WHICH FLAG? WHICH COUNTRY?
AN AUSTRALIAN DILEMMA, 1901-1951

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ABSTRACT

Federation of the Australian colonies in 1901 signalled the birth of the Australian nation. Managing the ambiguities intensified by this new status, especially at the height of their commitment to the imperial war in South Africa, posed a challenge to Australians. They were an Australian nation within the British nation, an Australian Commonwealth within the British Empire. People of British descent in other dominions experienced a similar dilemma — a phenomenon historians have been slow to explore in comparative terms.

Flags are the most obvious markers of nationality. They are at the centre of this thesis, which explores Australians' negotiation of the double loyalty in the first fifty years of federation. The Union Jack was a powerful national symbol, representing the might of the British, whether in Empire or Britain, but more particularly the power of England and its liberal political traditions. Dominated by the cross of St George, the warrior patron saint of England, the Union Jack ultimately symbolised English ethnicity and Protestantism. By contrast, the Australian ensigns were ambiguous national symbols. Designed shortly after federation, with the Union Jack in the place of honour in the upper hoist, they were both colonial and national. Not until 1953 did legislation establish unequivocally which ensign was Australia's national flag.

Such ambiguity makes flags and the conflict they provoked useful markers of Australians' changing perceptions of nationality, especially in the wider imperial context as other dominions struggled with a similar dilemma. Schools, particularly State schools, provide a particularly appropriate focus for this study. Through them the thesis explains why Australians were reluctant to use an Australian flag, and why their reluctance varied from State to State.
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ABBREVIATIONS

AA Australian Archives
ACT Australian Capital Territory
ANA Australian Natives' Association
AO Archives of Ontario
AONSW Archives Office of New South Wales
ADB Australian Dictionary of Biography
AW Australian Worker
BCARS British Columbia Archives and Records Service
BEL British Empire League
CARPA Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs
DT Daily Telegraph
EG Education Gazette
EGTA Education Gazette and Teachers' Aid
GAR Grand Army of the Republic
IODE Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire
MDHC Melbourne Diocesan Historical Commission
ML Mitchell Library
NAC National Archives of Canada
NLA National Library of Australia
NLC National Library of Canada
NSW New South Wales
PROV Public Record Office Victoria
QLD Queensland
RSL Returned Soldiers' League, the common title of the main returned soldiers' organisation, known more formally as the RSSILA: the Returned Sailors' and Soldiers' Imperial League of Australia. For later changes in name see Chapter 6, note 52.
SA South Australia
SAA Sydney Archdiocesan Archives
SSLM Mortlock Library of South Australiana
SRSA State Records of South Australia
SMH Sydney Morning Herald
Vic. Victoria
WA Western Australia
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INTRODUCTION

In April 1951 the Australian government presented an Australian flag to all schools for a ceremony to mark the celebration of fifty years of federation. It was the blue Commonwealth Ensign\(^1\) (fig. 1), only a few weeks before designated the Australian National Flag.

![Image of Australian National Flag](image)

Fig. 1. The Australian National Flag, known in its earlier form as the Commonwealth Ensign or the Commonwealth Blue Ensign. (John Christian Vaughan, Flags of Australia, chart, Rozelle, NSW, Standard Publishing House, 1983)

Accompanying the flag was a certificate, drafted by the war historian Charles Bean, modified by the Prime Minister's Department, and signed by the Prime Minister, Robert Menzies, explaining the significance of the gift.\(^2\) Six colonies, it said, had united to become one nation in 1901 as indicated by the symbols of Federation Star and Southern Cross designed later that year. But the concluding

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1Throughout the thesis I use the terms Ensign and Merchant Flag from the first warrant of 1902 to denote the Australian blue and red ensigns, Commonwealth of Australia Gazette, 20 Feb. 1903, opposite p. 94, 22 May 1909, opposite p. 1124, and 23 Mar. 1934, opposite p. 512.

2Flag Certificate, emphasis added, GRG 18/2/1950/1706, State Records of South Australia (hereafter SRSA); F.H. Berryman, Director-General of Commonweahlth Jubilee Celebrations, to Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, 15 Feb. 1951, with Bean's draft attached, CRS A461/7 0317/6, Australian Archives (ACT), (hereafter AA (ACT)).
paragraph contained a puzzle which teachers, if not children, might have pondered at their flag ceremony on an autumn day:

For over fifty years ... our flag has flown over the Australian people ... I know that it will have a place of honour at your School and I confidently hope that as the years go by those children who pass through your School will be taught to know and to cherish the flag.\(^3\)

Why was it now necessary to present an Australian flag to schools if it had flown over its people for fifty years? Had it not been honoured in schools before?

In 1901 State schools\(^4\) had been involved in a ceremony with a different flag. At precisely 12.50 pm on 14 May, as the national flag, the Union Jack\(^5\) (fig. 2) rose above the Exhibition Building in Melbourne, a telegraph message flashed along the wires as a signal to participating State schools around Australia to raise their Union Jacks.

Fig. 2. The Union Jack, national flag of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland from 1801 and the flag of the British Empire.

\((Vaughan, \textit{Flags of Australia})\)

Localities made their own arrangements to relay the message. In Newcastle boys with flags were stationed on routes between telegraph office and local schools to signal the arrival of the Melbourne message. The occasion was the

\(^3\)Emphasis added.

\(^4\)These were publicly-funded schools, as distinct from what I term private schools. See also note 3 of Chapter 2.

\(^5\)Although it was formally known as the Union Flag, I mostly use the more common term throughout the thesis. The name derives from the small flag denoting nationality worn on the jackstaff at a warship's bow. \textit{Oxford Dictionary}. 
celebration of the opening of the first parliament of the new Commonwealth of Australia. Paradoxically it was federation, said to be the birth of the Australian nation, which introduced the Union Jack into State schools: an invented tradition which became the focal point of their ceremonial life.

The transition in school flags from the national flag to the Australian National Flag was not sudden in 1951, though a first reading of Menzies' message might suggest that it was. Right from the time of the first ceremony in 1901 schools began making that transition when a few of them flew an Australian flag instead of, or as well as, the Union Jack. Since there was then no official Commonwealth flag, they had flown the flag of the federation campaign, variously referred to as the Federal flag, the Australian flag, even the Commonwealth flag (fig. 3).

![Flag](image)

Fig. 3. The Federal Flag: the flag of the federation campaign, originally known as the New South Wales Ensign from its design in 1831. (Vaughan, *Flags of Australia*)

More than fifty years later, even after the federal government's presentation of Australian flags to schools, the transition continued. In South Australia, where the Union Jack was the flag saluted each week, the minister of education reassured his director in 1953 that the acceptance of Australian flags from the federal government placed the department under no obligation to use them. He ruled 'that on all normal occasions the Union Jack shall be flown ... and that the use of the Australian flag shall be limited to special occasions and on Australia
Day'. His statement underlined the dominion dilemma which faced Australians during the first fifty years of federation and even later. What was the most appropriate symbol of their nationality? Were they British or Australian? Neither alternative seemed quite right for a people who regarded themselves as both.

Federation in 1901 had signalled the birth of the Australian nation, a status later reinforced by the achievements of Australian soldiers in World War I. Managing the ambiguities intensified by this new status posed a challenge to Australians: they were an Australian nation within the British nation, an Australian Commonwealth within the British Empire. People of British descent in other dominions experienced a similar dilemma, stimulated in part by the unification process and the war: Canada's confederation, which from 1867 expanded to include all of British North America; New Zealand's quasi-federation of 1852, strengthened by the abolition of the provincial governments in 1876; and South Africa's union of 1910. In South Africa, where Afrikaners were developing their own language and literature, Britons' pride in the culture of the English language qualified attachment to their native land: they had the 'inherited curse of a double loyalty'. In the more recent European settlements of Australia and New Zealand where nearly everybody spoke English and felt British, unlike in Canada and South Africa, the two allegiances were especially closely entwined. Australians' celebration of federation at the height of their commitment to the imperial war in South Africa vividly illustrated the strength of the affiliation. This circumstance makes Australians' negotiation of the 'double loyalty' potentially illuminating for historians with an interest in questions of national identity.

6 Minister to Director of Education, in response to the latter's query of 26 Mar. 1953 regarding the federal government's further offer of Australian flags to schools opening after 9 May 1951 and the implications for departmental policy, GRG 18/2/1950/1706, SRSA.

7 Hancock's striking phrase addressed the dilemma of English-speaking South Africans challenged by Afrikaners after 1902 to place the interests of South Africa before those of the Empire, W.K. Hancock, Smuts: vol. 1 The Sanguine Years 1870-1919, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1962, p. 357.
State schools and their tradition of saluting the flag were at the centre of this negotiation. The ritual had been borrowed and adapted from the Canadians, who had taken it from the Americans. In both cases the ritual had been devised to mark a special occasion — Columbus Day in the United States in 1892 and Empire Day in Canada in 1899 — but it became a regular, even compulsory, part of school life. So in Australia, saluting the flag, introduced into State schools to celebrate federation in 1901, became the focal point of school ritual. For Americans the choice of flag had been obvious: the flag of the republic. But for a dominion, with its own flag as well as the Union Jack, the choice was problematic. Similarly with the words recited. Canadians, unlike the Americans, had to grapple with the ambiguities of 'Empire' and 'country'. For Americans the words of 1892 were relatively straightforward:

I pledge allegiance to my flag and the republic for which it stands — one nation indivisible — with liberty and justice for all.\(^8\)

In the State of New York some schools were using an earlier form:

We give our Heads! — and our Hearts! — to God! and our Country! One Country! One Language! One Flag!\(^9\)

Canadians made appropriate adaptations, replacing 'republic' and 'nation' with 'Empire':

I pledge allegiance to my Flag and to the Empire for which it stands, — one Empire, indivisible, with Liberty and Justice for all.\(^10\)

They gave monarchy a central place — without the lively exclamation marks:

We give our heads and our hearts to God and our Country — One Flag, One Fleet, One Throne.

Australians faced a similar dilemma.

Victoria more than the other Australian States illustrated the Australian dilemma. Its capital had been the centre of federal celebrations in May 1901 and


\(^9\)George T. Balch, *Methods and a Patriotic Primer for the Little Citizen*, Indianapolis, William B. Burford, 1895, quoted by Guenter, ibid, p. 117.

\(^10\)Canadian Teacher, 1 May 1914, pp. 1079-1080.
continued until 1927 as the temporary capital of the new federation. Its government was the first to make the flag ceremony compulsory in State schools, children reciting at the beginning of each week the words

I love God and my country;
I honour the flag;
I will serve the King, and cheerfully obey my parents, teachers, and the laws.11

'The flag' was the Union Jack. Yet only the previous month, September 1901, the panel of judges appointed by the federal government had chosen a design for two Australian ensigns, a choice confirmed by the British government in 1902 and gazetted in 1903. Other States adapted for their schools the 'initiation rites' established in Victoria.12 From 1903, then, at both federal and State levels, Australians had to decide which flag, British or Australian, they would fly. If they used both, which would they give the place of honour on the left flagpole outside public buildings (fig. 4a), at the head of a procession, or on the left with its staff in front when flags were crossed (fig. 4b)?

This study of Australian nationality begins with these questions. My interest is in using the national flag, the symbol which above all others represents the national identity, to chart Australians' redefinition of nationality as Australian rather than British. Such a study brings into sharper focus a problem which has concerned historians, not only in Australia but also in other British dominions, and more recently in Britain itself. The Canadian historian Douglas Cole has termed it 'the problem of "nationalism" and "imperialism" in British settlement colonies', the problem of defining a dominion's identity — its national identity — apart from its British or imperial identity.13 In Australia Geoffrey Serle has addressed the same difficulty: 'Part of the difficulty' he wrote, 'lies in the word "nationalism" itself, which is as ambiguous as

11Supplement, Education Gazette and Teachers' Aid, Oct. 1901.
12Charles Hanly used the term to describe children being 'gradually "born" into the tribe', 'A Psychoanalysis of Nationalist Sentiment', in Peter Russell (ed.), Nationalism in Canada, Toronto, McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1966, p. 310. See Appendix 1 for declarations of allegiance in some Australian States.
"imperialism" and which historians have failed to elucidate in the Australian context'.

Figs 4a and 4b. Positions of honour when more than one flag is displayed.


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Flags and schools provide a particularly appropriate context for charting Australian nationality because they link local, State and federal levels. Yet they have been largely ignored by historians of nationalism in Australia. However, defining the limits of that context has been difficult, with regard to both place and time. At first I thought of confining the study to the Australian States. That would emphasise the responses of the six State governments, the managers of flags in State schools, as they variously mediated the issue of nationality between local communities and the federal government. But should I exclude private schools, which formed a significant sector of Australia's education system? They offered a striking contrast, particularly through the different interplay of class, religion, ethnicity, and gender.

Limiting the study to Australia, moreover, would exclude the wider imperial, and the still wider Anglo-Celtic, context within which Australians lived. To understand Australian decisions about flags and nationality one cannot ignore that wider context, that 'expanding zone of cultural conflict and creation' which J.G.A. Pocock justifiably recommended to those researching British history. Australian States followed the precedent of a flag ceremony in schools set by the Canadians, who had been influenced by the Americans. The Australian federal government more than once sought information from the wider imperial network, especially from Canada and New Zealand, in attempting to resolve problems associated with 'the national flag'. The Canadians reciprocated. The ambiguity surrounding the relationship between the Union Jack and the dominion flag troubled all the dominions between 1901 and 1951, though New Zealand and South Africa settled it more quickly than Australia and Canada. Citizenship was a similar problem because of its association with the concept of the British subject. Even in Britain there was confusion about flags, the Union Jack and the red ensign, confusion noted in

both Canada and Australia. Material from this wider context seemed integral to Australian developments.

This study, then, primarily concerns Australia but draws selectively on the wider Anglo-Celtic context for the kind of comparison which, Ged Martin argues, 'stretches the historian's knowledge'.\(^{16}\) David Lowenthal makes a similar point: 'comparisons reveal, parallels instruct'.\(^{17}\) Within Australia my interest is in the two largest States, New South Wales and Victoria, and South Australia, the fourth largest, which serves as a contrast.\(^{18}\) In religious and ethnic terms South Australia was distinguished from all other Australian States by having the fewest Catholics (mainly Irish in descent) and the most Lutherans (mainly of German descent).\(^{19}\) I examine the three other States, Queensland, Western Australia and Tasmania, so far as developments there affected those of the central States. Private schools are very diverse. I have used a range of their source material for the three main States to comment on themes in the critical period 1901-1916. Beyond Australia I have drawn on the experience of the other dominions, particularly Canada, and also that of the United States and Britain. That has necessitated selecting representative evidence. Governments and organisations at national, provincial/State, and local levels influenced the use of flags in schools. In Canada, for example, to understand the flag question fully means looking at the ten provinces which shared control of education with local school boards, as well as the dominion as a whole. To some extent the largest province, Ontario, can be taken as representative because of its dominant influence within Canada, particularly English-speaking Canada.


\(^{19}\)In 1911, just before the critical period of World War I, South Australia's Catholic percentage of 14.1 was much smaller than the 20+ percentages of all other states, except Tasmania (17.1 per cent). Similarly its Lutheran percentage was much larger at 6.5 per cent: all other States had less than 1 per cent (except Queensland with 4 per cent). Caldwell, 'Population', and W.W. Phillips, 'Religion' in Vamplew (ed.), *Australians: Historical Statistics*, pp. 26, 421-426.
Through this study of the Australian flag at federal, State and local levels, I seek to answer two questions about Australian nationality. Why were Australians reluctant to use the Australian flag, to assert their Australian nationality? Why did this reluctance vary from State to State? Federal governments struggled with the issue of nationality from the time of federation to the *Flags Act* of 1953 and even beyond. They hesitated, despite the encouragement of a resolution by the House of Representatives in 1904, to fly the Australian Ensign from their buildings. Later in 1924 regulations intended to clarify the use of Australian flags in relation to the Union Jack and the State flags only served to confuse the issue further. State and local governments experienced similar difficulties. Such reluctance might be thought to relate to Australia's ambiguous national status as a dominion within the British Empire, which was reflected in its two ensigns, the blue Ensign for naval and official purposes and the red Merchant Flag (figs 5a and 5b). These, it could be argued, were not national flags but ensigns, with the national flag, the Union Jack, in the place of honour in the upper hoist.

Figs 5a and 5b. The Commonwealth Ensign (left) and Merchant Flag (right) as gazetted in 1903. (Vaughan, *Flags of Australia*)

A closer examination, however, of the issue of Australian nationality and the Australian flag, as played out at State and local levels, especially in State schools, indicates that this reluctance involved more than a clarification of
national sovereignty. The difference in approach taken by governments in Victoria and South Australia, where the flag ceremony was compulsory from the time it was introduced, illustrates the point. In Victoria the government required the Union Jack to be used when the ceremony began in 1901, but later allowed the local committees providing the flags to use an Australian flag instead if they wished. By contrast, South Australian governments continued to insist from 1911 when the ceremony was established, ten years later than in Victoria, that the Union Jack must be used.

South Australia's difference concerned not only the Union Jack but also the words which accompanied it in the ceremony. Unlike other States which used an oath or declaration, South Australia changed the words several times between 1911 and 1956 in an attempt to clarify the issue of nationality. In 1911 the oath was a fairly simple statement:

I love my country.
I honour her King.
I will cheerfully obey her laws.20

Two significant additions were made during World War I to remove any ambiguity with regard to country and flag. 'Country' now meant Empire, not Australia; 'her flag' was the Union Jack not the Australian flag:

I love my country (the British Empire);
I honour her King (George V);
I salute her flag (the Union Jack);
I promise cheerfully to obey her laws.21

Governments gradually retreated from this position, allowing principals of schools early in 1939 to introduce the preamble, 'I am an Australian', if they wished, then in 1956 to fly the Australian National Flag instead of the Union Jack.22 By 1956 the oath reverted to what in substance it had been in 1911; but the segment on the flag, now unspecified, remained:

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21ibid., Oct. 1916, p. 224. See Appendix 2 for changes in words of the South Australian declaration between 1911 and 1956.
I am an Australian.
I love my country.
I honour her Queen.
I salute her flag.
I promise to obey her laws.

Why had Victorian governments been willing for the Australian flag to be used instead of the Union Jack, whereas South Australian governments had not until 1956? Clearly the impact of World War I was critical in strengthening the role of the British symbol of nationality in South Australian schools. But why should this be so when the same war highlighted the Victorian government's acceptance of the Australian flag?

The choice of flags for schools was obviously a sensitive matter and the two States developed different conventions for handling it. The South Australian government simply required the Union Jack to be used, at least until 1956; there was no choice. In Victoria the government left the choice to local committees. However, although the Victorian approach helped avoid controversy, dissatisfaction over the choice of flags for schools eventually led the State government to take up the question with the federal government. The difficulty for local committees was in choosing not only between the Australian and British flags, but also between the two Australian flags. The convention followed by flag manufacturers, one which no one could explain, was that schools could fly the red Merchant Flag not the blue Ensign, since only the federal government was believed to have the right to use that flag. To clarify this convention the Victorian government acted in 1939, so beginning a process which culminated in the Ensign being designated the Australian National Flag in 1950 and confirmed in legislation in 1953. Victoria at the time of federation had led Australians to introduce Union Jacks into schools; now almost fifty years later it led them to acknowledge the Australian National Flag.

It will have become clear that those years, marked by the two sets of school ceremonies in 1901 and 1951, provide an appropriate period for this
study. A shorter period, say from 1901 to 1925, would have allowed a more intensive exploration of the impact of World War I and its aftermath, critical years in the development of Australian ideas about nationality. But the dilemma experienced in Victoria in relation to the Australian flag, particularly after that war, only became clear during the 1930s and was not satisfactorily resolved until 1953. This point illustrates the need to see 1901 and 1951 as rough markers. The distinctiveness of the South Australian example was consolidated in the 1950s. At the other end, the 1890s saw the establishment of American and Canadian flag traditions which became precedents for Australians.

In Chapter 1 I consider the Australian dilemma, the emergence of an Australian nation out of a British/English nation, in the context of discussion by historians and theorists about nationality, particularly in relation to colonial off-shoots of Britain. Research suggests the potential of using flags in Australian schools to explore the relationship between class, religion, ethnicity and gender, on the one hand, and nationality on the other. Setting this study in the wider Anglo-Celtic world gives it a comparative edge — hopefully a spur to further research both within and between countries. The ritual of saluting the Union Jack, begun in Victoria and adopted more widely to mark Australian State schools' celebration of federation in May 1901 in the midst of an imperial war, is the subject of Chapter 2. It links the earlier Canadian and American precedents of nation-building through flags in schools with Australian federation and the search for an Australian flag at a time of continuing rivalry between Victoria and New South Wales. State, rather than private, schools — for boys especially — were the target of attempts to place the Union Jack in schools. Here I explore why this was so, particularly in relation to concepts of citizenship and nationality being considered by the new federal government and society generally. In Chapter 3 I explain how Empire Day, another adaptation from Canada, reinforced the ritual of the Union Jack in Australian schools, again in State rather than private schools, at a time of continuing uncertainty about the
Introduction

newly-gazetted Australian flags and growing political antagonism between Labor and non-Labor. Not until 1911, as I show in Chapter 4, was there a significant attempt to displace the Union Jack in schools with the Australian flag. Coming from the Irish-born Catholic archbishop of Sydney at a time of intense sectarianism, it served to enhance the Union Jack as a unifying rather than divisive symbol for most Australians.

World War I shaped the struggle over flags in contradictory ways as Chapter 5 reveals. On the one hand the feats of Australians in war and the desire of governments to maintain them encouraged the promotion of Australian flags. In Victoria and New South Wales there was growing acceptance of these flags in schools. On the other hand war increased ethnic animosities within Australia, particularly in South Australia, the State with the largest German-speaking minority. There it reinforced the role of the Union Jack. Flags were at the centre of the ethnic, religious and ideological disputes of the immediate postwar years, especially in Victoria and New South Wales. The analysis of St Patrick's Day and May Day in Chapter 6 underlines the ambiguity with which an Australian flag had come to be regarded in the Australian community, a suspicious symbol unless accompanied by the Union Jack. In the early 1920s the federal government attempted to clarify the status of Australian flags. Its failure, as Chapter 7 shows, created a problem for the Victorian government, whose solution in 1939 ultimately forced the federal government to remove restrictions on the use of the Ensign.

The thesis ends with the decision of the federal government to present an Australian flag to all schools, State and private, to mark the jubilee of federation — a corollary of that decision was the re-naming of the Ensign as the Australian National Flag. It had taken fifty years for an Australian flag to become a legitimate national symbol for Australians, as confirmed in the Flags Act of 1953. Even so, this transition in symbolism and the nationality it represented continued: most obviously in the guarantee of the Flags Act to Australians of
their right to fly the Union Jack; but also in the Union Jack retaining its place of honour on the Australian flag. The transition continues, as can be seen most vividly in the current debates about the place of the Union Jack on the Australian flag, and the place of the monarchy in Australia's constitution. At the centre of this transition are the symbols and the traditions they represent. On the one hand the Union Jack symbolised the union of the three British nationalities (the English, Scottish and Irish),\textsuperscript{23} the older English tradition of individual liberty, and the newer British tradition of naval power. On the other hand the Federation Star stood for the still more recent federation of the six Australian States, and the Southern Cross marked their different hemisphere.

But the symbolism went further. The red cross of the Union Jack, representing St George, the warrior patron saint of England, a powerful Protestant symbol with roots in mythical times, dominated the smaller crosses of the Scots and the Irish (fig. 6). Similarly the Southern Cross, as a constellation in the fly rather than in the form of St George's Cross, spoke of Victorian (fig. 7) rather than New South Wales (figs 8a and 8b) influence, and of moderation rather than the radicalism associated with the Eureka Flag (fig. 9). Australians, in considering an Australian national flag, had to negotiate the ethnic, colonial and ideological tensions associated with the different symbols and their traditions. In particular they had to decide whether an Australian flag, where the Federation Star and Southern Cross accompanied the Union Jack, was an adequate replacement for the Union Jack as a national flag.

\textsuperscript{23}The three crosses of the Union Jack represent the three nationalities: the red cross of St George, patron saint of England, on a white ground; the white saltire (diagonal cross) of St Andrew, patron saint of Scotland, on a blue ground; and the red saltire of St Patrick, patron saint of Ireland, on a white ground.
Introduction

The Union Flag—commonly called the "Union Jack." Red—Vertical Lines; White—Plain Spaces; Blue—Horizontal Lines.

Fig. 6. The dominance of the St George's Cross seen in the dimensions of the Union Jack publicising the flag scheme of 1901.

(The National Flag For Schools', Education Gazette and Teachers' Aid, Nov. 1900, p. 80)

Fig. 7. The Flag of Victoria with the Southern Cross constellation, which dates from 1870, the crown being added in 1877.

(Vaughan, Flags of Australia)
Figs 8a and 8b. The Federal Flag of the 1890s (left) with the blue St George's Cross bearing five white stars, and the New South Wales Flag of 1876, (right) with the red St George's Cross bearing four stars and a lion in gold.

(Vaughan, Flags of Australia)

Fig. 9. The Eureka Flag of 1854, the flag of the miners' rebellion in Victoria. Note the absence of the Union Jack in the upper hoist.

(Vaughan, Flags of Australia), and Len Fox, The Eureka Flag, Potts Point, NSW, Len Fox, 1992)
COUNTRY AND EMPIRE: A DOMINION DILEMMA

'I love God and my country', Victorian children pledged from 1901. The more consciously secular South Australians simply said 'I love my country', when they began taking the oath in 1911. The variable meanings associated with 'country' made it a convenient word to use: it could mean simply Victoria, South Australia, Australia, or England, Britain or the Empire. In Canada children pledged allegiance to 'the Empire' or 'our Country': the intended meaning was the same. On war memorials in Australia and New Zealand after World War I 'Country' and 'Empire' appeared interchangeably, never together, in the phrases, 'For King and Country', 'For King and Empire'. The ambiguity associated with the words served politicians and school administrators in Victoria well and, at least for a short time, in South Australia. In 1916, however, they found it necessary to define 'country' more precisely, restricting its meaning to Empire: 'I love my country (the British Empire)', a meaning they did not change until 1956.

The 1916 change in South Australia is instructive, especially when it was accompanied by the addition of 'I salute my flag (the Union Jack)'. Understanding 'country' to mean Australia was no longer acceptable as I will explain in Chapter 5. Here this extreme reaction serves to illustrate how the pressure of war stretched the ambiguity of 'country' to breaking point. 'In no other State of the Commonwealth ... did patriotism run mad like it did here', Leonard Hopkins, the newly-elected Labor member for Barossa, electorate of

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1Canadian Teacher, 1 May 1914, p. 1080.
many German-speaking South Australians, later observed in 1924. Paradoxically, the insistence in 1916 that 'country' could only mean 'Empire' occurred just at the time 'My Country', Dorothea MacKellar's poem, first published under that title in 1911, became 'one of the best-known' in Australia.

It was a passionate declaration of her love for Australian rather than English landscape. Other Australian States with school pledges which included 'country', indeed the phrase 'my country', did not follow the South Australian example. The word continued to serve their purpose, merging the meaning of State, country and Empire.

The two words 'country' and 'Empire' illustrate the dominion dilemma: while they could be, and were, used interchangeably, neither satisfactorily conveyed the complexity of dominion status. A dominion was a country, dependent but autonomous, which identified with the Empire. There was another term, equally ambiguous, which could have been used in dominion pledges: 'nation'. The American pledge was not simply to the flag and the republic but to 'one nation indivisible'. In Australia the South Australian 'optional preamble' of 1939, 'I am an Australian', came closest to a statement of Australian nationality, though it was immediately qualified by 'I love my country, the British Empire'. For dominion populations, especially those of British descent, 'nation' had a double meaning: Australian, for instance, but also British, even English. This ambiguity has made the study of nationality in the dominions unusually difficult.

Dominion Nationalism: A Historiographical Problem

The transition from British dominion to nation state has rarely interested historians and theorists of nationalism as the most recent surveys by Anthony

4South Australia Parliamentary Debates (hereafter SAPD) 1924, vol. 1, 7 Aug. 1924, p. 162. Soon afterwards Hopkins introduced a bill to allow Lutheran schools, closed by the Education Act of 1916, to re-open.
5The poem, written about 1904, was first published as 'Core of My Heart' in Spectator (London), 5 Sept. 1908, 'Isobel Marion Dorothea Mackellar', Australian Dictionary of Biography (hereafter ADB), vol. 10, p. 298.
Smith and E.J. Hobsbawm indicate. Hughes Seton-Watson's earlier work was a significant exception. For the most part, studies of dominion nationalism have been left to historians of the dominions. Douglas Cole, a Canadian historian, took up the challenge of what he called in 1971 'the problem of "nationalism" and "imperialism" in British settlement colonies'. He argued that there were 'no definitions, no analytic descriptions, no models, no ideal-types appropriate to nationalism in settlement colonies', but rather 'a continued, even an increased, amount of semantic and conceptual confusion'.

Against the background of his study of Canadian pamphleteer, John S. Ewart, Cole took issue in particular with Carl Berger's view that 'imperialism was one form of Canadian nationalism'. Charles Grimshaw in the Australian context had, more than a decade earlier, expressed a similar view: 'by 1900 ... a form of Empire imperialism became a component of the nationalism of possibly the majority of Australians'. Cole's plea was for a clearer conceptualisation of 'nation' and 'nationalism' on the one hand, and 'state' and 'patriotism' on the other. 'Nationalism', he argued was essentially 'the consciousness of being an ethnically differentiated people', whereas 'patriotism' was 'loyalty to a political state and the geographic territory circumscribed by that state'. His attempt to separate Canadian nationalism from British nationalism was one he did not expect many historians would accept. He was right to be sceptical. As Anthony Smith observed, 'there is general agreement that there can be no once-for-all

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6EG, May 1939, p. 144.
10Ibid., p. 161.
definition of the key terms "nation" and "nationalism".\textsuperscript{14} Eugene Kamenka found nationalism 'impossibly fuzzy: threatening to merge into patriotism or national consciousness at one end and fascism and anti-individualism at the other'.\textsuperscript{15} Karl Deutsch, whose work provided the basis of Cole's two definitions, had himself recognised their blurring.\textsuperscript{16} More recently J.H. Grainger suggested differentiating instead 'between kinds of patriotisms and to think of nationalism as an historical category, patriotism in its latest \textit{locus} or "form"'.\textsuperscript{17}

Historians and sociologists have attempted to separate the political and cultural aspects of the concepts, yet, as their definitions of nationalism reveal, they have continued to draw on both.\textsuperscript{18} Perhaps the most that can be said of the distinction between patriotism and nationalism is that the latter is often used as a more specific concept with a less respectable reputation.\textsuperscript{19} It is not surprising that John Eddy and Deryck Schreuder should conclude that Cole's attempt to distinguish between the two had 'remained a lonely theoretical venture'.\textsuperscript{20} Certainly no one rose to the challenge he posed, though some Canadian historians drew on his work.\textsuperscript{21} The problem, Eddy and Schreuder suggested, was that 'social scientists have simply not quite known how to characterise "nationalisms" which were essentially qualified by atavistic colonial attachments, through kinship and sentiment as much as through finance,

commerce and defence policies, to the metropolitan heart of that empire'. But the same social scientists have also been slow to associate nationalism with Britons, the English especially, at the very heart of their Empire. Gerald Newman pointed out that in Smith's list of 'every "Developed Nationalist Movement" known to scholarship ... neither "English" nor "British" appear[ed]'. That situation changed in the 1980s, whether stimulated by Pocock's plea for a wider context for studying British history or by a range of political problems in Britain associated with European federalism, the multiculturalism brought by Commonwealth immigrants, and the Welsh and Scottish nationalist movements.

My interest is not so much in nationalism (particularly when it is defined as a principle or movement), as in nationality, 'the quality of belonging to a nation', referred to more recently as 'national identity'. These terms, however, as K.S. Inglis showed in his lexical lecture in 1988, are barely less slippery than 'nationalism'. For Smith, nationality was 'the heart of the debate' between the two opposites suggested by Cole's definitions: a concern, on the one hand, with 'the legal status of citizenship'; and, on the other, with 'ethnic grouping'. Smith's work favoured ethnicity as the basis of nationality though he did not

22 Eddy and Schreuder, 'Introduction', p. 3.
25 Gellner defined nationalism as 'primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent' (Nations, p. 1), a definition Hobsbawm accepted (Nations, p. 9), and Smith as 'the activities and beliefs of the nationalist movement' (Nationalism', p. 22).
26 Ibid., p. 17.
exclude citizenship altogether. By 'ethnicity' he meant the quality of belonging which related to 'not "racial" but those elements of a group's culture which derive from its alleged origins and history'.

Ethnic or cultural considerations were also important to Ernest Gellner and Benedict Anderson in understanding nationality as an 'artefact'. For Anderson especially, a nation was 'an imagined political community', whose formation was best understood in terms of 'the large cultural systems that preceded it, out of which — as well as against which — it came into being'.

For my purposes, Anderson's work directs attention to how Australians imagined or constructed their nationality, not only in reaction to, but also in identification with, the wider British context, and how that construct changed over time. It involves exploring a range of tensions: between the 'real Australian' and the 'good Australian'; between the mottoes 'Advance Australia', 'Australia for the Australians' and 'Australia first within the Empire'; and between the symbols of the Southern Cross and Federation Star, and the crosses of the Union Jack, especially the red English St George's Cross. The discourse or narration of the nation and nationality, what Homi Bhabha of the University of Chicago called 'study[ing] the nation through its narrative address', becomes important. Using a poststructuralist perspective he was interested as much in 'the unconscious as a language' as in language itself, in 'the complex strategies of cultural identification and discursive address that function in the name of ... "the nation"'.

Bhabha's 'cultural identification', Anderson's 'cultural systems', and Smith's 'mythologies and symbolisms' associated with 'older ethnic concepts and structures' all point to the conscious and unconscious shaping of
nationality. They are reminders 'that many of the most powerful effects of nationalist discourse operate at a level below that of any explicit and easily historicizable political programme'.\(^{35}\) Linda Colley has imaginatively analysed the construction of British nationality in Britain in terms of older loyalties. 'Identities', she argued, 'are not like hats. Human beings can and do put on several at a time'.\(^{36}\) Thus the Scots, Welsh and English, retaining older local, regional and national loyalties, accepted a Britishness fashioned and superimposed by the elite in the face of challenges, both within and without Britain, most vividly symbolised by Catholic France in the race for empire. Protestantism and loyalism provided the 'symbolic framework'\(^{37}\) through which the earlier nationalities could be integrated.

Colley's point is useful in understanding not only British nationality but also its derivative nationalities in the dominions. As Smith, fascinated with the 'ethnic-genealogical' strand in the formation of nations, observed,

modern 'civic' nations have not in practice really transcended ethnicity or ethnic sentiments ... closer examination always reveals the ethnic core of civic nations, in practice, even in immigrant societies with their early pioneering and dominant (English or Spanish) culture in America, Australia or Argentina, a culture that provided the myths and language of the would-be nation.\(^{38}\)

It is not clear here how precisely Smith is writing of an 'English' rather than 'British' 'ethnic core' in relation to settlement in America and Australia. Certainly this is a common problem of terminology, as illustrated most vividly in Raphael Samuel's three-volume study of patriotism by the late replacement of 'English' with 'British' in the subtitle.\(^{39}\) J.H. Grainger, faced with the same problem, wrote of 'English/British patriotism' on the basis of 'the English presumption', that English was British.\(^{40}\) But difficulties of identifying 'the


\(^{36}\)Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1992, p. 6; see also her 'Britishness and Otherness', especially p. 314 which considers not only older national loyalties but also 'intense local and regional loyalties'.


\(^{38}\)ibid., p. 216.

\(^{39}\)Samuel (ed.), *Patriotism*, vol. 1, p. xii.

ethnic core' of British immigrant societies aside, Smith believed that the 'mythologies and symbolisms of previous generations', representing the 'deposit' of earlier collectively experienced historical events, were central to the shaping of nationality as groups drew on 'the various "myths" and "memories", "symbols" and "values"'.

David Cressy's study of the calendar of seventeenth-century England illustrates the potential of Smith's ideas for the historian of nationality, and at the same time reveals the shaping of the Protestantism which was so important in Colley's argument. The calendar, Cressy observed, 'became an important instrument for declaring and disseminating a distinctively Protestant national culture', not only in England but also North America. Using 'guiding landmarks ... from recent incidents in English history', such as the gunpowder treason plot of 5 November, the calendar expressed 'a mythic and patriotic sense of national identity', interpreted and reinterpreted by succeeding generations. Cressy used these 'crucial celebrated moments' to examine 'the English view of themselves and their history' and 'the forces of social and cultural cohesion' linking populace and elite. These were the forces which interested Smith: the 'social magnetism and psychological charge attache[d] to the "myth-symbol complexes" of particular ethnie which in turn form[ed] the basis of a nation's core heritage'. Historians are only beginning to understand the ways in which ethnicity has shaped 'relationships of dominance and subordination'.

Understanding Australian nationality, then, involves an analysis of the myths and symbols not only of this newly imagined community, but also of the older British nationality, 'the ethnic core' (in particular its Englishness), out of

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which, and against which, Australian nationality developed. This wider context helps avoid what Eric Richards sees as 'a certain insular tendency in current Australian historiography which witnesses many historians searching rather myopically for symbols and meanings of Australian identity'. Historians have not been the only ones drawn to understand Australian nationality. As Ann Curthoys comments, 'In a country where national identity is always problematic, where so many people are separated from their place of origin, everyone, it seems, is searching, now, for their ethnicity'. For those of British descent, she thinks, the quest for origins appears to be most urgent — perhaps a sign of 'diminished pride'.

**Australian Nationalism and Class**

Early studies of Australian nationalism and nationality were concerned not so much with myths and symbols as with class and democracy. W.K. Hancock's apt phrase characterised Australian nationalism as 'the child of Australian democracy'. The ground-breaking work of the American historian, C.S. Blackton, in 1955 and 1961 outlined the alternative Australian communities imagined by three different groups: a socialist republic of 'the radicals', an Australian federation within the British Empire of 'the middle-class nativist moderates', and an imperial federation of 'the Anglo-Australian loyalists'. Blackton saw the achievement of Australian federation as the triumph of a nationality shaped by middle-class democratic ideas.

Russel Ward, writing about the same time as Blackton, was more interested in the Australians attracted by the radical alternative, the itinerant

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bush workers. His central concern was with the origin of their values and attitudes, and their adoption in mythical form by the wider Australian population. By contrast Robin Gollan's concern was with the political effect of bush worker radicalism on the development of the trade union movement and the emergence of the Labor Party, in seeking to explain Australia's advanced democratic reform in the twenty years spanning the turn of the century. He saw the Labor Party as the party of 'intransigent Australian nationalism'. Another historian of the left, Ian Turner, expressed this even more simply and directly: 'it was from the working class that whatever there was of an Australian spirit has come. So radicalism and nationalism seemed natural partners'. Their work, despite the considerable problems associated with what one critic of Gollan's book termed 'ambiguities about class', was an enormous stimulus to historical debate about, and research into, Australian nationalism.

However, it led A.W. Martin and J.M. Ward to call for a reconsideration of class beyond the 'Whig' interpretation promoted by Gollan and Russel Ward. There was a need, Martin argued, to 'identify or revalue non-Labor political and social organizations and ideas' and 'to tread warily when easy generalizations about social class seem to offer ready hypotheses for explaining political change'. He suggested that Australian nationalism was just as much associated with the towns and the middle class as with the outback and the working class, and urged historians to examine the evidence for 'interclass

52Ian Turner, 'Temper Democratic, Bias Australian', Overland, no. 72, 1978, p. 22.
53D.W. Rawson, Review of Radical and Working Class Politics: a Study of Eastern Australia, 1850-1910 (1960, Robin Gollan, Carlton, Vic., Melbourne University Press, 1967), Quadrant, no. 17, Summer 1960-61, p. 83. Gollan, Rawson argued on p. 82, was 'convinced of the great importance of class divisions [but] ... [was] constantly changing his mind about what he mean[t] by a class'.
consensus' as well as for class conflict. However, they were to remain, as Janet McCalman was later to remark, 'rather shy of writing about the Australian middle class': the 'middle class nation ... avoid[ed] confronting itself'.

Russel Ward was unmoved by Martin's plea for 'a strenuous effort of empathy' for the middle class. Unrepentant, he reacted by extending his original thesis. In his Augustus Wolskel Memorial Lecture of 1969, while 'thinking aloud of the larger new emphases which may naturally, or even necessarily, derive from this [Whig] framework', he argued that there were two kinds of Australian patriotism and nationality, the 'local' and the 'imperial', identifying the 'working people' with the former and 'middle-class people' with the latter.

He was quick to admit that most Australians saw themselves not as either local or imperial patriots but a mixture of both, but nevertheless suggested that the two concepts as 'theoretically opposites' could provide a useful framework within which to interpret Australian history. It was not what Martin had in mind.

K.S. Inglis in 1965 had similar concerns to Martin's about the leadership of the working class in defining Australian nationality. He wondered whether the 'two main streams of national tradition, the one radical and the other patriotic', flowed together or apart. Assessing the impact of war on Australians, he suggested, could help determine the extent to which loyalty to class and nation were compatible. For Inglis, returned soldiers and their 'Anzac tradition' held the key to the puzzle of Australian nationality. Bill Gammage, in his later work on Australian soldiers during the Great War, agreed. Geoffrey Serle took up Inglis's lead, arguing that the achievements of the Australian Imperial Force in

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World War I led Australians of 'all classes and sections ... to feel a keen sense of Australian patriotism. From then on', he emphasised, 'few Australians would think of themselves as anything but primarily Australians rather than Britishers or Englishmen in the colonies'.

Serle accepted 'the close link between nationalism and radicalism' as 'one of the great central facts of Australian history', but argued that before the war those who put Australia before the Empire were a minority — only 'some of the native-born, Irish Australians and the working-class'. After the war and the 'marked change in the balance of Australian loyalties to Australia, Britain and the Empire', 'the conservative classes', he believed, took over 'the digger legend', developing 'a right-wing variation of Australian nationalism ... based on the new patriotism and pride of race of the Protestant middle class'. Chris McConville expressed it more sharply: 'In the 1920s Australian nationalism became a plaything of empire loyalists'. Serle's 'speculative' piece posed a problem for Australian historians. If the war changed the balance of loyalties for most Australians, why did they accept the 'schizophrenic double loyalty' of the Sydney Bulletin and the Returned Soldiers' League, 'the classic exponents', he had said, of this kind of nationalism, 'intense Australian patriots and intense imperialists both'?

Noel McLachlan took issue in 1968 with two of Serle's central points. He questioned whether the radical tradition in pre-war Australia 'really ever provided the principal dynamic for Australian nationalism', believing that 'the more moderate Anglo-Australian nationalism ... was almost certainly more

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61Ibid., pp. 150, 156.
63Known officially as the Returned Sailors' and Soldiers' Imperial League of Australia, the organisation was commonly referred to as the RSL. Not until 1965 did the League formally change its name to the Returned Servicemen's League, G.L. Christianson, *The Politics of Patriotism: the Pressure Group Activities of the Returned Servicemen's League*, Canberra, Australian National University Press, 1966, p. xix. Later there were further changes: to the Returned Services League and the Returned and Services League.
64Serle, 'The Digger Tradition', p. 156.
representative of Australian feeling'.\(^{65}\) For McLachlan, the digger legend simply emphasised 'the continuity of the nationalist mainstream, a tradition by no means markedly radical at any time and symbolized by the RSL in effect taking up the torch of the ANA [Australian Natives' Association].\(^{66}\) He saw no contradiction in Australian nationalists also acknowledging British loyalties in the same way that Welsh or Scottish nationalists did: identities, as Colley would later remind us, are not like hats. Nevertheless, Serle remained unconvinced. 'Part of the difficulty', he wrote in his wide-ranging cultural history of Australia in 1973, 'lies in the word "nationalism" itself, which is as ambiguous as "imperialism" and which historians have failed to elucidate in the Australian context', a view he reiterated in the book's second edition more than a decade later.\(^{67}\)

The problem which vexed Serle was the one which had absorbed Cole in 1971: 'the problem of "nationalism" and "imperialism" in British settlement colonies'. Cole believed answers were more likely to be found in a study of ethnocentrism, 'the belief in the unique value and rightness of one's own group, an approval of one's fellows and their ways, and an aversion and contempt for outsiders and their ways\(^{68}\) than in a study of class. Using the concept of ethnocentrism in its Australian (i.e. national), Anglo-Saxon (imperial) and Caucasian (racial) forms, he argued that nationalism, imperialism and racialism blended more often than conflicted in Australia's population. His study disentangled these three forms in the Australian context, but underlined the difficulty of separating Australian and British loyalties:

A local Australian ethnocentrism could never become full-blown Australian nationalism, monolithic in its loyalty to an Australian ethnic community, because it was so vitally dependent upon Anglo-Saxonism and Caucasian racialism. It was simply a variant of


\(^{66}\)ibid., original emphasis, p. 305.


ethnocentrism in Australia, blending almost imperceptibly into the pan-Anglo-Saxon ethnocentrism of Britannic 'imperialism' ... itself blending easily into white racial ethnocentrism.

Cole's view complemented that of Humphrey McQueen: 'Australian nationalism', he said, '[was] the chauvinism of British imperialism, intensified by its geographic proximity to Asia ... anti-British feeling was not the mainstay of Australian nationalism, nor was such feeling widespread'. As a shocktrooper of the New Left, McQueen had set out to challenge the ideas of 'the legenders' on radicalism and nationalism by unmasking their components.

To summarise, from the time of Blackton's work on Australian nationalism and nationality, the concept of class has been an important but uncertain ingredient in the debate about radicalism and nationalism. Russel Ward, Gollan and Turner saw the working class as central to the development of a radical nationalist tradition in Australia. But historians since then have questioned that role, arguing for a place for the middle class and emphasising the importance of imperial and racial ideas in any discussion of Australian nationalism and nationality.

Despite the debate begun by Ward and Gollan, the anticipated detailed studies to test these ideas have mainly concerned either class or nationalism, rarely both. John Rickard's study of 'the concept of labor and anti-labor in relation to each other' from 1890 to 1910 made only tantalisingly brief reference to nationalism. 'The importance of imperialist sentiment in cementing middle-class feeling', he argued, '[could] not be overestimated ... the adoption of an imperialist-oriented nationalism involved the rejection of a radical nationalist tradition more attuned to working-class values'. It was a restatement, however carefully worded, of Russel Ward's view of 1970. However, Rickard acknowledged that 'imperialist sentiment ... seeped through

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69ibid., p. 523.
71Grimshaw's work was also important here, see note 12 above.
to the labour movement'. But there he saw it serving as a divisive rather than unifying force.

In Janet McCalman's inventive biographies of Richmond's working class and Melbourne's middle class, 'patriotism' was an understated theme, associated with the Australian-ness of the one, and the British-/English-ness of the other. For Richmond, McCalman argued, World War I showed the weakening of working-class sentiment for Empire in the conscription referenda: class, rather than sectarianism and its associated 'Irish patriotism' versus 'English patriotism', was the decisive factor. Yet the apparent change in working-class attitudes was not explored in terms of Australia and the Empire. With the middle class McCalman found a close correlation between Protestantism, Britishness, and private schools, typified by the Methodists. Their counterparts were the Irish Catholics, portrayed as not more Australian, but less British. The reader is left to assume that not till World War II did the middle class make 'the discovery of being Australian', which underestimates the complexity of that class's attitudes towards nationality.

On the other hand, Noel McLachlan, in his study of 'the dynamics of Australian nationalism', recognised the importance of class as a factor but without showing how that was so. Perhaps his reticence reflected a determination to be 'decently undogmatic'. Even so, reviewer Michael Roe found him to be 'rather too ready to exaggerate the radical trend of those parts in the story with which he sympathises'. Just what role class played needed to be explained in relation to issues, such as the provision and use of national symbols 1901-1912, the defence crisis 1902-1909, and the Anzacs in World War

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74McCalman, *Struggletown*, pp. 95, 97-98, 103-104, though McCalman found 'the role of Irish patriotism ... hard to determine'.
76ibid., p. 223.
78ibid., p. 6.
I. McLachlan's frustration was that Australian nationalism was 'frequently ... conspicuous by its absence', which caused him to see his book as 'a history of what's not there as much as what is'.\textsuperscript{80} This view qualified his earlier interest in 'the more moderate Anglo-Australian nationalism'. His conclusion that 'whatever's distinctive about Australian nationalism is part of our complicated convict inheritance, a radical, egalitarian strain' signalled a return to Ward's thesis.\textsuperscript{81}

Stephen Alomes in his study of 'social nationalism, or the celebration of Australian society and place' gave class a more obvious role.\textsuperscript{82} Yet he found it equally difficult to go beyond Ward's stereotype of working-class 'local patriotism' and middle-class 'imperial patriotism'.\textsuperscript{83} His conclusion that 'Australian nationalism was generally either weak or imperial and conservative' was similar to McLachlan's.\textsuperscript{84} However, because Alomes was interested in the forms and uses of nationalism, particularly in the twentieth century, he was more willing to see it as a construct whose shape was determined by contests between classes. Cole had commented that Australian nationalism 'frequently served as a weapon in the internal struggles between classes'.\textsuperscript{85} But it was not until Richard White's 'history of a national obsession', a fresh look at Australians' search for a national identity, that historians in Australia began to consider identity as an invention.\textsuperscript{86} White asserted:

There is no point asking whether one version of this essential Australia is truer than another because they are all intellectual constructs, neat, tidy, comprehensible — and necessarily false. When we look at ideas about national identity, we need to ask, not whether they are true or false, but what their function is, whose creation they are, and whose interests they serve.

\textsuperscript{80}McLachlan, \textit{Waiting for the Revolution}, original emphasis, p. 300.
\textsuperscript{81}ibid.
\textsuperscript{82}Stephen Alomes, \textit{A Nation at Last? The Changing Character of Australian Nationalism 1880-1988}, North Ryde, NSW, Angus & Robertson, 1988, p. 3.
\textsuperscript{83}See especially Alomes' Chapter 2, From Hope to Conflict: Commonwealth and Imperial Nationalism 1901-30.
\textsuperscript{84}ibid., p. 332.
His work, which led Stuart Macintyre to hope for 'a full history of Australian nationalism', drew on ideas about class but in a different way. Although using the categories of 'working class' and 'middle class', White was mainly concerned with 'the "ruling class"', comprising 'those groups in society who wield economic power'. It was not so much this class, he believed, which determined the shaping of the national identity but rather its competing pastoral and manufacturing interests: intra- rather than inter-class competition caused the national identity to be 'continually ... fractured, questioned and redefined'. This view marked a significant attempt to change the way historians linked class and nationalism. By emphasising the contesting of ideas within the 'ruling' class rather than the development of a tradition by the working class, he was attempting to turn that tradition on its head. Critics were not convinced, believing that issues of truth and falsity, myth and reality could not be dismissed so easily. As Patrick Morgan complained: 'The trouble with the demythologising [today one might say deconstructionist] approach is that, ultimately, nothing is taken at its face value'.

