is able to gallop through most of its agenda with remarkable agility, if questionable profit. Nevertheless, convention debates, such as they are, are carried on with a notable earnestness. And in contrast to similar political gatherings in the United States, convention delegates are normally orderly and attentive while convention business is being conducted.

In addition to the consideration of motions, the annual convention is usually addressed by the State President, the State Leader of the State Parliamentary Party,

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[1] "1960 Convention Agenda," pp. 12-13.

and the Prime Minister (if available) or a Cabinet Minister from New South Wales.

In the past few years, the functions of the annual convention have been critically examined, and its value to the party organization has been openly questioned. After the 1962 convention, the State Executive noted in its annual report to State Council:

> Debating standards and subject matter generally, were not of a high order...Throughout the years, we have adopted the policy of refraining from guiding the Convention debate in any way. In that spirit, Parliamentary members generally, have not participated to any extent in the debates. Inevitably, the effect is to have very uninformed discussions on many topics, often led by a handful of delegates and represented in the press as the collective viewpoint of the Party. As a result, Convention frequently fails to serve either broad democratic participation or sound public relations tactics.[1]

The State Executive called for "a thorough appraisal of all aspects of the Annual General Convention, including its nature and functions."[2]

It is hardly surprising, therefore, that the annual convention was scuttled in 1963 "due to the intervention of the Federal Election campaign";[3] and in 1964, the convention--usually held in October or November, was "deferred" until after state elections scheduled for May 1, 1965.[4] It seems reasonable to conclude that the convention faces an uncertain future.

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[1]Report of the State Executive to the Annual General Meeting of State Council," December 3, 1962, pp. 9-10.

[2]Ibid., p. 9.

[3]Ibid., December 13, 1963, p. 13.

[4]Ibid., December 14, 1964, p. 3.

Electorate Conferences

An electorate conference is composed of delegates
elected by each general branch within a state or federal
electorate. The same group of delegates from a given
branch are members of both the state and federal electorate
conferences.

The **state electorate conference** is the main link
between local branches and the higher levels of the organi-
zation. The state electorate conference reviews all reso-
lutions forwarded to it by branches within the electorate,
and forwards approved resolutions to the governing body of
the organization--State Council. Each conference elects
four delegates to State Council, one of whom must be a
woman. In addition, the state electorate conference is
responsible for supervising control and co-ordinating the
work of all branches within the electorate, assisting in
the formation of new branches, and defining organizing
areas within the electorate. These duties and prerogatives
apply only to state conferences and not federal conferences.

The following activities and functions are carried
out by both state and federal conferences. All electorate
conferences elect a committee consisting of a president, two
vice-presidents, a secretary, a treasurer, at least one
additional member from each branch, and an auditor. State
conference committees also include the four delegates to
State Council and four alternate delegates. Conference

officers exercise much the same functions as do the corresponding branch officers: they perform the administrative tasks of the conference, plan activities, and provide general leadership.

Electorate conferences play a key role in election campaigns, both in the selection of Liberal candidates and in the management of campaigns. An electorate conference elects thirty of its members, who together with twenty members of State Council appointed by the State Executive, comprise a candidate selection committee. Aspiring candidates for parliament appear before the committee and are subjected to questioning. The committee then proceeds to nominate by exhaustive ballot the most desirable candidate.[1]

When a candidate for a given electorate is endorsed, the electorate conference is in charge of organizing and conducting the campaign, subject to the general supervision of State Council and the State Executive. The conference appoints a campaign committee, usually from among its own members, which consists of a chairman, secretary, treasurer, finance sub-committee, and publicity sub-committee. The campaign committee organizes meetings, fund-raising, distribution of leaflets, and polling day activities.[2]

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[1] The procedure and politics of pre-selection will be discussed in detail in Chapter V. It should be noted here, however, that conferences elect the entire selection committee in all electorates outside the Sydney metropolitan area.

[2] S. R. Tyler describes Liberal campaign organization in his article "Campaigning at the Grassroots", Australian Political Studies Association News, VI (February, 1961), pp. 6-12.

Regions

In 1957, State Council approved the formation of nine regional (five metropolitan and four country) conferences composed of an average of ten state electorates each. Regional conferences were established as an intermediate organizational stratum between electorate conferences and the central bodies of the party. They were composed of all officers of state and federal electorate conferences within the region, together with one representative of Young Liberal Branches and one representative of Women's Branches within the region, and all members of the State and Federal Liberal parliamentary parties from the region. Each region elected its own office-bearers, who comprised the regional committee. The presidents of the nine regional conferences were ex officio members of both State Council and the State Executive.

It was hoped that the regional conferences would develop into organizational clearing-houses, relieving State Council and the State Executive from the burden of dealing with strictly local and regional matters. These hopes were not realized: instead of streamlining the party organization, regional conferences complicated it by adding another layer to already complex structure.

Because of "the failure of regions to function in the full scope of their responsibility",[1] the State Executive finally recommended to State Council in 1962 that the idea

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[1] "State Executive Report to State Council," June 29, 1962, p. 2.

of active regional conferences be abandoned. The State
Executive presented three straightforward reasons for its
recommendation:

> (a) the huge distances involved in country areas, which
> make the region unworkable in terms of simple
> travel.

> (b) the Party Constitution is built upon the exploitation
> of the self-interest of individual electorates.
> Regions have no uniform self-interest and therefore,
> there is often little incentive for a common meeting
> ground.

> (c) branch and Conference office-bearers already have a
> heavy enough calendar of meetings without adding
> another stratum of meetings.[1]

The State Executive also recommended, however, that postal
ballots be conducted in each region to elect a regional
president, who would be an _ex officio_ member of State Council
and the State Executive. These recommendations were adopted
by State Council.

State Council

State Council is the governing body of the party.
It is vested by the party constitution with the power "to
exercise all or any of the powers of the Organisation...
within the boundaries of the State of New South Wales."[2]

State Council is a body of about 300 party members.
The composition of its membership is as follows:[3]

> (1) four delegates from each state electorate conference,
> (2) five delegates from the Youth Council,

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[1] _Ibid._

[2] _Constitution_, Clause 135.

[3] _Ibid._, Clause 136.

(3) three delegates from the Women's Group,
(4) one delegate from each special branch,
(5) the president of each regional conference,
(6) fifteen delegates (including at least five women) elected by the annual state convention,
(7) all members of the State Finance Committee,
(8) the leader and seven other members of the state parliamentary party, and
(9) the leader and two other members of the federal parliamentary party.

State Council is constitutionally required to meet at least six times a year. Fifty members constitute a meeting quorum. In practice, State Council usually met an average of nine times a year until 1957. Upon the establishment of regional conferences, meetings of State Council were reduced to six each year. When it became apparent that the regional conferences were not playing their expected role in reducing the size of State Council agenda, it was decided in 1961 that State Council should meet monthly.[1] Attendance at meetings varies considerably: an exceptional meeting will attract 125 members, but an attendance of around 100 members is the usual turnout.

State Council is re-constituted each year at its annual general meeting in November. At this meeting, State Council hears addresses by the State President and a member of federal Parliament. It also receives a report from the State Executive which reviews the activities, accomplishments, and problems of the party organization during the preceding year. But the main function of the meeting is the submission of nominations for the party's State Executive. State Council chooses eighteen people from its own

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[1] State Council Minutes, April 17, 1961.

membership to serve on the State Executive: the State President, the State Treasurer, four Vice-Presidents,[1] six members from the Sydney metropolitan area, and six country members. Nominations must be submitted in writing within one week after the annual general meeting, and election to these positions is by secret postal ballot. At the annual meeting, State Council members are provided with a list of retiring State Executive members, together with the attendance record of each retiring member at Executive meetings. These records are intended to guide State Council members in their nominations and subsequent voting.

In addition to electing eighteen members of the State Executive, State Council also nominates and elects by the same procedure seven representatives to the Liberal Party Federal Council, a Constitution Standing Committee, six members of the Joint Standing Committee on State Policy, and a three-member Liberal Philosophy Committee.

State Council considers resolutions from every level of the party organization, although branches are encouraged to channel resolutions through their electorate conferences. Individual members of State Council may also raise matters for discussion, but must state why they have not used normal channels. State Council resolutions embrace a large number of topics including policy recommendations, "Liberal principles", and internal organizational problems.

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[1]There are two Vice-Presidents (one man and one woman) from metropolitan electorates, and two from country electorates.

State Council has final authority on all matters relating to the party organization and constitution. Since 1959, State Council may amend the constitution at any meeting, but amendments must be approved by 60 percent of the members present.[1] At each meeting of State Council, the State Executive submits a report which includes a summary of its activities between Council meetings, and also includes any proposals which the Executive may wish to submit. Council reviews each item of the Executive report, and has the power to reject any Executive proposal.

On matters of party policy, State Council has only deliberative "power". State policy recommendations are submitted to the Joint Standing Committee on State Policy; federal policy resolutions are referred to the N.S.W. federal parliamentary party, or to the appropriate federal minister (if the Liberal Party is in power). If State Council so decides, it may appoint special committees to study any aspect of party policy or party organization, and may be guided by the findings of such committees.

State Executive

According to the party constitution, the State Executive acts as a committee of State Council: "It shall exercise the functions of the State Council between meetings and shall submit a report to the State Council of its

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[1]Prior to 1959, amendments to the party constitution could only be considered at an annual constitutional session of State Council. The quorum for this special session was 100 members.

activities at each meeting of the State Council."[1]

The State Executive is a body of thirty-seven party members, of which eighteen are elected from State Council as already described. The balance of the Executive is made up as follows:[2]

(1) the presidents of each regional conference,
(2) the two Leaders of the parliamentary parties, plus two additional members of each parliamentary party,
(3) one representative of Youth Council,
(4) the immediate past State President,
(5) a vice-president elected by the State Finance Committee, and
(6) the president of Federal Council.

The constitution does not spell out the number of times the Executive must meet, nor does it establish a quorum for Executive meetings. In practice, the Executive meets at least once a month. The function of the Executive is to "exercise all administrative functions, including control of Staff, publicity, and raising and expenditure of monies."[3] These functions are exercised subject to review and approval by State Council. However, "no decision of the Executive upon administrative matters shall be reversed by State Council unless a resolution to that effect is carried by two-thirds of the members attending the State Council meeting."[4]

The State Executive plays an important role in the nomination of candidates. Each candidate selection in the metropolitan area is made by a fifty-member selection

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[1]Constitution, Clause 159.   [2]Ibid., Clause 160.

[3]Ibid, Clause 162.   [4]Ibid.

committee, of which twenty are State Council members nominated by the State Executive. The State Council panel for each committee is chosen on a rotating basis from the approximately 200 Council members who live in the metropolitan area. The practice is to choose Council members from as many different electorates as possible. The participation of the Council panel inevitably raises charges of central "interference" in the nominating process. This will be discussed and analyzed in Chapter V.

To assist in the exercise of its powers, the State Executive may appoint such committees as it sees fit. These committees may be composed of any members of the party. The most important committee appointed by the Executive is the Finance Committee, which deals specifically with the raising and spending of money for the party organization in cooperation with the State Treasurer.

The State Executive also has the power to engage a General Secretary to be in charge of day-to-day administration of the party organization, and "such other officers as it considers necessary for the adequate forwarding of the interests of the Organisation."[1]

Administration and personnel

The Liberal Party has its headquarters in downtown Sydney.[2] Party offices occupy two floors of a privately-

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[1]Ibid, Clause 167.

[2]Party headquarters is located in Ash Street, Sydney. Official party publications generally refer to headquarters as "central office", but newspapers and many party members more commonly refer to it as "Ash Street."

owned office building; in addition, the party uses the
basement of the building as a meeting hall for State Council,
pre-selection committees, and other gatherings which cannot
be accommodated in the smaller "Executive Room." The
central administrative functions of the party organization
are performed at party headquarters by a paid staff of
approximately twenty-five persons under the supervision of
the General Secretary. The staff includes the General
Secretary and his private secretary, the State Supervisor
of the party Field staff and his secretary, an accountant,
a public relations officer, a press officer, a research
officer, the editor of The Australian Liberal, a switch-
board operator, and about a dozen women engaged in routine
office chores.

The staff at party headquarters attends to an immense
amount of administrative detail. A large proportion of time
is spent on duties connected with the meetings and work of
the party's central bodies, and their many committees and
sub-committees. A single meeting of any such group may
involve assembling of a meeting agenda, notification of
each member regarding time and place of meeting, recording
the minutes of each meeting, and assembling the minutes for
presentation to the next meeting. Long committee and sub-
committee reports often place an additional burden on the
staff, which may have to dig up information for these reports
in addition to typing, duplicating, and circulating them to

committee members.[1]

The tempo of headquarters activity naturally increases during election campaigns. Several months before an election, the staff is absorbed by the mechanics of preparing for candidate selection meetings (often called "pre-selections"). For each pre-selection, office personnel must contact by telephone the twenty pre-selection delegates named by the State Executive, and ask them to attend. If some of the twenty cannot attend, alternate delegates must then be contacted. In addition, the staff prepares and mails to each pre-selection delegate: a leaflet prepared by the General Secretary on the duties of a selector; an agenda of the pre-selection meeting; and a dossier on each candidate providing personal background, qualifications, and reference letters. After candidates are selected, the staff at party headquarters becomes immersed in the details of campaign organization: the preparation and distribution of campaign propaganda, campaign committee meetings, coordination of the campaign in the various electorates, raising of funds, and the organization of polling day activities.

The present General Secretary of the party is Mr. J. L. Carrick, who has held the position since 1948. Carrick's personal background includes a Bachelor of Economics degree

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[1] This strict adherence to orderly bureaucratic procedure, while burdening the staff with a severe load of paper work, does provide the student with a wealth of research material. Unfortunately, however, the proceedings of party meetings are usually recorded in the minutes with studious vagueness. Sharp conflicts are noted obliquely, if at all, and controversial or "touchy" topics often go unrecorded. According to the General Secretary, minutes are "emasculated" to protect the confidences of the party, should the minutes by some mischance fall into hostile hands.

from Sydney University in 1939. Then World War II inter-
vened, and Carrick served in the Australian army through-
out the war. As a prisoner of war for over three years,
Carrick managed to survive the rigors of prison camp and
pick-and-shovel work on the Burma-Thailand "Railway of
Death." Carrick returned to Australia with intentions to
begin Sydney University's program in medicine, but the
University discouraged him because of his age. He was
twenty-six.

In 1946, Mr. K. McCaw--an "old friend of the
family" and member of the New South Wales parliament--
suggested to Carrick that he help set up the research
operation of the recently-organized Liberal Party. Al-
though Carrick had no particular interest in politics or
party administration, the position appeared to suit his
qualifications and talens. Carrick took up his duties
with characteristic aggressiveness; he brought to his
position as research officer a quick mind, an engaging
personality, and an apparently boundless capacity for
work.

Carrick's talents soon attracted the attention of
Sen. W. H. Spooner, then State President of the party.
A close personal bond developed between the two men, a
bond which Carrick himself states has overtones of a
"father-son" relationship. In late 1947 the Liberal Party
began to organize for the 1949 federal elections, and

Spooner asked Carrick to take over as General Secretary.
Carrick refused, and the position remained vacant for
several months while the State Supervisor served as acting
General Secretary. Carrick finally accepted the position
on the condition that he would resign immediately follow-
ing the federal elections of 1949. His foreshadowed
resignation did not occur: Carrick directed the party
organization in the triumphant campaign which swept the
Liberal Party into power in 1949, and he has retained his
position until the present time. Carrick's resignation
was widely rumored following the 1961 federal election,
when the Menzies Government held on by a tenuous majority
of one. But Carrick continues as General Secretary with
no immediate intention of resigning.

Carrick has been described as a "lean-faced, grey-
flannel man...with granite chin, a smile that flashes on
and off like a neon sign, and a vague resemblance to Kirk
Douglas."[1] More to the point: he is thought of as
"Australia's most efficient party secretary."[2] Carrick
has no personal assistant other than his stenographer,

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[1]"A Grey Eminence Resigns," The Bulletin, LXXXIII,
No. 4275 (January 20, 1962), 4,5. The author of the
article--identified only as "An Ash Street Correspondent"
--was Henry Mayer.

[2]Ibid. See also Peter Coleman, "The Men Behind the
Party Machines," The Bulletin, LXXXIII, No. 4308 (September
8, 1962), 14.

and his associates sometimes observe that he appears
unwilling to delegate responsibility to subordinates.
The result is, as The Bulletin's correspondent points
out, that

> Carrick has been secretary, organiser, P.R. man,
> fund-raiser, chief clerk, policy-maker, propagandist.
> He has been Dorothy Dix to disappointed wives whose
> husbands have once more failed to gain pre-selection
> and to hundreds of other callers who want something
> from the party or whose corns have been trodden on.[1]

Over the years, Carrick has developed a reputation for
fairness and integrity. His keenly-honed political
instinct is combined with some of the detachment of the
academic--Carrick communicates easily with political
scientists and encourages their interest in the party.
Unquestionably, Carrick holds a deep and personal loyalty
to the Liberal Party; however, he is hard-headed in
measuring both the assets and the weaknesses of the party.

The General Secretary, in addition to directing the
professional staff of the organization, also serves as
secretary to the State Executive. This position involves
such responsibilities as preparing the Central Office
budget, and making recommendations to the Executive re-
lating to staff, publicity, finance, party structure, and
campaign organization. The General Secretary also prepares
the State Executive report to monthly meetings of State
Council. In November of each year the State Executive
presents a complete annual report to State Council. This

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[1] "A Grey Eminence Resigns," loc. cit.

report is prepared by the General Secretary, and is a
reasonably searching and candid statement of 10,000 words
or more which evaluates the party's activities in the pre-
ceding year and holds up challenges to the party in the
year ahead.

The State Supervisor of the field staff, Mr. A. T.
Lenehan, began his career in party politics after the
Depression of the early 1930's forced him out of business.
Lenehan joined the United Australia Party as an organizer
in 1933. In 1945, Lenehan accepted a position with the
Liberal Party organization of Western Australia, but re-
turned to New South Wales in 1958 and took over as State
Supervisor. Working under the direction of the General
Secretary, the State Supervisor has immediate supervision
over the activities of the field staff. His duties in-
clude recommending field staff appointees to the General
Secretary; carefully reviewing the weekly reports which
all organizers must submit; and generally keeping the
General Secretary informed on developments, progress, and
trouble spots in the party's electorate organizations.

In addition to the party central office in Ash Street,
the Liberal Party maintains ten offices distributed through-
out the Sydney metropolitan area, and nine offices located
in the larger "country" centers of Dubbo, Goulborn,
Newcastle (2), Gosford, Hamilton, Orange, Wauchope, Wagga
Wagga, and Wollongong. Each of these offices is normally

manned by a member of the party's full-time professional
field staff.[1] A member of the field staff is responsible
for assisting the branch and electorate organizations which
function in his assigned territory. He is expected to help
organize meetings, to advise branch officers on constitu-
tional matters and assist them with routine administration,
to work with the party member of parliament and/or the
party candidate, and to do much of the organizing and
"leg-work" of election campaigns. He is the main link
between the local organization and party headquarters:
he seeks to implement in the local area the decisions
which emanate from the governing agencies of the party,
and on the other hand, he keeps the central organization
informed on conditions in his territory.[2]

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[1]Field staff members are sometimes given the less
decorous title of "organisers". They may also be re-
ferred to as "field officers" or "field representatives".

[2]Field officers are considered to be "The equivalent
of the [Conservative Party] 'agents' of British elector-
ates." See The Australian Liberal, July, 1961, p. 6. The
duties of Liberal Party field officers and Conservative
Party agents are in fact very similar. C.P. agents, how- ·
ever, are hired and paid by the voluntary organization in
each electorate, while Liberal organizers are engaged by
the State Supervisor (with the approval of the General
Secretary and the State Executive), and their salaries are
paid from central funds. Moreover, C.P. agents function
as secretaries for the electorate organizations, while
in the Liberal Party, this function is performed by a
member of the voluntary organization. On the C.P. agent,
see McKenzie, op. cit.,pp. 246-28; and G. O. Comfort,
Professional Politicians: A Study of British Party Agents
(Washington: Public Affairs Press), 1958, pp. 5-59. Also
see A. T. Lenehan (State Supervisor, N.S.W. Liberal Party),
"Report on the Conservative Party Organisation", unpub-
lished report to the Branch Development Committee, Febru-
ary 1, 1961. A sub-committee of the Branch Development
Committee submitted a report to the BDC on July 3, 1961,
recommending that Liberal field staff should continue to
be hired by headquarters, but supported financially by
electorate conferences.

Because of fairly rapid turnover, the strength of
the field staff varies from year to year. There has been,
however, a gradual decline in the number of organizers
since the high point of 1949 when there were about thirty.
In the 1958-61 period, the field staff numbered from
twelve to fifteen men, with a few added during election
campaign periods.

To get a general picture of the field staff member-
ship, I asked the eighteen organizers who worked in the
federal election campaign of December, 1961, to fill out
a brief questionnaire. On the question of length of
service with the Liberal organization, it was found that
nine of the eighteen had worked for the party one year or
less; two had worked for the party two years; one for four
years; one for six years; and five were veterans of ten
years or more with the organization.

Although half of the field staff were recent em-
ployees of the organization, it does not follow that the
group was characterized by youthfulness. None of the
eighteen was under thirty years of age; four were in their
thirtie's; eight in their fourtie's; three in their
fiftie's; and three in their sixtie's.

Information on occupational background indicated a
heavy concentration of salesmen and small businessmen;
two farmers; two public servants; a former military officer;
and a lifelong political organizer, who had served the
Liberal Party and its non-Labor antecedents for over

fourty years. Regarding educational background: thirteen were high school graduates; four had some kind of post-high school technical education; and only one had attended college.

Party organizer's receive little, if any, formal training; but before receiving a permanent assignment, an organizer must pass a written examination on the party constitution and on campaign organization. In general, the party has found it difficult to attract and retain bright young talent, or develop the spirit of pro-fessionalism characteristic of Conservative Party agents.[1] Chiefly responsible for these conditions is the fact that organizers must work long hours under considerable pressure for low salaries. In 1961 field staff members were paid a salary of about $45 per week before taxes, plus a car allowance and a small expense allowance. Al-though such wages are not unusual in Australia, they are not sufficient inducement for most career-minded young men, especially those with a college education.

In the last two or three years, State Executive reports indicate that the size of the field staff has been gradually increasing, and that a "consistent programme of staff training...is now a key feature of our working year and is finding its expression in the high calibre and experience of our staff members."[2]

[1]See McKenzie, op. cit., pp. 246-248.

[2]"The State Executive Report to the Annual General Meeting of State Council,"November 14, 1964, p.8. Cf. the "Report" of December 13, 1963, pp.12-13; and December 3, 1962, p. 15.

Summary

We have in this chapter outlined the formal
structure of the New South Liberal Party, and reviewed
the procedures by which the organization operates. We
have seen that the party organization is designed to
fulfill two basic objectives. The first objective is
to equip the party with the means to conduct election
campaigns. The branch organization draws in manpower,
money, and other resources necessary to win elections.
The electorate conference collects and manages these
resources in an effort to capture an individual parlia-
mentary seat for the party. The central bodies of the
party direct and coordinate the statewide effort to gain
control of government. The second basic objective is to
provide procedures by which competition and conflict
within the party can be managed. These procedures
enable the party to make the hard decisions about
candidates and policy; they provide the means for am-
bitious men to gain political power, and they offer hope
to the losers.

Significantly, two elements in the party structure
--regional conferences and the annual convention--have
been allowed to atrophy, probably because neither had
important decisions to make, and neither contributed
much to the major objectives of the organization.

CHAPTER III

THE NEW SOUTH WALES LIBERAL PARTY

AS AN OFFICE-SEEKING

ORGANIZATION

Introduction

It is assumed that party organization can best be
approached as an organized effort to gain control of
government through the election of party candidates
motivated by the ambition to win and hold public office.
In this chapter we shall be looking at the New South Wales
Liberal Party from the point of view of this assumption.
There will be little attempt to marshall supporting
evidence; in fact, the main purpose of the discussion
is to see how far our theoretical assumptions alone can
carry us in describing probable patterns of party behavior.
The remaining chapters of this study will undertake to
demonstrate that party behavior can best be explained and
understood in terms of the office-seeking view of party.

The types of organizational patterns which flow from
our assumptions are shaped by certain basic structural
features of the Australian political system. Two such
features are particularly important to this discussion.
First: Australia is a federal system with both national
and state governments; therefore, the New South Wales

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Liberal Party directs its efforts toward control of government at two levels. The goal of the party is to participate in the election of a Liberal government at the national level, and also to elect a Liberal state government. Federal structure makes it possible for the aims of the organization to be realized and frustrated at the same time.

Second: Australia has a parliamentary sytem of government. This means that the success of a party in controlling government at either the state or federal level depends on the party's ability to win a sufficient number of separate contests in individual electorates to form a parliamentary majority. A unit of party organization is thus formed around the public office at stake in each state and federal electorate. We shall designate such a unit as an electorate organization.[1] Within the framework of an electorate organization, office-seekers compete for the party nomination and the successful nominee engages opposing candidates in a contest for the parliamentary seat. An electorate organization may be defined, then, as a collection of efforts directed toward the capture of a single parliamentary office. For an electorate organization, winning an interparty contest in a single electorate is its primary objective.

A second basic unit of party organization forms

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[1]To avoid semantic confusion, the terms "electorate" and "electorate organization" will be used in this study only in reference to the districts or constituencies in which candidates for parliament compete. It will not be used in the broader sense of "the voters in general."

around the party's quest for <u>control of government</u>. We
shall designate this unit as the <u>central organization</u>,
which is defined as <u>a collection of efforts directed toward</u>
<u>retaining or capturing control of government</u>. Although
parliamentary structure imposes a decentralized pattern
of office-seeking efforts on the party organization, the
central aim of controlling government remains as the
cohesive element of the party. Thus, for the central
organization, victories in single electorates are not
important in themselves, except as these victories add
up to control of government or the frustration of opposi-
tion.

Electorate organizations and the <u>central</u> organi-
zation are the principal structural units of the New South
Wales Liberal Party organization. In the discussion which
follows, we shall apply the propositions of ambition theory
to each type of unit, and attempt to determine the patterns
of organizational behavior likely to prevail. In addition,
we shall analyze patterns of <u>interaction</u> among the various
units as determined by the party's position with respect
to government.

The electorate organization

Electorate organizations provide the framework for
office ambitions, and the principal question bearing on
the shape and character of a given organization is whether
or not the Liberal Party controls the seat.

In electorates held by the Liberal Party, office-holders tend to dominate the electorate organization. Members of parliament have the prestige of public office; they wield formal governmental power even though power is diminished when the party is in opposition. Within the framework of the electorate organization, the office-holder has demonstrated that he can survive intraparty competition for the nomination, and interparty competition for the office. Other Liberals with office ambitions thus find it difficult to challenge a sitting member, and so they often seek other outlets for party activity and wait for an opportunity to present itself.

The office-holder seeks to build and maintain an electorate organization which will insure his re-nomination and re-election. The nature of his goal is such that there is no need for an active electorate organization between elections. Office-holders have an investment in the organizational status quo, especially until the nomination has been again secured.

Office-holders are put on their guard by electorate organization activities in which they are not involved. They tend to regard organization as an instrument of ambition, and "superfluous" organizational activities between elections may signal the rise of challengers.

When the office-holder has been re-nominated, he must then assess the electorate organization in terms of

the resources needed to win re-election. In "blue ribbon" Liberal seats, the office-holder may usually assume re-election, although he may wish to mount more than a token campaign in order to enhance further his status in the party and the electorate, and discourage potential challengers to his re-nomination. Other office-holders, however, may view re-election as less certain and may attempt to build a substantial campaign organization. The office-holder who won by a narrow margin in the previous election is likely to seek new sources of support. Similar efforts will be made by members who fear a loss of popularity in the electorate, or who fear that population changes in the electorate threaten his re-election. The office-holder who wins re-election tightens his grip on the electorate organization.

We have tended to assume so far that the _sole_ objective of the office-holder is to retain his office. It is also his objective, of course, to participate in a parliamentary majority which controls government. But this remains as his _secondary_ objective, since it neces-sarily depends on the attainment of his _primary_ objective --winning office in the electorate.

The objective of controlling government is more important to some office-holders than to others. For example, the Leader of the parliamentary party, Cabinet members, and potential Cabinet members presumably have more at stake in a general election than back-benchers.

Any members, however, may be inclined to help mobilize resources for strengthening the government-seeking activities of the party. Although all office-holders contribute to control of government simply by being elected, those who actively work for the party's success _outside_ of their own electorates are participating in the arena of the central organization. This point will be developed in greater detail in our discussion of the central organization.

The fact that some office-holders do more than the minimum organizationally to insure their personal re-election does not alter our basic assumptions about office-holders and their electorate organizations. We shall continue to assume that the office-holder who contributes to the government-seeking efforts of the party will do so only to the extent that his own office is not threatened. Perception of "threat" varies with individual office-holders, and the threat may be real or illusory.

It is clear from the preceding discussion that Liberal-held electorates may have organizations which differ considerably if only superficial measurements are applied. One Liberal electorate may contain several branches with hundreds of party members; there may be a bustle of social and political activities, even between elections. Another Liberal electorate may contain a small clique of party officers which does nothing until an election approaches. If our assumptions are correct, such differences among

electorate organizations can nearly always be traced to the differing motivations and inclinations of office-holders.

We turn now to an examination of party organization in electorates not held by the Liberal Party. In such electorates, organizations tend to vary according to the party's chances for winning the seat. Intra-party competition for the party nomination is likely to be most intense in those electorates which appear certain to go Liberal. Competition tends to decrease as the chances for Liberal victory decrease.

Vacancies in safe Liberal seats may occur because of the retirement, resignation, or death of an office-holder. Safe seats may also be created by changes in electorate boundaries. Prior to the 1962 state election, for example, a redistribution (or reapportionment) created three new safe Liberal electorates: The Hills and Wakehurst, which each attracted fourteen Liberal office-seekers; and Kirribilli, which attracted eighteen competitors for the nomination.

When a safe Liberal electorate is vacant for any reason, there is usually a rush of competitors for the party's endorsement. Each competitor attempts to build a base of support for the nomination, and the resulting competition is likely to have an observable impact on the character of party activities in the electorate. As the lines of competition begin to emerge, office-seekers try to mobilize support through the branch structure. Often this

means arousing a somnolent branch which has not functioned since the last election. Or it may mean insuring that enough supporters are present at a branch meeting to control the election of sympathetic officers. Another possible technique is the organization of new branches to provide additional bases of support. Thus, when competition for a nomination is intense, the electorate organization involved tends to divide into factions supporting the various aspirants.

A nomination contest in a safe Liberal seat is likely to attract also a number of office-seekers who are not residents of the electorate concerned. Such interest is encouraged by the fact that the fifty-member selection committee choosing the candidate will include twenty selectors from State Council who are also nonresidents, and who are presumably not directly involved in local factions. The composition of the selection committee thus implies a measure of objectivity which would increase a nonresident candidate's chances of success. In addition, the unstable and factional character of the electorate organization contributes further to the uncertainty regarding the eventual winner of the nomination, thus encouraging office-seekers who feel they have nothing to lose by entering the contest.[1]

When the selection committee for a vacant safe Liberal seat has finally met and chosen a candidate, his election will in most cases be assured, depending on party and public

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[1]Chapter V will discuss competition for nominations in a number of specific electorates. The discussion will include an analysis of voting patterns of selection committees.

reaction to the choice. If factions in the electorate organization fail to unite behind the nominee, the danger exists that an "independent Liberal" may emerge to challenge the candidate endorsed by the party. The challenge may be more serious if the Labor Party decides not to nominate a candidate, which gives its supporters in the electorate the opportunity to embarrass the Liberal Party by voting for the "independent."

Upon the election of a new Liberal office-holder in a safe seat, the electorate organization tends to return to the typical pattern of other Liberal-held seats. The new office-holder fashions an organization which will support his re-nomination and re-election. He uses the power and prestige of his office to consolidate his position, and discourage the ambition of rivals.

Some electorates are narrowly held by the Labor Party, and the possibility of a Liberal victory may appear promising. Other electorates may be created by reapportionment which appear to have an approximately equal number of Liberal and Labor voters. In such electorates, competition for the nomination is likely to be active, but less intense than in vacant safe Liberal seats. Seeking public office in a marginal or "swing" seat offers the prospect of a highly demanding campaign and an uncertain outcome. This tends to discourage interest on the part of office-seekers from outside the electorate.

Within the electorate, the party organization will
reflect the degree of competition for the nomination. Office-
seekers use the same techniques to build support through the
branch structure as those used in safe Liberal seats. Fac-
tionalism may be even sharper, however, in "swing" seats than
in vacant safe seats. "Swing" seats often have a history of
hard-fought campaigns followed by the disappointment of
narrow defeats. The pool of office-seekers is thus likely
to include previously defeated candidates or an ex-member of
parliament, each of whom has a clique of supporters in the
electorate organization. The presence of these aspirants,
in addition to some new faces, may result in a confused
jumble of conflicting ambition and loyalty which can only
be resolved for the time being by the decision of the selec-
tion committee. Following the decision, the need for
organizational unity is more compelling than it is after a
factional struggle in a safe Liberal seat. In a "swing"
seat, the electorate organization needs to marshall every
possible resource to defeat Labor; in the "blue ribbon"
Liberal electorate, the absence of a viable Labor threat
may encourage rival factions in the electorate organization
to fight out their differences at the polls.

There are a number of electorates in which a Liberal
candidate has virtually no chance of winning. Such an elec-
torate may contain several thousand Liberal voters, but no
office-seekers, and hence, no electorate organization. Where

there is no contest for the nomination, the Liberal Party
constitution provides that the State Executive may select
the candidate.[1] Often a volunteer will step forward to con-
test the electorate, hoping thereby to impress party leaders
with his loyalty and gameness. Some of the compensations for
certain defeat include a certain amount of campaign experi-
ence, a picture in The Australian Liberal, a pat on the back
at party headquarters, and a possible advantage in future
nomination contests.

If no one volunteers to run in a "hopeless" electorate,
the State Executive attempts to recruit a candidate.

From the point of view of the central organization,
there are a number of reasons for having a candidate in safe
Labor electorates. First, it is a matter of party pride that
a Liberal candidate should challenge the Labor Party in every
electorate. Second, it is important that some organizational
activity be stimulated if possible in order to bring out the
maximum Liberal vote. This is particularly true in federal
elections in which Senate seats are at stake. Third, popula-
tion changes and regular reapportionments can produce radical
alterations in electorate boundaries which may improve Liberal
prospects of victory. In that event, a rudimentary organiza-
tion could help support future office-seeking efforts. Fourth,
campaigns in safe Labor electorates provide training and
experience for those with office ambitions. The central

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[1] Constitution, Article 212.

organization values these campaigns to the extent that a small allocation of central funds is provided to help purchase modest advertisements in the local paper, a few posters, and other minimum supplies. In addition, the candidate may expect a contingent of Liberal supporters from safe electorates on election day to help hand out "how-to-vote" leaflets at polling places.

So far in this discussion we have not distinguished between _state_ and _federal_ electorate organizations, since we assume that the general patterns described apply with equal validity to both. However, the possible implications of overlapping electorates should be noted.

We assume that both federal and state office-holders dominate their electorate organizations. Therefore, given an area embracing safe Liberal seats with overlapping boundaries,[1] we conclude there is likely to be a stable pattern of electorate organizations unless other factors intervene. Other factors would include the occurrence of a vacancy; or radical boundary changes involving the creation of new electorates, the abolition of other electorates, and the alteration of surviving electorates. When such factors do intervene in a safe Liberal area, the possibility exists that incumbent office-holders will use their prestige either

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[1]The most extensive such area includes the north and north-western section of the Sydney metropolitan area, which embraces seven Liberal federal electorates, eleven Liberal state electorates, and two Labor state electorates. Three state electorates were held by Labor prior to the 1961 reapportionment.

for personal advancement or for exerting influence on behalf
of someone else. For example, if a federal seat becomes
available, a state member may decide to contest the nomina-
tion, and attempt to make the advance to federal parliament.
Such a member might be able to draw the complete support of
his state electorate organization, but not necessarily, since
an active nomination contest tends to produce realignments in
the electorate organization.

If a state seat becomes available within a Liberal
federal electorate, we assume that the federal member of
parliament has no interest in descending to the state level.
He may, however, use his party contacts in the electorate to
exert influence on behalf of a particular candidate. The
extent and effectiveness of these efforts would be difficult
to measure, since they are likely to be informal and unpubli-
cized.

In the campaign phase of party organization, office-
holders and office-seekers in safe Liberal areas tend to
draw from the same pool of party workers for both state and
federal campaigns. Supporters of party candidates generally
come to occupy official positions in party branches, and
become identified as willing workers for the party. In most
cases, willingness to work in campaigns will extend to both
the state and federal electorates in which the branch is
located. The role of a given branch in its two electorate
organizations may, however, differ considerably, especially
if a vacancy occurs in one of them.

In areas where Liberal and non-Liberal state and federal electorates overlap each other, organizational resources may be located in unlikely places if the federal system were not a factor. For example, a Liberal federal electorate may contain party branches which lie within the boundaries of one or more Labor state electorates; or a Liberal state electorate may contain branches which are located within one or more federal electorates held by Labor. Such an anomalous distribution of party resources is significant to the extent that it involves non-Liberal electorates in the "swing" category. When party resources are fortuitously located in potential Liberal electorates, an organizational base exists upon which office-seekers can draw in attempting to capture the seat.

Liberal branches located in strong Labor electorates because of electoral geography orient their activities almost completely toward the Liberal-held electorate.

The Central Organization

The central organization has been defined as the "collection of efforts directed toward retaining or capturing control of government." Political victory consists of an aggregate of separate electorate victories which produce a parliamentary majority. There is no single statewide office, strictly speaking, which forms the nucleus for the central organization; however, the Leaders of the parliamentary parties- though elected in their own electorates -- are a major

focus of central organization efforts, since the attrac-
tiveness of a Leader evidently has a general impact on voting
behavior throughout the state.

The objective of an electorate organization, as we have
seen, is limited primarily to winning within the electorate.
Thus, the party needs to develop organizational mechanisms
which cut across electorate boundaries, and which direct and
coordinate the party's drive for power. Those who control
and support these mechanisms make up the central organization.
It is the central organization which views the existing and
potential resources of the party throughout the state in
relation to the goal of controlling government.

The necessity for over-all direction and coordination
of the party organization is reflected in the formal structure
as spelled out in the party constitution. Formal provision
is made for a governing body of the party--State Council,
which is composed of delegates from state electorate con-
ferences. State Council in turn elects from its own member-
ship the State Executive, which includes the State President,
Vice-Presidents, and Treasurer. The State Executive hires a
full-time party official, the General Secretary, who super-
vises Central Office, the field staff, and manages the daily
affairs of the organization. The constitution also provides
that the parliamentary parties shall designate delegates to
State Council and the State Executive, but no parliamentary
member may serve as State President.

The central bodies of the formal party structure are

not the same as the central organization. There is, however, an extensive overlapping of personnel. The most active, loyal, and ambitious members of the party at large tend to cluster in the formal central bodies, and it is the same people which help to form the core of the central organization. However, State Council with its membership of some 300 has many nominal members who do not contribute overtly to central organization goals. Members of the State Executive generally do contribute, but there is much variation in the character and amount of their contributions. The central organization also draws personnel from outside of the central bodies of the party. Such personnel may serve on committees created to strengthen the government-seeking program of the party, or serve as a pool of workers which can be assigned to organizationally weak electorates for campaign work. The central organization also includes those who desire or feel constrained to contribute money to the central funds of the party, but who do not participate in party activities in any other way.

The central organization is composed of two kinds of personnel: leaders and supporters. Central organization leaders initiate, develop, and direct the over-all strategy which is believed necessary to bring the party to power and keep it there. In most cases, these leaders occupy official positions in the formal structure, and work within the formal structure whenever possible. Central organization supporters

provide the manpower, money, and other resources necessary to carry out the leaders' strategy.

Who leads the central organization? The identification of central organization leaders cannot always be made with certainty and confidence, but the task is simplified when the party controls government. Leadership identification is far more hazardous when the party is in opposition.

When the party is in power, the central organization tends to be dominated by the party's public office-holders. The Leader of the parliamentary party is then Prime Minister, and his power and prestige overshadow all other forces in the party. Cabinet members also rank particularly high in the hierarchy of party affairs. In fact, the entire parliamentary party shares in the rewards which accompany the realization of the party objective. Public office-holders may expect and generally receive deference and loyalty both from electorate organizations and the central organization.

The success of public office-holders tends to relegate other central organization personnel to an essentially supportive role. Between elections the central organization promotes and defends the government and its policies. It carries on a continuing assessment of the organizational resources of the party with a view to maintaining them at a level necessary to retain control of government. In addition, the central organization attempts to gauge public reaction to the government's performance in office so that

re-election is not jeopardized by unpopular policies.

The fact that non-parliamentary personnel of the central organization are involved daily in assessing organizational strength and public opinion helps to insure that office-holders do not ignore their supporters. It is axiomatic that past success at the polls does not assure future success: although office-holders dominate, supporters can and do have independent ideas about the strategy and policy which will bring re-election. Complete harmony is therefore unlikely, since decisions on strategy must necessarily be made in a state of uncertainty about their electoral consequences. If sharp conflicts occur, office-holders tend to temper their position rather than risk a weakening of support. On balance, however, it must be concluded that office-holders have a clear and consistent strategic advantage on almost any intraparty issue.

The central organization has a further function when the party is in power, and that is to strengthen the party's control by capturing more parliamentary seats. The central organization naturally turns its attention to those electorates in which Liberal candidates lost by the narrowest margins. When the central organization examines such an electorate, it attempts to assess whether the party candidate was the best possible vote-getter; whether financial support was inadequate; whether enough party workers were available before and during the campaign; and what needs to be done to

win next time. These questions necessarily imply a direct
intrusion of the central organization into the internal
affairs of an electorate organization. Such an intrusion
may be welcome, but it is likely to be unwelcome since it
upsets the conditions of office-seeking within the electorate
organization, particularly during the nomination phase.
Tensions are unavoidable when the central organization
becomes involved directly in a nomination contest. Suspi-
cions of manipulation or dictation may be fostered, more-
over, by the fact that twenty members of State Council
chosen by the State Executive have a vote in the formal
candidate selection meeting.

Tensions may also arise between the central organiza-
tion and an electorate organization when a vacancy occurs
in a safe Liberal seat. Office-seekers who have toiled for
the party will see an opportunity to fulfill ambition;
however, the parliamentary leadership may see an opportunity
to bring in a new colleague who adds talent and distinction
to the government team, but lacks a background of dedicated
party service. The result is a nomination contest which may
leave a residue of ill feeling on all sides.

Another possible--though improbable--source of tension
between central and electorate organizations could be a
revolt in an electorate organization against its own sitting
member of parliament. The office-holder's neglect of his
organization, combined with the resourcefulness of an ambitious

challenger, could produce such a situation. The central
organization is characteristically predisposed to support
office-holders, and in any case, wishes to avoid the public
embarrassment associated with "dumping" a member in good
standing of the government team. Thus, the central organi-
zation will attempt to avert an internal head-in conflict
in an electorate organization.

Although tensions between units of organization are
possible when the party controls government, we may conclude
that the "normal" relationship prevailing is one of funda-
mental compatibility. In both the central organization and
the electorate organizations, office-holders are inextri-
cably linked with the satisfaction of party victory and the
fruits of governmental power.

The fact that the party controls government has criti-
cal implications for the campaign phase of party activity.
The central organization develops campaign strategy against
the background of what has taken place in government. Party
policy for campaign purposes tends to be equated with govern-
ment policy. The central organization publicizes the accom-
plishments of the government, and ignores or plays down
failures and embarrassments. Since the party bases its
campaign on its record in government, office-holders
necessarily dominate the process of developing policy
positions for the campaign. Controversial issues within
the party organization are nearly always settled when office-

holders in control of government establish a position on
the issue. At the same time, new programs and policies emana-
ting from the organization are stifled if they are not accept-
able to office-holders. Thus, campaign strategy tends to be
directed toward the same combination of voters which put the
party in power.

We turn now to an examination of the central organiza-
tion when the party is out of power. We have already indi-
cated that when the party is in opposition, the central
organization attempts to coordinate and direct efforts which
will bring the party's office-holders control of government.
A party defeat at the polls stimulates the central organiza-
tion to assess the reasons for failure, and to take whatever
action is perceived as necessary in order to win the next
election. Unanimity on these points is unlikely in the face
of defeat, for defeat bears its own seeds of frustration,
confusion, and conflict. There is frustration caused by
unfulfilled ambition; there is confusion about who or what
is to blame; and there is conflict about who is to speak for
the party and lead it to victory. All of these factors serve
to complicate the identification of leaders and supporters in
the central organization when the party is in opposition.

Following a losing election campaign, the central
organization undertakes an assessment of what went wrong.
Speculative ingenuity yields many possible rationalizations
for defeat--an unprincipled and deceptive opposition campaign,

a hostile press, lack of funds, and so forth. In addition, a federal system offers many other opportunities for explanation: the New South Wales Liberal Party, for example, is able to explain its defeats in state elections by referring either to the popularity or unpopularity of the national Liberal government. When the national government is perceived as popular, the New South Wales Labor government is said to reap the benefits of prosperity resulting from national policy; when the national Liberal government is perceived to be unpopular, the state Liberal Party is said to share the stigma.

Although many reasons and combinations of reasons for defeat can be alleged, the party turns a critical eye on its office-holders and candidates who cannot escape being tarred by the defeat. Defeat damages the power and prestige of office-holders in such a way that we can not assume their domination of the central organization.

The position of the parliamentary Leader is particularly ambiguous following party defeat because of the nature of parliamentary structure. The Leader runs in a single electorate, but his appeal as Prime Minister or as a potential Prime Minister presumably has a bearing on his party's success in other electorates. The defeat of the party is therefore an implicit rejection of the parliamentary Leader. Defeat, however, does not dispose of the Leader and make way for another since the Leader is likely to be successful in

his own electorate. He can not be shelved as "titular leader" with honor but without office, for he retains his office and his position as Leader until he resigns or the parliamentary party removes him.

The decision regarding the future of a defeated Leader may or may not be an easy one. If the party substantially improved its strength in the election as compared to previous elections--if, in other words, the party drew closer to power--then it is likely that the Leader will be re-endorsed. But if the party failed to move closer to power, the Leader's position may be in jeopardy. Members of the parliamentary group may think that their earlier support of the Leader was a mistake; other members who have leadership ambitions may try to gather support in order to unseat the defeated Leader. In addition, there tends to be strong pressures from non-parliamentary leaders both for and against retention of the Leader.

If the Leader survives party defeat, the party has a parliamentary Leader between elections whose power and prestige have been almost inevitably dimmed; if the Leader is replaced, the dominance of the new Leader will be limited by the fact that his popular appeal is still untested. In either case, the Leader of the opposition does not have the pre-eminent status within the party which is enjoyed by a national Prime Minister or State Premier.

It is not only the Leader who suffers a diminution of

status when the party loses an election. Defeat casts its shadow over the entire parliamentary team which has been relegated to opposition by the voters. Those in the party who are most concerned with winning government begin to probe for weak spots in the parliamentary delegation. Questions are raised regarding the performance of office-holders prior to the party's defeat; speculation is possible regarding ways to improve the vote-getting ability of party candidates by presenting new faces to the electorates. The introspective process following defeat must involve an evaluation of the party's office-holders, and unavoidably introduces an element of uncertainty about the standing of office-holders in the central organization.

When the party is in opposition, there is thus a greater opportunity for non-parliamentary personnel in the central organization to wield power and influence. The neat pattern of leaders (office-holders) and supporters which prevails when the party is in power is less likely to prevail when in opposition. Non-parliamentary personnel who occupy conspicuous places of leadership in the central bodies of the party are not preoccupied merely with supporting office-holders, but more particularly with planning strategy for the next election. Such strategy could include the energetic recruitment of more party volunteer workers, the hiring of professional staff, raising more money, finding attractive candidates, and so on. All considerations focus on the central

goal of change--from opposition to control of government.
Moreover, to the extent that central organization strategy
involves electorate organizations, there is a disturbance of
the status quo which may have an impact on office-seeking
conditions in electorate organizations.

We have assumed, however, that the office-holder has
an investment in the status quo in his electorate organiza-
tion; he tends to resist, therefore, changes or intrusions
which would endanger his re-nomination. The office-holder
perceives central organization strategy in terms of its
impact on his electorate organization. When some office-
holders feel threatened by central organization strategy,
tension develops between these office-holders and other
central organization personnel who believe electorate organi-
zation involvement is necessary to win the next election.
For example, if the central organization determines that new
party members and branches are desirable in a Liberal elec-
torate, the office-holder may decide not to cooperate in a
membership drive which could result in complicating his
re-nomination. Those in the central organization promoting
the drive would perceive the office-holder's resistance as
an obstacle to victory at the next election. On the other
hand, the office-holder who joins in the development of party
resources (such as new members) is more likely to be influen-
tial in the central organization.

In addition to conflict on organizational strategy,

the party in opposition is characteristically troubled by conflict on party <u>policy</u>. Defeat implies a rejection of party policies as well as rejection of party candidates. The party thus encounters the need to examine its policies and to determine what changes may be necessary to win wider public support. This is a difficult process for the party in opposition. The party unity which was constrained by an election campaign breaks down; past policy disagreements must be thrashed out again and new policy alternatives debated. This process is complicated by the fact that the party is tied to its past positions, and cannot change radically and abruptly, if only not to appear merely opportunistic.

The development of policy is further complicated by the federal system, particularly when a state party such as the New South Wales Liberal Party is out of power, and the national party controls government. The state party is limited in choosing policy alternatives not only by its past positions, but also by the prevailing policies of the national party.

During the period between elections, the policy development process cannot be monopolized by office-holders because of the inherent weakness of their position. Non-Parliamentary personnel thus have the opportunity to participate actively in this process by evaluating past policy and presenting new alternatives. Again, the differences of opinion which emerge may not neatly divide office-holders from those not holding office, and it may be difficult to identify with

precision leaders and supporters in the central organization.

During the campaign phase, the central organization of the out-party also tends to focus on the record of the government. Since office-seekers of the out-party monopolize the alternative to the governing party, campaign strategy is usually directed toward discrediting government policy and leadership. In addition to mounting an attack on the existing government, the central organization also seeks to develop new policies and programs which will attract a winning combination of voters. The shaping of such policies is subject to the difficulties and complications already indicated, and also involves the risk of alienating past supporters as well as appealing to new supporters.

Summary

In this chapter we have discussed the patterns of behavior likely to prevail in the New South Wales Liberal Party organization, given our assumptions about office ambition, and given the structural character of the Australian political system. Since office-seekers and supporting organizational resources cluster around each public office, we identified the electorate organization as a basic unit of party organization. A second basic unit is the central organization, which is a collection of efforts directed toward capturing or holding control of government. Because of Australia's federal system, control of both national and state government is at stake, and thus it is possible for

the aims of the central organization to be realized at one
level and frustrated at the other.

In the _electorate organization_, the principal question
bearing on the shape and character of the organization is
whether or not the party controls the parliamentary office.
Members of parliament, who have the prestige and power of
public office, tend to dominate the electorate organizations.
In electorates held by an opposing party, organizations tend
to vary in size and activism according to the degree of
competitiveness among office-seekers for the party nomination.
Competition among office-seekers usually decreases as the
prospects for Liberal victory decrease.

The party's public office holders take control of
government when an aggregate of electorate victories produces
a parliamentary majority. The _central organization_ cuts
across electorate boundaries to direct and coordinate the
drive for power. It is composed of two types of personnel:
leaders and _supporters_. Leaders initiate, develop, and direct
the strategy believed necessary to bring the party to power
and keep it there; supporters provide manpower, money, and
other resources necessary to carry out leaders' strategy.

Although the identification of central organization
leaders cannot always be made with confidence and certainty,
we assume that public office holders dominate the central
organization when the party controls government. Non-
parliamentary personnel in the central organization are then

relegated to an essentially supportive role. Between
elections the central organization promotes and defends
the government and its policies. It also carries on a con-
tinuing assessment of organizational resources in order to
maintain them at a level necessary to retain control of
government.

When the party is in opposition, the identification
of central organization leaders is more hazardous. After
electoral defeat, the objective of the central organization
is to determine what went wrong and to devise strategy to
win the next election. But electoral defeat tends to dim
both the power and prestige of public office holders, and
also stimulates confusion and conflict about leadership,
strategy, and policies. Thus, the non-parliamentary personnel
have greater opportunity to influence organizational strategy
between elections. Such strategy could include the develop-
ment of resources in electorate organizations which would
tend to disturb the conditions of nomination-seeking. The
threat of such disturbance encourages resistance by incum-
bent office-holders who have a vested interest in maintaining
the status quo in their electorate organizations. But office
holders who stand in the way of mobilizing additional resources
also risk discrediting themselves, and rivals with office
ambitions may feel encouraged to challenge incumbents.

As the next election approaches, the need to present
a semblance of unity to the voters constrains party unity.

Inter-election conflicts about leadership and policies are submerged until the voters make their choice. Victory for the party settles most arguments in favor of the winning office-holders who assume control of government.

The remaining chapters of this study will focus on the New South Wales Liberal Party during the period from mid-1959 to March, 1962. This period begins shortly after the party had fought the successful federal campaign of November, 1958, and the unsuccessful state campaign of March, 1959. It extends through the successful federal campaign of December, 1961, and the unsuccessful state campaign of March, 1962.

CHAPTER IV

THE BRANCH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM:

MOBILIZING HUMAN AND

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Introduction

In November, 1958, the Liberal-Country government of

Prime Minister Menzies won its fifth-straight electoral test,

and was returned to office with a comfortable 77-45 parlia-

mentary majority.. Within the state of New South Wales, a

small swing against the Menzies government had occurred, and

the suburban Sydney seat of St. George slipped into Labor's

hands by 59 votes.[1] The Liberals held on to their other 15

seats, however, and successfully supported the election of 3

Senators. The 1958 victory was solid, if not resounding.

In March, 1959, the Labor government of Premier J. J.

Cahill was re-endorsed by the voters of New South Wales. The

Liberal Party and Country Party each made a net gain of one

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[1]The Liberal candidate, Mr. B. W. Graham, fell just
short of retaining the seat in spite of the fact that he
received 75 percent of the second preference votes of the
D.L.P. candidate.

seat, but the Labor Party retained a workable 49-44 majority.[1] Labor's unbroken hold on the government since 1941 was not seriously threatened.

Following the state elections of 1959, the Liberal Party faced the unusual prospect of an inter-election period extending until late 1961 when, barring unforeseen events,[2] the Menzies government would again seek re-election. For the first time since its organization as a party, the Liberal Party in 1959 had an opportunity to conduct a systematic examination of its organizational resources. As the General Secretary indicated in a memorandum to the Branch Development Committee (BDC):

> With an average of one general election per year since 1949, no opportunity has presented itself, until now, for long range branch reform. Inevitably, the constant appeals to branches for special efforts in the intensive campaign periods, have produced a general weariness with politics and a reluctance to engage in routine functions in the 'off' periods.[3]

In another memorandum, the General Secretary, put the case more bluntly:

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[1]The Liberal Party won the seats of Blacktown, Dubbo, and Wagga Wagga, but lost Parramatta and Sutherland. The Country Party gained the seat of Young.

[2]As it happened, the Liberal Party had to fight another statewide campaign in April, 1961, when the Labor government tried to abolish the upper house (Legislative Council) of the New South Wales parliament by referendum. The abolition proposal was overwhelmingly defeated.

[3]"Branch Development Programme," a confidential memorandum prepared by the General Secretary for the April 30, 1960 meeting of the Branch Development Committee.

> Branches have alternated between intensive elec-
> tioneering and complete stagnation. There has
> been little thought given to branch development
> or to defining the purpose of branches between
> elections.[1]

In 1959, the time had come for the Liberal Party to assess

its organizational resources, define organizational goals,

and implement plans for achieving the goals of the organi-

zation.

The organizational component of the party which

addressed itself to these problems was the central organi-

zation. As the quotations above from the General Secretary

indicate, the electorate organization is characteristically

an election-centered mechanism: when the contest for office

is fought and settled, the electorate organization lapses

into inactivity or "stagnation" until the next campaign

period, <u>regardless of the victory or defeat of the party</u>

<u>slate as a government-seeking team</u>. On the other hand, the

central organization as typified by the General Secretary

views the party in terms of its total electoral performance,

and the mobilization of a winning organization becomes a

full-time enterprise.

In the chapter which follows, we shall examine the

assessment of the party made by the central organization,

and point up the areas of weakness in the party as seen by

the central organization. In the second place, we shall

examine the goals of the Branch Development Drive, which was

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[1] "Branch Development," a confidential memorandum pre-
pared by the General Secretary for the July 28, 1959 meeting
of the BDC.

designed to correct the weaknesses of the organization.
Third: we shall examine the implementation of the Branch
Development Drive, and the resulting collision between
central and electorate organizations. Finally, we shall
attempt to arrive at conclusions on the success, or lack
of success, of the inter-election branch development program
pursued by the central organization.

In this chapter, we shall draw heavily from confi-
dential memoranda, which circulated only among central
organization personnel and not among party members at large;
as well as party publications, minutes of party meetings,
committee reports, newspaper stories, and personal observa-
tion.

Assessment of the Organization

Introduction.--From the point of view of the central
organization, the only relevant basis for assessing the party
organization is its success in winning elections. The dis-
tinction between central organization attitudes and elector-
ate organization attitudes is made in the following statement
by Mr. J. C. Maddison, chairman of both the Electorate
Assistance Committee and the Branch Development Committee,
and then State Treasurer:

> 'My view is that we must have unity throughout the
> whole of the Organisation. Unless we all pull together
> we shall never get very far...
>
> 'One of the things I've been telling meetings,' he
> says, 'is that unless the Party in New South Wales
> works as a whole, and unless we win more than 50

percent of the seats, there is not much point in
the members [of parliament] in the "safe" seats only
being returned. The members and all Liberals in the
"safe" seats...must realize that when planning for
an election we have to be mindful of the whole scene
and not just one or two seats.'

The obligation, he [Mr. Maddison] points out, is for
the party members in the secure electorates to do more
than merely return the sitting member. They must
provide men and money for the major task of winning
more seats.[1]

Mr. Maddison's statement thus dismisses electorate

organization work as having "not much point" unless their

efforts result in the election of a parliamentary majority.

Once the basic inadequacy of the party organization

had been established, the central organization began to focus

on the specific indices of organizational strength and vital-

ity. The party constitution spells out what electorate

organizations and their component branches must do if the

party is to win elections:

(1) to enlist supporters of the Organisation as members
    of the branch,

(2) to raise funds for the purpose of the Organisation
    and for the furtherance of its objects,

(3) to secure the enrollment of every person eligible
    as an elector and the removal from the electoral
    roll of the names of all unqualified persons,

(4) to keep an Electoral Roll for the electorate in
    which shall be marked the known supporters of the
    Organisation,

(5) to encourage within the Branch and Organisation
    all education work of a political, social and
    economic character,

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[1] "Mr. John Maddison Prods Consciences, Pockets,"
Australian Liberal, July, 1960, p. 4. Hereafter, references
to the _Australian Liberal_ will be abbreviated _AL_.

(6) to adopt resolutions for submission to the State
Council, to Convention, or the Electorate Conference
or Regional Conference concerned.[1]

These activities relate mainly to the establishment
and maintenance of a fully-organized campaign-fighting
machine working systematically both during and between
election periods to elect party candidates. In reviewing
these functions, the General Secretary stated:

> It is fair comment that very few people in the Liberal
> Party would be aware of them and they are certainly
> not in the direct focus of branches.
>
> It may well be that we are not looking to define new
> functions, but to resurrect and enforce the old ones.[2]

The State Supervisor also reported that branch conditions were
"far from satisfactory."[3] In addition to resisting an in-
creased membership fee, the State Supervisor reported that
branch officers lacked "inspiration and enthusiasm",[4] that
the majority of branch committees were not functioning, and
that many branch meetings were "dry as dust."[5] "It is a
fact," the State Supervisor said,

> that within the branch structure of the Liberal Party,
> branch committees are elected at annual meetings and
> there the matter rests. No attempt is made to call the
> committee together to organise meetings, and to assist
> in the development of Party work in the area.[6]

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[1]Constitution, Clause 45.

[2]"Branch Development," p. 2.

[3]"Branch Membership and Organisation," p. 1.

[4]Ibid.   [5]Ibid, p. 3.

[6]Ibid, p. 2.

In the assessment which follows, we shall see that the central organization gave attention to questions as these:

(1) How many members does the Liberal Party have, and what are the trends in branch membership?

(2) Are the electorate organizations and their component branches performing their duties and functions in a manner which achieves maximum electoral results?

(3) What is the level of activism, dedication, and loyalty in the branch and electorate structure?

(4) Are the electorate organizations in a healthy condition financially?

(5) Are the electorate organizations attracting members of such a calibre that could form a pool of potential candidates?

(6) Are incumbent members of parliament doing everything possible to build up the party at the electorate organization level?

When the central organization assessed the party in terms of these questions, its findings did not hold out much hope for improving the electoral performance of the party in the future. The central organization was confronted by a shrinking membership, uncertain financial resources, a low level of activism and enthusiasm, and parliamentary members eager to preserve the status quo. The central organization resolved to search out the reasons for these conditions, and also to carry out a program to correct these conditions.

Branch membership.--Immediately following the state election of 1959, the central organization set out to determine the actual number of party members in the organization. This determination should have presented no problem, since

clause 62 of the party constitution required each branch

to submit annually to the General Secretary "a report

showing the work done during the year, the financial position

of the Branch...and a certified copy of the Members' Roll."

In practice, however, this clause of the constitution was not

honored by branch officers or enforced by the State Executive.

The obvious result was that the central organization had only

a fuzzy picture of the membership strength of the party.

As the General Secretary pointed out in a memorandum to

the State Executive:

> It has never been possible to measure accurately the
> branch membership of the Liberal Party in this State.
> Our practice...of leaving all branch membership records
> in the hands of the secretaries of branches has produced
> many defects, including badly kept records, failure to
> secure membership renewals or new membership and loose
> estimates of branch strengths.[1]

The General Secretary's report went on to describe the hap-

hazardness of existing methods for assessing membership:

> Each year an estimate of total membership has been
> compiled by the process of obtaining from branches
> their statement of branch strengths. In consequence,
> there has been a general estimate (probably grossly
> exaggerated) of Party strength ranging from 35,000
> to 40,000 members.[2]

The estimates were indeed "grossly exaggerated" as the General

Secretary's report subsequently pointed out:

> The actual financial membership, as far as can be
> ascertained, is probably not more than 14,000 and
> there are quite a number of the 345 branches which
> are constitutionally not entitled to continue their
> existence.[3]

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[1] "Branch Membership Drive," p. 1.
[2] Ibid.   [3] Ibid.

The 14,000 branch membership figure was obtained from a report prepared for the General Secretary by the State Supervisor of field staff, Mr. A. T. Lenehan.[1] Lenehan had directed the field staff to obtain as reliable information as possible on branch membership in each state electorate. Although the State Supervisor's memorandum included the reservation that "it has always been difficult to obtain from branches an authentic statement as to branch membership",[2] his membership survey was the first serious attempt to pin down the actual number of people in the party organization, particularly in the Sydney metropolitan area.

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[1] "Branch Membership and Organisation," a memorandum prepared for the General Secretary by the State Supervisor, May 15, 1959. Cf. Gwendolen Carter's statement in Neumann, op. cit., p. 97, that the New South Wales Liberal Party had "some four hundred and sixty branches dotted throughout the state, and, in addition, numerous youth clubs." Carter does not indicate the number of party members in these branches, nor disclose the source of her information. However, if her figure of 460 branches was correct at the time of her writing (1956), it appears that the number of party branches dropped sharply between 1956 and 1959. More likely, she was given exaggerated figures. In any case, since records do not exist which confirm or refute her statement, perhaps all that is confirmed is the characteristic imprecision of information on party membership. Cf. also Duverger, op. cit., pp. 62-90.

[2] Ibid.

The following table summarizes the distribution of
Liberal Party branch membership between metropolitan and
"country" state electorates, as reported by the State Super-
visor in May, 1959.

TABLE 1

SUMMARY OF LIBERAL PARTY BRANCH MEMBERSHIP

Electorates	Members	Branches
Metropolitan area: 44 electorates	10,569	191
"Country" area: 27 electorates	3,363	154
TOTAL 71 electorates	13,932	345

It should be noted initially that figures on branch member-
ship in "country" electorates are in most cases very unreliable,
since the central office of the party is generally unable to
get accurate information from these areas. Central organiza-
tion involvement in "country" electorates tends to decline in
relation to a given electorate's distance from Sydney. The
most reliable information is thus obtained from the Liberal-
held electorates of Nepean, Hawkesbury, Gosford, and
Wollondilly, which are more or less contiguous to the Sydney
metropolitan area. Fourty-four Liberal Party branches are
located in these electorates.

In the 5 Liberal-held electorates[1] outside the Sydney

[1]The five electorates: Maitland, South Coast, Albury,
Wagga Wagga, and Dubbo.

orbit, the prevailing organizational pattern is that the office-holder has an active personal following which expands during campaign periods, and then lapses into inactivity between elections. The State Supervisor's survey reports that 39 branches are organized in these 5 electorates.

The remaining 62 branches in "country" areas are distributed among the 18 electorates not held by the Liberal Party, but which have some kind of Liberal organization. Rawson and Holtzinger's description of Liberal branches in southeastern New South Wales is typical of Liberal organization in the "country":

> At the branch level, it is almost a misnomer to speak of Liberal Party branch activity. Even large and important branches often hold only the annual meeting that is required if they are to have a voice in the selection of candidates. Some branches are called into being during an election campaign and are then allowed to lapse until the approach of the next election.[1]

Under such circumstances, little attention is given to routine administration of branches, and it is impossible to get accurate information on branch membership figures.

In concluding these summary comments on Liberal organization in the "country", we should note that there are in fact 46 electorates outside of the Sydney metropolitan area. Since membership figures are indicated for only 27 electorates, there were evidently 19 electorates without any Liberal organization at all at the time of the survey.

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[1] D. W. Rawson and S. M. Holtzinger, Politics in Eden-Monaro (London: Heinemann), 1958, p. 51.

For the balance of the discussion of party member-
ship, we shall focus on the party organization in the Sydney
metropolitan area. The New South Wales Liberal Party, despite
its ambitions to extend itself throughout the state, is
primarily a Sydney-based party. Sydney is the headquarters
for the central organization; Sydney contains the bulk of
Liberal Party membership and financial resources; and Sydney
embraces the crucial swing electorates which are the key to
victory for the Liberal Party.

In presenting membership figures for state electorates
in the metropolitan area, it must be kept in mind that regu-
lar reapportionment has resulted in considerable alteration
of electorate boundaries.[1] Reapportionments are supposed to
preserve existing boundaries whenever possible; however,
rapid population increases in the suburbs have made extensive
alterations inevitable. The membership figures obtained by
the central organization in 1959 were based of course on the
existing arrangement of electorate boundaries. Branch
development targets were also based on existing conditions.

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[1] In 1949, the Labor Government increased the size of
the New South Wales Legislative Assembly from 90 to 94 seats.
The Sydney area was given 48 seats; Newcastle received 6; and
the "country" area received 40. Subsequent reapportionments
were completed in 1952, 1957, and 1961. Under present elec-
tion statutes, there must be a reapportionment at least every
5 years. Boundaries are determined by an Electoral Commission
of 3 members: a judge or ex-judge and a surveyor appointed by
the Government, and the state Electoral Commissioner (a public
servant). Australians generally use the term "redistribution"
instead of "reapportionment." See R. S. Parker, op. cit.,
pp. 69-76.