The major difficulty with White's approach can be most clearly seen in the central chapter, 'Young, White, Happy and Wholesome', intended to illustrate the middle-class reinterpretation of 'the bush and the bohemians' for the new nation created in 1901. Beginning with the 'ambiguities' of Australia's 'twin identity, both Australian and British', White nevertheless ignored the significant tension between these two strands. Yet the relationship with Britain, according to his concluding sentences in the chapter, was the cause of the

88White, Inventing Australia, pp. ix, x.
89Ibid., p. x.
91Morgan, 'Who Are We Again?' p. 84.
92White, Inventing Australia, especially pp. 112, 123.
critical division between pastoral and manufacturing interests, a point he deferred to the next chapter but never substantiated. This neglect is surprising on two counts. Competing pastoral and manufacturing interests formed the basis of his argument. Equally important had been his declared determination to rescue 'those aspects of the Australian identity which were not distinctive', especially 'the lingering sense of a British heritage'.

Class, Religion and Ethnicity

Australian historians, absorbed with the relationship between class and Australian nationality, have given less attention to two related factors, religion and ethnicity, the latter denoting the quality of belonging to a cultural group based on 'alleged origins and history'. This word, used to indicate the pre-national status of a group, is not always easy to distinguish from the older term 'nationality'; the meanings of the two words merge. In the Australian context ethnicity is perhaps the more appropriate word for those of Irish, English, Scottish and Welsh birth or descent, though these groups on occasion were referred to, and referred to themselves, as 'nations' celebrating 'national' days, as the Irish did on St Patrick's Day. The difficulty becomes more apparent if these groups are collectively described as 'British', a term which in the Australian context denotes both ethnicity and nationality. Australia's 'ethnic core' is at once both British and English.

From the time of Blackton's work, class, religion and ethnicity were most often discussed in relation to Australians of Irish birth or descent. 'Irish Catholics', Blackton wrote of the radical stream of colonial opinion, 'were readily absorbed into outback working-class society probably because they always constituted a sizable element, but also because the Irish were

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93ibid., p. 47.
94See notes 28 and 29 above.
95For example, one of the meanings of nationality is 'a racial or ethnic group', A Supplement to the Oxford English Dictionary, vol. 2, 1976, p. 1138.
experienced resisters of the employer class'. For Ward the Irish were an especially important group in explaining the origins of the Australian radical tradition: 'The mere fact that a disproportionately large majority of Irish convicts and immigrants were very poor working people tended to place them naturally in the vanguard of the movement, but more important was the anti-British attitude which so many Irishmen brought ... with them'. Patrick O'Farrell, who has written extensively on the Irish and the Catholic Church in Australia, made the point even more forcefully and specifically: 'The distinctive Australian identity was not born in the bush, or at Anzac Cove, but in Irishness protesting against the extremes of Englishness'. The 'Australian Irish', he wrote, referring especially to the critical battles over conscription during World War I, were 'seeking an acceptance by the wider community of their distinctive and separate contribution to a pluralist situation, defined as Australian rather than British'. 'What was really at issue, he concluded, 'was the place of Irish Catholics within the Australian community'.

Despite these challenging declarations, there has been no systematic study of the relationship between class, religion and ethnicity in the development of ideas about Australian nationality. Rickard, in detailing the organisation of non-Labor parties by the middle class in New South Wales and Victoria in the period 1901 to 1910 and their association, particularly in the former State, with militant Protestantism, remarked on 'how quickly it was accepted that the Catholic vote had attached itself to the labor party, and that, ostensibly as a result, the middle-class Protestant vote had gone to anti-labor'. O'Farrell from his study of the Catholic Church agreed with the same broad Catholic Labor versus Protestant non-Labor division, though he contested Rickard's explanation: 'Catholics were not only being pulled towards Labor by their self-interest as workers, but pushed towards it by the anti-Catholicism of non-Labor

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96 Blackton, 'Australian Nationality and Nationalism, 1850-1900', p. 355.
98 Patrick O'Farrell, The Irish in Australian History, Quadrant, no. 72, Dec. 1978, pp. 18, 21.
... Protestant identification with the non-Labor parties, appears to have greatly promoted precisely that Catholic political activity they most vigorously denounced and feared.¹⁰⁰

J.D. Bollen and Richard Broome concurred, Broome in particular providing statistical evidence making clearer the links between class and religion, and complementing the earlier figures of Celia Hamilton.¹⁰¹ However, R.W. Connell and T.H. Irving in their ambitious Marxist history of Australia's class structure not surprisingly discounted the religious factor.¹⁰² More recently Chris McConville, critical of Catholic historiography, has suggested giving more attention to the Australian context rather than the Irish heritage in exploring the relationship between class, religion and ethnicity in the Irish Catholic community.¹⁰³ He reminds his readers of the importance of Oliver MacDonagh's comparative work on the Irish in settler communities, which showed that the Irish in Australia were more integrated into the community than Irish elsewhere.¹⁰⁴

Material on World War I and especially the conscription referenda has attracted wide interest in the relationship of class, religion and ethnicity. Alan Gilbert concluded that the broad Catholic/Protestant differences over conscription reflected their 'fundamental disagreement about what it meant to be an Australian', Catholics being more Australian in orientation than

¹⁰²Connell and Irving, Class Structure.
¹⁰⁴Ibid., p. 11. MacDonagh argues that the Irish were a larger percentage of Australian immigrants, that a greater proportion of them were middle-class, that more came from the petit bourgeois than 'the proletariat of the Irish countryside', that in Australia they were not disproportionately urban and included a wider range of occupations, and that the moderate rather than radical tradition of nationalism was strong. 'The Irish in Australia: A General View', in Oliver MacDonagh and W.F. Mandle (eds), Ireland and Irish-Australia: Studies in Cultural and Political History, London and Sydney, Croom Helm, 1986, pp. 159, 161, 164, 166. He concluded: 'Dual allegiance [to Ireland and the Empire] was therefore not merely likely but even practically a necessity', p. 167.
Protestants. Michael McKernan later agreed though not in such stark terms: Catholic opposition to conscription was strongest in the working class because of falling living standards, continuing injustice in education and the deteriorating situation in Ireland. Gilbert was too willing to assume that Irish-Australian opposition to conscription reflected Australian nationalism rather than Irish antagonism towards England. His work underlined the difficulty of separating the two emotions, especially in a situation where nationalism was used as a weapon in class and sectarian struggles. Marilyn Lake's study of the war showed the hardening of class and sectarian lines in Tasmania. Although less willing than Gilbert to see a division between Australian and British loyalties in ethnic terms, she nevertheless linked Catholics and the working class to a weakened sense of loyalty to Empire, in contrast to Protestants and the middle class. Far from seeing the war through O'Farrell's eyes as revealing the triumph of Australian nationalism under the leadership of the Irish-Australians, Lake argued that it 'ultimately retarded the development of a separate national identity in Australia'. Michael McKernan broadly agreed though not in those terms.

McLachlan adopted a similar view about the impact of war on nationalism in Australia: 'It left Australians much more confused than ever about their loyalties/identity: Australian and Imperial'. Curiously, for one who promoted O'Farrell's view that 'the Irish have been the dynamic factor in Australian history', McLachlan said little about Irish-Australians during World War I. The failure of the 1916 conscription referendum, he suggested, was

109 Ibid., p. 192.
110 McKernan, 'Catholics, Conscription and Archbishop Mannix', pp. 306, 308; and The Australian People, p. 41.
112 Ibid., p. 299.
due to 'Irish intransigence', but he then offered the cryptic comment that 'the Irish and their offspring here [in Australia] often confused Irish and Australian reality'. Alomes, too, was surprisingly silent about ethnic divisions and the war in Australia. In summary, historians have not been able to resolve the relationship between Irish ethnicity and Australian nationality, despite the visibility of Australians of Irish descent as a minority because of their close association with the Catholic Church and the working class.

Even more difficult is it to trace the influence of the other ethnicities, especially English ethnicity, and British nationality itself. Roe's survey of Australian nationalism was primarily concerned with the question of whether it was compatible with loyalty to Empire, with a sense of British nationality. Convinced that 'no-one is ever going to sort out this question altogether', he nevertheless argued that in part 'the idea of Australianism [grew] out of Britishness': Australians asserting their rights as Britons. Hancock, he reminded us, called them 'Independent Australian Britons', a phrase Alfred Deakin had used. 'The sheer empiric fact', Roe concluded, 'is that the two attachments [to Australia and Britain] could be compatible and even symbiotic'. He foreshadowed the point Anderson later developed more generally: that the formation of a nation is best understood in terms of 'the large cultural systems that preceded it, out of which — as well as against which — it came into being'.

One avenue taken by historians interested in exploring this symbiotic relationship has led to an examination of the days Australians celebrate and...

113ibid., pp. 206, 207.
114Alomes, A Nation at Last? pp. 62-64.
115Since Roe's comment, 'Whereas the Australianism of the Irish might have become exaggerated, the Scots' has been noticed too little' ('An Historical Survey', p. 662), Malcolm D. Prentis has written The Scots in Australia: A Study of New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland, 1788-1900, Sydney, Sydney University Press, 1983 and The Scottish in Australia, Melbourne, AE Press, 1987. See also That Land of Exiles: Scots in Australia (Edinburgh, HMSO, 1988), especially Eric Richards 'Scottish Australia 1788-1914'. For the English (and also the other ethnic groups) see James Jupp (ed.), The Australian People: An Encyclopedia of the Nation, Its People and Their Origins, North Richmond, Angus & Robertson, 1988.
117The earliest reference to this phrase was in the Centennial Supplement of the Daily Telegraph, 23 Jan. 1888, John Hirst to Ken Inglis, 14 Oct. 1994.
commemorate. In examining Anzac Day, K.S. Inglis sought an explanation for the apparent mismatch between his vivid childhood memories of the day's commemoration of the birth of the Australian nation and historians' neglect of Charles Bean's official history of the war and the tradition of 25 April it encouraged. But he found that to understand the significance of Anzac Day and its imperial and national rhetoric he must first establish why no other comparable national day had emerged. *The Australian Colonists*, the first of four projected books exploring Australian commemoration and celebration, revealed the riches to be found by following Allan Martin's suggestion of understanding Australians through their ceremonies.119

Two other days proved worthy of investigation, especially in relation to the complicated patterns of ethnicity and nationality in the Australian context: Australia Day, 26 January, and Empire Day, 24 May. Inglis, in his exploration of the changing fortunes of Australia Day (known for much of its history as Anniversary Day, ANA Day or Foundation Day), remarked on Catholic rather than Protestant interest in the promotion of the day.120 The Catholic Church, he argued, divided ethnically between those of English and Irish descent, had cause to promote Australian sentiment. By contrast, Protestants, 'not ethnically diverse', were 'not commonly troubled about the relation between national and imperial sentiment'.121 The critical factor was, he said, 'ethnic rather than ecclesiastical', though how easily the two factors could be separated was not clear.122

For Maurice French the two belonged together.123 But his studies of Empire Day placed them within the wider political context: 'In one aspect the

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118See above note 31.
120Ibid., pp. 30, 37, 38.
121Ibid., p. 38.
122Ibid., p. 37.
involvement in the [Empire Day] celebration of commerce ... and hostile politicians ... alienated sections of the labour movement; in another aspect the strong Protestant identification with Empire ... alienated the Roman Catholics whilst the insistence on the virtuous superiority of Anglo-Saxon ideas and institutions alienated the Irish'.

French's study of Empire Day indicated the importance of schools, State and private, in illustrating the debate about nationality within the Australian community. The decision by the six premiers at the beginning of 1905 to establish Empire Day not as a public holiday, as in Canada, but as a day for teaching State school children about the Empire, placed State schools in particular at the centre of that debate. As 'important weapons in the battles raging in the community' these schools deserve closer study in a study of Australian nationality.

School and Nationality

Indeed French's analysis of the origins of Empire Day and its changing focus raises a series of questions about schools and nationality. Clearly State schools were the focus of political interest because they were funded and controlled by government. Private schools, without government funds, were free from that control. But did they celebrate Empire Day, and if so, did their celebrations differ from those of State schools? French ignores them except where they were Catholic. Cardinal Moran of Sydney promoted 24 May as Australia Day in the parish schools of New South Wales. But what of other Catholic schools — Sydney's socially prestigious Riverview of the Jesuits, or the Marist Brothers' St Joseph's College? How did Protestant schools observe Empire Day? Or did they consider such instruction unnecessary because they were Protestant and middle class, protected from disloyal ideas?

Given the more serious test of enlistment in World War I, two private boys' schools in Sydney, one Anglican, the other Catholic, performed similarly, St Joseph's College 'preferr[ing] to stand amongst the other AAGPS [Athletic Association of Great Public Schools] schools in asserting their new found Australian conservatism and its concomitant of imperial loyalty'. This finding of Geoffrey Sherington and Mark Connellan suggests the value of such comparative work. Perhaps similar studies will follow the publication of an innovative history of private schools in Australia, *Learning to Lead*. Ambitious in scope, it may prompt scholars to explore what 'learning to lead' meant in terms of nationality, citizenship and gender. The recent work of Ann Curthoys and Marilyn Lake on feminism and citizenship indicates the potential of the subject, especially if linked to schools, but one beyond the scope of this thesis.

Equally important questions should also be asked about New South Wales, the focus of French's attention because the promoter of Empire Day in Australia, the British Empire League, had begun in that State. Were there similar developments in the other States? Or was Empire Day, a 'product of domestic politics' in New South Wales, imposed on the other States? Why did Archbishop Carr of Melbourne not issue instructions for Australia Day in his parish schools? Was it significant that the British Empire League was simply the League of the Empire in South Australia and Victoria?

French's work suggested the potential for including schools, State and private, in a study of Australian nationality. Historians have rarely used them

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as more than a passing illustration: State schools in Manning Clark's view
practised simple imperialism, as shown by 'the oath of loyalty to King and
Empire'; to Geoffrey Serle their 'saluting of either the Union Jack or the
Australian flag symbolised the double loyalty'. McKernan clearly recognised
the central role schools played in World War I by devoting an entire chapter to
these 'seedplots of Empire loyalty'. They were, he argued, 'at the heart of the
nation's life' and 'far more important' than the church in shaping 'people's spirit
and their patriotism'. McKernan contrasted the 'devotion to Ireland and
Australia' of Catholic schools, whether middle- or working-class, with the
'single-minded devotion to Empire' in State schools. In other private schools
'Empire loyalty' was 'important' and became more so during the war. But as
McKernan's work indicated, at least with Catholic schools, it was not easy to
separate school from church and ethnicity. As well, the generalisations hid the
extent of feeling for Empire in Catholic schools and for Australia in State and
non-Catholic private schools. The requirement of Victorian State schools that
children salute the Union Jack or the Australian flag surely qualifies their
'single-minded devotion to Empire'.

The earlier work on which McKernan drew was Stewart Firth's
comparative study of the values of State and Catholic schools in New South
Wales, particularly by examining their textbooks, including the Education
Department's School Magazine. Firth had been careful in making distinctions
between the patriotisms taught in the two kinds of schools. Catholic schools
were "Australian" in the Catholic sense: Irish-Australian rather than English-

130 French, 'The Ambiguity of Empire Day', p. 65.
131 C.M.H. Clark, A History of Australia Vol. VI: 'The Old Dead Tree and the Young Tree Green' 1916-
1935, Carlton, Vic., Melbourne University Press, 1987, p. 6; Serle, From Deserts the Prophets
Come, p. 89.
132 McKernan, The Australian People, p. 43.
133 ibid., p. 44.
134 ibid., pp. 60-61. McKernan was probably referring here to New South Wales not Victoria, see
EG (NSW), Nov. 1917, p. 256. The Education Gazette and Teachers' Aid in 1917 gave no such
instruction.
135 S.G. Firth, Schooling in New South Wales 1880-1914, MA thesis, Australian National
University, 1968.
Australian' as in the State schools.\textsuperscript{136} He had difficulty establishing the relative strengths of Australian and English/British patriotisms in State schools. They taught, on the one hand, 'loyalty equally to England and to Australia', the two loyalties were 'complementary'; but, on the other hand, 'the primary tradition was always British'.\textsuperscript{137}

Even so, Firth's work showed vividly how the two different school systems reflected the divisions of the wider society, divisions in which the idea of respectability was critical: to be respectable was to be British (a notion later important to Janet McCalman's studies of class). Brendan Murray also considered Catholic and State schools but in Victoria. He differed in his findings, arguing that despite their differences in ethos, the Catholic and State systems 'shared a number of agreed ideals in citizenship education'.\textsuperscript{138} In particular, Catholics shared, though not in full, 'imperialism and its associated doctrine of race', mainly in an attempt to be accepted in the wider society.\textsuperscript{139} That raises again the question of how different were the Catholic schools of Victoria from those of New South Wales. For too long colonial boundaries have acted as barriers to scholars. The comparative questions are tantalising.

Others followed Firth's example in exploring Australian society through its schools, particularly through textbooks. I myself traced changing attitudes to Australia and Australians through changes in the curriculum of South Australian primary schools.\textsuperscript{140} Educators influential in Australianising the curriculum were part of a wider network stretching from the University of Adelaide to the Royal Geographical Society of Australasia, the Field Naturalists Section of the Royal Society, the Australian Natives' Association, the Board of the Public Library, the Museum and Art Gallery, as well as organisations and

\textsuperscript{137}Emphasis added, \textit{ibid.}, pp. 132, 137, 145.
\textsuperscript{139}\textit{ibid.}, p. 226.
individuals interstate. The changing balance in Australian-British loyalties in the curriculum reflected patterns in the wider community. The thesis, which showed how the promise of the years 1906-12 was crippled by the pressures of war and its aftermath, raised for further investigation politicians' and educators' willingness to allow a renewed Britishness to dominate the curriculum.

One of the most valuable sources for this study was the *Children's Hour*, a school magazine published in three editions every month by the South Australian Education Department. As required reading in State schools, it gave the department immediate access, not only to children but also to their parents, particularly in country areas. Victoria copied the South Australian example with the *School Paper*, and New South Wales later again with its *School Magazine*. Both sources were central in studies which underlined the enduring British influence in the schools of Victoria and New South Wales.¹⁴¹ Betty Taylor in particular noted that despite the emergence of an 'Australian ethnocentricity' in Victoria's *School Paper* during World War I, the *Paper* continued to condition State school children 'to accept unquestioningly the British ethnocentricity of Australians'.¹⁴² Murray had argued this was also the case for the children of Catholic schools in Victoria which accepted the *Paper* 'without serious objection'.¹⁴³ We still await a comparative study of these departmental school magazines, which may throw light on a range of important issues, not least the question of nationality.

An earlier study by A.W. Hannan had analysed the essential Britishness of the patriotism taught in the State schools of Victoria between 1901 and 1945.¹⁴⁴ He found three variants of patriotic ideology: the "old consensus" of 1901-16, based on the 'vision of Britain's moral mission in the world', and revived again

¹⁴²Taylor, Ethnocentricity, p. x.
¹⁴³Murray, Citizenship and Schooling, p. 227.
in 1940-43; the 'divisive partisanship of 1916-24'; and the "new consensus" from 1924 on (except between 1940 and 1943), a consensus based on the old 'Greater Englandism' but with a stronger sense of internationalism. In comparative terms Hannan judged it 'unlikely' that conflicts over the nature of patriotism in Victorian State schools were 'different in kind from those in other states' but urged researchers to study 'the degree of difference'. In this he had been influenced by the work of Bob Bessant on education and politics in New South Wales and Victoria. However, Bessant emphasised similarities between the two States, sometimes at the expense of significant differences. In the example he used to typify postwar dissent in the two states — the flag ceremony in schools — only New South Wales was discussed. The fact that it was not such a bitter issue in Victoria does raise the question: why not?

The school ritual which centred on flags, Australian or British, becomes an appropriate focus for examining the issue of Australian nationality because it draws together the factors of class, religion and ethnicity. That this ritual was a regular part of State, but not private, school life in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia enables a comparison of the varieties of nationality taught. To my knowledge there have been two studies of this ritual in dominion schools. One in South Australia showed how changes in the words of the oath accompanying the salute of the flag between 1911 and 1956 symbolised significant changes in national perceptions for the curriculum generally. It led to further exploratory work on the ritual in the other States, which established and raised questions about the distinctiveness of the South Australian situation. The other study was by Roger Openshaw, an analysis of the

145 Ibid., p. 295
146 Ibid., original emphasis, p. 303.
148 Ibid., p. 38.
149 Kwan, Making 'Good Australians'.
150 Elizabeth Kwan, 'Educating Australia's Citizens, 1901-1939: As Australians or Britons?', a paper presented at the International Standing Conference on the History of Education,
responses of educationalists and politicians in New Zealand in the 1920s to two questions: 'how best to ensure effective patriotic instruction and, ultimately, how to maintain an acceptable balance between patriotic teaching and the new values of progressive education and internationalism'.151

Openshaw was interested more in social control than nationality, but his work powerfully refuted the view that ‘school patriotism’ was ‘a fascinating but irrelevant specialist study’.152 Work in Europe and America revealed similar developments. Eugen Weber in France argued that ‘the greatest function of the modern school’ was ‘to teach not so much useful skills as a new patriotism beyond the limits naturally acknowledged by its charges’: the fatherland was to be more than the village.153 Hobsbawm in Britain wrote of ‘the growing captive public of schoolchildren’, being ‘transformed ... into citizens of a specific country’.154 In America Scot Guenter explored the flag ritual of public schools, though he noted the curious neglect of the subject by historians of education.155 Was the ritual so sacred that it was beyond historical scrutiny? Or were issues of class and social control of such importance that nationalism could be ignored?

Canadian historians’ lack of interest in the flag ritual in schools is puzzling. Certainly there has been much research into the theme of nationalism, stimulated by concern in the 1960s and 1970s at increased cultural and economic influence from the United States, and at Francophone pressure for

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152Ibid., p. 121.
change from within the country. Historians of education have also taken up the theme, in particular those considering the implications of A.B. Hodgett's *What Culture? What Heritage?* — a report of the National History Project, which reminded Canadians that the school was 'one of the most important agencies in society affecting the political socialization of its citizens'. The two most relevant responses for my purpose were by Genevieve Jain and Robert Stamp. Jain traced the influence of national sentiment, French and English, in political disputes over the teaching of history in Quebec and Ontario. Stamp sought to explain 'why Canadian educational institutions have never served the interests of Canadian nationalism'; his particular interest was in disentangling the Canadian and British strands of Empire Day in Ontario.

Historiographically the focus of interest in nationalism in Canada has been the French-English divide. For educational historians that has meant an absorption with French-English struggles over control of the primary school systems: both public (sometimes bilingual); and separate or denominational (but also supported by public money). These struggles were played out in various forms in the different provinces, but those in Ontario and Manitoba were the most critical. For this reason the Irish in Canada had a very different role from their counterparts in Australia. Caught between English-speaking Protestants on the one hand, and French-speaking Catholics on the other, Irish

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158 Genevieve Jain, 'Nationalism and Educational Politics in Ontario and Quebec 1867-1914', and Robert M. Stamp, 'Canadian Education and the National Identity' (p. 29), and 'Empire Day in the Schools of Ontario: The Training of Young Imperialists', in Chaiton and McDonald (eds), *Canadian Schools*.
Catholic Canadians chose to align themselves according to linguistic rather than ethnic ties, despite the long tradition of hostility.160

More recently historians in Canada have turned to other non-English-speaking immigrant groups, important numerically from the 1890s especially in Saskatchewan, Alberta and Manitoba, in an attempt to understand the dynamics of ethnicity in shaping the promotion and reception of imperial and national ideas.161 Again, schools have been important. Bill Maciejko saw the Ukrainians as central in determining the 'other' in the development of a Canadian identity. The school, in particular, he argued, occupied a critical position in mediating these perceptions. His work revealed the sensitivities still at issue in Canadianisation and led to a lively exchange with David Jones.162 But did Canada's greater diversity of immigrants, many of whom were from the United States, weaken or strengthen the English core of Canadian nationality? Seton-Watson believed that the presence of such a powerful neighbour, with its 'pressures or attractions', did inhibit the ability of English-speaking Canadians to develop a distinct identity, in contrast to Australians.163 But he was noticeably silent about the impact of immigrants.

As in Canada, so in Australia: we lack studies of the development of dominion nationality at provincial and State levels which would allow comparisons within, as well as those suggested more often between,


163Seton-Watson, Nations and States, p. 236.
dominions.\textsuperscript{164} This study is a step in that direction. Flags were the most visible symbols of nationality discussed in the dominions at the turn of the century, particularly in relation to State schools. The ritual associated with the introduction of Union Jacks into Australian schools in 1901 posed two paradoxes: the British flag was to celebrate Australian federation; the tradition being invoked was Canadian yet in Canada the most common flag flown was the Canadian red ensign.

\textsuperscript{164}McLachlan, \textit{Waiting for the Revolution}, p. 296; Eddy and Schreuder (eds), 'Introduction: Colonies into "New Nations"', \textit{The Rise of Colonial Nationalism}. 
THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA, 1901: 
THE UNION JACK FOR SCHOOLS

Melbourne, the temporary capital of the new Commonwealth, was alive with visitors from Australia and overseas come to see the opening of the first federal parliament in May 1901 by the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York. The city, observed the Revd Dr W.H. Fitchett, editor of the Review of Reviews, had 'the half-delighted and half-uncomfortable sense of being ... not only the nerve-centre of the continent, but a centre of interest for the Empire, and for the civilised world'.

Melbourne's socialist paper, Tocsin, had already concluded that 'Melbourne has been transformed into a huge madhouse, and its citizens into a crowd of gibbering lunatics'.

The opening of the parliament in the Exhibition Building on 9 May marked an important step in the development of a sense of Australian nationhood. Yet there was another ceremony, intended for that day but held in the same building five days later, which involved the children of the continent in celebrating not the Australian, but the British, nation. The Duke and Duchess had returned to the Exhibition Building to preside over a prize-giving to boys of Victoria's elite private schools: Scotch College, St Patrick's College, Melbourne

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1 'The Duke of York and the Commonwealth Parliament', Review of Reviews, a monthly journal for Australasia issued from Melbourne, 20 May 1901, p. 503. W.H. Fitchett, as author of Deeds That Won the Empire (London, George Bell & Sons, 1897) and Fights for the Flag (London, George Newnes, 1898), had become a household name in the Empire. English-born, Fitchett had migrated to Port Phillip at the age of 7. A Wesleyan clergyman, who was the founding president of Methodist Ladies' College, Kew, from 1882, he regarded 'his journalistic ana educational work as part of his ministry and subservient to it', 'William Henry Fitchett', Australian Dictionary of Biography (hereafter ADB), vol. 8, p. 512.

2 Tocsin, 16 May 1901, p. 4.

3 Throughout the thesis I usually refer to public (as in government) schools as State schools, and public (as in corporate) schools as private schools. C.E.W. Bean discussed the particular problems of nomenclature for corporate schools in the Australian context in Here, My Son: An Account of the Independent and Other Corporate Boys' Schools of Australia, Sydney, Angus and Robertson, 1950, pp. 1-4. King's School Magazine in Sydney referred to these schools in the 'time-honoured sense of "Schools where boys are trained to take their share in the public life of the nation"', emphasis added, March 1903, p. 302. Even then further distinctions were necessary to define the elite private schools. In Sydney, for example, such schools belonged to
Grammar School, Geelong Grammar School, Wesley College and St Francis Xavier's College. Their sister schools had no place at such a public occasion. At precisely 12.50 pm the Duchess concluded the ceremony by sending a telegraphic message to suburbs and towns in Victoria and throughout Australia and beyond, announcing the raising of the Union Jack over the Exhibition Building, the signal for hundreds of State schools around Australia to raise their flags bought by, or donated to, their schools in the preceding weeks. Participating localities made their own arrangements to relay the message. In the industrial port of Newcastle, New South Wales, boys with flags were stationed on routes between telegraph office and local schools to signal the arrival of the Melbourne message. Just as the Commonwealth was launched, or as some said, the new nation was born, its State schools began formally teaching children to give their allegiance to the British Empire rather than to the Commonwealth of Australia.

Saluting the Flag: A Borrowed Tradition

The idea for the ceremony had come from Sir Frederick Sargood, Melbourne merchant and unofficial leader of the Victorian Legislative Council, who since 1898 had been trying to put Union Jacks into State schools. He had not been the only one to suggest the use of flags in schools. In August 1900 Dr E.G. Leger Erson, former chairman of the City of Prahran School Board, Melbourne, at a special flag-raising ceremony at the Bordertown State school just across the Athletic Association of Great Public Schools. For these distinctions among private schools in England see Eric Hobsbawm, 'Mass-Producing Traditions: Europe, 1870-1914', in Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds), The Invention of Tradition, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1983, p. 294.

4The six schools were as listed in the Australasian, 18 May 1901, p. 1109. St Francis Xavier's College at Kew, begun by the Jesuits as a branch of their St Patrick's College at East Melbourne, became a school in its own right in 1900 and some years later simplified its name. Greg Dening, Xavier: A Centenary Portrait, Kew, Vic., The Old Xaverians Association, 1978, pp. 3-4. St Patrick's College (Presbyterian) came to replace St Patrick's in the group of six. They were later the focus of a study by I.V. Hansen, Nor Free Nor Secular: Six Independent Schools in Victoria: A First Sample, Melbourne, Oxford University Press, 1971.


6Sargood, a freetrader, though diffident about identifying himself as a conservative or a liberal, was essentially conservative in his approach to politics. In religious terms he was a Congregationalist. 'Sir Frederick Thomas Sargood', ADB, vol. 6, p. 88; Kathleen Thompson and Geoffrey Serle, A Biographical Register of the Victorian Legislature 1851-1900, Canberra, Australian National University Press, 1972, p. 187.
border in South Australia had proposed two flags for Australian schools: the Union Jack as an 'outdoor' flag; and the flag of the new Commonwealth as an 'indoor' flag. Citing New Zealand's adoption of the American custom, Leger Erson believed that the Bordertown ceremony was 'the first of its kind that has taken place in South Australia, if not in all Australia'. A few weeks later, Australian-born and -trained Catholic priest, Patrick Dwyer, Coadjutor Bishop of Maitland, New South Wales, forwarded to Cardinal Moran in Sydney a suggestion from 'a good Catholic layman' who had lived in America that Catholic schools should adopt the American custom of saluting the flag, particularly now that Australia was to have its own flag. Dwyer expressed the hope, somewhat naively (given Protestant antagonism to Catholic schools), that 'if adopted from the first and in the first instance by our Catholic Schools it [saluting the Australian flag] would recommend them to the non Catholic public'. Indeed, it might well have the opposite effect in the context of the Catholic struggle to gain State funding for their parish schools.

However, it was Sir Frederick Sargood who seized the opportunity provided by federation to place flags — not Australian flags but Union Jacks — in State schools. On his return from Canada he had reported being 'surprised and delighted to see the "Union Jack" (the emblem of the great British Empire) flying over all the Dominion state schools'. This was an over-simplified reading of the Canadian situation — perhaps deliberately so. At any rate, Sargood had been unsuccessful on his return from Canada in persuading Ministers of Public Instruction, Alexander Peacock and Carty Salmon, both

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7 'Unfurling of the Flag. An Interesting Patriotic Ceremony', Border Watch (Mt Gambier), 29 Aug. 1900, p. 3, which became the basis of the report in the South Australian Register (hereafter Register), 24 Aug. 1900, p. 6, and thence to Melbourne's Herald Standard, 4 Sept. 1900, p. 3.
8 Register, 24 Aug. 1900, p. 6.
11 See below pp. 60 and 70.
Liberals and leading figures of the Australian Natives’ Association, to take up his idea, apparently because of the cost involved. Now he hoped that federation would provide the incentive for school boards rather than the Education Department to spend the necessary money. With the support of James Bagge, Secretary for Education, F.L. Outrim, Deputy Postmaster-General, and finally the Minister, Carty Salmon, he launched his proposal early in October 1900 through the press with the offer of 200 Union Jacks on behalf of Lady Sargood and himself. A flag ceremony would, Sir Frederick explained, 'be a very suitable means of enabling our State school children to take part in the general rejoicings'.

The opportunity suited Sir Frederick's purpose perfectly. Ever since the press had announced in mid-September the Queen's decision to send her grandson to open the new parliament there had been much discussion about the necessary preparation. What, he thought, could be more appropriate in impressing that event on young minds than using the flag to make them 'realise the fact of our being part of the greatest empire in the world'? By background and training Sargood was an imperialist. Migrating at the age of 15, he had maintained his links with England, returning there thirty years later with his nine children to marry a second time in 1880. He was a military man, a lieutenant-colonel, having been involved since 1859 with the Victorian Volunteer Artillery, and the St Kilda Rifle Corps which he founded. He had been Victoria's first Minister of Defence in 1883 and the next year created the school cadet corps. Part of his proposal in 1900 was that the military commandant 'could issue a "general order"' for the flag to be saluted by 'the cadets, or Mounted Rifles or rifle clubs'. Sargood felt 'assured' they 'would be pleased to take part in the ceremony'. In short, he sought 'the active approval of

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12Sargood to editor, Argus, 2 Oct. 1900, p. 5. The letter also appeared in the Age, 2 Oct., p. 4, and was sent to country papers as well.
13Ibid.
14'Sargood', ADB, vol. 6, pp. 87-88.
those who take an interest in promoting in our state school children a love of the old mother country and a pride in the "old flag".

This concern to promote 'pride in the "old flag"' reflected the widespread anxiety of recent months in 1900 when the Union Jack had been the focus of news coming from South Africa at the height of the imperial war in which Australians were involved. 'Thank God, we kept the flag flying', Sir George White, British commander at Ladysmith, had said in February 1900 at the lifting of the siege — words cited by Dr Leger Erson at the Bordertown ceremony. There were further instances: Mafeking in May after a seven months' siege; and Beijing in September with the Boxer rebels. Sir John Madden, Chief Justice, Lieutenant Governor of Victoria and enthusiastic recruiter for the South African war, could speak with feeling of the recent 'magnificent lessons of the value of the national flag'. Such a sentiment was very much in the tradition of Fitchett's *Fights for the Flag* of 1898, issued in a new edition in 1900 as a successor to his extraordinarily popular *Deeds That Won the Empire*. Telegraphic communication, K.S. Inglis argues, intensified rather than weakened imperial sentiment, 'the spirit of Mafeking travelling undiluted along the wires'. Well might Sir John remark that the flag was 'that around which we are all impelled to rally when the occasion arises'. Even pro-Boer supporters in Australia had greeted with enthusiasm the relief of British troops in Mafeking. However difficult it is to separate Australian and imperial sentiment at that time, the Union Jack

15Irish-born and Catholic, Sir John had migrated at 12 and been educated at St Patrick's College and the University of Melbourne. He was opening the exhibition of the flags of the first competition for an Australian flag (see below p. 76). *Herald Standard*, 8 Sept. 1900, p. 1; 'Sir John Madden', *ADB*, vol. 10, pp. 371-373.


symbolised Australians' 'ethnic core', their identification with British/English origins, history, destiny and solidarity.\(^\text{20}\)

**An American Tradition**

Sargood, in proposing flags for schools, had cited the Canadian example. Others, such as Leger Erson and Dwyer, traced the custom to the United States. The role of flags in the schools of both countries is instructive in understanding their introduction into Australian schools. In the United States the practice of flying a flag over the schoolhouse became common from the time of the Civil War, though there were earlier instances reaching back to 1812.\(^\text{21}\) The late 1880s and early 1890s saw a resurgence of interest in flags for schools, spearheaded by the powerful veterans' pressure group, the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR), seeking to promote patriotism as a means of safeguarding pensions for its members.\(^\text{22}\)

This resurgence came at a time of rapid industrialisation, marked by violent clashes between capital and labour, and large-scale immigration, which relied increasingly on people coming from central, eastern and southern Europe.\(^\text{23}\) In Chicago, where 80 per cent of the population comprised first or second generation immigrants,\(^\text{24}\) the Haymarket riot of 1886 resulted in fatal clashes between police and strikers, the hanging of four alleged anarchists and the imprisonment of four more. In most other American cities the majority of workers were also foreign-born.\(^\text{25}\) In 1889 the annual national meeting of the

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\(^{20}\) Anthony D. Smith identifies an ethnic group by 'the sense of unique group origins, the knowledge of a unique group history and belief in its destiny, one or more dimensions of collective cultural individuality, and finally a sense of unique collective solidarity', *The Ethnic Revival*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1981, p. 66.


\(^{24}\) Ellen M. Litwicky, 'The Inauguration of the People's Age: The Columbian Quadracentennial and American Culture', *Maryland Historian*, vol. 20, no. 1, Spring/Summer 1989, p. 50.

\(^{25}\) This had been so since the 1860s, Hobsbawm, 'Mass-producing Traditions', p. 281.
GAR, prompted by its New York department, agreed that every GAR post throughout the country should present a flag to each school without one in its neighbourhood. Whether this initiative was an Anglo-Saxon Protestant middle-class response to the predominantly foreign-born working-class is not clear. But flag-worship in schools may well illustrate Hobsbawm's suggestion that it was 'as the quintessential patriotic class that the new or aspiring middle class found it easiest to recognize itself collectively'.

The formal presentation of an American flag in a New York City public school, which had inspired the GAR, also led George Balch to devise further flag rituals as a means of Americanising the city's large immigrant population. Through his work as an auditor in the Health Department, he had developed a concern about the immigrants in the city's tenement housing. The highlight of these rituals was 'The American Patriotic Salute'. Touching their foreheads then hearts, children were to declare:

We give our Heads! — and our Hearts! — to God! and our Country!

Then, lifting their right arms to the flag, they ended the salute:

One Country! One Language! One Flag!

The phrases were reminiscent of the closing lines of one of Oliver Wendell Holmes's Civil War poems, *Voyage of the Good Ship Union*, written at the beginning of 1862:

One flag, one land, one heart, one hand,
One Nation, evermore!

While used in some New York City schools, Balch's pledge was not the one subsequently adopted by schools across the country:

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27Hobsbawm, 'Mass-Producing Traditions', in Hobsbawm and Ranger (eds), *The Invention of Tradition*, pp. 280, 301-302.
29George T. Balch, *Methods and a Patriotic Primer for the Little Citizen*, Indianapolis, William B. Burford, 1895, quoted in ibid., p. 117.
I pledge allegiance to my Flag and the Republic for which it stands: one Nation indivisible, with Liberty and Justice for All.31

Pupils were to give the military salute, right arm bent to the forehead, before extending the right hand towards the flag. The occasion which popularised it was Columbus Day in October 1892, when more than twelve million public school children pledged their allegiance.32

The day was the culmination of a three-year campaign by the *Youth's Companion*, the most widely read children's magazine in the United States. James Upham, nephew of the *Companion*'s editor, succeeded in 1890 in turning the journal's policy to favour the cult of the flag, and promoted competitions and schemes to put flags into schools.33 It was Upham's idea to broaden the celebration of the 400th anniversary of Columbus's arrival in the Americas, a celebration centred in Chicago with the World's Columbian Exposition, by involving public schools across America in a flag ceremony. Early in 1892 organisers of the exposition confirmed the *Companion*'s leading role, and one of Upham's assistants, Francis Bellamy, headed a national committee to implement the idea. Its members devised the program for participating schools. Bellamy, 37, was a Baptist clergyman, who had recently joined the staff of the journal, having become frustrated with the church in his attempts to mobilise it as a social and educational force for the working class.34 He was the cousin of Edward Bellamy, the author who portrayed nationalism as the force that would unite capital and labour in the utopian novel of 1888, *Looking Backward 2000-1887*.35

Francis Bellamy sought to use schools to teach 'a higher patriotic American sentiment' as a means of dealing with the bitter conflict between

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capital and labour, a conflict in which immigrants played contradictory and
critical roles as radical union leaders, cheap labourers and strike-breakers.36 The
particular incident which helped crystallise his concern as he devised the school
program for Columbus Day was the violent suppression of the strike at the
Carnegie steel plant at Homestead across the river from Pittsburgh,
Pennsylvania in July 1892. The clash between the strikers and the hundreds of
private guards (Pinkertons) brought in by Andrew Carnegie to break the strike
left ten dead. Carnegie's partner and manager, Henry Frick, proceeded to cut
wages almost in half, reintroduce the twelve-hour day and employ newly-
arrived immigrants as non-unionised workers protected by the national
guard.37 The incident symbolised capital's triumph over labour, a swifter and
more clear-cut outcome than that of the earlier Haymarket riot in Chicago. The
pledge Bellamy published in September for children to recite in flag ceremonies
across America the following month had as its centre-piece the words, 'one
Nation indivisible, with Liberty and Justice for All'. The presence of Civil War
veterans, symbolising the triumph of the Union in an earlier generation,
underlined the message.38 The first of the ceremonies was the most prominent:
it launched the exposition in Chicago.39

Canadian Adaptation

Canadians noted this groundswell of interest in America which linked flags and
schools in the teaching of patriotism. Members of the Imperial Federation
League in Toronto had been quick to see its potential early in 1890. As Colonel
George Denison, Toronto police magistrate and Canada's most vocal
imperialist, reported,

The idea was seized on at once, and it was decided to organise a
representative deputation with a view to waiting on the Minister of

36Quoted from the Boston Evening Globe, July 1892, in The National Cyclopedia, p. 52.
37Leon Wolff, Lockout. The Story of the Homestead Strike of 1892: A Study of Violence, New York,
38See 'National School Celebration of Columbus Day: The Official Programme', reproduced in
Guenter, The American Flag, pp. 197ff.
39Litwicki, "The Inauguration of the People's Age", p. 47.
Education, and getting him to make such a regulation that the national flag would be used in all public schools in Ontario, and hoisted on certain days of the year to commemorate events of national importance.40

We might think that 'national flag' meant the Union Jack. But the league's ally, Empire, a new conservative journal, made clear their intent. The prizes for school competitions were to be Canadian flags — British red ensigns with the badge of Canada in the fly.41 Denison went further, publishing his booklet, Raise the Flag and Other Patriotic Canadian Songs and Poems, and distributing it to the schools unsuccessful in winning a flag.42 This use of the Canadian symbol by imperialists is a vivid illustration of Carl Berger's view that in Canada 'imperialism was one form of Canadian nationalism', an interpretation challenged by Douglas Cole.43

Denison denied the charge of an opponent, Goldwin Smith, advocate of union with the United States, that he had made the public schools 'nurseries ... of party passion'.44 But he later admitted that the league 'had published a good many thousand volumes and scattered them freely through the country before the election of 1891'.45 The lines of a poem quoted on the title page summarised, he said, 'all that we were fighting for, the object we were aiming at, and the spirit we wished to inspire in the children of our country: "Shall we break the plight of youth / And pledge us to an alien love?"'46 The issue arousing such

40George T. Denison, The Struggle for Imperial Unity: Recollections & Experiences, London, Macmillan, 1909, pp. 134-135, 269. Denison was chairman of the deputation to George Ross. He was referring to schools supported by public money.
41Ibid., p. 156. The badge included the arms of the four provinces founding the confederation (Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick). As new provinces joined the confederation the most popular versions of the ensign unofficially added their arms to the badge. Alistair B. Fraser, 'A Canadian Flag for Canada', Journal of Canadian Studies, vol. 25, no. 4, Winter 1990-91, pp. 70-71.
42It appears to be a Canadian version of Balch's book for American schools. Denison described the illustration on the cover as 'a well-executed, brightly-coloured lithograph of a schoolhouse with a fine maple tree beside it ... with a large number of children, boys and girls, waving their hats and handkerchiefs and acclaiming the flag which was being run up to the top of the flagpole, the master apparently giving the signal for cheering', Denison, The Struggle for Imperial Unity, pp. 157-158.
45Denison, ibid., p. 159.
46Ibid., p. 158.
passion at the general election of March 1891 was continentalism, with the Liberals seeking a closer economic relationship with the United States through unrestricted reciprocity, and the Conservative government eventually choosing protectionism and renewed ties with Britain.

In this context the league's choice of a Canadian flag rather than the Union Jack for schools is significant. It contained both Canadian and British symbols: the Canadian badge and the Union Jack. Only a few months before, in October 1890, an order-in-council of the Conservative government had selected that flag for merchant ships registered in Canada. The flag had come into use informally soon after the Admiralty authorised the Canadian blue ensign in 1870 for use by Canadian government vessels. It came to be regarded as Canada's national flag: while Denison's imperialists planted it in publicly-funded schools, the government encouraged its use on government buildings throughout Canada. But the Admiralty was reluctant to approve its use as a merchant flag. Alarmed, the Governor-General, Lord Stanley, warned the colonial secretary late in 1891 of the dangers of denying a national flag to Canada at such a critical time in Canadian-American-British relations:

It is more than usually important to foster rather than to check an independent spirit in the Dominion, which, combined with loyal sentiments towards the mother country, I look upon as the only possible barrier to the annexationist feeling which is so strongly pressed upon us by persons acting in the interests of the United States.

The Admiralty grudgingly gave its assent early in 1892.

47F.C. Wade citing J.S. Ewart, Canadian nationalist, in The Canadian Flag, reprinted letters to the press in 1908 by Wade on 'The Canadian Flag and Our Schools', Vancouver, 1908, p. 4. Ewart's article was 'The Canadian Flag: A Suggestion for Canadian Clubs', The Canadian Magazine, Feb. 1908. Wade was a prominent Canadian lawyer. See below Chapter 4, note 117.

48Fraser, 'A Canadian Flag for Canada', p. 70.


50Ewart (who does not make clear whether the emphasis is his or Stanley's), 'The Canadian Flag', p. 334.
The discussion about Canada's future, which had come to a head at the time of the 1891 election, continued during the 1890s, influencing decisions about the place of flags in schools. Although the Liberal Party subsequently modified its policy of continentalism, the debate continued in the English-language press between conservative imperial nationalists and liberal continental nationalists, between those who saw Canada's future in the Empire and those who saw it in the new world.51 This was not so much a difference in policy as in emphasis. Both Conservatives and Liberals fostered Canadian patriotism for their own purposes. For Liberals, such patriotism was a means of encouraging Canadians to identify with their continent rather than Europe, especially Britain or France; for Conservatives, it was a means of countering not only the Liberals' continentalism but also American imperialism.

In this context provincial ministers of education found themselves in a difficult position. On the one hand educational opinion deplored the teaching of patriotism. J.E. Wells, editor of the *Educational Journal*, Canada's leading commentary on educational matters, was critical of the 'marked tendency in some educational circles in the United States ... [under] the guise of teaching patriotism ... to Americanize everything'.52 He warned that 'there [was] no surer means of producing a narrow, purblind ... patriotism, than [that] of teaching the young to look at everything through the coloured spectacles of national prejudice'. Wells had been moved to comment on the matter because of 'the growth of a similar tendency in Canada' where 'the practice in the United States [was] constantly quoted in support of it'. On the other hand, there were increasing political pressures to encourage the teaching of patriotism in publicly-funded schools. Inevitably that meant defining the nature of that patriotism. For Canadians, what would that be?

This was a question which troubled George Ross, the Liberal Minister of Education in Ontario from 1883. Ross was an astute politician. He had worked his way up through the ranks as teacher and inspector to become a Liberal MP, then minister of education from 1883, and finally premier in 1899. As minister he was proud of increasing the number of textbooks written by Canadians among those authorised for use in schools: from forty-nine of 184 in 1883 to all but two in 1899.53 Influential as president in the Ontario Teachers' Association, in 1892 he became first president of the newly-formed Dominion Educational Association. It drew members from all those with an interest in education, from elementary schools to universities.

Ross regarded teachers as 'the real nation builders — the real makers of Canada'.54 He was attempting to achieve through teachers and the schools what the politicians had failed to achieve: a Canadian identity in the new world. In his presidential address to the first annual meeting of the Dominion Educational Association55 Ross asked the assembled educationists of Canada: 'Are we going to be provincial in our education any longer, or are we going to be national?'56

The legislators of the country had been meeting in Ottawa for 25 years ... but ... in spite of all this legislation ... there was a lack of that national sentiment without which they could never hope to be a country. What the politicians had not done, the twenty thousand school teachers of the confederation should do. That should be the great aim of this association.

Frequent applause punctuated his address. At the same meeting Ross was chosen chairman of a committee to organise the writing of a national (Canadian) history text for use in schools.57

53Reported by his daughter, Margaret Ross, Sir George W. Ross: a Biographical Study, Toronto, Ryerson Press, 1923, pp. 81-82.
54Ibid., p. 74.
55An organisation modelled on the National Educational Association in the United States.
57For an account of this fascinating exercise in the writing of a national history see P.J. Read, The Dominion History Contest: an Episode in the Search for Canadian Unity, MA thesis, University of Toronto, 1969. See also Robert M. Stamp's brief discussion of the crisis in Ontario provoked by an Education Department proposal in 1893 to replace British with Canadian history in the high school entrance examination, The Schools of Ontario, 1876-1976, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1982, p. 34.
Before that text became available in 1897 Ross himself had his *Patriotic Recitations and Arbor Day Exercises* published in 1893. Its three parts indicated his pragmatic, neutral approach: 'A Talk With Teachers', which suggested appropriate celebrations for the Queen's Birthday and Dominion Day; 'Canadian Patriotism', with poems and extracts from speeches referring to important events in Canada's history; and 'Universal Patriotism', a selection of patriotic poems from many nations.\(^5\) Disclaiming the necessity for teachers or pupils to buy the book, Ross nevertheless dedicated it to 'the teachers of Canada' with Bismarck's words: 'We owe to our schools the thankful task of strengthening the feeling that we are all Germans'. His book put the view that every nation encouraged patriotism in its people through song and verse. It was time for Canadians to do the same.

Throughout the book the emphasis was Canadian, even with the celebration of the Queen's Birthday: Canada's relation to the Empire, her share in British achievements and her progress during Victoria's reign. For Dominion Day this emphasis was much more obvious when Ross insisted on the importance of fostering 'a Canadian sentiment ... if we are to develop the great forces which make for national life'.\(^6\) To him the teacher 'of all others' was best placed to arouse in children 'an intelligent interest ... in Canadian affairs which [would] place the future of the country beyond all doubt'. Given the continuing political debate about that future, Ross was suitably cautious. Keen to encourage what Lord Stanley had referred to as Canada's 'independent spirit', he was astute enough to realise that he could not disregard its imperial context, particularly when Conservatives made such effective use of the charge of disloyalty against their opponents. Indeed, by the mid-1890s imperialists had established their dominance in the press, a fact that Ross could not ignore.

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\(^5\)George W. Ross, *Patriotic Recitations and Arbor Day Exercises*, Toronto, Warwick Bros & Rutter, 1893. Perhaps this was the Liberal response to Denison's *Raise the Flag and Other Patriotic Canadian Songs and Poems*.

\(^6\)Ross, *ibid.*, p. 7.
Canada's Empire Day

These were the circumstances in which Ross introduced what became known as Empire Day into schools, not just in Ontario but in several of the other provinces, quick to follow the example of the central English-speaking province. The germ of the idea had been evident in his *Patriotic Recitations* of 1893, a point recognised by his contemporary, J. Castell Hopkins. The specific proposal, however, was made in November 1897, Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee Year, by Mrs Clementina Fessenden of Hamilton, a manufacturing town in Ontario, for 'a movement looking towards the formation of a national patriotic scheme of education' organised by a 'League for the Union Jack'. As Ross remarked later, the special jubilee celebrations had prompted the suggestion that school children should be regularly taught 'the relations of Canada to the Empire'. His circular to inspectors had directed teachers to discuss important events in Victoria's reign and to ensure that portraits of the Queen were hung in every school room. The monarch, symbolising the Empire's glory, may also have served, as Hobsbawm argued in the case of Britain, 'as a necessary counterweight to the dangers of popular democracy', especially in the Canadian context of rapidly growing numbers of immigrants from eastern Europe. Perhaps, too, the American custom of Flag Day, originating in schools but adapted more widely from 1893, and the ceremony of

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60 J. Castell Hopkins, *The Origins and History of Empire Day*, 1910, pamphlet no. 60, Archives of Ontario, p. 4. Hopkins was editor of the *Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*. Re Hopkins see below Chapter 4, note 77. Note also that Lord Meath had suggested in England in 1896 schools' celebration of the Queen's *accession* by singing the national anthem and saluting the flag. Reginald Brabazon, Earl of Meath, *Memories of the Nineteenth Century*, London, John Murray, 1923, p. 337.


63 *Canadian Teacher*, 1 June 1897, p. 12. The enterprising journal had these ready for sale, having already seen how popular its other publications were becoming in schools. In fact so popular did its *New School Helps* become that the minister had to warn teachers against using them to replace the authorised text books, 15 Feb. 1898, p. 488.

64 Hobsbawm, 'Mass-Producing Traditions', p. 282.
1892 were influential. Ross's response to the proposal for 'flag exercises' in schools was cautious: he was 'delighted' at the 'loyal tone' of Mrs Fessenden's letter, agreed that Canadians had neglected 'the cultivation of a patriotic spirit' and thought her suggestion of a league would gain support.

However, Ross advised her to consult the inspector and chairman of the board of school trustees in Hamilton as the departmental regulations did not provide for such flag exercises. But he assured her that 'any effort to foster in our school children a love for our country [would] receive the most cordial support' and that he was willing to consider 'any general scheme for the schools of the whole Province that may be submitted'. In a further letter Ross suggested that her proposed 'Flag Day', if taken up by Hamilton's schools, would 'call public attention to the movement, and perhaps make it easier for the Department to act'. Ross, ever the cautious imperialist, was seeking to measure public opinion before deciding to sponsor the proposal, whatever his assurances to Mrs Fessenden. Only when the Hamilton board had endorsed 'Flag Day' did Ross take the matter up with the superintendents of education in other provinces, seeking their suggestions for the title of the day and the most suitable date. With their support he presented a proposal to the annual meeting of the Dominion Educational Association in August 1898.

His memorandum picked a careful path between imperial and Canadian sentiment. His choice of title for the day was 'Empire Day', rather than 'Flag Day' as in the United States: the latter, he thought, was inappropriate to 'our mode of thought and those notions of patriotism and loyalty which I think we should cultivate'. He explained:

The proudest sentiment which the old Roman could express was 'Civis Romanus sum'. The greatest sentiment, as well as the most stirring, which we could put into the minds of our children ... is
'Civis Britannicus sum', and to give that sentiment its fullest force we should broaden it so as to include the whole British Empire.

'I am a British subject' summarised the view that the might of the British Empire could command respect for the rights of its subjects abroad. For Ross, the narrower 'Britannia Day' and the more neutral 'Patriotic Day' were also inappropriate. The choice reflected his admission in his memorandum to the Dominion Educational Association that at present Canada's prosperity could be guaranteed 'with greater certainty' as part of the British Empire than by any other means. But he also thought that future generations might well have a different view.

The date he favoured was not 1 July, Dominion Day, celebrating the creation of the confederation, as suggested by the Hamilton board, but the last school day before 24 May, Queen Victoria's birthday. Choosing 1 July was not practical, he thought: celebrations would be over-shadowed by activities associated with the last day of the school year, 30 June. Despite its imperial-sounding name, Empire Day could still be Canadian: a day 'specially devoted to the cultivation of feelings of loyalty and attachment to our country and to the institutions under which we live'; both 'country' and 'institutions' were usefully ambiguous words. Was Ross attempting to use imperialist trappings for his own patriotic purposes, to promote Canadian patriotism but in a form which would attract wider support? Or was he seeking to avoid the charge of encouraging jingoism? Or both?

Historians are not clear on this point. Robert Stamp, interested not so much in the origins as the forms of celebration of Empire Day, argued that for

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69It was a reference to a phrase made prominent by the Don Pacifico incident of 1850 in which Lord Palmerston, British Foreign Secretary, used naval force to demand compensation from Greece for British subjects and British-protected persons. In his speech to parliament, Palmerston succeeded in justifying his approach by likening the British subject to the Roman citizen of ancient times, for whom the phrase 'I am a Roman citizen' guaranteed Roman protection against alien powers. See Parliamentary Debates, Third Series, vol. 112, 25 June 1850, cc. 381, 444; E.D. Steele, Palmerston and Liberalism, 1855-1865, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1991, p. 20; and Donald Southgate, 'The Most English Minister' ... The Policies and Politics of Palmerston, London, Macmillan, 1966, pp. 263-264.

70Quoted from the Ross memorandum by Hopkins, The Origin and History of Empire Day, p. xxviii.
Ross it was a successful means of attracting public attention prior to the change in the leadership of the Liberal Party in Ontario in 1899.71 As well, it reflected his belief that imperialism was simply an extension of 'Canadianism'. Stamp concluded that Ross 'who seemed to want to promote Canadian nationalism in the schools actually spent more time strengthening imperial sentiment'. Genevieve Jain, in exploring the relationship between politics and education in Ontario and Quebec, saw Ross as a strong nationalist 'of the "Canada First" type' but one who did not think imminent Canadian independence would mean 'the disowning of British traditions'.72 She portrayed his increasing emphasis on imperialism in schools as a means of disarming critics quick to charge him with disloyalty towards Britain. As one contemporary expressed it, 'He never allowed the Conservatives to put him in the position where they could wave the Union Jack in political opposition to him'.73

By introducing the imperial note into the promotion of a Canadian sentiment, Ross was attempting to broaden its base and avoid the charges of jingoism and narrowness. As he wrote in his memorandum: 'I think the voice of the people is in favor of a higher, a purer and less selfish patriotism than we perhaps possess now'.74 He spoke of 'opportunities for nationhood' and the need to 'develop a national spirit' but urged that it be 'broad and sympathetic', comprehensive, respectful, intelligent, and at the same time intense'. He warned against a 'narrow spirit', superiority towards neighbours, and the pushing of 'love of country ... in a blustering, arrogant manner'. His words recalled the similar sentiments expressed more clearly and fully in extracts from his *Patriotic Recitations* by Dr Egerton Ryerson, the first superintendent of education in Canada West (before it became Ontario), and by Sir Oliver Mowat, a former

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71Stamp, 'Empire Day', pp. 103, 108. See also his The Schools of Ontario, pp. 34-35.
72Genevieve Jain, 'Nationalism and Educational Politics in Ontario and Quebec 1867-1914', in Chaiton and McDonald (eds), Canadian Schools, pp. 41, 43.
73'An Albertan Victor', Canadian Courier, 24 May 1913, at the time of the publication of Ross's reminiscences, commenting on Sir George Ross when he was one of the political leaders of Ontario: Scrapbook Biographies of Men, (microfilm), vol. 3, p. 50, Metropolitan Toronto Reference Library.
74Report ... for 1898, p. xxviii.
Liberal premier of Ontario. The latter wrote of developing 'a profound love for Canada ... and hopes of Canada as one day to become a great British nation: British, whether in a political sense in connection or not with the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland'.

The kind of limits within which Ross could promote patriotism was indicated by a marked change in the *Educational Journal*’s attitudes from 1892 to 1897, when its new owners gave it the more strident name of the *Canadian Teacher*. On the one hand, the journal was now prepared to be 'national not provincial' and to promote Canadian material. In September 1897 its editor, J.E. Wells, so scathing in 1892 towards those who spoke of 'American literature', began a series on Canadian writers 'to familiarize Canadian readers with our rapidly increasing native literature'. For example, he introduced the poet, Charles Roberts, as 'neither Briton nor American, but thoroughly Canadian'; by June 1898 Wells was writing of a 'Canadian literature'. But on the other hand, he hoped that among the journal's readers there would be no 'jingoes': 'the swearers, those without moderation or restraint, prone to premature explosions, boastful, vain, over-confident'. The journal was influential in serving teachers as an unofficial education gazette where provinces simply produced circulars distributed as leaflets to inspectors and thence to teachers. These circulars also appeared in the *Canadian Teacher*.

The Dominion Educational Association adopted Ross's Empire Day proposal unanimously, and 'respectfully requested' the Education Departments in the provinces and their territories to organise 'exercises' for increasing 'a sound patriotic feeling'. By the time the department in Ontario issued its first circular regarding such exercises, the councils of public instruction in Nova Scotia and Quebec, at least its Protestant section, had also acted on the

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75Ross, *Patriotic Recitations*, p. 203.
76*Canadian Teacher*, 1 Mar. 1897, p. 1.
77*ibid.*, 1 Oct. 1897, p. 11.
78*ibid.*, 1 May 1897, p. 12.
80*Report ... for 1899*: Appendix B: Proceedings for the Year 1899, p. 77.
association's recommendation. The dual approach to Canada and the Empire in the Ontario circular was best symbolised by the instruction that the 'British Flag or Canadian Ensign' should be raised over the school on the day.81 This was a politic decision, given the governor-general's earlier view that the Canadian flag had 'come to be considered as the recognised flag of the Dominion', and the later countervailing movement to place the Union Jack in schools. The choice of flag was left to the school boards or individual teachers, at least one of whom had already organised pupils the previous year to raise the necessary money.82 Teachers were expected to give lessons on 'the history of Canada in its relation to the British Empire' and other exercises 'to increase the interest of pupils in the history of their own country and strengthen their attachment to the Empire to which they belong'. However, the central instruction underlined the marked Canadian emphasis in the topics suggested for the day's program: 'the aim of the teacher in all his references to Canada and the Empire should be, to make Canadian patriotism intelligent, comprehensive and strong'.

These sentiments were echoed by the editor of the Canadian Teacher who wrote of the importance of instilling 'that truest patriotism', teaching future citizens 'to be loyal to the principles of sound government'.83 Such loyalty, he argued, would come as children were taught in their evening prayers 'to frame the word, Canada, with a holy and fervent purpose, making of their country and of themselves a daily offering to their God'.84 But the context for this kind of patriotism, the editor continued, was the Empire, built on 'the ever-increasing intelligence, honesty and freedom of its people'. This Empire and the peace it enforced through the preponderance of its power, he warned, required self-sacrifice and the constant maintenance of the wider vision: 'If they [boys

81ibid., p. 78, emphasis added.
82Canadian Teacher, 15 April 1898, p. 681.
83ibid., 1 May 1899, p. 729.
84The language used here is a reminder of the close connection between 'religious ideals and national character' in Canada at the turn of the century. See Trevor Wigney, 'Manifest Righteousness: the Presbyterian Church, Education and Nation Building in Canada, 1875-1914' in Chaition and McDonald, Canadian Schools, p. 89; also Brian John Fraser, The Christianization of Our Civilization: Presbyterian Reformers and Their Defence of a Protestant Canada, 1875-1914, PhD thesis, York University (Canada), 1983.
and girls] see in public affairs not the magnificent future of British sway but Canada, not Canada but their own province, not their own province but their own home, then Empire is doomed, British power and British influence sink in the dust'. The warning, seen in the context of South African affairs, was to have greater force once war began later in the year.

Richard Harcourt, Ross's successor as minister of education on his becoming premier, expressed satisfaction with the first celebration of Empire Day: it had not released a 'jingo spirit' but rather 'a patriotism inspired by a higher conception of civic duty'.85 His report emphasised the importance of this 'true patriotism', based on 'the principles of good government [in] every country brought under the dominance of British authority', particularly as the war in South Africa divided public opinion in Canada. Referring to events in South Africa, Harcourt insisted that 'the pupils of our Public Schools have been taught to know that wherever the British flag floats, order is established, equal rights prevail, education is fostered, liberty is upheld, and general progress ensues'. 'True patriotism' meant that the rightness of British rule must be upheld, even when that rule had been imposed rather than invited. The department's circular concerning Empire Day galvanised some boards into organising flags for their schools. The board at Hullett decided its school should have a flag — the Canadian red ensign — and raised it with due ceremony on the last day of the school year to the strains of God Save the Queen.86 There was a short speech by the inspector followed by prayers from the Presbyterian and Methodist ministers. The presence of the school cadets was central to the proceedings. The ceremony had all the ingredients of subsequent Empire Day celebrations: flag, cadets, national anthem and Protestant representatives.

The department's Empire Day circular for 1900 was more British in emphasis, going beyond love of British institutions to 'the cultivation of British

85Report...for 1899, pp. xxiv, xxv.
86Canadian Teacher, 15 May 1900, p. 724.
patriotism among the Canadian people'. It also suggested, in discussing the kind of topics that could be taught on the day, that 'an historical reference to the Union Jack, explaining when and how it became the national emblem, would be opportune'. Special mention was made of the South African war which the circular suggested would 'call forth increased love for British institutions'. The minister's report for 1900 — in a special section on patriotism — urged teachers to remind students 'that the truest and most useful citizens are those who invigorate and lift the nation by doing whatever duty devolves upon them, truthfully and manfully'. The role of 1,000 cadets in the Empire Day celebrations in Toronto in 1900 reinforced his point: marching down University Avenue to the parliament at the end in Queen's Park, they became the centre-piece of subsequent Empire Days in Ontario.

Whether a children's pledge was part of this first Empire Day is not clear. The first guidelines spoke only of 'exercises' for increasing 'a sound patriotic feeling'. Not till some years later did the Canadian Teacher refer to 'the ceremony of saluting the flag'; later again it printed the words in response to teachers' requests for information. At the same time, however, it acknowledged that 'many schools' practised 'the Flag Salute'. There were two forms of the pledge, both copies but with important modifications of the Balch and Bellamy pledges from the United States:

We give our heads and our hearts to God and our Country —

This was as devised by Balch in New York, though without the exclamation marks. But then followed

One Flag, One Fleet, One Throne

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87 Report ... for 1900, p. 83.
88 Emphasis added.
89 Report ... for 1900, p. xliii.
90 Stamp, 'Empire Day', p. 106.
91 Canadian Teacher, 15 May 1902, p. 1230, 2 May 1910, pp. 1008, 1 May 1912. p. 1064, and 1 May 1914, pp. 1079-1080 which included words for the first time.
instead of Balch's 'One Country! One Language! One Flag!' The Canadians may simply have adapted Balch's phrases to reflect Canada's imperial context. More likely, however, is that they came from the closing lines of Tennyson's poem to commemorate the opening of London's Colonial and Indian Exhibition by Queen Victoria in 1886:

Britain's myriad voices call,  
'Sons, be welded each and all,  
Into one imperial whole,  
One with Britain, heart and soul!  
One life, one flag, one fleet, one Throne!  
Britons, hold your own!92

The Canadian version of the Bellamy pledge, adopted more widely through Columbus Day in 1892, simply replaced 'republic' and 'nation' with 'Empire':

I pledge allegiance to my Flag and to the Empire for which it stands,  
— one Empire, indivisible, with Liberty and Justice for all.

In Melbourne Sir Frederick Sargood's suggestion of a flag ceremony for Australian schools clearly drew on an American tradition adapted by the Canadians. In both countries the tradition had begun with flags in schools. Ceremony and pledge had followed, popularised through a special day — Columbus Day and its successor, Flag Day, in the United States, and Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee and Empire Day in Canada. The ritual became a part of school life: in 1898 the New York legislature passed the first of the American flag salute statutes requiring the State superintendent of public instruction 'to prepare, for the use of the public schools of the state, a program providing for a salute to the flag at the opening of each day of school'.93 For the Americans there had been no doubt as to which flag should be saluted: it was the 'Stars and Stripes', 'Old Glory', the flag of the republic which had triumphed in the Civil War. The choice was not so obvious for the Canadians who had a Canadian flag but also the Union Jack. Australians planning their celebrations

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93 Guenter, *The American Flag*, p. 3.
of federation in 1901 had no authorised Australian flag. But, as Sargood well knew, there were moves to have one.

The Australian Flag: Uncertain Origins

Sargood’s appeal for Union Jacks in schools indicated his intent. Just a month before launching that appeal, he had been chairman of the panel of judges which had selected an Australian flag through a competition organised by Melbourne’s Herald Standard.94 Sooner or later, Sargood anticipated, one or other Australian design would gain official approval; it would probably be promoted in schools. The same issue of the Herald which had announced the winner included a report of the special flag-raising ceremony at the Bordertown State school. It was difficult enough to put one flag into schools; better that the Union Jack should be there first, especially in view of some opposition in Australia to Britain’s role in the South African War.95 What better form of indoctrination could there be? In Canada, Colonel George Denison, proponent of flags in schools during the 1890s saw a direct result in ‘the wave of Imperialism’: ‘The boys at school in 1890 were in 1899 men of twenty to twenty-five years of age, the very men who formed our contingents [to the South African War]’.96 Besides, plans for celebrations had to begin immediately if schools were to be ready by May 1901. There was no time to wait for authorisation of an Australian flag. Such considerations had not concerned Canadians in 1890. But then the Canadian flag, which had evolved informally soon after confederation, was widely used.

Australians did have a flag which could serve that purpose, a flag variously referred to as the Australian flag or the Federal flag. Used before the separation of Victoria and Queensland from New South Wales, it was taken up

94 Other judges were Major General Francis Downes (Military Commandant), E.E. Morris, Professor of Modern Languages and Literatures, Captain Archibald Currie, President of the Marine Board, W. Skelton, President of the ANA, F.H. Bruford, Deputy Income Tax Commissioner, Herald Standard, 4 Sept. 1900, p. 1.

95 The division of opinion led to the emergence of the two organisations in New South Wales: the British Empire League (1901) and the Australian Anti-War League (1902).
during the federation campaign in the 1890s and proposed by the Federal Association of New South Wales in 1898 as the flag of the Commonwealth of Australia (fig. 10). But this British white ensign with a St George's Cross bearing stars was too closely associated with New South Wales, despite the difference in colours — blue and white rather than red and gold. By contrast its rival State, Victoria, had adopted the constellation of the Southern Cross itself.

The first of two competitions, both based in Melbourne, had specified the Southern Cross, either as the constellation or symbolised in some way, and the Union Jack as part of the design for an Australian flag. The judges' choice was a British red ensign with the Southern Cross in the fly and six red horizontal stripes on a white ground below the Union Jack to represent the federating

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96Denison, *The Struggle for Imperial Unity*, p. 269.
97*SMH*, 24 May 1898, p. 9. My thanks to Kevin Blackburn for this reference. See also A.C. Burton, 'Australia's Forgotten Flag', *Crux Australis*, vol. 8/4, no. 36, Oct.-Dec. 1992, a reference Gordon Briscoe brought to my attention. Research shows that the earlier version of this flag — a white ensign with red St George's cross and four white stars — dates from the 1820s, Burton, 'Australia's Forgotten Flag, pp. 163-164, and John Christian Vaughan *Flags of Australia*, chart, Rozelle, NSW, Standard Publishing Co., 1983, see 'National Colonial Flag for Australia'.
States (see blue version in fig. 11).\textsuperscript{100} There was extraordinary interest in this first flag competition which attracted some 8,000 entries.\textsuperscript{101} People queued to see them displayed in Buxton’s Art Gallery in Collins Street after the selection of the winner. It was in opening this exhibition that Sir John Madden referred to those ‘magnificent lessons of the value of the national flag’, a reference to the role of the Union Jack in the sieges of the South African War. The fundraising committee managing the exhibition in the interests of the Children’s Hospital had to extend the opening hours and later dropped the entrance fee to 3d to accommodate children from the state schools, urged to attend by the minister of public instruction. Another committee from Ballarat began negotiating for the flags to be exhibited there to raise funds for a statue commemorating soldiers of the South African War.

![Flag of Melbourne's Herald competition, 1900 (blue version).](image)

\textsuperscript{100}Simplicity, effectiveness, and a little touch of inventive genius have gained for the red flag "Concordia", the unanimous suffrages of the judges', \textit{ibid}. The \textit{Review of Reviews} featured it on the cover of its issue of 20 Oct. 1900; on the next month's cover was the blue version. Vaughan, \textit{Flags of Australia}, illustrates only the blue version.


generation, Harold Scruby, ignored this distinction between the two competitions. As Executive Director of Ausflag, the organisation dedicated since 1983 to the search for a 'relevant' Australian flag, he declared: 'Australians never had a choice; the rules allowed only for a defaced British ensign'.

The Review competition required a design for two flags: one for 'the merchant service' and another for 'naval or official use'. The six premiers agreed to be the judges.

Despite the Review's lack of restrictions on the design, its requirement for two flags puzzled entrants. The winning design of the first competition had been a red ensign. But the Review explained that this flag was for 'general use'; another version in blue was for 'government use'.

Editorial responses to specific questions added to the confusion: 'Is one flag intended for navy and the other for military use?' asked one competitor. 'Yes'. 'How should the two designs differ?' asked another. 'In their main colour: red for military, blue for naval use'. The editor acknowledged the lack of printed information on flag design. But his attempt to address the problem mentioned British rather than Canadian or New Zealand examples. This did not help Miss H.G. Hirst, an entrant who sought clarification of 'exactly what is meant by this term Naval or Official': 'The Naval flag is the White Ensign, whilst the Official is the Blue. The Navy does not use the blue; but on the other hand, the Official services cannot use the white. Which is to have the prior claim?'

The instructive New Zealand example was significant by its absence. Discussion of the flag problem there had a direct bearing on both the search for an Australian flag and the use of flags in schools. Flags had become an issue in New Zealand in mid-1900 because of confusion over which was the New

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103 Harold Scruby, 'Flag of Inconvenience?', Australian Magazine, 25-26 Sept. 1993, p. 28. See also Peter Spearritt: 'the competition ... prescribed that the Union Jack would be part of that flag', The British Dominion of Australia, in John Arnold, Peter Spearritt and David Walker (eds), Out of Empire: The British Dominion of Australia, Port Melbourne, Mandarin, 1993, p. 1.

104 Review of Reviews, 20 Nov. 1900, pp. 570-571.

105 Miss H.G. Hirst (with her emphasis), to Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, 5 May 1901, CRS A6/1 01/1160, Australian Archives (ACT), hereafter AA (ACT).
Zealand flag. John Hutcheson, Member for Wellington City, called on the Premier, R.J. Seddon, 'to make known as publicly as possible' which New Zealand flag was to be used as a national flag by citizens, and by government and merchant vessels.\textsuperscript{106} The confusion came at a time when politicians were urging New Zealanders to provide flags for government schools.\textsuperscript{107} Since 1869 government vessels had flown the blue ensign with four stars of the Southern Cross, red and bordered with white.\textsuperscript{108} The commercial version on a red ground followed later. However, the placing of the stars on a white disk for signal flags at sea, and the use of these flags by government and commerce on shore, led William Hall-Jones, Minister for Public Works and the Marine, to protest that they were not intended to replace the two ensigns whose use was well established. Seddon acted immediately, proposing that the blue ensign be 'the recognised ensign of the colony ... for all purposes'.\textsuperscript{109} Parliament approved the bill in September 1900, reserving it for the Queen's approval. The move reflected a New Zealand nationalism, awakened by the participation of New Zealand troops in South Africa, and encouraged by Seddon asserting New Zealand interests in the Pacific after rejecting federation with the Australian colonies.\textsuperscript{110}

To summarise, the New Zealand legislation was a striking response to the flag problem that dominion shared in some form with Canada and Australia. Canada regarded its red ensign as the flag for not only its merchant ships (for which it had been approved), but also government and commercial use on land, where the Admiralty had no formal jurisdiction. New Zealand had now legislated to make its blue ensign, the flag of government vessels, the flag for all


\textsuperscript{108}Kelly, \textit{Australian State Flags}, pp. 3-4.

\textsuperscript{109}Glue, \textit{The New Zealand Ensign}, p. 16.

purposes afloat and shore. Would the Admiralty allow the change? At the same time Australian judges of the first flag competition had chosen a red ensign. The Review's competition stipulated two flags, the red and the blue. How much Fitchett knew of the Canadian and New Zealand developments is not clear. However, as a passionate imperialist he had an interest in emphasising the role of the Union Jack as the national flag with two Australian ensigns to serve the new Commonwealth in the same way as ensigns had served the individual colonies. The issue of the Review, which had featured the winning design of the Herald's competition on its cover and announced a second competition for two ensigns, welcomed Sargood's idea of Union Jacks for State schools, pleased that Australians would be following the example of their Canadian and New Zealand cousins.

Given Victorians' interest in flags, how would they respond to Sir Frederick's proposal of Union Jacks for State schools? Table Talk, an illustrated weekly Melbourne journal, considered Sir Frederick 'wise to start the idea', that it would 'provoke discussion'. However, that was not the case. Tocsin did not notice Sargood's suggestion. Neither did the Catholic papers, the Advocate and Austral Light. But the Review reported enthusiastically that Sir Frederick's idea had 'caught on', that 'in almost every locality flags are being provided by private liberality'. It is impossible to know whether this enthusiasm for the Union Jack reflected war-time imperialism or a simple desire to encourage schools' participation in the federal celebrations. The mixture of imperial and Australian motives is evident in both Sargood, as judge of the first Australian flag competition and proponent of Union Jacks in schools, and Fitchett, sponsor of the second flag competition and supporter of Sargood's plan for schools.

Both the conservative Argus and the liberal Age, where Sargood's letter appeared, began listing the donors willing to contribute, among them James

111 Table Talk, 4 Oct 1900, p. 4.
113 Grimshaw, 'Australian Nationalism', pp. 161, 164.
Moore, a timber merchant, who matched Sir Frederick's 200 flags with poles. The scheme lent itself to political manipulation, especially against those opposed to the sending of troops to South Africa. H.B. Higgins, successful liberal candidate for the working-class seat of North Melbourne in the new parliament, was asked by a political opponent on the school board at Fitzroy to prove his loyalty by donating a Union Jack to the school. Convinced that those favouring war had exploited Victorians' imperial sentiment, Higgins refused to be drawn on the flag. However, enough donors participated for Fitchett to estimate that the 'national flag seem[ed] likely to fill a very large space in the Australian landscape'.

Sargood in the meantime had formed a committee to implement his scheme. Three of its members had served on the Herald's flag committee: Sargood himself, Major-General Francis Downes, who as military commandant in Victoria had sent five contingents to South Africa, and Captain Archibald Currie, President of the Marine Board. Others were James Bagge, Secretary of the Education Department, James Moore, the generous timber merchant, F.L. Outtrim, Deputy Postmaster-General, R.T. Chenoweth, Chairman of the Council of Boards of Advice, and Lieutenant-Colonel William Cairncross, who acted as secretary. Only then, when Sargood had public support for the idea, the ears of the secretary of the Education Department and the deputy postmaster-general, and a committee behind him, did he formally approach the minister of public instruction. Sargood had already mentioned the scheme to the minister when both were attending the Railway and Firemen's Banquet, but now asked

115 Jamish Furzer, correspondent, Fitzroy School Board of Advice, identified by Higgins as a 'committee member of the so-called Fitzroy branch of the National Liberal Organisation', to H.B. Higgins, 29 Mar. 1901, and Higgins' reply, 17 Apr. 1901, Higgins Papers, MS 1057 items 78, 81, NLA. My thanks to Dr Frank Bongiorno for drawing these letters to my attention. Higgins, an Irish-born Protestant lawyer and a close friend of Deakin, was a noted Victorian radical. 'Henry Bournes Higgins', ADB, vol. 9, pp. 285-289.
117 Education Gazette and Teachers' Aid (hereafter EGTA), Nov. 1900, p. 80.
that he direct officers of his department to assist the committee. The minister obliged the next day.

The premier, within ten days, cabled the agent-general in London on Sargood's behalf, seeking dates for the shipping of 1,000 flags or the material to make them. The railway commissioner and the postmaster-general agreed to transport poles and flags free of charge. Sargood's State School Flag Committee, through the *Education Gazette and Teachers' Aid* and the *School Paper*, outlined the scheme. The duties of the committee, it explained, included deciding on 'the ceremony to be observed for the hoisting and saluting of the flag', and arranging 'for the simultaneous carrying out of same by the Boards of Advice in the several districts'. It invited boards to place their orders for the 'national flag'. Enquiries by these boards through the next few months prompted departmental approval for them to use their maintenance allowance in buying flags and poles, as long as they did not exceed their annual grant. Clearly there were not quite enough donors. While schools in Victoria were Sargood's immediate concern, he was also keen to involve those in the other Australian States and wrote to the premiers and the press about the scheme. He even invited the schools of New Zealand, where he had business interests, and of Fiji, to participate.

The focus of all this organisation, the Union Jack, became the subject of special lessons in Victorian schools in preparation for the day. The *School Paper* explained the symbolism of the flag's colours: 'the red of St George stands for ardent love; the blue of St Andrew for truth; and the white of St Patrick for purity', a convenient but confusing interpretation of the white and blue saltires of St

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118 Letter from A.H. Sargood, for his father who was indisposed in bed, to Minister of Public Instruction, 19 Oct. 1900, VPRS 794, Box 963 1900/39931, PROV.
119 Letter from Premier to Lt-Col. Sir F.T. Sargood, 30 Oct. 1900, VPRS 1161, Letterbook 111 no. 5242, PROV.
120 The arrangement led Alfred Champion, a flagmaker, to complain of the unfair competition, Education Department to Champion, 19 April 1901, VPRS 794, Box 971 1901/11733, PROV.
122 *SMH*, 15 May 1901, p. 7; see also *Age*, 15 May 1901, p. 8.
123 *ibid.*, and *Australasian*, 18 May 1901, p. 1109.
Andrew and St Patrick. Older children were urged to memorise the extract from Hulme's *The Flags of the World* which described the significance of the national flag. 'Though its prime cost may be but a few shillings', Hulme wrote in part,

its value is priceless, for the national honour is enwrapped in its folds, and the history of centuries is figured in the symbolism of its devices. It represents to us all that patriotism means. It is the flag of freedom, and of the greatest empire that the world has ever known.

The date set for the hoisting of the flags was 9 May, the day of the opening of the new federal parliament. However, as Victorian schools were to be on holiday, 14 May served instead. The change allowed the central ceremony to take place in the same building, the Exhibition Building, in Melbourne. The time was to be 12.50 pm. For Sargood 'the simultaneous hoisting of the flags', made possible by the telegraph system, was 'an important point' in his proposal. It was a refinement of a strategy used by the labour movement in the United States and Europe in 1890 to make May Day an international demonstration in support of the eight-hour working day. Labour's adoption of this fundamental principle of religious practice of 'doing the same thing at the same time' — was intended to raise working-class consciousness and to impress the wider public. Francis Bellamy and his committee in the United States had also been attracted by the idea of simultaneous celebration — but for very different purposes — with their flag ceremony of October 1892. Now Sir Frederick was attempting to be even more precise with his raising of the Union Jacks, not only on the same day but at the same minute, despite Australia's three different time zones.
Those attending the ceremony at the Exhibition Building were not from State but private schools: they were the boys of Victoria's elite schools and their families. These schools displayed the national flag but only on special occasions, and then with the restraint of the English 'public' school tradition.\(^{129}\) Rudyard Kipling's vignette, 'The Flag of Their Country', in *Stalky & Co*, the story of a school in England's west country, gave a glimpse of the 'public' school suspicion of anything which resembled 'flag-flapping'. A visiting Conservative politician, flourishing his Union Jack at the height of his speech on patriotism to the boys, expected 'the thunder of applause'.\(^{130}\) But the boys, horror-struck, looked in silence. They had certainly seen the thing before ... But the College never displayed it; it was no part of the scheme of their lives; the Head had never alluded to it; their fathers [75 per cent of them were officers in the services] had not declared it to them. It was a matter shut up, sacred and apart.

Later that night they concluded that the visitor, 'beyond question, was born in a gutter, and bred in a Board-school'.\(^{131}\)

This was not fair to the board school. The London School Board had treated the issue of flags in schools very cautiously.\(^{132}\) Late in 1892 Lord Meath, an alderman of the London County Council and later the Empire's champion of Empire Day, had suggested to the board's chairman the adoption of the practice of saluting the flag for its schools as a means of giving 'the young Briton some notion of the mighty heritage and glorious traditions which are his

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129In 1902, for example, St Peter's Collegiate School in Adelaide marked the end of the war in South Africa by sending the smallest boy up the flagpole to fly the Union Jack, *St Peter's School Magazine*, 25 June 1902, p. 401. However, school flags were much more visible, and were even the object of adoration. See, for example, 'The Flag Song' of Wesley College, Melbourne, composed in 1906 and sung for the first time on Empire Day that year to mark the school's return to its first colours of purple and gold, *Wesley College (Melbourne) Song Book* (1893), Melbourne, 6th edn, 1929, p. 1.


131Kipling, a reactionary in the debate then current on public schools, believed that conflict rather than conformity was necessary in the moulding of boys' characters. See Edward C. Mack, *Public Schools and British Opinion since 1860: The Relationship between Contemporary Ideas and the Evolution of an English Institution*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1941, pp. 221, 225.

birthright'. Meath had been impressed by what he had seen in the United States. Perhaps, too, he feared the impact of the Red Flag — a more revolutionary symbol than trade union banners — with the great dockers' strike in London in 1889 and the world-wide celebration of 1 May which had begun in 1890. He later expressed the fear that some of the working class 'entertain a vague feeling that the laws and institutions of the country are somehow or other responsible for much of their sufferings'. Meath was one of several gentlemen 'engaged in the self-imposed task of the moral regeneration of the English working class'. Another was Lord Milner, convinced that 'the consciousness that "we are also a nation"' was most lacking in the working class. Such men were keen to exploit royal occasions to bind the working class to the nation in the face of the socialist challenge.

Not until Meath supported his suggestion with £50 towards the flags did the board seriously consider his proposal. But it drew opposition from several quarters, and was roundly condemned by the Gas Workers' and General Labourers' Union on behalf of some parents who saw the flag as symbolic of 'British rule ... the most intolerable burden the world has ever had to bear'. The result was a compromise: the board would accept offers of flags, but not the condition Meath had attempted to impose, and supply flags to schools which requested them. Thus an observer of the issue could later remark: 'We do not like waving the flag; in fact we would rather not do it. ... we may show

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139 Quoted from the resolution of the Gas Workers' and General Labourers' Union (South Woolwich Br.) by Betts, Patriotism on the Elementary School Curriculum, pp. 4-5.
140 ibid., pp. 6-8. Meath's condition was that the flag should be hung in the school's largest room and paraded while the children sang a patriotic song after the teacher's occasional lecture on the flag.
our respect for it in the way that some people show their respect for the classics — by leaving undisturbed the dust that tenderly veils their glories', a striking contrast to the more emotive American approach. J.H. Grainger concluded 'that if the patria were to be taught at all it would be taught indirectly'. To ask for more would be to go 'against the grain of English education'.

The distaste Kipling described was common in Australian private schools, modelled as they were on those of England. They assumed rather than taught patriotism, so closely associated with manliness. 'A public school', Frederic Chappie, Headmaster of Prince Alfred College in Adelaide, had declared when farewelling old boys of the school leaving with the second South Australian contingent for South Africa in January 1900, 'ought to produce such as you. It ought to teach its boys to look down upon selfishness and self-seeking; and to reverence, esteem, and cultivate bravery and patriotism — the readiness to help others and to defend that right'. The sentiment reflected the ideas of Dr Thomas Arnold, former headmaster of Rugby, which were so influential in cultivating a group spirit in private schools throughout the Empire. 'Public' schools, Arnold had argued, fostered 'a sort of republican fellowship', which when a boy left school, became public spirit in the wider community. It was not surprising that Sargood should make these boys the centre of his telegraphic ceremony, especially when it was combined with a prize-giving at the hands of the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York.

While Sargood's scheme was under way in Melbourne, in London Joseph Chamberlain, Colonial Secretary, was writing to the newly-appointed Governor-General, Lord Hopetoun, seeking his government's advice as to a flag and seal for the new Commonwealth. The despatch was forwarded to the

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141Dr Gunn, The Practical Teacher, Aug. 1910, p. 82, quoted in ibid., p. 9.
142Grainger, ibid., p. 28.
143See, for example, how little is said on the subject in Bean, Here, My Son, and Geoffrey Sherington, R.C. Petersen and Ian Brice, Learning to Lead: A History of Girls' and Boys' Corporate Secondary Schools in Australia, Sydney, Allen & Unwin, 1987.
144Prince Alfred Chronicle, 30 Mar. 1900, special number, p. 344.
145Quoted by Mack, Public Schools, p. 70.
146Chamberlain to Hopetoun, 29 Nov. 1900, CRS A461/1 B336/1/1 Pt 1, AA (ACT).
Prime Minister, Edmund Barton, a few days after the inauguration of the Commonwealth in Sydney on New Year’s Day, 1901. Barton’s ministers had considered the issue of a flag but were ‘rather inclined to think that the matter could be deferred until more important matters had been disposed of’.\textsuperscript{147} Perhaps that was politic: Barton favoured the Federal Flag.\textsuperscript{148} Now, with Chamberlain’s request, Barton wondered whether the choice of seal and flag was a matter for government or people. W.A. Gullick at the Government Printing Office, Sydney, suggested appropriate wording for the seal but commented: ‘the word “Commonwealth” is decidedly difficult to hit it off in Latin [\textit{reipublicae}] - it looks right away from the Empiric idea in a free reading’.\textsuperscript{149} Barton agreed the difficulty was ‘manifest’, but thought it could be overcome by an English translation on the reverse side. While Barton hesitated, one citizen urged him to arrange a design competition for a flag as soon as possible: ‘every city, village, house, school and steamer is anxious to proclaim the Union of Australia, but not one can do so through the non-existence of our Flag’.\textsuperscript{150} By 13 April Barton’s government had decided in favour of a competition. The \textit{Review}, which had already extended its 1 February deadline in December, welcomed the move and offered to forward its entries and increase the prize money to match that offered by the government. The requirement for two flags remained. The closing date was 31 May.

\textbf{14 May 1901: Imperial Legacy for State Schools}

At the Exhibition Building on the 14 May 10,000 people assembled: proud families, and their excited schoolboys, restless once the speeches began until the Duke motioned them closer to the dais. The venerable headmaster from Scotch College, Dr Alexander Morrison, whose obvious seniority nicely decided the

\begin{footnotesize}
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  \item [148]\textsuperscript{148}SMH, 24 May 1898, p. 9.
  \item [149]\textsuperscript{149}Gullick to Atlee Hunt, Secretary, Prime Minister’s Department, and minute by Barton, 8 Jan. 1901, CRS A6/1 01/133, AA (ACT).
  \item [150]\textsuperscript{150}M. Tudor, Grosvenor Hotel, Sydney, to Edmund Barton, 19 Jan. 1901, \textit{ibid.}
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
vexed issue of precedence, chaired the occasion. He began his welcoming speech to the royal visitors by affirming that religious education was the basis for 'moulding the character, and thereby shaping the destinies of this new people'. All the major religious denominations represented — Presbyterian, Anglican, Catholic and Methodist — could agree. But how these schools, 'organized and conducted very largely on the model of English public schools', would mould 'this new people' was not so clear.

W.S. Littlejohn, when he succeeded Morrison at Scotch in 1904 and made it the largest school of its kind in the British Empire, was more specific on this point in his first annual report. Drawing on the importance of religious education, games, and especially cadet drill, he sought to define that 'complex thing', 'that indefinable something called the "tone" of the school', which for him was inextricably linked with patriotism:

> The dominant note is manly courage ... I do not mean mere physical courage ... nor the courage that conscience creates along the path of duty ... but courage born of love; love it may be of higher things but always love of the alma mater, love that 'doth not behave itself unseemly, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, rejoiceth in the truth'.

Significantly, given the social exclusiveness associated with private schools, Littlejohn did not include charity in his extract from I Corinthians 13, verses 4 to 6: 'Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up ... seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked'. 'Public' schools, the editor of the Argus commented, aimed to be 'nurseries of unselfish citizenship'. The loss of self, Littlejohn argued, necessary in the life of the school, was preparation for citizenship in the wider community. For boys, he

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153 Sherington, Petersen and Brice, Learning to Lead, p. 61.


155 Argus, 15 May 1901, p. 4.
said, 'this highest ideal' of his alma mater would 'inculcate a larger patriotism, that will make him say and believe that as there is no school like his school so there is no country like his country'. 156 But did love of school transfer to love of country?

Janet McCalman offers a sharper perspective from her study of middle-class Melbourne. She portrays that class at the turn of the century as 'complex, prickly and anxious', having suffered the devastating humiliation of the 1890s depression. 157 It depended for its existence on the private schools; they gave the 'lifelong, indestructible membership of the caste', the means of learning how to "exact deference". 158 Those of the middle class regarded themselves as 'the backbone of the nation; those "with a stake in the country" — men especially; the shoulders upon which responsibility for the well-being of society actually fell'. 'Superiority tempered with service and responsibility': that was the mark of a private school. 159 Reconciling the two characteristics was not easy.

Morrison assured the royal visitors that such schools aimed to produce 'loyal and patriotic citizens'. 160 By that he meant men 'who will not only do their work well in every social, civil and religious capacity, but will fight, if need be, for their King and Country'. Here he referred to many old boys who were fighting in the South African War. 'Patriotism and loyalty' he thought were 'natural products of Victorian soil'. It is not clear whether 'country' and 'patriotism' referred to Australia, the Empire or both. The Duke's response was equally ambiguous. He concurred with Morrison on the link between 'public' schools and 'national greatness'. Their discipline, he said, 'generate[d] manliness and courage', which in turn taught 'the faculty of sticking together'. The Australian Natives' Association later referred to 'British-stick-together-ism'

156 Scotch College, Annual Report, 1907, p. 6.
158 ibid., p. 136.
159 ibid., p. 143.
as 'the true spirit of Imperialism'. Charles Bean was to refer to it as 'the quality of sticking ... to an old mate'. Speaking to the boys as 'fellow subjects of the British Crown', the Duke also referred to those fighting in South Africa, as well as China, ending with the words: 'Be loyal, yes, to your parents, your country, your King and your God'.

As for the State schools, Sargood had reason to be satisfied with his effort, especially with the response in Victoria and New South Wales. However, contemporary accounts of the extent of involvement are conflicting. The dailies in Melbourne and Sydney gave the impression of widespread participation, the most extreme version of this appearing in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, whose editorial referred to 'every State school throughout the Commonwealth'. However, reports in the metropolitan dailies of smaller states presented a different picture. In South Australia only 100 of 706 state schools, most of them in country districts, had participated — 'punctually at 12.20' to coincide with the ceremony of 12.50 in the eastern states. Press reports in South Australia were so precise because its government, unlike counterparts in Victoria and New South Wales, had agreed to supply flags to those schools erecting poles. Money for this purpose had been taken from a fund set aside for 'a Patriotic display' when the war ended in South Africa. The *Advertiser* noted with regret 'that most of the large city schools took no part in the ceremony'. Schools in Tasmania were involved, but those in Western Australia hardly at all. Queensland's schools, reported by the *Age* to have had their ceremonies on 9 May, appear not to have participated at all, on 9 or 14 May.

164 *Advertiser*, 15 May 1901, p. 4.
165 L.W. Stanton, Chairman of the Board of Inspectors, to Minister of Education, 10 Nov. 1900, request approved by the minister on 15 Nov. and cabinet on 19 Nov., GRG 18/2/1900/2084, State Records of South Australia (hereafter SRSA). In South Australia the chairman of the Board of Advice at Koolunga tried to obtain 'Australian Flags' for its schools at Yacka, Red Hill and Koolunga in the mid-north but without success, Minute from Thomas Brooker, Minister of Education and Industry, to L.W. Stanton, 24 May 1901, GRG 18/1/1901/563, SRSA.
Another puzzle which press reports do not clarify was the nature of the flag ceremony. Reporters wrote of the hoisting and saluting of the flag, cheers for the king, the duke and duchess, and the new nation, school cadets firing three volleys, the singing of patriotic songs, the giving of speeches, and the presenting of commemorative medals and bags of lollies. There was no mention of a children's declaration or pledge. Only two slight clues indicate that 'saluting the flag' might have included words. The duke's words, 'Be loyal, yes, to your parents, your country, your King and your God', summarised the oath the Victorian minister of public instruction was shortly to impose on state schools. And at the Central School, Ballarat, a reporter observed: 'While waiting for the [telegraph] signal, Mr Webb schooled his pupils in an American idea of salute. This consisted of three movements, the meaning of which were — love the Empire, honour the flag, and promise to obey her laws', which again suggested the oath to come.168

The emphasis throughout was on Empire rather than Commonwealth. A speaker at Sutherland near Sydney might tell his young listeners that the 'British flag' was 'a symbol of Australian unity', but Melbourne's conservative Argus recognised the importance of the other message: 'In the mind of every schoolboy and schoolgirl ... the accomplishment of federation will ever be associated with an unprecedented and universal expression of loyalty to the British Throne and Empire'.169 As Sargood had intended, most important would be 'the lasting impression' left on children as, week by week, they saw the Union Jack, 'the symbol of unity, strength and protection', flying over their schools.170 Other speakers developed the same theme. In working-class Collingwood, Melbourne, the Mayor, William Beazley, a London-born Labor MLA, believed the flag would be a constant reminder of 'the greatest freedom and liberty for the people' and a guarantee of the Empire's support.171 Freedom

169SMH, 15 May 1901, p. 8; Argus, 15 May 1901, p. 4.
170Reported from Sir Frederick's speech, Age, 15 May 1901, p. 8.
171Age, 15 May 1901, p. 8.
The Commonwealth of Australia, 1901: The Union Jack for Schools

and strength: these were the qualities presented to children through the symbol of the Union Jack: 'Always remember', the civics textbook explained, 'that ... wherever the British flag waves, everyone is and must be free'. The flag was a much more potent symbol than the picture, 'The Opening of the First Federal Parliament', which the minister of public instruction in Victoria hoped every State school would buy.173

The use of the Union Jack, however, did not go unchallenged. In New South Wales at least three schools also flew an Australian flag, variously referred to as the 'Australian', 'Commonwealth' or 'Federal' flag — probably the flag of the federation campaign.174 The headmaster of Smith-street Superior Public School in working-class Balmain, Phillip Nelligan, made a point of using not only both flags, but also Advance Australia Fair as well as God Save the King.175 That Australian anthem and other Australian songs featured in many New South Wales ceremonies. In Victoria J. Brunton Stephens' anthem had been promoted in the celebrations as the Australian National Anthem, though reports mentioned it only in relation to the school at Burnley and the combined State school demonstration.176 Despite its Australian orientation, Stephens did not neglect the British connection, developed in the third of four verses:

Oh, with Thy mighty hand
Guard Thou the Motherland;
She, too, is Thine.
Lead her where honour lies,
We beneath other skies
Still clinging daughterwise,
Hers, yet all Thine.

173EGTA, Nov. 1901, p. 67.
175P.J. Nelligan, an experienced teacher and a founding member of the teachers' association, had been educated at the Catholic St Stanislaus' College, Bathurst, extract from the Sun, 3 Jan. 1917, reported on his retirement from the Education Department, in Echoes from St Stanislaus', Apr. 1918, p. 18.
In the rhetoric of celebrating federation, the mother-daughter relationship was rarely fully explored. The challenge, posed by Kipling's poem, *The Young Queen*, commemorating the Commonwealth, lay in transposing Australians' allegiance from Britain to Australia.\(^{177}\) Australia, a 'young queen', was no longer a daughter but a sister to Britain, the 'old queen'. The last line of his poem gave the words of advice from old to young: 'And make thy people to love thee, as thou has loved me'. Dr Morrison could assure the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York that his school taught boys to love their country. But which country is not clear. Sargood's message had also been ambiguous. To speak of 'nation' and 'nationhood' was equally difficult. Australia's crown of

\(^{177}\)Rudyard Kipling, *The Young Queen*, Review of Reviews, Nov. 1900, p. 577.
'nationhood' in Table Talk's cartoon of May 1901 implied independence, but as a gift from the more mature British monarch it indicated the continuing colonial bond (fig. 13). The symbolism of the souvenir invitation card for the opening of parliament was similar: the young queen of Kipling's poem paying homage to the older queen (fig. 12).

These issues were not the concern of Australia's leaders as they gathered to affirm their 'public' school education while in Melbourne for the celebrations. These were old boys from the prominent schools of Australasia and Britain, confirming their right and duty to lead public life. The principal speaker was the Prime Minister, Edmund Barton, former dux of Sydney Grammar School, who praised the 'public' school as 'a real school of citizenship':

The little republic of a public school, the public spirit of it, and the public opinion of it, were among the factors in the making of men, and it was for that that the work of a public school had a better influence upon the scholar than the work of any other place in which he could be put.178

His words recalled Arnold's 'republican fellowship'. In mentioning that Sydney and Melbourne Grammar Schools had provided the top two men in federal politics (Alfred Deakin and himself), Barton was critical of 'public' school men who chose not to go into politics but chased 'the almighty dollar'. For 'public' school men, he believed, there was a special obligation. Such an obligation was not widely recognised in Australia, according to the King's School Magazine, Sydney, 'even amongst those who have been pupils in such schools'.179

The reporter disagreed with Barton, arguing that no class of school or society had 'a monopoly of the duties and distinctions of public life'. The questioning was timely. Controversy about the value of 'public' school education, approaching its peak in England with the inadequacies revealed by the South African War, was filtering through to Australia.180

179 King's School Magazine, March 1903, p. 302.
180 Mack, Public Schools, pp. 217ff.
Fig. 13. Nationhood: 'Crowning the young queen!'

(Table Talk, 9 May 1901)
Even those heading these schools in England were suggesting that teaching a boy to be loyal to his school was unlikely to translate into a loyalty to the wider nation. 'While the boy carries his enthusiasm for his school into maturer life', a headmaster was shortly to write in a damning indictment of 'public' schools, 'the tendency of the public school atmosphere does not tend to cultivate afterwards a regard for those among his fellow-countrymen whose rank, station and wants differ from his own'. In Australia the assumed differences of 'public' and State schools and the contrasting roles they were given in the federation celebrations posed the question of how they would negotiate the Australian-imperial relationship with their pupils. It was not long before State schools, at least those which had adopted a flag ceremony, had to face this question. For within a few months of celebrating federation, the second competition had yielded an Australian design.