Although boundaries were again altered in 1961, membership figures will be presented from the 1959 perspective.[1]

The following table summarizes Liberal Party branch membership in the Sydney metropolitan area. State electorates are classified into "safe Liberal", "swing" electorates, and "safe Labor" according to Liberal performance in the election of March, 1959.

TABLE 2

SUMMARY OF LIBERAL PARTY BRANCH MEMBERSHIP
IN THE SYDNEY METROPOLITAN AREA

Electorates	Members	Branches
Safe Liberal (15)	7,153	96
"Swing" (10)	1,948	48
Safe Labor (23)	1,468	47
TOTAL (48)	10,569	191

Keeping in mind previous qualifications regarding the accuracy of the figures above, we may still conclude that party membership is concentrated in those electorates where electoral support of the party is greatest. Half of the branches, and well over two-thirds of the membership is located within electorates which return Liberal office-seekers as a matter of course. The branch organization is

[1]The shifting of electoral boundaries obviously has important implications for office-seeking patterns in the party organization. These implications are discussed in Chapter V.

weak by comparison in those electorates where elections are won or lost--the 10 "swing" electorates, and still weaker in the 23 electorates where the party has almost no chance of winning. Thus, in 1959 the central organization faced the necessity of either strengthening the party in "swing" area or finding some means of re-allocating the resources existing in strong Liberal areas.

With these preliminary comments as background, we may proceed with a breakdown and examination of each of the 3 groups of electorates.

TABLE 3

LIBERAL PARTY MEMBERSHIP IN SAFE LIBERAL
ELECTORATES: MAY, 1959

State Electorate	Branches	Members	%Liberal Vote (1959)
Gordon	10	732	Uncontested
Neutral Bay	5	496	Uncontested
Vaucluse	4	830	Uncontested
Willoughby	8	517	Uncontested
Woollhara	4	1,016	Uncontested
Mosman	6	167	78.73
Eastwood	6	155	72.69
Collaroy	7	222	71.09
Lane Cove	6	300	69.55
Hornsby	10	1,018	66.75
Ashfield-Croydon	7	393	64.31
Manly	5	115	63.13
Burwood	7	732	61.56
Cronulla	5	287	60.62
Earlwood	6	173	58.25
TOTAL	96	7,153	---

Table 3 lists the 15 electorates which have been classified as safe Liberal Party seats. Nine of these electorates are located in the middle and upper middle-class suburbs which extend some 20 miles north of Sydney harbor. The 9 electorates are Gordon, Mosman, Neutral Bay, Manly, Lane Cove, Hornsby, Willoughby, Collaroy, and Eastwood. This is Liberal heartland, a wide belt of Liberal support which will deliver 60-75 percent majorities for the party regardless of any manipulation of the electorate boundaries.

A second strong Liberal area is a narrow suburban strip extending east of the central business district of Sydney and along the southern shores of the harbor. This area includes the electorates of Vaucluse and Woollhara. Within these electorates are Sydney's most prestigious suburbs; they are settled by business executives and professional men who have achieved financial success, and whose wives regularly adorn the society pages of the Sydney Morning Herald.

The safe Liberal seats of Burwood, Ashfield-Croydon, and Earlwood are primarily residential areas located south-west of the central business district of Sydney. They are sandwiched between strong Labor areas--the older densely populated suburbs immediately bordering the central district; and the highly industrialized, closely settled suburbs stretching farther south and west of the city. Consequently,

a redrawing of electorate boundaries could throw the seats of Burwood, Ashfield-Croydon, and Earlwood into the "swing" category.

The safe Liberal seat of Cronulla was created by the 1957 reapportionment. Cronulla is a rapidly growing residential area bordering the southern shores of Botany Bay; it is about 15 miles from downtown Sydney.

Table 4 contains a breakdown of Liberal Party membership in the 10 electorates classified as "swing" seats.

TABLE 4

LIBERAL PARTY MEMBERSHIP IN "SWING"
ELECTORATES: MAY, 1959

State Electorate	Branches	Members	%Liberal Vote:1959
Coogee	6	635	52.68*
George's River	5	170	52.27
Drummoyne	8	204	52.19
Blacktown	7	168	51.16*
Rockdale	4	111	48.57*
Hurstville	2	70	46.18*
Sutherland	4	82	45.67
Bondi	3	146	45.45
Concord	4	227	45.40
Ryde	5	115	45.00
TOTAL	48	1,928	---

*Includes distribution of D.L.P. or independent candidates' second preferences in cases where neither major party candidate received a majority of first preference votes.

Included in the "swing" category are the 10 electorates
which would change hands as a result of 2.5 percent or less
of the vote in each electorate. The characteristics of these
"swing" electorates vary considerably. For example, the
adjacent electorates of Bondi and Coogee are older residen-
tial areas containing uniformly modest dwellings. In each
of the electoral subdivisions and polling places (precincts)
in these electorates, the parties compete on very nearly
even terms.

In contrast, the electorate of Ryde on the northern
shore of Sydney Harbor is held by Labor because of heavy
Labor majorities in 3 polling places (Gladesville, Gladesville
North, and Ryde), while the other parts of the electorate are
fairly evenly matched. The Liberal seat of George's River
has one strong pro-Liberal subdivision (Oatley) which gives
the Liberal candidate a margin of victory. In Blacktown
electorate, strong Liberal and strong Labor subdivisions
balanced each other off, with the edge going to the Liberal
candidate in 1959.[1] Located south of inner Sydney Harbor
are the adjacent electorates of Concord and Drummoyne, which
were once mainly residential areas, but are giving way in-
creasingly to industrial development.[2] Hurstville and
Sutherland electorates embrace rapidly growing suburbs in

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[1]Blacktown was radically altered by the 1961 reappor-
tionment, and became a safe seat. The strong Liberal areas
in Blacktown now form part of the new safe Liberal seat--
The Hills.

[2]Drummoyne was altered somewhat by the 1961 reapportion-
ment and was carried by the Labor Party in 1962.

the southern part of the metropolitan area.

Table 4 indicates that, in general, Liberal branch organization is weak in the 10 crucial borderline electorates. Coogee, with 635 members, appears to be an exception; however, another survey of branch membership completed immediately before the 1960 Branch Development Drive credited Coogee with only 160 members. The February, 1960 membership survey also reduced estimates for other "swing" electorates, with the result that the total estimate for the 10 electorates was reduced from 1928 members to 1280 members, and from 48 branches to 42 branches.

Table 5 lists the 23 electorates where the Liberal Party has little or no prospect of victory. The relatively high level of party membership in North Sydney is the result of door-to-door canvassing by a retired insurance salesman who worked on a commission basis. His efforts added a few hundred names to party membership records, but according to party officials, few of these people ever attended a party meeting. Membership figures for Kogarah and Randwick later proved to be exaggerated. In the hard-core Labor electorates where the Liberal Party polls less than 40 percent of the vote, the Liberal branch organization is limited to a handful of loyal party members, and 4 electorates have no Liberal organization at all.

TABLE 5

LIBERAL PARTY MEMBERSHIP IN SAFE LABOR
ELECTORATES: MAY, 1959

State Electorate	Branches	Members	%Liberal Vote:1959
North Sydney	8	543	44.28
Merrylands	2	38	44.05
Kogarah	6	265	43.32
Parramatta	6	105	42.81
Dulwich Hill	3	53	42.78
Canterbury	2	38	41.35
Liverpool	2	60	41.09
Randwick	5	91	41.06
Leichhardt	3	30	38.44
Lakemba	1	14	36.03
Auburn	1	20	35.40
Maroubra	1	20	35.27
Bankstown	1	26	33.49
Marrickville	1	20	31.02
Paddington-Waverley	1	25	30.73
Fairfield	1	21	30.43
King	1	17	27.52
Granville	0	0	27.02
Fast Hills	0	0	26.42
Phillip	0	0	24.83
Cook's River	1	18	24.24
Balmain	1	64	23.44
Redfern	0	0	19.86
TOTAL	47	1,468	---

Party finance.--In the view of the central organization,
the decline in party branch membership was accompanied by a
precarious financial standing. Unfortunately, it was impos-
sible to secure details on the raising and spending of party
funds, so we must proceed on the basis of indirect evidence
which is available.

The principal burden for raising money falls on the
Finance Committee. This committee is appointed by the State
Executive and consists of about 15 people with good connec-
tions in the business community. The State President,
Metropolitan Vice-President, State Treasurer, and the Leader
of the New South Wales federal parliamentary party also serve
on the Committee. The General Secretary is secretary of the
Finance Committee, and serves as its chief administrative
officer.[1] The chairman of the Finance Committee is ex officio
one of the five vice-presidents of the party.[2]

The Finance Committee is primarily responsible for
raising money to support the operations of the party Central
Office. This includes office rentals, salaries of professional
staff, and during campaign periods the cost of statewide
advertising, centrally issued propaganda, and other election-
eering materials not associated with individual electorate
campaigns.

Finance Committee members use the "personal approach"

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[1]These party officers serve on the Finance Committee as
a matter of custom, and not according to constitutional pro-
vision.

[2]See Constitution, Clause 160. Also note that the chairman
of the Finance Committee may not be a member of parliament.

in soliciting funds--mainly from individuals in business, industry, and commercial institutions. The Liberal Party, in contrast to its non-Labor antecedents (National Party and United Australia Party), does not accept donations from trade associations, professional organizations, or any other organization which represents a particular economic grouping.

A second principal component of Liberal Party fund-raising efforts is the Electorate Assistance Committee (EAC). The objective of the EAC is to stimulate safe Liberal electorate organizations to raise money which can be redistributed among less wealthy electorate organizations.[1] The chairman of the EAC is designated by the State Executive, and the committee consists of 20 to 30 party members from "donor" electorate organizations.

The EAC has been functioning since 1953. Until 1958, the committee was a loosely organized body which arranged and approved direct transfers of funds from "donor" to "donee" electorates. However, since 1958 the EAC has established a central account which receives and disburses all electorate assistance funds.

In order to determine the allocation of funds, the EAC analyzes past election results, and gives top priority for assistance to those electorates narrowly held by either party.

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[1]Although the EAC is mainly concerned with raising and distributing funds, it also attempts to arrange for the transfer of volunteer party workers from safe electorates to needy electorates.

In general, electorates which deliver the largest Liberal majorities are expected to assume the major share of the obligation for electorate assistance funds.

The machinery of electorate assistance is complex and cumbersome, and there are many points at which breakdowns can occur. In the first place, the success of electorate assistance obviously depends on the voluntary cooperation of the electorates involved, particularly the potential donor electorates. Not all electorates, however, are equally enthusiastic about electorate assistance: some electorate organizations must be prodded into sending a delegate to the electorate assistance committee; some make financial commitments which are fulfilled only in part or not at all. In the 1958 federal election campaign, for example, 10 electorates were pledged to contribute to the assistance fund. Only 3 electorates (Bradfield, Parramatta, Wentworth) met their obligations; 3 (Mackellar, Warringah, Lowe) contributed about half of their pledge; and 4 (Bennelong, North Sydney, Evans, Mitchell) failed to contribute at all.

The work of the electorate assistance committee is also complicated by the immense amount of detailed information which must be gathered and analyzed. Such information includes election statistics, the strength or weakness of branch organizations, the number of polling places in each donee electorate and the number of volunteers required to man each polling place, the campaign budgets of donee electorates, and the

amount of money likely to be available from donor electorates. This information does not come to hand in orderly and systematic fashion, but rather bit-by-bit or not at all. In addition, electorate assistance arrangements are continually being revised: a crucial campaign in a swing electorate may exceed its budget by hundreds of pounds, or a donor electorate may be unable to raise the money which it pledged. Under such circumstances, effective long-range planning is difficult, if not impossible.

The main burden of dealing with electorate assistance problems falls on the committee chairman (Mr. Maddison), who works closely with the General Secretary. In order to get desired results, the chairman relies chiefly on the steady application of personal pressure. If a committee member is absent from a number of the committee's lunch-hour sessions, he may expect to be contacted by the chairman. If the delinquent member continues to show lack of interest, he is replaced. When a particular electorate is lagging in its organization of electorate assistance, the delegate from that electorate receives from the chairman a good-humored remonstrance, or sometimes a sarcastic tongue-lashing. In spite of such pressure, breakdowns in electorate assistance machinery cannot be completely eliminated.

Although the problems involved in carrying out the electorate assistance scheme are formidable, the achievements of the scheme should not be minimized. Available data on the

1950-56 phase of the electorate assistance committee's activities are very sketchy, but it seems clear that the committee has expanded its activities considerably since 1957 when Maddison became chairman. In the federal elections of 1958, 23 of the 27 electorates in the Sydney metropolitan area participated in the electorate assistance scheme: 6 as donor electorates and 19 as donee electorates. These electorates received varying amounts from an electorate assistance fund of L3675,[1] over two-thirds of which was contributed by two electorates: Wentworth (L1350) and Bradfield (L1275). The state election campaign of 1959 occasioned a still more ambitious electorate assistance effort which embraced 45 of the 48 state electorates in the Sydney metropolitan area. In this campaign, 12 donor electorates contributed a total of L6037 which was distributed to 33 donee electorates. Well over half of the fund was contributed by four electorates: Gordon (L1400), Vaucluse (L1200), Woollahra (L1200), and Hornsby (L700). (These electorates coincide approximately with the federal electorates of Wentworth and Bradfield.)

The principal recipients of electorate assistance funds were those state and federal electorates in which Liberal and Labor strength appeared to be most evenly balanced. In the 1958 federal campaign, the largest beneficiaries of electorate assistance were Phillip (L500), Parkes (L425), and Kingsford-

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[1]One Australian pound equals about $2.25.

Smith (L365); in the state campaign of 1959, Ryde received the largest outlay of assistance funds (L824), followed by Bondi (L500), Coogee (L474), and Blacktown (L470). The proportion of such contributions to the total campaign budget varies a great deal from electorate to electorate, depending mainly on the size and vitality of the branch membership in each electorate, and the fund-raising potential of the branch membership. In any case, the available evidence suggests that the contribution from electorate assistance funds rarely exceeds one-third of the total campaign budget in any given electorate.[1]

In summary, a general assessment of the EAC indicates that over the years the committee has been troubled by persistent tensions characteristic of relations between central and electorate organizations. For example, a sub-committee of the EAC reported in 1956 regarding—

> the unwillingness or inability of some strong Liberal electorates to accept responsibilities under the scheme and their consequent meagre provision of money and manpower to other electorates.[2]

An EAC report of five years later speaks of similar difficulties:

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[1]According to members of the electorate assistance committee, an intensive campaign in a swing electorate usually has a budget of approximately L1500. This is also the figure cited by S. R. Tyler, who has participated actively in several Liberal campaigns (once as a candidate). See his article: "Campaigning at the Grass Roots," APSA News, VI (February, 1961), pp. 6-12.

[2]"Future Development of Electoral Assistance," unpublished mimeographed report, July 13, 1956.

Because the Committee's task is purely a persuasive
one, it follows that a high level of effectiveness
can be achieved only if its functions are understood
and appreciated by the Party as a whole. At the present
time, many members of the Party...lack any detailed
understanding of its true purpose or the difficulties
it has to overcome. In some areas where there should
be considerable potential to help the Committee's work,
the attitude ranges from apathy to mild hostility.[1]

The third major component of party fund-raising efforts

is the electorate organization as such. Electorate organiza-

tions are the least stable and most erratic sources of party

funds. The only regular means of raising money is the annual

membership fee paid by each branch member to the branch

treasurer. Until 1958, the fee amounted to the equivalent

of 28 cents, which was not even sufficient to pay postage

used by the branch secretary. As we shall see, the central

organization decided to pursue a conscious policy of

strengthening party finance at the electorate organization

level. One of the pivotal elements of this policy was the

decision to increase the annual membership fee eightfold to

Ll ($2.25).

The fee increase encountered immediate and bitter

resistance in many electorate organizations. The State

Supervisor reported to the General Secretary in May, 1959,

that the increase—

has had repercussions within the organisation. A
number of areas have accepted the position, others
have not...A firm stand will be necessary if the
will of [State] Council is to be implemented...
Certain branches threaten to go out of existence
and it is known that certain office-bearers will
do nothing to implement Council's decision.

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[1]"Working Paper on Electoral Assistance," un-
published mimeographed report, February 27, 1961.

> The existing membership comprises a large number of
> persons who have subscribed 2/6d. only. It will be
> necessary, if the £1 subscription is to prevail, to
> notify branches of their constitutional position if
> the full subscription is not paid. The view is
> expressed that on account of the increased fee we
> will lose certain branches.[1]

The General Secretary also took note of the situation in a

memorandum to the State Executive:

> Several electorates are showing an unwillingness to
> pursue the new membership fees...Clearly, this cannot
> be allowed to continue as it must have a demoralising
> effect upon the whole branch structure.[2]

Pointing out that State Council had already rejected two

motions for rescinding the new fee, and that more motions

were forthcoming, the General Secretary recommended that

"a resolution might be secured ensuring that no further amend-

ments to membership fees shall be debated by Council for

another twelve months."[3] This resolution was submitted as a

recommendation of the State Executive to State Council at its

meeting of June 29, 1959, and the resolution was adopted.

The same meeting of State Council debated four motions

from branches and electorates that the increased fee be re-

scinded. In the debate, the State President said that "to a

great extent [the Party's] future independence was bound up

with the membership fee."[4] Other speakers said that the higher

fee "was linked with a strong branch structure" and that

branches pursuing the fee were encountering no major

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[1] "Branch Membership and Organisation," p. 2.

[2] "Branch Membership Drive," p. 1.   [3] Ibid.

[4] AL, July, 1959, p. 1. The State President at the time was Mr. R. C. Cotton.

difficulties.[1] Speakers opposing the higher fee claimed

that it would "split the party"; that many branches would

refuse to collect it; and that many branch officers and mem-

bers would resign if forced to pay the fee. After a lengthy

and spirited debate, the motions to rescind the fee were de-

feated by a 54-41 vote, indicating a high degree of negative

feeling toward the fee even at the State Council level of the

party organization.

There are a number of indications that funds collected

by the Finance Committee are slowly declining in relation to

the total fund-raising effort of the party. This relative

decline is due partly to the apparent caprice of the sources

tapped by the Finance Committee, and partly to the philosophy

of the General Secretary, Mr. Carrick, who believes the party

can raise more money and better retain its integrity by a

broader base of financial support. As the General Secretary

stated in the "Report of the State Executive to the Annual

General Meeting of State Council," November 6, 1961:

> When the Liberal Party was formed in this State, it was
> regarded as essential that its finance-raising methods
> should be so broadly based, as to enable it to survive
> the inevitable periods of electoral unpopularity and to
> be impervious to any pressure-groups.
>
> This principle is fundamental to the whole character and
> integrity of the Liberal Party. It has been underlined
> by events of recent months.[2]

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[1] Ibid, p. 4.

[2] "Report," p. 3. In November, 1960, the Menzies govern-
ment imposed credit restrictions on banks and other lending
institutions, and passed a measure requiring life insurance
companies to invest at least 30 percent of their investments
in government securities. These actions inspired cries of
"socialism", and reportedly had an unfavorable impact on
Liberal fund raising efforts.

The decline in funds raised by the Finance Committee appears to have seriously undermined the development of the Central Office staff.

> Over the years as costs have risen and as political organisation has become more complex and exacting, donations have not followed the same trend. It has been necessary therefore, for us to be spartan in our methods, in some cases to the point where our capacity to achieve results has been limited.[1]

We have already noted that the field staff has gradually declined to about half of its strength in the peak year of 1949. And in 1961, the General Secretary felt forced to conclude that "the [financial] position has rarely been other than precarious and it has not been impossible to look with confidence to the long-range development of the organisation."[2]

Complaints about lack of funds are perhaps characteristic of parties everywhere, and such complaints are usually viewed with skepticism by outside observers. In contrast, the financial plight of the New South Wales Liberal Party is generally recognized as a reality. The Bulletin's "Ash Street Correspondent" notes the "shoe-string budget" of the party and comments: "People who waffle about the rich coffers of the Liberal Party have never looked at it."[3] Nation's correspondent, Don Whitington, states:

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[1]"Report of the State Executive to the Annual General Meeting of State Council," November 26, 1960. Emphasis supplied.

[2]"Report of the State Executive to the Annual General Meeting of State Council," November 6, 1961, p. 3.

[3]"A Grey Eminence Resigns," loc. cit.

The State where Liberal Party [financial] affairs are
probably at their lowest ebb is New South Wales. There,
it was short of funds even before the last campaign
[the federal elections of 1961] began. Many business
houses in Sydney which had contributed for years to the
party funds either refused to do so, or reduced their
contributions substantially. Two big business organi-
sations known to me made their most substantial con-
tributions to D.L.P. [Democratic Labor Party] funds on
the grounds that that was the best way to keep Labor
from winning. A third rejected Liberal Party overtures
for the first time in the memory of any one of the firm's
senior partners.[1]

The correspondent of the Sydney Morning Herald makes the

following observations along the same lines:

As for funds, the party is living from hand to mouth...

The party is so impoverished that it is struggling to
maintain a skeleton administrative staff. Its few paid
officers are loaded with a burden of work out of all
proportion to the wages they receive. As a result,
there has been great difficulty in holding staff.[2]

The party's uncertain financial resources, combined

with an apparently deteriorating branch organization, impelled

the central organization to create an organizational mechanism

which could help to correct these deficiencies. Thus, in 1959,

the Branch Development Committee (BDC) was established by the

State Executive upon the recommendation of the General

Secretary. BDC was charged with the general responsibility

for improving the vitality of the party branch structure,

and more specifically, for planning and implementing branch

membership drives. The most ambitious membership drive

launched by the BDC took place in the period from mid-1960 to

mid-1961. After reviewing the objectives of this branch

[1]Don Whitington, "Liberals in Disarray," Nation, No. 86
(January 27, 1962), p. 4.

[2]SMH, May 12, 1962, p. 2.

development program, we will discuss the implementation of the program.

Objectives of the Branch Development Program

Increased branch membership.--The General Secretary, in reviewing the membership data presented earlier, commented that "the present situation is therefore, very unsatisfactory and cannot be allowed to continue."[1] The objectives of the branch development program were many, as we shall see; but viewed at its most superficial level, the program was designed to bring a large number of new members into the party.

In late 1959, a survey of branch membership was again made. This compilation was presented to the BDC on January 27, 1960, along with recommended target figures for each electorate. The target figures were adopted by the committee.[2]

Table 6 summarizes membership targets in the 3 groups of electorates.

TABLE 6

SUMMARY OF BRANCH MEMBERSHIP: JANUARY, 1960;
AND MEMBERSHIP TARGETS OF BRANCH
DEVELOPMENT DRIVE

| Electorates | January, 1960 | | Target | |
	Members	Branches	Members	Branches
Safe Liberal (15)	8,861	96	18,165	144
"Swing" (10)	1,280	42	4,405	89
Safe Labor (23)	1,289	39	6,058	96
TOTAL (48)	11,430	177	28,618	329

[1]"Branch Membership Drive," p. 1.
[2]BDC Minutes, January 27, 1960, p. 2.

The BDC thus envisioned a membership expansion program which would increase the number of branch members by approximately 250 percent. The program was to be carried out over a two-year period, but the main thrust of the program was planned to be a highly organized branch development drive from May through August, 1960.

Under the projected program, Liberal members would still be concentrated in "blue ribbon" Liberal electorates which would more than double the existing branch membership. The program was relatively more ambitious, however, in "swing" and safe Labor electorates. In "swing" electorates, the BDC planned to double the number of branches, and nearly quadruple membership. In Labor electorates, branches would be more than doubled, and membership expanded fivefold.

Table 7 is a breakdown of branch membership targets in the 15 safe Liberal electorates. There is considerable variation both in the number of members enrolled in January, 1960; and in the membership targets, which tend to be related to existing branch strength. In general, targets in most safe Liberal electorates call for doubling, or nearly doubling the number of branch members. However, in electorates where membership has fallen below 200, relatively greater efforts were planned.

TABLE 7

BRANCH MEMBERSHIP: JANUARY, 1960; AND MEMBERSHIP
TARGETS IN SAFE LIBERAL SEATS

| Electorates | January, 1960 | | Target | |
	Members	Branches	Members	Branches
Gordon	2,067	8	3,950	13
Neutral Bay	540	5	1,040	9
Vaucluse	851	4	1,850	8
Willoughby	511	8	1,175	10
Woollhara	1,366	4	2,200	7
Mosman	754	6	1,425	12
Eastwood	155	6	615	11
Collaroy	374	9	780	13
Lane Cove	199	5	550	9
Hornsby	660	9	1,580	12
Ashfield-Croydon	177	7	450	9
Manly	66	3	550	6
Burwood	560	11	940	11
Cronulla	153	5	645	8
Earlwood	228	6	315	6
TOTAL	8,861	96	18,165	144

Table 8 provides data on the branch membership target in the 10 "swing" seats. In contrast to the fairly regular pattern of targets set for safe Liberal seats, targets for "swing" seats differ considerably from electorate to electorate

TABLE 8

BRANCH MEMBERSHIP: JANUARY, 1960; AND
MEMBERSHIP TARGETS IN "SWING" ELECTORATES

| Electorates | January, 1960 | | Target | |
	Branches	Members	Branches	Members
Coogee	6	160	6	650
George's River	5	107	9	360
Drummoyne	4	145	6	355
Blacktown	5	155	28	550
Rockdale	3	67	8	490
Hurstville	2	80	5	350
Sutherland	4	78	9	330
Bondi	3	147	4	550
Concord	4	229	7	550
Ryde	5	112	7	220
TOTAL	42	1,280	89	4,405

in relation to January, 1960 levels. Regardless of existing membership, the BDC planned—except in Ryde—to build up membership in "swing" seats to a strength of from 330 members (Sutherland) to 650 members (Coogee).

Table 9 is a breakdown of membership targets in the 23 safe Labor electorates. The gigantic North Sydney target is at least partly explained by the fact that North Sydney lay within the safe Liberal federal electorate of the same name. In the other 7 electorates in which the Liberal Party polled more than 40 percent of the vote, targets call for membership

TABLE 9

BRANCH MEMBERSHIP: JANUARY, 1960; AND MEMBERSHIP
TARGETS IN SAFE LABOR ELECTORATES

Electorates	January, 1960		Target	
	Branches	Members	Branches	Members
North Sydney	8	543	9	2,776
Merrylands	0	0	4	105
Kogarah	6	192	7	395
Parramatta	5	115	8	295
Dulwich Hill	3	62	7	285
Canterbury	2	51	8	250
Liverpool	2	20	4	130
Randwick	4	64	5	525
Leichhardt	2	60	3	225
Lakemba	1	25	4	120
Auburn	1	12	4	70
Maroubra	1	12	3	90
Bankstown	0	0	4	140
Marrickville	1	20	0	0
Paddington-Waverley	1	32	4	140
Fairfield	1	20	4	62
King	1	20	0	0
Granville	0	0	4	75
East Hills	0	0	6	120
Phillip	0	0	0	0
Cook's River	1	17	3	95
Balmain	1	24	3	100
Redfern	0	0	3	70
TOTAL	39	1,289	96	6,058

increases up to a total of 225-550 members in each electorate. In 12 of the remaining 15 hard-core Labor electorates, the BDC planned to establish in each electorate 3 or 4 small branches with a total membership of 70-140 members. In 3 electorates—Marrickville, Phillip, and King—the BDC planned no branch development efforts.

This completes the brief review of branch development targets as adopted by the BDC in January, 1960. As planning for the drive continued, however, these targets were scaled down considerably. The General Secretary indicated in an April 30, 1960 memorandum to the BDC that the drive would be limited to 30 of the 48 metropolitan state electorates: "The remaining eighteen are of the strong, Labor industrial type and our progress there will be much slower."[1] The same memorandum stated that "the programme visualizes the formation of one hundred and eight new branches with an increased membership of approximately nine thousand persons."[2] The July, 1960 Australian Liberal stated that the drive "aims in its first phase at securing ten thousand more members of the Party and at establishing 108 new branches in the metropolitan area alone."[3] In September, the General Secretary presented the same figures at a party meeting as a two-year objective.[4]

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[1] "Branch Development Programme," p. 2.

[2] Ibid., p. 4.

[3] AL, July, 1960, p. 2 (Supplement). Emphasis supplied.

[4] AL, September, 1960, p. 7.

These statements represent a substantial reduction in the objective of the branch development program as originally conceived and adopted. Even with the exclusion of 18 safe Labor electorates, there was a reduction in the membership target from more than 15,000 new members to 10,000, and in the branch target from 207 new branches to 108. The BDC did not compile a detailed breakdown of electorate target figures reflecting the more modest goal, and it is apparent that the original targets were set aside as visionary. Even so, the aim of doubling the party membership remained as a formidable objective.

Improving branch performance.--In the discussion of the central organization's assessment of party resources, we have already noted that central organization leaders were critical of "stagnation" at the electorate organization level. It is clear that the central organization related branch inactivity between elections to weakened organizational performance in the campaign period:

> New members and branch reforms must go hand-in-hand...
>
> If we are to meet the real and growing threat of our opponents, our branches must be geared to undertake continuous programmes of work. It is no longer sufficient for them to spring into effective life in the last few weeks of an election campaign and to hibernate (or at the best, meet desultorily) between times as all too many of them now do.[1]

The branch development program had as a major objective the transformation of branches into continuously active organizational units working to achieve the party's objectives.

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[1] "State President's Message," AL, July, 1960, p. 1 (Supplement).

The BDC recognized at the outset—

> that any scheme must fail which seeks merely to add a number of new members to existing branches. For people to be attracted permanently to this Organisation, branch membership must be given a more tangible purpose and the proceedings made more attractive.[1]

The BDC, therefore, gave considerable attention to the stimulation of "purposeful branches," branches which would prepare interesting and attractive programs; which would reach out into the surrounding community and seek the support of influential community leaders; which would, above all, mobilize every possible resource in the service of the Liberal cause.[2]

According to the General Secretary:

> The Branch Development Committee is seized with the necessity of a virtual re-education of Branch members and office-bearers in their future tasks. As a first step, the Committee finds it necessary to emphasise that the branch has major and continuing responsibilities which are beyond the capacity of any other media to discharge. It ought to be the front-line public relations of the party.

> The Branch Development Drive, therefore is not simply a means of taking in more branch members and building more branches, although these objectives are worthy in themselves. As a first step, it will seek out probably Liberals and endeavour to enrol them. It will then attempt to locate the doubtful or swing voters and, by skilful personal contact, endeavour to persuade them towards the Liberal cause.

> No mass media can do these things.[3]

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[1] "Branch Development Programme," p. 1.

[2] Cf. "State President's Message," AL, July, 1960, p. 1 (Supplement). Also the General Secretary's comment that "our greatest resource of potential man-power [strong Liberal areas] has been virtually untapped," "Branch Development Programme," p. 1.

[3] Ibid, p. 1-2, Emphasis supplied.

In calling upon branches to become the public relations arm of the party, and in rejecting the possibility that the mass media could perform this function adequately, the central organization envisioned the branch as an integral part of community organizational life. As the General Secretary indicated in a memorandum to the BDC:

> The Liberal Party is often accused, with some measure of truth, of remoteness from public contact...It is necessary to bring our branch structure into direct contact with community life.[1]

The State President expressed a similar view in the Australian Liberal:

> We cannot be remote and survive. We must make the Liberal Party organization a functional and acceptable part of community life. Our branches must be in intimate contact with their local areas.[2]

To achieve these objectives, the BDC undertook to prepare a recommended program for branches, which would make their activities both enjoyable and "purposeful." In addition, the BDC planned selective recruitment efforts which would seek to attract leaders in community organizations, salesmen and public relations men, professional men, and "junior executives." These efforts will be analyzed in the discussion of the implementation of the branch development drive.

Party Finance.--The branch development program was conceived a short time after the party State Council, on the recommendation of the General Secretary, increased the annual

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[1]"The Branch Programme--Some Suggested Reforms," mimeographed memorandum from the General Secretary to the BDC, March 30, 1960, p. 1.

[2]"State President's Message," op. cit.

membership fee. As we have seen, this decision caused great turmoil, and allegedly threatened to cost the party heavily in membership renewals.

Consolidating branch members under the Ł1 fee was of great importance to the central organization. Under the old fee, a party member did not contribute enough to pay for the minimal housekeeping expenses of the branch secretary. The branch treasury lay empty unless some special fund-raising project was sponsored. In electorates with low party membership, there was a tendency to depend on the Electorate Assistance Committee for help in financing campaigns. Under the higher fee, however, a branch is provided automatically with a substantial sum of money in the treasury, especially if the branch has a large membership. Self-supporting and financially strong branches and electorate organizations tend to relieve pressure on the central funds of the party, the sources of which are narrow-based and uncertain.

Insofar as the new fee increased the financial resources of the electorate organization, it contributed to the objective of the central organization, which is to provide the party with a stable source of money for fighting elections. To accomplish this objective, the central organization planned to strengthen and broaden the financial base at the electorate level, and eventually draw upon electorate resources to help finance the central machinery of the party.[1]

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[1] Cf. Michels, op. cit., p. 198: "The modern party, like the modern state, endeavors to give to its own organization the widest possible base, and to attach to itself in financial bonds the largest possible number of individuals."

This objective was clearly spelled out by the General
Secretary in the State Executive annual report to State
Council in 1961:

> Finance is our greatest single problem. We must resolve
> it if we are to recruit and maintain an adequate pro-
> fessional staff of the calibre which a modern-day
> political party demands...
>
> The work of central finance-raising should be regarded
> as supplementary to the local effort. In the final
> analysis, the party will grow in strength only if it
> continues to widen its field of individual donors at
> the 'grass roots'...
>
> Inevitably, in the coming years, it will be necessary
> for electorates to assume a growing responsibility for
> the maintenance of the organisation.[1]

The higher fee was itself a step toward assuming this "growing
responsibility" in that the fee included a built-in subscrip-
tion to the monthly party magazine, The Australian Liberal.
Branch treasurers are required to forward 5 shillings (about
$.55) of each fee to central office to pay for a party member's
subscription. The Australian Liberal, a 32-page magazine of
party news, features, and some general interest articles,
depends for its existence on the support of the membership
fee. The magazine is important to the central organization,
since it ensures—

> automatic distribution to all branch members of a
> significant document which contains essential informa-
> tion on a wide range of political matters.
>
> The periodical is being used as an essential part of
> the Branch Development Programme. It ensures that
> information is distributed regularly, direct to branch
> members and is not subject to the hazards of channelling
> through branch office-bearers.[2]

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[1]"Report of the State Executive to the Annual General
Meeting of State Council," November 6, 1961, p. 4.