In September 1901 the winning design was raised above the Exhibition Building in Melbourne: 'that bastard flag', the Bulletin called it. The judges had again favoured the Union Jack in the upper hoist, the place of honour, and the constellation of the Southern Cross in the fly as symbolic of 'the loyalty and sentiment of the Australian people'. The new symbol, the Federation Star, representing the six federating States, pointed to the red cross of St George in the Union Jack. There was immediate criticism, especially from New South Wales. Charles Burfitt, later president of the Royal Australian Historical Society, believed that the flag chosen was too much like the flag of Victoria and disregarded 'the principal feature of the old Australian flag', a reference to the

182See figs 5a and 5b above, p. 10.
184Judges Report to Secretary, External Affairs, 2 Sept. 1901, CRS A461/1 B336/1/1 Pt 1, AA (ACT). The judges were Captains J. Eadie, Superintendent of Navigation, Sydney, J.A. Mitchell, Pilot Service, Victoria, C.J. Clare, Commander of SA's Protector, I.N. Evans, shipping manager and MHA, Tas., and Lieut. Thompson, RN, Australian Station and Naval Assessor to the Board, CRS A461/1 B336/1/1 Pt 1, AA (ACT).
flag of the federation campaign with its blue St George's Cross. It gave the prime minister cause for thought as he prepared to send the design to London for approval.

In the meantime, within a month of the new design being announced, William Gurr, Liberal Minister of Public Instruction in Victoria, established on a permanent basis the ritual of saluting the Union Jack begun at the time of federation. He now required State schools to observe the practice on all national occasions. The premier was Alexander Peacock, a director of the Australian Natives' Association. The ostensible cause was the celebration on 8 November of the new King's birthday and the honouring of men back from the war in South Africa, but the special ceremony of patriotic songs and poems was also to be used on other 'national' occasions (fig. 14). More significantly, the minister required a simplified version of that ceremony every Monday morning — the hoisting of the flag and the children's declaration of loyalty. He believed 'the time opportune for systematizing effort to maintain and increase, if possible, the patriotic sentiment in this State'. On 14 May 1901 school cadets had usually saluted the flag and fired their volleys; now from October all the children were to recite, right hands on left breasts, the words:

I love God and my country;
I honour the flag;
I will serve the King, and cheerfully obey my parents, teachers, and the laws.

That 'cheerfully' was to linger in many minds down the years. Who included it in the pledge — indeed, who devised the pledge — remains a mystery. Perhaps William Gillies, teacher and writer of textbooks may have been influential. 'In no country in the world', he explained in one of those texts, 'does the will of the people become the law of the land more readily than in

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185 C.T. Burfitt to Editor, Daily Telegraph, 13 Sept. 1901, in letter by A.W. Thompson to Edmund Barton, 16 Sept. 1901, CRS A8/1 01/208/8, AA (ACT).
Australia and New Zealand, and therefore in no country should the law be more cheerfully obeyed than in these lands.187

**Saluting the Flag.**

The children should be drawn up in the form of a hollow square facing the flag-pole. If the school has a cadet corps, its place will be in the hollow square. Visitors should face the children, standing, if possible, behind the flag-pole.

When, at a given signal, the flag is run up, the boys should salute, and the girls stand to attention.

Fig. 14. Extract from instructions for saluting the flag.

(Supplement, *Education Gazette and Teachers’ Aid*, Oct. 1901)

Many schools already had their 'national flag'. Others would now have to get one. Fitchett had been right in observing that 'the national flag seems likely

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to fill a very large space in the Australian landscape'. The Union Jack had come to stay.

\[188\] Review of Reviews, 20 Oct. 1900, p. 413.
Sir Frederick Sargood had persuaded at least some State schools beyond Victoria to place the Union Jack at the centre of their celebration of Australian federation. But would the States now follow Victoria's example in making the flag ceremony a regular part of school life? If so, which flag would they use? The selection of a design for an Australian flag had come too late for the ceremony of May 1901. However, once selected and authorised, what impact would it have on the use of the Union Jack in schools? Was it possible that the Union Jack would be hauled down and an Australian flag raised in its place? Or would schools erect a second pole, or a yard-arm and fly both flags? These representations of two nationalities could be confusing. Which of the flags would have the place of honour on the left as the children faced them? Whatever the choice, precedence was involved.

This question of flags nicely illustrates the dilemma of nationality facing Australians. Federation had given form to an Australian nation, but were Australians, in imagining themselves as a nation, to forget the wider British nation of which they were a part? As K.S. Inglis posed the question: which country was home? For Benedict Anderson, remembering and forgetting shaped the construction of nationality. 'If nationalism was ... the expression of a radically changed form of consciousness', he asked, 'should not awareness of that break, and the necessary forgetting of the older consciousness, create its...

own narrative? His question is especially appropriate for my purpose here, given his definition of nation as 'an imagined political community' and his advice that nationality can best be understood in the context of 'the large cultural systems that preceded it, out of which — as well as against which — it came into being'. Linda Colley showed how this could be done in explaining the emergence of a British nationality from English, Scottish, Irish and Welsh components.

However, Colley's argument that identities, unlike hats, could be worn 'several at a time' does not hold true for flags, the symbols of those identities. In Britain the Union Jack did represent three of the four nations, and Australia's winning design had given that flag pride of place in its upper hoist. But a single flagpole without a yard-arm could fly only one flag. For Australian schools would an Australian flag, which reflected both British and Australian symbols, suffice? The answer was doubtful in a British context where the monarch had become 'the head of the nation ... a symbol of consensus and continuity' and 'the symbolic representative of the country's greatness and glory'. The answer was equally doubtful in the Australian context where party political instability might be resolved by an appeal to British rather than Australian loyalties. In these circumstances, the introduction of Empire Day into schools was decisive in encouraging not only the ceremony of saluting the flag but also the use of the Union Jack rather than an Australian flag, especially when there was not one such flag but two ensigns.

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3Emphasis added, ibid., pp. 6, 12.
5ibid., p. 6.
Problems with the Australian Design

In one sense the selection of a design in September 1901 had settled the issue of an Australian flag — the Australian government could now forward it to London. In another sense the selection, associated with the two ensigns, launched more than fifty years of confusion and ambiguity. The decision to choose ensigns was not surprising, given the conditions of the competition, and the naval and shipping connexions of the judges. As one entrant in the competition was quick to note, 'their collective tastes would be likely to be biased towards the old form of flag which has presumably been the object of their lifelong loyalty and affections, to the prejudice of newer designs & even of re-arrangements of the British emblem'.

Further criticism was to come. Behind much of it was the difference in symbols of the two major States: the St George's Cross in blue (with white stars), or red (with gold stars and lion) from New South Wales; and the constellation of the Southern Cross from Victoria. There were other 'imagined communities' besides the British and Australian ones. Colonial loyalties were extraordinarily persistent. They were further complicated by the States' differing views on federation. As A.W. Martin remarked, 'Those historians who interpret its ultimate achievement as a Victorian coup have good arguments on their side'. The fact that the judges had come from several States was not enough to satisfy 'many' discontented contributors reported in the Daily Telegraph. They had 'understood [that] the designs were to be submitted to the Imperial authorities, and not judged by anyone connected with the States'.
Had that been the case some 30,000 designs would have been sent to London.\textsuperscript{12}
Charles Burfitt, later president of the Royal Australian Historical Society, was
more explicit in his criticism of the judges' choice:

1. It is virtually the flag used, and [which] will continue to be used,
by an individual State, and, therefore, its adoption would be
opposed to the spirit of Federation.
2. At a distance it is likely to be mistaken for the British ensign or the
Victorian or New Zealand flags.
3. The principal feature of the old Australian flag is omitted ...
5. From a heraldic standpoint there is the mistake that the common­
wealth is placed in the third instead of the second position on the
field.\textsuperscript{13}

The design was too much like the Victorian flag. The Board of Directors of the
Australian Natives' Association (ANA) in New South Wales forwarded a
similar opinion to the prime minister, complaining that 'the designs of the
Federal Flag and Seal ... are not of a national character and ... that both should
be changed for designs more emblematical of Australia'.\textsuperscript{14} They did not specify
what 'more emblematical of Australia' might mean.

Questions in parliament indicated the concern. On 9 October 1901 Senator
George Pearce from Western Australia wondered whether the government
intended to recognise officially the flag and seal recently selected, and whether
the Senate would have an opportunity to express an opinion.\textsuperscript{15} The next month
Austin Chapman, MHR for Eden-Monaro, New South Wales, asked on behalf
of fellow Liberal Protectionist, Richard Crouch, the member for Corio, Victoria,
if the government had made a decision about the Australian flag, and if, when
adopted, that flag would be flown 'as the national flag on the ships of the
auxiliary squadron and on all Australian forts'.\textsuperscript{16} Teachers also wanted the flag
issue settled. Fred Burman at Moss Vale Public School, New South Wales,
wished to buy a Commonwealth flag with money remaining from his purchase of the Union Jack.  

The government tried to avoid controversy, particularly given State sensitivities, however disguised, by insisting that it was a matter for the imperial government. That was true up to a point. The Admiralty controlled British flags, at least as far as they were used on ships. But the New Zealand government had shown considerable independence in determining its flag. However, the Admiralty opposed merchant ships using the New Zealand blue ensign, believing that New Zealand's request 'would doubtless lead to claims from the mercantile marine of this country and of other countries to demand a similar privilege'. The New Zealand government amended its legislation in November 1901 but nevertheless retained the blue ensign for all purposes — government and non-government — ashore. The flag of government vessels had essentially become the flag of the country. The Canadians, less formally, had chosen the red ensign of their merchant ships. Canadian flag enthusiast F. Barlow Cumberland had written to Dr Fitchett, hoping that Australians would follow their example: 'The blood-red fighting flag of Britain with a Commonwealth emblem in the fly, would tell us that you are of us and with us'.  

Yet Edmund Barton delayed sending the design to London. Dissension within cabinet marked the extent of dissatisfaction felt, particularly within New

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17Fred Burman to Chief Inspector, Department of Public Instruction, NSW, 21 Jan. 1902, forwarded to External Affairs Department, CRS A8/1 02/135/10, AA (ACT).
20Glue, ibid., pp. 17-20. The amended bill was approved at the court of St James in March and gazetted in June 1902.
South Wales.22 There had also been signs of it in the judges' report. The secretary of the Prime Minister's Department had forwarded that report to Barton with not one but two designs. One was from the competition. The second, apparently the flag of the federation campaign, carried the note: 'It is understood, unofficially, that the main objection to this design was the difficulty of making, which, in the opinion of most of the judges, rendered it costly, clumsy, and therefore unsuitable for general use'.23 If that were so, the judges' objection is surprising, given the greater difficulties in making the chosen design with the Southern Cross constellation. Yet the view explains 'Dog of St Bernard's' outburst to the editor of the *Telegraph*: 'Fancy appointing gentlemen who ... take into consideration "the cost of making in bunting" of what is to be a national emblem!'24

Eventually Barton sent both designs, each closely identified with a major State. One featured the Southern Cross from the competition, suitable for red and blue ensigns; the other the St George's Cross in blue (bearing white stars) on a white ground, 'originally known', Barton explained to the governor-general, 'as the Australian flag ... in general use on the East Coast of Australia before the separation of Victoria and Queensland from New South Wales'.25 This was the flag Barton had persuaded the Federal Association of New South Wales to recommend as the flag of the proposed Commonwealth.26 The government had already indicated this possibility in its response in the Senate to the first question on the flag: 'The prize designs, and possibly others, will be forwarded to the Imperial Government. The final decision does not rest with the Commonwealth'.27

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22Atlee Hunt, former Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, 'Federal Memories. The Commonwealth Flag', *Sydney Morning Herald* (hereafter SMH), 18 June 1932, Australian Flag, Newspaper File, National Library of Australia.
23Atlee Hunt, Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, to Prime Minister, 22 Nov. 1901, together with the judges' report, CRS A461/1 B336/1/1 Pt 1, AA (ACT).
24'Dog of St Bernard' to editor, DT, 11 Sept. 1901, enclosure in design by A.W. Thompson, CRS A8/1 01/208/8, AA (ACT).
25Edmund Barton to the Governor-General, the Earl of Hopetoun, 8 Feb. 1902, CRS A461/1 B336/1/1 Pt 1, AA (ACT).
26SMH, 24 May 1898, p. 9.
Richard Crouch had a particular interest in the flag issue. At 33 he was the youngest member of the House of Representatives. A Melbourne barrister and solicitor, he had been a member of both the ANA and the Imperial Federation League, as had his friend and party colleague, Alfred Deakin, Attorney-General, though after 1893 they had both given the ANA priority. Crouch had been the source of the first question for the government on the use of the new flag. His interest in its use on ships and forts revealed his close involvement in the militia from 1892. Tired of waiting for news from London, he questioned Deakin as acting prime minister in July 1902 on 'why the Government should not make the selection itself. Government spokesmen, Barton and Deakin in the House and O'Connor in the Senate, consistently responded: the request for a flag had come from Joseph Chamberlain, the Colonial Secretary; selected designs had been sent (in February 1902, not the previous December as Deakin had said); they must await approval from London. Deakin added: 'A flag is a symbol of a Sovereign State ... An unauthorized flag would not be recognised'. His view, an explicit recognition of Australia's colonial status, had already been made clear in the Australian Constitution Bill, which 'expressly provided that Australia was "constitutionally a subordinate and not an independent sovereign community or state"'.

The National Flag of Britain and the Empire: Union Jack or Red Ensign?

Not mentioned in the Commonwealth parliament at that time, but later influential in both Australia and Canada, was the heated debate about the status of the Union Jack and the red ensign in the English press between 7 June to 26 September 1902. 'A.S.B.', in addressing the editor, remarked that 'it was surely a curious fact that the unofficial British subject does not know what is the
flag of his Empire ... is it not scandalous?"32 Perhaps tact prevented the writer from adding that officials were equally ignorant, for the Times could assert: 'There is, indeed, no common agreement as to what the national flag is'.33 Two incidents at the time of the coronation of King Edward VII in June had raised the issue of flags for the general public.

One was the refusal by the king's private secretary to allow subjects to fly the Royal Standard, the personal flag of the king. The vicar of St Michael's at Folkestone, on seeking permission to fly that flag, had been told on behalf of the king that he could 'always fly the Union Jack'.34 This drew a response from some, including a naval officer, who believed that the Union Jack could be used only by officials and that private individuals had to use the red ensign.35 Most of the discussion which followed concerned the Union Jack and red ensign. However, one contributor cautioned readers against too hasty an acceptance of the views of the king's private secretary on the Royal Standard, at least in relation to the Church of England.36 'F.S.A.' reminded readers of the act of parliament he believed was still in force, which, since the restoration of Charles II, required every church to display the Royal Arms.37 His point was that this 'compulsion to display the Royal Arms inside the church suggests ... the right to display them outside in the form of the Royal Standard'.38 Since the king permitted tradesmen and shopkeepers, whose wares he bought, to display his Arms and Standard, 'F.S.A.' was puzzled as to why the national church, headed by the king as 'Defender of the Faith', should not have the same right. He hoped the private secretary's statement would be reconsidered.

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32 A.S.B' to editor, Times, 13 Sept. 1902, p. 6.
33 Times, 18 Sept. 1902, p. 7.
34 Sir Francis Knollys, Private Secretary to the King, to the vicar, St Michael's, 7 June, ibid. Although I could not find this letter in the issue of that date, the editorial of 18 Sept. 1902, p. 7 gave the essential details.
35 A.C.S.' to editor, 23 June, Lord Hawkesbury to editor, 25 June 1902, ibid., pp. 7, 14.
36 F.S.A.' to editor, ibid., 23 Sept. 1902, p. 10.
The other incident, the confiscation of a Union Jack from a private vessel at the time of the king's visit to Cowes in August, illustrated the view which restricted the Union Jack to official use. G. Wheatly Cobb, the vessel's owner, still smarting from the loss of his Union Jack, complained to the Times: 'Of the tens of thousands of Union Jacks which have been flown by the King's loyal subjects throughout the Empire in honour of the Coronation this is probably the only one so distinguished'.  

'Half the boys of England', he continued, 'were wearing Union jackets — that is, the modern diminutive of the Jack ornamented with the Union device — without let or hindrance'. Should the state insist on its exclusive use of the Union Jack, he argued, it would leave 'the nation without a national flag'. The naval officer, Lord Hawkesbury, thought Cobb mistaken in his belief, 'for obviously the Red Ensign, the colours shown by British ships at sea, must be the national flag'. 'Lincoln's Inn' joined the debate to point out to Cobb 'that whilst there [was] a law regulating the use of flags on board ship there [was] none controlling their use on shore'. However, he also disagreed with 'the promiscuous use of the Union Jack on land', believing that the flag was for fortresses and government buildings only.

'A.S.B.' drew attention to the imperial context of what he suggested had become an annual discussion of 'whether a private gentleman can legally hoist a Union Jack'. 'After travelling over nearly the whole world', he declared '... I have never seen any other flag than the Union Jack over a private Englishman's house'. If such Englishmen were now to be liable to punishment, he asked, 'should not the government issue an order on the subject?' 'Querist' agreed that 'the time [was] ripe for putting the whole matter ... on an established and satisfactory footing', but posed a series of difficult questions which would first

40Hawkesbury to editor, *ibid.*, 30 Aug. 1902, p. 10.
41'Lincoln's Inn' to editor, *ibid.*, 2 Sept. 1902, p. 8.
have to be answered. The most difficult was whether there were 'any laws, customs, or prescriptions which determine the lawful or illicit use of this or that form of the national flag on shore?' He favoured the Union Jack as the national flag since it was common to all British ensigns. It also flew from Victoria Tower at Westminster when parliament was in session.

The use of the Union Jack on the houses of parliament had been a recent innovation. Lord Meath on his return from the United States in 1892 had wanted the daily flying of the Union Jack not only in schools but also from Victoria Tower. With the support of H.O. Arnold-Forster, MP and author of The Citizen Reader for the Use of Schools, Meath was eventually successful, despite opposition from Gladstone's government. 'We were told', Meath later recounted, 'that we were too late, and that no alteration could be made in the Budget; next year the excuse was that ... Queen Victoria's consent would be necessary before any such change could be considered'. Finally the problem posed was one of cost since the appointment of a special official would be necessary to raise and lower the flag when parliament was in session. When Arnold-Forster told his constituents that 'a patriotic Colonial friend ... on hearing of the poverty of the British nation' had offered to pay, Gladstone capitulated. He did not say whether the government or the colonial had paid.

In the debate in the Times 'A.S.B.' thought that loyal subjects should not be denied the use of the Union Jack; but if they were to use it, they should fly the authorised version in the proper way. He estimated that at least 75 per cent of genuine Union Jacks used at the time of the coronation were flown upside down. The Times itself, reflecting on this extensive correspondence, argued along similar lines: 'that the Union Jack is, and must be, the national flag

43Querist' to editor, ibid., 15 Sept. 1902, p. 6. A letter from a captain of the Royal Navy made the same point in relation to 'forts or castles or official places' throughout the Empire, ibid., 18 Sept. 1902, p. 9.
45ibid., p. 329.
46ibid., p. 330.
47A.S.B.' to editor, Times, 13 Sept. 1902, p. 6.
properly so called', the symbol of British nationality.\textsuperscript{48} The flag's structure — the crosses of the three patron saints — symbolised the merging of the three countries, England, Scotland and Ireland, into one, the United Kingdom; three nations had become the British nation.\textsuperscript{49} All that remained was how to ensure the flag's proper use. Here the \textit{Times} looked to 'every school in the kingdom' for the 'wider diffusion of accurate knowledge' about the flag, its 'form, construction, history, and proper usage'. In all the discussion, only one writer, Sir Lambton Loraine, a Rear-Admiral, recognised the change that was taking place.\textsuperscript{50} The regulations had originally concerned only ships because the function of 'national colours' was to protect British subjects at sea. 'It probably did not occur to any one', he explained, 'that a subject, while living in his house on British soil, required any advertisement of his nationality, so no provision was made for it ... To parade national colours all over the country', he thought, '[was] surely a sentiment of modern growth'. Gwyn A. Williams, writing of the previous decade, agreed: 'the British people seemed to have wantoned in colour'.\textsuperscript{51}

He was right. The parading of national colours by British subjects had accompanied the coronation of King Edward VII, the most recent joyful royal spectacle since Queen Victoria's jubilees of 1887 and 1897. A myriad of colours was flown in 1902. 'Querist' had complained about a green British ensign with an Irish harp on it: 'Is this either seemly or legitimate?' he asked. 'May any one take the National Flag and make a travesty of it in any form, colour, or device that suits his fancy?'\textsuperscript{52} David Cannadine's work on the British monarchy and Eric Hobsbawm's on 'mass-producing traditions' of the late nineteenth century underline the importance of these royal spectacles as 'new devices to ensure or express social cohesion and identity and to structure social relations' with the

\textsuperscript{49}Points also made by 'Agenda' and 'Captain, R.N.', \textit{ibid.}, p. 9.
\textsuperscript{50}Sir Lambton Loraine Bt, Rear-Admiral, to editor, \textit{ibid.}, 23 Sept. 1902, p. 10.
\textsuperscript{52}'Querist' to editor, \textit{ibid.}, 15 Sept. 1902, p. 6.
emergence of mass politics. Lord Meath's campaign in the 1890s to put Union Jacks into board schools, 'to give the young Briton some notion of the mighty heritage and glorious traditions which are his birthright', had been a specific attempt at such structuring, a response to the 'banner mania [which had] seized working people' in the 1890s.

The Australian Ensigns

Authorisation of the Australian flags came slowly: first a cable in October 1902 indicating the king's approval of a design, though which one it did not say; then the arrival in February 1903 of the December despatch with drawings of the flags as they would appear in the Admiralty's flag book. Two flags based on the design from the competition had been approved — the Commonwealth Ensign on a blue ground and the Commonwealth Merchant Flag on a red ground — but no reasons were given. Perhaps the alternative — the 'old Australian flag' — was too much like the Royal Navy's white ensign, the only difference being a St George's Cross in blue (rather than red) with white stars. Besides, converting that flag into the blue and red ensigns required for Australian purposes would have been difficult. The ensigns underlined Australia's colonial status and were consistent with Admiralty decisions on the Canadian and New Zealand flags. As an Australian civil servant remarked two generations later, when trying to explain Australians' confusion about their national flag, 'It would in all the circumstances appear that the grant to the

53 Cannadine, 'The British Monarchy' and Hobsbawm, 'Mass-Producing Traditions', in Hobsbawm and Ranger (eds), The Invention of Tradition, pp. 263, 282.
55 Colonial Secretary to Lord Tennyson, Governor-General, 29 Dec. 1902, CRS A461/1 B336/1/1 Pt 1, AA (ACT).
57 SMH, 4 May 1898, p. 6 suggests that 'it is on account of the alleged danger of it being mistaken for the white ensign that the Imperial authorities have an objection to the Australian flag'. My thanks to Dr Helen Irving for this reference. Burton in 'Australia’s Forgotten Flag', p. 163 reports that the Admiralty’s authorisation of the flag in the 1820s when it was known as the New South Wales Ensign has yet to be found.
Commonwealth of a flag had no greater significance than had that to say Tasmania in prefederation days ... The Commonwealth was merely another colonial unit and the flag was merely a colonial Ensign'.58

The gazette notice announcing the Admiralty's choice gave no instructions as to the use of the two ensigns: it was taken as self-evident. The main concern was to explain the transition from State to Commonwealth merchant flags. Many were puzzled. Captain W.R. Creswell, the Naval Commandant at Brisbane, asked Sir John Forrest, Minister for Defence, for directions as to the use of the new flag.59 He in turn referred the query to the Department of External Affairs. Atlee Hunt, its secretary, could only forward a copy of the original gazette notice, adding: 'No other instructions have been recd'. Sir Lambton Loraine, already stirred by the fuss over flags in Britain, was amused at the idea of an Australian flag. He thought that 'One Throne, one flag' was good enough for the whole Empire'.60 It was an uncertain beginning for the Australian flag. The ministers, aware of Australia's subordinate relationship with Britain, accepted the ensigns as appropriate symbols. Nevertheless, their hesitation about the flags' use suggests that they also regarded them as symbols of the new Australian nation. The awkward protocol involved in this situation is a reminder of Barton's intention early in 1901 to defer the issue of flag and seal until prodded by the British government.

The Admiralty assumed that Australians would use the new red and blue ensigns to mark government and merchant shipping as they had with colonial ensigns before federation. That had been its concern with the New Zealand government which regarded the blue ensign as the national flag. The Admiralty lords could hardly have been unaware of the British flag controversy, so prominent in the pages of the Times in 1902, and its implications for New

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58 Paper, Necessity of an Australian National Flag, drafted in preparation for the jubilee celebration of federation and suggesting the need for legislation defining the Australian National Flag, n.d. but c. 1950, CRS A462/1 828/1/1, AA (ACT).
59 Capt. W.R. Creswell, Naval Commandant, Brisbane, to Sir John Forrest, Minister for Defence, 11 Mar. 1903, CRS A461/1 A336/1/1 Pt 1, AA (ACT).
60 Sir Lambton Loraine, letter to the Times, quoted in SMH, 19 Mar. 1945, p. 2.
Zealanders (on whose flags they had just ruled), and Australians (whose design they were then deciding). Flags were serving purposes other than distinguishing ships at sea. This was creating problems both for governments and citizens, especially in the dominions. In Britain the government marked special days and the sessions of parliament with the Union Jack. But in Australia would the government use the Union Jack or the Australian Ensign? For subjects and citizens in Britain the choice had been largely between the Union Jack and the red ensign. But in Australia a similar choice — between the Union Jack and the Australian red ensign — was symbolically more complicated, suggesting a difference in nationality. Further, if, as the *Times* believed, government and people could use the same flag, then Australians wishing to fly an Australian flag could legitimately use the Ensign rather than the Merchant Flag. The difficulty was that the Australian Ensign was a defaced British blue ensign and blue ensigns were for government use only.61

Richard Crouch was quick to note that the gazetting of the ensigns had no impact on the use of flags in Australia. In April 1903 he complained to Barton that 'a flag other than the national flag (now officially approved and gazetted) was flown at recent military camps in Victoria, and that none of the naval vessels based in South Australia, Victoria or New South Wales flew the Commonwealth flag.62 Believing that 'a national principle [was] at stake', he asked whether the government knew and approved of this situation, and intended 'to continue this neglect in future on all our ships, forts and buildings and on our auxiliary squadrons'. He suggested that 'it [was] possible that the Defence authorities consider[ed] the Australian flag a kind of inferior ensign'. Barton pleaded ignorance but promised to investigate.63 However, in relation to the Australian squadron, he pointed out 'that as these ships still belong to the British Navy, and that only a proportion of the cost of maintenance is borne by

61'Defaced' was the correct technical term, replaced later by the more neutral sounding 'differenced'.
62Richard Crouch to Prime Minister, 16 Apr. 1903, CRS A461/1 A336/1/1 Pt 1, AA (ACT).
63The Prime Minister's Department responded on Barton's behalf, 24 Apr. 1903, *ibid.*
the Commonwealth, it is hardly a matter of surprise that the British Flag is flown'. The next day Forrest gazetted regulations defining the use of the Union Jack and the Royal Standard on forts around Australia. There was no mention of the Australian flag. Annoyed, Crouch again reached for pen and paper.

Flags on forts and public buildings proved more difficult to settle than flags on ships — at least on those ships apart from the auxiliary squadron. Forrest advised Creswell late in May 1903 that local naval forces, but not those of the auxiliary squadron, should now use the Australian Ensign. That did not satisfy Crouch who wrote again to Barton in August. Crouch was in a particularly belligerent mood having spearheaded the attack on Barton's Naval Agreement Bill from 7 July. About the same time the Defence Bill was also being debated. Crouch argued for a separate Australian navy rather than the continuation of Australia's subsidy for an auxiliary squadron controlled by the Royal Navy. A young and ambitious man, not only in politics but also in the militia where he was seeking promotion, he was impatient with Barton's views and with the imperial influence of Major-General Sir Edward Hutton, General Officer Commanding the Australian forces. A contemporary historian, H.G. Turner, thought Crouch 'rather conspicuous for jumping at conclusions without being sure of his basis'; yet in most respects on the flag issue Crouch proved to be well informed. Others shared his concern. William Higgs, Labor Senator from Queensland, angrily asked the government whether it would 'demand that the ships of the Australian Squadron shall use the Commonwealth of

64CAG, no. 18, 25 Apr. 1903, p. 253.
65Crouch to Barton, n.d. but probably 28 Apr. 1903, CRS A461/1, A336/1/1 Pt. 1, AA (ACT).
66Sir John Forrest, Minister for Defence, Minute for Capt. W.R. Creswell, Naval Commandant, 28 May 1903, ibid.
67Crouch to Barton, 17 Aug. 1903, ibid.
69Meaney refers to the tensions in the relationship between Hutton and cabinet, especially in 1903 and 1904, The Search for Security, p. 68. Note, too, Meaney's reference to a dispute over promotion in March 1903 in which cabinet reluctantly supported Hutton against militia opinion, pp. 68-69.
Australia flag? Higgs had already distinguished himself by initiating a debate lasting two months on the inadequacies of the Empire.

Not till September did the Secretary of the Defence Department, Captain Robert Collins, give his views on the use of the Australian Ensign. Born and trained in England, Collins had been associated with naval defence matters in Australia since the 1870s and was an advocate of an Australian navy rather than the payment of the subsidy. Nevertheless he took a conservative view of the flag issue. Admitting that it was 'very difficult to find any clear exposition as to the use of flags', particularly on shore, he believed ensigns primarily concerned ships. Although aware that the Admiralty flag book allowed the flying of a blue ensign on public buildings and forts, he favoured the custom defined by the King's Regulations which he said stipulated the use of the Union Jack, the Royal Standard or both, depending on the occasion. He concluded that the Australian Ensign was for use on local naval forces but not on forts: 'the Union Jack is not superseded in any way by the Commonwealth ensign'. Hutton, invited to comment, concurred, as did the new Minister for Defence, Senator James Drake, a Liberal Protectionist from Queensland.

Clearly Barton's government continued to regard the Union Jack as the national flag, despite the authorised Australian Ensign. From the beginning of his time as prime minister Barton had treated the flag as a sensitive issue, deferring its consideration, delaying the sending of the selected design, eventually sending two, then ignoring the Admiralty's choice. In part this was

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71 Higgs raised the issue on 19 Aug. 1903, the day after E. Wilson Dobbs wrote to the *Herald* on flag matters objecting to the Admiralty's term 'defaced' when describing the Commonwealth's addition of stars to the British blue and red ensigns — a sign of Australian sensitivity, CRS A461/1 B336/1/1 Pt 1, AA (ACT). A week earlier Senator Lt-Col. J.C. Neild had asked whether the government intended to submit the selected design to parliament for approval, 12 Aug. 1903, CPD 1903, vol. 15, p. 3398. Dobbs was an amateur heraldist.
72 The debate, beginning on 11 June 1903, lasted until 12 August, French, 'The Ambiguity of Empire Day', p. 63.
73 Capt. Robert Collins to Atlee Hunt, Secretary, External Affairs Department, 22 Sept. 1903, CRS A461/1 A336/1/1 Pt 1, AA (ACT).
74 Sir Robert Henry Muirhead Collins', *ADB*, vol. 8, p. 79.
75 CRS A461/1 A336/1/1 Pt 1, AA (ACT). Drake, an English-born journalist and lawyer, was a radical from Queensland, 'James George Drake', *ADB*, vol. 8, p. 338.
an attempt to soothe interstate rivalries symbolised by the two designs. In part it was a recognition that for all the talk of 'the new nation' the constitutional reality was that Australia was a British colony: her ensigns were British ensigns defaced by Australian symbols; her national flag was the Union Jack. The Naval Agreement of 1903 underlined that dependence. The federation had been born in the midst of a war marked by Australian determination to uphold the honour of the Union Jack, to 'keep the flag flying'. In that context to fly now an Australian flag instead of the Union Jack symbolised an unthinkable preference for the Australian community rather than the British one, 'out of which — as well as against which — it came into being'.76

This difficult issue of nationality was also evident in the debate on naturalisation in the same year. The Naturalisation Bill was 'to create a Commonwealth naturalisation and to lay down the conditions under which aliens may become entitled to the rights and privileges of British subjects in Australia'.77 Before federation naturalisation had been specific to a particular colony: the rights of a British subject naturalised in one colony were not usually recognised in another.78 The Naturalisation Bill addressed this problem. In the wider Empire Joseph Chamberlain had had the same concern, at least since October 1901: how to enable naturalisation in one part of the Empire to be recognised in another.79 Canada had proposed that 'residence in any British Possession should qualify for full naturalisation equally with residence in the United Kingdom'.80 But at the Colonial Conference in 1902 the issue of reciprocity remained unresolved.

76Anderson, Imagined Communities, p. 12.
77James Drake, Postmaster-General, 1 July 1903, CPD, 1903, vol. 14, p. 1607.
78Littleton Groom, member for the Darling Downs, mentioned an act of the Federal Council of 1897 which recognised reciprocal rights of naturalisation between Victoria and Queensland for persons of European descent, 9 Sept. 1903, CPD 1903, vol. 16, p. 4865; see also Sawer, Australian Federal Politics, p. 22.
79Joseph Chamberlain to Canadian government, 10 Oct. 1901, seeking its views on difficulties relating to the administration of naturalisation law, in Appendix xiii: Naturalisation, Papers Relating to a Conference between the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Prime Ministers of Self-Governing Colonies, June to August 1902, Commonwealth Parliamentary Papers (hereafter CPP), 1903:2.
80Earl of Minto, Governor-General of Canada, to Chamberlain, 21 Apr. 1902, forwarding his ministers' view, ibid.
By comparison with the wider problem, the Australian one seemed simple. But debate revealed considerable ignorance, even in Senator Drake, who as postmaster-general, had introduced the legislation. Drake thought there was reciprocity between the United Kingdom and the dominions.81 John Keating, a noted lawyer from Tasmania, the government whip and the parliament's youngest member, quickly corrected him: 'We are conferring British nationality, not Australian nationality merely ... [but] we are conferring full British nationality within a certain defined geographical area ...[;] for the whole Empire ... Britain alone could confer nationality'.82 Even so, he pointed out that a certificate of naturalisation gained in the United Kingdom would not be recognised throughout the Empire, a point which guaranteed Australians their White Australia Policy.83

The complications of this situation were too much for Senator James Walker, 62, a Free Trader from New South Wales who complained of the legislation: 'Many things in it strike against my preconceived ideas of what it means to be a British subject'.84 His schoolboy notion of Empire, 'Civis Britannicus sum', was considerably shaken. That notion still applied to those born British subjects in whatever part of the Empire. But the issue of naturalisation illustrated the difficulties of discussing nationality within the British context. Conferring British nationality within Australia was very close to conferring Australian nationality, or at least citizenship. There were implications for the flag issue here, but the government was not yet prepared to admit them.

Crouch, recently promoted to head the Prahran militia company, continued to pursue the flag issue. Unwilling to wait any longer for advice from

81Drake, 1 July 1903, CPD 1903, vol. 14, p. 1608; two days later Drake acknowledged his mistake, ibid., p. 1749.
83Keating, 1, 2 July 1903, CPD 1903, vol. 14, pp. 1615, 1704.
84James Walker, 1 July 1903, ibid. p. 1612.
the Defence Department, 'a proper grave for the interment of all questions which another Department finds it inconvenient to answer', he wrote again to the prime minister, now Alfred Deakin, to know 'when we can expect the Australian flag to be used in the Commonwealth by the Commonwealth authorities'.85 Atlee Hunt promised to give the matter 'early attention'. Once again Crouch's letter stung the government into action, this time to seek information from Victoria and New Zealand as to the practice of using flags.86

The response from New Zealand was particularly relevant. Sir Joseph Ward, Colonial Secretary, enclosed a copy of the *New Zealand Ensign Act* of 1901 which stated that the Ensign 'shall be the recognised ensign of the colony for general use on shore within the colony and on all vessels belonging to the Government of New Zealand'.87 He pointed out that the New Zealand Ensign was hoisted daily on the defence headquarters at Wellington and at Fort Cautley in Auckland. Regarding flags on public buildings there were no regulations but the practice was to fly the Ensign on days indicated by regulation for post offices, for example, royal birthdays and Christian festivals, including the days of the saints Patrick, George and Andrew. David, the Welsh saint, was not mentioned. Ward's response, then, to the Australian query of 1904 was clear. It confirmed that New Zealanders regarded their blue ensign in the same light as the Canadians had used their red ensign — as a national flag.

By the time the New Zealand response reached Melbourne, the government had changed, again due to continuing difficulties with the Conciliation and Arbitration Bill. Chris Watson led a Labor government. This may have given Crouch hope that the flag issue could be settled quickly. At any rate he had had enough of letters to the prime minister. In the House he moved

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85Crouch, 26 May 1904, *ibid*. 1904, vol. 19, p. 1607; Crouch to Deakin, 20 Jan. 1904, CRS A461/1 A336/1/1 Pt 1, AA (ACT).

86Secretary, Prime Minister's Department to Secretary, Premier's Office, Victoria, and to Under-Secretary, Chief Secretary's Office, New Zealand, 29 Jan. 1904, *ibid*.

87Sir Joseph Ward, Colonial Secretary, *New Zealand*, to Secretary, Department of External Affairs, 30 Apr. 1904, *ibid*. The response from the Victorian government showed a very limited use of flags, only the Royal Standard and the Union Jack, and then only in relation to the governor's movements. In support of this practice it cited Colonial Regulations, ch. XX, p. 434 of the Colonial Office List as being the only regulations regarding the flying of flags, *ibid*.
'that, in the opinion of this House, the Australian Flag, as officially selected, should be flown upon all forts, vessels, saluting places, and public buildings of the Commonwealth upon all occasions when flags are used'.

American-born King O'Malley suggested that State schools should also be included but Sir John Quick reminded the House that the Commonwealth had no control over these. Indeed, Barton's government had already indicated it would not distribute the new flag to State schools. State sensitivities as well as the Commonwealth's shortage of funds were at issue. Crouch explained why his motion was necessary, basing his argument on the premise that 'when we have an Australian flag, it is difficult to understand why it should not be used'.

He believed that the Barton and Deakin governments had not known what to do with the new flag, fearing it would draw unwelcome attention to the different status of Australian and imperial naval forces — a sensitive issue after the Colonial Conference of 1902 had favoured the Royal Navy. At military functions where flags were saluted, the Australian flag, Crouch said, was always conspicuous by its absence. He regarded the government as illogical when it sought to defend the use of British flags not only on the ships of the auxiliary squadron which Australia subsidised, but also on forts and public buildings for which Australia paid in full. In relating the saga of his attempts to have the Australian flag recognised, Crouch spoke of his desire to see Australian children 'taught lessons on patriotism, what the flag of their country stands for, and what certain institutions mean' — in the way Americans were on their Flag Day. He praised the work of the late Sir Frederick Sargood in presenting flags to State schools, but without mentioning that these were Union Jacks. Concerned at State school children's ignorance about the Australian flag,
he criticised not Sargood, but the minister for defence for being 'frightened to use it ... Ministers have objected to use it, have ignored it, and treated it with contempt instead of recognising it as the emblem of the Naval and Military services'.

Parliamentary colleagues generally supported Crouch's point. Henry Willis, Free Trade member from New South Wales, urged the flying of the Australian flag on all buildings and ships maintained by the Commonwealth, and further, 'that the youth of Australia [be] taught to pay it as much respect as has hitherto been accorded to the Union Jack'. However, there was criticism. Sir John Forrest was cautious, urging 'due regard for order'. Watson, the new Labor prime minister, was willing to issue instructions for the Australian flag to be flown on Commonwealth public buildings and given precedence, but he thought that the House should first establish that this was the most suitable design. He himself was critical of it: 'Though it includes the Southern Cross it does not adequately symbolize our national life ... it is not sufficiently indicative of Australian unity'. His words echoed the earlier complaint, particularly heard in New South Wales, that the Australian flag was too much like that of Victoria. He was reluctant to displace the Union Jack, 'a flag of which we are all proud', from Australian forts until the Australian flag was redesigned 'more in accord with the views of those who have taken the trouble to carefully examine this question'. The same day Senator Lt-Col. John Neild, a Free Trader from New South Wales, moved successfully to have papers concerning the selection and approval of the Commonwealth flag tabled, arguing that parliament had as much right as anyone to have been consulted.

Debate on Crouch's motion resumed early in June and, despite a threatened further adjournment, a majority passed it. Crouch lost no time in

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93 Sir John Forrest, ibid., p. 1610.
94 Chris Watson, ibid., p. 1609.
95 ibid., p. 1584.
96 2 June 1904, ibid., p. 1914.
writing to W.M. Hughes, Minister for External Affairs, drawing his attention to
the resolution and seeking assurance that he would give effect to it.97 He also
wrote to Senator Anderson Dawson, Minister for Defence, in addition asking
him to 'see the military regulations are altered accordingly', and to Sir Edward
Hutton, General Officer Commanding of the Commonwealth Military Forces.98
Dawson refused to change the regulations, arguing that since the prime
minister had urged parliament to reconsider the design of the Australian flag,
the government did not consider the change of regulations 'an urgent matter'.99

However, Crouch was heartened by the cooperative response to the
resolution by Hugh Mahon, Postmaster-General and Member for Coolgardie,
Western Australia, and by Egerton Batchelor, the Minister for Home Affairs
from South Australia.100 Perhaps Mahon was glad of the opportunity to
promote the Australian flag at the expense of the Union Jack: Crouch later
described this Irish-born Home Rule activist as a 'fierce & bigoted RC' who
'hated Protestantism with a holy hatred' and 'England & all its works and
connections'.101 Batchelor, said to be not only the most popular politician in the
Australian parliament but also the most deserving of popularity, was a leader
of the moderate wing of the Labor Party.102 At any rate their cooperation with
Crouch's motion meant that the Commonwealth flag would be flown from post
offices (as long as 'no additional expense were incurred' — still a restriction),
and from Commonwealth buildings in Sydney and Melbourne. He resumed his
battle with the Defence Department by addressing a series of questions to the
prime minister later in June.103 They pointed to the inconsistency and confusion
of having 'the national flag' flown from public buildings controlled by the
Postal and Home Affairs Departments, and from the ships of that department,

97Crouch to Minister for External Affairs, 3 June 1904, CRS A461/1 A336/1/1 Pt 1, AA (ACT).
98Crouch to Minister for Defence, 3 and 8 June 1904, ibid.
99'Robert Collins, Secretary of Defence, to Crouch, 14 June 1904, ibid.
100Crouch and Watson, 28 June 1904, CPD 1904, vol. 20, pp. 2695, 2696.
101Richard Armstrong Crouch, Political Reminiscences, pp. 273, 275, MS 9599, Crouch Papers,
La Trobe Library.
102'Egerton Lee Batchelor', ADB, p. 207.
103Crouch, question on notice, and Watson's response, 28 June 1904, CPD 1904, vol. 20, pp. 2695,
2696.
but not from its forts. Watson denied the inconsistency and repeated the view of the Defence Department that it was 'custom to display the Union Jack', not an ensign, on forts: 'The Commonwealth flag is regarded as an ensign to be used in the same way as the British ensign. The British ensign is not displayed from forts'.

The Australian Ensign, although denied a place on forts, had gained some acceptance. Curiously enough the reverse was happening with its Canadian counterpart. In 1904 Joseph Pope, Under-Secretary of State in Canada, persuaded the minister of public works to order 'that the Union Jack, and the Union Jack alone, shall fly from all public buildings under Government control in this country'. Pope had followed the correspondence in the Times of 1902 and seized on the view of the king's private secretary, that a British subject could fly the Union Jack, to argue 'that the flag for British subjects to fly is the Union Jack'. Aware that the Canadian red ensign had been approved as a merchant flag, Pope was exasperated that 'fully three-fourths of the Canadian people use it on land under the impression that it is what is absurdly styled the "Canadian National Flag"'. He began a campaign to change that view. Canadians had become enthusiastic promoters of their national colours, especially in reaction to their neighbours ' flaunting "Old Glory" in [their] faces'.

In Australia Crouch's motion of 1904 had unexpected consequences. Intended to clarify the standing of the Australian flag, it served to confuse the issue further through the ambiguous phrase, 'public buildings of the Commonwealth'. Did it refer to all public buildings in Australia? Or, given the separation of powers in Australia's federal system, only those buildings

104Joe Pope to Col. J. Hanbury Williams, Secretary to the Governor-General of Canada, 7 Nov. 1906, Pope Papers, MG30 E86 vol. 18, file 85, National Archives of Canada (hereafter NAC); H.L.E. Priestman, Assistant Canadian Government Trade Commissioner to T.J. Collins, Prime Minister's Department, Australia, 14 Mar. 1939, enclosing a nine page transcript of a debate on the flag issue in the House of Commons, Canada, on 14 Feb. 1938, CRS A461/1 A336/1/1 Pt 2, AA (ACT).


106Pope to Williams, 7 Nov. 1906, ibid., vol. 18, file 85, NAC.
controlled by the federal government? Further, did the phrase mean that the Ensign could not be used for unofficial purposes? Whether Crouch intended it or not, his motion became the basis for the view that the Ensign was exclusively for Commonwealth government use. By implication, others wishing to use an Australian flag, whether State or local governments, or private companies, organisations and individuals, would have to use the Merchant Flag.

Australia's First Empire Day: Preparation

Empire Day had begun ambiguously in Canada in 1899 as a day which served both Canadian nationalists and imperialists. In Britain Lord Meath promoted the idea from 1902 to further his plan of placing Union Jacks in schools.107 Chamberlain gave him permission to write directly to the delegates attending the Colonial Conference. By 1903 most colonies and dominions throughout the British Empire observed 24 May as Empire Day. Australia was one of the few exceptions: the premiers at their conference in April 1903 had not been able to agree.108 Barton, conscious of the antagonism in New South Wales stimulated by the formation during the South African War of the Australian Anti-War League and the British Empire League (BEL), a branch of the parent organisation in Britain, regarded the issue as divisive.109 Nevertheless, two years later the premiers supported the introduction of Empire Day, not as a public holiday but as a day set aside for special instruction and celebration in the State schools.110 The change reflected the growing polarisation in Australian politics between the Australian Labor Party, on the one hand, and the liberal

108French, "'One People, One Destiny'", pp. 239-240.
109Ibid. The parent body had been established in Britain in 1894.
110French, "'One People, One Destiny'", p. 244.
Protectionists and conservative Free Traders on the other. French's work reveals his growing certainty that Empire Day was 'an anti-socialist ploy'.

That argument appears to be strongest for New South Wales, the heart of the anti-socialist campaign of George Reid, a vice-president of the league, Free Trade prime minister, and would-be leader of a combined federal anti-Labor party. For much of 1904 the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Bill had proved a sticking point in the House of Representatives, divided fairly evenly between Protectionists, Free Traders and the Labor Party, bringing down two governments before being passed under Reid's government. Labor was outmanoeuvred in its attempts to shape the bill. Early the following year the State Conference of the Labor Party of New South Wales voted to establish its party objective. It was in two parts. Socialisation, the second part, became the declared target of Reid's campaign, launched just one day after the premiers' decision to establish Empire Day. Equally important, however, though overlooked by historians, was his undeclared target, the first part of the objective: 'The cultivation of an Australian sentiment based upon the maintenance of racial purity and the development in Australia of an enlightened and self-reliant community'.

Reid hoped to achieve federally what former Free Trader, Joseph Carruthers, Member for St George and Leader of the new Liberal Party of New

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111 Compare his two articles, "'One People, One Destiny'", 1975, pp. 244-245, and 'The Ambiguity of Empire Day', 1978, pp. 63-65.
113 A.E. Cahill, 'Catholicism and Socialism — The 1905 Controversy in Australia', Journal of Religious History, vol. 1, no. 2, December 1960, p. 91. The objective of the NSW branch became the federal party's objective in July 1905, Australian Labor Party, Third Commonwealth Labour Conference Official Report, 8-11 July 1905, p. 10. Note the suggestion of the Pastoral Letter on the issue of socialism (Sydney, 1905) that 'the passing prominence given to the subject has come about, not by reason of the activity amongst us of socialists, strictly called ... but for other reasons', p. 9, Melbourne Diocesan Historical Commission.
114 The securing of the full results of their industry to all producers by the collective ownership of monopolies and the extension of the industrial and economic functions of the State and municipality', quoted in Cahill, 'Catholicism and Socialism', p. 91; French, "'One People, One Destiny'", p. 245. See also W.G. McMinn, George Reid, Carlton, Vic., Melbourne University Press, 1989, pp. 221-223. McMinn, however, does not mention Empire Day and the part it might play in Reid's strategy.
South Wales, had begun to do in that State in 1904, successfully drawing together the Liberal and Reform Association, the Women's Liberal League, the temperance movement and the Australian Protestant Defence Association against the Labor Party. The fact that Cardinal Moran and the Catholic Church refused to condemn the Labor Party's socialist objective strengthened Reid's cause. To openly oppose Labor's 'cultivation of an Australian sentiment' and the 'development ... of an enlightened and self-reliant community' would give Reid an uncertain result, since these ideas could appeal to a wide cross-section of the Australian community. But if they could be exaggerated so as to appear anti-British, and tied to the Labor Party's socialism, then Reid was more likely to succeed.

Hobsbawm has suggested that in Europe and America the middle classes, who found it difficult to establish a unifying identity, looked to 'external symbols, among which those of nationalism (patriotism, imperialism) were perhaps the most significant'. But which would find wider support among the middle class in Australia: an appeal to a British community or to an Australian one? Conservative Free Traders, having lost the fiscal policy battle with the Protectionists, 'in a state of disintegration lacking a coherent national policy', sought other issues on which it might gain leadership of the middle class. In New South Wales, traditionally a free trade stronghold, a possible direction had already been suggested by the establishment in 1902 of a branch of the British Empire League. In South Australia and Victoria, which had weaker forms of sectarianism, smaller or more moderate labour movements and less of a gulf between Labor and non-Labor, there was no British Empire

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117 Grimshaw, 'Australian Nationalism', p. 172.

118 See R. Broome, *Treasures in Earthen Vessels: Protestant Christianity in New South Wales Society 1900-1914*, St Lucia, Qld, University of Queensland Press, 1980, p. 120. See also Rickard, *Class and Politics*, p. 200 on the 'militant Protestantism' of New South Wales in particular.
League. Later — in May 1904 and August 1905 — branches emerged in those States, but under the softer title of League of the Empire.

The league fostered a close relationship with the Education Department in each State. Its members were well connected socially and politically. The South Australian branch was headed by Sir Samuel Way, Chief Justice, Lieutenant-Governor, and Chancellor of the University of Adelaide. The Governor, Sir George Le Hunte, was patron. Its 'large and influential committee' was drawn from State and private schools. The secretary, the most important person in terms of the work done rather than the prestige involved, was Madeline Rees George, Headmistress of the State's Advanced School for Girls. Both Way and Rees George were English-born, migrating at the ages of 17 and 24 respectively. Way prided himself on his seat on the Privy Council as the Australasian representative. At the time of the constitutional negotiations in London in 1900 he had supported the view adopted by Joseph Chamberlain on the need to maintain the Privy Council link with Australia against fellow Australians, Deakin, Kingston and Barton.

The impact of the league can be seen most vividly in South Australia as administrators prepared for the first Empire Day. The minister of education's directive in the April Education Gazette that 'in all schools under his control that have joined the League of the Empire, Empire Day may be specially observed', became in the next month, "'Empire Day" shall be celebrated at all schools under his control'. Celebration was now mandatory in the 700 schools, rather than a voluntary matter for the 20 or so associated with the league. In Victoria the government was not so sure. The Victorian branch had not yet been established, though teachers had been given details of the league's scheme for linking the schools of the Empire. By April the Gazette notice advised: 'It has not yet been

120Madeline Rees George' and 'Sir Samuel James Way', ADB, vols 12, 8, pp. 417, 639.
121Emphasis added, EG, Apr., May 1905, pp. 59, 71; note that the April notice had rewarded schools in the League with the right to close one hour earlier on the day.
decided what should be done in the way of celebrating Empire Day', but the following month's Gazette announced: 'The Minister trusts that all teachers will join heartily in this movement'.123 In New South Wales the government relied on circulars to communicate its desire that schools, 'both public and private', participate, the Public Instruction Gazette not beginning publication until later that year.124

The means of involving the wider public in school celebrations varied from State to State. In New South Wales the League wrote from Sydney to all municipalities, urging their participation and the establishment of branches.125 In Victoria the lord mayor of Melbourne circularised his counterparts throughout the State, suggesting a standard ceremony to be held at an agreed time.126 It was reminiscent of Sargood's ceremony of 14 May 1901 and another reminder of the importance attached to simultaneous celebration.127 The mayor knew that the schools would mark the day because of the minister's ruling, but he also hoped councils would lend support and, in particular, seek the cooperation of 'national societies', presumably those such as the ANA, the St George's Society, and the Caledonian Society.128 In South Australia Empire Day was clearly a matter for the Education Department, its schools and boards of advice.

Discussion followed as mayors called citizens together to decide on their celebrations. In Bathurst that discussion was considerable. It became evident that Empire Day would not be a simple matter: party and nationality were involved. So few people arrived for the first meeting on 11 May, less than two

123ibid., 20 Apr., 20 May 1905, pp. 160, 162.
124SMH, 24 May 1905, p. 7; Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate, 9 May 1905, p. 5.
125SMH, 24 May 1905, p. 7; Bathurst Daily Argus, 12 May 1905, p. 2; National Advocate (Bathurst), 11 May 1905, p. 1.
126Report of a meeting of the Empire Day Celebration Committee, Geelong Advertiser, 9 May 1905, p. 4.
weeks before Empire Day, that the mayor, Alderman Albert Ennis, a carpenter, called a further meeting to confirm the suggestion of a procession, bun feast and bonfire.\footnote{129 National Advocate, 12 May 1905, p. 3; Bathurst Daily Argus, 15 May 1905, p. 2.} One who was 'agreeably surprised' to note the sparse attendance was 'Australian', writing to the editor of Bathurst's \textit{National Advocate}, whose motto was 'Australia for the Australians'.\footnote{130 R.B. Walker, \textit{The Newspaper Press in New South Wales,} 1803-1920, Sydney, Sydney University Press, 1976, pp. 181-182.} The \textit{Advocate} was a protectionist paper with a tradition of strong links with Labor.\footnote{131 \textit{Australian} argued that party politics caused the lack of interest in the meeting.} 'Australian' argued that party politics caused the lack of interest in the meeting.

The paper was more specific: 'a certain section, not in Bathurst but in the metropolis, sought to use the Empire Day movement to serve their own political party ends'.\footnote{132 Geelong Advertiser, 9 May 1905, p. 4.} Indeed, the paper had encouraged Bathurst's citizens in this interpretation by publishing on the day of the first meeting a letter from Bruce Smith, MHR, a Free Trader and President of the BEL, to W. Percival Minell, one of two central league representatives in Bathurst.\footnote{133 \textit{ibid.}, 11 May 1905, p. 1.} Essentially Smith's view was that 'if we can get this idea of the Junior partner widely understood by the Australian people so that Australian local aspirations may be subordinated, where necessary, to Empire interests, we shall be doing good work'. To the \textit{Advocate} Smith's 'bombastic statement ... reek[ed] with party politics'. Smith, it argued, should be rebuked by Bathurst citizens, as the Prime Minister, George Reid, had been by the league's committee 'for proposing to use Empire Day as a medium for furthering his own party ends'.\footnote{134 Editorial, \textit{ibid.}, p. 2.} Smith had mentioned two issues in his letter as the cause of his criticism: Australians' unwillingness to increase their contribution to imperial defence, a sensitive issue, particularly in Labor circles since Barton's promise of £200,000 at the Colonial Conference in 1902; and their reluctance to accommodate British and Japanese viewpoints in immigration legislation. The \textit{National Advocate} believed...
Australians were willing to make concessions in the interests of the Empire, but not where this would mean 'the greasing of the fat sow', a reference to Britain.

Debate in the local press continued. 'Briton' of the evening paper, the free trade Bathurst Daily Argus, answered the National Advocate's 'Australian', calling on Bathurst's citizens to 'show ... that their horizon is not bounded by the Commonwealth of Australia'. Australians' patriotism, was the assumption, should be 'intelligent', concerned with 'higher qualities', not narrow. Accompanying this letter was another from Lord Meath, the fervent promoter of Empire Day, who wrote of 'the duties and responsibilities which attach to British citizenship'. The fate of the second meeting in three days' time to consider Empire Day celebrations hung in the balance. Would enough people attend, or would the special day have to be abandoned? Elizabeth Edgeley, wife of Bathurst general merchant Louis Edgeley of Imperial Warehouse, had much at stake in the outcome. She was the other representative from the BEL in Sydney who had attended the first meeting. She was also, as president of the Bathurst branch of the Women's Liberal League, about to welcome State delegates to the league's third biennial conference, the first to be held in a country centre. Liberal women were to prove a powerful force in the promotion of Empire Day.

The women were to select socialism as 'the gravest danger which menaces the welfare of Australia', a choice the Bathurst Argus thought appropriate 'for they have most to fear from it'. Arguing that under socialism 'the individual ... [had] no right as against the State', the paper believed that a woman, as 'the weaker vessel', was especially vulnerable. Once socialists were in power, the paper suggested, 'would not the relentless logic of their own assumptions

136 National Advocate, 9 May 1901, p. 2. Neither the National Advocate nor the Bathurst Daily Argus spelt the Edgeley name correctly. See marriage records, 82/417, Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages, New South Wales.
137 National Advocate, 12 May 1905, p. 3.
139 Editorial, Bathurst Daily Argus, 22 May 1905, p. 2.
compel them to attempt to regulate the mating of the sexes? [Would] it not compel them to send all children to "State" educative institutions?" By contrast its opponent, the National Advocate, asserted that 'it is the Labor Party that the Women's Federal League is now commissioned by Mr Reid to fight against particularly' for political purposes.140

The second meeting concerning Empire Day in Bathurst was again poorly attended: some suggested the cold night and the Orphanage Ball as likely reasons. Those present decided to abandon the celebrations 'rather than have a failure and thus play into the hands of their opponents'.141 Scottish-born Alexander Pringle, the clerk who moved the motion, 'could not understand people — especially those who called themselves Britishers — displaying such a lack of patriotism'. After the meeting a few, including Louis Edgeley, reconvened at the Park Hotel and decided to go ahead with the celebrations, planning a bonfire for the evening. Further meetings followed. The mayor, no longer in the chair, declared that he was pleased that citizens were now showing some interest but puzzled as to why they had not done so before.142

The movement, he thought, would appeal to the 'hundreds of people [in Bathurst] who came from the old land' rather than to Australians. To cries of 'No! No!' the mayor continued: 'Well it should be more ... what they [the immigrants] wanted was to cement the bond between Australia and the old country'. The new chairman, Arnold Rigby, a plumber, disagreed: he 'did not think the example of loyalty should be set by those who had come from the old country'. English-born Daniel Hogarth, licensee of the Royal Hotel and treasurer of the group, supported him: 'When they talked to him about Australians he said, "No, you are not Australians. The Australian has a black face ... (Applause and Laughter.) You are Britishers"'.143 There was much to be

140 Editorial, National Advocate, 19 May 1905, p. 2.
141 Bathurst Daily Argus, 17 May 1905, p. 2.
142 ibid., 20 May 1905, p. 3a; see also National Advocate, 20 May 1905, p. 2.
143 National Advocate, 20 May 1905, p. 2. The Bathurst Daily Argus reported his words as 'When people talked of being real Australians they meant those who had black faces', emphasis
1905: Empire Day
gained by blurring the distinction between the two imagined communities, British and Australian — at least Anglo-Celtic Australian. The mayor declined to be president of the movement.

As 24 May drew nearer the criticism continued, but with new elements which revealed deeper sensitivities relating to the society's 'ethnic core'. At the first meeting to consider celebrations, the suggestion of a bonfire and fireworks drew the interjection: 'Never mind the fireworks'.¹⁴⁴ But the establishment of a fireworks committee and the invitation of 'all public schools [that is, State schools] in the district' to the bonfire continued to rankle.¹⁴⁵ A 'Bathurst Native' deplored the waste of wood for the proposed bonfire, arguing that it should be distributed to the poor.¹⁴⁶ But more than a concern for wood and poverty was at stake, for the writer cautiously and mysteriously warned: 'Australian loyalty has reached a peculiar, I might say transitory stage, and its defenders and guardians were now in the history of this island continent in a position where the exercise of care, discretion, and tact were so necessary as things are today'.¹⁴⁷ Another citizen, A.W. Cutler, took pains to explain the reason for his withdrawal of an offer of wood, since Empire Day organisers had not made that clear in the press. While willing to donate wood to any of Bathurst's poor specified by the Poor Relief Society, he thought the burning of 'good wood' in a bonfire 'a crying shame' when so many were in need.¹⁴⁸

The comments suggest an awareness of religious and ethnic insult in the heightened sectarian atmosphere of New South Wales in 1905. Carruthers' winning of the election of August 1904 with the support of the Liberal Reform Association, the Australian Protestant Defence Association and the New South Wales Temperance Alliance indicated a 'well-grounded' Protestant belief in the

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¹⁴⁴ National Advocate, 17 May 1905, p. 3.
¹⁴⁶ ibid., 22 May 1905, p. 3.
¹⁴⁷ Bathurst Daily Argus, 22 May 1905, p. 3.
close link between the Labor Party and the Catholic Church, and a suspicion of
the Progressive (formerly Protectionist) ministry. It reflected the 'conjunction
of economic recession, middle class insecurity and Protestant anxiety'. Francis
Boyce, Anglican clergyman and the leader of the Temperance Alliance from
1890, was also a founder and the first president of the BEL in 1902.

In this context bonfires and fireworks had quite explicit associations which
might engage or alienate citizens according to religious commitment and ethnic
identity. They were linked through memory and custom to English national
events, such as the defeat of Catholic Spain's Armada and the accession to the
throne of Protestant Elizabeth I, which had become British national events. Guy
Fawkes night was another reminder. David Cressy has written of the
importance of fires in marking the English calendar which declared and
disseminated 'a distinctively Protestant national culture'. This aspect of the
English 'ethnic core', Anthony Smith reminds us, reappeared in Britain's
colonies. Certainly there were signs of this core and reactions to it with the
preparations for the first Empire Day in Bathurst.

The question which exercised many minds was: were loyalty to Australia
and loyalty to the Empire mutually exclusive? The Bathurst Daily Argus
attempted to argue the negative case. Australians, like the English, loved
their native land best; but being part of the Empire, being British, they also had
a wider loyalty: 'Loyalty to the Empire indeed springs from Patriotism'. To
those 'few isolated cases' among Australians who did not have that wider
loyalty, who said "We were born in Australia, hence we are Australians", it
responded, 'So they are, but certainly not less British than their fathers were
who were not born in Australia'. While prepared to accept that being an

150 Broome, *Treasures in Earthen Vessels*, p. 142.
151 'Francis Bertie Boyce', *ADB*, vol. 7, p. 368; French in "One People, One Destiny" provides the
correct year, 1902 not 1901, for the founding of the BEL, p. 240, note 28.
152 David Cressy, *Bonfires & Bells: National Memory and the Protestant Calendar in Elizabethan and
Australian did not necessarily mean being Aboriginal, for the *Bathurst Argus* the only satisfactory descriptive term was 'British'. The *National Advocate* objected to the disloyalist tag for those who called themselves Australians. On the contrary, it asserted, 'Those who, born in Australia, are ashamed to call themselves Australians, are but poor citizens of the Empire ... Australia is part of the Empire and therefore the name should be gloried in by loyal citizens of the Empire to designate to which part of it they belong'.

At Geelong in Victoria a meeting of the Empire Day Celebration Committee, chaired by the mayor, Councillor Neil Campbell, discussed the issue. There were various suggestions, including one in a letter from Richard Crouch, the member for Corio who had been so concerned about the Australian Ensign. He urged that the celebrations should reflect the 'diversity and unity of the Empire'. Perhaps he hoped the Australian flag would be featured. The meeting decided to proceed on the basis that the focal point would be the children's salute of the Union Jack, which had been the Education Department's intention. However, when the subcommittee reported the arrangements negotiated with the schools, it proposed that only the cadets of Geelong Grammar School, Geelong College and the State schools, with their bands, march to Market Square and salute the flag. 'Teachers', it said, 'were disinclined to turn out and take charge of the children'. Given that 'the demonstration [was] for them principally', as one of the councillors put it, the committee urged schools to at least also send a united school choir. On that basis the token Market Square celebration proceeded.

In all these preparations, of special interest are the instructions issued by education departments or governments which indicate how teachers and children were to negotiate the issue of nationality in relation to Australia and

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156 *Geelong Advertiser*, 9 May 1905, p. 4.
157 *EGTA*, 20 May 1905, p. 162.
158 *Geelong Advertiser*, 16 May 1905, p. 2.
the Empire. In South Australia as in Victoria saluting the Union Jack was to be the centre-piece of the proceedings. The difference in New South Wales was striking. 'The Union Jack and the Federal Flag will be displayed', said Carruthers as premier. The two flags, not simply the Union Jack, would be 'displayed' not 'saluted'. Saluting had 'not been considered necessary' in that State. South Australia appeared to be following the example set by Victoria late in 1901. New South Wales provided a puzzling contrast. Carruthers' apparent interest in the Australian flag may have been simply a recognition of the widespread use of 'the old Australian flag' during the federation campaign. However, displaying the Australian flag with the Union Jack also symbolised Carruthers' determination to re-affirm in people's minds Australia's subordinate position in the Empire — in defiance of the Labor Party's vision of a 'self-reliant' Australia. To include the Australian flag was politic: a recognition of Australian sentiment but in a form which reinforced dependence. Alone, the Australian flag had no role; only with the Union Jack was it acceptable.

The two southern States had a tradition of borrowing educational ideas and practices from each other. In the years of John Hartley's administration in South Australia, the Victorians had been glad to use his ideas. Now, as their system revived under Frank Tate, the new director of education in Victoria, ideas were flowing the other way. Milton Maughan, Inspector of Schools in South Australia, remarked in his report for 1904 on the Victorian Education Department's encouragement of the flag ceremony in schools.

160Joseph Carruthers, Premier of New South Wales, as reported in detailing the day's program, emphasis added, SMH, 24 May 1905, p. 7. Carruthers was an Australian-born Anglican solicitor, who was widely known for his interest in the achievements of Captain James Cook. 'Sir Joseph Hector McNeil Carruthers', ADB, vol. 7, p. 578. Presumably he meant the Commonwealth Ensign or Merchant Flag not the Federal Flag from New South Wales.
161Broughton O'Conor, Minister of Public Instruction, made the comment in response to a question on 24 Nov. 1904, New South Wales Parliamentary Debates 1904, second series vol. 16, pp. 1814-1815. O'Conor, a lawyer, was the son of an Irish Anglican clergyman, educated at Sydney Grammar School, 'Broughton Barnabas O'Conor', ADB, vol. 11, p. 59.
162For example, Victoria, in publishing the School Paper, had copied South Australia, the first of the Australasian colonies to establish a school magazine, the Children's Hour, in 1889.
164South Australian Parliamentary Papers (hereafter SAPP) 1905: 44, p. 25.
Education Gazette had expressed the view that the school flag 'if used judiciously, will magnify ... the importance of the school as a public institution in the eyes of the pupils and their parents', reflecting Tate's efforts to gain public support in his campaign to improve the education system. But further, the flag would also 'foster sentiments of loyalty to the Commonwealth and Empire, periodically refresh the memories of the pupils regarding important historical events, and keep them in touch with what is transpiring at the present time'. The Victorian flag ceremony caused Maughan to think that 'perhaps no better means of cultivating and keeping alive the national spirit [could] be devised'. Now the idea was to be formally adopted with the first Empire Day: 'Hoisting and saluting the Union Jack ... would be specially suitable for the occasion', advised the minister.

Directions about the nature of the patriotism to be taught were as important as those concerning the use of flags. Ministers spoke of the importance of teaching an 'intelligent' patriotism, a term George Ross had used in Canada. Indeed, as in 1901 when flags had been introduced into Australian schools, again administrators cited the Canadian example. In South Australia and New South Wales ministers drew on the same league literature to present Empire Day in almost identical terms: the purpose was to show pupils 'such a view of the British Empire as will help to develop a feeling of pride in the achievements of the British peoples [race], and increase [strengthen] the groundwork of knowledge on which an intelligent patriotism may be based'.

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166SAPP 1905: 44, p. 25.
167EG, Apr. 1905, p. 59.
169Most important of all, the exercises should be an inspiration to stimulate all to seek how they may further reinforce the good tendencies, and bind the distant members of the Empire more closely together in the bonds of reciprocal helpfulness as well as sentimental love', 'Empire Day, Nova Scotia: Good Advice', quoted from the Journal of Education, Nova Scotia, in EGTA, 20 May 1905, p. 174.
170EG, May 1905, p. 71; and report of Carruthers' advice to schools for the celebration of Empire Day, with the alternative words used in brackets, SMH, 24 May 1905, p. 7.
'Intelligent patriotism' did not rest on 'mere glorification of the British races' but on 'an appreciation of the higher qualities' explaining their progress.\footnote{171}{EG, May 1905, p. 71.}

These 'higher qualities' enabled administrators to extend children's love for Australia to love for the Empire: 'By this means', South Australian teachers read in their Gazette, 'the children may be encouraged not only to be patriotic Australians, but patriotic citizens of the British Empire'.\footnote{172}{ibid.} Victorian regulations expressed the idea more precisely: teachers were 'to impress upon the children that they are to be citizens, not \textit{merely} of Australia, but also of a great empire'.\footnote{173}{Victoria. Education Department, \textit{Regulations and Instructions}, 1905, no. 571, emphasis added.} Tate saw a danger for self-governing communities such as Australia — that they 'would take refuge in a kind of selfish isolation'.\footnote{174}{EGTA, 20 Sept. 1905, p. 42.} In seconding the motion to found the Victorian branch of the league in Victoria, Tate hoped that the league would prevent such selfishness. He complimented it on adopting 'the wise method of beginning with the children, who were more impressionable ... than the adults'. But this had to be done carefully. The same regulations which spoke of the importance of being citizens 'not merely of Australia' also urged: 'It is extremely desirable that a national Australian sentiment should be engendered; and teachers should do all in their power to give the children clear ideas of the relation of Australia to the Empire as a whole'.\footnote{175}{\textit{Regulations and Instructions}, 1905, no. 571.}

This concern for balance in children's perception of Australia and the Empire was not new. What was new was the concern that imperial sentiment should not be neglected. Educational reformers such as Frank Tate in Victoria, Peter Board in New South Wales and Alfred Williams in South Australia, inspired by the campaign for, and the achievement of, federation and the ideas of the New Education, had urged changes in the curriculum to encourage the teaching of Australian geography, history and literature. 'Australia should mean to every one of us', Frank Tate had told the sixth annual conference of the
South Australian Teachers' Union late in 1901, 'something more than a place out of which we can scratch a living'.\textsuperscript{176} Even before Williams became director of education in South Australia early in 1906 the Children's Hour, the department's school magazine, had begun to foster an understanding and an appreciation of the Australian environment.\textsuperscript{177}

Such encouragement was not without difficulty. There was a fine line between developing children's Australian sentiment on the one hand, and maintaining their Britishness on the other. The simplest poem could reveal this tension.

\begin{quote}
Let England boast her Rose so red,  
Scotland her Thistle blue,  
Ireland its Shamrock leaf so green  
The Wattle blooms for you.\textsuperscript{178}
\end{quote}

Even changing perceptions of climate or Christmas celebrations could convey distinctions unflattering to 'the old country' when fostering pride and interest in Australia. The contrast posed in an extraordinary poem, 'Christmas: in England and Australia', was clearly to England's disadvantage in discussing the spirit of Christmas.\textsuperscript{179} Coldness marked that season in England:

\begin{quote}
A sky of mist, with cloud-wrack from the sea,  
Sodden with sleet, and laden all with snow  
...
\end{quote}

In Australia it was warmth:

\begin{quote}
A cloudless sky of tender turquoise blue  
Smiles o'er the warm, glad, sun-kissed southern land  
...
\end{quote}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{176}EG, Nov. 1901, p. 143.
\item \textsuperscript{177}Kwan, Making Good Australians', pp. 94-102.
\item \textsuperscript{178}The National Flower of Australia', Children's Hour, Class IV, Sept. 1904, p. 130.
\item \textsuperscript{179}Christmas: in England and Australia', \textit{ibid.}, Dec. 1904, p. 177. The poem was by Joseph Johnson 1848-1904, a South Australian-born Catholic, journalist, mining promoter and politician. A founder of the Australian National Union which merged with the Australian Natives' Association (of which he became president), he promoted Australian federation. He was also an enthusiastic supporter of the war in South Africa, raising funds to send South Australians, and to commemorate their deeds in a heroic statue opposite the South Australian parliament. His last letter to the Register was a characteristic protest against the use of imported stone in the McDouall Stuart memorial. \textit{Adelaide Observer}, 25 June 1904, p. 41; 'Joseph Colin Francis Johnson', \textit{ADB}, vol. 9, pp. 495-496.
\end{itemize}
No grey old wintry blooded man art thou
We see a bright-haired youth with sun-tanned face,

In the past, distinctions disparaging Australia had been common, and indeed continued in the *Children's Hour*. But the assertion of Australian sentiment, especially in the changing political context of 1905, caused ministers and directors of education to tread warily.

**Australia's First Empire Day: The Result**

In New South Wales, despite the expectation of the premier that two flags would be flown on Empire Day, the Australian flag was rarely flown if press reports are to be believed. As John Dacey, Labor MLA, was to remark in a few months, 'No one comes forward to present a flag of Australia to this or that school. But there is something to be got by presenting the flag of the Empire'.

The press mentioned only seven instances of the Australian flag for the whole of New South Wales, and in only two of these, inner Sydney's Paddington and Moruya on the south coast, was the Australian flag reported on its own. Even the Royal Standard made an appearance at the Surry-Hills South (Bourke Street) School, the BEL women who donated it being oblivious of the restrictions on the flag aired in the British press in 1902. League women were active in providing flags in other Sydney school celebrations. Indeed, the president, Bruce Smith, declared that the day's success 'was due in large measure to the women's committee'. Victorian schools, although hoisting and

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180 Dorothea Mackellar had written 'Core of My Heart' later retitled 'My Country', at about the same time, 'Isobel Marion Dorothea Mackellar', *ADB*, vol. 10, p. 298.
182 Compare reports in *SMH*, p. 7, and *DT*, pp. 8-9 for 25 May 1905; the *DT* reported seven instances of an Australian flag being used; the *SMH* only a single instance (at Lismore). The *Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate* reported some Australian flags at Newcastle schools, 25 May 1905, pp. 5-6.
183 John Dacey, 24 Oct. 1905, *NSWPD 1905*, second series vol. 20, p. 3087. Dacey, an Irish-born Catholic coachmaker, had migrated to Australia at 4. 'John Rowland Dacey', *ADB*, vol. 8, p. 188.
184 Moruya was to be 'almost the only town in Australia not to put up a war memorial' after the Great War, K.S. Inglis, comment to author, 30 Sept. 1994.
186 *SMH*, 25 May 1905, p. 7; in Melbourne, women's support for Empire Day was through the Australian Women's National League, the Victorian counterpart to the Women's Liberal League of New South Wales, *Age*, 25 May 1905, p. 8. In 1911 the importance of the women's
saluting the Union Jack as directed, also armed children with Australian flags for suburban parades: the Age reported 'a forest of bannerettes flaunted from van to rearguard, the Australian adaptation of the Union Jack floating gaily by its parent, and bearing almost as bold a part in the proceedings'.

In Sydney's working-class Rozelle, Phillip Nelligan, now the headmaster of Darling-street Superior Public School just up the road from Balmain, adopted an even-handed approach with the flags by continuing the unique ceremony he had begun in 1901. He directed the children's attention to their duty to their native land. The Commonwealth flag was then saluted by the cadets, and the children sang 'Advance Australia Fair'. The second portion of the address dealt with the Empire ... At its termination the cadets saluted the Union Jack and the children sang 'Rule, Britannia' and 'God Save the King'.

Even so, Nelligan had given the Australian flag first place, an action or view that was rarely expressed. Another who shared that view was English-born Mrs Florence Hodges, wife of Charles Hodges, Headmaster of Sydney Church of England Grammar School. In speaking at the Sydney Girls' High School, where visitors were given a sprig of gum, or a buttonhole with flowers representing parts of the Empire, she said 'that if patriotism meant love of country, it must start from love of one's native land'. Such a view provided a marked contrast to the messages of the governor and political leaders.

Sir Harry Rawson, that 'big tall burly Jack Tar' of an admiral, who had been sworn in as Governor of New South Wales in 1902, wanted the boys and girls of Fort Street School in the heart of Sydney to know 'that they had a splendid country ... [and] also an Australian flag, but they should remember

role was stated even more explicitly: 'The women were looked to for the cultivation in the children of a patriotic sentiment and a proper idea of responsibility'. Mr C.W. Oakes at a meeting of the women's branch of the People's Reform League in New South Wales, a more conservative group than the Women's Liberal League associated with the Liberal Reform Association, Rickard, Class and Politics, p. 182.

188 DT, 25 May 1905, p. 8. The SMH did not notice the event.
that the chief part of that flag was the little Union Jack'.\textsuperscript{190} He had not found it necessary to caution against love of their native land when talking to the boys of the King's School a few months before.\textsuperscript{191} Now, at Fort Street, he declared: 'One day they would become a nation'. Sir Harry had a similar message for the adults at the lord mayor's function the same day, suggesting that Australians and New Zealanders more than double their current naval subsidy to £440,000 to cover the annual cost of the squadron.\textsuperscript{192} The municipal council and Citizens' League at Mosman were inclined to agree, thinking it necessary at their celebrations to pass resolutions affirming their loyalty to King and Empire, and their disappointment at Australia's inadequate contribution.\textsuperscript{193}

At Rockdale, the Liberal-Reformist premier, Joseph Carruthers, an old Fort Street boy, told children that the 'love of their native land was only secondary to their love for the Empire, as their native land only formed part of the greatest Empire the world had ever known'.\textsuperscript{194} His party colleague and Attorney-General, Charles Wade, an old King's School boy, was more direct, warning children at Erskineville Superior Public School, which flew both flags, against 'the mistake of esteeming themselves as Australians, better than the people of the mother-country'.\textsuperscript{195} In Victoria Arthur Sachse, the Reformist Minister for Public Instruction, expressed a similar concern at the 'children's demonstration' at Melbourne's Town Hall on the evening of Empire Day: 'People born and living here were very prone to think that they were Australian, and to forget they were Britishers. But to be good Australians they must of necessity be good Britishers'.\textsuperscript{196} 'Good Australians' was a phrase that was to recur.

English-born Joseph Cook, the conservative Free Trader from New South Wales who had migrated at 25, echoed the same sentiment: 'In cultivating this
feeling of loyalty to the Empire, we were most of all, and best of all, true to the Australian sentiment'.\textsuperscript{197} He abhorred the anti-imperial views expressed on the cover of a 'certain publication', the \textit{Bulletin} (fig. 15).

Fig. 15. 'Australian father of family: "An Empire Day, by all means; but let this be your empire!"'

\textit{(Bulletin, 18 May 1905)}

\textsuperscript{196}\textit{Argus}, 25 May 1905, p. 7. Sachse, Australian-born of German-Irish parents, was widely travelled; he was educated at Collegiate School, Brisbane. 'Arthur Otto Sachse', \textit{ADB} vol. 11, p. 505.

\textsuperscript{197}\textit{DT}, 25 May 1905, p. 8.
'No more vicious teaching could be published', Cook concluded. 'Hear, hear', his listeners added. Barton was more circumspect. Speaking on the same platform in comfortable Woollahra as Bruce Smith, President of the BEL and fierce Free Trade federal member, he argued that honouring the king meant honouring free institutions.198 Urging his audience not to listen to those who talked of separation, he warned that the break up of the Empire would mean the 'loss of British liberty'.

In Bathurst there was much talk against separation. Children from the State schools gathered around the Union Jack at the Bathurst Superior Public School to hear speeches on the Empire, the navy and the flag.199 Gone was the 'Federal Flag', the focus of the Bathurst ceremony of 1901.200 All speakers referred directly or indirectly to the disagreement in the community about the day's significance, warning about the 'separation being preached in certain quarters', and about the necessity for imperial defence. Revd Dr J.T. Marriott, Dean of the Anglican cathedral, 'sincerely hoped that Australians would never fail to be true Britishers'.201

After the children's choruses, including Advance Australia Fair, came the release of balloons into the air, symbolising freedom. The mayor, who had been unsuccessful in attracting initial support for the day, could not be present, having been 'called away on important business'.202 He and William Young, MLA for Bathurst, once Labor but more recently Progressive, had sent their apologies. The same day All Saints' Anglican Cathedral held a special celebration based on the order of service sent from church headquarters in Sydney. Dr Marriott took as his theme the 'true socialism', 'the Imperial

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200'Anti-Humbug' to editor, ibid., 16 May 1901, p. 2.
201Bathurst Daily Argus, 24 May 1905, p. 2.
202Bathurst Daily Argus (24 May 1905, p. 2) reported their absence; the National Advocate (25 May 1905, p. 2) their apologies. Young, an engine-driver, had migrated from Scotland at the age of 27 in 1879, and was elected as a Labor man in the by-election of June 1900. He became a hotel licensee. In religion he was Presbyterian. Heather Ridi, Peter Spearritt and Elizabeth Hinton, Biographical Register of New South Wales Parliament 1901-1970, Canberra, Australian National University Press, 1979, p. 302.
Socialism of the British Empire: 'the people of all parts of the Empire bore the burdens that naturally belonged to them, and yet they all stood together to bear one another’s burdens'. His listeners could draw an obvious conclusion about Australia’s contribution to imperial defence. Drawing on the Christian theology of love and sacrifice, of loving others as oneself even in the face of personal inconvenience and sacrifice, Marriott sought to answer those with the ‘narrower’ concerns of Australian security and working-class interests represented by the Labor Party’s new objective of socialisation and cultivation of an Australian sentiment.

Bathurst’s daily papers continued to differ in their attitudes to the significance of Empire Day celebrations in the town. To the *Bathurst Argus*, free trade in emphasis, the day was a reminder that the Empire guaranteed Australia’s future: ‘Empire Day is ... Australia’s day in a local as well as an Imperial sense, since as long as we are in a position to celebrate it the inviolability of the Commonwealth is assured, while should the Imperial bond snap ... the dream of a white Australia would that moment vanish’. The success of the celebrations, the paper believed, was ‘a protest ... against the disloyalty of a small coterie of persons’ who overestimated their power and influence in Bathurst: a blow to the ‘half-hearted citizens ... for ever crying out to “cut the Painter”’. The paper hoped they had learned their lesson and in future would stand aside.

The protectionist *National Advocate* agreed that citizens were right to celebrate Empire Day, to be proud of being part of such an Empire, but argued that despite the alarmist accusations, ‘no serious proposals [had] ever been made, at this end [Australia] ... to cut the painter’. Turning finally to the *Bathurst Argus*’s ‘small coterie of persons’ alleged to have opposed Empire Day

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204 Editorial, *ibid*.
205 ‘Cutting the Painter’, i.e., cutting ties with Britain, a common taunt conservatives directed at the Labor Party.
celebrations, the *Advocate* replied that 'the people of Bathurst showed their adherence to British ideas of truth and their detestation of the ignoble attempt to drag a noble patriotic sentiment into the mire of party politics, by standing aloof until the party element was eliminated'. It, too, hoped the culprits — 'a certain section ... in the metropolis' — had learned a lesson.

Children were supposed to be at the heart of Empire Day. Well might the *Sydney Morning Herald* say that 'it would be unreasonable to suggest ... that the children were capable of grasping the full significance of all they were told'.207 It was satisfied that 'the chief object was realised, for seeds were planted that will grow', a reminder of Tate's faith in 'the wise method of beginning with the children, who were more impressionable'. That was the concern of the *Bulletin*, but for another reason:

Identify patriotism with 'the Empire' in the mind of the Australian child ... and patriotism is at once dissociated from a love for Australia ... There is thus an evil subtlety in concentrating the effort of Empire Day in corrupting the young. If the twigs can be bent crooked many will grow up crooked.208

It pleaded with 'those Australian parents who are Australians first ... to ... tell [their children] ... it is the duty of every Australian child to grow up to love his own land' (fig. 15).

Speeches were an inevitable part of Empire Day. Children were more interested in the half-holiday from lessons, once the morning's patriotic recitations and songs were over. For some there were games and picnics, buns, sweets — 'lollies' the more colloquial said — and fruit.209 At Fitzroy cricket ground in Melbourne there were donkey rides, Punch and Judy shows, merry-go-rounds and side-shows as well as sports.210 In Ballarat the mayor and officials gave between four and five thousand children 'a real good time' with

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moving picture shows, 'both humorous and instructive', and gramophone recordings of world-famous Victorian singers, Nellie Melba and Ada Crossley, at Her Majesty's Theatre. It was unusual for mayors and councils not to cooperate, as in Oakleigh, Melbourne, and Broken Hill in New South Wales. The Argus reported dissatisfaction at Oakleigh when the mayor 'did nothing to celebrate the day and refused to cooperate with the board of advice'. In Broken Hill, whose council was reported to be the only one in New South Wales to reject the League's invitation to celebrate the day, the schools still raised the Union Jack.

While State schools were the prime target of the celebrations, private schools were encouraged to participate, at least in Victoria and New South Wales. At Kew and Hawthorn, the heart of Melbourne's private school domain, several of them gathered at the post office and town hall. Boys from the Jesuits' Xavier College were there, though the Rector and Prefect of Studies, Father Patrick Keating, complained to his journal, 'Another of those great days of the Great British Empire has been invented, called "Empire Day". They are the cause of no end of trouble. The whole school (cadets in uniform) went to Kew to assist at unfurling of some flag or other'. The revival of cadets with a federal government grant encouraged their participation in these ceremonial occasions. With all the interruptions, Keating added, 'we might have given a whole play day'.

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211 Ballarat Courier, 25 May 1905, p. 6.
214 SMH, 24 May 1905, p. 7.
215 Age, p. 8, and Argus, p. 8, 25 May 1905.
216 Entry for 24 May 1905, Prefect of Studies Journal, Xavier College Archives, Kew. Keating was rector from 1901-1908 and prefect of studies in 1904-1905. He had previously been at St Ignatius' College, Riverview, near Sydney, until 1890, where his wide education (the US, Ireland, France, Germany, Rome) and skill as a teacher had appealed to Christopher Brennan as a boy. See Greg Dening, Xavier: A Centenary Portrait, Kew, Vic., The Old Xaverians Association, 1978, p. 73. Axel Clark describes Keating as 'tall, strikingly handsome ... had perfect style and elegance, with great personal charm, self-control and personal discipline' in Christopher Brennan: A Critical Biography, Carlton, Vic., Melbourne University Press, 1980, p. 17. Later Xavier College was criticised by fellow Catholics for not marching in St Patrick's Day processions.
217 St Peter's School Magazine (South Australia), Aug. 1905, p. 3.
The Irish-born Keating had become rector at Xavier in 1901, having already held that position at St Ignatius College, Riverview, its junior counterpart in Sydney. The Irish Jesuits, accustomed to being treated with suspicion in Ireland and England, were conservative in their politics and religion. In Victoria they were more readily accepted by Catholics and non-Catholics than in New South Wales, where Catholics were more divided. Although Keating privately grumbled about the first Empire Day at Kew, he was present some months later with other heads of schools at the public meeting which voted unanimously to establish a Victorian branch of the League of the Empire. He joined W.S. Littlejohn of Scotch College and L.A. Adamson of Wesley College on the committee. Xavier was one of Victoria's elite boys' schools. It was not easy to oppose publicly the encouragement of 'some common sense of brotherhood' between the boys of the Empire, even if that meant creating a 'personal individual interest in things Imperial'.

English-born Anglican Adamson roused the boys at the Methodist Wesley College at that first Empire Day with poems of Newbolt, Henley, Tennyson and Lyle. 'For not a few' of Melbourne's Methodists, 'feeling British' was an important part of being Methodist. But then Dr Edwin Watkin, Methodist minister and former president of the college, followed the poems with an illustrated lecture on the early history of Australasia, especially relating to Victoria. He was one who, according to the school chaplain, 'gloried in the fact that he was an Australian'; he was 'the best type of Australian, one proud of his country but loyal to the old land'. A 'good Australian'? The crowning
cerebration at the school was the cadets' salute of the Union Jack at the front of the school as the rest of the boys watched.

Even so, private schools' attitudes to this first Empire Day were mixed, with many school magazines, which usually recorded the major events of the school year, not noticing it. Boys at the Anglican King's School, Sydney, were even encouraged to take a critical view of the rhetoric of Empire Day. 'Poker' related in the school magazine how they were reminded 'that we formed a part of the great and glorious British Empire', and that 'a great many speakers were ready to rave about "Rule Britannia" and "Advance Australia"'. 'But', he continued, 'they all seemed to forget to remind their hearers that the power of England was on the wane'. Then he suggested 'Australians should make some sort of attempt at becoming suitable ... defenders of their country' instead of calling out 'Rule Britannia' and 'Advance Australia' and 'slush of that sort'. The article did not match Reid's agenda.

In Bathurst, private schools were noticeably absent from the town's celebrations, though all of them except the Catholic Patrician Brothers had ordered badges for the day. The Ballarat Courier reported the involvement of private schools at Sebastopol, Ararat, and also Creswick where the mayor's committee made a point of visiting all schools, including the Catholic one. Sometimes, however, schools refused invitations: St Ambrose's Boys School, Brunswick, a Catholic school in Melbourne renowned for its outstanding examination results, returned tickets for the mayor's magic lantern show on the development of the Empire. The headmaster of St Ambrose's was Charles O'Driscoll, Australian-born son of Irish parents, who had trained as, but in the

Society and an authority on Aboriginal folk lore and vocabulary, unpublished article on E.I. Watkin held by the ADB, The Australian National University.

227 Bathurst Daily Argus, 23 May 1905, p. 3; National Advocate, 23 May 1905, p. 2. These carried imperial messages. The one presented to children at Stockton in the Newcastle district declared 'One Flag, one Crown, one people, one destiny' (Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate, 25 May 1905, p. 5), a variation on the League's motto, 'One King, one flag, one fleet, one empire' (School Paper, Classes 5 and 6, May 1910, supplement p. 2), and on Tennyson's original phrase, 'One life, one flag, one fleet, one Throne' (see Chapter 2, note 92).
228 Ballarat Courier, 25 May 1905, p. 6.
229 Age, 25 May 1905, p. 8.
end not become, a Christian Brother. Despite his close involvement with the cadet movement, perhaps his Irish background made him a reluctant participant in Empire Day. There were other more subtle sources of antagonism for Catholics, especially in New South Wales, where bonfires and fireworks were more common than in Victoria and South Australia on that first Empire Day. Among the groups processing to the bonfire at the Ordnance Ground in Bathurst was the Protestant Alliance, the recently-formed organisation so prominent in the fierce sectarianism of the August 1904 New South Wales election.

The introduction of Empire Day in Australia in 1905 reveals a society struggling with contending visions of national identity. The achievement of federation and the development of policies of naturalisation, immigration and defence had encouraged Australians to imagine themselves as a distinct nation emerging from, and contrasting with, the wider British nation. The Australian Labor Party in New South Wales gave the development of 'Australian sentiment' and 'a self-reliant community' priority in the first statement of its objective early in 1905. Conservative politicians, seeking an issue to unite non-Labor forces as Labor became more influential, seized on the second part of its objective, socialisation, to discredit the party and its vision of a self-reliant Australia. Reid and Carruthers had a political interest in portraying Labor's self-reliant Australia as anti-British. For these men, drawing on the Protestant temperance cause and conservative women's organisations in their bid for the insecure middle-class vote, Empire Day provided a useful means of keeping Australian sentiment in second place.

In Victoria Empire Day consolidated the school ceremony around the Union Jack. Reports showed that the pledge of loyalty linking Union Jack and love of 'country' was becoming widespread. In South Australia Empire Day

230 Charles Xavier O'Driscoll, ADB, vol. 11, pp. 63-64.
signalled the adoption of the Victorian example, at least with the saluting of the Union Jack, even if the pledge were not given. New South Wales recognised the possibility, for political purposes, of an Australian flag being used with the Union Jack, but the latter predominated. The British Empire League/League of the Empire sought to persuade, with bonfires and buns, the children of Australian schools, both State and private, that they were British first and Australian second.

The two campaigns — anti-Labor and Empire Day — complemented each other, especially when they could draw in practical and symbolic terms on deeper religious and ethnic forces. Ernest Broughton, a Liberal MLA in New South Wales, expected Australians to make as much of Empire Day as the Americans did of 4 July and the French of Bastille Day.232 Australian-born of the Anglican faith, Broughton was one of the of the founders of the British Empire League and a member of the Australian Protestant Defence Association. Empire Day occurred almost mid-way between the major Catholic and Protestant anniversaries: St Patrick's Day, 17 March, and the anniversary of Protestant victory in Ireland at the Battle of Aughrim, 12 July.233 But some Irish Catholic Australians saw 24 May much more closely linked to Protestantism than Catholicism. Australia's ethnic core, such a powerful mobilising force during the South African War when the Union Jack — dominated by the red St George's Cross — and all it was said to symbolise were threatened, now reasserted itself. Bathurst, a particularly volatile microcosm of the wider Australian community, illustrates this rich mixture of factors at work. In such a context the newly selected design for two Australian ensigns, already the subject of controversy, had little claim as a national flag.

232Ernest Broughton, 24 Oct. 1905, NSWPD 1905, second series vol. 20, p. 3083. Broughton, a native-born, Anglican estate agent, was a member of the Australian Protestant Defence Association and had helped found the British Empire League. Radi, Biographical Register, p. 28.
233When Empire Day was proposed as a public holiday, William Crick facetiously suggested adding the Catholic and Protestant dates and dividing them to establish a date acceptable to both sides, 15 Aug. 1905, NSWPD 1905, second series vol. 19, p. 1446. He was an Australian-born Catholic solicitor. 'William Patrick Crick', ADB, vol. 8, pp. 150-152.
24 MAY 1911: EMPIRE DAY OR AUSTRALIA DAY?

Empire Day celebrations continued to cause difficulties in Bathurst after 1905, and spectacularly so in 1911 in the protest made by Father Maurice O'Reilly, Principal of St Stanislaus' College, Bathurst. He and Cardinal Moran in Sydney began a counter movement to challenge Empire Day. Armed with a newly devised Australian national anthem and the Australian flag, these two senior Catholic clerics of New South Wales called for the celebration of Australia Day. They were marking 24 May, not as the late queen's birthday, but as the Catholic feast day of Mary, Our Lady, Help of Christians, and Patroness of Australia.

Several historians have noted this protest but without setting it securely in the wider Australian and imperial context.¹ They have taken Cardinal Moran, based in Sydney, as representative of Catholics, not only in Sydney but also New South Wales and the other Australian States — another example of using what Douglas Pike termed 'eastern eyes' in writing Australian history.² Further, they have not recognised that the rhetoric of Empire Day was changing, and that Moran was seeking to capitalise on the new Australian emphasis. In the wider imperial context, Canadian material confirms that the years 1905 to 1911 saw a heightened tension between the two kinds of patriotism, symbolised by the British and dominion flags.


Empire Day after 1905: More Australian, Less British

The direction taken by O'Reilly and Moran in 1911 drew an outraged response in New South Wales. But instructions issued by education departments had in recent years indicated a stronger Australian emphasis on Empire Day. The circular of 1906 from Peter Board, Director of Education in New South Wales, mentioned, as in the previous year, the importance of developing children's 'pride in the achievements of the British people' and 'an appreciation of the higher qualities'. But then he added: 'By this means, also pupils may be encouraged to become worthy citizens of their own native country, feel a pride in its progress, and an obligation to advance its interests'.

By 1908 this note was being sounded still more loudly. 'The practical outcome of the [Empire Day] lessons', Board wrote on behalf of the minister, 'should be the deepening of a patriotic regard on the part of the pupils for the portion of the Empire that lies nearest to them and of a sense of their duty to their own Australian land'. This reorientation is striking, especially when we remember the efforts of politicians on the first Empire Day to put Australian sentiment firmly in second place. Now Board could write: '[Pupils'] duty and allegiance to their own country should be the centre around which will gather their best service to the Empire'. The point of the day would be achieved, Board argued, if senior pupils, besides admiring the greatness of Empire were to 'learn also that they live in a land of great possibilities, a land that claims their deepest regard and truest service'.

The minister, James Hogue, may have encouraged this new emphasis. Hogue, a journalist who had briefly been a pupil-teacher, had recently been president of the ANA in New South Wales; he was also a member of the Australian Historical Society. However, Bob Bessant argues that Board and

3Public Instruction Gazette, Apr. 1906, p. 78.
5Emphasis added.
6Ibid.
7James Alexander Hogue, Australian Dictionary of Biography (hereafter ADB), vol. 9, p. 326.
Tate were both 'generally fully in control of their departments and able to influence the various ministers as they wished'. And A.R. Crane and W.G. Walker comment that the issue of citizenship 'above all else' concerned Board. For Board education was 'a social leveller': teaching 'the duty of the citizen to the state [was] a means of lessening class conflict'.

This Australian emphasis in Empire Day was also evident in South Australia. Alfred Williams, the Director of Education, expressed more directly in 1910 what Board had written two years before: 'What we must strive to do first is to make good Australians of our children ... in this matter of patriotism, as in all else in teaching, we must begin at home'. Richard Jebb, author of *Studies in Colonial Nationalism*, had said as much in 1905: 'A sound country has no use for the men whose first affections lie beyond its shores; which is the conventional English idea of "colonial loyalty"'. Deakin regarded his book as the first by an Englishman to fully understand Australian ideas of nationalism. Unless teachers could 'arouse in the hearts of the children a love for their native land, [Williams wrote] ... it [was] hopeless to expect any true "Empire" feeling'. The sentiment matched Jebb's: 'In Australia ... there is not merely a compatibility but even a causal connection between nationalism and Imperialism'. The marked difference in South Australian instructions for Empire Day between 1905 and 1910 reflected a series of changes: among them the coming to power of the Liberal-Labor coalition under Labor's Tom Price in July 1905 and the government's appointment of the reformer, Williams, as

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director, and his friend and colleague, Bertie Roach, as editor of the _Children's Hour_, through which Australian material was relayed to children.\(^{15}\)

Williams assured the South Australian public in his first annual report that Roach's emphasis on Australian history 'should remove from us the reproach that we do not teach our Australian children anything of their own land'.\(^{16}\) He could easily have said the same of Roach's material on geography, nature study, literature and music. Roach was innovative, not only in South Australian but also Australian terms, in drawing on local scientific and literary expertise and adapting it for children reading the three editions of the monthly magazine. At the same time Professor G.C. Henderson at the University of Adelaide was leading universities elsewhere in stimulating research into Australian history.\(^{17}\) By 1908 the _Children's Hour_ had largely become the textbook for Classes II to V.\(^{18}\) Williams and Roach were aware of the significance of their approach, Williams commenting that it reflected 'a great change in Australian sentiment' since the late 1880s: 'One remembers the time when ... Great Britain was "home" — theme of constant eulogy; Australia — a place to be endured. All this has greatly changed and rightly so'.\(^{19}\)

Instructions for the teaching of history indicated that change. 'Our children', Williams urged his teachers, 'must be trained to look at the past from _two_ points of view'.\(^{20}\) 'While we must remember the history of the motherland', he explained, 'we must not neglect the many opportunities to instil in our pupils a love for their own country'. For this reason the Empire Day numbers of the _Children's Hour_ which appeared from 1906 featured Empire builders as

\(^{15}\)Williams and Roach, South Australian-born of Cornish and Cornish/German descent, were central figures in the education reform movement of the early twentieth century in South Australia, Elizabeth Hayden Kwan, Making 'Good Australians': The Work of Three South Australian Educators, MA thesis, University of Adelaide, 1981, especially chapters 3 and 4.


\(^{18}\)Kwan, Making 'Good Australians', p. 167.


\(^{20}\)"Course of Instruction", _EG_, Feb. 1907, p. 50.
Australian heroes. 'Every Australian boy and girl should know ...', Roach began his article on Captain James Cook. He was concerned to dispel the common prejudice among children and their parents 'that to be a hero ... you must live in other lands'. The next year Roach was more explicit. In explaining the Australian as well as the British flag to younger readers, he advised: 'We must remember that, while King Edward rules us, we are Australians ... [who] must fight to defend our country'. 'What is the name of our country?' he asked. 'It is Australia'. In Western Australia that year the ANA conference had resolved to urge its State government to supply an Australian flag to each school 'so that by the hoisting and saluting of it each morning the children may be taught to know and love their National Flag'.

In South Australia the League of the Empire expanded slowly from 840 junior members in 1904 to 2,227 in 1907. It had the support of not only the Education Department but also the South Australian Public School Teachers' Union. The league's president, Sir Samuel Way, could report how 'delightful' it was 'to hear the Masters and Mistresses of the Schools mention the interest the scholars take in the old country'. Even so, the league experienced some difficulty in gaining and holding the attention of its members. Within a short time it had had to replace Jabberwock, begun as a magazine for its junior members, with the All Red Line in an attempt to find more favour with its readers.