[2]Ibid., November 25, 1960, p. 8.

Thus, The Australian Liberal is a direct link between the central organization and the rank-and-file branch member. When a new member joins the party, he automatically subscribes to the central publication;[1] and the branch treasurer who collects the fee not only enriches the branch treasury but acts as a subscription collection agent for the central organization.

For a number of reasons, therefore, the central organization had a large stake in the higher fee. The fee elevated existing members to the status of party contributors, and lent impetus and purpose to a drive to add many thousands of new members to the party. As the General Secretary pointed out:

> The organisation confronts a two-fold task, namely—the re-enrolment of pre-existing branch members with the renewal of branch fees for the coming year, and secondly, a comprehensive branch membership drive.[2]

Confronted by widespread resistance to the fee at the electorate level, the central organization launched the Branch Development Drive as an instrument for both broadening the financial base of the party, and increasing the amount of financial resources available to the party.

In this chapter we have presented a general assessment of the organizational resources available to the New South Wales Liberal Party in its struggle to win control of government. It was an assessment which stimulated the formation of

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[1] Under the old fee, subscription to the party periodical Liberal Opinion was optional. Liberal Opinion's format was less elaborate and of lesser quality than its successor, The Australian Liberal.

[2] "Branch Membership Drive," p. 1.

a program of action: the branch development program. This program to develop the organizational resources of the party was advanced by the central organization in the hope that the party's government-seeking objectives would be realized. As the General Secretary summed up shortly before the 1960 membership drive was launched:

> If the plan succeeds, it will provide an enormously strengthened organisation to meet the needs of the Federal and State elections at the end of next year...
>
> If the scheme is fully implemented, we should be able, for the first time, to isolate the swing voters and to work on them...the branch should be adequately equipped with funds and a solid core of finance should be available to meet campaign needs.
>
> With the Federal Government approaching its twelfth year of office and the State Party confronting the difficulties attendant upon a lengthy period in opposition, the tasks ahead of us are very large.[1]

Implementation of the Branch Development Drive

The Branch Development Committee was created by the State Executive in May, 1959, upon the recommendation of the General Secretary.[2] As we discussed in the preceding section, the BDC was charged with the responsibility of revitalizing the party branch structure by bringing in thousands of new party members, and improving existing branch activities. In this section, we shall examine and evaluate the efforts of the BDC over a two year period--June, 1959-June, 1961. This period may be divided into four phases: the membership drive

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[1]"Branch Development Programme," p. 4.

[2]"Branch Development Drive," a memorandum from the General Secretary to the State Executive, May 25, 1959, p. 3.

planning phase from June, 1959-April, 1960; the intensive drive itself from May-September, 1960; a period of BDC inactivity from September, 1960-February, 1961; and a phase involving further member recruitment efforts before arriving at new membership totals in June, 1961.

The BDC was chaired by Mr. J. C. Maddison, then State Treasurer and also chairman of the Electorate Assistance Committee. Maddison was authorized by the State Executive to co-opt additional members of the BDC as he saw fit. At the first meeting of the BDC on June 5, 1959, Maddison was joined by three other members of the State Executive: Mr. Ralph Honner, an attorney and a Roman Catholic who was later to be elected State President of the party;[1] Mr. Claude Tuckwell, an insurance broker and veteran party worker; and Mr. Eric Willis, the young Deputy Leader of the state parliamentary party. Mr. A. T. Lenehan, State Supervisor of party field staff, also attended the meeting and acted as the committee's secretary.[2]

The first meeting of the committee was devoted to a general discussion of its duties. The committee arrived at the tentative conclusions that an all-out membership drive was indeed necessary--"the sooner the better"; that special atten-tion should be given to "swing" electorates and areas of rapid population growth; and that a special effort should be made to attract "'key' people with a well-chosen personal approach aimed

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[1]Mr. Honner served as State President in 1961 and 1962.

[2]Minutes of BDC, June 5, 1959.

at securing their joining the party."[1]

By the end of July, 1959, the BDC had expanded to eight members. The committee began to give attention to the mechanics of implementing the membership drive. Decisions needed to be made on whether the BDC would work through the state electorate conference or through individual branches; whether special literature should be prepared for new members; whether volunteer party canvassers should receive special training. The committee also considered "the devising of ways of securing the co-operation of the Parliamentary Parties with the aims and objects of the Committee."[2]

The BDC set for itself a heavy meeting schedule. The full committee generally met at bi-weekly intervals, but often much more frequently. In addition, as decisions were made, particular work assignments were given to small sub-committees which held separate meetings. Membership on these subcommittees was often overlapping, which meant that some committee members were involved in several meetings per week during some periods of membership drive planning.

By the end of January, 1960, the BDC had completed most of its preparatory work. The membership drive was scheduled to begin on May 2 with a kick-off rally featuring the Leader of the State parliamentary party, Mr. Askin; and the federal Attorney General, Sir Garfield Barwick. But before the drive

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[1]Ibid.

[2]Minutes of BDC, July 28, 1959. The role of parliamentary members in the branch development program will be discussed separately at the end of this chapter.

could be launched, the BDC faced the task of communicating
the objectives of the drive to the party organization at large,
and securing the active cooperation of office-holders and other
party personnel who had not been involved in the planning
process.

On April 5, 1960, the chairman of the BDC dispatched a
lengthy and detailed memorandum to all presidents and secre-
taries of state electorate conferences, as well as to members
of state and federal parliaments. The memorandum began as
follows:

> For the past eight months the Branch Development Com-
> mittee (appointed by State Executive, together with
> co-opted members of the Branch Organisation) has been
> meeting continuously and preparing plans for the
> conduct of a Membership Drive within the metropolitan
> area and also examining ways and means of developing
> the Branch Organisation, generally.
>
> The Committee has now reached the stage in completing
> its plans when State Electorate Conferences must be
> made aware of the essential details.[1]

Following this portentous opening were eight legal-size pages
(single spaced) of instructions on how the membership drive
should be conducted. Four days after the memorandum was sent
to state electorate conference officers, a second memorandum
from the BDC chairman was sent to the presidents and secre-
taries of all Liberal Party branches. This memorandum was of
similar length and covered much the same ground as the earlier
one.

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[1]"Membership Drive: Branch Development," a memorandum
from the chairman of the BDC to all state electorate con-
ference presidents and secretaries, February 5, 1960, p. 1.

Implementation of the branch development drive, as indicated in the two memoranda, was to be carried out according to the following plan. All state electorate conferences were asked to call a meeting within the period of February 15-March 14. At this meeting the target figures for new branches and new members established by the BDC should be endorsed, and a Branch Development Sub-Committee be appointed consisting of one member from each branch in the electorate. The Sub-Committee was expected to establish geographical areas for which each branch in the electorate would be responsible. In areas requiring new branches, committees of three members were to form the nucleus of the planned branch, and secure enough additional new members to form a new branch. The State Electorate Conference Branch Development Sub-Committee was placed in charge of co-ordinating the drive throughout the electorate. Members of the party field staff were expected to assist as much as possible, and to act as liaison between the electorate and the central BDC.

At the branch level, the drive was to be co-ordinated by the branch representative on the electorate Branch Development Sub-Committee. This person, known as the "Branch Drive Captain," was expected to appoint a "Team Captain" and a group of canvassers for each area into which the branch had been subdivided.

Each branch was also called upon to prepare a complete list of "main electors" (heads of households) residing in the

branch area. The list was then to be organized by street addresses, and would indicate the occupation of each elector. Basic information for compiling the index could be obtained from the "Original Roll of Electors and Ratepayers" maintained by municipal councils, but organizing the material by streets represented a formidable task requiring many hours of tedious, volunteer labor. The Branch Drive Captain was also expected to compile a special list of officers of all voluntary organizations such as service clubs, veterans groups, business organizations, and sporting clubs.

Assuming the completion of the necessary groundwork, the BDC memoranda called for the scheduling of training sessions for canvassers during the month of April, 1960-- immediately preceding the drive kick-off on May 2. Training sessions would be scheduled on a regional basis, and would feature members of the BDC and the field staff. A special manual would also be available as a guide to canvassers.[1]

The BDC communications went on to spell who should be canvassed as prospective members, and how they should be approached:

> The drive is to be a "discriminate" canvass. It should be confined to those people, who, because of their occupations or professions, appear to be likely Liberal sympathizers. As well, the key members of all the local voluntary organizations are to be canvassed during the first stage of the drive. The wives of all locally prominent men should be canvassed...

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[1] Visitors' Manual, a Liberal Party publication prepared for party workers in the branch development program. In an interesting semantic move, the BDC decided to use the term "visitor" instead of "canvasser", and the term "briefing" instead of "training" when referring to the preparation of party workers for the drive. See Minutes of BDC "Visitors" Sub-Committee, March 14, 1960.

> In principle, canvassers are to be assigned to the
> section within which they reside or are best known...
>
> "Cold" canvassing should be avoided where possible.
> Knowing a prospect personally or being able to arrange
> an introduction to him can mean the difference between
> the canvasser being successful or unsuccessful. The
> value of personal relationship between the canvasser
> and the prospect must be stressed time and time again...
>
> Special emphasis must be placed on the soliciting of
> the key personnel of local voluntary organizations as
> they are in effect the local leaders and are in a
> position to influence the members of their organisations...
>
> The canvasser should be prepared to spend a reasonable
> amount of time with a prospect, but he must be aware
> that he does not spend an abnormal amount of time dis-
> cussing some very interesting, but totally time-
> wasting subject.[1]

After the commencement of the drive itself, canvassers
were expected to attend a progress report session called by
the Branch Drive Captain. A second reporting session was
called for within one week after the end of the two-month
intensive drive. Canvassers' reports were to indicate—

> any objection raised by those who refused to join...
> the objections raised [were] to be forwarded by the
> Branch Drive Captains to the State Electorate Conference
> Branch Development Sub-Committee which is to forward
> them to the Branch Development Committee which will
> analyse them and try to devise ways and means of
> overcoming them.[2]

In cases where the prospective member was undecided, the Branch
Drive Captain was "to consider transferring the contacting of
the prospect to another canvasser. If this is done, the second
canvasser should not call for at least one week."[3]

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[1]"Membership Drive: Branch Development," a memorandum
from the BDC chairman to all party branch presidents and
secretaries, February 9, 1960, p. 2-3.

[2]Ibid., p. 4.   [3]Ibid.

Within one month after the completion of the drive,
the state electorate conference was expected to hold an
"induction meeting" for new members which would feature mem-
bers of parliament and other party officials. The conference
president was advised to station himself at the door to
welcome new and old party members and guests.

> Informality [should] be the keynote of the evening. As
> much time as possible should be given over to allowing
> the new members to mix and meet the others present. This
> is particularly important where the official guests are
> concerned. The Electorate Conference President should
> ensure that they are not monopolised by one group.[1]

All members were also to receive the new brochure "The Trust
You Accept" prepared by the BDC. In addition, members should
be issued a party membership card which "will have no practi-
cal use as far as the organisation is concerned, but it may
help some members to gain that feeling of 'belonging' that
they lack."[2] Following the induction meeting, a branch vice-
president was to be assigned the task of following up on new
members who did not attend, or who did attend the induction
but failed to come to subsequent branch meetings.

The BDC ended its memoranda with a note of optimism,
and a straightforward statement on the reason for the whole
effort:

> We look forward with anticipation to the attainment
> of the membership target in your branch area.

> The building up of the organisation in the year, 1960,
> will help considerably when we meet the challenge of
> the Federal Elections in 1961 and the State Elections
> in 1962.[3]

Having spelled out the objectives and implementation
machinery of the drive to local party officers, the BDC threw
itself into prodding the electorate and branch organizations

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[1]Ibid., p. 5.   [2]Ibid.   [3]Ibid., p. 5-6.

into action. It was agreed that the BDC, which by this time had expanded to eighteen members, would attend as many electorate conference meetings as possible. In addition, of course, the party field staff would concentrate its efforts on organizing for the drive.

Minutes of committee meetings provide an indicative, if not complete, account of the response by electorate organizations. The BDC minutes of March 24, 1960, reported "full cooperation" from the Burwood electorate, "no enthusiasm for the proposals" from Manly, "not complete cooperation", from Collaroy, an energetic house-to-house canvass already underway in Rockdale, and "progress" or "cooperation" (with qualifications) from Gordon, Vaucluse, and North Sydney.[1] On March 30, it was reported that the Mosman electorate had "accepted the proposals of Branch Development in principle."[2] At the same meeting:

> Verbal reports were made by each Field Representative in regard to the action taken in connection with Branch Development within their respective areas. It was gleaned from the reports that there was 50 to 60 per cent co-operation by the electorates concerned.[3]

In April, 1960, the BDC moved ahead with briefing sessions for canvassers who had agreed to work in the drive. Again, the BDC minutes indicate that success in this phase was spotty. The BDC "Briefing Sub-Committee" minutes of April 6 take note of "well attended" meetings in the northern

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[1]Minutes of BDC, March 24, 1960, p. 2.

[2]Minutes of BDC, March 30, 1960, p. 1.

[3]Ibid.

and central regions of the metropolitan area. The April 11
minutes comment on a "successful meeting" in the southern
region, but an "unsatisfactory" meeting in the eastern region.
A "fair meeting" in the western region was reported in the
"Briefing Sub-Committee" minutes of April 27. In a meeting
of the full BDC on April 13, a field staff report stated that
a total of 292 "Visitors" had been enrolled as volunteers,
and that contacts were being made with 166 others. "In
commenting on the report the Chairman expressed disappoint-
ment with the number of 'Visitors' enrolled...and stated
that the Committee should aim at securing the services of
at least 1,000 'Visitors'".[1]

The branch development drive was launched on May 4,
1960. According to The Australian Liberal, "almost 700 key
members of the Liberal Party" gathered to hear addresses by
the federal Attorney General (Sir Garfield Barwick), the state
parliamentary Leader (Mr. Askin), the state President (Mr.
Cotton), and the Leader of the New South Wales federal
parliamentary party (Senator Spooner).[2] Near the close of
the meeting, the chairman of the BDC, Mr. Maddison, "said it
had been an inspiring and exciting evening. Its inspiration
and excitement should now be translated into activity."[3]
Maddison termed the program "realistic, and the work involved
for Branch members...far easier than it looked on paper.

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[1]Minutes of BDC, April 13, 1960.

[2]AL, May, 1960, p. 1.

[3]Ibid., p. 7.

'It is in your hands,' he said, 'to go and do the job.'[1]

Within a month after the launching of the drive, the BDC met with members of the field staff to review progress.

Individual members of the Field Staff reported gradual progress...Difficulties were being met in certain areas in each of the Regions. Each member of the Staff implied that every effort was being made to overcome these difficulties. A statement was presented...showing a Membership Increase of 730...Mr. Maddison stated he was not distressed over results to date and that he was very satisfied with the reports...He expressed the opinion that within two or three months real Membership Increase would be shown.[2]

The field staff was instructed to keep weekly records of membership increases, and be ready in three weeks to present another report to the BDC. When the BDC again convened, members of the field staff "reported gradual progress...and steady increase in membership. A statement was presented showing an increase on basic figures of 1,318 at 13 June, 1960."[3]

At the drive progressed, party publications continued to claim a significant build-up in branch membership. An item in the July, 1960 Australian Liberal said that 1,500 new members had been enrolled by mid-June.[4] In August, The Australian Liberal pointed to an increase of more than 2,500 new members;[5] the September issue reported 3,000 new members.[6]

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[1]Ibid.

[2]Minutes of BDC, May 30, 1960, p. 2.

[3]Minutes of BDC, June 20, 1960, p. 2.

[4]AL, July, 1960, p. 2 (supplement).

[5]AL, August, 1960, p. 2.

[6]AL, September, 1960, p. 1.

The State Executive report to State Council in September
indicated that "the membership increase is now approximately
3,500."[1]

The figure of 3,500 was taken from data gathered by the
BDC. At the same time, however, the committee betrayed un-
certainty about its figures by deciding to ask each branch
to submit a statement of its membership as of September 30,
1960.[2] In the event, the implementation of this decision was
deferred, since the BDC disbanded until February 1, 1961.[3]

In November, 1960, the State Executive reported to State
Council that "it seems clear that almost 4,000 new members
have been enrolled as a result of the Drive up to date."[4]

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[1]Report of the State Executive to State Council,
September 26, 1960, p. 1.

[2]Minutes of BDC, September 19, 1960.

[3]The activities of the BDC, and the membership drive
itself, were effectively interrupted by the intervention of a
by-election campaign in the federal electorate of Calare, a
country electorate about 200 miles west of Sydney. Calare had
been held by the same Liberal member, John Howse, since 1946.
When Howse resigned, the Country Party decided to field a
candidate--much to the Liberals' irritation, since the Labor
Party had little chance of victory. The Liberal electorate
organization in Calare had deteriorated badly during Howse's
long incumbency, while the Country Party could draw on strong
state electorate organizations within Calare. In an effort to
hold Calare, the Liberal Party assigned most of its Sydney
field staff to Calare during September and October. The
campaign also absorbed much of the General Secretary's attention
during this period. With the field staff out of Sydney, it was
impossible to keep the membership drive moving. The by-election,
held on November 5, was won by the Country Party. See C.
Orlebeke, "Any Lesson in Calare?", The Observer, October 29,
1960, p. 8; and "The Calare By-Election", Australian Political
Studies Association News, February, 1961, pp. 13-15.
    The BDC's lack of activity between November and February
can be attributed to the holiday season and summer doldrums.

[4]Report of the State Executive to the Annual General
Meeting of State Council, November 25th, 1960, p. 1.

However, this claim is made only after considerable hedging:

> At the outset it was very difficult to establish an accurate record of existing branch members. The only records available had been kept by branch secretaries and in many cases, very little attempt had been made over the years to renew subscriptions.
>
> The increased branch membership fee did not take full effect until the financial year 1960/61. It was therefore not possible at the beginning to detect what wastage might occur as the result of the new fee.
>
> The Branch Membership Drive which was launched in May, 1960, therefore overlapped our initial attempts to restore our existing membership and to establish the new fee.[1]

The BDC reconvened in February, 1961, and began by following up on its efforts in 1960. The committee again sent out a barrage of letters (1) to all branch presidents requesting a statement of membership and of branch program plans for the year;[2] (2) to 6 state electorates which were reported to have new branches in the process of formation; (3) to 23 newly established branches asking if they were having any problems needing BDC help; (4) to 4 blue-ribbon state electorates requesting that they plan membership drives.[3] Subsequent meetings of the BDC were largely devoted to discussing problems in specific areas, and attempting to revive a general membership drive was not seriously considered.

At the same time, committee meetings were clearly marked with a pervasive sense of disappointment over the results of the 1960 drive, and with a sense of frustration about the outlook of the branch development program. It was decided,

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[1]Ibid.   [2]Minutes of BDC, February 1, 1961.
[3]Minutes of BDC, February 20, 1961.

therefore, to form a 5-man subcommittee from among its members in order to review in detail the problems existing in the organization.[1] The subcommittee in its first meeting discussed its assignment at length; its conclusions reflected clearly the lack of success of the BDC in the 1960 drive:

> Arising from the discussions it was resolved that the sub-committee would visit key areas in turn to meet local representatives in order to:
>
> (a) Explain the work of the Branch Development Committee and the sub-committee.
>
> (b) To seek local views on Branch programmes and Branch Development.
>
> (c) To establish sound public relations between each area and the Branch Development Committee.[2]

The subcommittee did carry out its plan to meet with a number of electorate organizations, and held many meetings with individual members of the field staff. An "Interim Report" of the subcommittee was completed on June 27, 1961, and we shall discuss some of its contents later in this chapter.

In May, 1961, the BDC again undertook to determine the number of branch members in the Sydney area, and the field staff was asked to submit a report.[3] The results of the survey confirmed that apparently very little net membership increase had occurred after two years of effort by the BDC.

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[1]Ibid.

[2]Minutes of BDC Subcommittee, February 22, 1961.

[3]Minutes of BDC, May 19, 1961.

The following table provides membership figures broken down according to "safe Liberal", "swing", and "safe Labor" state electorates.

TABLE 10

SUMMARY OF BRANCH MEMBERSHIP BEFORE AND
AFTER BRANCH DEVELOPMENT DRIVE

Electorates	Before Drive	After Drive	Net Gain/Loss
Safe Liberal (15)	8,861	8,727	-134
"Swing" (10)	1,280	1,600	320
Safe Labor (23)	1,289	1,375	86
TOTAL (48)	11,430	11,702	272

The table above indicates a net membership gain of only 272 new members. The party showed a net loss of membership strength in its "blue-ribbon" areas, and relatively small gains in "swing" and safe Labor electorates.

Within the three types of electorates, the survey revealed an apparently erratic pattern of gains and losses. Table 11 provides data on the 10 safe Liberal electorates. The poor performance of the Gordon electorate is primarily responsible for the over-all decline in safe Liberal seats. It is obvious that a membership drive was not mounted in Gordon, and in addition, as the BDC sub-committee report points out, "the Gordon debacle is undoubtedly due to the

TABLE 11

BRANCH MEMBERSHIP IN SAFE LIBERAL ELECTORATES
BEFORE AND AFTER BRANCH DEVELOPMENT DRIVE

Electorates	Before	After	Net Gain/Loss
Gordon	2,067	728	-1,339
Neutral Bay	540	907	367
Vaucluse	851	1,108	257
Willoughby	511	495	-16
Woollhara	1,366	1,149	-217
Mosman	754	1,210	456
Eastwood	155	376	221
Collaroy	374	364	-10
Lane Cove	199	162	-37
Hornsby	660	557	-103
Ashfield-Croydon	177	207	30
Manly	66	458	392
Burwood	560	560	0
Cronulla	153	186	33
Earlwood	228	260	32
TOTAL	8,861	8,727	-134

lack of continuity and supervision in collecting subscrip-
tions."[1] The "debacle" in Gordon is balanced off by substan-
tial increases totaling 1,225 in Mosman, Manly, and Neutral Bay

[1]Interim Report, BDC Subcommittee, June 27, 1961, p. 8.

electorates. Without discounting whatever efforts may have been made by volunteers in Mosman and Neutral Bay, it should be noted that a retired insurance salesman had been active in this area signing up new party members for a commission.[1] The BDC subcommittee suggests that he may have been responsible for almost 1,000 new members.[2] In the case of Manly, we noted earlier that there was "no enthusiasm" for branch development plans.[3] The increase in Manly, however, cannot be attributed to a change of heart; rather, the increase resulted from intensive canvassing by members of the field staff who were assigned temporarily to Manly by the central office.[4] The electorates of Eastwood and Vaucluse show moderate membership gains; Woollhara slipped 617 members; and the remaining eight electorates had little change in net membership.

Turning now to a survey of the "swing" electorates, we again note a wide variation in branch development efforts. Table 12 indicates that Hurstville, Coogee, and Bondi show the greatest net gains in new members among the "swing" seats. The increase in Hurstville can be attributed to the energetic drive conducted by the Bexley branch, which increased its membership from 49 to 161 members.[5] A canvassing team from Bexley branch

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[1]Ibid. See also SMH, May 12, 1962, p. 2. The insurance agent was permitted to keep half of the first annual fee collected from each new member.

[2]Interim Report, p. 8.

[3]See p. 158, supra.

[4]Minutes of BDC, August 23, 1960, p. 2. A second field staff canvass in Manly was made in May, 1961. Seventy-six members were enrolled to form a new branch, but the first meeting of the branch did not attract a quorum (8).

[5]R. W. Rathbone, "How Could It Be Done!", AL, July, 1960, p. 10.

TABLE 12

BRANCH MEMBERSHIP IN "SWING" ELECTORATES BEFORE
AND AFTER BRANCH DEVELOPMENT DRIVE

Electorates	Before	After	Net Gain/Loss
Coogee	160	312	152
George's River	107	127	20
Drummoyne	145	176	31
Blacktown	155	189	45
Rockdale	67	58	-9
Hurstville	80	227	147
Sutherland	78	144	66
Bondi	147	236	89
Concord	229	148	-81
Ryde	112	41	-71
TOTAL	1,280	1,600	320

also established a new branch of 22 members--Carlton West-
Kogarah.

The increases in Coogee and Bondi, however, were not the
result of local efforts. Seven members of the field staff were
assigned to Coogee and Bondi for three weeks in order to build
up membership strength.[1] In the remaining "swing" electorates,
there were no dramatic increases and some indications of
serious slippage.

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[1]Minutes of BDC, February 1, 1961; State Executive Report
to the Annual General Meeting of State Council, November 6,
1961, p. 2.

In the 23 safe Labor electorates, as we have already noted, there was no serious push for new members. Membership totals for the 23 electorates indicate a net increase of 86 members: 12 electorates had membership gains, 5 electorates lost membership, and 6 remained unchanged.

In attempting to assess the branch development effort as a whole, one is least comfortable on the shifting sands of branch membership figures. How did it happen that almost 4,000 new members were claimed when, in fact, only 200-300 were added to the total membership? The obvious answer is that thousands of members were probably counted twice. There is little question that the branch development drive of 1960 produced a more or less organized flurry of activity in many electorates with the result that thousands of membership fees were collected. The fact that the drive coincided with the normal period of membership renewal no doubt added to the general confusion. The field staff was under heavy pressure from the BDC to report membership increases, and it is probable most membership renewals were counted as "new members".

These observations are not intended to demean the branch development drive. Party membership was, according to the General Secretary, in gradual decline since 1949--a decline which was dangerously accelerated by the controversy over the membership fee increase in 1959. The drive did succeed in consolidating the higher fee, and probably brought back as dues-paying members many who had resisted or avoided paying the new fee. In so doing, the drive may have averted a serious

<u>loss</u> in party membership, and at the same time it realized one of the drive's main financial objectives.

It is impossible to say how many people brought into the party were really new members, who had no previous connection with the organization. Since there was certainly some attrition in the membership existing before the drive, we may conclude that there were more new members than indicated by the net increase of 272. A clue to genuine new membership may be the number of newly established branches formed during the drive: as of June, 1961, some 20 new branches had been established, and 15-20 others were being pushed by the BDC. The 20 new branches alone claimed 800-900 members. Some of these may have been transferred members from existing branches, but the great majority were probably new members. Taking into account additional new members which were undoubtedly added to existing branches, a rough but reasonable estimate of actual new membership would be 1,000-1,500 new members. There is no way of knowing, of course, how many new members went beyond the simple payment of the membership fee and made their way into the stream of party activities.

Although the branch development program can not be written off as a failure, it was a profound disappointment to its organizers when viewed against the grand objectives of the program. The BDC's careful planning and elaborate machinery failed to work when tested by implementation. With few exceptions, electorate organizations were not activated to seek the goals set by the BDC.

The branch development program thus brought to the surface fundamental tensions between the central organization and electorate organizations. As an arm of the central organization, the Branch Development Committee was concerned primarily with mobilizing the maximum organizational resources in the quest for a Liberal victory. Electorate organizations, on the other hand, were primarily concerned with maintaining' control of the office-holding and office-seeking conditions within each electorate.

The failure of electorate organizations to perform in the interests of the party as a whole was censured by the BDC subcommittee assigned to survey the branch structure. The subcommittee's "Interim Report" contains a dreary catalogue of branch shortcomings such as the following:

> Leading citizens are not as a generality attracted to the party...Uninteresting or non-existing branch programmes of a diverse nature...Unsuitable meeting centres...Lack of a stimulating crusading spirit throughout the party... Disinterest and lack of assistance by Parliamentary Members in organisational affairs...Lastly there appears, except for the "red-line" enthusiast, complete absence of the "will to win". This negation of zest and fighting spirit is having a paralysing effect on our organisation.[1]

Later in the report, the subcommittee gives its version of the conflict between central and electorate organizations:

> The Sub-Committee is unanimous in taking the view that in the main the control of Branches and Conferences has passed from the organisational structure of the Party as set out in the Constitution and administered by the State Executive, to individuals or groups of individuals whether they be parliamentary members or private members who incorrectly believe they have some vested interest in the local organisation.[2]

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[1] Interim Report, p. 2. [2] Ibid., p. 5.

In this statement, the subcommittee acknowledges unhappily that electorate organizations are not run by the central organization, but rather by members of parliament and branch officers with "some vested interest."

The success of a branch development program posed a real threat to entrenched branch and electorate officers. If membership targets had been realized, the members of many existing branches would be far outnumbered by new members. Such an influx would be at least a potential threat to incumbent branch officers. Moreover, the formation of new branches would mean in influx of new delegates to the electorate conference, which often plays a decisive role in the selection of candidates.[1] Most branch officers were therefore unable to generate much enthusiasm for a program which could undermine the control of their bailiwicks.

Liberal members of parliament also contributed to the disappointing result of branch development by failing to lend their active support to the effort. The General Secretary anticipated this problem even before the membership drive when he stated:

> The pre-selection method in metropolitan areas creates a vested interest by the sitting member in inertia. There is a strong tendency in Liberal areas to discourage new members or new branches, presumably because they may create new challenges in pre-selection.[2]

Efforts were made, however, by the BDC to secure the involvement of parliamentary members in the membership drive. Shortly

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[1]This point will be further developed in Chapter V.

[2]"Branch Development," p. 1.

before the drive was launched, the BDC chairman and the General Secretary met on succeeding days with the state and federal parliamentary groups.[1] Both groups expressed support of the aims of the drive. In addition, as we noted earlier, the federal Attorney General, Sir Garfield Barwick, agreed to deliver the main address at the rally opening the drive.[2] The rally was also addressed by state parliamentary Leader, Mr. Askin, and the New South Wales federal parliamentary Leader, Senator Spooner.[3]

In spite of public commitments by parliamentary members to support branch development, the BDC came to regard their expressions as "lip service." It was clearly not in the interests of incumbent office-holders to promote actively a program which could complicate the nomination process. The problem of re-nomination is most manageable in electorates which contain relatively inactive branches with stable leadership cliques supporting the incumbent. The branch development program offered the unwelcome prospect of shaking up the existing electorate organization by an influx of new people. This would confront the incumbent with a group of new faces from his own electorate at the nomination meeting, in addition to the unknown group of 20 selectors representing State Council. If faced with nomination challenges, the incumbent would be forced to appear before a nominating

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[1] Minutes of BDC, February 8, February 17, February 26, 1960. The meetings with the parliamentary parties were held on February 26 and 27, 1960.

[2] Sir Garfield himself was not a party member until shortly before his nomination as the Liberal candidate in the Parramatta by-election of 1958.

[3] AL, May, 1960, pp. 1, 7, and 4-page Special Supplement.

committee with undetermined loyalties, and compete under considerable pressure with his challengers. Generally speaking, the incumbent would rather not submit himself to this kind of scrutiny if he can avoid it.

The promoters of branch development were aware of the reasons for lack of support by members of parliament, but found these reasons unacceptable. The BDC believed that the party's office-holders have the responsibility to use the power and prestige of their position to help build a winning party organization. The member of parliament should work for a large, growing, and active branch structure in his electorate; the risks associated with an active organization are minimal if the sitting member serves the electorate well, according to the BDC. Thus, the conflict between the central organization and office-holders was sharpened by the fact that office-holders readily promised support for branch development and even made inspiring speeches at rallies and conventions, but failed to take concrete steps in their own electorates to invigorate the branch organization.

A personal memorandum written in February, 1961, from the General Secretary to the BDC chairman communicates some of the hostility toward members of parliament, and also illustrates the kind of pressure put upon members to assist the membership program. The memorandum was as follows:

(1) Cooperation with the Parliamentary Party

I suggest you write a carefully written letter to me from the Branch Development Committee, and suggest that I bring the matter to the Central Committee of the State

Executive at its next meeting. In writing the letter,
you might keep in mind its future use by the State
Leader in being read out to the Parliamentary Party.
I think that this is essential because I do not think
that any casual report of a Committee discussion would
be good enough and I am not disposed to suggest that
we should make a further attempt to address the
Parliamentary Party.

I think that we want to express ourselves calmly but
with force on paper. Furthermore, I think that the
correct plan is for the memorandum to come to the
attention of the State Leader through the Central
Committee, so that it goes with the knowledge and
blessing of the Executive.

(2) Development of Branches

I think that it is also important that we should busy
ourselves with restoring stagnating branches in City
Members' electorates. I have in mind Hornsby as a
start and I think we should work out a thorough
programme so that everyone knows we mean what we say.
It is no use seeking help from the Parliamentary Party
if they believe we are talking platitudes.[1]

The second part of the memorandum clearly sounded the warning

that the central organization intended to proceed with building

branch strength in Liberal electorates with or without the

approval and support of the sitting member.[2]

Summary

After fighting the successful federal campaign of 1958,

and the losing state campaign of 1959, the Liberal Party made

a searching assessment of its organizational resources.

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[1]Memorandum from J. L. Carrick to J. C. Maddison,
February 21, 1961. This memo gives a rare and illuminating
example of how various agencies of the central organization
can be manipulated to apply maximum pressure on office-holders.

[2]The nomination for the electorate of Hornsby--mentioned
in the memorandum--was contested by the BDC chairman, Mr.
Maddison, who won both the nomination and the election.

Spearheading the assessment of the organization were the
General Secretary and the State Supervisor of field staff.
Evaluation of branch membership strength, branch activism and
effectiveness, and party finance led to the conclusion that
a major effort to build the party's resources was imperative
if the party was to maintain control of the national govern-
ment, and gain control of state government. The Branch
Development Committee was appointed to implement such an effort.