Among its peers, the Victorian Education Department appeared the least concerned to explain directly to teachers why they should observe Empire Day

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21 'An Empire-Builder Captain Cook', Children's Hour, Class III, May 1906, p. 65.
22 'A Brave Diver', ibid., Class II, May 1907, pp. 76-77.
23 'The Commonwealth Flag', ibid., May 1907, p. 70.
24 Motion proposed by T.M. and C. Lowry of Coolgardie, and amended to also include the flying of the flag on all public buildings, the cooperation of ANA boards in the eastern states on this matter, and all branches obtaining a flag. Report of Proceedings of Eleventh Annual Conference of West Australian Branches, Coolgardie, 16-17 Apr. 1906, in ANA, (Vic.), Conference and Board of Directors Reports, vol. 8.
26 The SAPSTU Executive meeting of 1 June 1906 agreed with the league's request for an evening during conference week for entertaining teachers, Minutes, EG, June 1906, p. 141.
— perhaps because instructions for Empire Day had become fixed in a book of regulations in 1905. It preferred to draw on the views of others. Its Gazette cited the example of Nova Scotia, which had been the first Canadian province to respond to the Dominion Education Association's suggestion of Empire Day. In 1906 there were two extracts: one from South Australia's Education Gazette; and, strangely, another issued by the Department of Education, Iowa, in the United States of America. The first spoke of the importance of training children 'not only to be patriotic Australians, but patriotic citizens of the British Empire'. The American extract served to justify the teaching of patriotism: 'To be a patriot is to love one's country, to serve it faithfully, to support its government intelligently'.

The following year an open letter from the proponent of Empire Day, Lord Meath, drew the two extracts of 1906 together in encouraging 'a reasonable, imperial, and local patriotism'. What was 'reasonable' was not easy to define in teaching 'obedience to authority, self-sacrifice in the interest of the community ... [that is] to subordinate the individual to the common interest'. Meath's letter also included the suggestion of raising and saluting the Union Jack, and the singing of his song, The Flag of Britain. The song, reproduced in the Commonwealth School Paper of New South Wales, had also been recommended to Canadian schools, with the appropriate actions, the raising of the hand and the bowing of the head, at the words 'we salute thee'. Victoria already had its flag ceremony, formalised now in the regulations of 1905, to which the Education

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30EGTA, Apr. 1906, p. 148.
31'Empire Day and the Inculcating of Patriotic Feeling', quoting from Special Day Exercises, ibid., Apr. 1906, p. 156.
32Empire Day Movement', ibid., Apr. 1907, p. 159.
Department could and did refer. Significantly, however, although these regulations assumed the use of the Union Jack (by referring to the 1901 Gazette), they did not specify it, mentioning only 'the flag'. There was not the same need as in New South Wales and South Australia to be prescriptive with the approach of each Empire Day. Instead, emphasis could be given to the broader context, especially by using the examples of others.

This more eclectic approach makes an analysis of Victoria's mediation of the two kinds of patriotism on Empire Day more difficult to trace in the period after 1905. However, the course of instruction which Tate had introduced in 1902 on becoming director of education, and modified in 1905, reveals a weaker interest in Australian material when compared with Williams' approach in South Australia. Tate had introduced history — Australian history — for Class III: 'at least twelve stories of the exploration and settlement of Australia'. But the point of these stories was not to teach history 'from two points of view', as in South Australia, but 'to give children a genuine interest in the geography of Australia'. Charles Long's book, Stories of Australian Exploration, became the basis for teaching this subject. The English history taught in Classes IV to VI was based on William Gillies' two books, Stories and Simple Studies in English History for Young Australians, and on Walter Murdoch's The Struggle for Freedom. The aim of the course was 'to communicate pride of race' and 'to give an intelligent knowledge of, and appreciation for, our leading national

34Victoria, Education Department, Regulations and Instructions, 1905, no. 571; EGTA, Apr. 1906, p. 148.
35'Proposed Course of Free Instruction', EGTA, June 1902, p. 134.
36'Notes by the Director', ibid., June 1902, p. 136.
institutions, so that they may be consistently maintained, and, if need be, stoutly defended'.

Victoria's regulations emphasised the importance of producing 'citizens, not merely of Australia, but also of a great empire'. But Murdoch's book spoke of 'dual citizenship' only in an Australian sense, referring to each of the Australian States, and to the Commonwealth of Australia. An Australian emphasis in Victoria's Empire Day emerged slowly through the extracts in the Gazette. In 1908, as in 1906, there was the call to encourage children 'not only to be patriotic Australians, but patriotic citizens of the British Empire'. But this time it was accompanied by the extract from New South Wales which expected teachers to encourage their pupils to see Australia as 'a land that claims their deepest regard and truest service'. It was a theme Tate developed more diplomatically when thanking Lord Meath for his address on the Empire Day Movement to Victorian teachers in the ballroom of Government House on 7 March 1910: 'We will best keep Empire Day by determining that we shall be through and through Australians'. In the same month Williams had expressed the sentiment in similar terms: by first making 'good Australians', he said, 'we shall be training good and loyal sons of the Empire'.

Meath himself had emphasised the importance of Australians being loyal 'in the first place' to the Commonwealth 'and then to the Empire'. Even the catechisms of the Empire Day movement could be adapted to make them more acceptable to Australians: 'if there is anything in them that you think controversial', Meath urged teachers, 'scratch it out and put in something you think proper'. But the point of his address was to raise in his listeners' minds the question posed by the poet Browning when reflecting on Nelson's fate in the

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39 Notes by the Director, ibid., Sept. 1902, p. 51, Supplement, June 1905, p. 17.
40 No. 571, Regulations 1905.
42 Extracts from EG (SA) in EGTA, Apr 1906, p. 148, Apr. 1908, p. 160.
43 Extract from Public Instruction Gazette (NSW) in EGTA, Apr. 1908, p. 160.
44 Tate, in seconding the vote of thanks, EGTA, Apr. 1910, p. 91.
45 EG, Mar. 1910, p. 114.
46 EGTA, Apr. 1910, p. 89.
Battle of Trafalgar: 'How can I help England, say'? Meath's motivation was apparent for all who could see when, at the height of his address, he laid bare the problem they faced: how were the Empire's whites to maintain their supremacy when they were outnumbered six to one? He explained in graphic terms, referring to his addresses to school children:

I make them realise it by asking a class of boys or girls to come out. I put seven in a row in front of me and I say, 'You are the British Empire'. I choose one and say, 'You are white', 'You are a negro', 'You are yellow', and so on right down the line. I say to the white boy, 'You are the only one that has got any power or vote; the others have none at all'. He looks at the other six boys, and I say to them, 'Look at his fine forehead, look at his biceps; as for brain, you would not for a moment compete with that boy'. Then I say, 'You are a white boy; you have to govern these six. You have got to do it righteously, my boy, and, if you do not, they will jump on you, and they are six to one'.

It was a powerful appeal to ethnicity in the broadest sense, especially in a country determined to defend its restrictive immigration policy against imperial interests: 'All these [qualities of 'great ability, great thought, great attention', Meath said,] depend upon ... you and me, and every single individual who is white'.

However, such an appeal disguised the division between Australian and British interests which was becoming more obvious. The report following Meath's address in the Education Gazette and Teachers' Aid was also on patriotism, but was taken from The New South Wales Teacher and Tutorial Guide. It spoke of 'patriotism of the citizen', of maintaining 'the honour and integrity of our own country by helping to build up our own industries, manufactures, and productions'. Charles Long had had difficulty in explaining the notion of 'country' when discussing citizenship with Australian children: the British Empire, he said, was 'our Country'; but Australia was 'more particularly our Country'. Such confusion was becoming less likely as the Australian

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47 Ibid., p. 90.
48 Ibid., p. 89.
49 P.J. Wallace, 'Patriotism', original emphasis, ibid., p. 91.
50 H.O. Arnold-Forster, The Citizen Reader for the Use of Schools (1886), adapted for Australian children (1906) by C.R. Long, Cassell, Melbourne, 1912, pp. 18-19, original emphasis.
government moved to establish a citizen army and an Australian navy, in the process clarifying the status of the Australian Ensign.

The Australian Government: Coming to Terms with the Australian Ensign

Richard Crouch, the Member for Corio, Victoria, who had led the campaign from 1901 for the Australian Ensign to be used as the national flag, had had mixed success with his motion on the flag in the House in 1904. The government was prepared to fly the Ensign from Commonwealth public buildings but not from forts, or from ships in the imperial squadron subsidised by the Australians. Undeterred, Crouch took his complaint to the Admiralty in January 1905 in a last bid to deal with the issue. He explained how the passing of the resolution in the House created an unfortunate distinction in colours between Australian ships and those of the Royal Navy largely subsidised by Australians. Accordingly, he requested that the Admiralty 'consider the advisability of meeting Australian sentiment' by directing that British ships in Australian waters fly the Australian flag. It was a cheeky move, prompted by frustration with the Australian government's reluctance to use the Ensign. The lords commissioners of the Admiralty, unsure of the dominion's views, advised the colonial secretary against such a change since the white ensign was universally recognised as the colours of the Royal Navy. When the letters were relayed to Australia, the Free Trade-Protectionist Reid-McLean government assured the secretary that it did not agree with Crouch.

There the matter rested until Deakin's government amended the regulations in 1907 to replace the Union Jack on forts with the Australian Ensign. When the change was noticed early in 1908 and questions were asked in the House, Thomas Ewing, Minister for Defence, took refuge in the resolution which in 1904 had not carried much weight. Now he argued that the change

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51Richard A. Crouch to The Right Hon. the First Lord of the Admiralty, 24 Jan. 1905, CRS A6006/1 1905/6/10, Australian Archives (hereafter AA) (ACT).
52Cabinet minute, 10 June 1905, ibid.
simply brought 'the practice of the Military Forces ... into line with that of our Naval Forces' (meaning those not in the imperial squadron).53 Some members interpreted the amendment to the regulations — 'the supersession of the British flag by what is called the Australian flag' — as evidence of 'a strong undercurrent of antipathy to anything British'.54 Further questions were asked with the approach of Empire Day, Bruce Smith citing the Sydney Morning Herald's provocative headline: 'Exit Union Jack'.55 That was not the intention of Deakin's government, but the decision to fly the Commonwealth Ensign instead of the Union Jack from forts in Australia symbolised Deakin's strategy of greater Australian independence within the imperial framework.

From 1905, the year in which Deakin was president of the Imperial Federation League in Victoria, he pursued more independent defence arrangements for Australia.56 The policy reflected a recognition by the ANA in Victoria, in which Deakin was a prominent member, of the need for a separate Australian navy.57 It expressed both an increased fear of the Japanese after their spectacular defeat of the Russians in May, and a continuing distrust of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, renewed in August. But Deakin had never been happy with the naval agreement negotiated by Barton at the Colonial Conference in 1902: a £200,000 Australian subsidy for ships in the Royal Navy over which the Australian government had no control. The contrast with Canada was marked, though of course it reflected the difference in the two

54William Johnson, Member for Lang, New South Wales, 2 Apr. 1908, CPD 1908, vol. 45, p. 10119. Johnson, English-born, had been a Labor man in New South Wales but became a Free Trader, while remaining a populist and a democrat, 'William Elliot Johnson', ADB, vol. 9, pp. 497-498.
55Bruce Smith was the member for Parkes, NSW: English-born, avid Free Trader; president of the BEL in NSW. 'Arthur Bruce Smith', ADB, vol. 11, pp. 639-641; question on notice to the Prime Minister, 7 May 1908, CPD 1908, vol. 46, p. 10969.
56Atkinson terms this period of Australian defence policy the 'nationalist' period, Australian Defence Policy, Part 3.
57See especially the editorial by Captain Carty Salmon, a close friend and political associate of Deakin, a leader in the ANA, and federal member for Laanecoorie in western Victoria, Advance Australia, 15 Nov. 1905, p. 293; 'Charles Carty Salmon', ADB, vol. 11, p. 511. See also resolutions on defence at the annual conferences of the ANA (Vic.) in 1906 and 1907, ANA (Vic.) Conference and Board of Directors Reports, vols 7 and 8.
countries' geo-political circumstances. With a larger population than Australia, Canada contributed only £185,000 to its defence — not as a subsidy to Britain, but for the construction and maintenance of Canadian docks and the protection of its fisheries.\textsuperscript{58}

Deakin presented his vision for Australian defence to the federal parliament before the Christmas adjournment in 1907. It reflected the concern evident in the Victorian branch of the ANA that Australian interests were in jeopardy. In March at Hamilton the annual conference had asked the board of directors to ensure that each year local branches should 'organise a demonstration in defence, support and praise of Australian unity'.\textsuperscript{59} The resolution was extended the following year to include 'the display of the Australian Flag on all public occasions'.\textsuperscript{60} The ANA in Victoria had been cautious about promoting the Australian flag when approached by Crouch in 1904 and by the Western Australian board of directors in 1907.\textsuperscript{61} Its stronger stand on the flag at the 1908 conference was accompanied by the complaint of a Hawthorn branch member that his branch 'had been accused of pulling down the Union Jack for suggesting that the Australian flag should be displayed'.\textsuperscript{62} Dr Carty Salmon, Liberal-Protectionist MHR and Deakin's close associate who had followed him into the Imperial Federation League in 1905, supported the resolution. The ANA's desire to fly the Australian flag, he argued, 'was not to be considered evidence of disloyalty but evidence that we were part of the Empire'.\textsuperscript{63}

Deakin also drew on his experience at the Colonial Conference in April-May 1907. His vision encompassed a 'citizen soldiery, inspired by patriotism', and an Australian navy which would fly 'the White Ensign with the Southern

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\item \textsuperscript{58}Alfred Deakin, 13 Dec. 1907, \textit{CPD} 1907, vol. 42, p. 7519.
\item \textsuperscript{59}Report of Proceedings of the Annual Conference, ANA (Vic.), 1907, ANA (Vic.) \textit{Conference and Board of Directors Reports}, vol. 8.
\item \textsuperscript{60}Report of Proceedings of the Annual Conference, ANA (Vic.), 25-26 Mar. 1908, \textit{ibid}.
\item \textsuperscript{62}\textit{Advance Australia}, Apr. 1908, p. 85.
\item \textsuperscript{63}\textit{ibid.}; 'Salmon', \textit{ADB}, vol. 11, pp. 511-512.
\end{itemize}
Cross ... altogether Australian in cost and political control'.64 His aim was 'the maximum of good citizenship, with the spirit of patriotism as the chief motive power of a civic defence force'.65 Fired by the Admiralty's disregard for the proposal he had telegraphed in September, then its rejection of the idea in December, he declared that his government, 'representing the Australian people, is entitled in this, as in every other matter, to speak and act for them'.

Not until 1909 did Australia and Britain negotiate an acceptable compromise. The Dreadnought crisis, when the loss of Britain's monopoly of sea power became clear, followed by the Imperial Conference on naval and military defence, provided the catalyst, culminating in the Naval Defence Act of 1910. At the 1909 conference representatives of Canada and Australia raised the matter of the flag for dominion warships in the hope that 'the White Ensign with the distinctive emblem of the Dominion in the fly might be sanctioned'.66

The Admiralty, after some consideration, remained reluctant. Completely misunderstanding the dominions' desire for a symbol which would recognise their growing independence, the Admiralty first responded in 1910 with the offer of 'the White Ensign without any distinctive badge'. Believing that the use of that flag 'apparently did not occur' to the dominion representatives, the lords suggested that it would illustrate the new dominion ships' 'full share in the heritage of the British Navy'.67 In the meantime the Labor Party had come to power in Australia, headed by Andrew Fisher who had hopes of changing the design of the Australian flag.68

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65Ibid., p. 7510.
66Memorandum of the Admiralty regarding 'certain legal and international questions which call for settlement in connection with the creation of Dominion Navies', an enclosure with the Confidential Memorandum to the Governor-General, Australia, from the Colonial Secretary, Aug. 1910, forwarded to the Prime Minister 21 Sept. 1910, CRS A461/1 A336/1/1 Pt 1, AA (ACT). But note that the proceedings of the 1909 conference mentioned the issue of the flag only in relation to Canada, and then in general terms, Imperial Conference: Correspondence and Papers Relating to a Conference with Representatives of the Self-Governing Dominions on the Naval and Military Defence of the Empire, 1909, Cd 4948, p. 24.
67Memorandum of the Admiralty, Aug. 1910, CRS A461/1 A336/1/1 Pt 1, AA (ACT).
68Soon after becoming prime minister, Fisher initiated the re-design of Australia's Coat of Arms: see below pp. 185; M.L. Shepherd, Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, to Atlee Hunt, Secretary, External Affairs Department, CRS A462/8 828/3/8 AA (ACT) and Herald, 17 Sept.
Canada: Confused Developments, 1906-1911

As these developments were occurring, the Canadian government moved to enforce the flying of the Union Jack, instead of the Canadian red ensign, within the country. Joseph Pope, who had campaigned hard to this end since 1902, could write to W.R. Baker, assistant to the president of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company early in 1911 that

the Govt has directed that the Union Jack shall fly from all Customs Houses and Post Offices in all seaport and frontier towns throughout the Dominion. The Red Ensign is entirely discarded on land, being relegated to its proper use on the water. I regard this action of the Govt as important in a country where so few people know what their flag is.69

In 1906 Pope had requested a statement from the Colonial Office 'to lay down that the flag to be ordinarily flown in this country is the Union Jack'.70 The Colonial Secretary, Lewis Harcourt, obliged in 1911. 'I should be glad', he wrote to HRH the Duke of Connaught, Governor-General of Canada,

if you would be good enough to cause the public to be informed that the Union flag is the national flag of Canada, as of all other parts of His Majesty's Dominions, and may be flown on land by all British subjects, and that the Red Ensign with the arms of the Dominion of Canada in the fly is intended to be used only by Canadian merchant vessels.71

The issue of Union Jack versus Canadian ensign had simmered since the early 1890s, and more particularly since the introduction of Empire Day in 1899. It came to a head in 1907 when several provincial governments insisted that publicly-funded schools fly flags daily. Manitoba led the way by passing

1910, p. 8. Fisher had emigrated as a coal miner from Scotland to Queensland, where he became a colonial, then federal, politician. 'Andrew Fisher', ADB, vol. 8, pp. 502-507.
69Joseph Pope, Under-Secretary of State, Canada, to W.R. Baker, assistant to the president of the Pacific Railway Co., 2 Mar. 1911, Pope Papers, MG 30 E 86, vol. 20, file 184, National Archives of Canada (hereafter NAC).
70Pope to Col. J. Hanbury Williams, Secretary to the Governor-General, 7 Nov. 1906, ibid., vol. 18 file 85, NAC.
71Quoted by Hugh Savage, Suggestions for Canadian National Flag: Its Adaption for Uses by Sea and Air: Based on Winning Design, La Presse Competition, 1926. Submitted to the Joint Committee of the Senate and House of Commons Appointed to Consider and Report upon a Suitable Design for a Distinctive National Flag for Canada, Jan. 1946, typescript, photostat copies of documents relating to flying of distinctive Canadian flags 1865-1946, MG 27/III G 1: M-293, NAC; and typescript speech of the Canadian Prime Minister, 14 Mar. 1939, enclosed in letter from H.L.E. Priestman, Assistant Canadian Government Trade Commissioner, Australia, to T.J. Collins, Prime Minister's Dept, Australia, CRS A461/1 A336/1/1 Pt 2, AA (ACT). I have not been able to see the original despatch to confirm that the Hansard reference, dating the despatch at 12 Apr. 1911, is correct rather than Savage who gives the year 1912.
legislation requiring school trustees to provide a flag pole and 'a British national flag' for flying each day the school was in session.72 Trustees not doing so would forfeit their school grant; teachers would be disqualified.

The Conservative premier, R.B. Roblin had made his intention clear in September the previous year.73 His motive was to assimilate the huge numbers of immigrants then moving into the province; many were not from a British background. That fact, Roblin believed, would make the maintenance of imperial ties increasingly difficult. Of the three prairie provinces, Manitoba had the highest percentage of immigrants from central and eastern Europe; but it also had the highest percentage of immigrants from the British Isles.74 James Woodsworth, a Methodist minister and missioner in Manitoba's capital, Winnipeg, devoted to Protestantising and Canadianising immigrants, popularised the challenge facing provincial governments with his Strangers Within Our Gates or Coming Canadians.75 Roblin argued that as these immigrants enjoyed 'the civilization and benefits that follow the Union-Jack', their children should be taught to honour it.76 Those objecting to having their children 'infused with British patriotism', were, he thought, 'undesirable'. At that stage his government was prepared to supply the flags. The minister of education was keen to act, particularly given the unanimous support of the Manitoba Teachers' Association, but he postponed his instruction until Empire Day the following year to allow trustees time to organise flag poles.

J. Castell Hopkins believed that the government was motivated more by fear of the influence of immigrants from the United States than those from

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72 An Act to Amend The Public Schools Act, Statutes of Manitoba, 1907.
74 Of Manitoba’s European immigrants in the period 1896-1914, 40 per cent were from central and eastern Europe (cf. 15 per cent in Alberta and 30 per cent in Saskatchewan); 50 per cent were British in Manitoba (cf. 37 per cent in Alberta and 30 per cent in Saskatchewan), Donald Kerr and Deryck Holdsworth (eds), Historical Atlas of Canada, vol. 3 Addressing the Twentieth Century, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990, Plate 27.
75 James S. Woodsworth, Strangers Within Our Gates or Coming Canadians (1909), Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1972, with an introduction by Marilyn Barber.
76 Hopkins, CARPA, 1906, p. 448.
Europe. In particular, he thought Roblin was reacting to the use of American flags in the province, especially over Winnipeg's city hall on 4 July, Independence Day in the United States. However, statistically Manitoba had the smallest percentage of American immigrants of the three prairie provinces, though in general terms these immigrants were influential. The next year in the neighbouring province of Saskatchewan the mayor of the capital, Regina, was to declare 4 July a public holiday for that day. The 'Union-Jack as the national flag of Canada', Roblin asserted, should be given a more prominent place, especially before children 'during their formative stages of mental growth'.

Manitoba was at the forefront of the issue of nationality at that time, its 'schools question' of 1890 to 1897 continuing to trouble Canadian politics. In 1890 the Liberal provincial government abolished the dual education system (of public and denominational schools supported by public money), and the official use of the French language — both guaranteed in 1870 when Manitoba had become a province. The influx of larger numbers of Protestant English-rather than Catholic French-speaking settlers had enabled the government to act. The protests of the Catholics were heard all the way to the Privy Council, which supported the action of the provincial government. However, so politically divisive had the issue become that the Canadian government negotiated a compromise in 1896: it guaranteed some religious instruction, employment of Catholic teachers, and bilingual instruction for children who spoke French or a minority language. Similar developments, though without

78Of its immigrants between 1896 and 1914, 10 per cent were from the US (cf. 37 per cent in Alberta and 25 per cent in Saskatchewan), Kerr and Holdsworth, Historical Atlas of Canada, vol. 3, Plate 27.
79Hopkins, CARPA, 1907, p. 404.
80Ibid., p. 448.
such division, occurred later in the Northwest Territories, which in 1905 became the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan. Attempts in longer-settled Ontario proved more difficult.82 Manitoba by 1906 had proved the power of its Protestant, English-speaking population. Roblin sought to consolidate that position. Behind him were the Orangemen.83

His action drew public comment, mostly approving, not only in Manitoba but also across English-speaking Canada and even in Britain. According to Hopkins, it 'conduced more to the Dominion reputation of the Roblin Government than almost any other subject of policy or action'.84 Apart from general support from papers in western Canada, press opinion mostly divided along conservative/liberal or imperial/anti-imperial lines, with the liberal papers regarding the flying of flags as an individual voluntary matter.85 In Britain the press thought Roblin's example should be followed there.

The issue attracted the attention of Joseph Pope in Ottawa. His exasperation with Canadians' refusal to recognise the Union Jack as their flag, and with the Colonial Office whose regulations until 1911 condoned that, reached a new height. In writing to the governor-general's secretary regarding a flag for the lieutenant-governor in the new province of Saskatchewan, Pope digressed to discuss the issue of flags generally. His starting point was the United States, whose people 'never tire of flaunting "Old Glory" in our faces', which made it necessary for Canadians to cultivate an affection for our flag — that is, the Union Jack'.86 But most Canadians, he believed, thought their flag was the Canadian red ensign, the 'absurdly styled ... "Canadian National Flag"

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84Hopkins, CARPA, 1906, p. 447.
85Ibid., pp. 448-449.
86Pope to Williams, 7 Nov. 1906, Pope Papers, MG 30 E 86, Vol. 18 file 85, NAC.
to three-fourths of those using it. Hence his request for a despatch from the Colonial Office to reinforce his view. To him it was not a trivial matter:

... British subjects ... should be taught to revere their flag, and surely it is essential in the first place that they should be instructed as to what that flag is. A flag I take it, is the sign and symbol of sovereignty, and it is to me as clear as day that Canada, being a British possession, should fly the British flag.

At the opening of Manitoba's fourth parliamentary session in January 1907 the issue of the flag was raised again. The Minister of Education, H.C. Campbell, discussed it in relation to the example set by the United States in familiarising settlers with their new country's flag, and to 'the peculiar national problems' in Canada's west: that 40 per cent of its people were from 'countries that perhaps are either hostile or jealous of the British nation' (Hopkins, CARPA, 1907, p. 566). Citing the 'good results' from 'the compulsory flying of flags, the compulsory lessons in history and patriotism, the compulsory teaching about the flag' in the United States, he thought that in Canada, 'where British subjects had a greater flag and a greater heritage', they 'should not hesitate to make the subject a matter of education'. He suggested that Manitoba's proposed legislation had 'no real compulsion in it' when compared with the practice in the United States.

The premier, returning to his concern that on fete days Winnipeg looked more like an American than a British city — reflecting American influence and the desire to attract more American immigrants, commented that of the 500 to 1,000 communications he had received on the matter, only three were negative (Manitoba Free Press, 13 Feb. 1907, p. 7). Liberal opposition was not convinced, spokesman Horace Chevrier arguing that Manitoba's people were quite loyal and that to insist on the display of that loyalty was un-British (Hopkins, CARPA, 1907, pp. 566, 582). His objection was not to the flying of the flag but rather to the penalty the statute imposed. Indeed, Chevrier said the opposition 'would like to see the bill go further, providing for drilling, saluting

87Hopkins, CARPA, 1907, p. 566.
89Hopkins, CARPA, 1907, pp. 567, 582.
the flag, etc.' The amendment deleting the penalty was lost four to eighteen. The legislation, rushed through parliament before it was prorogued prior to the election, was the icing on the cake the Conservatives presented to electors. The government was in a strong position, having a large majority in the House, a surplus in the treasury, popular policies regarding rail, roads and telephones, and the province behind them in the clash with Ottawa over its boundary dispute.

The issue in Manitoba attracted widespread interest across Canada. In Ontario, two patriotic organisations concerned about the dominance of American flags in the province sought to persuade the Conservative government to follow Roblin's example: The Empire Club which stood for 'The advancement of the interests of Canada and a United Empire', symbolised by a maple leaf with crown; and the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire (IODE).

The IODE had been founded in 1900 in response to the Empire's crisis during the South African War — ten years after its counterpart, Daughters of the American Revolution. It pursued a range of interests from defence to education, all with the common thread of promoting ties between country and Empire. Its imperial name reflected many of its concerns: correspondence between pupils in Canada and Britain ('Comrades Correspondence'); the promotion of the study of the Empire's history; Canadian involvement in the defence of the Empire; and the honouring of the flag. In practical terms this meant, for example, arranging for the care of the graves of the war dead in South Africa, honouring a feat of heroism by a Canadian woman by

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93 See for example, minutes for the meeting of 6 Nov. 1907, IODE Papers, Vol. I: Minutes of the National Executive, NAC.
establishing a hospital ward for children with tuberculosis, and protesting at a Toronto manufacturer's use of the Union Jack as a wrapper for toilet paper.94 It operated from a Canadian-centred base, seeking a 'common nationality' where there was 'no English Canada, no French Canada — but one Canada — ... whose children spring from all nations [and] find unity in that name'.95 However, this 'common nationality' had an English core.

A petition presented in February 1907 by the Chamberlain Chapter of the IODE to the premier of Ontario reflected an English-based duality: the women were seeking measures requiring the flying of either the Union Jack or the Canadian ensign over schools and the teaching of children to 'cherish the flag of their own country ... in preference to all others'.96 It also called for the regulation of all foreign flags and the proper display of 'the flag of our own country' on public buildings. The Empire Club referred more directly to the issue in Manitoba in seeking the same outcome in Ontario: the flying of the Union Jack over schools. It, too, sought to restrict the use of foreign flags and promote 'Our Own Flag' to encourage 'a sturdy patriotism and dignified independence amongst our own people'.97

The month of February 1907 was critical. On 15 February a member of the Ontario legislature announced his intention to ask whether the government would require public schools to use the Union Jack and if so whether it would assist school boards in buying them.98 The reporter reflected that such a plan had been discussed in government circles since the decision was announced in Manitoba and rumours suggested that Ontario might follow suit. At the same

94Loose clipping, ibid., Vol. 36 Newsclipping Scrapbook 1905-1911, and Petition of 1905 to the House of Commons, Canada, Vol. 20 file 8, IODE Papers, NAC.
95Untitled newsclipping, Feb 1905 in which the president of the IODE was quoted, Vol. 36 Newsclipping Scrapbook 1905-1911, p. 13, ibid., NAC.
96Petition from the IODE, 14 Mar. 1907, Whitney Papers, MU3122, AO.
97Secretary, The Empire Club to J.P. Whitney, Premier of Ontario, 23 Oct. 1907, Whitney Papers, MU3121, AO.
98Ontario. Legislative Assembly. Newspaper Hansard (Debates), NLC.
time in the federal parliament members were debating a motion concerning the 'relations which should exist between Great Britain and Greater Britain'.

There was a growing feeling among Canadians that Britain was putting her own trade and strategic interests before those of Canada, particularly where the United States was involved. Such feeling, Lord Grey, the Governor-General, warned the colonial secretary, was widespread in the press, whether liberal, conservative or independent. He considered the parliamentary speeches reported that month important 'because ... they reflect a sentiment which is growing among the members of the non-party Canadian clubs which exist in all our big towns'. He noted the caution of the Liberal Prime Minister, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, aware of the strident nationalism of fellow Liberal Henri Bourassa in Quebec, yet unwilling to move too quickly in that direction, fearing it might be counterproductive. As Laurier himself said, 'our existence as a nation is the most anomalous that has yet existed. We are British subjects, but we are an autonomous nation'.

There had been several issues from 1900 which illustrated the difficulties in Canada's relationship with Britain, particularly with Laurier, a French-Canadian from Quebec, as Liberal prime minister: imperial defence, preferential tariffs and boundary negotiations. On the one hand he faced criticism from Bourassa, suspicious of the imperial tie and determined to exploit opposition to it for his own political purposes. On the other hand, Laurier was cautioned by George Ross, aware of the strength of imperial feeling in Ontario and elsewhere and concerned at the political consequences if the Liberal Party did not acknowledge it. In 1902 Ross, then premier of Ontario, had warned Laurier about the anti-imperialist talk in Quebec:

100 Ibid.
I think it would never do ... for a Leader having regard to the sentiments of the Canadian people ... to abandon the advocacy of closer union with the Empire and all that Imperialism in that sense implies ... for Ontario and the English speaking portion of the population generally the Imperial view is paramount.102

Ross wrote again later, this time seeking Laurier's support for the attempt by Joseph Chamberlain, Colonial Secretary, to introduce in the British parliament a preferential tariff for colonial produce as a means of strengthening the bonds of Empire. For Ross, such support made political sense as Chamberlain's success would advantage Canada, and the Liberal Party would be seen to be sympathetic to 'what even the most cynical must admit is rational imperialism', thus drawing support from all regardless of party allegiance.103 Despite the difficulties the proposal held for Canadian manufacturers, Ross urged Laurier to remember the importance of 'the sentimental idea which every political leader knows is so potent — the consolidation of the Empire'. That was the idea on which Joseph Pope based his promotion of the Union Jack. Ross admitted that 'Ontario has sometimes an hysteria of loyalty' but then continued, 'nevertheless, the undertone in that regard cannot be ignored by any party that looks for political ascendancy'. He knew his country well. As one of his opponents later commented, 'If upon some great occasion we were asked to find the one man who would best interpret to the world the moral consciousness and the national temper of the Canadian people, we could make no better choice than (the then) ... Premier of Ontario'.104 The champion of Empire Day in the schools had learned his lesson well.

Pope continued to push his view: in January he had convinced the general manager of the Intercolonial Railway of Canada to change flags; in March he wrote to persuade the Department of Militia and Defence to fly only the Union

102 George Ross, Premier of Ontario, to Wilfrid Laurier, 13 Jan. 1902, Laurier Papers, C-790, p. 61485, NAC.
103 Ross to Laurier, 5 Oct. 1903, 9 Oct. 1903, ibid., C-804, pp. 77500, 77649, NAC.
104 Quoted by H.E. Willmott, Star (Montreal), 21 June 1913, on publication of Ross's reminiscences, Scrapbook Biographies of Men, vol. 2, p. 160, Metropolitan Toronto Reference Library.
Jack. Given this situation, it is not surprising that school boards should wonder which flag their schools should fly. A representative of the Protestant Board of School Commissioners in Quebec, asked Pope: 'Is there such a thing as a recognised Canadian flag'? Pope pointed out (incorrectly, as the regulation was not in force till Empire Day) that the Union Jack flew from every school in Manitoba and that 'something of the kind is in contemplation in Ontario'.

Just what was being contemplated in that province was not clear. In April, Dr R.A. Pyne, Minister of Education in the Conservative government and close associate of the premier, when questioned by a Liberal member about the $5,000 in the estimates for 'flags for public schools' said only that these flags, without specifying what kind, 'would be raised at the discretion of the teacher' in the province's 5,000 schools. The premier added that his government preferred to see the flag made part of the lesson as a symbol for the institutions it represented rather than saluted American-style. In fact the government chose the Canadian flag, as did the government of New Brunswick whose amendment covered the cost of flags where boards were unwilling to pay.

Instructions for Empire Day that year in Ontario continued to specify that either the Union Jack, the Canadian flag or both could be used. But the emphasis in the guidelines was on the Empire and the 'British National Flag' rather than Canada and the Canadian flag, and on the duties subjects and citizens owed to the Empire because of the privileges they enjoyed. Teachers were no longer invited to cooperate in celebrating the day but told that regulations required it. Central to the proceedings was to be the motto of the Empire Day Movement, 'One King, One Flag, One Fleet, One Empire'. For the first time there was mention of *The Flag of Britain*, with its recurring 'we salute

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106 Dr H.B. Yates to Joseph Pope, 23 March 1907, *ibid*. file 152, NAC.
107 Ontario. Legislative Assembly. Newspaper Hansard (Debates), NLC.
108 Hopkins, CARPA, 1907, pp. 552, 626.
109 Compare the circular of March 1900 with that of May 1907, Report of the Minister of Education (Ontario) for 1900, 1907, pp. xliii, 129-132.
thee'. Later that year the Ontario government reversed its earlier choice of flag to be bought for schools: the flag flown was to be the Union Jack. The Premier, J.P. Whitney, explained: 'As soon as the difficulty relating to the use of the Red Ensign with the Arms of Canada in the fly was brought to the attention of the Minister of Education, he changed the specifications to the Union Jack'. Pope's campaign had borne fruit. The governor-general wrote congratulating Whitney on his decision, 'delighted that Ontario under your direction is giving the right example, which I trust will soon be followed in all parts of the Empire'. That was not so in New Zealand where the government had given New Zealand flags to schools and told the children on Empire Day, 'You must not call your school flag the Union Jack. It is the blue ensign of the Royal Naval Reserve with the addition of the stars, and its proper title is the "New Zealand Ensign"'.

Flags in schools in British Columbia had also become a public matter. Provincial regulations of 1906 had suggested the raising of the British or Canadian flag for Empire Day. The annual convention of the British Columbia Association of School Trustees in February 1907 unanimously called for the compulsory flying of the Canadian flag, asking the government to supply it to rural schools. However, the following year the Conservative government ruled that every day schools must fly the Union Jack it provided. For the beginning of the school year schools were to follow instructions for a special ceremony: God Save the King as the flag was raised, a march past of children and a patriotic speech from a member of the school board. There was no specific mention of a salute by pupils, though from the correspondence of the superintendent of education to individual school boards that appears to

110 Lord Grey, Governor-General of Canada, to J.P. Whitney, Premier of Ontario, 13 Sept. 1907 and Whitney's reply, Whitney Papers MU3123, AO. Grey's letter congratulating Whitney on the change mentioned only rural schools, implying that for schools in towns, the matter was left to the boards.
111 'New Zealand Ensign', School Journal, Pt III, May 1908, p. 110. The article was particularly significant, given that the material was intended for the celebration of Empire Day.
have been assumed.\textsuperscript{115} Flying the Union Jack now became part of the teacher's duties.

The headline in the major daily paper of Victoria, the provincial capital, indicated the school board's belligerent response to the new instruction: 'FLAGS WILL NOT FLY AT OPENING. TRUSTEES OBJECT TO USE OF UNION JACK. WANT CANADIAN FLAG INSTEAD OF ONE SUPPLIED BY THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT'.\textsuperscript{116} The dispute over flags was also evident on the mainland in Vancouver. F.C. Wade, a prominent local lawyer, felt so strongly about the issue that he published a special pamphlet in support of the Canadian ensign, citing not only the 1891 view of the former governor-general but also tradition: 'We all know what the Canadian flag is. We have been familiar with it since childhood, and have grown up with it'.\textsuperscript{117} Evidence in the \textit{Canadian Teacher} supports his claim. In 1902 and in 1904 its editor had written of the Canadian flag as the commonly used flag in Canada: 'our national flag, the one used by the merchant marine service, the militia and the citizens generally'.\textsuperscript{118} Wade, noting Pope's reference in his brochure to the Union Jack as 'the flag of Canada' rather than 'the Canadian flag', referred to the decision of the New Brunswick legislature to fly the ensign in schools, and asked:

Would it be abnormal to allow the flag 'which has come to be considered as the recognised flag of the Dominion, both ashore and afloat' [Lord Stanley] ... to continue to fly from the flagstaffs of our schools? If the Canadian ensign is the recognised flag, surely it would be normal rather than abnormal to continue to fly it?

\textsuperscript{116}Victoria Daily Times, 13 Aug. 1908, p. 12.
\textsuperscript{117}Wade quoted Lord Stanley as saying that the Canadian red ensign had 'come to be considered as the recognised flag of the dominion both ashore and afloat', F.C. Wade to editor, \textit{ibid.}, 14 Aug. 1908, p. 3. Frederick Coate Wade (1860-1924) was born in Ontario and educated in Toronto, becoming a lawyer, entering the bar in Manitoba, and appointed a K.C. in 1902. He was the author of \textit{The Manitoba School Question} (Winnipeg, 1895), and in 1903 served as one of the British counsel on the Alaska Boundary Commission. McKay (ed.), \textit{The Macmillan Dictionary}, p. 863.
\textsuperscript{118}\textit{Canadian Teacher}, May 1902, p. 1230, May 1904, pp. 958-959.
Earlier that year the Canadian Magazine had published an article by John S. Ewart, a determined publicist in the cause of the Canadian ensign. Nephew of the renowned former Liberal premier of Ontario, Sir Oliver Mowat, he argued the case for the appropriateness of the symbolism of the Canadian ensign. While its Union Jack represented Canada's current affiliation, the arms in the fly indicated 'the commencement of independent national life'. He explained further:

The equivocal use of the flag on shore has its parallel and its explanation in the ambiguity of our political status. Were we in fact as well as theory, a part of the British Empire, we should of course fly the flag of the Empire alone — the Union Jack, the symbol of our subordination. And were we, in theory as well as fact, an independent nation, we should fly no flag which did not clearly express our status and our nationality.

He sought to reassure those 'Canadians who [saw] something sinister, if not disgraceful and abominable, in the suggestion of a Canadian flag', that only the previous July the Colonial Office and Louis Botha, Premier of the Transvaal and former commander-in-chief of the Boer forces, had agreed on the insertion of a Union Jack in the corner of the Transvaal's Veurkleur.

In Manitoba the flag in schools continued to be a political issue as the Liberal Party attempted to amend the act in February 1908 by removing the penalty clause. But Roblin, despite the petition from the Mennonites (traditionally opposed to government prescription) was adamant: trustees or people generally who were 'indifferent as to whether ... the British flag or any other flag ... [flew] over their school, [were] indifferent as to whether their children [should] know what the British emblem [stood] for or not'. Party politics aside, he thought that any man 'worthy of the name of Briton' would agree with him. The motion was rejected twenty-four to twelve. In Alberta the attempt to follow Manitoba's example was only partly successful, the

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120Ibid., p. 334.
121Ibid., p. 335.
122Hopkins, CARPA, 1908, p. 456.
government agreeing to advise rather than compel schools to display 'the National flag' in every school room to teach pupils 'what it stands for'.

Thus, by 1908 several Canadian provinces had introduced flags, mostly the Union Jack, into schools: Manitoba, Ontario, New Brunswick, British Columbia and Alberta. There is no evidence in ministerial reports or the more ephemeral circulars that governments required saluting, or pledging allegiance to, the flag. It is even more difficult to establish whether schools informally adopted the salute and/or pledge. The Canadian Teacher, the unofficial education gazette in Ontario, had urged teachers as early as 1902 to teach their children to salute the flag on Empire Day. Some public figures argued for its introduction: Henry J. Morgan, of the Office of Canadian Men and Women of the Time, in 1909 wrote to the premier of Ontario urging the copying of the United States custom of saluting the flag rather than 'simply displaying our flag, [the Union Jack] and that too infrequently, over or in front of the school building'. The premier, while willing to agree about the flag, was non-committal on the salute.

The Canadian Teacher mentioned 'the ceremony of saluting the flag' with increasing frequency from 1910. Not only schools but also Protestant churches promoted the ceremony. In 1907 the Reverend J.W. Churchill had urged members of the Methodist Conference of Manitoba to give pride of place to the Union Jack in their Sunday schools and churches: 'Drill patriotism into the children; a man who is not patriotic is not a thoroughly good man'. By 1911 5,000 children attending rallies for Protestant Sunday schools at the beginning of the year were saluting the Union Jack with the pledge: 'I promise to be loyal and true to my flag and the Empire for which it stands'.

123 ibid., p. 508; see also Manfred Prokop, 'Canadianization of Immigrant Children: Role of the Rural Elementary School in Alberta, 1900-1930', Alberta History, Vol. 32, no. 2, 1989 (my thanks to Dr Norah Lewis, Department of Social and Educational Studies, University of British Columbia for this source).
124 Henry J. Morgan to Whitney, 3 Feb. 1909, Whitney Papers MU3126, AO.
125 Canadian Teacher, May 1910, p. 1008, May 1912, p. 1064.
126 Hopkins, CARPA, 1907, p. 379.
127 ibid., 1911, p. 131.
following year the chief superintendent of education in New Brunswick announced the introduction into schools of a military salute which was to be observed each week or more often. At the same time he recommended the Union Jack 'not the so-called Canadian flag'.

By 1912 the dispute over which flag should be used in British Columbia had been settled — at least as far as the Education Department's regulations were concerned: the 'British or Canadian' flag in the Empire Day instruction of the 1906 edition of the Manual of the School Law and School Regulations had become 'the Union Jack'. Yet the issue was not the subject of annual reports until that of 1912-13 when David Wilson of the Free Text-book Branch (which handled the distribution of the flags) reported on the scheme, commenting: 'The flag naturally chosen was the Union Jack, which is "the National Flag of Canada as of all other parts of His Majesty's dominions". Joseph Pope's stand had been vindicated. But not all agreed with him. The Principal of McGill University in Montreal, Quebec, William Petersen, unconvinced by Pope's brochure, had refused to replace the Canadian flag and its 'honourable badge' with the Union Jack. Pope was disappointed and disheartened: 'Why should we mix up our national symbol with another flag, and thus confuse the unlearned? If we are British — since we are British, why in Heaven's name should we be in any doubt what flag to fly, in order to proclaim that fact?' Of the principal himself, Pope continued: 'if we cannot convince a man of his loyalty, ability and culture, what impression can we hope to make on the rabble

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128 ibid., p. 532.
132 In 1907 Pope had convinced Baker to replace the Canadian ensign with the Union Jack on the Canadian Pacific Railway; Baker subsequently passed on one of Pope's brochures to Petersen, Pope, Under-Secretary of State, Canada, to W.R. Baker, Assistant to President of the Canadian Pacific Railway, 6 Feb. 1911, Pope Papers MG 30 E 86, Vol. 20 file 184, NAC.
below?' Petersen had been involved in the Empire Day movement. But Pope was reassured by the thought that such cases were 'the rare exception'.

It was not surprising, then, that when Blackley Municipal School exchanged national flags with a school in Adelaide, South Australia, as many schools did through the League of the Empire, it should send a Union Jack, not a Canadian flag. The Adelaide school sent an Australian flag — also a little surprising in that the Education Department required its schools to use the Union Jack. In Melbourne the Camberwell State School sent an Australian flag to Camberwell, England. By convention Victorian State schools could fly an Australian flag instead of the Union Jack if local committees supplied it. Camberwell State School did (fig. 16). The puzzles continued with politicians further blurring the distinctions. The New South Wales Labor Premier, James McGowen, in England for the coronation in June 1911, presented an Australian flag from Matraville in Sydney to Frome in Somersetshire, explaining that the people of Matraville wanted to send 'their flag, which happened to be your flag, or your flag which happens to be their flag, to the town in which Matra lived and worked'. What could his listeners make of his words?

Confusion about the national flag in Britain had surfaced from time to time following the explosion of ignorance at the time of the previous coronation in 1902. In 1908 Lord Howe asked again in the House of Lords, to remove 'any possible doubt', whether citizens throughout the Empire could fly the 'full Union Jack'.

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133 His name was listed, along with those of other notables around the Empire involved in the Empire Day movement, in material accompanying a memorandum prepared by J.H. Betheras, 15 Aug. 1905, inviting Melbourne's schools to establish a Victorian branch of the League of the Empire, VPRS 794, Box 1013, 1905/9101, Public Record Office, Victoria (hereafter PROV).

134 Canadian Teacher, May 1910, p. 1011. The school was probably in Ontario, though Blackley is not listed in the Canadian Gazetteer.


137 Quoted in the Public Instruction Gazette, Sept. 1911, p. 340.

138 Question by Lord Howe to Lord Crewe, 14 Jul. 1908, Parliamentary Debates (UK) 1908, Fourth Series vol. 192, c. 579.
The Colonial Secretary, Lord Crewe, responded 'that the Union Jack should be regarded as the National flag, and it undoubtedly may be flown on land by all His Majesty's subjects'. This was the kind of statement Pope had been seeking, though there was a difference between 'may' and 'should' be flown. Crewe's statement was noted in the South Australian press and in government circles where the issue of the flag was being discussed. One response was to

139 Lord Crewe to Lord Howe, 14 July 1908, ibid., c. 580.
140 The People and the Union Jack, newscutting from Register, 19 Sept. 1908, Law re flying Union Jack and Royal Standard, GRG 24/6/1908/905; and Lord Elgin, Colonial Secretary, to
call for the Australian flag to be used more often since it was 'the only correct
general flag for this country'. The writer, however, was careful to point out
that the flag was 'not an independent flag ... but a local expression of the flag of
the race', specifically designed and approved for use in the Commonwealth.

Father O'Reilly, Cardinal Moran and Mary, Patroness of Australia

O'Reilly and Moran could not help but be aware of such discussions about
flags, particularly from 1908 with the groundswell of interest in the use of the
Australian flag. The questions asked in the federal parliament as Empire Day
approached about the regulations which replaced the Union Jack with the
Australian Ensign on Australian forts meant that some would be scrutinising
the flags used on that day. Curiously Education Department instructions for
Empire Day in New South Wales in 1908 did not mention the use of flags. In
previous years teachers had been encouraged to fly the Australian flag and the
Union Jack. Nevertheless, Moran used the Australian emphasis of Board's
circular in 1908 to endorse the flying of the Australian flag rather than the
Union Jack. He made his remarks when asked to comment on the reported
view of Cardinal Logue of Ireland that the British Empire was on the point of
dissolution, especially in Australia. Empire celebrations, Moran considered,
were 'out of place': 'What we want is Australian celebrations. The 24th of May is
a grand day, but there should be an Australian day — not an Empire day'.

Moran, the elderly Irish-born Archbishop of Sydney, made much of his
commitment to Australia from his arrival in 1884, beginning his first public
address, as he himself expressed it, as 'an Australian among Australians'.146 Key figures within the Catholic Church commented on the strength of his Australian patriotism. Richard O'Connor, a former federal Protectionist cabinet member and a justice on the High Court, believed that 'No man had done more ... for the cultivation of Australian sentiment' than Moran.147 The editor of the Marist St Joseph's College Annual referred to him as the 'Flagship of Australian Patriotism'.148 In August 1908 at the time of the visit of the United States fleet, a point of some contention between the Australian and British governments, Moran had courted the Americans and promoted the idea of an Australian navy which some saw as anti-British.149 Yet, however much Moran emphasised Australian patriotism, it was associated with Ireland. Much the same could be said of O'Reilly, 44, also Irish-born, a Vincentian priest in Australia from 1892 who became a friend of Moran.150 Both followed every twist in the fortunes of the Home Rule movement in Ireland. O'Reilly, a poet of some talent, often contributed poems on this theme to Austral Light, official journal of the Melbourne Archdiocese.151

O'Reilly was the principal of St Stanislaus' College at Bathurst, Australia's oldest Catholic boarding school. He had first come to 'Stannies' as the boys called it, in 1901 for a year as dean of discipline. He returned in 1903 as principal and remained until 1915: it was a time of expansion for the school as O'Reilly pushed ahead to complete the massive building, inviting Moran to

146Quoted by K.T. Livingston, The Emergence of an Australian Catholic Priesthood 1835-1915, Sydney, Catholic Theological Faculty, 1977, p. 104.
147Report of comment at the annual communion and breakfast for the Hibernian Guild at which Moran said that 'love of country was [not 'a matter of selfishness' but] a Divine sentiment.' Freeman's Journal, 19 May 1906, p. 13.
148Comment in St Joseph's College Annual, 1906, p. 44, on article 'Advance Australia Fair!' by 'Maristonian' in Cerise & Blue (St Joseph's College Old Boys Annual), 1906.
149Moran held a banquet for the Americans which the Commodore Sperry awkwardly decided at the last minute not to attend. Tighe Ryan, editor of the Catholic Press, commented to Moran: I'm thinking of a leader this week on Sperry's jingoism. The welcome was Australian, & not English. Sperry stayed with the wrong crowd — & the views he received were not Australian views, but the view of Governors & title-hunting politicians. What do you say? Tighe Ryan to Moran, 1 Sept. 1908, Moran Papers, S.C.: Moran/220 Corr. 1908.
150'Maurice Joseph O'Reilly', ADB, vol. 11, pp. 94-95.
151For example 'Ireland and England' which introduces his poem, The Veteran of the Guard in Austral Light, June 1906, pp. 450-451. It concerns an old man in Australia attempting to explain to his daughter his fierce hatred of England in his fight for Irish liberty. O'Reilly commented that such hatred was dying away. See also his Poems, London, Sands & Co, n.d. [1919].
open it in 1907. He was an impressive man, tall, well-built, articulate, with a
determination to bring the culture of the wider world to this school on the
western plains.\textsuperscript{152} Under O'Reilly the school had never participated in Empire
Day celebrations in the town, unlike the Patrician Brothers' School. However,
by 1910 that school had also withdrawn.\textsuperscript{153} In Melbourne the rector of Xavier
College had also imposed limits on the boys' participation from 1907:

\begin{quote}
It is to be clearly understood that tomorrow ... is \textit{not} a holiday. The
College Cadets \textit{who are to take part in the manoeuvres \&c — and only \textit{they} — are allowed to be absent from all classes. For all others there
will be class as usual till 11.30. Warning is given to day boys that
special notice will be taken of absence tomorrow.\textsuperscript{154}
\end{quote}

It was a marked change from attendance by the whole school in 1905.

O'Reilly was, as he put it, 'a fighting man', or as prominent Catholic
Bathurst storekeeper, John Meagher MLC, elaborated, the Catholics' 'champion
in secular or religious matters [who] ... allowed no insult to go
unchallenged'.\textsuperscript{155} This was the view, he said, of Catholic laity not only in New
South Wales, but throughout Australia. O'Reilly championed two causes in
particular: state aid for Catholic schools, and the replacement of Empire Day in
Catholic schools by Australia Day. With regard to the first, Catholic leaders in
New South Wales had taken renewed heart as the Labor Party, with which their
members increasingly identified, grew in power in the State parliament.
Cardinal Moran's refusal to condemn the party in 1905 over its 'socialist'
objective strengthened this relationship.\textsuperscript{156} To Moran Catholic support had

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\textsuperscript{152}Rev. F.D. King CM, \textit{Memories of Maurice O'Reilly CM}, Bathurst, NSW, St Stanislaus' College,
1953, p. 2.
\textsuperscript{154}Entry for 24 May 1907, Prefect or Studies Journal, Xavier College, Kew.
\textsuperscript{155}Speeches farewelling O'Reilly from St Stanislaus' in 1915, \textit{Echoes from St Stanislaus' (the
college magazine)}, June 1915, pp. 6, 8. On Meagher see 'John Meagher', \textit{ADB} vol. 10, pp. 469,
470.
\textsuperscript{156}J. Watson, leader of the federal Labor Party to Moran, 31 Mar. 1905, Moran Papers, S.C.: M
217 Corr. 1905/20, Sydney Archdiocesan Archives (hereafter SAA); Pastoral Letter of the
Cardinal Delegate, Archbishops and Bishops of the Australian Commonwealth in Plenary Council
Assembled to the Clergy and Laity of Their Charge, Sydney, 1905; A.E. Cahill, 'Catholicism and
1960.
\end{flushright}
become so critical to Labor Party victory in October 1910 that in December he felt justified in pressing the new government to aid Catholic schools.\textsuperscript{157}

Regarding the second cause, Empire Day, the holding of the first Catholic Education Conference in Sydney in January 1911 reflected Moran and O'Reilly's determination to go on the offensive, by mobilising their own people and declaring to the wider society the principles defining Catholic education. For Moran, now 80, it was to be his last fling in Australian politics. Of particular interest in the purposes of the conference was one which insisted that clergy, parents and teachers 'should strenuously endeavour to imbue children with ... love of country, and ... love of religion'.\textsuperscript{158} The resolution O'Reilly introduced was about primary education. It was in two related parts:

That, with a view to impress on our children their indebtedness to Ireland's National Apostle, an effort should be made by the teachers to celebrate with befitting splendour St Patrick's Day; and that, as a help to the cultivation of the patriotic spirit, the 24th May should be formally set apart as 'Australia Day', under the auspices of Our Lady, Help of Christians.\textsuperscript{159}

It reflected Moran's view of 1908 that 'we [Australians] ought to take a lesson from the patriotism of Ireland'.\textsuperscript{160} O'Reilly argued that since Australia lacked traditions of its own, its people would have to draw on older ones; for Catholics, that meant the traditions of Ireland.\textsuperscript{161} Thus, although admitting that 'their children were not Irish — they were Australians', he concluded that 'he would like to see St Patrick's Day observed right through their schools with as great enthusiasm as possible'.

As to patriotism in Australia, O'Reilly complained that too often it was associated with the British Empire League 'which endeavoured to turn their love towards England'. He argued that 'children should be taught to love the

\textsuperscript{159} Resolution 11, ibid., p. 16.
\textsuperscript{160} \textit{Freeman's Journal}, 28 May 1908, p. 17.
\textsuperscript{161} \textit{Catholic Education Conference}, p. 30.
country of their birth ... the essential idea of patriotism'. For that reason he favoured 'Australia Day' rather than 'Empire Day'. While conceding that mention could be made of the Empire in terms of the benefits Australia gained as one of its members, he thought the emphasis 'must be primarily Australian'.

His message differed little from that of Board, about to publish instructions in the Gazette: 'Empire Day will fail in its effect if there is not nourished in each youthful mind the desire to become useful, worthy citizens of the Commonwealth, and to live and work harmoniously together for the security and advancement of its vital interests'.

Historians believe that Catholics were the first to call for an Australia Day. However, there was an earlier attempt by the ANA. In 1907 the annual conference of its branches in Western Australia resolved 'to have a day set apart as "Australia Day", and that the children of the State Schools be taught Australian History and to salute the Australian flag on that day'. Little more was heard of that proposal. But in the eastern States, especially New South Wales, there was much discussion of an Australian national holiday. The annual conference of the ANA in New South Wales called for 28 April, marking Captain Cook's landing in Australia, to replace Anniversary Day on 26 January as a national holiday. The ANA board reported to its members that the State government was sympathetic to the proposal, but 'any change at the present time might be open to serious misconception'. The interstate ANA conference that year defeated the New South Wales ANA proposal for commemorating

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162Public Instruction Gazette, Mar. 1911, p. 95.
164The motion was moved by C.E. Hankins, Perth, and H.H. Truman, Kalgoorlie, Report of Proceedings of the ANA (WA) Annual Conference, Perth, 1 and 2 Apr. 1907 in ANA (Vic.) Conference and Board of Directors Reports, vol. 8. Unlike the motion it replaced, it did not specify a date.
165The motion was moved by W.S. Eather, Balmain Branch, and I.R. Cohen, Belah Branch, Report and Proceedings of the Annual Session of the ANA (New South Wales), 1909.
166Report of the Board of Directors to the Annual Session, ibid., 1910.
Cook, choosing instead 26 January as 'Foundation Day'.\textsuperscript{167} It discounted the feelings of New South Wales members that the 'old unpleasantness' — the convict stain — associated with the beginnings of European settlement would make public support for 26 January difficult in their state.\textsuperscript{168} By 1911 the New South Wales board could report that deputations to the government were likely to lead to 22 August, Cook's annexation of Australia, being declared as 'Australia Day'.\textsuperscript{169} Moran's resolution in January 1911, while not the first time Australia Day had been suggested, may well have added urgency to the search for such a day.

When Moran spoke to the resolution he urged the linking of religion and patriotism on St Patrick's Day and Australia Day.\textsuperscript{170} Most of his speech concerned those who supported imperialism and Empire Day, many of whom, he warned, 'were avowed enemies of the Catholic Church'. For Moran, imperialism was too closely associated with the English, symbolised by the St George's Cross which dominated the Union Jack. That cross was also the feature of the recently approved coat of arms for Australia (fig. 17). The design, the result of discussions between Alfred Deakin, the College of Arms in England, and E. Wilson Dobbs of Melbourne who had an interest in heraldry, had provoked disapproving comments from Scottish societies in Scotland and Australia.\textsuperscript{171} Seizing on the St George's Cross, the St Andrew's Society of Edinburgh complained about the 'very grave and serious blunder ... thus originating a grievance and a soreness which will always be felt more or less by

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\textsuperscript{167}Ibid.; Official Report of the Proceedings of the Interstate Conference, Melbourne, 1-3 Feb. 1910, supplement, \textit{Advance Australia}, Feb. 1910. 'Foundation days' of a different kind were becoming popular among old boy associations of private schools: foundation day dinners celebrated the founding of their schools.
\textsuperscript{168}W. Griffith, General Secretary, ANA (NSW), also said, 'we hold the view that the day we celebrate is a day which gave us a bad start', ibid., p. xiv.
\textsuperscript{169}Report and Proceedings of the Annual Session of the ANA (NSW), 1911, p. 12.
\textsuperscript{170}Catholic Education Conference, p. 38.
\textsuperscript{171}The development and modification of Australia's Coat of Arms is a fascinating story, still to be told but too complicated to explore here. Souter refers very briefly to it in \textit{Lion and Kangaroo}, pp. 193-194. The file CRS A462/8 828/3/8 AA (ACT) is rich in detail. See also pp. 13-18 of C. Forbes, Australian Public Arms, bound typescript history of various coats of arms of Australia and New Zealand, Melbourne, 1932, MS 224, NLA. The St George's Cross had dominated the unofficial Australian Coat of Arms of the nineteenth century, which the ANA in Victoria used to head its journal, \textit{Advance Australia}. The cross with its stars was similar in design to the New South Wales flag.
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the non-English portion of the Australian people'. The Society suggested removing the St George's Cross or amending it 'to make it representative of the United Kingdom' and its four nationalities. Atlee Hunt, Secretary of the External Affairs Department, denied the deliberate choice of the English cross, though Dobbs had clearly had that association in mind when giving advice.

When Andrew Fisher, a Scottish immigrant with a strong interest in Scottish history and literature, became prime minister late in April 1910, he was quick to initiate the re-design of the arms, reacting not only to the St George's Cross but also to the unnatural poses of the emu and kangaroo, and to the motto. His ideas discussed in the press in September 1910 became the basis of the amended coat of arms (fig. 18). In this, as in many other matters, Fisher 'had a fine understanding of what caucus and the electorate wanted'.

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172 President, Vice-President and Secretary, St Andrew's Society, Edinburgh, to Alfred Deakin, Prime Minister, 24 Jan. 1908, responding to a statement in Melbourne's Leader, 9 Nov. 1907, ibid.

173 Atlee Hunt, Secretary, External Affairs Department, to Secretary, St Andrew's Society, Edinburgh, 11 Mar. 1908, and E. Wilson Dobbs to Atlee Hunt, 1 Feb. 1908, ibid. Dobbs had written of the central shield: 'while in this case it shows the British claim of sovereignty, it denotes also the protecting care and support of the Empire over the Commonwealth as portrayed by the National Emblem the Cross of St George ... and carrying as it does the Southern Cross it is symbolical of the united Commonwealth of Australia and the British Empire' (emphasis added).

174 M.L. Shepherd, Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, presumably to Atlee Hunt, Secretary, External Affairs Department, 20 June 1910, and E. Wilson Dobbs to Atlee Hunt, 17 Sept. 1910, ibid.; and Herald, 17 Sept 1910, p. 8.

175 Fisher', ADB, vol. 8, p. 505.
In the process of adopting and then modifying the arms, the national colours in the wreath changed — with no apparent discussion: from red and white, as proposed by the College of Arms (also the colours of Canada), to blue and white in the 1908 version, to blue and gold in the arms in 1913. The gold was repeated in the wattle added to the arms though not recognised in heraldry. It was a reminder of the success of the Australian Wattle Day League. But the major change in symbols was from the red St George’s Cross

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176 The league, begun in South Australia in 1890 by William Sowden (a founder of the ANA), and federated in 1912, promoted ‘an Australian and Imperial patriotic sentiment’ through Wattle Day as a national day on 1 September. See ‘The Australian Wattle Day League’, EG
with stars to a shield bearing the badges of the six States, indicating, Fisher explained to the governor-general, the desire 'that the Commonwealth is a union of the several component States'. It was a pragmatic solution, making the Australian symbol the sum of its parts. The design of the flag could not be settled so easily, as Fisher found.

It was against this background that Moran challenged Empire Day: asserting that it was becoming discredited, he thought the alternative, Australia Day, would attract wide support. The Catholic Education Conference in January 1911 adopted the resolution. This move on the part of O'Reilly and Moran was astute in that it deflected the criticism of Catholics that they were disloyal, anti-British, by emphasising an Australian-based patriotism at a time when there was growing support for this. In another sense, however, the move was naive: renaming Empire Day as Australia Day might not be so difficult for the Australian community to accept; but linking it to a Catholic feast day would, because of the history of sectarianism in the community. This was especially so in New South Wales, where Catholics were so closely identified with the new Labor government. The fact that Labor was also in power federally underlined the threat in the eyes of anxious Protestants in the Liberal opposition.

Moran's reference to Our Lady, Help of Christians, as 'the Chief Patroness of the Australian Church' was significant. Until 1911 the Catholic Church in Australia had taken little notice of 24 May as a special feast day. Mary had been invoked as Patroness of Australasia at the First Provincial Council and Synod of Australasia in 1844, a title confirmed by the Vatican in 1852. The 24 May


177Andrew Fisher, Prime Minister, to Lord Dudley, Governor-General, 27 Mar. 1911, CRS A462/8 828/3/8, AA (ACT).

178See Morning Chronicle, 28 Sept. 1844, p. 2, though the Acta et Decreta Concilii Primi Provinciae Australiensis [Act and Decrees of the First Council of the Australian Province] and Frances O'Donoghue's biography of the archbishop (The Bishop of Botany Bay: The Life of John Bede Folding, Australia's First Catholic Archbishop, Sydney, Angus & Robertson, 1982) make no mention of it. See also Monsignor J.J. McGovern's notes on typescript Our Lady, Help of
associated with Mary's title of Our Lady, Help of Christians, which originated in the sixteenth century, had been proclaimed a feast day in 1815 to mark Pope Pius VII's first return to Rome after exile and imprisonment by Napoleon.179 Father John Ayers has argued that Moran had attempted 'to revive falling enthusiasm' for the day in the 1890s 'by bringing all Sydney's schoolchildren together at St Mary's each May 24th for a patronal Mass'.180 However, Moran himself makes no mention of the significance of the day in his history of the church published about 1896.181 In South Australia, only in 1911 did the Catholic paper, the *Southern Cross*, list 24 May in its 'Australian Calendar' as the day of 'Our Lady, Help of Christians, Patroness of Australia'.182 Little wonder, then, that in 1911 the major dailies were suspicious of Moran's proposal to turn Empire Day into Australia Day. 'It is very difficult', an *Argus* editorial concluded, 'to see anything but a challenge in the deliberate choice of May 24 for the celebration'.183 Yet Melbourne's Catholic *Advocate* evinced surprise that 'the celebration of an older and religious feast on the same day [as the late queen's birthday], under a religious-patriotic aspect', could give offence.184

The *Sydney Morning Herald* at first chose not to react to this Catholic response to Empire Day. Given the current political climate the editor seized on the state aid question in his issue for 18 January, condemning Moran's criticism of the State system of education at the opening of the conference as a declaration of war on the state.185 O'Reilly immediately became involved when he jumped to Moran's defence, accusing the press of being 'extremely intolerant

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183*Argus*, 25 May 1911, p. 6.
and bigoted' in reporting on Catholic education and the conference. They [Catholics] would', he said,

continue to protest and organise until those people who blindly opposed them were brought to a sense of their duty to the Catholic body. Catholics were not looking for favours, but their right, and they were determined they would have those rights if organisation, determination, and solidarity ... could achieve anything.

In drawing the editor's fire, O'Reilly himself became the target. Such was the heated background against which the conference's Australia Day proposal was discussed.

On Anniversary Day (26 January) the *Sydney Morning Herald* heading declared: 'EMPIRE DAY ATTACKED. STRONG SPEECH BY CARDINAL MORAN. AUSTRALIA DAY PROPOSED. CATHOLIC CONFERENCE RESOLUTION'. The decision', the report continued, '... is meant, according to Cardinal Moran, as a counter demonstration to that of Empire Day'. Next day's editorial commented on what it termed 'the new patriotism', 'in which Australian patriotism [not of the Imperial sort] is to be associated with religious feeling specially centred upon a Roman Catholic feast day'. The paper doubted that Catholics would support such a day which lacked strong Irish traditions and which Moran had 'shorn ... of all its Imperial associations'. It pointed out that St Patrick's Day, even with the weight of Irish tradition behind it, drew little support outside Sydney, a fact that Moran and O'Reilly had acknowledged in attempting to encourage its celebration in schools. As for Australians generally, they would not tolerate "Australia Day" as a sort of rival demonstration on Empire Day': not even the 'lure' of an 'Australia Day' would tempt them to become involved in 'sectarian squabbles'.

The *Herald* published only one letter responding to this 'Australia Day' proposal. It was from 'An Australian Roman Catholic', angry at the way

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188*ibid.*, 27 Jan. 1911, p. 6.
pronouncements from the Catholic hierarchy turned Protestants against Catholics, often affecting their business interests, as with country storekeepers:

Why should not our schools be allowed to take part in Empire Day celebrations? Are we not all under the one flag, which wherever it is flown stands for a grand and glorious freedom that is the admiration of the world ... It is unfair for the press and for the average citizen to assume that we Catholics are all tarred with the same brush as his Eminence.

The proposal, he suggested, had resulted from 'the intolerant and inexcusable bigotry of the Irish priest, which extend[ed] from his Eminence, the most bigoted of them all, down to the last raw curate that landed from Maynooth'. On his/her estimate it represented the views of only one-third of Catholics. The point was to be given force in 1914 with the formation of the Manly Priests' Union to modify the pervading influence of Irish-born priests. The 70 per cent of Catholic clergy who were Irish-born contrasted sharply with the 3 per cent Irish-born in the Australian population.

In preparation for Australia Day 1911 O'Reilly sent to Moran an Australian hymn he had written at the prompting of John Carroll, Bishop of Lismore, suggesting that Moran's approval would give it a wider audience. Clearly O'Reilly was building on the foundation he had laid in January when he explained to Moran why he thought Catholics should now have 'a national hymn':

Later on we shall once more seem sectional, should we object to one that may have set upon it the seal of public approval, but whose jingoistic, or non-religious character, may give it but scant claim on our respect. But, if we enter the arena first, we shall again have the credit of giving the lead in Australian patriotism.

Moran was quick to approve the idea, issuing a circular on 9 May which directed that on Australia Day 'the Australian National Hymn ... will be sung in

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189 Ibid., 28 Jan. 1911, p. 11.
all the Catholic schools'. The *Freeman’s Journal* welcomed the new anthem, believing that *God Save the King* had been 'brought into contempt by unworthy use as the mutilated finale of twopenny-ha'penny dinners and picture-shows'. Moran also ordered schools to use the Australian flag wherever available and authorised priests to grant a holiday since the celebration was the first of its kind.

The scope of Moran's circular was not entirely clear. Since the *Freeman’s Journal* was a Catholic Sydney paper, 'all Catholic schools' could be taken to mean those in New South Wales. However, Melbourne's Catholic *Advocate* reported Moran's circular as saying 'every Catholic school in Australia'. This would hardly be possible, even for Victorian Catholic schools, given that there were only two school days left before 24 May. Perhaps Adelaide's paper, the *Southern Cross*, was more realistic when it reported Moran's circular for 'the Catholic schools of the Sydney archdiocese'. The Melbourne journal was more circumspect with regard to the Australian flag; there was no mention of it.

The Labor government in New South Wales had been reconsidering Empire Day in relation to other public holidays in the light of the new king's birthday (to be officially celebrated on 3 June) and coronation day (22 June). Its proposal to substitute 28 April (the anniversary of Cook's arrival at Kurnell) or 22 August (when Cook claimed possession of New South Wales) for 26 January (Anniversary Day which marked settlement at Sydney Cove), and Coronation Day for Empire Day provoked the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the Australasian Pioneers' Club to protest. To the editor of the *Herald*, Anniversary

192The music given was by J.M. Stevens, though O'Reilly had also composed his own version. The first verse read:

   God bless our lovely morning-land!
   God keep her with enfolding hand
   Close to His side.
   While booms the distant battle roar,
   From out some rude barbaric shore,
   In blessed peace for evermore,
   There to abide!

   *Freeman’s Journal*, 11 May 1911, p. 25.
195*Southern Cross*, 19 May 1911, p. 402.
Day 'epitomise[d] ... the idea of nationality ... [when] we became a British people'. It would be equally unlikely, he argued, for the Americans to replace 4 July — hardly an appropriate comparison — with 12 October, the date of Christopher Columbus's arrival in the Americas.\textsuperscript{197} For the Pioneer Club's committee, occupation, not possession was the important link, particularly when it meant 'the permanent extension of the British Empire and race into these southern seas', and was thus 'one of the strongest links that bind us to the motherland'.\textsuperscript{198} Besides, the committee said, three generations of schools and textbooks had taught children about 26 January, 'the centre round which has grown up the strongest part of our national sentiment'. A meeting of the Sydney Labor Council a few days before had accepted by a close vote the moving of Anniversary Day to 22 August.\textsuperscript{199}

The stage was set for conflict as schools and citizens prepared for 24 May. The editor of the \textit{Freeman's Journal} believed 'misunderstanding regarding the motive at the back of the Australia Day movement' was 'inevitable' but blamed 'the maffickers of St Jingo' who, he said, treated as disloyal all those not willing to formally declare their loyalty.\textsuperscript{200} Taking 'the democratic spirit' and freedom as his measures of the greatness of an empire, the editor chose two examples which for him called into question the standing of those who promoted Empire Day. He presented the first, Lord Meath, leader of the Empire Day Movement, as 'an absentee Irish landlord ... violently opposed' to Home Rule in Ireland.

The second example was a local one: the mayor of Mullumbimby, near Lismore in northern New South Wales, who had castigated a priest with 'the manliness to decline ... to parade lip-loyalty in very questionable company'.\textsuperscript{201}

\textsuperscript{196}SMH, 13 May 1911, p. 12.
\textsuperscript{197}The date of the arrival of the pilgrims in the \textit{Mayflower} would have been more appropriate.
\textsuperscript{198}SMH, 15 May 1911, p. 7.
\textsuperscript{199}The meeting voted 47 to 42 against Mr Lahiff's protest at the change of Anniversary Day, \textit{ibid.}, 12 May 1911, p. 6.
\textsuperscript{200}Freeman's Journal, 18 May 1911, p. 20.
\textsuperscript{201}Father Sullivan of Mullumbimby was reported as boasting 'that he never had wished and never would wish, success to the Empire', \textit{SMH}, 22 May 1911, p. 10.
and freedom aside, the editor argued for the promotion of the 'domestic patriotism' Australia Day would encourage.

The conflict began quietly enough just before Empire Day with the National Advocate's announcement in Bathurst of the arrangements for the town's celebration. The paper made a point of indicating that St Stanislaus' College would not be participating. The same day the Sydney Morning Herald declared: "'DISCREDITED EMPIRE DAY'. CARDINAL'S ATTACK. NEW CELEBRATIONS PROPOSED'. It quoted Moran's circular of 9 May and reported the explanation he had given in January. That evening O'Reilly released a letter to the press explaining the 'weighty reasons' why his college would not be participating. The next day it appeared not just in the National Advocate but was also reported in detail in Sydney's Daily Telegraph under the heading: "'AUSTRALIA NOT ENGLAND'. AN OPPONENT OF EMPIRE DAY. "AGGRESSIVE, BLATANT, JINGOISTIC". ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIEST'S VIEWS'.

O'Reilly ensured that his letter would have maximum impact by attacking the 'toady Sydney press [which he said had] persistently tried to make Empire Day ... our national holiday'. He sought to warn people of the state of 'the true nature of this movement', that it was 'a party question', not only in Australia but also in England where the Liberal prime minister and Liberal London County Council had refused to be part of it. Warming to his subject, he continued:

We know your Empire-builders, and appreciate them accordingly ... They are the men who have cruelly oppressed and persecuted their fellow subjects in Ireland for the sake of an alien oligarchy. They are the land sharks of the world, who make use of people as pawns in the international game, and sweep nations, when ripe for spoliation, into the maw of capitalism.

202 National Advocate, 22 May 1911, p. 2.
203 SMH, 22 May 1911, p. 9.
204 National Advocate, 23 May 1911, p. 2; DT, 23 May 1911, p. 7.
He went on to explain that young Australians were 'conspicuously deficient in patriotism', because they began 'at the wrong end':

The man who is a bad son to his mother will never be a loyal citizen to the State. Australia, not England, is our children's motherland. Her they should love with the best of their affection. Her flag they must cherish beyond any flag that flies. We make no disguise. The flag of Australian nationhood comes first with us, and on May 24, at St Stanislaus' at all events, the first lesson of the day shall be devotion unto death, if needs be, to our children's lovely morning land, and the flag that they shall look up to ... shall be the flag of their young nation bespangled with the stars of the balmy south.

Earlier in the letter O'Reilly had been careful to acknowledge 'the blessings of Empire' and 'the protection of the flag', but concluded: 'When some attempt has been made to attend to this first duty [to Australia], and the Catholics alone are seriously attempting to do so, then we may emphasise the undoubted obligation of our children to the Empire — but not till then'.

That same day, 23 May, the editorials of both Sydney major dailies concerned the Catholic Church and Empire Day.205 The Herald, in asserting the unanimous support for Empire Day in Britain and the dominions, regretted the 'one notable exception' of Cardinal Moran 'isolat[ing] his people from sympathy with the rest of the community'. Careful to avoid calling the Catholic Church as a whole disloyal, the paper accused Moran of being 'ready to use any means to stir up religious or racial antagonism ... [of] dar[ing] to bring the name of Australia into disrepute by annexing it for the purposes of sectarianism'. By declaring 24 May 'Australia Day', Moran had, the paper argued, usurped the role of the Commonwealth's parliament, had 'flouted ... civil authority'. This was familiar ground for Protestants critical of the Catholic Church. The papal decree of 1908, Ne Temere, by which the church refused to recognise the legitimacy of marriages contracted outside its jurisdiction, was still drawing criticism, most recently the previous Sunday, from the Anglican dean in Newcastle.206

205SMH, DT, 23 May 1911, p. 6.
206Dr. Cecil H. Golding-Bird was reported in the Sydney Morning Herald as saying 'The decree practically said that Roman Catholics in non-Roman Catholic countries were foreigners, who
The Telegraph seized on O'Reilly's remarks introducing the resolution at January's Catholic Education Conference, and attacked his most vulnerable point: 'There may ... be an Australia Day and a St Patrick's (Ireland) Day, but not an Empire (British) Day. Children of Irish blood may be taught to love Ireland, but children of English and Scotch blood are to regard the other island in the North Sea with quite another feeling'.\textsuperscript{207} The paper warned that Australians would resent both the church's attempt 'to stigmatise ... [them] as anti-Australian because they [were] pro-Empire' and O'Reilly's 'offensive references' to the British nation. Like the Herald, the Telegraph was careful to separate O'Reilly and Moran from 'many of those who belong to their Church', urging both men to live beyond the Empire where their opinions would not offend 'the great majority of their fellow-citizens'. It concluded that 'these ecclesiastical dignitaries' were 'not Australians at all ... They were born and bred far from Australia, and no amount of shouting 'Australia for ever' will disguise the potent fact that they are seeking to introduce into this country political grievances, which should have no place here'. To clinch the argument the paper quoted with approval the remarks of Senator George Pearce, Labor Minister for Defence, who three days before in London had affirmed Australia's reliance on the Royal Navy, but also her determination to develop her own defences.

By the next day, Empire Day, more players had entered the conflict to publish their views. In an interview reported in the Telegraph Moran denied any antagonism towards the Empire.\textsuperscript{208} Likening it to a three-legged stool he explained that the seat was England, the legs were the larger dominions of Australia, Canada and South Africa. The stronger each leg, he argued, the more secure would be the seat. Australians, by developing their strength, would

\textsuperscript{207}DT, 23 May 1911, p. 6.
\textsuperscript{208}ibid., 24 May 1911, p. 9.

become the key to the Pacific Ocean, thus 'preparing a new phase of splendour for the Empire'. He countered the charge of disloyalty by quoting from O'Reilly's hymn and from a copy of the Australian Catholic hierarchy's recent address which assured George V that on his coronation nowhere would there be 'greater enthusiasm ... than among your faithful subjects of the Australian Commonwealth'.

Moran had always been careful in his criticism of the English to distinguish between king and government. Loyalty to the one acted as a counterfoil to criticism of the other. Catholic and Irish protest had experienced some success during Edward VII's reign. The coronation oath to be used by his successor in 1911 had at last been amended to avoid giving offence to Catholics; and there had been some progress on the Home Rule question as a third attempt to approve it was being mounted in the House of Commons. Moran, in the memorial service held in St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney, had endorsed the portrayal of the late king as 'The Peacemaker' and suggested a monument in the adjoining square to accompany those of Victoria and Albert. But his suggestion had a particular point: the statue, with olive branch not diadem, would commemorate 'the organization of our Commonwealth and the perfecting of the edifice of Australia's freedom'. It was a point with an Irish message behind it: freedom for Ireland as for Australia; Home Rule.

Another player was John Perry, a former minister of public instruction in earlier Protectionist governments, and a member of the Loyal Orange Institution of New South Wales, the Protestant secret society originating in Ireland. In parliament he declared that although proud of being a 'native' of New South Wales, he was more proud of having sprung from the British race. Therefore, he explained,

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209 A letter to the editor by 'Anglican' noted the ambiguous wording of this address to the king: it 'leaves room for a charming cross-division, which makes it doubtful whether or not they are those whom the signatories represent', DT, 25 May 1911, p. 4.

I do not want to see the Australian flag hoisted over the Union Jack; I do not want to see the Union Jack cast on one side and the Australian flag put in its place; nor do I want to see the Australian flag in order to demonstrate the existence of some sectarian difference. Tomorrow I hope the Union Jack will float over every public school and every building in this state, and that no section of the community will hoist the Australian flag in its place.\footnote{John Perry, \textit{ADB}, vol. 11, p. 204.}

The \textit{Telegraph} gave his comments the caption: 'UNDER WHICH FLAG?' They had a clear political point, the Labor government having decided to fly the Australian flag in place of the Union Jack.\footnote{John Perry, 23 May 1911, \textit{New South Wales Parliamentary Debates} (hereafter \textit{NSWPD}) 1911, second series vol. 40, p. 173; see also \textit{DT}, 24 May 1911, p. 9.}

Perry's preamble to Empire Day led to a related matter: arrangements for the schools' celebration of Coronation Day. He expressed concern that the government was putting pressure on the Public School Teachers' Amateur Athletic Association, forcing them to cooperate with 'some other association ... [a] denominational organisation' in a combined demonstration.\footnote{Southern Cross, 26 May 1911, p. 415.} He insisted that neither the parents of State school children, nor the children themselves wished to join 'the other children'. This was a veiled reference to the Catholic schools, as became evident later. On the same page the \textit{Telegraph} also published the remarks of Dr Golding-Bird, the Anglican Dean in Newcastle, a regular critic of the Catholic Church and its policies, under the heading, 'CHEERS FOR EMPIRE DAY. "WE DON'T WANT AUSTRALIA DAY". WHERE THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND STANDS'.

By this time readers were beginning to respond with their own views. 'Eastern Suburbs', a Roman Catholic, agreed with the criticism of the \textit{Sydney Morning Herald} and reminded Moran that 'there are other than Irish members of his flock'.\footnote{Perry, 23 May 1911, \textit{NSWPD} 1911, second series vol. 40, p. 173; \textit{DT}, 24 May 1911, p. 9.} He complained of hearing of 'the patriotism of martyred sons of Erin' at 'every school that is opened, and every function his Eminence presided at'. Another reader, Tom Knight asked Moran for proof that Australians were wearying of Empire Day, adding that he did not expect one third of Australians
to be loyal: 'they can't possibly be loyal to a foreigner and the British King at the same time', a reference to Catholics and the pope.

The notion of 'foreigner' was not as clear cut as 'Eastern Suburbs' suggested. Robert Stuart-Robertson, the native-born Catholic member for Camperdown, had asserted that a foreigner was a person 'outside Australia'. When asked by the Minister of Public Instruction, James Hogue, to clarify whether he considered English and Scottish people to be foreigners, Stuart-Robertson replied that he did: they were born outside Australia. Whether he took the same view towards the Irish-born is not clear. How he would have responded to the term 'British' is also not clear. There was considerable discussion about the terms 'Australian' and 'British' and what they signified. It was difficult to be precise about the distinction, as Charles Long's antics indicated as he attempted to define 'country' in relation to Australia and the Empire.

There were further difficulties with 'loyalty'. A simple way some measured loyalty was the order in which toasts were proposed at public dinners. Catholic custom was to propose the toast to the pope before the king. However, Catholics were often more diplomatic, giving the first toast to the pope and the king, as happened at the Christian Brothers College (CBC) Old Collegians Association dinner in Adelaide in 1909. By contrast, a toast to Australia rarely featured. At the 1910 CBC dinner it was 'put on the list at the

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215SMH, 24 May 1911, p. 17.
216The exchange arose in relation to whether the government should buy the more expensive Australian text books for schools rather than cheaper imported ones. The issue was not simply one of free trade/protection and cost, and copyright, but also of content — Australian and British. James Hogue, the Minister of Public Instruction, while prepared to pay up to 25 per cent more for Australian-made books, urged members not to be too parochial since they themselves were part of the British Empire where much of the publishing work was done. Stuart-Robertson's motion to decide whether members were 'prepared to have the work done here or rely upon foreigners' failed, 31 Aug. 1909, NSWPD 1909, second series vol. 34, pp. 1643, 1641. Stuart-Robertson was a storekeeper and industrial advocate, Heather Radi, Peter Spearritt and Elizabeth Hinton, Biographical Register of New South Wales Parliament 1901-1970, Canberra, Australian National University Press, p. 266.
217Note the distinction made by Donald McDonald between 'British' or 'Briton' and 'Britisher', in the Argus, quoted in EGTA, Jan. 1911, p. 23.
218Arnold-Forster, The Citizen Reader (1886), adapted by Long (1906), 1912, pp. 18-19.
219There was much discussion of this issue at the time of the Papal Legate's visit to Canada, when he proposed a toast to the king before the pope, Southern Cross, 6 Jan. 1911, p. 19.
220CBC Annual, 1909, p. 46.
last moment' to replace the customary toast to old boy associations of the other Adelaide colleges, since their representatives were absent. Among old boys of St Peter's College, Adelaide, who celebrated the founding of their school at annual dinners around the world, only those at Perth and Kalgoorlie were reported as drinking to 'The Land We Live In'. There was a radicalism associated with Western Australia, especially its goldfields, already noted in relation to the ANA and Australian flags in schools. Its annual conference had also suggested a competition for an Australian Anthem 'the words of which have no reference to any country or person outside Australia'. And twice in recent years the Kalgoorlie Branch had attempted to persuade the State conference to give precedence in the toasts to the ANA or Australia rather than the king.

Loyalty to a 'foreigner' — pope or king — was not O'Reilly's immediate concern. His letter, responding to the Herald's charge that Moran had flouted civil authority in declaring Australia Day, asked by what authority Lord Meath had declared 24 May to be Empire Day, given that the British government had not given it their official sanction. In the Telegraph another of his letters answered point by point that paper's report of his Empire Day protest at Bathurst. Accusing the paper of 'fighting a bogey set up by [it]self', he denied that he had condemned the Empire and objected to people celebrating Empire Day. Rather he objected to being forced to celebrate 'under pain of disloyalty': perhaps he had in mind the pressures, more evident in country towns, to join

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221 The puzzling absence of the representatives was not explained, CBC Annual, 1911, p. 23. The date of the dinner, 1 September, coincided with South Australia's first celebration of Wattle Day.
223 Report of the Quarterly Meeting of the Board of Directors, ANA (Vic.), 10 Aug. 1905, ANA (Vic.), Conference and Board of Directors Reports, vol. 7.
224 In 1909 the proposal was defeated 39 votes to 4, Reports of Proceedings for Annual Conferences, ANA (WA), for 1906 and 1909, in ANA (Vic.), Conference and Board of Directors Reports, vols 7 and 8.
225 'Catholics and Empire Day', M.J. O'Reilly to editor, SMH, 25 May 1911, p. 4.
226 'Catholics and Empire Day', M.J. O'Reilly to the editor, DT, 25 May 1911, p. 3.
the celebrations.\footnote{The editor of the \textit{Freeman's Journal} mentioned the mayor of Mullumbimby 'holding up to obloquy a priest who had the manliness to decline at the behest of a few busybodies to parade lip-loyalty in very questionable company.' 18 May 1911, p. 20.} He asked why the paper had omitted his reference to criticism of Empire Day in Britain, even from the prime minister. Essentially he sought to reveal what he saw as many Australians' hypocrisy: they erected barriers against goods and peoples of the Empire, yet could sing its praises on Empire Day. This, he said, was 'flag-flapping that stands for cheap patriotism'. It had resulted, he concluded, from Australians being 'too long taught to put Australia last ... they are sadly lacking in that love of their own land and people ... the only solid basis on which to rest devotion to the Empire'. O'Reilly's argument might seem paradoxical: he was berating Australians for asserting their love of Empire while in fact looking after their Australian interests. But at the same time he did not wish to acknowledge that it was precisely those actions which indicated that their love of Australia was greater than their love of Empire. His concern was that their rhetoric should match their actions.

\textbf{24 May 1911}

Empire Day for 1911 took on a special character as the daily press in Sydney urged people to answer O'Reilly and Moran with a renewed show of enthusiasm for Empire. The day had become a sectarian battle zone with Protestantism and the Union Jack versus Catholicism and the Australian flag. From St Mary's Cathedral in Sydney flew the Australian flag and a much larger Irish National Flag as 400 children gathered to hear Cardinal Moran's address.\footnote{German-born Hugo Alpen had been Director of Music in the Education Department in NSW for more than thirty years by the time he retired in 1906. Massed choirs of children frequently sang his compositions on state occasions, as in the Centennial celebrations (\textit{Patriotic Cantata}), and the inauguration of the Commonwealth. See H.J. Gibney and Ann Smith, \textit{A Biographical Register 1788-1939}, vol. 1, Canberra, Australian Dictionary of Biography, 1987, p. 12; \textit{Freeman's Journal}, 28 June 1917, p. 9.} He spoke of the need for new schools, and Australian flags to fly above them before the next Australia Day. The children sang O'Reilly's \textit{Australian National Anthem} and Hugo Alpen's \textit{Australia}.
The major papers made little mention of Australian flags being flown at State schools in New South Wales: only at Rozelle and Hurstville in Sydney, and at Tamworth in the northern inland of the state. At the Darling-road School at Rozelle Phillip Nelligan, the old boy from St Stanislaus' College, remained consistent to his stance taken in 1901 and 1905: the Australian flag flew with the Union Jack. The general silence about the Australian flag in State schools is striking. Did reporters simply not notice Australian flags? Or did schools which had flown these flags in 1905 decide not to do so in 1911 to avoid association with the Catholic Church's stand? Certainly John Perry, a leading member of the Liberal-Reform Party, in contrast to the Labor government, had discouraged the use of the Australian flag, suggesting that it would 'demonstrate the existence of some sectarian difference'. The Daily Telegraph agreed (fig. 19). The proportion of Catholic schools in New South Wales which flew the Australian flag or celebrated 'Australia Day' is difficult to judge. Equally difficult is it to establish whether Moran's circular separated Catholic schools from others in the celebration of the day, particularly in country centres. At Katoomba in the Blue Mountains, Alderman G. Kitch expressed concern that the day was celebrated in two different parts of the town: the Catholics at the Falls Reserve and others at Katoomba Park. In the north at Murwillumbah, Catholic children went not to the showground but to the coast, while at Yass, the local convent simply gave the children a full holiday.

230 Rozelle, Hurstville, and Surry Hills, Cleveland-Street School, and in the country at Tamworth, SMH, 25 May 1911, p. 5, DT, 25 May 1911, p. 12.
231 SMH, 25 May 1911, p. 5; the paper also reported children at the Ragged School, Surry Hills, waving Union Jacks and Australian flags. The Sydney Girls' High School continued to use flora to mark the day: oak and gum leaves.
233 DT, 25 May 1911, p. 4.
234 ibid, p. 12.
Fig. 19. 'On Empire’s Day

His Eminence: “Come with me, and you may wave this flag.”

Young Australia: "Why don't you come with me? You must be lonely. You've got a good flag, but this is my flag’s day.”

In Bathurst this was the second time since 1909 that the Patrician Brothers' School had not participated in the combined schools' gathering. The convent schools, and, of course, St Stanislaus' College were also absent. The Bathurst Times referred to the '1500 Protestant Bathurst boys and girls who watched the Empire flag float out — the boys at the military salute and the girls ... standing at attention'. They repeated, after Dr Marriott, the Anglican dean,

Australian boys and girls are we;
We love our country, fair and free.
We love our British Empire, too;
And will our duty strive to do ...

This was his reply to O'Reilly's 'counter movement'. Dr Machattie, a local surgeon, and president of the Bathurst branch of the BEL, also acknowledged, indeed welcomed this movement, 'because it brought out things which otherwise would not have manifested themselves'.

At St Stanislaus' College there was a ceremony of a different kind; the boys gave the Australian flag the military salute as they marched past the central door. Later they heard O'Reilly, their principal, speak of their duty to the flag: to love it, to fight for it, and even to die for it. When O'Reilly had first come to the college as dean of discipline, the students had given him what in retrospect seems the unlikely nickname of 'John Bull'. It reflected, according to his biographer, their perception of his huge size and aloof manner. Perhaps it also indicated a strained relationship between boys and master: a contemporary said 'that he never came fully to understand Australian boys'. The nickname could well have expressed their Australian humour in this situation. But on the

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235Emphasis added, 25 May 1911, p. 2. This was the renamed (1909) Bathurst Daily Argus, which supported the Fusionists or Liberals; the National Advocate supported the Labor Party, see R.B. Walker, The Newspaper Press in New South Wales, 1803-1920, Sydney, Sydney University Press, 1976, p. 182.
236Bathurst Times, 25 May 1911, p. 2.
237ibid. Machattie, 55, had been born in Bathurst. Educated at All Saints' College, he studied medicine in Edinburgh. Active in civic affairs as an alderman and mayor, he had been a leader in the federation movement, presiding over the Bathurst Convention of 1896. That year he had raised the Bathurst Company of NSW Mounted Rifles and later served in South Africa. W.A. Steel, The History of All Saints' College, Bathurst 1873-1934, Sydney, Angus & Robertson, 1936, p. 128.
238Echoes from St Stanislaus', Dec. 1911, p. 43.
239King, Memories of Maurice O'Reilly CM, p. 6.
occasion of the first Australia Day at St Stanislaus', O'Reilly's words moved them: there were 'eyes that were wet with emotion'. The ceremony ended with a further salute and the hymn.

O'Reilly responded to reports in both Bathurst papers with letters to the editors, complaining that Marriott had misrepresented his views. This time he quoted as supporting evidence the views of G.W.E. Russell, nephew of a former prime minister of England, a member of the Privy Council and a lay reader of the Church of England, to condemn the kind of performance typified by Marriott: "'Turgid harangues ... by patriotic orators ... Jingoism in a surplice ... ecclesiastical pomposity'". However, some fellow Catholics did not agree. 'Catholic', writing to the National Advocate, vehemently denied the right of 'these two disgruntled Irish priests' to speak and accused them of 'trying to saddle the Catholic people with opinions they do not hold'. 'An Indignant Catholic' in the Telegraph believed there was 'a self-sustained movement amongst a comparatively small but well-organised circle amongst us to discredit and weaken the Empire, in the supposed interest of Ireland'. The latter view appeared to be supported by the accompanying observation that while a 'score of green flags' in Sydney flew with 'the usual Union quartering', the one on St Mary's Cathedral did not: 'at St Mary's alone did one see the symbol of a shattered Empire'.

O'Reilly had received little support from the National Advocate in Bathurst, despite its motto of 'Australia for the Australians' and its desire to see Empire Day given an Australian emphasis. 'True patriotism', the editor had said in 1910, 'means the inculcation of a love of country, which in our case means a

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241 Echoes from St Stanislaus', Dec. 1911, p. 43.
242 Bathurst Times, National Advocate, 26 May 1911, p. 2.
243 National Advocate, 26 May 1911, p. 2.
244 DT, 27 May 1911, p. 11. One letter from 'Citizen' agreed that 'our loyalty should be towards Australia' but that it 'must be part of the wider sentiment towards the Empire', ibid., 25 May 1911, p. 3.
love of Australia and the British Empire'. Moran and O'Reilly sought to teach love of Australia and love of Ireland as a means of countering the appeal of British imperialism. 'As they showed their patriotism and religious feeling by linking their enthusiasm with St Patrick's Day', Moran had told priests and teaching brothers and sisters in January, 'they would show the same enthusiasm in associating Australia Day with the Feast of Our Lady Help of Christians, the Chief patroness of the Australian Church'. O'Reilly had said that 'everything that was best and noblest in Australia was Irish'. The selection of flags, Irish and Australian, to fly from the cathedral towers in Sydney on 24 May 1911 reflected the same thinking.

Moran was attempting to make Australia part of 'Ireland's Empire ... the empire of Enlightenment & Religion & Morality'. St Patrick's Day was to be 'Ireland's Empire Day'. Just a week after the sending of his circular to schools for Australia Day, Moran enthused to a regular correspondent in Ireland, Mrs J. Maher, 'Everything here in connection with religion continues to flourish. We have fixed on 24th May ... for our national Australian Day, (What St Patrick's Day is for Ireland)'. Monsignor O'Riordan at the Irish College in Rome, in recognising Moran's political strategy of 'initiating "Australia Day" as against "Empire Day"', referred to it as 'a party pill wrapped up in sugar'. He suggested a further strategy: 'What about beginning to speak regularly & openly of the Australian nation?' Moran never received the letter; he had died a few days after it was written.

245 National Advocate, 24 May 1910, p. 2. The paper was grateful for the absence of a fireworks display, though it noted that for a second time pranksters had set alight the night before the fires prepared for Empire Night, ibid., 24, 27 May 1911, pp. 2, 6.
246 Catholic Education Conference, pp. 38, 30.
247 Moran to Philip D'Cuaba, Examining Dept, H.M. Customs, Bombay, 9 Apr. 1911. D'Cuaba had written to Moran seeking clarification of a press report of 13 Mar. in the Times of India that he had turned Empire Day into 'a sectarian affair'. The clipping seems to refer to Moran's statements of January about Australia Day. However, Moran's reply concerned 'Ireland's Empire Day', that is St Patrick's Day. Moran assured D'Cuaba that 'Ireland's Empire ... [was] the finest pillar of support & strength of the Great British Empire'. See also his letter to Mrs J. Maher, 11 Apr. 1911, Moran Papers, S.C.: M223 Corr. 1911/19, 36 and 38, SAA.
248 Moran to Mrs J. Maher, 16 May 1911, ibid./59, SAA.
249 Monsignor O'Riordan to Moran, original emphasis, 1 Aug. 1911, ibid./82, SAA.
The attempt to convert Empire Day was confined to New South Wales. In Victoria, where Catholics were only a slightly smaller percentage of the population, there was no flag controversy on Empire Day.250 Melbourne’s Advocate mentioned only ‘Australia’s National Hymn’, not the flying of the Australian flag, from Moran’s circular for Catholic schools on 24 May.251 Afterwards the Argus reported Patrick Phelan, Irish-born Dean at St Patrick’s Cathedral, Melbourne and spokesman for Archbishop Carr, as saying that ‘no special celebrations, similar to those suggested by Cardinal Moran, were held in Roman Catholic schools in Victoria’.252 The Freeman’s Journal in Sydney also noted another of Phelan’s observations, again made on behalf of his archbishop: that Australian Catholics ‘would be foolish ... if they were anything but loyal’, given ‘the freedom they enjoyed under the British flag’.253 Moran’s proposal for Australia Day, the Argus concluded, ‘could not have originated in Victoria, and will find very little support here’.254 It thought Moran wrong to encourage children 'to think that the "Australian Catholic" and "Imperial Protestant" aspire to 'different kinds of patriotism'. There had not been the same need in Victoria, as indicated by the Australian flag featured with Henry Parkes’ poem on the cover of the School Paper.255 In South Australia, with a much smaller Catholic population of 14.1 per cent, the Southern Cross printed Moran’s circular in full, but understood that it was for Catholic schools in Sydney.256 The paper concluded that Moran was ‘taking a sensible as well as patriotic view of the matter’, and that Australia Day was ‘destined to spread throughout the Catholic

253Freeman’s Journal, 1 June 1911, p. 24.
254Argus, 25 May 1911, p. 6.
255School Paper, Class 4, May 1911, p. 47. Parkes’ poem, ‘The Flag’ is in his collection, A. Wanderer (pseud.), The Beauteous Terrorist and Other Poems, Melbourne, George Robertson, 1885, pp. 42-44. The line in the third stanza, ‘Our starry cross — our glorious sign!’ probably refers to the old Australian flag with the blue St George’s Cross bearing stars on the British white ensign.
schools in the Commonwealth'. But in South Australia Empire Day was barely noticed in 1911 since the government had decided to combine its celebration with Coronation Day on 22 June. Not until 1922 did Catholic archbishops and bishops of Australasia agree to observe 24 May as Australia Day.

However, what was manifested so vividly in New South Wales in 1911 was also evident in Victoria and South Australia but in more subtle forms. At issue was nationality and how it should be defined. 'What about beginning to speak regularly & openly of the Australian nation?' Monsignor O'Riordan had written to Moran, expecting that such words would stimulate controversy. He was right: the Protestant Rev. W. Cowen at Balmain told State school children that 'they did not want to build up a separate nation'. Williams, Director of Education in South Australia, had instructed teachers to make children 'good Australians'. By that he meant those who would also be 'good and loyal sons of the Empire'. At Katoomba the Rev. W.J. Grant, a Congregational minister, expressed the same view: 'Australians who forgot the Motherland certainly could not be called good Australians'.

The problem was which motherland: Britain, or England? And what of Ireland: could one be a 'good Australian' and love Ireland at the same time? Certainly O'Reilly and Moran thought so, and there were others within the Catholic community with a similar view. Still other Catholics hoped that developing Australian loyalties would diminish the strength of older national allegiances. Joseph Spruson, 37, born at sea of Irish-Catholic parents, published such a view in Cerise and Blue, the magazine of the prestigious Catholic St

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257 Southern Cross, 26 May 1911, p. 415.
259 SMH, 25 May 1911, p. 5.
262 CBC Annual, 1909, p. 61.
Joseph's College.263 'The Englishman, the Irishman, and the Scotchman alike', he complained, 'exhibit a supreme contempt for any Australian ideal, and regard this country as a common battling ground for old world feuds, as a force to be prospected for old world interests'.264 Educated at the Marist Brothers' School in Sydney, the patent attorney and former Protectionist MLA continued: 'Each and all of them wish us Australians to look at the world at large through Red, Green, or Yellow spectacles'.265

Spruson believed 'in the ideal of Empire ... because ... it [was] best for the present needs of [his] own country'. But he protested that neither the Englishman nor the Irishman was 'willing to consider Imperial politics from an Australian view point'.266 'We want', he asserted, 'and we want them whilst they are here as our fellow citizens, to look at it through Blue spectacles'. He urged the adoption of that point of view in the teaching of history since 'teachers and their masters [were] still of the old stock, imbued with the narrow imported idea, and ever ready to look back, but never forward'.267 Such criticism of the imported citizen marked the magazine in those years.268 'Patriotism', Brother Wilbred concluded in 1908, 'should mean, as applied to Australia, precisely what the word signifies when referred to in England, Ireland, or Scotland'.269 Too often, he believed, it was understood to mean 'that form of loyalty to Great Britain or to the Empire, which completely ignore[d] the claims of the Commonwealth to first service from her people, or that worse than absurd notion of "Cutting the Painter" with the Mother Country'.