The BDC completed an analysis of organizational strength
on the basis of available information, and established ambitious
targets for building a larger and stronger organization. Then
the BDC devised elaborate plans for reaching these goals, and
communicated their plans to electorate organizations. In
implementing the branch development program, the BDC encoun-
tered complete cooperation in very few electorates, partial
cooperation in most electorates, and a total lack of response
in others. The impact of the program was difficult to evaluate
because of unreliable data on membership strength, but the
over-all result was disappointing. In general, electorate
organizations were unwilling to accept direction from the BDC,
and unwilling to undertake a vigorous membership drive. Members
of parliament offered vocal support for the effort, but failed
to within their own electorates to achieve the targets which
were set.

Thus, the branch development program, which was conceived
by the central organization to mobilize party resources for
victory, collided with resisting office-holders who did not want
to disturb the conditions of office-seeking in the electorate
organizations.

CHAPTER V

THE CONTEST FOR NOMINATIONS IN THE

NEW SOUTH WALES LIBERAL PARTY

Introduction

Control of individual offices and control of government

are at stake in each election. In the months before an elec-

tion, the party decides which candidates will carry the party's

designation into the electoral contest. These decisions

constitute the nomination process by which office-seekers

compete with each other for the opportunity to contest an

electorate with the support of the party's name and resources.

The strategy of office-seeking tends to be controlled by two

main considerations: (1) What are the chances of being

nominated in a particular electorate; and (2) If nominated,

what are the chances of winning the office? Thus, office

ambitions are discouraged in hard-core Labor electorates where

the party nomination can be readily secured, but there is no

hope for being elected. On the other hand, office ambitions

are also discouraged in a safe Liberal seat held by a Cabinet

minister, since the prospect of being nominated is remote.

The central organization is concerned with the nomination process insofar as the selection of candidates relates to the party's prospects for winning control of government. If the party is already in power, the central organization has realized its objective and seeks to maintain the status quo. It does not attempt to make organizational changes or encourage attitudes which stimulate challenges to incumbent members of parliament. Rather, the central organization tries to bolster the prestige of the Liberal government, and encourages loyalty to its members.

Thus, the Liberal Party State President (then Mr. Honner), at a time when the Menzies government was receiving severe criticism of its economic policies from newspapers and business interests, warned a meeting of party officers as follows:

> 'It is not a time to aid the enemy by swallowing and regurgitating the enemy propaganda of ill-informed or malicious criticism,' he said.
>
> Unless we preferred socialism, unless we preferred Calwell [Leader of the opposition] to Menzies, then we had a duty to build up, not to destroy, the prestige of our parliamentary members, who were the best men the Party could find among those willing to serve in Government.[1]

This statement by a central organization leader includes no attempt to refute "ill-informed or malicious criticism", but rather calls for loyalty in the face of the spectre of defeat.

When the party is not in control of government, the central organization attempts to correct whatever conditions are perceived as the reasons for defeat. If the party has

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[1] <u>AL</u>, April, 1961, p. 1.

appeared to lack sufficient money or other resources to conduct a winning campaign, the central organization attempts to mobilize additional resources through such techniques as the branch development program.

In addition, the central organization is likely to turn a critical eye on the office-holders of the party, who must demonstrate from a posture of opposition that they constitute an acceptable and desirable alternative to the governing party. Repeated electoral failure tends to reflect unfavorably on the parliamentary delegation, from which executive leadership would usually be drawn in the event of victory.[1]

As we have already indicated, the Liberal Party has been experiencing the frustration of prolonged opposition at the state level. The result is that the central organization has been receptive to, and at times actively fostered, the ambition of office-seekers who offer the prospect of improving party performance in state elections. Thus, the State President, after calling on party officers "to search out the ablest citizens we can persuade to place their talents at the service of the people of this State,"[2] abruptly shifted his ground later in the same address:

> The man who could be of most value in Parliament loses such value if he cannot win the seat. The man who can win the seat is, in the circumstances, the man to choose.[3]

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[1]In a governmental system with a separately elected executive, the party may readily reach outside of the legislative delegation for a presidential or gubernatorial candidate. Such a candidate may choose to disassociate himself from his party's legislative record.

[2]AL, April, 1961, p. 2.

[3]Ibid.

The State President then went on to point out that the

central organization value of winning government should

prevail over all other considerations:

> Sometimes the selection of the horse for the course
> may go against the grain. It may mean the rejection
> of a better man. It may mean the acceptance of a
> candidate who might seem, in some sense, unacceptable
> except that he 'has what it takes' to win the seat.
> It may mean the overriding of strong personal prefer-
> ences, of close, life-long associations, of deep and
> abiding loyalties; but if that sacrifice is necessary
> to turn the socialists out of office, and if turning
> the socialists out of office is what we want, then it
> is a sacrifice we must be prepared to make...
>
> Let us not, as Liberals, have on our consciences some
> action that would keep the Labor Government in office.[1]

The statements of Mr. Honner which we have quoted illus-

trate some of the tensions and conflicts which complicate the

nomination process in the Liberal Party. In this chapter,

we shall examine the nomination process in terms of the inter-

action of office ambitions in electorate organizations, and

government ambitions in the central organization. Since the

chracter of this interaction is determined mainly by the

party's position with respect to control of government; and

since the party controls government at the federal level, but

not at the state level, we shall discuss separately the nomi-

nation process for both a federal and a state election: the

federal election of December 9, 1961; and the state election

of March 3, 1962.

First, however, we shall outline the formal procedures

governing the selection of candidates.

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[1]Ibid., p. 2, 11.

The nomination process: formal procedure

The nomination or candidate selection process in the
Liberal Party is governed by rules of procedure laid down in
the party constitution.[1] The process of candidate selection'
usually begins from 6 to 9 months before a state or federal
election is anticipated. Upon the decision of the State
Executive to open nominations, the General Secretary is di-
rected to place a public advertisement in metropolitan news-
papers inviting candidates to come forward and compete for
nominations.

Any member of the Liberal Party is eligible to compete
for the party's endorsement in any state or federal electorate
in New South Wales. If a candidate is not a party member at
the time nominations are called for, he may simply apply for
membership to a local branch, pay his membership fee, and
proceed to compete for the nomination.[2]

The General Secretary supplies each candidate with a
lengthy form to complete. The candidate is required to provide
the following background information about himself: age,
marital status, educational background, current and previous
occupation, professional and business experience, war service
and patriotic activities, Liberal Party activities, previous

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[1]Constitution, Clauses 199-227.

[2]See the State President's (then Mr. Honner) letter to
the SMH, October 10, 1961, p. 2: "Our doors are wide open to
anyone of Liberal faith. A person may join at the moment of
nomination for selection." In contrast, the New South Wales
Labor Party requires at least 3 years of party membership for
candidates. See R. S. Parker, op. cit., p. 100.

political experience, and special associations in the electorate. The candidate may also submit, if he wishes, not more than 3 letters of reference supporting his candidacy. In addition, the candidate must pay a nomination fee of ₤5 (11.75) which is not refundable. All background material on candidates is compiled and duplicated at party headquarters, and distributed to members of selection committees at least one week prior to the selection meeting.

The Liberal Party of New South Wales, like the Liberal organization in all states except South Australia,[1] employs an __ad hoc__ selection committee for each electorate. The composition of the selection committee differs according to the location of the electorate. In electorates outside of the Sydney metropolitan area, a Liberal candidate is nominated by a selection committee composed entirely of delegates from party branches within the electorate. Each branch in a "country" electorate designates from 3 to 6 delegates (depending on the size of the branch) for federal nominations, and 5 to 12 delegates for state nominations. The chairman of "country" selection meetings is a member of the State Executive designated by the State Executive.

For electorates in the Sydney metropolitan area, the selection committee for each electorate is composed of 30 members of the electorate conference, and 20 members of State

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[1]In South Australia, Liberal candidates are chosen by a postal ballot of all branch members in an electorate. In Victoria and Tasmania, selection committees are composed exclusively of branch delegates without participation of the State Council. Queensland and Western Australia, like New South Wales, use a combination of electorate and central participation.

Council designated by the State Executive. In selecting State

Council panels of 20, the State Executive uses the following

guidelines:

(1) A complete participation of all <u>available</u> metro-
politan councillors over a series [of selections] .

(2) A representation of as many different electorates
as possible in any one panel of 20.

(3) Within the scope of the above principles, as random
as possible an election system.[1]

It is also customary that 5 members of the State Council panel

be members of the State Executive. When the State Executive

has compiled a list of 20 State Council members and 10 alternate

members, the list is turned over to the senior clerk on the

party staff who telephones the designees until 20 agree to be

present at the selection meeting concerned. The senior clerk

then gives the list to the General Secretary who keeps it

locked up until the time of the selection meeting. Thus, only

the senior clerk and the General Secretary know the exact

composition of the State Council panel. Theoretically, no one

member of the panel knows who are the other 19 members. This

procedure is of course intended to prevent prior consultation

among the panel regarding the candidates offering themselves

for nomination.[2]

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[1]Quoted from the "Report of the State Executive to the An-
nual General Meeting of State Council," November 6, 1961, p. 9.

[2]See the State President's (Mr. Honner) rejoinder in <u>SMH</u>,
October 10, 1961, p. 2, to R. A. Benson's letter in <u>SMH</u>, October
9, 1961, p. 2. Benson alleged that certain party "officials"
might be "able to count on 20 votes out of 50 at every preselec-
tion meeting." Mr. Honner retorted that since the State Council
panel "is a random cross-section of some 200 eligible State
councillors, and since practically all councillors participate
over a whole series of selections, there is no bloc vote." See
also Malcolm Mackerras's analysis of the composition of State
Council panels in "Pre-selections in the New South Wales Liberal
Party," unpublished B.A. honors thesis submitted to the Depart-
ment of Government, University of Sydney, 1960.

Selection meetings for electorates in the Sydney area are nearly always held in the dingy basement meeting room of party headquarters in downtown Sydney.[1] The chairman, who is a member of the State Executive designated by the State Executive, introduces himself and asks for a formal motion declaring him chairman of the meeting. Then the chairman asks the General Secretary (or other senior party official present) to call the roll of delegates. The formalities continue as the chairman asks whether any delegate is related to a candidate, is less than 21 years old, or has been a party member for less than 6 months. An affirmative response of course disqualifies a delegate from participation.

When the preliminary formalities are completed, the candidates are called into the meeting room and introduced to the selection committee. The chairman explains to the group of candidates that each shall be allowed to address the selectors for 8 minutes on any subject of his choice, after which he must respond to questions from the selectors for 7 minutes.[2] After the groundrules have been explained, the candidates are ushered out of the room. They then appear—one by one—before the committee in alphabetical order. Under no circumstances are the candidates allowed to observe each other's performance before the selectors.

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[1]The press is never admitted to selection meetings. In 1961, for the first time, political scientists were permitted to attend as observers.

[2]Time limits are rigorously enforced by the use of a stop-watch and bell.

There are many possible approaches a candidate can use
to convince the selection committee that he is the most suitable
candidate for the electorate. Some candidates emphasize
personal qualifications--education, military service, profess-
ional experience, connections in the electorate, party acti-
vities, and so forth. Other candidates focus their attention
on a particular issue or issues such as the public transporta-
tion problem or the tax structure; these candidates usually
promise--if nominated and elected--to devote their energies
to the problems outlined. A few candidates present airy
discourses on "Liberalism" or the "challenge of the future"
or a similar topic; the candidate who takes this oblique
approach makes no direct reference to his own candidacy.
Most candidates, of course, try to use a combination of
approaches in their 8-minute presentations.

When a candidate has finished speaking, the chairman
calls for questions from the selection committee. There is
no set procedure for question-time: if anyone wants to ask a
question, he raises his hand and proceeds when recognized by
the chairman. Most candidates dread this question period,
for one bobbled question can negate the effect of a carefully
prepared speech. Some questions are routine requests for
information. For example: Will you devote your full time
to parliamentary duties? Would you maintain an office in
the electorate and be available at specified times to deal
with constituents' problems and requests? Other questions
recur so often in pre-selections that the candidate can
anticipate them and be primed with an answer. For example:

What can you do for the people of your electorate? How can we defeat the Labor Party in the next elections? Such questions do not usually give the candidate any difficulty.

There are other questions which the candidate fears. Naturally, a candidate fears a question on a topic which he knows little or nothing about. A complicated question on taxation, federal-state relations, or foreign policy may take a candidate off guard if he is not equipped to answer it, or clever enough to disguise his ignorance. It is hazardous for a candidate to appear uninformed or inarticulate. Another type of question-time pitfall for a candidate is the facetious question. For example: "In view of the current controversy concerning expulsions from our beaches because of immodest bathing attire, what do you think the Liberal policy should be regarding the proper dimensions of bathing suits?[1]" Such a question is designed to embarrass the candidate, and usually succeeds.

Perhaps the question dreaded most of all by candidates is the controversial question--in other words, the question dealing with a problem on which there is a sharp difference of opinion within the party. Such controversial problem-areas include the "White Australia" immigration policy, the problem of state aid to private and parochial schools, and the problem of gambling laws. If the candidate expressed a strong opinion

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[1] This question was actually put to Mr. E. D. Darby in a pre-selection for the Manly State Electorate held on October 6, 1961. Mr. Darby, the sitting member for Manly, lost his attempt for re-endorsement. In the election of March 3, 1962, however, he ran as an independent and defeated the endorsed Liberal candidate, Mr. H. O. Boyle.

when such topics were debated on the various levels of the party organization, that opinion may be dredged up by a questioner, especially if the candidate's opinion was contrary to the position eventually adopted by the party as "policy." But even if the interrogator does not know the position of the candidate on a controversial issue, he _does_ know that the candidate's response could alienate a number of members of the selection committee. Thus, the controversial question can and often does become a weapon used by a selector against a candidate whom he opposes. The selector who _favors_ a particular candidate is unlikely to put his favorite on the spot with a thorny question. More likely, he would ask a "Dorothy Dix-er",[1] which if not actually pre-arranged, would at least be designed to bring out the strong points of "his" candidate.

While there is little doubt that question-time is used for strategic purposes by blocs of supporters for particular candidates, it is also clear that some selectors who are completely uncommitted look upon question-time as a fairly reliable indicator of a candidate's poise under pressure, ability to express himself effectively, and his general competence in discussing political problems. In order to provide a fair basis of comparison for evaluating the candidates, these selectors often ask each candidate an identical question. Such a question usually demands that each candidate address himself to some broad problem area, and present his ideas for improving,

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[1] "Dorothy Dix-er" is a slang term applied to a question which is pre-arranged by the questioner and the respondent. Such questions are common features of parliamentary question-time.

for example, the tax structure or the public transportation system. The candidate who rates highest in such a test certainly improves his stock with uncommitted selectors.

When the last candidate has completed his appearance before the selection committee, the chairman calls on the General Secretary (or, in his absence, another paid party official) to explain the voting procedure. The system used--called the "exhaustive system"--provides that each selector vote for the <u>one</u> man whom he thinks will make the best Liberal candidate.[1] The vote is cast by secret ballot. The candidate who receives a majority of votes cast becomes the party's nominee. If there are more than 2 candidates competing for the nomination, and if no candidate receives a majority, then the candidate with the <u>least</u> number of votes is eliminated. However, more than one candidate may be eliminated if the combined vote of the least popular candidates is less than the vote polled by the next most popular candidate. To illustrate, let us examine the first ballot of a hypothetical pre-selection:

Candidate A.....	3 votes
" B.....	14 "
" C.....	10 "
" D.....	5 "
" E.....	18 "
TOTAL	50 "

---

[1] Until 1958 the Liberal Party used in its pre-selections the preferential system of balloting which is typical of regular Australian elections. Under this system, the selector votes for all contestants, ranking them in the order of his preference. If no candidate receives a majority of first preferences, the candidate with the least votes is eliminated and his second preferences are distributed among the remaining candidates. The process is repeated until a candidate receives a majority. The preferential system was abandoned because it was felt that selectors should only be permitted to vote <u>for</u> a candidate and not against another candidate by putting him at the bottom of

In this hypothetical case involving 5 contestants for the
nomination, candidates "A" and "D" would be eliminated since
their combined total of 8 votes is less than the 10 votes
polled by candidate "C". The selectors then proceed to ballot
again, their choice being limited to "B", "C", or "E". If
none of the remaining candidates polls a majority, the candidate
with the least votes is eliminated, and the stage is set for
a showdown between the 2 candidates who survive the second
ballot.

When the General Secretary has finished his outline of
voting procedure, the chairman calls for nominations for
scrutineers of the vote counting. As it happens, the first
4 or 5 names called out by selectors are "elected" to admin-
ister the balloting operation under the supervision of the
General Secretary or other party official present. Scrutineers
distribute blank ballots to the other members of the selection
committee, and collect the completed ballots after each vote.
The scrutineers deposit the ballots in the slot of a locked
wooden box prominently placed on the chairman's table. Then
the General Secretary carries the box into an adjoining room,
and he and the scrutineers proceed with the vote counting. If
the nomination is not decided on the first ballot, the General
Secretary announces the names of the candidates which have been
eliminated. He does not divulge, however, the number of votes
that the candidates received; only he and the scrutineers
know the course which the ballot is taking, and the scrutineers
are not permitted to discuss the vote with their fellow selec-
tors until the winner has been determined.

When one of the candidates receives a majority of votes cast, all the candidates are summoned to the meeting room and the General Secretary announces the winner. The chairman, the president of the electorate conference, and usually one of the unsuccessful candidates address congratulatory remarks to the winner, and assure him of wholehearted support. Finally, the victorious candidate himself thanks the committee for its endorsement, and pledges an energetic campaign. When a sitting member has been defeated in a selection contest, these post-selection pleasantries can take a cruel twist. Some selector is bound to "move a vote of thanks" to the defeated sitting member for his service to the party and his electorate, where-upon the selection committee lustily applauds the man it has just repudiated. The defeated member manages a tortured response to this gesture, while in his mind he weighs the possibility of running as an independent. The chairman makes a few closing remarks and declares the meeting closed.

The nomination process: federal election of December 9, 1961.

We have assumed in this study that the objective of a party organization is to control government by electing party candidates to public office. Candidates who win elections and participate in control of government tend to dominate the party organization. The perpetuation in power of the party's office-holders tends to be the single-minded aim of party supporters: to challenge or repudiate party office-holders would constitute rejection of the very people who signify and embody realization of the party objective.

The Liberal-Country government of Prime Minister Menzies was enjoying its twelfth year of uninterrupted power as the New South Wales Liberal Party looked forward to the federal election of 1961. In this section, we shall discuss the contests for House of Representative nominations for the election of December 9, 1961. First, we shall examine the nomination process in those electorates controlled by the Liberal Party; and second, contests in electorates not held by the party.

If our assumptions are valid, we would expect that the 15 incumbent Liberal members of the House of Representatives would be re-nominated without challenge. In the event, one office-holder, W. C. Wentworth, had token opposition to his re-nomination; and another office-holder, F. A. Bland, was defeated in a nomination by a rival office-seeker, John S. Cockle. (The Bland case is discussed below.) All other office-holders were re-endorsed by the party without challenge.

In Chapter III, it was suggested that in spite of central organization support of office-holders when the party is in power, an office-holder's neglect of his electorate organization combined with the resourcefulness of an ambitious challenger could result in the defeat of an office-holder for re-nomination. The case of Professor Bland is an interesting example of such an improbable occurence.

Professor F. A. Bland was elected in 1951 to represent the federal electorate of Warringah, a safe Liberal seat. Bland entered federal Parliament at the age of 68 after retiring from his position as Professor of Public Administration at Sydney University. In spite of his age, Bland proved to be an able,

vigorous member of Parliament. He became chairman of the Public
Accounts Committee, and gained national recognition as a voci-
ferous foe of bureaucratic waste and inefficiency. Indeed,
"the Liberal branches of Warringah were very proud of his
achievements."[1] Bland was re-endorsed without opposition, and
re-elected in 1955 and 1958.

In 1960, Bland resigned as chairman of the Public Accounts
Committee. He began to complain of failing health, and indi-
cated with some equivocation that perhaps he should not offer
himself as a candidate for the election of December, 1961.
While Bland hedged, Mr. J. S. Cockle, secretary of the
Warringah electorate conference since 1953, quietly began
gathering support from key branch members in the electorate.
Politically ambitious, Cockle had long been active in local
politics, had served on the Sydney City Council, had competed
for selection as a candidate in another federal electorate in
1956, and was a member of the Liberal Party State Executive.[2]
Since Bland did not reside in the Warringah electorate (a sore
point with some local Liberals) and did not maintain close
contact with party branches, he was unaware of Cockle's activi-
ties. Then in late 1960, Bland—who had outlived 3 previous
wives—married his secretary, who was less than half his age

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[1]Quoted from a letter to the SMH, November 21, 1961.
The correspondent was Edith Pulsford, a Liberal branch member
in Warringah electorate.

See AL, February, 1961, pp. 4, 9, for the feature article
"Jack Cockle Is Hard Fighter." Cockle, 52, was secretary of the
Australasian Steamship Owners' Federation.

and a Roman Catholic. There were mutterings that the old professor had gone too far. A short time after his marriage, Bland announced that he would again seek re-election after all--at the urging of the Prime Minister himself.

But Cockle continued his unobtrusive compaign among the branch officers in the electorate. His aim was to control the electorate conference, the body of branch delegates--mainly office beareres--which elects from its own number the 30 people who form the selection committee along with 20 delegates from State Council. When the Warringah conference met to choose its 30 selectors, only 36 out of a possible 95 delegates from the electorate's 11 branches appeared at the meeting.[1] Clearly, the meeting was dominated by Cockle's supporters and chose a selection panel favorable to him. The selection was eventually held on May 30, 1961, and Cockle won a narrow victory.

On the night of his defeat, Bland was quoted as saying:

> Everybody, from the P.M. [Prime Minister] down, was perfectly satisfied there would not be the slightest chance of my being defeated.
>
> Members of the [Liberal Party state] executive to whom I spoke afterwards were appalled at what happened.[2]

Bland was correct, although the newspapers did not put much stock in the second part of his statement.[3] The press claimed

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[1] This information was supplied to the writer by Mr. R. Tarrant, Liberal Party field officer in the Warringah electorate.

[2] SMH, June 1, 1961.

[3] See for example, SMH Editorial, "The Defeat of Prof. Bland," June 2, 1961, and The Bulletin, June 3, 1961.

that "the party machine" which allegedly controlled the 20 State Council delegates had given Bland the axe: after all, Cockle was a member of the State Executive, it was pointed out.

The weight of the evidence, however, clearly points to the electorate organization as the main contribution to Bland's defeat. Following the nomination contest, the General Secretary, J. L. Carrick, indicated to me in an interview that the result had taken him completely by surprise. He was certain that the bulk of the State Council delegates participating in the selection had in fact voted for Bland. The General Secretary's views were shared by J. C. Maddison, the member of the State Executive who chaired the selection meeting.

The General Secretary was particularly disturbed by the fact that no one had informed him that Cockle had taken control of the electorate organization delegates. If he had been aware of Cockle's activities Carrick said he would have tried to persuade Bland to step down rather than risk ending his career with a humiliating rebuff. In addition, Carrick said that Cockle's actions had prevented what should have been a wide-open nomination contest among many candidates.[1] As it happened, the contest provided ammunition for the press to fire at the "Ash Street machine." Ironically, the State Executive, which was allegedly behind Cockle's nomination, reprimanded him at first meeting following the contest.

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[1] E. C. B. MacLaurin, a member of the State Executive, expressed a similar view in a letter to AL, July, 1961, p. 8.

The fact that Bland had been rejected by delegates from his own electorate was confirmed by an exchange of letters in the Sydney Morning Herald several months after the selection. In response to a Herald news story which mentioned that Bland "was not seeking re-election", Bland retorted somewhat petulantly:

> This statement is being sedulously circulated in the electorate but it is not true.
>
> I am not seeking re-election because I was not chosen by the now notorious preselection committee for Warringah.[1]

Bland's letter drew an angry response from a Warringah member of the selection committee, who "bitterly resented" Bland's reference to the "notorious" committee. Noting that Bland had resigned the previous year from the Public Accounts Committee, the correspondent continued:

> It came as a surprise, therefore, to a number of active Warringah Liberals when he offered himself again for preselection, particularly as he had indicated on several occasions that for health reasons he would not stand again.
>
> As he had surrendered such an important role, I, and I feel sure a majority of the selection committee, felt that as he is now 79 years of age, with practically inaudible voice, he would no longer be capable of representing the Warringah electorate.
>
> To me it is incredible that he should publicly sneer at people who have given him unwavering support for the past nine years...[2]

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[1] Letter to the SMH, November 18, 1961.

[2] Letter to the SMH, November 21, 1961 (emphasis supplied).

This letter leaves little doubt that Bland was not "dumped" by some amorphous "party machine", but was defeated by his previous supporters (including Cockle) in Warringah electorate who refused to endorse him for another term.[1]

Apart from the Bland case, all other Liberal incumbents were renominated without real challenge. We now shift our attention to electorates not held by Liberals, but which appeared to have potential as Liberal seats. Two electorates in particular fell into this category: St. George, which was captured by the Labor Party in 1958 by 59 votes; and Barton, which was retained by Labor in 1958 by 264 votes.[2] These are adjacent electorates with similar characteristics located in the southeastern suburbs of the Sydney metropolitan area.

Each of the two nomination contests attracted 6 candidates, 4 of whom entered both contests. Neither of the 2 defeated candidates in 1958 decided to become involved in the 1961 selections.[3] Each contest included both residents and non-residents of the electorate involved.

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[1] Mr. Cockle was subsequently elected by a wide margin over two independent's--not members of the Liberal party.

[2] The indicated margin of victory for Labor in Barton and St. George is after the distribution of D.L.P. second preferences.

[3] Mr. Bruce Graham, who was defeated in St. George in 1958, did contest for the nominat___ in 3 state elec-torates, 1 federal ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ was unsuccessful in all 5 attempts.

The St. George selection meeting was held on May 24,
1961, and the Barton meeting was held on the following evening.
The 6 candidates for the St. George nomination were as follows: :

JOHN AMOS. Amos, 50, was a theatre manager active
in the Bexley branch of the party in St. George.
Amos claimed to be well known and respected in the
electorate. He expressed confidence in the strength
of the local party organization. He also pointed
out that his surname began with the letter "A"
which would give him the advantage of having his
name at the top of the ballot.[1]

WINIFRED CHRISTISON. Miss Christison, 36, was a
private secretary for a Liberal member of federal
parliament (Mr. Aston). Miss Christison was also
a member of the Bexley branch. She also claimed
many local associations, plus specialized knowledge
of a parliamentary member's duties. She promised
a hard-working campaign including a door-to-door
canvass, if nominated.

THOMAS DALTON. Dalton, 44, was a realtor who lived
just inside the Barton electorate, although his
office was in St. George. A member of the party
since 1944, Dalton was affiliated with the
Mortdale-Oatley Branch (Barton) and had worked
in all federal and state campaigns. Dalton claimed
broad support in the community because of his active
involvement in numerous voluntary associations such
as boys' clubs, sporting clubs, charities, etc.

RICHARD HAWKINS. Hawkins, 39, was a retailer of
electrical and electronic materials. He was
president of the Hurstville branch, a member of
the Hurstville state electorate conference, and
a member of the St. George federal electorate
conference. In addition to his party activities,
Hawkins claimed to be actively involved in 27
different community organizations and projects.

JACK MANNING. Like Hawkins, Manning, 54, was
affiliated with the Hurstville branch. Manning
was the manager of a sheet metal facotry. He
was active in the Lions Club and other businessmen's
clubs, but had not been active in the party apart
from branch activities.

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[1] See Henry Mayer (ed.), "The 'Donkey Vote' for the House
of Representatives," Australian Political Studies Association
monograph No. 6 (mimeographed), Sydney, 1963. The monograph
suggests that 2-4 percent of the voters vote their preference
straight down the ballot in alphabetical order.

KEITH WOODWARD. Woodward, 40, had returned from a foreign service post in Geneva only two weeks before the selection meeting. Prior to that, Woodward had been a government lawyer and journalist. He argued that his professional qualifications were more important than being a "local boy." He candidly told the selection committee he was trying for the St. George nomination because it seemed the most likely seat to go Liberal in the next election.

The St. George selection committee consisted of 30 delegates from the electorate conference and 20 delegates from State Council. The committee was confronted by two candidates (Amos and Miss Christison) from the Bexley branch, two candidates (Hawkins and Manning) from the Hurstville branch, and two candidates (Dalton and Woodward) from outside of the electorate organization. The winning candidate, Amos, was nominated on the fourth ballot. The voting resulted in a pattern of elimination as follows.

The first ballot eliminated Manning, who was running against the president of his own branch; and Dalton, who had no firm organizational base in the electorate.[1] The second ballot eliminated Miss Christison, who also was competing against a leading member of her branch. In the third ballot, the selection committee was confronted by Amos, Hawkins, and Woodward. Hawkins was eliminated. The final ballot pitted the local candidate Amos against Woodward, who although a political unknown from outside the electorate, had impressive credentials as a potential candidate. The committee picked Amos.

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[1] Dalton, an ex-seaman, may also have been handicapped by his accent. He lacked the so-called 'cultivated' Australian accent characteristic of people in business and the professions--and most Liberals. Dalton had the

The elimination pattern suggests strongly that the committee was divided between two major groups; one supporting Woodward with sufficient strength to keep him in the running until the final ballot; and another group composed of blocs of followers of the various local candidates. When the field of local candidates was narrowed to Amos and Hawkins, delegates from the large (161 members) and vigorous Bexley branch probably rallied to Amos against the forces from the smaller (44 members) Hurstville branch, of which Hawkins was president.

It is likely that Woodward drew the bulk of his support from the 20-member State Council delegation participating in the selection. These delegates were uninvolved in the manouvering which occurred prior to the nomination in the St. George electorate organization. The State Council delegation was thus more likely to judge the candidates by their qualifications and their performance in the selection meeting. On the basis of these criteria, Woodward clearly had the edge over the local candidates, and was able to survive elimination until the final ballot even though he lacked a local base of support. Woodward had to put his "organization" together on the spot-in a 15-minute appearance before the selection committee. He could appeal to those delegates who, like himself, had no personal stake in the St. George electorate organization. For Woodward--an office-seeker in search of an electorate-- there would be other contests; for State Council delegates,

there was nothing to do but cast their votes for the best
candidate and let the St. George organization take over
from that point on.

The St. George selectors had a difference perspective.
Although they were sharply divided, they eventually had to
choose between a man they knew with deep roots in the elec-
torate, and an articulate stranger who wanted to use St.
George as an instrument of political ambition. Confronted
with this alternative, the St. George delegation closed
ranks behind Amos.

The nomination contest for Barton federal electorate
was held on the evening following the St. George nomination.
Hawkins, Manning, Dalton, and Woodward again entered the
field. In addition, Alexander Alexander, 64, a slipper
manufacturer from outside the electorate; and Colin Sullivan,
47, who was vice-president of the Barton federal electorate
conference, entered the race. Sullivan was a pharmacist
and a member of the Blakehurst branch in Barton.

The Barton selection committee thus had to choose
from among 4 candidates from outside the electorate (Alexander,
Manning, Hawkins, and Woodward); and 2 from the electorate
organization (Dalton and Sullivan). Manning and Hawkins lived
in the immediate area, but were deprived of an organizational
base becuase of the accidental boundary division between
Barton and St. George.[1]

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[1]Most of the candidates seeking the St. George or Barton
nomination continued efforts to be nominated. Woodward defeated
Manning for the nomination in Hughes, a safe Labor seat.
Manning subsequently accepted the nomination for Banks, a hard-
core Labor seat. Hawkins defeated Dalton for the nomination
in Hurstville state electorate, a Labor-held swing seat.

As the balloting for the Barton nomination proceeded, early eliminations again resulted in a showdown between a local candidate--Sullivan, and an attractive candidate from outside the electorate--Woodward. Once again, the electorate organization candidate won. As we shall see later in this chapter, this pattern of voting by nominating committees appears to re-occur in a number of nominations for state electorates. This phenomenon will be discussed further at that time.

Since we assume that party organization is an instrument of office-seekers, we anticipate an absence of office-seekers in those electorates which appear beyond hope of Liberal capture. This assumption receives support from a review of Liberal party nominations in safe Labor electorates.

With less than 4 months to go before the federal election, no Liberal candidate had come forward to contest any of the 10 electorates in the Sydney metropolitan area receiving less than 37 percent of the Liberal vote in the previous federal election of 1958.[1] This fact was cited by the State Supervisor in an urgent memorandum to all members of the field staff asking them "to make all out efforts to secure candidates--preferably from within the respective areas. The matter is urgent and must receive attention."[2]

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[1] The ten electorates and their Liberal votes: Kingsford-Smith (36.7); Lang (35.0); Banks (33.5); Dalley (29.0); Blaxland (27.5); Grayndler (26.6); Reid (26.4); Watson (25.1); East Sydney (22.7); West Sydney (19.0).

[2] "Field Staff Notes", a mimeographed memorandum from the State Supervisor to the field staff, August 17, 1961.

Less than two months before the election, 5 of the hard-core

Labor electorates still remained uncontested by a Liberal

candidate. Field staff members were again told that it was

of the "utmost urgency" that candidates be found for these

electorates--"All staff must give matter serious attention."[1]

Eventually, a candidate was secured for each of the electorates.

The evidence concerning nominations in safe Labor seats

suggests that <u>competition</u> for nominations tends to be replaced

by <u>recruitment</u> of candidates by the central organization. The

value of running candidates in all electorates is stated in

<u>The Australian Liberal</u>:

> In the "hard luck" seats, it is desirable that the
> Liberal flag should be shown, to encourage the
> hard-working branches in those districts, to
> demonstrate that the Party is not prepared to give
> socialists a walk-over, to consolidate existing
> Liberal strength there so that it may grow in
> importance for future Federal and State campaigns.[2]

For the candidate who undertakes a doomed campaign, the party

offers its gratitude and a veiled promise of better prospects

in the future:

> It is not easy for a candidate to tackle a campaign
> with the almost certain knowledge of defeat ahead.
> The Liberal Party greatly appreciates the spirit
> and loyalty which animate those candidates who
> stand as Liberals in such electorates. It believes
> in the value of their efforts; it considers that
> they demonstrate and improve their own abilities
> for future contests elsewhere.[3]

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[1] "Federal Campaign 1961. Field Staff Notes," a mimeographed memorandum from the State Supervisor to the field staff, October 13, 1961.

[2] AL, February, 1962, p. 18.

[3] <u>Ibid.</u>

Our review of nominations for the federal election of December, 1961 may be summarized by stating that Liberal office-holders were able to maintain control of their offices without significant challenge from rival office-seekers. If our assumptions are valid, the nomination process was relatively uneventful because the Liberal Party was in control of government, and therefore, office-holders enjoyed the power and prestige necessary to retain the support of both electorate and central organizations.

It would be misleading to conclude, however, that relations between the Liberal government and their party supporters were entirely placid and harmonious. In the year preceding the 1961 election, there was in fact considerable dissension and turmoil within the party organization.

The principal cause of controversy within the party was a series of economic measures instituted by the Liberal government in November, 1960. These measures included a 10 percent increase (to 40 percent) in the tax on automobile sales; a number of credit restrictions tailored to slow down installment buying, imports, and speculative building ventures; and a requirement that life insurance companies invest at least 30 percent of their assets in government securities.

The economic measures of November, 1960 triggered a barrage of negative criticism from those groups most directly affected. Leaders of industry and commerce denounced the actions as a fresh attack on the free enterprise system; banking interests said that the government had taken another

step toward complete control of the private banking system.
The requirement governing the investment of insurance company
assets into government bonds was also challenged as a move
toward socialism. Running through all of the criticism was
the common theme that the Liberal Party had abandoned "Liberal
principles" and was leading the nation toward socialism just
as surely as the Labor Party would, if it were in power.

As the effects of the government's measures began to be
felt in the economy, criticism intensified and soon pene-
trated the ranks of the Liberal Party organization. The
Australian Liberal began to carry lengthy articles explaining
and defending the actions of the government,[1] and the General
Secretary prepared a statement "for key Liberal Party people...
designed to assist them in informing electors unfamiliar with
the language of the economist or the complexities of the
subject."[2] Motions critical of the government began to appear
regularly on the agenda of the State Council.[3]

Liberal parliamentary solidarity was also shaken by
the economic measures. Mr. H. B. Turner, New South Wales
backbencher from the Bradfield electorate, attacked the
regulation of insurance company investments as "pernicious",
"repugnant", and the "first step to perdition."[4] Mr. Turner's
views were echoed by another New South Wales Liberal, Mr. R. C.
Wheeler from Mitchell electorate.[5]

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[1] See for examples, AL, December, 1960, pp. 15-16; April,
1961, pp. 6, 16.

[2] "Notes on Economic Policy," mimeographed, undated, 4 pages.

[3] See Minutes of State Council, January-April, 1961.

[4] SMH, April 28, 1961.   [5] SMH, May 3, 1961.

In June, 1961, the <u>Sydney Morning Herald</u> reported that "a routine discussion of party affairs" at a meeting of the State Executive "developed suddenly into a sharply critical examination of Commonwealth economic policy."[1] A special meeting of the Executive was held the following week for further discussion of the problem. According to the <u>Herald</u> report, "one member of the Executive with a prominent business background said he suspected Mr. Menzies was unaware of the deep misgivings in industry and commerce about Commonwealth actions."[2] The proceedings and decisions (if any) of the special meeting were not disclosed, but second-hand reports indicate that the Executive urged the government to ease credit restrictions as soon as possible.

. Liberal parliamentary dissension again erupted in October, 1961, when Mr. Wheeler returned to his attack, claiming that "private enterprise in recent months had reason to doubt whether the Government still upheld its free enterprise policies."[3] Mr. Wheeler was commended by the president of his electorate conference, Mr. Irwin, who said the government "rode roughshod over the wishes and desires of the party and flouted party policy."[4] Irwin went on to say:

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[1] <u>SMH</u>, June 22, 1961.

[2] <u>Ibid</u>.

[3] <u>Ibid</u>., October 11, 1961.

[4] <u>Ibid</u>., October 13, 1961. See also the editorial: "Mr. Wheeler Speaks for Liberal Principles," October 12, 1961.

> Judging by the great number of resolutions passed
> by State Council imploring the Government to implement
> its 1949 banking policy it would appear that 90 per
> cent of Liberals back Mr. Wheeler's stand.
>
> It would appear that the only way we can bring the
> government back to reality is for outstanding
> businessmen to oppose the Ministers at the forth-
> coming election and make banking and free enter-
> prise the issue.[1]

In spite of Mr. Irwin's suggestion, no "outstanding businessmen"

came forward, and none of the 4 government Ministers from New

South Wales was challenged by a dissident Liberal for re-

nomination or re-election.[2] Liberal backbenchers fared just

as well, except for Professor Bland, whose defeat was unrelated

to the economic issue.

Thus, we may conclude that a major disruption within the

party involving a central policy issue had virtually no impact

on the politics of nominations. Electorate organizations

remained loyal to incumbents; contests for nominations occured

only in electorates where there was no incumbent Liberal and

some chance of a Liberal victory. Similarly, there is no

evidence that the central organization did anything other than

foster loyalty to Liberal office-holders, and in doing so,

discouraged the ambition of rivals. Moreover, there is no

indication that the central organization made any moves to

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[1] Ibid.

[2] In the State of Victoria, however, a retired insurance
executive, Mr. G. E. Knox, announced in July, 1961, that he
would oppose the federal Treasurer, Mr. Holt, who was the
Cabinet member most closely identified with Liberal economic
policy. Mr. Knox quietly withdrew from the contest a month
before the election for what he described as "purely family
reasons." See SMH, July 28, November 4, 1961.

threaten the re-endorsement of Liberal office-holders who publicly denounced government policy.[1]

In the next section of this study, we shall examine the nomination politics in the state election of March, 1962. We hope to demonstrate that the contrast between this series of nominations and the series just analyzed can be explained chiefly on the basis of the party's position in relation to control of government.

The candidate selection system used by the New South Wales Liberal Party is generally accepted by party rank-and-file as the best method. There has been some dissent, however. For example, two motions were introduced in the 1961 annual convention which favored the selection of candidates by local branch delegates only.[2] Speakers supporting these motions did not complain about "junta" controlled selections; rather, they contended that the Liberals in a given electorate were the best qualified to judge which candidate could serve the electorate most effectively. Other speakers--members of State Council--opposed the motions, claiming that good local candidates had nothing to fear from the State Council panel. These speakers also asserted that the welfare of the party as a whole is at stake in candidate selections, as well as the welfare of the local electorate.

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[1] It is reasonable to assume, however, that Messrs. Turner and Wheeler hurt whatever chances they may have had for promotion within the parliamentary delegation to a ministerial post.

[2] See 1961 Convention Agenda, Motions 127 and 131, p. 29.

The State Council panel's participation in selections, they argued, helps provide candidates which strengthen the parliamentary party with "Cabinet material." After the debate, both motions were overwhelmingly defeated by voice vote.[1]

The nomination process:
state election of March 3, 1962.

The nomination process for the state election of March 3, 1962, began with the aftermath of the 1959 election. In that election, the Liberal and Country parties gained one seat each, but the Labor Party retained an adequate 49-45 working majority in the New South Wales Legislative Assembly. This was the sixth straight election loss for the Liberals, who have never controlled the government of New South Wales since the organization of the party.

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[1] See _AL_, November, 1961, p. 12. The annual convention, as we have noted, has no power to amend the party constitution; its debates and "decisions," however, are indicators of prevailing sentiment among the party rank-and-file. Cf. Parker's comments on the Liberal Party's candidate selection method:

> "While not as 'democratic' as a rank-and-file selection ballot, this system is probably less open to abuse than most alternative methods of pre-selection, and it has been retained with minor adjustments since the inception of the Liberal Party. Its administration is surrounded with elaborate safeguards against undue influence and oligarchical manipulation, and...it does not seem to have deserved the querulous complaints of some disappointed Liberals about the 'dictation' of 'swollen-headed party bosses' and the 'foisting of a hand-picked candidate' by 'the Ash Street machine.'"

Parker, _op. cit._, p. 98.

Following the 1959 election, the parliamentary Leader, Mr. P. H. Morton, offered his resignation to his colleagues. Morton had been Leader since 1955, and had also led the party to defeat in 1956. Morton was active in private business interests--a fact used against him by Labor, and a basis for criticism from Liberals as well.[1] The parliamentary group accepted Morton's resignation and elected the then Deputy Leader, Mr. R. W. Askin, to succeed Morton as Leader. Askin was a former bank officer, who had represented the electorate of Collaroy since 1950.

The 1959 election also produced reactions from non-parliamentary personnel in the party organization, and much of the reaction tended to focus on the office-holders of the party. Soon after the defeat, State Council activated a special committee to study the 1959 campaign and make recommendations for future campaigns. The committee's report was the main topic of discussion in the August and September, 1959, meetings of State Council.

The State Council committee report stated the "Liberal leadership had not been established as a fully acceptable alternative to the entrenched leadership of Mr. Cahill [Labor Premier]." The report was particularly critical of Liberal absenteeism from parliamentary divisions. Attendance records covering the preceding 3 years were circulated among State

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[1] Morton was managing director of a motor accessories distributing firm, and chairman of directors of Coventry Gauge and Tool Company, an Australian subsidiary of a British firm. See AL, October, 1959, p. 4 for Morton's response to criticism of his private business involvements.

Council; the records indicated that the Liberal Party had by

far the poorest average attendance of any of the parties.[1]

The committee report made a direct connection between absen-

teeism and Liberal electoral failures:

> Liberal members absences...had made it impossible
> for them to discharge fully their Parliamentary
> duties, and they had failed to function as an
> effective Opposition. If elected to Parliament,
> a member's first duty was to be present at each
> sitting, except for very serious reasons...

> We need 100 per cent there if we are to win
> Government...Since the inception of the Liberal
> Party 14 years ago, we have never won a State
> election here. We have had too many part-time
> politicians with outside private interests.[2]

The committee report made a number of recommendations

which clearly implied dissatisfaction with the performance

of Liberal office-holders. These recommendations included:

> TV training for Party leaders; circulation of
> parliamentary division lists to State Council
> and State Electorate Conferences; possible
> establishment of a sub-committee to assert
> [sic] in ways of attracting candidates of high
> calibre; and provision for all sitting members,
> whether opposed or not, to face selection
> committees.

> It was also recommended that where a selection
> committee considered there was no satisfactory
> candidate before it, then it should refuse to
> endorse any candidate.[3]

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[1] Out of 222 parliamentary dividions, the average Labor
member was present at 200; the average Country Party member—
181; the average Liberal member—165. AL, October, 1959, p. 4.

[2] Ibid.

[3] AL, September, 1959, p. 11.

In addition to censuring office-holders in its report
and discussions, State Council passed a highly significant
constitutional amendment which seriously undermined the status
of office-holders. Prior to the amendment, Clause 21 of the
party constitution specifically excluded sitting members from
a provision that any party member who ran against an endorsed
Liberal candidate should be automatically expelled from the
party for 3 years. Under this provision, a Liberal member of
parliament could be rejected by a selection committee, and
still run for re-election as an "unendorsed Liberal candidate"
without jeopardizing his party membership. The theory behind
this privileged status was that a member of parliament should
have the right to appeal to the electorate for re-election
even if rejected by a party selection committee.[1] The
practical effect of the clause was that it served to dis-
courage the emergence of rival office-seekers, since a rival
could be confronted with a Liberal incumbent even if success-
fully nominated.

State Council simply amended Clause 21 by deleting
the exclusion of sitting members from the penalty for opposing
an endorsed Liberal candidate.[2] This meant that a Liberal
member could not appeal beyond the decision of a selection
committee to his electorate without losing his party standing

[1]Cf. R. T. McKenzie, op cit., p. 588: "A fundamental
feature of the British parliamentary system" is that "members
must hold themselves responsible solely to the electorate and
not to the mass organizations of their supporters outside
Parliament."

[2]AL, September, 1959, p. 1.

and membership. The amendment of Clause 21, coupled with State Council's analysis of the 1959 election defeat, served notice on office-holders that many members of the central organization were dissatisfied with their performance. These actions also alerted ambitious office-seekers to the fact that a climate of opportunity was being officially encouraged.

We have seen that party attitudes and events following the Liberal defeat in 1959 pointed toward a period of insecurity for office-holders on the state level. Liberal office-holders not only suffered from the inherent weakness of prolonged opposition, but also found themselves under attack because of lacklustre and irresponsible performance in office. Moreover, office-holders were held largely responsible for the debility of the organization, a fact which has been discussed in connection with the branch development drive. Thus, office-holders were caught between the party organization and its chief objective--winning control of government.

In October, 1960, midway between the 1959 and 1962 elections, the State President, Mr. Cotton, told the party annual state convention that--

> It was a matter of supreme importance...that Liberals should cast a very critical eye over every member of Parliament representing them in the various Houses.

> "If we are not satisfied with what they are doing, and the quality of work they are performing, we should not hesitate to find somebody to replace them.

"These are harsh words, and I do not apply them
in any sense to any particular person...We expect
from ourselves the very highest activity politi-
cally and the very highest endeavor. Similarly,
we should look for it in our parliamentary repre-
sentatives. If we do not do so, our Party will
not flourish.[1]

Party dissatisfaction with Liberal office-holders was
echoed and amplified in journalistic comment. Following
the 1959 election, The Sydney Morning Herald ran an editor-
ial entitled "Who Would Want to Lead the Liberal Rabble?".[2]
In late 1960, after the election of a new State President
of the Liberal Party, the "Herald" commented on the need
for more qualified Liberal candidates, and then noted:
"There has been little incentive to link one's political
fortunes to a band of parliamentarians who behaved like
a rabble of 'no-hopers'."[3] As the time for nomination
contests approached, newspapers commented with increasing
frequency on the likelihood of challenges to sitting
members. The Sydney Daily Telegraph's political corres-
pondent summarized probable contests in an article:
"Opposition out for Blood (New)."[4] Another article, "Lib
Shakedown", discussed Liberal office-holders who allegedly
were "marked down for the axe in the Liberal Party's 'new
blood' campaign."[5]

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[1]AL, November, 1960, p. 1.

[2]SMH, July 15, 1959, p. 2.

[3]SMH, December 19, 1960. p. 2.

[4]Daily Telegraph (Sydney), August 25, 1961, p. 2.
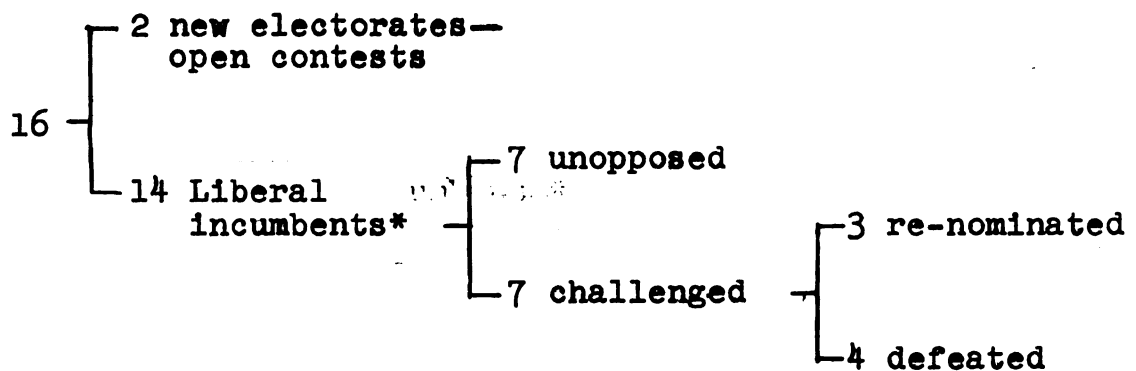
[5]Ibid., October 3, 1961, p. 3.

We have been reviewing a number of factors which
pointed toward the probability of a lively series of nomin-
ation contests. In addition to these _political_ factors, an
institutional factor had an important bearing on the nomin-
ation process: this was the reapportionment of state elec-
torates which was announced approximately 5 months before
the beginning of candidate selection meetings.[1] Population
shifts had occurred mainly in the Sydney metropolitan area,
and it was there that electorate boundaries were most radi-
cally altered. From the perspective of the Liberal Party,
the reapportionment had the following impact: 2 safe seats
(Neutral Bay and Woolhara) were abolished outright; 2
borderline Liberal seats (Blacktown and Drummoyne) were
altered to favor Labor; 3 new safe Liberal seats (Kirribilli,
Wakehurst, and The Hills) were created in the rapidly
growing northern suburbs of Sydney. Only 4 Liberal elec-
torates (Earlwood, George's River, Lane Cove, Cronulla)
survived the reapportionment with boundaries intact; all
others retained their identity, but were subjected to
boundary changes of varying extent and importance.

The 1961 reapportionment necessarily had a profound
impact on the structure of state electorate organizations.
Overnight, many office-holders found themselves either
with an entirely new electorate, or with a significantly
altered electorate. Branches loyal to a particular office-
holder suddenly were thrust into another electorate with

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[1] See _SMH_, May 6, 1961, pp. 1, 5; July 12, 1961, p. 3;
Parker, _op. cit._, pp. 69-76.

a different political complexion. Some branches landed in newly-created electorates which presented unexpected opportunities for ambitious office-seekers. Thus, reapportionment added another element of instability into a party organization already troubled by the corrosive irritation of prolonged opposition.

When the Liberal Party organization prepared to select candidates for the 1962 state election, there were 16 electorates in the Sydney metropolitan area which could be considered safe Liberal seats. The following diagram indicates the pattern of nomination contests in these 16 safe seats.

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16 ┬─ 2 new electorates —
   │    open contests
   │
   └─ 14 Liberal        ┬─ 7 unopposed
        incumbents*      │
                         │                  ┬─ 3 re-nominated
                         └─ 7 challenged    ┤
                                            └─ 4 defeated
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*Note: Includes Mr. Dennis, who contested the new seat of The Hills after his own seat, Blacktown, was made a sure Labor seat by reapportionment. Dennis did, however, reside in that part of the old Blacktown electorate which formed part of The Hills, and thus is counted here as an incumbent.

We note from the diagram above that 7 of the 14 Liberal incumbents seeking renomination were challenged by rival office-seekers. Three of the incumbents were able to beat down challengers, but 4 failed to receive party re-endorsement.

Before examining nomination contests in individual electorates, we shall present an overview of the character- istics of office-seekers in the 9 safe Liberal electorates where competition occurred. The 9 contests attracted a total of 62 candidates, 7 of whom were incumbent members of parliament. Of the 55 remaining office-seekers, a heavy majority were _active_ in the party organization: 4 out of 5 were branch officers; over half (54 percent) were members of State Council; 5 were members of the State Executive; and 3 were former members of parliament defeated in previous elections.

The following table indicates the age distribution of the 55 office-seekers.

Age	Percent,		Age	Percent
21-29	.....1.8		50-59	.....21.6
30-39	.....25.2		60--	......3.6
40-49	.....45.0		NA	......1.8

A survey of the occupational backgrounds of Liberals with office ambitions indicates a virtually complete domin- ation by the white-collar occupations.

Occupation	Percent
Professional	....39.6
Managers	........12.6
Officials	.......12.6
Proprietors	.....14.4
Salesmen	........14.4
Clerical	..........1.8
Housewives	........3.6

We note from the table above that professional people com-
prised almost 40 percent of the office-seekers. Within the
professional category, about half (10) of the office-seekers
were lawyers; the group also included accountants, teachers,
engineers, and a librarian. If the three categories "managers,
officials, and proprietors," are lumped together, they com-
prise a group similiar in size to the professional group.
"Proprietors" included operators of some kind of retail busi-
ness; "officials" included a civil servant, an animal inspec-
tor, and a tourist officer; "managers" included upper level
business executives and plant managers. Among the salesman,
half (4) were realtors.

The educational background of the 55 office-seekers
can be summed up as follows: 37.8 percent had no formal
education beyond high school; 23.4 percent held an advanced
professional degree (mainly lawyers); 21.6 percent had a
general liberal arts university education; and 16.2 percent
had earned a technical diploma in such fields as accountancy
and pharmacy.

We turn now to an examination of 6 nomination contests
in specific electorates. First, we shall analyze the 4
contests in which Liberal members of parliament were defeated
by challengers. These contests occurred in the electorates
of Hornsby, Manly, The Hills and Gordon. Second, we shall
examine the contest in Burwood electorate, in which the
Liberal incumbent won re-nomination by a narrow margin.
Third, we shall examine the contest in Kirribilli, a new,
safe Liberal electorate created by reapportionment.

In the introduction to this section, we pointed out that the party's prolonged opposition status created tension and conflict between electorate organizations and the central organization. It was also pointed out that reapportionment disrupted many electorate organizations, and further complicated the nomination process. The result of this combination of circumstances was that people with office ambitions were encouraged to contest nominations, even to the point of challenging office-holders. The discussion of contests in 6 specific electorates will attempt to analyze the impact of these circumstances on the pattern of competition among office-seekers, and also the impact on the values and behavior of selection committees.

Since voting in selection committees is by secret ballot, it is difficult to determine with complete accuracy the voting behavior of selection committee delegates. However, the sequence of candidate eliminations if often illuminating, particularly since a given pattern appears to recur again and again. In addition, much information was gleaned as a result of personal conversations and interviews with party officials, candidates, State Council members, and numerous selection committee delegates.

Mr. S. A. Storey was elected as an independent in 1941, from the Hornsby state electorate. Mr. Storey joined the Liberal Party when it was organized in 1945, and he continued to represent the electorate as a Liberal. When the date (October 3, 1961) for the Hornsby pre-selection

was set, Storey tried unsuccessfully to have the pre-
selection postponed; he then announced that he would not
attend the meeting.[1] Storey changed his mind at the last
minute and did appear before selection committee. He was
defeated on the first ballot.

Storey was beaten by a combination of bad luck, a
superior opponent, and his own neglect of the branches
in his electorate. It was bad luck for Storey that
reapportionment had cut off a section of his electorate
containing 3 branches, from which he could have expected
some support. In addition, the reapportionment added to
Hornsby electorate a section which contained 2 branches
sympathetic to his opponent--Mr. J. C. Maddison. A like-
able, articulate, and ambitious lawyer, Maddison had been
active in Liberal Party affairs since 1949. He was a
perennial branch officer, electorate conference officer,
and campaign director. In addition, he was an energetic
leader of fund-raising efforts, the establishment of new
branches, and campaigns for new party members. Maddison's
ability and activism soon brought him a seat in State
Council, and in 1957 he became a member of the State Execu-
tive. In 1958 he was elected State Treasurer; and, as we
have seen, he became chairman of two of the hardest working
committees in the party organization--the Electorate

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[1] Storey made his appeal to a meeting of State Council
held September 29, 1961. He claimed that the pre-selection
meeting conflicted with his duties to attend sessions of
parliament. He also claimed that selectors had not been
given proper advance notice of the time of the selection.
Storey's objections were overruled unanimously by State
Council.

Assistance Committee and the Branch Development Committee.[1]
Because of his many positions in the party organization,
Maddison figured prominently in almost all meetings of State
Council; he was well known and respected. Thus, when Maddison
announced that he would contest the pre-selection for Hornsby
electorate, he held an unbeatable hand—strong support from
the branches in the electorate, and almost certain strong
support from a State Council panel—regardless of the parti-
cular individuals chosen to make up the panel. Maddison's
selection was secured by a large majority on the first
ballot.[2]

Another Liberal member of state parliament to lose pre-
selection was Mr. E. D. Darby, who had represented the safe
Liberal seat of Manly since 1945. There is no doubt that
Darby was more thoroughly disliked by leaders of the central
organization than any other Liberal parliamentarian. The
main grievance against Darby was that he was openly anta-
gonistic to all efforts to strengthen the party organiza-
tion—either in Manly, or the party as a whole. Darby repre-
sented a prosperous suburban area which regularly voted
60-65 percent Liberal; yet party records in 1959 showed that
Manly electorate had 5 Liberal branches with a total of only

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[1]See 'Tropicus', "Mr. John Maddison Prods Consciences,
Pockets," AL, July, 1960, p. 4.

[2]There was a third contestant for the Hornsby nomina-
tion—Mr. J. H. Sim, a stockbroker. Sim was one of those
unusual people who turn up in pre-selections occasionally;
he addressed the meeting "in the name of the Father, Son,
and Holy Ghost." He had no support.

115 members. These branches were so inactive that the Manly electorate conference had not met, and therefore the electorate for some time was not represented on State Council.[1] In the past, when pre-selections were held, the branches revived briefly and Darby successfully staved off opponents to his re-endorsement.

Because of the weakness of the branch structure, the Manly electorate did not participate in the electorate assistance scheme. When the party membership fee was increased in 1959, Darby encouraged his supporters not to pay the increased fee. Darby also opposed the branch development program approved by State Council in 1959. These actions made Darby unpopular with the central organization, especially since the Manly electorate was potentially a source of considerable organizational strength for the Liberal Party.

In spite of Darby's opposition to branch development, the General Secretary had ordered members of the paid field staff to canvass for new members in the Manly electorate. This intensive drive resulted in the revival of 3 "dead" branches, the establishment of 3 new branches, and a total of 450 new members were added to the rolls. Clearly, the central organization hoped that this infusion of new people would produce challenges to Darby's grip on the Manly

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[1] See the "Report of the State Executive to State Council," November 6, 1961, p. 2.

organization. Ironically, the success of this strategy was never tested, for the 6 new branches established by field staff efforts were all in the northern section of the electorate; reapportionment clipped off this section and added it to the new Wakehurst electorate. In addition, another section was _added_ to Manly which contained 2 Liberal branches. It was from one of these branches that Darby's main opponent emerged--Mr. H. O. Boyle, a 39-year-old school teacher.

When the Manly pre-selection was held on October 6, 1961, there were 4 branches in the electorate--2 were generally pro-Darby and 2 were pro-Boyle. There was also some scattered support for Mr. J. W. Paton, who was mayor of the suburb of Manly, but had not been active in the Liberal Party. In addition, there were 3 candidates (2 who lived outside the electorate), who had no base of support. These 3 candidates were eliminated in the first ballot; Mayor Paton was eliminated in the second ballot. The final vote was between Darby and Boyle; Boyle won--27-23.

After the contest, Boyle stated in an interview that his supporters had canvassed the 30 delegates from Manly electorate conference, and that 17 indicated they would vote for him. Boyle was certain, therefore, that (1) he had enough votes to survive the early eliminations, and (2) he would need about half the votes of the State Council panel in order to win. Boyle was confident that anti-Darby sentiment in the State Council panel would be sufficiently strong to give him the 9 or 10 votes he needed. As it happened, his calculations were perfect.

An interesting aspect of the Manly case is the method
which the central organization used in an attempt to unseat
Darby: members of the paid field staff were withdrawn from
their usual assignments in other electorates, and were
directed to sign up new members and establish new branches
in the Manly electorate. The field staff canvassed door-
to-door, and the results of its efforts have already been
noted: 450 new members and 6 new branches. This costly and
time-consuming program was ordered on the assumption that
from a revitalized branch structure would emerge challenges
to Darby's suitability as a member of parliament. In addi-
tion, it was hoped that a vigorous branch structure would
lead to the effective participation of Manly's Liberal voters
in (1) continued branch development, and (2) the electorate
assistance program for weaker Liberal area. In other words,
the membership drive conducted by the field staff in Manly
electorate was undertaken in order to help realize Manly's
potential contribution to the vitality of the party organi-
zation as a whole, as well as to secure the removal of Mr.
Darby.[1]

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[1]Darby appeared to agree with this statement, according
to a report in SMH, November 3, 1961: "Mr. Darby said his loss
of pre-selection was symptomatic of a postwar political crisis
over whether a group or the constituents chose a member of
Parliament. He said less than two per cent of people who vote
Liberal in the Manly electorate in the last State election
were financial members of the Liberal Party Correct percentage
according to party records was .76%. He said that when the
current Liberal Party search for new members--or 'purge'--
started, there was a decay in party membership and a change
in the party constitution which prevented a Liberal who was
not selected from standing as an 'unendorsed Liberal.'" Note
Darby's equation of the "search for new members" and the
"purge."

Another Liberal member of state parliament to lose re-
nomination was Mr. A. H. Dennis, who had been representing the
Blacktown electorate. A few months before the nomination
contest, reapportionment changed Blacktown from a 'swing'
seat to a safe Labor seat.[1] About two-fifths of the old
Blacktown electorate was transferred to a newly created elec-
torate called The Hills, which was located in Sydney's north-
west suburban fringe and was a certain safe Liberal seat.
Dennis decided to contest The Hills pre-selection. There
were 9 Liberal Party branches in the new electorate, only 2
of which were originally in Dennis's old Blacktown electorate.
Even these 2 branches were not solidly supporting Dennis.[2]
Thus, Dennis entered The Hills pre-selection in such a weak
position that he can hardly be classified with the other 3
parlimentarians who were 'dumped.' Dennis lost his seat in
parliament because of the caprice of the change in his elec-
torate boundaries.

The Hills pre-selection attracted 14 candidates, half of
whom lived outside the electorate. A few of the local candi-
dates had small blocs of supporters; the other local candi-
dates and 7 candidates from other electorates hoped for
scattered votes from the local delegates and enough votes

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[1]Dennis received 49.9% of the vote in the 1959 state
elections; he received a majority of 51.16% after the distri-
bution of an independent candidate's second preferences.

[2]Two branch members from the old Blacktown electorate
were themselves candidates in The Hills pre-selection. One
of them had been Dennis's campaign manager in 1959.

from the State Council panel to survive the successive elimin-
ations. The local candidate with the largest bloc was Mr.
M. S. Ruddock, who had been active in Liberal Party politics
and local government in The Hills area for 12 years. Ruddock
won The Hills nomination in the final ballot, defeating David
Griffin from nearby Gordon electorate by 2 votes.

We turn now to the contest in the blue-ribbon Liberal
seat of Gordon, which had been represented since 1953 by
Mr. Stewart Fraser. Two strong candidates challenged Fraser,
both of whom were active in Liberal Party affairs and in local
politics in the Gordon electorate. Mr. A. H. Jago, a bank
manager, was president of the Killara branch, a delegate to
State Council, and mayor of Kuring-gai--a municipality
embracing a large section of the electorate. Mr. David
Griffin, an attorney, was vice-president of the Killara
branch, and had previously been a member of State Council,
president of Gordon electorate conference, and secretary
of the Pymble branch--the largest branch in the electorate.
There was no office-seekers from outside the electorate.

On the first ballot, Fraser, the incumbent, was elimin-
ated. Jago defeated Griffin on the second ballot by one vote.
Reports after the contest indicated that Jago had used his
position in local government as a means to gather support,
while Fraser tended to neglect local branch affairs.[1]
Griffin, a skilled and articulate speaker, had less local
support than Jago, but probably received the votes of most
State Council delegates.

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[1]SMH, September 29, 1961; Daily Telegraph (Sydney),
September 29, 1961; Sun (Sydney), October 3, 1961.

Burwood is a safe Liberal seat represented by Mr. Ben Doig. Friction had developed between Doig and some of the leading branch officers in Burwood electorate, 2 of whom were opposing him for pre-selection. One of these opponents, Mr. W. Sheppard, was president of the Burwood electorate conference, and had directed Doig's campaign in 1959; the other opponent, Mr. J. Jackett, was vice-president of the electorate conference. A third opponent was Mr. P. Wilson, who had until a few months before been the Liberal Party field officer assigned to Burwood. Since Doig was apparently going to be hard-pressed to retain his seat, 3 candidates from other electorates entered the contest, hoping that a strong State Council vote and scattered votes from the splintered Burwood delegation would give an "outsider" a chance for the nomination. At the last minute, a fourth candidate decided to enter the Burwood contest: he was David Griffin, who a few days before had failed by one vote to get the nomination for his home electorate of Gordon. Griffin again made an excellent impression on the selection committee, and after 3 ballots he and Doig--the sitting member--were the only candidates still in the running. Doig won the final ballot by one vote.

The pre-selection for Kirribilli electorate was held the evening following the Burwood selection. Kirribilli was a new seat created by the reapportionment, and it was an almost certain Liberal seat. Eighteen candidates paraded before the pre-selection committee; 9 were active Liberals who resided in Kirribilli, and 9 lived outside of the electorate--including the unlucky Mr. Griffin. Once again, after

many ballots a local candidate--Mr. J. L. Waddy--faced Griffin
in the last ballot; and once again, Griffin lost by one vote.
Two days later, Griffin entered The Hills pre-selection,
which we have already discussed, and lost to a local candi-
date in the final ballot by 2 votes.

Each of the 6 nomination contests which we have reviewed
was governed by a particular set of circumstances. It is
clear, however, that the main battleground of aspiring
Liberal candidates is the electorate organization. Office-
seekers begin to manouver for support months, or even years,
before the formal selection meeting takes place. Groups of
supporters in party branches cluster around each office-
seeker, and each branch or group of branches may have its
favorite candidate. These factions tend to be projected
into the electorate conference, which elects 30 delegates
to the selection meeting.

The relative detachment of the 20-member State Council
panel stands in sharp contrast to the intense involvement
of the electorate organization. This attitude of detachment
and objectivity is encouraged by the central organization.
"A Message to Members of Selection Committees", contains
the following exhortation:

> Your decision--by secret ballot--will profoundly
> aifect the fortunes of this Party, not only in
> one particular electorate but throughout the State.

> Good candidates are vital to our success. A candi-
> date with strong personal appeal can succeed in an
> electorate which may be otherwise unwinnable. Out-
> standing personalities will enormously enhance our
> goodwill in every part of the State...

> Your decision should rest ENTIRELY upon your personal
> assessment of the respective merits of the candidates.
> Yours is a secret vote according to your conscience.
> You are NOT called upon to represent the viewpoint

There is every indication that State Council members who participate in pre-selections do in fact take their task seriously. State Council panels, as we have seen, are composed of party members drawn at random from all parts of the Sydney metropolitan area. Some will come to the meeting with their minds already made up, but most of them appear to come with the honest intention of evaluating the candidates, and voting "according to their conscience" for the best candidate. Since State Council selectors will not usually be directly involved in factional fights within the electorate concerned, they are more inclined to vote for "a candidate with strong personal appeal" without regard to the candidate's residence.

The difference in perspective between local selectors and State Council selectors is reflected most clearly in nomination contests involving both local candidates and non-resident candidates. For example, we have seen that in the electorates of Kirribilli, Burwood, and The Hills, the final ballot pitted a local candidate against an attractive non-resident--in each case, Mr. David Griffin. The balloting pattern in these contests indicates that candidates with the smallest blocs of local supporters, together with the least attractive "outside" candidates, are eliminated first-- often in the first ballot. The State Council panel tends to give substantial support to a strong outside candidate such as Griffin, and thus prevents his elimination. But as the weaker local candidates are eliminated, the selectors

supporting these candidates must decide whether to switch to the outside candidate, or switch to another local candidate who has survived elimination. Confronted with this alternative, the local selectors tend to close ranks behind the local candidate, rather than face the prospect of being forced to campaign for an outsider. Although there is certain to be some cross-over between local selectors and State Council selectors, the overall advantage in a final ballot lies with the local candidate.

Summary

The contest for nominations in the New South Wales Liberal Party tends to be shaped by conditions within each electorate organization, and by the party status as governing or opposition party.

Within the electorate organization, competition is unusual if an incumbent Liberal member of parliament seeks re-nomination. Competition tends to be most sharp, however, in safe Liberal electorates which for some reason are not held by an incumbent. The degree of competition decreases in relation to the apparent chances of a Liberal victory in an electorate.

When the party is in power, the position of office-holders is especially commanding. Since office-holders in control of government embody the realization of the party objective, they receive the loyalty and support of both the central organization and electorate organizations. Testing our assumption on the nomination process for the 1961 federal

election, we found that there was virtually no challenge to incumbent office-holders, in spite of the fact that there was a major intraparty conflict on the Liberal government's economic policies. An exception to the generally uneventful nomination process was the failure of one incumbent, Professor Bland, to win re-nomination. In reviewing this case, we found that Bland was unseated by forces within his electorate organization in spite of general support by the central organization.

At the state level, the New South Wales Liberal Party had never since its formation in 1945 gained control of government. This tended to reflect unfavorably upon party office-holders, who had consistently failed to attract sufficient support from the voters. As the party faced the 1962 state election, the central organization openly encouraged an attitude of criticism and challenge toward incumbent members of parliament. In addition, reapportionment altered electorate boundaries and disrupted office-seeking conditions in many electorate organizations. This combination of circumstances produced a sequence of spirited nomination contests. Although 7 incumbents were re-nominated without challenge, 9 other contests attracted a total of 62 office-seekers, and 4 incumbents were defeated by challengers.

The voting pattern of selection committees indicated that the strongest local candidate clearly has the overall advantage, in spite of the tendency of State Council delegates to vote for an attractive non-resident candidate.

CHAPTER VI

THE CAMPAIGN PHASE OF
PARTY ORGANIZATION

Introduction

The nomination phase of party organization in Australia is a distinctly intramural matter. Men with office ambitions use the machinery established by party organization to compete for the party label and resources in trying to gain public office. The voters at large have no formal voice in the nomination process, although the vote-getting ability of an office-seeker as perceived by the nominating committee may have a bearing on the nomination decision. However, when all decisions on nominations have been made, the party organization at all levels turns its attention to the task of electing its endorsed candidates and winning control of government. With the onset of the campaign phase, the importance of con flicts among office-seekers within the party tends to shrink in comparison with the more crucial contest with competing parties.

An election campaign confronts a party with the question of its own survival. Party candidates tend to dominate the

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party organization because their success or failure is the standard measure of the party's success or failure. Thus, intraparty competition is overshadowed by the compelling drive to defeat the opposition. Those disappointed office-seekers who do carry intraparty conflict into the campaign phase tend to abdicate future claims to party endorsement. Most men with office ambitions are therefore prepared to accept the nominating decisions and wait for a more opportune occasion. Meanwhile, the demands of party loyalty and the threat of victory by the opposition party are sufficient to bring about a closing of ranks behind the party nominees.

Tensions between the central and electorate organizations also tend to be suppressed during the campaign phase. Once nomination contests are settled, the objective of both the electorate and central organization becomes the election of the party candidate. Leaders of the central organization may not have preferred a particular candidate; they may have tried to prevent his nomination. This conflict becomes irrelevant during the campaign since the success of even "undesirable" candidates is bound up with the success of the party. The office-seeker who is able to obtain the credentials of a party candidate tends to attract general support from the existing organization, both within his electorate and in the central organization. Thus, the real challenge confronting both the candidate and the organization is the attraction of sufficient support from the voters at large in order to achieve public office.

In this chapter we shall examine the strategy employed
by party candidates to win elections. But before analyzing
specific federal and state campaigns, we shall discuss in
general terms the range of appeals used by party organiza-
tions.

As we discussed in Chapter III, campaign strategy is
developed mainly in response to what takes place in government.
Public office-holders who are in control of government present
themselves for re-election on the basis of their record.
They amass evidence of accomplishments and progress; they
ignore or underplay negative aspects of the record. If an
embarrassment or failure by the government is conspicuous,
there are efforts to give assurance that corrective measures
are being taken.

Leaders of the party in power tend not to offer the
voters a wide range of new promises. Campaign promises are
used to lure votes from particular groups, but promises may
also repel votes from other groups. Venturesome policy
proposals involve a degree of risk: the party in power prefers
to maintain control by appealing as much as possible to the
same body of voters which elected its office-holders pre-
viously. There is a second reason why parties in control of
government avoid new policy proposals during campaigns. Such
proposals raise the awkward question: if a given new program
has merit, why did the government fail before to proceed with
its implementation? The party in power, therefore, promises
to "build on its record" rather than venture into new program
areas.

The candidates of the party in power address themselves not only to the record of their party in government, but also attack the candidates of the opposition party. Attack on the opposition may take many forms, and may be unleashed with varying intensity. A typical attack is to label the opposition as irresponsible or obstructive--prone to distortion and misrepresentation in its criticism of the government. The campaign promises of the opposition are usually labeled as extravagant, impracticable, or even dangerous. Another line of attack is to question the capability of the opposition to govern: opposition leaders may be described as weak, confused, and inept; or as aggressive and power-hungry. In general, the _intensity_ of attacks on the opposition will relate to the governing party's perception of its own vulnerability in the campaign. If the governing party is confident that either its own record or the weakness of the opposition assures its reelection, then there is little point to a pulverizing attack on the opposition. Public office-holders prefer to talk about themselves and are content to do so until an opponent is perceived as a threat.

Candidates of the opposition party also focus on what has taken place in government. They probe the governing party's record in search of issues which will arouse sufficient voters to vote against the government. They attack government leaders as demonstrably incapable of governing effectively, and predict disaster if the governing party

is returned to office. The very condition of being in opposition tends to encourage campaign techniques which emphasize negative criticism and forceful assaults. Since the opposition party in a two-party system constitutes the only alternative to the party in power, it is automatically brought to power if the governing party is discredited enough to repel a sufficient number of voters.

Although opposition candidates do monopolize the alternative to the governing party, it is necessary to do more than conduct a merely negative campaign. The opposition party is called upon to spell out the policies it would pursue if entrusted with control of government. These policies generally are of two types: the office-seekers of the opposition begin by adopting those policies of the governing party which are perceived as strong vote-getters. This demonstrates to the voters that they have nothing to lose by switching party allegiance. The second type of policy offered by the opposition is a group of campaign promises--new programs the opposition intends to enact, but which are not offered by the governing party. Campaign promises carry the same risk for the opposition as for the party in power: there is the two-edged danger that promises may not attract the desired additional votes and may also repel past supporters of the party. In spite of the risks involved, however, the opposition tends to propose a group of new programs to the voters in the hope that it has hit upon a winning combination of campaign appeals.

The central figures of an Australian election campaign are the parliamentary Leaders of the competing parties. The Leader of each party begins the campaign with a lengthy policy speech, which spells out the partyprogram, attacks the opposing party, and generally sets the tone of the campaign. The policy speech forms the backbone of most party propaganda, and is the principal resource for local candidates. The Leader is also important because he usually symbolizes the party. He is the object of wide publicity throughout the year, and the focus of party loyalty. In the eyes of many voters, the combination of qualities which make up the Leader determines their reaction to his party. Thus, the Leader's "image" as well as his policies is an important component of campaign strategy.

The foregoing generalizations have not included any attempt to distinguish types of strategy according to specific political parties. We assume that office-seekers, regardless of their party identification, determine campaign strategy first of all by relating their appeals to what has taken place in government, and secondly in response to their status as governing party or opposition party candidates. Traditional "party principles" play an uncertain role in the development of strategy, as we shall see later in this chapter.

We turn now to an examination of the federal election campaign of December, 1961; and the state election campaign of March, 1962.

The 1961 Federal Election Campaign

     Mr. Arthur A. Calwell, the Leader of the opposition, delivered the Labor Party's policy speech three weeks before election day.

> Mr. Calwell described the Liberal-Country Government
> as inept, and tired, and said it was "mounting the
> guillotine of it's own creation to it's own self-
> destruction...It is time for a change," he said,
> "it is time to clean up the stable. It is time to
> clean out the Menzies Government."[1]

If elected, Mr. Calwell promised to wipe out unemployment within one year; he promised a wide range of new or expanded social service benefits in the fields of education, health services, pensions, child endowments, and housing--all without increased taxation, but financed by a revitalized, expanding economy. Mr. Calwell also promised to provide greater assistance to state and local governments. On the touchy issue of communism, Mr. Calwell said:

> We are completely and inrevocably opposed to
> Communism on ideological and philosophical grounds.
>
> Communism to us is an alien creed based on tyranny
> and sustained by terror. We have always declared,
> and say it again, that between the Labour Party and
> the Communist Party there exists an unbridgeable
> gulf...[2]

Mr. Calwell was equally forthright on the subject of socialism and nationalization of industries:

> Mr. Calwell said Labour had no plans to nationalise
> the banks or to socialise medicine..."We promise not
> to raise the question of nationalization during the
> lifetime of the 24th Parliament."[3]

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[1] SMH, November 17, 1961.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid.

In defense and foreign affairs, Mr. Calwell said a Labor
government would maintain defense spending at the status
quo, "but we will have something to show for it. We will
have a stronger Navy, Army and Air Force"; he also supported
continued Australian support of the British Commonwealth, the
UN, SEATO, and self-determination for New Guinea.[1]

The Prime Minister, Mr. R. G. Menzies, began the Liberal-
Country joint policy speech as follows:

> I do not propose to put before you a long list of
> promises. After 12 years the A.L.P. [Australian
> Labor Party] can easily make a series of brand new
> offers without saying where the new hundreds of
> millions are to come from; though they will, of
> course, come from you...
>
> For us to come along now with a string of new
> promises would excite your ridicule. You could
> well say: "You have had years to do these things.
> Why didn't you think of them before?"
>
> We offer you good government. The essential quality
> of good government is that it should have sound and
> intelligible principles, that it should pursue great
> national and social objectives with resoluteness,
> that it should be able to meet the storms which arise
> from time to time with a proper sense of navigation...
>
> Tonight I will lay before you a statement of principles
> and ideas which have been followed and, in our belief,
> ought to continue to be followed for the good of
> Australia.
>
> I could speak to you for hours on the national and
> social achievements of the last decade. The over-
> whelming majority of Australians have benefited
> from them, and will remember them.[2]

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[1] Ibid.

[2] "Federal Election, 1961, Joint Policy Speech," November
15, 1961, quoted from the printed pamphlet issued by the Federal
Secretariat of the Liberal Party of Australia, pp. 3-4. Cf. the
comment in Creighton Burns, Parties and People (Melbourne:
Melbourne University Press, 1961), p. 52: "It is part of the
logic of a governing party's situation that it should run a
quiet campaign. It can do little but face the electorate on
the strength of its record. To raise new issues...would be
to admit that its stewardship had been deficient."

The Prime Minister went on to promise a continuing program of national development, and gave examples of recent Commonwealth financing of railway and port improvements, road building, and hydro-electric irrigation projects.

Mr. Menzies defended the economic policy of the Liberal government, which Mr. Calwell had condemned as a "piece of high-handed economic bungling which only a reckless, power-drunk Government could conceive and carry out."[1] Menzies stated that:

> My Government was not prepared to permit a
> [inflationary] boom to roar on to the inevitable
> burst...We knew that this would be unpleasant
> for some, but we believed that our actions
> would protect many more people against a collapse...[2]

Menzies cited evidence that rising prices, labor shortages, speculative investing, and depleted overseas reserves made necessary the controversial "credit sqeeze" economic measures of November, 1960.[3] Menzies said that "our measures, unpleasant in themselves, have succeeded,"[4] and noted that the

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[1] Ibid.

[2] "Policy Speech," p. 9.

[3] The economic measures included a 10 percent increase (to 40 percent) in the tax on automobile sales; and the imposition of banking controls designed to discourage land and stock speculation, large-scale importing, and consumer credit. Interest rates on deposits were increased to encourage saving, and preferential credits rates were extended to export producers in the agricultural and mining industries. See "The Australian Economy" (Canberra: Commonwealth Government Printer, 1961), pp. 12-13.

[4] "Policy Speech," p. 9.

emergency measures had been gradually lifted and finally ended.

Menzies admitted that "the most discussed by-product of our policies has been some temporary unemployment," and expressed "profound sympathy" for the unemployed. He charged, however, that:

> Our opponents magnify the employment problem for election purposes...They do not want you to remember that the socialist policy, in action, would bring about such confusion in private industry, and such distrust in the minds of investors, both overseas and at home, that unemployment would increase heavily and the national progress would be halted.[1]

After listing further accomplishments in foreign relations, foreign trade, and national development, the Prime Minister asked: "Can similar things be achieved by our divided and disorganized opponents, lacking experience, judgment, and standing?"[2] Menzies ended his policy speech with the familiar charge that the Labor Leader and his parliamentary colleagues would not be their own masters, but would be subject to the direction and discipline of non-parliamentary Labor hierarchy:

> You are not in truth being asked by Labor to vote [for] Mr. Calwell...You are being asked to hand over the international and national policies of Australia to the obscure but powerful gentlemen of the Federal Conference of the A.L.P.! This is a complete denial of Parliamentary Democracy. It provides the final reason why we ask you to renew our mandate...[3]

Following the policy speeches by the two parliamentary Leaders, the campaign quickly focussed on economic issues, and it became clear that Mr. Calwell had chosen the health

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[1] Ibid., pp. 10-11.

[2] Ibid, p. 20.

[3] Ibid., p. 21.

of the Australian economy in general, and unemployment in particular, as the basis for Labor's challenge to the Menzies Government. Calwell promised that his Government would immediately begin to spur the economy by introducing a supplementary budget of £100 million for financing of public works, Northern Territory development, increased grants to states, and social service improvements. He said he would re-impose import restrictions which had been lifted by the Menzies government, and raise tariffs to protect "established industries."[1]

The Prime Minister attacked Labor's proposals as inflationary and a "wild experiment."[2] He scoffed at the claim that Calwell's program could be implemented without increasing taxes, and quoted a former Labor Prime Minister, Ben Chiffley, as saying that "it is just no use attempting to tell the people that [social service improvements] can be done except by the imposition of additional taxes."[3] On the same evening, Calwell reminded his audience in Perth that the 1958 Menzies government had budgeted a deficit of £110 million when unemployment at a far lower rate than in 1961. Calwell quoted Menzies statement at that time: "Deficit spending is the right risk to take if Australia is to have faith in the continued growth of her national economy."[4]

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[1] SMH, November 17, 1961.

[2] SMH, November 21, 1961.

[3] SMH, November 25, 1961. J. B. Chifley was Labor Prime Minister from 1945 to 1949 when Labor was swept out of office.

[4] Ibid.

As the campaign went into its second week, Mr. Calwell placed declining emphasis on expounding his policy proposals, and increasing emphasis on Menzies' failure to spell out what his government proposed to do about the economy. Calwell repeated his challenge again and again throughout the balance of the campaign:

> I speak for the Australian people when I ask the Prime Minister one simple question, and I challenge him to answer it with a plain "Yes" or "No."...
>
> "Is the Prime Minister satisfied with the economic situation now prevailing?"
>
> If the Prime Minister answers "Yes" it means that he is satisfied with an economic situation in which the level of unemployment is higher than it has ever been since all parties accepted the policy of full employment.
>
> If the Prime Minister answers "No" then he is bound to tell the public what he plans to do to improve the situation.[1]

Menzies ignored Calwell's challenge, but neither Calwell nor the _Sydney Morning Herald_ would let him forget it.[2] The Prime Minister meanwhile shifted his campaign to foreign affairs, making two national television speeches dealing with West New Guinea, Berlin, nuclear disarmament, and Southeast Asia.[3] Calwell rarely discussed foreign affairs in his speeches, a fact which Menzies commented on scornfully: "He said the Labour Party's only policy on foreign affairs was the 'rather vague

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[1] _Ibid_, November 28, 1961.

[2] See the SMH editorial, "Mr. Menzies Evades the Calwell Challenge," December 1, 1961.

[3] SMH, November 30, 1961.

idea of taking it to the United Nations and then washing your hands of it."[1] Referring to the impending British negotiations with theEuropean Common Market, Menzies belittled Calwell's capacity to defend Australian interests:

It is not a job to be handed over to novices...

What has anyone said to you which would indicate that he [Calwell] understands the nature, the gravity and the complexities of this problem?

Are you going to hear a Labour Prime Minister speaking for you in the councils of the world-- a Labour Prime Minister struggling to get to know all the people in the United States and the other great contries with whom we are utterly familiar?[2]

The final days of the campaign were taken up mainly with a repetition of issues already well defined. A new note was sounded, however, when the Prime Minister abruptly injected the issue of communism into the campaign, claiming that the Labor Party's attitude toward communism was "ambiguous" and "feeble."[3] Calwell angrily retorted that Menzies had stopped to "McCarthyism", "muck-raking" and "demagoguery"; Calwell called the charges "a measure of his [Menzies] growing anxiety about the election result."[4]

If Menzies was in fact growing more anxious, events proved that he had good reason. When the votes were counted after the election of December 9, the 77-45 Liberal-Country

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[1]Ibid.

[2]Ibid.

[3]SMH, December 1, 1961.

[4]SMH, December 2, 1961.

majority was reduced to 62-60--or 61-60 after the naming of
a non-voting Speaker. There was a general swing against the
Menzies Government throughout the Commonwealth: Labor
captured 2 seats in Western Australia, 5 seats in New South
Wales, and 8 in Queensland. The Government was able to hold
its own in Victoria, South Australia, and Tasmania, in spite
of generally reduced majorities.

The Queensland debacle resulted from an average swing
of almost 7 percent against the Government. In 1958,
Queensland had shown its loyalty to the Menzies Government
by returning members in 15 out of 18 electorates; the 1961
election gave Labor a 11-7 advantage. Political observers
had predicted some losses for the Government, but did not
anticipate the extent.[1] Two months before the election, one
correspondent commented:

> Reliable reports from Queensland indicate that the
> Menzies Government is remarkably unpopular in that
> State, far more so than the residents of the other
> States could imagine possible.

> The resentment against the Government is based on
> a general belief that Mr. Menzies has taken things
> too much for granted in recent years...There is
> the feeling that Queensland's overwhelming support
> has led the Prime Minister to treat the State almost
> with contempt.[2]

Queensland, with its vast undeveloped territory, depends
heavily upon federal government grants for the development of
transportation networks and industrial expansion. Labor Party

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[1] SMH, October 2, 1961; November 23, 1961.

[2] SMH, October 2, 1961.

candidates campaigned vigorously for greater support of
Queensland development, and their appeal was evidently
successful. In addition, the relatively high unemployment
rate of 3.5 percent in Queensland probably contributed to
the Government's defeat.[1]

In New South Wales, the average swing against the Govern-
ment was 5.21 percent.[2] The Liberal Party lost 3 seats in
the Sydney metropolitan area: Phillip, Evans, and Mitchell.
Phillip, a closely contested inner city electorate, was won
by the Liberal candidate (W. J. Aston) in 1958 with 51.87
percent of the vote after distribution of Democratic Labor
Party second preferences. In 1961, the Labor candidate
(S. D. Einfeld) defeated Aston by a 50.33 clear majority.
The D.L.P. polled 5.54 percent in Phillip. The Liberal
candidate for Evans out-polled his Labor opponent in primary
votes by 318, and held on by 287 votes after the distribution
of 702 votes cast for an independent candidate. However,
when the decisive 2,865 (7.5 percent of vote) D.L.P. second
preferences were ditributed, the Labor candidate received
over 56 percent and was elected by only 72 votes. The third
electorate lost by the Liberal Party was Mitchell, which
had radically altered in character since 1958 because of an
influx of 21,500 new voters. In Bennelong electorate, a
Liberal defeat was staved off when the D.L.P. delivered over

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[1] In April, 1961,Queensland's unemployment rate of 3.5
percent compared with Western Australia-2.1, South Australia-
2.0, New South Wales-1.8, Tasmania-1.7, Victoria-1.5. SMH,
April 18, 1961.

[2] The 5.21 percent figure was cited in the State Executive
Annual Report, December 3, 1962, p. 2.

three-quarters of its second preferences to the Liberal candidate, enabling him to overcome an 1,849 vote deficit and win by 832 votes.

The Country Party lost 2 of its 9 seats in New South Wales. In Cowper, the aged Country Party member, Sir Earle Page, was on his deathbed at the time of the election, a fact which probably contributed to the sharp swing to Labor in Cowper. The Country Party also lost the electorate of Hume, which had been narrowly carried in 1958 after distribution of D.L.P. preferences. The Labor candidate in 1961 polled an outright majority of 50.91 percent.

We shall not undertake in this study a detailed analysis of voting behavior in the 1961 election. We assume that office-seekers select campaign appeals, which in their best judgment, will produce a favorable reaction from the voters. Office-seekers form and use party organization to achieve their objective of public office. Local candidates, organizations, and issues may be important and even decisive in individual electorates; however, most contests tend to be overshadowed by the better-publicized confrontation by the parliamentary Leaders. This appeared to be true in 1961, when a decline in support for the Government--accentuated in Queensland--prevailed throughout the Commonwealth.

The Prime Minister assumed that the voters would remain, faithful because of 12 years of demonstrated competence, and because of unattractive alternative leadership offered by the opposition party. The Leader of the opposition selected

economic issues as the basis of his challenge, and kept up his attack at the point he perceived the government to be most vulnerable. Given the state of electoral uncertainty, Mr. Calwell made the better judgment.[1]

A significant aspect of the 1961 campaign was that the appeals made the two Leaders presented a rather ironic juxtaposition of traditional party "principles." Mr. Menzies, Leader of the party of private enterprise, defended his government's use of controls to prevent the ruin of the economy. In doing so, he was savagely attacked by the major manufacturing and banking interests for laying the heavy hand of government intervention on the economy. Mr. Calwell, Leader of the party of public enterprise, readily discarded his party's socialist objective for the campaign, and seemed comfortable singing in the same chorus with the Chamber of Manufacturers and the Australian Bankers Association. The Sydney Morning Herald added its touch to the incongruity of party postures when it declared editorially that it "stands today as it has throughout its history for liberal principles."[2] However, the Herald continued, the Menzies Government has "turned more and more to bureaucratic planning and socialistic methods [and] the country has been

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[1] After the election, The Australian Liberal stated that "the Prime Minister has accepted the result as indicating disapproval or misunderstanding by a large sector of voters of the Government's economic policies. AL, January, 1962, p. 1.

[2] SMH, December 7, 1961.

brought to a parlous position."[1] The _Herald_ then called for
the election of a Labor government.[2]

Although victory evaded Mr. Calwell, he was able to
mobilize the Labor Party organization effectively. He re-
tained electoral support previously loyal to Labor, and he was
able to cut deeply into past Liberal support. Thus, Calwell's
campaign demonstrated the extent to which a parliamentary
Leader--sensitized to vote-getting issues--is able to place his
own stamp on his party when making a bid for control of govern-
ment. The Prime Minister, his prestige shaken, but still in
power, reacted quickly to the electoral rebuff he had received.
Soon after the election, the Menzies government instituted a
series of special economic measures "to increase employment
and business confidence."[3] These measures provided for:

> more funds for State Governments; increased
> unemployment benefits; reduced income tax and
> sales tax on vehicles; more money for home building;
> investment allowances; additional funds for the
> Development Bank; and...in particular cases,
> protection of Australian industries...[4]

The government also took steps to impose additional limits on
imports of goods which were in competition with Australian-made
goods. Thus, the Liberal-Country government took over large
sections of Labor policy in response to its electoral

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[1] _Ibid._

[2] Menzies later called the _Herald's_ endorsement "an
exercise in logic that will engage the study of people in the
philosophy schools of the universities for years to come."
SMH, February 3, 1962.

[3] _AL_, March, 1962, p. 15.   [4] _Ibid._

setback. Australian voters had apparently expressed a pre-
ference for Labor's 1961 campaign policy, and Liberal public
office-holders showed no lack of willingness to comply with the
voters' wishes.

The 1962 state election campaign.

The New South Wales state election of March 3, 1962 was
held less than 3 months after a federal election which
resulted in a severe setback to the Liberal-Country govern-
ment of Prime Minister Menzies. The Leader of the state
parliamentary party, Mr. R. W. Askin, feared that the un-
popularity of the national Liberals would transfer to the
state level, and gave an early indication that "we intend
to fight on state issues."[1] At the same time, Askin suggested
that the federal election may have reflected a general desire
for a change by the voters. If so:

> Practically every argument used by Labor against the
> Menzies government applies with greater force to the
> Heffron government... if ever ther was a case of a
> government grown complacent and arrogant from an
> over-long stay in office, the N.S.W. government fits
> the bill.[2]

In spite of this hopeful note sounded by Mr. Askin, there was
little question that the national Liberal reversal put the
state Liberal Party in an awkward defensive position, and
complicated the effort to assume a position of aggressive
challenge.

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[1]SMH, January 22, 1962, cited by Ian Campbell, "State
Ballot: The N.S.W. General Election of March 1962," Australian
Political Studies Association Monograph No. 7, 1963, p. 10.

[2]SMH, January 20, 1962, cited by Campbell, op. cit., p.10.

Liberal Party office-seekers were confronted with other problems as they prepared for the campaign. In our previous chapter on the nomination process, we discussed the internal disruption which occurred as a result of electorate boundary alterations complicated by the frustrations of prolonged opposition. Four incumbent office-holders failed to win re-nomination: they did not, however, accept the decision of the party nominating committees, and decided to run as independent's in their respective electorates against the endorsed Liberal candidates.[1] The four dissident Liberal office-seekers, and their supporters under Clause 21 of the party constitution, faced a penalty of expulsion from the party for at least three years. However, they saw a loop-hole in Clause 21 which they intended to slip through: they would <u>resign</u> (not wait for expulsion) shortly before filing their nominations with state elections officials, and simply <u>rejoin</u> the party after the election. One of the candidates, Mr. Fraser, stated that his "price" for rejoining the parlia-mentary party would be the portfolio of housing and develop-ment.[2] Fraser made it clear that he perceived his duty to be service to his constituents, and not the party organization. Therefore:

> The State Secretary of the Liberal Party, Mr. Garrick [sic], and his associates at Ash Street, must be taught that the elected representatives of the people...are not prepared to hand over their duties and responsibilities to an outside junta.[3]

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[1] The four incumbents and their electorates were: S.A. Storey (Hornsby), E. D. Darby (Manly), A. H. Dennis (The Hills), D. S. Fraser, (Gordon).

[2] <u>The Sun</u>, October 3, 1961.

[3]

Another candidate rejected for re-nomination, Mr. Darby, said

"the people of Manly will decide whether they want their

present member to continue serving them or a new member"

[the endorsed Liberal candidate].[1] Darby also insisted

that "he was still a Liberal and it would be unthinkable

for him to vote against the Party in Parliament."[2]

The actions taken by the unendorsed candidates

threatened to subvert the disciplinary force of Clause 21,

which had been passed by State Council in 1959 and was

receiving its first test. The State Executive therefore

requested State Council to strengthen Clause 21 by pro-

hibiting an unendorsed candidate from joining or re-joining

the party for at least three years. The amendment to Clause

21 was finally approved, but only after more than two hours

of spirited debate. According to The Australian Liberal

report:

> Parliamentary members argued during the animated
> debate that members who had given good service in
> Parliament should not be penalised if the they
> were elected after standing against selected
> [endorsed] candidates; and that if the balance
> between opposing parties were narrow it might
> be possible to gain State Government by enlisting
> any independents in the Party ranks.[3]

Non-parliamentary members of State Council took the position

that the party's public office-holders were obliged to accept

the party's verdict on their capability to continue in office.

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[1]SMH, November 8, 1961.

[2]The Sun, October 17, 1961.

[3]AL, December, 1961, p. 10.

Mr. C. Tuckwell, a member of the State Executive and the Branch

Development Committee, summed up this view late in the debate.

> Mr. C. Tuckwell said that any man going in as a
> Liberal member [of parliament] submitted himself
> to pre-selection and agreed to abide by the Party's
> constitution. When a sitting man was defeated at
> a pre-selection it could be assumed there were
> good reasons for the defeat. If he [then] villified
> the organisation he assisted its opponents.[1]

In a final speech before the vote on the amendment, Mr. J.

Cameron, who had moved the amendment, declared that "Liberals

have to decide whether to be a real political party or a

group of policical picnickers."[2] Passage of the strengthen-

ing amendment to Clause 21 demonstrated that the non-parlia-

mentary members of the central organization would impose

discipline on office-holders who were rejected by selection

committees and contested elections without party endorsement.

The Clause did not, however, have any effect on the inten-

tions of the four dissidents to run as independents. They did

not, with the exception of Darby in Manly, pose any real

threat to the endorsed candidates. They did, however, siphon

off some of the party's potential resources; moreover, their

protests against the party "machine" contributed to the

prevailing image of the state Liberal Party as a disorganized

and somewhat quarrelsome political organization.

Another problem confronting Liberal office-holders in

the campaign was the development of policy. Following the

party's defeat in 1959, a committee appointed by State Council

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[1] *Ibid.*, P. 14.

[2] This quotation is drawn from personal notes taken at
State Council meeting, November 6, 1961.

reported that the 1959 policy speech--

> had made a favorable impression, but such a com-
> prehensive document delivered a few weeks before
> the poll, without prior continued advocacy and
> explanation, could not be fully accepted, and
> in the circumstances gave the impression that
> it promised too much and was incapable of ful-
> filment. "It dodged certain controversial
> issues and made unhappy compromises on others."[1]

The defeated Leader, Mr. Morton, defended the 1959 policy:

> Policy was being considered for 15 months before
> the election...and for months I visited every
> metropolitan seat.
>
> It has been stated that we cannot make up our
> minds on some issues. But we were trying to
> accomplish what had not been offered in N.S.W.
> for many years--a joint policy with the Country
> Party. We conferred for months--and immediately
> after an understanding had been reached with
> Mr. Hughes [then Country Party Leader] he
> became ill, and I had to start again with the
> new Leader.[2]

The Liberal and Country Party Leaders were finally able to

agree on a joint policy in 1959. In 1961, however, the Country

Party parliamentary members broke precedent, and became the

first party in New South Wales to adopt a policy of direct

state aid to private schools.[3] The Country Party move

impelled Liberal Party office-holders to take a direct stand

on the sensitive issue of aid to private schools. The

Liberal position, however, remained a matter of speculation

until the Leader's policy speech when it was announced that

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[1]AL, September, 1959, p. 11.

[2]AL, October, 1959, p. 4.

[3]SMH, August 24, 1961. The new Country Party policy
toward private schools called for the state to pay the interest
on loans used for private school construction.

the Liberal Party would not support direct aid of any kind to private schools. The Labor Premier, Mr. Heffron, ignored the question of direct aid in his policy speech, so it was assumed that there would be no immediate change in the government's policy. Thus, the Liberal Party found itself in fundamental disagreement on a major policy issue with its potential coalition partner--the Country Party, and in agreement with its chief adversary.

On other major policy questions, the Labor Premier stood firmly on the record of his government. As Heffron noted shortly after the election: "Labor had not made extravagant promises to woo votes. Most of Labor's promises consisted of a continuation of our present activities."[1] In his policy speech, Heffron relied heavily on the presumed unpopularity of the national Liberal government. He accused Askin of failing to speak out against, and even defending, the "disastrous measures" of the Menzies government. At the same time, Heffron claimed that a Canberra-dominated Liberal government in New South Wales would subject the state to the same "destructive jolts and jars to the economy...which have so recently been a feature of Liberal-Country administration in the federal sphere."[2] Addressing himself to the existing high level of unemployment in New South Wales, Heffron said:

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[1] _Daily Mirror_, March 7, 1962, cited by Campbell, _op.cit._ p. 54.

[2] _Ibid._, p. 10.

Unfortunately, the Commonwealth not the state had
the constitutional powers necessary to deal with
unemployment. Banking, credit, income, company
taxation and import controls were all fields where
the Commonwealth was virtually exclusive.[1]

Heffron promised to maintain "unremitting pressure" on the

Commonwealth Government for increased grants to New South

Wales, which would be administered in a "constructive and

practical" manner to raise the level of employment.[2]

The Labor Premier skirted two other controversial issues

in his policy speech: rent controls, and legalizing of off-

course betting on horse races. In New South Wales, rent

controls imposed during World War II on existing dwellings

were never lifted. The result was that tenants who occupied

rental premises continuously since World War II continued to

pay as little as $15-20 per month rent, while tenants living

in comparable dwellings built since the war paid at least

triple the controlled rate. Controlled premises comprised

about 20 percent of all rented premises, most of which were

located in the older sections of cities embracing strong

Labor-voting areas and some "swing" electorates. A Royal

Commission appointed by the government to study the Landlord

and Tenant Act recommended, in substance, that the anachron-

istic controls be lifted, provided that safeguards against

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[1] *Daily Telegraph*, February 13, 1962.

[2] Campbell, <u>op.cit.</u>, p. 11.

exorbitant rents and summary eviction be retained.[1] In his policy speech, Heffron said that there would be no substantial changes in the Landlord and Tenant Act, but that his government would "consider" the recommendations of the Royal Commission.[2]

The Premier also gave no indication in his policy speech that his government planned any moves toward licensing off-course betting establishments, although there was reported to be strong pressure to do so from sections of the Labor Party organization.[3] Other forms of gambling--slot machines, state lotteries, and race course betting--flourished legally in New South Wales, and were major sources of revenue.[4] Off-course betting, although illegal, went on more or less openly. This disturbed many religious leaders, who at the same time spoke out against any proposal to place a legal stamp of approval on yet another form of the gambling vice. As far as the campaign was concerned, Mr. Heffron decided that this was an issue to let slide.

The Liberal leader, Mr. Askin, delivered his policy speech two nights after the Premier's. Characterizing Labor's policy as "dreary, stale, and completely lacking in

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[1] Cf. SMH editorial "Selfishness, Politics and Rent Control," November 3, 1961: "The Premier has behaved almost as if somebody had invited him to grasp a red-hot poker."

[2] Campbell, op. cit. p. 22.

[3] SMH, June 6, 1961.

[4] In 1960-61, the various forms of legal gambling produced a total of about $30 million in revenue. See SMH, October 4, 1961.

imagination", as well as sounding "like a political death
rattle",[1] Askin spelled out a vigorous program for ending
unemployment, and a long list of promises for improving
social services. Askin accused Labor of being "defeatist"
about unemployment, and of—

> inexcusably losing many large industries to the
> Southern States. We State Liberals have centred
> our whole policy on making N.S.W. the most secure
> of all States from an employment point of view...
>
> We will take a leaf out of the Vitorian Liberal
> Government's book, and give the 'red carpet'
> treatment to industrialists wishing to establish
> factories.[2]

To stimulate employment Askin promised that his government
would immediately introduce a supplementary budget of ₤2
million ($4.5) "to be allocated at once to stimulate building
and developmental works in the City and country." In addition:
"We will begin at once to implement a dynamic roads and State
public works programme."[3]

In the area of social services, Askin promised to raise
pension benefits for all retired public servants; provide
free bus transportation for school children; accellerate
hospital construction and establish a new medical school;
improve mental health services; provide public transport
concessions to all widows; and provide 95 percent govern-
ment-guaranteed loans for home buyers. All of this, and
more, would be accomplished in concert with a program of
tax reduction on property and gasoline.[4]

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[1] AL, March, 1962. p. 15.   [2] Ibid., p. 16.
[3] Ibid.   [4] Ibid., pp. 16-19.

Askin met head-on the issues of rent controls and

licensing of off-course betting. He promised to implement

the recommendations of the Royal Commissions on the Landlord

and Tenant Act by permitting controlled rents under Ł5

($11.25) per week to be raised by a maximum of 40 percent.

A "Rent Relief Fund" would also be established to assist

"on a confidential basis" pensioners or unemployed workers

who suffered hardship because of increased rents.[1]

In a surprise gambit, Askin proposed to legalize off-

course betting. "The State Liberals are against encouraging

gambling," Askin reasoned—

> but we do not oppose gambling in moderation. Where
> gambling cannot be curbed effectively by prohibition
> and law enforcement it is preferable to license and
> tax it for public purposes...
>
> We respect the views of those who oppose legalising
> off-course betting, but they have not advanced any
> practicable alternative to the present disgraceful
> position.
>
> An overwhelming majority of our fellow citizens
> approve licensing S.P. starting price betting.[2]

With the revenue produced by an expanding economy and by the

proposed betting tax, Askin predicted: "We will be able to

implement the most dynamic policy ever presented in this State

for substantial tax reductions, social benefits and encourage-

ment of employment."[3]

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[1] Ibid., pp. 17-18.

[2] Ibid. p. 16.

[3] Ibid.

Premier Heffron's reaction to Askin's aggressive policy speech echoed Prime Minister Menzies' response to his opponent three months before. Heffron called Askin's policy "reckless and irresponsible... quite impossible of realisation."[1] In later statements, Heffron said: "He Askin is in opposition--he can promise anything"[2] and "Mr. Askin is making all sorts of promises but the first thing will be to find something to use for money."[3] Heffron labelled Askin's proposal for retirement benefit increases as "airy-fairy";[4] his reaction to Askin's proposal to legalize off-course betting was "this government does not consider this a matter for urgent or anxious thought."[5]

At the same time that the Premier was attacking Liberal campaign promises, his government was busy implementing some of the very measures Askin had proposed. During the campaign, the Heffron government moved to increase retirement benefits for public servants by 10 percent; and to provide 95 percent guaranteed home purchasing loans. Heffron also announced that a committee of judges would be appointed to study the question of additional gambling legislation.[6]

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[1] SMH, February 15, 1962, cited by Campbell, op.cit., p.17.

[2] SMH, February 22, 1962, cited by Campbell, op.cit., p.18.

[3] SMH, February 23, 1962, cited by Campbell, op.cit., p.12.

[4] SMH, February 22, 1962, cited by Campbell, op.cit., p.18.

[5] Daily Mirror, February 16, 1962, cited by Campbell, op. cit., p. 18.

[6] AL, March, 1962, p. 25; SMH, February 24, 1962.

Askin responded angrily to the Labor government's actions. The following statement by Askin communicates both his frustration and his remarkable perception:

That is the Labor policy--to lift our proposals.

What is worrying the Government is that the things we stand for are the things the Labor Party is meant to stand for.

They know our program has caught the imagination of the public so they are stealing it.[1]

Thus, Askin described well the irony of the situation: the Liberal Party had a better Labor policy than the Labor Party itself; the Labor Party, sensing an apparent danger to its control of government, quickly neutralized the appeal of Liberal policy by adopting it as its own.

The Labor Party did not, however, attempt to take over Liberal policy on rent controls. In fact, "the announced Liberal policy of increasing controlled rents up to 40%... was used by Labor as the major campaign issue whenever rental premises were in significant numbers."[2] The Labor Party organization flooded such areas with pamphlets entitled "Warning! Liberals Will Raise Your Rent."[3] "A leaflet distributed in Bligh [a "swing" electorate newly created by reapportionment] on election eve, urging rent payers not to trust the Liberal Party, said: 'Rent Ł5 and over--unlimited increase proposed.'"[4] Although the Liberal Party tried to

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[1]SMH, February 24, 1962.

[2]"Appreciation", an analysis of the election prepared by the State Executive and submitted to State Council, April 27, 1962, p. 2.

[3]Campbell, pp. 22-23.   [4]AL, March, 1962, p. 25.

allay fears by sponsoring large advertisements saying "The Liberal Party guarantees that no one will suffer hardship",[1] one Liberal candidate complained that "attempts to explain the Liberal Party's policy on rents in Bligh was like going over Niagra in a barrel."[2]

The voters of New South Wales went to the polls on March 3, 1962, and returned the Heffron Labor government with a substantially increased majority. The Liberal Party lost four seats to Labor candidates: Bligh, Coogee, Drummoyne, and Nepean--all in the Sydney metropolitan area. In addition, the endorsed Liberal candidate in Manly was defeated by the incumbent Liberal-turned-independent, Mr. Darby, who had failed to win party re-nomination. The Labor Party picked up an additional member of parliament when its endorsed candidate defeated Mr. Purdue, who had sat in parliament as an independent member from the Waratah electorate. There was no change in party control in the electorates held by the Country Party. Thus, when the new parliament convened, the Labor government was firmly in control with a 54-40 majority.

In response to the Liberal Party defeat, the State Executive attempted to analyze the factors contributing to the defeat. The State Executive's "Appreciation", which was undoubtedly drafted by the General Secretary, claimed that the 1961 reapportionment tended to weaken Liberal-held "swing" seats and strengthen Labor control in its borderline seats.[3]

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[1] SMH, March 1, 1962, cited by Campbell, p. 23.

[2] "Appreciation", p. 3.   [3] "Appreciation," p. 2.

Based on 1959 voting patterns, it appears that boundary changes
worked against Liberal incumbents in Bligh, Drummoyne, and
Nepean; and against Liberal challengers to Labor incumbents
in the "swing" Rockdale, Concord, and Mudgee electorates.
An objective analyst, Miss Joan Rydon, agreed with the
Liberal contention; she suggests that--

> There can be little doubt that the redistribution
> of 1961 strengthened the position of the A.L.P.
> To what extent movements and growth of population
> were responsible and to what extent there were
> elements of "gerrymandering"... are questions to
> which there are unlikely to be final answers.[1]

The Liberal Party "Appreciation" also discussed certain
policy positions which may have contributed to the defeat.
Foremost among these was the policy on rent control. In the
"swing" electorate of Coogee, a sampling of polling places
(precincts) indicated that in predominantly homeowner areas
the Liberal candidate polled as well as in 1959; however, in
apartment-dwelling areas, there was a 5-6 percent swing to
the Labor candidate. It was believed that rent control was
"the deciding issue in Coogee [and] played a supporting role
with gerrymandered boundaries in determining the fact of
Bligh, Drummoyne and Nepean." Unfortunately for the Liberals,
the rent control issue had its greatest impact in those elec-
torates which the party needed to hold.[2]

The "Appreciation" comments on the issues of legalized
betting and state aid to private schools are critical of the
timing and manner in which party positions were presented to
the public.

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[1] Joan Rydon, "The Results", in Campbell, op. cit., p. 51.

[2] "Appreciation," pp. 2-3.

On legalized betting:

> The main criticism by Liberals is directed against
> the suddenness of the announcement and the consequent
> inadequacy of explanation...

> Over the years, the Liberal Party has branded the
> State Labor Government as the "gambling government"...
> By contrast, an image had been established of a
> Liberal Party which opposed the promotion of gambling
> and sought to establish the virtues of thrift and
> providence. The Party's election policy (by its
> suddeness [sic] of impact seemed to shatter these
> concepts. Many people felt that the Liberals were
> outbidding Labor in the gambling field and that or
> principles had been put aside in order to find
> extra revenue.[1]

Regarding aid to private schools, the "Appreciation"
noted that "the Liberal policy remained a matter of intense
speculation" until a few weeks before the election.[2]   In
addition, many signs pointed toward the adoption of a
favorable position on aid to private schools: the Liberal
Menzies government had been assisting private schools in the
Australian Capital Territory since 1957; the New South Wales
Liberal Party annual general convention had recommended
support; and the Country Party had also adopted a policy of
state aid. It was also generally known that the State
President, Mr. Honner--a Roman Catholic--favored aid to
private schools.

> The policy speech, on this point therefore, must
> have created an anti-climax.

> Such an issue (whatever its form of resolution)
> is thoroughly ill-suited to an election campaign.
> Clearly, it should be studied and resolved on
> merits in a period of calm, and conveyed to the
> electors at a time free of election passion, so
> that the full implications can be understood.[3]

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[1]Ibid., pp. 3-4.   [2]Ibid., p. 7.

[3]Ibid., p. 8.

In general complaints about the timing of policy decisions, the "Appreciation" noted that it was impossible to prepare definitive campaign literature and advertising, since "details of the policy were not available...until the day of the Policy Speech, $2\frac{1}{2}$ weeks before polling day."[1] Moreover, "controversial policies cannot be launched and sold at short notice. They arouse suspicion and tend to repel support."[2]

Although the State Executive could readily criticize on the basis of hindsight, it had little to offer toward a solution either of intra-party policy conflicts, or toward the larger question of a winning campaign strategy. Such issues as gambling and aid to private schools were debated and studied between elections within the councils of the party, but never resolved. It fell to the Leader and his fellow office-seekers to decide whether to equivocate or take a concrete stand. Mr. Askin's predecessor had been attacked for dodging certain issues and making unhappy compromises on others;[3] Mr. Askin evidently decided to be unequivocal and gamble that electoral success would vindicate his choice of strategy. If Askin had led the party to victory after so many years of frustration, there seems little doubt that his government's positions on issues would be accepted and even embraced, though not always

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[1] Ibid., p. 9   [2] Ibid.

[3] AL, September, 1959, p. 11.

happily, throughout the party organization. As it happened, the party's defeat settled nothing, but only tended to deepen intraparty policy differences.[1]

The impact of campaign organization

In Chapter IV we discussed in detail the role which central and electorate organizations are expected to play in providing the resources necessary to conduct an effective election campaign. The responsibilities of the central organization, once candidates have been nominated and policies defined, are to develop and manage campaign propaganda; to secure adequate resources of money and manpower (both volunteers and paid staff); and to allocate these resources throughout the party organization in such a manner that m maximum electoral advantage is realized. The electorate organization serves the local party candidate; its functions include the management of local propaganda, fund-raising, and the mobilizing of party workers to perform various electioneering tasks. We noted in Chapter IV that the central organization regarded the resources of the party as inadequate, and undertook through the branch development program to strengthen the organization in preparation for the federal election of December, 1961, and the state election of March, 1962. In this section we shall discuss in general terms the two related questions: How well did the party organization in fact perform in the two campaigns under review, and secondly, did the organization's performance have any demonstrable bearing on the outcome?

Cf. Peter Coleman, loc. cit., p. 16.

The impact of party organization on the outcome of an election is not readily measured. It is generally assumed, however, that the amount of resources available, and the skill with which they are used, have some influence on a candidate's success. Since voting is compulsory in Australia, organization is not necessary to "get out the vote." But compulsory voting also means that a large number of uninformed and apathetic people go to the polls. Since the Australian ballot does not include the party designation of candidates, many voters are confronted with a slate of unfamiliar names.[1] In addition, the voter is required to number in the order of his preference the square opposite each candidate. If the voter fails to mark each candidate, his ballot is ruled "informal" (invalid) and thrown out. In a multi-party contest, a voter's second preferences can determine the winner if no candidate receives a majority of first preference votes. These procedures in Australian elections suggest the importance of last-minute communication between party organization and the voter.

Candidates and their supporters try to make such contact by distributing "how-to-vote cards" to voters as they approach the entrance of the polling place. A "how-to-vote card" is a

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[1] A survey taken in the Parkes (N.S.W.) federal electorate in 1958 indicated that less than half of the respondents could name the Labor candidate, in spite of the fact that he had served the electorate for 15 years, "was a leading member of his party, received frequent notice in the press, and was regarded as having a considerable personal following in the electorate." Less than a quarter of the respondents could identify the Liberal candidate, and the D.L.P. candidate was virtually unknown. See P. Westerway, "The Parkes Sample Survey," in Rawson, op. cit., 164-196.

slip of paper with the names of the candidates appropriately marked. Each candidate arranges to have as many volunteers available as possible to cover the approaches to each polling place. In the Sydney metropolitan area alone, a thorough election day organization would require perhaps 5,000 volunteer workers.[1] This presents a formidable organizational challenge, particularly since the party membership is not distributed equally throughout the area.[2] As we noted in Chapter IV, the Electorate Assistance Committee of the State Executive attempts to work out arrangements by which electorates with an excess of manpower donate volunteers to electorates needing them.

According to evaluations by party officials, as well as outside observers, the Liberal Party's election day organization was not adequate in either the federal or state election. The Australian Liberal reported after the federal

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[1] The figure of 5,000 workers assumes that 4 volunteers working in 6-hour shifts are required at each polling place. The polls are open for 12 hours (8 a.m. — 8 p.m.). All elections are held on Saturday. For a description of election day activities, see Overacker, op. cit., pp. 278-282.

[2] S. R. Tyler, a veteran of many Liberal campaigns, writes that "the enlistment and organising of polling booth workers always presents the campaign committee with a major headache. At no time are there sufficient volunteers available to fill all the vacant positions and to do all the multitude of small but important tasks." See Tyler, "Campaigning at the Grass Roots," Australian Political Studies Association News, February, 1961, p. 12.

election:

> The Federal poll and the poor manning of many booths...
> disclosed how members and the Party can suffer when
> organisation at the branch level is below possible strength.

> Some sitting Liberal members of both Federal and State
> Parliaments have done far too little to encourage and
> foster the growth of branches. On this Federal occasion
> they have received eloquent demonstration at the booths
> and elsewhere that organisation in the electorates is
> an essential factor in bringing out the maximum vote...

> It was noticeable in many strong Labor areas that
> Liberal workers were either badly out-numbered or
> missing entirely.[1]

Another observer commented:

> Some sitting Liberals were appalled at the extent to
> which they found, too late, that their branch membership
> had declined...As a result, some sitting members who
> had considered themselves reasonably safe found on polling
> day that half their tables weren't manned, and one minister
> found that his name had not even been displayed at several
> polling booths in his electorate.[2]

Reports like those just quoted indicate that the Liberal

organization on election day was generally disappointing.

Although the Liberals appeared to lose face, it is not clear

whether or not they lost votes, and if so, how many. Most

electorates, of course, are "safe" for one party or the other,

and it is unlikely that any number of workers could alter the

outcome. But as we noted earlier in this chapter, there were

two electorates, Phillip and Evans, in which Liberal incumbents

were defeated by very narrow margins. It is possible that a

more adequate organization on election day could have had an

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[1] AL, January, 1962, p. 1.

[2] D. Whittington, "Liberals in Disarray," Nation, January
27, 1962, p. 4.

impact, but it is more likely that the vote was a reflection
of the swing against the government. In the absence of
comparable data on both Liberal and Labor organizational
strength in the various electorates, it is impossible to
draw definitive conclusions.

In the state election, there is no evidence to suggest
that the Liberal organization performed better than in the
federal election three months before. The General Secretary
commented that "our polling-day organisation was no better
and no worse than usual in recent campaigns."[1] The General
Secretary also stated shortly after the state election:
"No amount of extra work in the electorates, whether in
polling day work or canvassing, could, in my judgment and
that of many, have altered the result at all."[2]

The General Secretary's conclusion appears to be
supported by the results in two electorates, Hurstville
and Kogarah, which differed significantly in organizational
resources. Hurstville was one of the few electorates in
which the branch development program had realized substantial
increases in party membership--from 70 to over 300 members.
According to a branch president in Hurstville:

> The Liberal organisation in the Hurstville
> electorate is at least twice as large as that
> of its opponents, and far more united, enthu-
> siastic and effective. Yet in the recent State
> election--with an excellent local candidate,
> a splendid organisation and more money than
> we have ever had--we only managed to reduce
> the overall Labour majority from 1,878 to 1,168.[3]

---

[1] Personal letter to me from J. L. Carrick, July 2, 1963.

[2] Personal letter to me from J. L. Carrick, May 28, 1962.

[3] R.Rathbone, quoted from letter to SMH, May 16, 1962.

In the southern suburban electorate of Kogarah, the Liberal candidate--a nonresident of the electorate-- found that "branch membership was pitifully small."[1] The candidate, Mr. J. R. Partridge, enlisted "the support of 40 of my personal friends from the Northern suburbs (not active Liberals) to help in leaflet distribution and on polling day."[2] According to Partridge, the electorate assistance program was little help:

> Electoral [sic] Assistance was very ineffective and quite horrifying to me...Our entire outside help on polling day was only six persons. There was no outside assistance at all for our three leaflet distributions, despite promises. Cash aid was meagre.[3]

In spite of the fact that Partridge was a stranger to the electorate, was nominated only four weeks before the elections, and had very limited resources with which to work, he was able to increase slightly the Liberal percentage of the vote (44.0) as compared to the previous election (43.3).

Again, on the basis of available data, it is difficult to draw conclusions on the impact of organization. Analysis of the state election is complicated further by changes in all but 8 electorate boundaries, thus precluding in most cases comparisons with previous elections. However, evidence from 2 electorates (Hurstville and Kogarah) with unchanged boundaries suggests that factors other than organizational resources have at least as much impact on election results.

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[1] J. R. Partridge, "Winning the Next State Election," AL, June, 1962, p. 12. Party membership records listed 233 members in Kogarah as of June, 1961. Most of these were evidently inactive.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid.

Summary

In this chapter we have examined the 1961 federal election campaign and the 1962 state election campaign in New South Wales. We have assumed that public office-holders, particularly the parliamentary leadership, dominate the development of campaign policy and strategy. We also assumed that office-holders determine strategy first of all by relating their appeals to what takes place in government, and secondly in response to their status as governing party or opposition party candidates. Thus, office-holders in control of government--as the Liberals were in 1961--tend to present themselves for re-election on the basis of their record, and avoid a wide range of new campaign promises which may repel more votes than are attracted. On the other hand, office-holders in opposition--as the New South Wales Liberals were in 1962--search for issues to discredit the government, and also tend to present a list of campaign promises to the voters in an attempt to hit upon a winning combination of campaign appeals.

In the 1961 federal campaign, the Labor Party was in the role of the challenger. The Labor parliamentary Leader, Mr. Calwell, focussed his attack on the alleged inability of the Menzies government to cope with economic problems in general, and unemployment in particular. If elected, Calwell pledged to wipe out unemployment within one year, and also promised a wide range of new or expanded social services-- all without increased taxes. Calwell promised further to shelve any Labor plans for nationalizing of major industries.

Prime Minister Menzies based the Liberal appeal for re-election "on the national and social achievements of the last decade", and refused to come forward "with a string of new promises." Menzies charged that Labor's programs were wildly irresponsible, and that Labor leaders lacked the experience or capability to manage Australian domestic and foreign policy. Menzies also claimed that unemployment was only temporary, and accused Calwell of manifying the problem.

In selecting campaign appeals for the Liberal Party, the Prime Minister assumed that the voters would remain faithful because of demonstrated competence in the past, and because of unattractive alternative leadership offered by the opposition party. The Leader of the Labor Party selected economic issues as the basis of Labor's challenge, and he kept up his attack at the point he perceived the government to be most vulnerable. Given the election outcome, it appeared that Calwell had made the better assessment. When the votes were counted, the government's 77-45 majority was reduced to a single seat.

The 1961 campaign involved an ironic juxtaposition of party "principles" and campaign appeals. The Liberal Party-- the party of private enterprise--was forced to defend its use of economic controls against attacks by both the Labor Party and commercial interests. The Labor Party, on the other hand, casually discarded its traditional socialist objective for the campaign, and offered programs designed to advance private enterprise.

In the 1962 state election, the Liberal Party found
itself in the role of challenger. The Liberal Leader, Mr.
Askin, charged that Labor's policies were "dreary, stale,
lacking in imagination, and defeatist about unemployment."
Taking a leaf out of Calwell's book, Askin then promised to
introduce a supplemental budget, expand public works programs,
and provide a broad range of improved health and welfare
services. Askin also took forthright positions on the contro-
versial issues of rent controls, state aid to private schools,
and off-course betting on horse races.

The Labor Premier, Mr. Heffron, stood firmly on the
record of his government, and attempted to play on the pre-
sumed unpopularity of the national Liberal government.
Heffron labelled the Liberals' ambitious programs as
"reckless, irresponsible", and impossible to implement;
however, the Labor governmnet then proceeded to enact during
the campaign parts of Liberal policy. With respect to
sensitive questions on which Labor had temporized in the past,
Heffron avoided the risk of taking definitive positions
during the campaign.

The voters' response to the party appeals was to return
the Labor government with an increased parliamentary majority.

We have seen in this chapter that office-seekers, regard-
less of party label, tend to define campaign positions in
relation to their perceived electoral consequences. Thus,
the campaign style and appeal used by the federal Liberal
Party and the state Labor Party were characteristic of

parties in power. Similarly, the federal Labor Party and the state Liberal Party adopted a campaign strategy typical of parties in opposition.

APPENDIX

SYDNEY METROPOLITAN AREA
STATE ELECTORATES
MAY, 1959

1. Blacktown (Liberal)
2. Hornsby (Liberal)
3. Collaroy (Liberal)
4. Manly (Liberal)
5. Mosman (Liberal)
6. Neutral Bay (Liberal)
7. North Sydney (Labor)
8. Willoughby (Liberal)
9. Lane Cove (Liberal)
10. Gordon (Liberal)
11. Ryde (Labor)
12. Eastwood (Liberal)
13. Parramatta (Labor)
14. Merrylands (Labor)
15. Granville (Labor)
16. Fairfield (Labor)
17. Liverpool (Labor)
18. Sutherland (Labor)
19. Cronulla (Liberal)
20. Georges River (Liberal)
21. East Hills (Labor)
22. Hurstville (Labor)
23. Kogarah (Labor)
24. Rockdale (Labor)

25. Earlwood (Liberal)
26. Lakemba (Labor)
27. Bankstown (Labor)
28. Auburn (Labor)
29. Concord (Labor)
30. Burwood (Liberal)
31. Canterbury (Labor)
32. Ashfield-Croydon (Liberal)
33. Drummoyne (Liberal)
34. Balmain (Labor)
35. King (Labor)
36. Leichhardt (Labor)
37. Dulwich Hill (Labor)
38. Marrickville (Labor)
39. Phillip (Labor)
40. Redfern (Labor)
41. Cook's River (Labor)
42. Maroubra (Labor)
43. Randwick (Labor)
44. Coogee (Liberal)
45. Paddington-Waverly (Labor)
46. Bondi (Labor)
47. Wollahra (Liberal)
48. Vaucluse (Liberal)

SYDNEY METROPOLITAN AREA
STATE ELECTORATES
APRIL, 1962

1. Blacktown (Labor)
2. The Hills (Liberal)
3. Hornsby (Liberal)
4. Collaroy (Liberal)
5. Wakehurst (Liberal)
6. Manly (Independent)
7. Mosman (Liberal)
8. Kirribilli (Liberal)
9. Willoughby (Liberal)
10. Gordon (Liberal)
11. Lane Cove (Liberal)
12. Ryde (Labor)
13. Eastwood (Liberal)
14. Parramatta (Labor)
15. Wentworthville (Labor)
16. Granville (Labor)
17. Fairfield (Labor)
18. Liverpool (Labor)
19. Bass Hill (Labor)
20. Auburn (Labor)
21. Concord (Labor)
22. Burwood (Liberal)
23. Drummoyne (Labor)
24. Balmain (Labor)
25. King (Labor)
26. Phillip (Labor)
27. Bligh (Labor)
28. Vaucluse (Liberal)
29. Bondi (Labor)
30. Coogee (Labor)
31. Randwick (Labor)
32. Redfern (Labor)
33. Marrickville (Labor)
34. Dulwich Hill (Labor)
35. Ashfield-Croyden (Labor)
36. Canterbury (Labor)
37. Bankstown (Labor)
38. East Hills (Labor)
39. Lakemba (Labor)
40. Georges River (Liberal)
41. Sutherland (Labor)
42. Cronulla (Liberal)
43. Kogarah (Labor)
44. Hurstville (Labor)
45. Earlwood (Liberal)
46. Rockdale (Labor)
47. Cook's River (Labor)
48. Maroubra (Labor)

NEW SOUTH WALES
STATE ELECTORATES
APRIL, 1962

1. **Sturt** (Labor)
2. Cobar (Labor)
3. Castlereagh (Labor)
4. Dubbo (Liberal)
5. Temora (Country)
6. Murrumbidgee (Labor)
7. Murray (Country)
8. Young (Country)
9. Wagga Wagga (Liberal)
10. Albury (Liberal)
11. Barwon (Country)
12. Upper Hunter (Labor)
13. Mudgee (Labor)
14. Orange (Country)
15. Bathurst (Labor)
16. Burrinjuck (Labor)
17. Goulburn (Labor)
18. Australian Capital Territory
19. Monaro (Labor)
20. Tenterfield (Country)
21. Tamworth (Country)
22. Casino (Country)

23. Byron (Country)
24. Lismore (Country)
25. Clarence (Country)
26. Armidale (Country)
27. Raleigh (Country)
28. Oxley (Liberal)
29. Gloucester (Country)
30. Maitland (Liberal)
31. Cessnook (Labor)
32-37. Newcastle area: Kurri Kurri, Waratah, Newcastle, Kahibah, Lake Macquarie, Hamilton (Labor)
38. Wyong (Labor)
39. Hartley (Labor)
40. Hawkesbury (Liberal)
41. Gosford (Liberal)
42-89. Sydney area: Liberal (15), Labor (32), Independent (1)
90. Nepean (Labor)
91. Wollondilly (Liberal)
92. Bulli (Labor)
93-94. Wollongong-Kembla, Illawarra (Labor)
95. South Coast (Liberal)

NEW SOUTH WALES

STATE ELECTORATES

APRIL, 1962

1. Mitchell (Labor)
2. Werriwa (Labor)
3. Robertson (Liberal)
4. Parramatta (Liberal)
5. Reid (Labor
6. Banks (Labor)
7. Bradfield (Liberal)
8. Bennelong (Liberal)
9. Blaxland (Labor)
10. Lowe (Liberal)
11. Lang (Labor)
12. Mackellar (Liberal)
13. North Sydney (Liberal)
14. Evans (Labor)
15. Dalley (Labor)
16. Parkes (Labor)
17. Grayndler (Labor)
18. St. George (Labor)
19. Barton (Labor)
20. Hughes (Labor)
21. Warringah (Liberal)
22. West Sydney (Labor)
23. Watson (Labor)
24. Wentworth (Liberal)
25. East Sydney (Labor)
26. East Sydney (Labor)
27. Kingsford-Smith (labor)

SYDNEY METROPOLITAN AREA

FEDERAL ELECTORATES

JANUARY, 1962

1. Darling (Labor)
2. Riverina (Country)
3. Gwydir (Country)
4. Lawson (Country)
5. Calare (Country)
6. Farrer (Liberal)
7. Hume (Country)
8. Australian Capital Territory (Labor)
9. New England (Country)
10. Paterson (Country)
11. Robertson (Liberal)
12. Macquarie (Labor)
13. Eden-Monaro (Country)
14. Richmond (Country)
15. Cowper (Labor)
16. Lyne (Country)
17. Hunter (Labor)
18. Newcastle (Labor)
19. Shortland (Labor)
20. Mitchell (Labor)
21—45. Sydney Area: Liberal (8), Labor (17)
46. Cunningham (Labor)
47. Macarthur (Liberal)
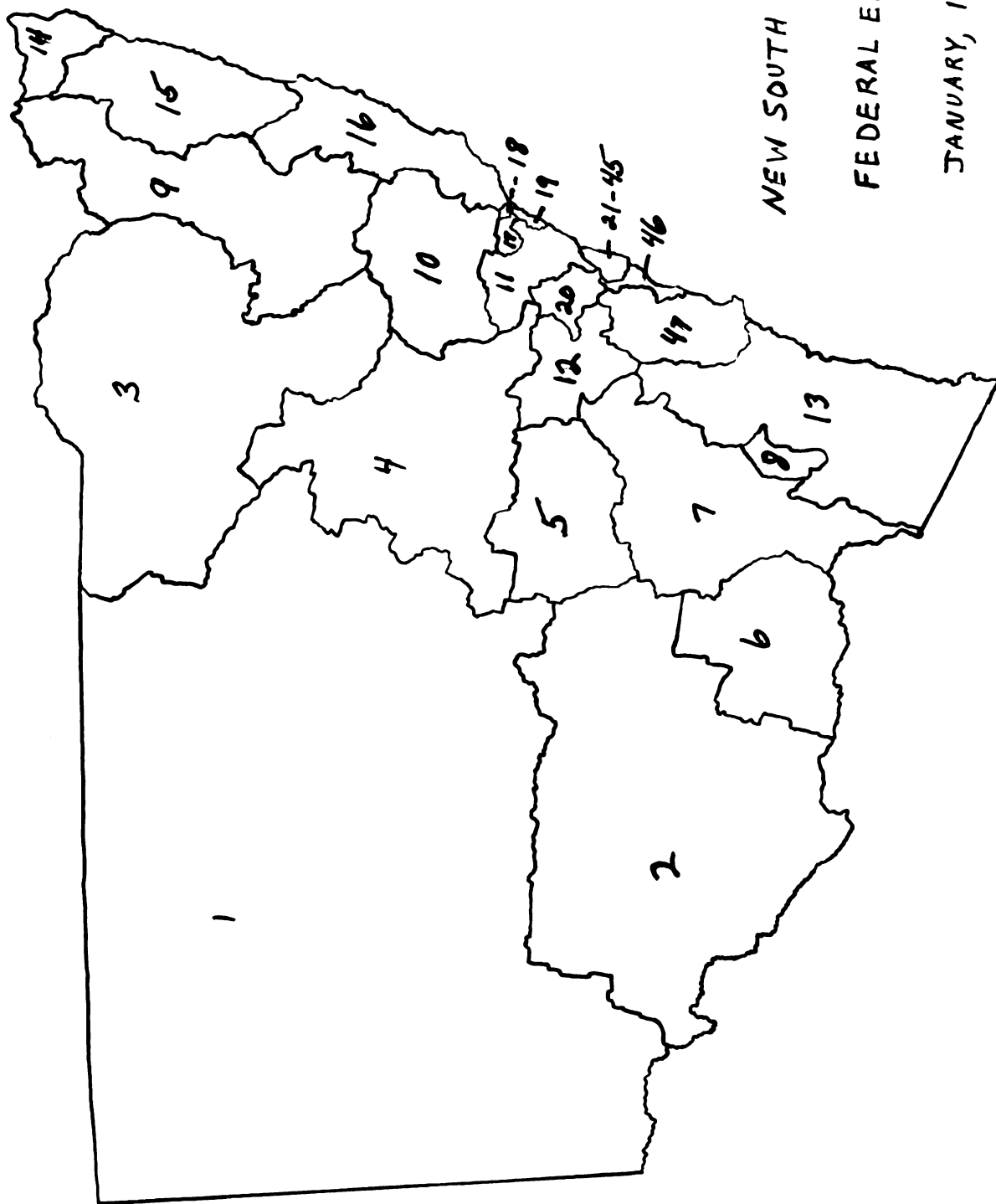
New South Wales

Federal Electorates

January, 1962

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