265 Spruson's comment may reflect inter-order rivalry, the Marists being of French origin, in contrast to the Jesuits and Christian Brothers.
266 Cerise & Blue 1907, pp. 58, 60.
267 Ibid., p. 58.
269 Ibid., p. 32.
Grainger writes of the 'English presumption' that English meant British.270 A similar presumption operated in Australia where the 'ethnic core' was English rather than British.271 State schools commonly taught English rather than British history, the English dominance being disguised as a history of liberal institutions. Even so, there was a complaint from the Victorian Scottish Union in 1910 which revealed ethnic sensitivities: to those of Scots descent, 'English' did not mean 'British'.272 The Union extracted a promise from the director of education to rectify 'erroneous Imperial expressions' in Gillies' books. The Catholic Church, for religious as well as ethnic reasons, organised its own set of readers. Perhaps because of the overwhelming predominance of English rather than Scottish, Irish, Welsh or Cornish immigrants in the settling of Australia, there was not the same need for an English association. Certainly the ethnicity of the English has gone largely unnoticed by historians.273

However, there did emerge a Royal Society of St George. In South Australia it acted to mediate the renegotiation of loyalties in the period 1908 to 1921. Its founder and secretary in 1908 was C.E. Owen Smyth, Superintendent of Public Buildings, an Irish-born Anglican, ardent imperialist and freemason; the president was Sir Samuel Way, English-born Methodist, Chief Justice and President of the League of the Empire in South Australia, and also a freemason; and the patron was the Governor, Sir George Le Hunte, an Irish-born Anglican.274 Although a small group meeting for dinner on St George's Day and for occasional addresses, the members were influential: they included A.H.

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272James A.R. Milligan, Secretary, Victorian Scottish Union to Director of Education, 13 Feb. 1911, VPRS 794, Box 1045 1912/8314, PROV; and W.S. Littlejohn (Principal of Scotch College and convenor of the committee of the Council of Public Education appointed to examine the teaching of history and the censoring of library books), to Director of Education, 16 Apr. 1912, VPRS 10298, Box 2, PROV.
Peake, Leader of the Liberal Party and Deputy-Premier in the Liberal-Labor coalition, J.L. Bonython, MHR and owner of the Advertiser, W.J. Sowden, a founder of the ANA and editor of the Register, and Bertie Roach, editor of the Children's Hour. Most were freemasons. The aim of forming branches around the Empire, Smyth explained, was 'to keep at white heat ... the sentiment Pro Deo et Patria'. In 1908 the object had been expressed as 'God and the King'. King and country were as one. Way was more explicit on what was meant by 'Patria'. It was the Empire — an extension of England:

We may well rejoice that men of Irish and Scottish, of Welsh and Cornish blood, and our German compatriots also are helping to shape Australian character and Australian aspirations. For us Englishmen it is becoming to be modest; we have no need to boast. But we are entitled to remember that we belong to a race that has had the greatest part in the settlement of Australia and in building up the Empire.

The contribution of the various ethnic groups to Australian defence continued to be an issue. It was a matter of some sensitivity within the ANA in Victoria. The association's committee which considered 'national questions' recommended, in response to a complaint from a member, that the board of directors could not oppose the formation of an Irish regiment since there was already a Scottish one. Way in South Australia reminded St George Society members of the need to celebrate 'England's noble history and our own perpetual union with England' each year on St George's Day. Bonython spoke of the need for patriotism 'to maintain the glory of England and to keep the Empire intact ... It would make them think of the Union Jack ... [and all] it stood for[:] justice, good government, liberty, and Christianity'. Kipling had called

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277 ibid., for 1908, Peake Papers, PRG 241, SSLM.
279 Proceedings of the Royal Society of St George (Adel. Br.) for 1908, Peake Papers, PRG 241, SSLM.
it *The English Flag*.\(^{280}\) In 1911 the *Southern Cross* believed that Empire Day's 'purely English character' was revealed by the insistence on the Union Jack, the flag which the English had imposed on the British Isles and vast areas of the world.\(^ {281}\) It suggested that a more appropriate date for such a celebration was St George's Day, 23 April.

The attempts by Moran and O'Reilly in 1911 to turn St Patrick's Day into 'Ireland's Empire Day', and Empire Day into Australia Day were extreme reactions to what some people perceived as the very English and Protestant nature of Empire Day. In this context, the term 'British' was ambiguous: it could not be easily dissociated from 'English'. The campaign, intended to pull Australian patriotism away from British and English ties, strengthened its association with Ireland, exacerbating the problem of definition. The 'good Australian' was an artefact, shaped by differing ideas of ethnicity which were not easily reconciled.

\(^{281}\) 'Catholics and Empire Day', *Southern Cross*, 26 May 1911, p. 415.
1916: THE CONTRADICTORY PRESSURES OF WAR

The previous chapters have been primarily concerned with analysing the flag ceremony on special occasions to see how Australians attempted to define their community within the wider British community, 'out of which — as well as against which — it came into being'. On those occasions either Victoria, with the opening of the first federal parliament in 1901, or New South Wales, with Empire Day in 1911, was the focus of attention. Now South Australia becomes the focus. This time the flag ceremony signals no special occasion. Rather, as in Victoria, it is a weekly, then during the war a daily, reminder of nationality.

The Great War has preoccupied historians seeking to explain the development of Australian nationalism. For K.S. Inglis and Geoffrey Serle the war was pivotal in ensuring the primacy of Australian rather than British sentiment in Australians' sense of nationality. The change, Inglis argues, centres on the returned soldiers and their 'Anzac tradition', a theme he develops through an examination of the rituals of Anzac Day played out around the country's many war memorials. Serle agrees: Australians' pride in the achievements of the Australian Imperial Force meant that 'few ... would think of themselves as anything but primarily Australians rather than Britishers or Englishmen in the colonies'. However, this picture is difficult to match with that of Michael McKernan, who emphasises the role of schools, especially non-

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Catholic schools, as 'seedplots of Empire loyalty' during the war.\textsuperscript{4} He writes of State schools' 'single-minded devotion to Empire', and of the growing importance of Empire in Protestant schools.\textsuperscript{5} The 'devotion to Ireland and Australia' in Catholic schools, he argued, provided the contrast. Did an Australian sense of nationality triumph after the war despite the efforts of schools? A closer examination of schools during the war reveals the complexities involved in answering that question. Governments, particularly in New South Wales and Victoria, fostered pride among school children in the feats of Australians at war by encouraging or allowing the use of the Australian flag. In South Australia, however, war intensified government efforts to mould children as British patriots. Such a marked difference considerably qualifies the view that the war emphasised Australia's imperial rather than national identity.\textsuperscript{6}

Part of historians' fascination with the war in Australia has stemmed from the role of conscription as a catalyst for conflict in the potent mix of class, religion and ethnicity. Much of the argument has revolved around the question of whether the Labor Party, attracting those from Irish, Catholic, working-class origins, was more Australian than the Liberal Party, associated with those of English, Protestant, middle-class origins.\textsuperscript{7} The case of South Australia and Victoria during the war shows the dangers of such simplification. Under a Labor government South Australia became much more British in orientation in 1916, as indicated by the change in oath recited in schools:

\textsuperscript{4}Chapter 3 'Seedplots of Empire Loyalty: The Schools at War', especially p. 43, Michael McKernan, \textit{The Australian People and the Great War}, West Melbourne, Nelson, 1980.

\textsuperscript{5}Emphasis added, \textit{ibid.}, p. 44.


\textsuperscript{7}See the discussion above in Chapter 1, in particular sections 'Australian Nationalism and Class', 'Class, Religion and Ethnicity', and 'School and Nationality'.

By contrast, Victoria's Liberal government in the same year unobtrusively acknowledged that the Australian flag could be flown instead of the Union Jack.9 This chapter explores why this was so.

1911: The National Salute for South Australian Schools

Not until 1911 did the South Australian government formally introduce the 'national salute' into State schools as part of the weekly routine.10 The Education Department had shown an interest in the Bordertown ceremony in 1900, and some schools had flown the Union Jack at the time of the opening of the federal parliament in 1901. But South Australia did not copy Victoria in requiring that ceremony on a regular basis apart from Empire Day. However, some schools clearly used a ceremony, even on a daily basis.11 It illustrated the changing role of gender in the teaching of patriotism. Teachers 'often asked' how girls should salute the flag.12 In Victoria they were instructed to stand at attention. South Australian girls were to do 'exactly the same ... as the boys': to stand at attention and give the military salute bringing the right hand to the forehead. By 1911, when the ceremony became a requirement, girls were merely asked to bow. The change reflected the increased militarism associated with schools, seen as inappropriate for girls.

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9H.S.W. Lawson, Minister of Public Instruction, to L.D. Howard, Norfolk Girls' School, 29 Aug. 1916, VPRS 10928, Box 9, Public Record Office, Victoria (hereafter PROV).
10The first formal requirement for saluting the flag on a regular basis occurs in EG, Aug. 1911, p. 191.
11John Harry, Headmaster of Hindmarsh Public School, reported to the League of the Empire that saluting the flag was a 'daily reminder' of the Empire, ibid., May 1907, p. 108. See also Milton Maughan, inspector, in Report of the Minister of Education, South Australian Parliamentary Papers (hereafter SAPP) 1905: 44, p. 25.
12ibid., Nov. 1905, p. 163.
expressed the new emphasis most boldly in explaining the training of boys of 13: 'We propose ... to add another R to the alphabet of education, and have Reading, 'Riting, 'Rithmetic, and Rifle'. For Catholic elite boys' schools there were five Rs: Reading, 'Riting, 'Rithmetic, Religion and Rowing. The Education Department in South Australia expected schools to practise the flag ceremony 'at least once a week' although schools were free to use it on a daily basis if they wished. But as to the flag, the Department was adamant: 'The Union Jack must be used on every occasion'.

When flags were introduced into State schools in South Australia in 1901 the government had agreed to supply Union Jacks to schools providing the poles. The gift was for State schools only. In 1906 the Labor Premier, Tom Price, had hesitated when Frances Twiss from the Anglican Christ Church School in North Adelaide asked for a Union Jack for Empire Day. He did not think it 'safe [perhaps because of the long tradition of church and state separation] to issue flags to other than state schools', then relented, but in the end held firm to his original view. In Victoria Australian flags were appearing in State schools as local committees, responsible for supplying flags, saw the need. This practice absolved the Board of Directors of the Australian Natives' Association (ANA) from becoming involved. Aware of the sensitive nature of the issue, it was cautious about promoting the Australian flag.

In Western Australia the ANA had been urging the State government since 1906 to supply an Australian flag and staff to schools for children to salute every morning. At the time of the first Empire Day their government had sought direction on the protocol of flying the Commonwealth flag alongside the

14Dr Katharine Massam, comment to author, 25 June 1995.
15Tom Price, Premier and Minister of Education, to Alfred Williams, Director of Education, 21 May 1906, GRG 18/1/1906/146, State Records of South Australia (hereafter SRSA).
State flag and the Union Jack on its public buildings. The Commonwealth government assured it that the Australian flag had now replaced the Union Jack on public buildings when flags were flown, and that it was not usual to fly two flags simultaneously, whether State and federal, or State and imperial.\textsuperscript{18} However, the status of the Australian flag continued to be questioned in Western Australia. When the American fleet visited Fremantle in 1908 Australian cadets were prevented by 'officialdom or regulations of some sort' from presenting an Australian flag to the Americans: 'It had to be done by a private Australian boy'.\textsuperscript{19} The Americans were then allowed to carry it at the head of their procession. George Foley, Labor MLA from the goldfields and a director of the ANA, argued that 'no body of the people of Australia could feel insulted when they saw at the head of a procession a flag which ... had the approval of the Imperial authorities'.\textsuperscript{20} The next year in 1909 the Australian flag headed the Empire Day march on the Esplanade below King's Park in Perth (fig. 20).\textsuperscript{21}

In 1911, as we have seen in New South Wales, some took great exception to the flying of the Australian flag instead of the Union Jack on Empire Day. Yet developments at the Imperial Conference in May-June that year confirmed the standing of dominion flags as national flags.\textsuperscript{22} The Australians had not been impressed by the Admiralty's offer in 1910 of the white ensign for the Australian navy. The Minister for Defence, a Labor senator from Western Australia, George Pearce, had sought W.M. Hughes' advice on how the

\textsuperscript{18}F. North, Under-secretary, Colonial Secretary's Office, WA, to Secretary, Department of External Affairs, 23 May and 23 June 1905, and response of 8 June and 5 July 1905, CRS A1/1 05/4192, Australian Archives (hereafter AA (ACT)).


\textsuperscript{20}George Foley, 7 Aug. 1912, \textit{WAPD} 1912, new series vol. 42, p. 911.


\textsuperscript{22}Meetings of 26-28 May 1911 involving representatives of Canada and Australia at the Admiralty, resulting in the memorandum approved by the Imperial Conference, \textit{Papers Laid Before the Imperial Conference: Naval and Military Defence}, Cd 5746-2; and \textit{Minutes of Proceedings of the Imperial Conference}, 1911, Cd 5745, p. 432.
government could ensure internationally recognised independent status for the Australian Navy.\textsuperscript{23} A Defence Department memorandum prepared for the conference subsequently proposed that the British government should legislate for, or ensure foreign recognition of, a flag specifically designed for dominion navies.\textsuperscript{24} In the end, the compromise reached between Canadian and Australian leaders and the Admiralty, confirmed by the conference, involved both imperial and national flags: the white ensign in the place of honour at the stern and the dominion flag, instead of the Union Jack, at the jack-staff on the bow.\textsuperscript{25} It was a significant step in the recognition of the Australian flag.

![Image](image-url)

Fig. 20. The Australian flag heads the Empire Day march on the Esplanade below King's Park, Perth, 1909.

(C.T. Stannage, The People of Perth: A Social History of Western Australia's Capital City, Perth, Perth City Council, 1979, p. 331)

There was to be no merging of the two flags (British white ensign and Australian flag) as envisaged by Deakin. That did not come until the design of


\textsuperscript{24}Memorandum from S.A. Pethebridge, Secretary, Department of Defence, 28 Feb. 1911, CRS A461/1 A336/1/1 Pt 1, AA (ACT).

\textsuperscript{25}Article 3, Memorandum of Conferences between the British Admiralty and Representatives of the Dominion of Canada and the Commonwealth of Australia, Imperial Conference, 1911: Dominions no. 9: Papers laid before the Imperial Conference: Naval and Military Defence, Cd 5746-2.
the Royal Australian Navy flag in 1967: a white ensign for the Commonwealth (fig. 21) — without the distinctive red St George’s Cross of the British white ensign. From 1911 the Commonwealth Ensign (blue) was to fly at the bow of the warships of the Royal Australian Navy — the target of Crouch’s attention since 1901. Not surprisingly, ANA members in Perth would scrutinise the bow of the first Australian cruiser to arrive from Britain.

Australian regulations on the flag to be saluted by defence forces made clear the pre-eminence of the Australian Ensign over the Union Jack:

1. Except when the King’s Colour [the Royal Standard] is paraded, the Commonwealth Ensign is to be the Saluting Flag at all reviews and ceremonial parades on shore.

2. The Union Flag is also to be flown at the saluting point on all occasions when representatives of His Majesty the King review the Commonwealth Forces.26

The reaction in Australia from groups sensitive to these matters was not long in coming. The Australian Women’s National League in Victoria insisted that although they honoured the Australian flag ‘as the emblem of young nationhood[,] ... on ceremonial occasions and at reviews the grand old Union

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26Naval Forces of the Commonwealth: Consolidated Orders and Regulations, CRS 461/1 A336/1/1 Pt 1, AA (ACT). Only recently had the Royal Standard been withdrawn from the last flag-poles in Australia permitted to fly it: on government houses, Lewis Harcourt, Colonial Secretary to Lord Dudley, Governor General, 11 May 1911, CRS A661/1 34, AA (ACT) cf. despatch from Lord Elgin to Governor, South Australia, 27 July 1907, which restricted the use of the Royal Standard except on government houses, GRG 24/6/1907/946, SRSA. By 1911 the Royal Standard was clearly the flag of the king, only to be used when he was present; the Union Jack was the flag of the British government.
Jack of England must take precedence, and Australia — the child of that great nation — is glad to salute and acknowledge fidelity and allegiance'. The Catholic Advocate, on the other hand, applauded the decision: 'We have a flag. Let us honour it, and not be ashamed of it, and let no other flag take precedence over it'. Coming so soon after the Empire Day celebrations, the change in regulations appeared to show sympathy with the views of Moran and O'Reilly. The Australian press, eager to assess the implications of the decision made at the conference about flags for dominion navies, seized on a statement the Prime Minister, Andrew Fisher, was alleged to have made in an interview in Colombo on his way home to Australia. W.T. Stead of the Review of Reviews in Britain, in search of controversial copy, reported Fisher as saying that if, in a conflict between England and other powers, Australia considered England in the wrong, 'we will haul down the Union Jack and hoist our own flag and start on our own'. Back in Australia Fisher denied having made the statement, and was caustic about the 'political patriots' who attempted to make much of the interview. Deakin, however, was not among them: 'he knows how these things are worked', Fisher commented ruefully.

This was the month in which the South Australian Labor government formalised the saluting of the Union Jack as a weekly ceremony in State schools. Whether words were used before August 1911 in the 'National Salute' is not clear; certainly this was the first time they had appeared in the Education Gazette. God's absence in the South Australian declaration indicated a distinctly different approach:

Victoria: 1901
I love God and my country;
I honour the flag;
I will serve the King, and
cheerfully obey my parents,
teachers and the laws.

South Australia: 1911
I love my country.
I honour her King.
I will cheerfully obey her laws.

27 Advocate, 10 June 1911, p. 31.
28 Ibid.
29 Daily Herald, 9 Aug. 1911, p. 5.
God had no place in the State schools of South Australia, the first of the Australian colonies to cut the link between church and state in 1851. The dissenting tradition was still strong. Also striking is the absence of any mention of a flag, the centre of the ceremony; and there was a much less comprehensive promise at the end.

The relevant personal, ministerial and departmental records reveal little direct evidence of the deliberations behind the Gazette notice. The minister of education was F.W. Coneybeer, an English-born horse-collar maker and trade unionist, who had been member for East Torrens since 1893. He was a freemason. As a child living in Orange, New South Wales, he had attended the Anglican Sunday School run by the Rev. F.B. Boyce, later the first president of the British Empire League in New South Wales in 1901 and again in 1909-11. Coneybeer was a friend and close associate of the Director of Education, Alfred Williams, having watched his reform movement with interest from the time of Williams' headmastership of East Adelaide and Norwood schools, show-cases in Coneybeer's electorate. The idea for the oath may have come from Williams, since both Hedley Beare and G.L. Fischer portray him as setting the pace for his Labor masters. But Beare also emphasises his 'likemindedness', his 'instinct to suggest the very changes which the politicians had for long been groping towards as a policy'. Williams was native-born of Cornish Methodist mining stock. Although he had given his educational reforms an Australian emphasis, he retained a clear commitment to their British context: the two were interdependent. He was a founding member of the Royal Society of St George.

31The personal papers of John Verran, Premier, and Alfred Williams, Director of Education, are not extant. F.W. Coneybeer's diaries and rough diaries for 1911 are either not extant or too brief to be useful, Coneybeer Papers, PRG 22/1 and /2, Mortlock Library (hereafter SSLM). My thanks to Dr Leith MacGillivray for checking this source.
32Frederick William Coneybeer', Australian Dictionary of Biography (hereafter ADB), vol. 8, p. 85.
33Francis Bertie Boyce', ibid., vol. 7, p. 368.
36Alfred Williams', ADB, vol. 12, p. 495.
Fig. 22. John Verran, Premier of South Australia, 1911.

(Westralian Worker, 2 June 1911, p. 1)
The premier was John Verran, who had been leader of the Labor Party since Price's death and the break up of the Liberal-Labor government in 1909. 'Bluff, flamboyant ... short and stout' (fig. 22), Verran was Cornish-born, a miner from Moonta, centre of South Australia's copper mines, where Williams had begun his teaching career. Largely self-educated, Verran was glad of the help of Moonta's headmasters who came to his house to improve his grammar. He was a Methodist lay preacher from the Primitive tradition, more fundamentalist than the Wesleyan Price, who had also been a lay preacher. Verran was a freemason, as Price had been. They typified the Protestant reformist tradition of South Australia's Labor Party. Price had regarded himself as 'both a Colonial Nationalist and an Imperialist', which also described Verran's position. The war, however, was soon to alter that balance for Verran, though there were some within the labour movement in 1911 who argued for a stronger Australian emphasis. At the last two annual conferences of the Labor Party the painters' union had submitted a proposal for a special day in State schools — Commonwealth Day — 'on the lines of Empire Day', to teach children 'their duties as citizens to the Commonwealth'; instruction was to include Australia's political system, especially 'the value of the franchise and the responsibilities of democratic government'. It was carried in 1911. That conference also passed another proposal asking the government to have a book prepared 'by an impartial author giving a full explanation of the laws under which the people live'. It had a particular point in the current political context, reflecting Verran's difficulty with South Australia's Legislative Council which drove him to petition the British parliament for special legislation.

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39Proposals submitted by the Federated House Painters' Society in 1910 and the Painters and Decorators' Union in 1911, Minutes of the Annual Conference, United Labor Party (SA), SRG 73/1, SSLM; Daily Herald, 16 Sept. 1911, p. 7.
40The proposal was submitted by the Port Adelaide Democratic Club, which had in mind a modern version of Catherine Helen Spence's The Laws We Live Under (Adelaide, Government Printer, 1880), Minutes of the Annual Conference, United Labor Party (SA), SRG 73/1, SSLM; Daily Herald, 18 Sept. 1911, p. 5.
The ANA (Western Australia): Champions of the Australian Flag, 1911-1913

The same concern for civics education was evident in Western Australia where the ANA was still seeking ways of stimulating Australian patriotism in State schools. But whereas in 1906 it had concentrated on the Australian flag, in 1911 it also requested a copy of the Australian constitution.\(^{41}\) Impatient with advice from the eastern State associations that 'local effort and private subscription' provided the best approach, the ANA in Western Australia continued to look to government, at both federal and State levels. Its federal intermediary was King O'Malley. In 1904 O'Malley had urged Crouch to include State schools in his resolution concerning the Australian flag on public buildings. But Sir John Quick reminded him that such schools were not under federal jurisdiction. In 1911 O'Malley was minister for home affairs. However, the response of the federal Labor cabinet to the ANA's request was brief and to the point: 'Not advisable'.\(^{42}\) Apart from constitutional difficulties and considerable costs, imperial and State sensitivities were involved. Only the previous year Fisher had suffered at the hands of the press and political opponents when quizzed about the Union and Australian flags. As well, the federal government had been rebuffed in a referendum seeking to extend Commonwealth power.\(^{43}\) Eventually when the ANA again put its request, the federal government relented, but only agreed to supply copies of the constitution 'provided the State Government concur[red] in the proposal'.\(^{44}\)

\(^{41}\)That the Board of Directors in this State approach the Federal Government for the purpose of placing in all the principal State Schools in Western Australia a copy of the Federal Constitution and the Commonwealth Flag', resolution passed at the 1911 Annual Conference, ANA (WA), as recorded in the Report of the Quarterly Meeting ANA (Vic.), 6 Nov. 1912, and Report of Proceedings of Annual Conference ANA (WA), 1 and 2 Apr. 1907, ANA (Vic.) Conference and Board of Directors Reports, vols 8 and 9.

\(^{42}\)M.L. Shepherd, Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, to James H. Crabb, General Secretary, ANA (WA), 20 May 1912 (indicating cabinet decision of 14 May), correspondence between Crabb, King O'Malley, Minister for Home Affairs and Andrew Fisher, Prime Minister, 17 Aug. 1911 - 19 Sept. 1912, CRS A2/1 12/400, AA (ACT).


\(^{44}\)Shepherd to Crabb, 6 Sept. 1912, conveying decision of 30 Aug., CRS A2/1 12/400, AA (ACT). The ANA board in Queensland made a similar request in 1912, E.E. Quinlan, General Secretary, ANA (Qld), to Minister for Home Affairs, n.d., and response from M.L. Shepherd, Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, 31 Dec. 1912, ibid.
The ANA, undaunted by the federal government's refusal of flags, took the matter to the State parliament through one of its directors, George Foley, the Labor MLA from the goldfields, who moved that the minister of education instruct State schools to fly the Australian Ensign. The ANA in Perth and newly-elected Labor member for Kalgoorlie, had asked the Labor premier to have the Australian flag flown from the building when parliament was in session. So sensitive was the issue that the Speaker, Michael Troy, Labor MLA for Mt Magnet, was willing to explain only in the privacy of his room why Green's question was not an appropriate one for the premier to answer. It was a fitting preview to debate on Foley's motion. Foley's intention was to use the Australian flag to develop 'a true national Australian sentiment' among the State's children who, he said, barely knew their flag. He reassured his listeners that he had 'no wish to belittle the Union Jack', since that was already part of the Australian flag.

Labor's Minister of Education and Attorney-General, Thomas Walker, was clearly uncomfortable with the proposal, arguing that it was more a military matter. Reluctant to discuss the Australian flag apart from the Union Jack or the Western Australian flag, he argued that he had no power over the flying of any flag but the State flag. Walker was an English-born Wesleyan Methodist, who had travelled widely and controversially as a lecturer and journalist in Canada and the US. In the late 1880s and early 1890s he had been active as a republican in New South Wales politics. More recently he had become a lawyer.

45'That in the opinion of this House instructions should be issued by the Minister that the
Australian flag (blue) be flown at all schools throughout the State on all occasions when flags
are flown'. The motion was amended by inserting 'of Education' after 'Minister'. Foley's
intention was that the flag should be flown daily as in America, where he noted it was also
46Albert Green, 30 July 1912, ibid., p. 740. Australian-born, Green had travelled widely,
including in the US, before becoming a Commonwealth public servant, 'Albert Ernest Green',
ADB, vol. 9, pp. 89-90.
and farmer in Western Australia. Unlike the speaker, he was prepared to
discuss the flag on parliament house — 'a matter of sentiment', he termed it.49
Referring indirectly to the Union Jack as the flag for the whole Empire, Walker
believed that to fly 'other flags', meaning the Australian flag and the Western
Australian flag, 'would be incongruous and mar the sentiment'. But he agreed
that if Foley would withdraw his motion, he would arrange for the Australian
flag to accompany the Union Jack whenever it was flown.50 However, enough
members were determined that the Assembly should express an opinion on the
matter, and the motion was passed.

But the matter did not end there: the Governor of Western Australia in
1913 pursued the question of the Australian flag in State schools, first with his
counterparts in other States, then with the Governor-General.51 Referred in turn
to the Department of the Prime Minister and the Department of Defence, the
correspondence landed on the desk of the Adjutant General, H.G. Chauvel. He
suggested that the two-flag approach of schools in New South Wales was worth
adopting throughout the continent: 'on days of historical interest throughout
the Empire, such as Empire Day, the King's Birthday, Waterloo Day, Trafalgar
Day, etc., the Union Jack should be flown, and on days of Australian interest,
the Australian Ensign'.52 He obviously saw a clear distinction between imperial
and Australian interests, but made no suggestions for 'Australian days'. The
Secretary, S.A. Pethebridge, and the minister himself, George Pearce, judged the
matter was 'entirely' for State governments to decide.53

No doubt Pearce was relieved to have this advice from Pethebridge. He
was then in the midst of another dispute with the Western Australian Branch of
the ANA over the absence of the Australian Ensign at the lieutenant-governor's

50ibid., p. 914.
51Memorandum from the Governor General to the Prime Minister, 7 Apr. 1913, forwarding a
desparch from the Governor of WA, CRS A461/1 D336/1/1 Pt 1, AA (ACT).
52H.G. Chauvel, Adjutant General, to Secretary, Department of Defence, 5 May 1913, ibid.
53Minutes from S.A. Pethebridge, Secretary, Department of Defence, 15 May 1913, and from
George Pearce, Minister of Defence, 30 May 1913, ibid.
inspection of the men of the *Melbourne*, the first Australian cruiser to arrive at Fremantle from Britain in March 1913. The ANA was suspicious of the 'considerable amount of cavilling' on the Australian flag: its board had extracted a promise from the minister of defence 'to fly this particular flag'; but there had been lapses. Not surprisingly, the ANA sprang into action when there was no Australian flag at the *Melbourne*’s review, telegraphing Pearce to deplore the omission and to request an explanation. Australian by birth, Pearce had the reputation of being 'a solid man ... serious, industrious ... attentive to detail'. Since 1905 he had been a keen advocate of both developing Australia's defences and maintaining imperial relationships. In 1911 he had attended the Imperial Conference determined to gain recognition for an Australian flag to mark the new navy. Pearce's first response to the ANA was to point out that the inspection had been arranged by the State government, that the captain of the *Melbourne* did not inquire about the flag to be used, and that the 1911 regulations giving pre-eminence to the Australian flag were still in force.

His reply did not satisfy the ANA board. Backed by its annual conference, the general secretary wrote at length to the prime minister, reporting the exchange with Pearce and seeking 'a statement of all regulations which apparently prohibit the Australian Flag being flown on reviews of the Australian Military and Naval Forces'. The secretary hastened to reassure the prime minister that the request was not made 'in any spirit of antagonism to the Union Jack', even though some might regard the ANA's view as the result of 'narrow Australian Patriotism'. He pointed out that the Australian flag, unlike the flags of Scotland (with the rampant lion) and Ireland (with the Irish harp), included the Union Jack: a recognition of 'the close alliance of pride and interest

54 Charles McDowall, 7 Aug. 1912, WAPD 1912, new series vol. 42, p. 915. McDowall, an Australian-born auctioneer in Coolgardie, was the member for Coolgardie. Active on the Board of Directors in Victoria in 1896, he was now on the WA board. He was also a freemason, Black and Bolton, *Biographical Register*, vol. 1 1870-1930, p. 127.
55 'George Foster Pearce', *ADB*, vol. 11, p. 177.
56 Pearce to the ANA (WA), 2 Apr. 1913, as reported by General Secretary, ANA (WA) to Andrew Fisher, Prime Minister, 11 Apr. 1913, CRS MP 472/1/0 1/13/4322, AA (Vic.)
57 General Secretary, ANA (WA), to Andrew Fisher, Prime Minister, 11 Apr. 1913, CRS A461/1 A336/1/1 Pt 1, AA (ACT).
with the cradle of the land of the race'. Further, the Australian flag had the
approval of the imperial government. Finally, he noted the contrast provided
by the launch of the *Parramatta* in Britain by Mrs Asquith, wife of the prime
minister: only the Australian flag had been flown.\(^5\) A few days later Pearce met
an ANA deputation in Perth to emphasise that, since the reception of the
*Melbourne* had been 'purely a State function', 'the Commonwealth Government
could not tell them [the State authorities] what to do'.\(^{59}\) He asserted the
importance of the Australian flag, which the regulations guaranteed, but
reminded the ANA that ultimately in the international context the Union Jack
took precedence: the 1911 conference had made clear that 'foreign powers
would recognise only one flag and that was the flag of the British Empire'.
Nevertheless, the ANA protest had a useful outcome — though not one the
prime minister was prepared to admit publicly.\(^{60}\) It led the naval secretary to
draw the attention of naval officers, in particular the captain of the *Melbourne*, to
the regulations concerning the Australian flag.\(^6\)

The Western Australian association, spurred on by its more radical
members from the goldfields, had led ANA attempts to gain proper recognition
for the Australian flag. Schools were central to its campaign. By contrast, the
older and larger association in Victoria was not so concerned, preferring to wait
for the change in attitude at the local level where the flags were provided in its
State. Even at its annual conference in Castlemaine in 1912 there was no
Australian flag to be seen among the many Union Jacks.\(^6\) In Adelaide, the
response of the board of directors to the Western Australian call for cooperation
was lukewarm: they favoured the more regular use of the Australian flag, but

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58 The *Parramatta* and the *Yarra* were the first two ships of the Royal Australian Navy.
59 Statement by Pearce of 14 April 1913, reported by Pethebridge in a memorandum to Secretary,
Prime Minister's Department, 16 June 1913, CRS A461/1 A336/1/1 Pt 1, AA (ACT).
60 M.L. Shepherd, Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, to ANA (WA), 17 June 1913, ibid.
61 Naval Secretary to Secretary, Department of Defence, 7 May 1913, CRS MP 472/1/0
1/13/4322, AA (Vic.)
that was all.63 Perhaps such disinterest decided the Chief President, J.V. O'Loghlin, when retiring a few months later, to present an Australian flag to the association.64 O'Loghlin, soon to be elected to the Senate, was an Australian-born journalist of Irish Catholic descent, founder and still managing director of the company producing the Catholic weekly, Southern Cross. He was also a founder of the ANA, and a strong supporter of Home Rule for Ireland.65 The Queensland board was more responsive, following the Western Australian example in seeking copies of the constitution for schools. In New South Wales the annual conference in 1913 agreed to urge its State government to display the Australian flag and constitution in its schools, but next year reported that the government was 'not sympathetic'.66 By that time Western Australia had enough support at a rare meeting of the Federal Council of the ANA, just before the outbreak of war, to carry a resolution urging the federal government to place the constitution and flag in all State schools.67 The war delayed the ANA from communicating its request to the government for more than a year.

1915-1916: Adaptation of the National Salute in South Australia and Victoria

There was much discussion during the war about the flying of flags, such visible markers of nationality in recruiting and fundraising campaigns (figs 23a and 23b). Inevitably the relationship between the Union Jack and the Australian flag became an issue. In January 1915 the Premier's Office in Tasmania had asked the Secretary of the Prime Minister's Department whether the Australian flag instead of the Union Jack should be flown on State buildings in Tasmania.68
Figs 23(a) and 23(b). South Australian recruiting posters using Australian and British flags in World War I.\textsuperscript{69}

(State Records of South Australia GRG 32/16/7 and 33)

\textsuperscript{69}Badges sold by organisations such as the Red Cross, the Cheer-Up Society and the Australian Comforts Fund featured British and Australian flags: of the latter, the blue Commonwealth Ensign predominated, D5537 (Misc) Mortlock Library of South Australiana.
The practice there had been to follow the example of the governor and fly the Union Jack to illustrate 'that we were still sovereign States, governed by a direct representative of the King'. But questions were now being asked and the Premier's Office needed to know whether any regulations concerning the use of the Australian flag had been issued at the time of its adoption. No reply survives on the file, simply a pencilled note: 'See me re this'. Was this another case of sentiment being too sensitive to acknowledge publicly, as in Western Australia in 1912? The questions continued and became more difficult.

The teaching of patriotism, so closely aligned with the use of flags, attracted the special attention of education administrators. In Victoria the department had made a point in October 1914 of reminding State school teachers 'if such a reminder is necessary at the present time' that they were required to follow instructions for saluting the flag.70 The next month the Liberal Minister of Public Instruction and Attorney-General, Harry Lawson, reinforced the point at some length. Lawson was a lawyer and prominent Presbyterian. His reason for intervening, probably at the request of Director of Education, Frank Tate, whom he generally supported, was that there was 'some apprehension ... among members of the public and of school committees as to the instructions'.71 Misapprehension was understandable, given that the regulations which the minister then quoted extensively made no mention of a weekly ceremony but merely spoke of teachers taking opportunities 'from time to time' to foster national and imperial sentiment, especially on such 'national occasions' as Empire Day and the anniversary of the inauguration of the Commonwealth. In an attempt to clarify the issue the minister 'directed that, during the war, the ceremony of saluting the flag shall be performed every Monday morning'. Neither the minister nor the regulations defined 'the flag'. However, the Australian flag was making more frequent appearances in the department's Gazette. In June 1915 specific dimensions of the flag's design were

70EGTA, Oct. 1914, p. 361.
71ibid., Nov. 1914, p. 412.
given in a diagram, enabling children to draw the flag accurately.\textsuperscript{72} The late Professor Sir Kenneth Wheare recalled that as a boy at Stawell State Primary School from 1915 to 1918 he had saluted the Australian flag.\textsuperscript{73}

The South Australian Education Department was slower but more demanding in its manipulation of the flag ceremony, ruling in August 1915 that children were to salute the flag every day rather than once a week.\textsuperscript{74} The suggestion had come from Milton Maughan, the former chief inspector of schools who had replaced Williams as director on his death in 1913. Maughan was English-born, the son of a Methodist minister, and a lay preacher.\textsuperscript{75} He had joined the Royal Society of St George in 1908. The Labor government, in power since the beginning of April, was headed by Crawford Vaughan. Verran's loss of government in 1912 had discredited his leadership of the Labor Party, but he continued on the backbench. Vaughan was not only Premier but also Minister of Education. His background contrasted sharply with that of Verran. He was Australian-born, middle-class, well educated, quietly spoken, and a Unitarian.\textsuperscript{76}

By July 1915 Australian troops, despite heroic attempts, had bogged down in a stalemate at Gallipoli; the federal Labor government was about to introduce its War Census Bill in preparation, some feared, for conscription. Maughan, with the help of the press and Liberal opposition leader, A.H. Peake, persuaded Vaughan to accept the need for a daily flag ceremony.

Maughan made his recommendation as part of a request to Vaughan to supply Union Jacks to the recently established provisional schools in outlying

\textsuperscript{72}\textit{ibid.}, June 1915, p. 261.
\textsuperscript{74}\textit{EG}, Aug. 1915, p. 158.
\textsuperscript{76}Crawford Vaughan, \textit{ADB}, vol. 12, pp. 313-315.
country districts. Accompanying the salute would be two verses of the national anthem, the second stanza beginning 'God bless our splendid men'. Vaughan doubted the value of children saluting the flag so frequently, fearing such familiarity would detract from the importance of the occasion, a view he expressed when Peake raised the issue in the House. Two days later Maughan tried again, forwarding to Vaughan the draft of a notice for the Gazette. The tone was sharp: 'The Minister of Education has directed that in all schools under his control, the Flag shall be saluted ... at every morning assembly'. The explanation was blunt: 'It is desired that respect for the Flag shall be so cultivated that the practice of saluting it shall become habitual'. Vaughan delayed the matter for a few days until capitulating after a further question from Peake in the House: his decision would take 'immediate effect'. However, the final version of the Gazette notice informing teachers of the decision was more diplomatic than the original draft: 'the Minister desires that... saluting of the flag should be practised daily'. The explanation addressed Vaughan's earlier concern and anticipated teachers' scepticism: 'If the ceremony is carried out with befitting decorum and solemnity, it will do much to quicken the pupils' sense of patriotism and to instil into their minds a due appreciation of the noble and gallant efforts our brave troops are making against the Empire's foes'.

The more frequent practice of the ceremony appeared to have the effect Maughan intended. School inspectors reported an intense patriotism stimulated by the war; almost every school followed the new requirement. In many country towns, observed Earnest Skitch, Assistant Inspector for War Work, the

77 M.M. Maughan, Director of Education, to C. Vaughan, Minister of Education, 9 July 1915, GRG 18/2/1917/1214, SRSA.
78 A.H. Peake reported receiving a letter urging the daily salute 'to instil into the minds of the young reverence for our glorious Empire and the ideals for which it stands'. The writer could not 'understand what objection can be urged to such a ceremony', adding that 'there should be no difficulty in getting private schools to follow the lead of the Government', 20 July 1915, South Australia Parliamentary Debates (hereafter SAPD) 1915, vol. 1, pp. 113-114.
79 Maughan to Vaughan, 22 July 1915, GRG 18/2/1915/1311, SRSA.
80 Emphasis added, ibid.
81 Ibid.
82 Question from Peake and Vaughan's response, 27 July 1915, SAPD 1915, vol. 1, p. 245; the same day Vaughan approved Maughan's request, GRG 18/2/1915/1311, SRSA.
83 Emphasis added, 'Saluting the Flag', EG, Aug. 1915, p. 158.
school had become the centre for such work and the teacher 'the moving spirit of it'. John Fairweather, Inspector of the northern district and a member of the Royal Society of St George, remarked on the 'reverent saluting of the flag' and the 'earnest singing' of the anthem. Skitch described 'the seriousness of feeling' with which little ones sang the second stanza of the national anthem, believing it reflected their realisation that 'a father or a brother has gone to risk his life in the defence of the Empire'. The progress of the war, Fairweather observed, was 'of vital interest to many children who, formerly, have known little and cared little as to what was happening in their own land or within the wider bounds of the Empire'. Speaking for teachers and inspectors as well as children, he concluded: 'today we all realise the solemn truth bound up in the words of Tennyson — "One life, one flag, one fleet, one Throne, / Britons hold your own!"' Lord Meath would have been pleased with this reminder of the motto of the Empire Day movement: 'One king, one flag, one fleet, one empire'.

Brian Lewis, with hindsight, confirms this adult view of the impact of the war on children. Children, however, were likely to be impressed by more basic symbols. One little boy, Bob Snow, who had just started school in 1916, described vividly years later a local councillor's use of butcher's skewers to demonstrate the message of Empire: 'united we stand, divided we fall'. One by one the councillor snapped the skewers; when held together they could not be broken. Children's interest and involvement in the war developed through the raising of money for the School Patriotic Fund, the knitting of socks for the troops and the exchange of letters with men at the front.

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85Ibid., p. 28.
86Ibid., p. 36.
88All children growing into consciousness during those years were fascinated by the war. It was more important to them than their school, church or their football team; to the old people of today their most vivid childhood memories are of the war'. Lewis, Our War, p. 4.
89Comment by Bob Snow to author, Canberra, 6 Nov. 1994. Bob attended school at Dorrigo, northern New South Wales.
90See, for example, the letters of Francis Desmond Kelly (of Lower Mitcham, Adelaide) to his younger brothers, in Elizabeth Kwan, Living in South Australia: A Social History, vol. 2 After 1914, Netley, South Australia, 1987, pp. 2-3.
Victoria did not go as far as South Australia in introducing a daily flag ceremony, but in 1916 the minister urged private schools to follow the example of their State counterparts in saluting the flag every Monday morning. Lawson's circular to the private schools was extraordinary, given the tradition of minimal State interference in such schools. In it he emphasised public concern for 'developing a healthy patriotism' in schools, that is, 'sound ideals of imperial and Australian citizenship'. He included the extract from the department's regulations which explained the flag ceremony and pupils' declaration, and asked schools whether they were 'prepared to cooperate with the State schools in these manifestations of loyalty'. He hastened to add that while he did not prescribe any particular form of declaration, he felt 'strongly' that every school should have a 'national flag', display it on 'national occasions', and teach pupils 'to honor it as a symbol of our national ideals'.

Lawson's attempt was largely unsuccessful, as will be seen shortly. What is of particular interest here is that his circular made no comment about the Union Jack or Australian flag: Lawson simply referred to 'the national flag'. This was typical of the approach adopted by Tate, at least since the 1905 regulations which did not define 'the flag'. The lack of precision acknowledged the different choices of local committees, despite the tradition of the Union Jack begun by Sargood and enshrined in those first instructions of 1901. Australia had featured more strongly in the Gazette in 1916. In January teachers were asked to celebrate Foundation Day, 26 January, with their students. They were to include the flag ceremony, addresses on 'the First Settlement in Australia, on the development of the nation, and on the national ideals towards which we are striving', and 'a lesson on the Australian Flag'. Anzac Day (25 April) appeared in the school calendar, taking the place of nearby Discovery Day (20 April).

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91Circular from the Minister of Education, Victoria, to registered schools, 23 Aug. 1916, VPRS 10298 Box 9, PROV.
92EGTA, January 1916, p. 11.
93Discovery Day had been introduced into Victorian schools in 1911 to mark the anniversary of Cook's first sighting of Australia on 20 Apr. 1770; teachers were to have special lessons on Australian history during the afternoon, ibid., Mar. 1911, p. 51, Feb. 1916, p. 30. During the
Addresses by 'returned Anzacs' marked this special 'national occasion', and the second stanza on 'our splendid men' was added to the national anthem. But there was no specific mention of the Australian flag in the ceremony. Of the school principals and proprietors responding to the minister's inquiry, only one, Douglas Howard, MA, of Norfolk Girls' School, a secondary school at Sandringham, questioned him as to which was 'the national flag'. The minister, admitting that some State schools used the Australian flag, thought that 'there seem[ed] no good reason why the Australian Flag which includes the Union Jack, should not be used if so desired'. While neither Lawson nor Tate publicised this response, it reflected their continued willingness to accept schools' use of the Australian flag.

South Australia a few months later adopted a much less tolerant approach. Maughan's daily ceremony served his purposes for little more a than a year. In October 1916 the Education Gazette announced a further change which was to have far-reaching implications in the State. Yet the notice gave no indication of its precise origin, which remains a puzzle despite my search of government records and the press. The only evidence, which led me to the October 1916 issue of the Gazette, was in a small manuscript book indicating a 'revision of declaration' in October 1916. It is most likely that Maughan made the change and that Vaughan as the minister agreed. The notice in the Gazette was unobtrusive, appearing simply as

**THE NATIONAL SALUTE**

I love my country (the British Empire); I honour her King (George V);
I salute her flag (the Union Jack); I promise to cheerfully obey her
laws.

This cryptic statement was quite dissociated from the main instruction for saluting the flag, which appeared earlier in the year as a repetition of the

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1920s Anzac Day became a public holiday in the individual states, Inglis, Anzac Day in Australia and New Zealand, p. 4.
94 Minister of Public Instruction to L.D. Howard, 29 Aug. 1916, VPRS 10298 Box 9, PROV.
95 Memorandum Book of Regulations, Rulings & Miscellaneous Information, Giving File References Where Applicable c. 1910-1947, GRG 18/173, SRSA.
96 EG, Oct. 1916, p. 224.
August 1915 notice. The usual preamble, 'The Hon. the Minister desires', was missing, and the index issued at the end of the year did not list the item, making its location difficult.

Two aspects of the notice were striking, apart from the strange circumstances surrounding it. Although 'country' had always been ambiguous for Australians in the imperial context — conveniently so for those of strong imperial sentiment — increasingly it had come to refer to Australia rather than the Empire, especially during the war. 'Australia: I love my country' was the message on a blackboard of South Australia's most prestigious infant and primary State school in a photograph demonstrating the department's Montessori methods. 'Australia Day', despite its fundraising origins, persisted, at least in some South Australian schools. K.S. Inglis refers to the first Australia Day of 30 July 1915 as 'a singular occasion, a patriotic festival organized by showmen and politicians to raise money for the war effort'. That it had little specifically Australian significance can be seen from the director of education's instructions to teachers in 1915: 'Generally speaking the arrangements will be the same as those carried out on Empire Day'. Nevertheless, Sturt Street State School in inner city Adelaide, continued to celebrate Australia Day at the end of July each year throughout the war. The large State school at Gawler just north of Adelaide also marked the day for the first three years of the war, though not without some confusion in 1917 as to whether a holiday had been granted for the purpose. Despite the encouragement of an Australian patriotic sentiment, 'country' was now to mean 'the British Empire'. To underline the point, a clause was added to emphasise which flag was being saluted: 'the Union Jack'.

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97ibid., Feb. 1916, p. 72.
98Colin Thiele, Grains of Mustard Seed, Adelaide, Education Department, South Australia, 1975, p. 120.
100Maugnan to head teachers in 41 metropolitan State schools, 14 July 1915, and further details, probably for the Gazette, on 19 July, GRG 18/2/1915/1242, SRSA.
101Sturt Street School Journal, vol. 1, GRG 18/305/2, SRSA.
102Gawler School Journal, vol. 1, GRG 18/219/6, and Gawler State School Committee Minutes, GRG 18/219/10, SRSA. Another large State school at Unley also marked the day in 1915 and 1917, Unley School Journal, vol. 1, GRG 18/281/2, SRSA.
By contrast, authorities in New South Wales were investigating the possibility of Australian flags for schools. The director was Peter Board. The minister of public instruction was Labor MLA Arthur Griffith: an Irish-born Protestant patent attorney and former teacher with socialist and republican sympathies. The department's difficulty was uncertainty as to which of the Australian ensigns it should order for schools. P.J. Wallace from the Government Education Stores in Sydney asked the Minister of External Affairs, Hugh Mahon, whether it was 'a fact that only Departments under the Federal Government are permitted to fly the Blue Ensign and that the Government Offices under the States should fly the Red Merchant Flag of the Commonwealth?'

Wallace's letter is a reminder of the confusion about the two Australian ensigns, evident since the time of the 1901 competition and reinforced by Richard Crouch's resolution of 1904. At that time Mahon, as postmaster-general, had been willing to fly the Australian Ensign on post offices, provided there was no extra expense — a significant qualification, though the minister for defence had not been so cooperative. But Wallace's request was not easily settled. The letter went from one department to another: external affairs, prime minister, attorney-general and finally navy. After two more persistent letters from Wallace and almost a year later the Naval Secretary and 'watchful uncle' of the Royal Australian Navy, George Macandie, advised the Prime Minister's Department that 'State Public schools should, strictly speaking, fly the Blue Ensign with the State badge as they belong to a State Government Department'. But then, in an immediate contradiction, Macandie added

104 P.J. Wallace, Government Education Stores, to Minister for External Affairs, 8 June 1916, original emphasis, CRS A461/1 B336/1/1 Pt 2, AA (ACT).
105 Macandie, Australian-born of Scottish parents, was trained as an accountant. From federation he established the Navy Office with Captain William Creswell. He was a fervent Presbyterian, 'George Lionel Macandie', ADB, vol. 10, p. 194; G.L. Macandie, Naval Secretary, to Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, 18 Apr. 1917, CRS A461/1 B336/1/1 Pt 2, AA (ACT).
'There is no reason, however, why they should not fly the Commonwealth Blue Ensign as the national ensign'.

Basically Macandie's view was that on shore the Australian Ensign was for federal departments only; State departments should fly the State ensign. The Australian Merchant Flag was specifically for merchant ships. To Wallace's further question about the distinction between 'ensign' and 'flag' — as in Australian Ensign (blue) and Australian Merchant Flag (red) — Macandie had no satisfactory answer in the Australian context: "'National" Flags" were 'the recognised Symbol of the State'; "'Ensigns'" were 'National Flags for special uses, usually with the "National Flag" in the upper canton'. The terms had an unambiguous meaning in Britain, where the Union Jack, the national flag, appeared in the red, white, and blue ensigns for particular purposes. In Australia the Australian Ensign was, in one sense, Australia's national flag — as the symbol of the Commonwealth; in another sense, it was just another British ensign with the national flag, the Union Jack, in the upper canton.

It is not surprising that Wallace's questions should finally come to rest in the Navy Office, traditionally the authority on flags. But the role of flags was changing, as Rear-Admiral Sir Lambton Loraine had recognised in 1902: 'To parade national colours all over the country [was] surely a sentiment of modern growth'.106 Decisions about flags were no longer naval matters; they had become the concern of politicians. But in the ambiguous imperial context Australian politicians still looked to naval advisers. They in turn relied on traditional naval solutions, but also drew on more recent political pronouncements in Britain. When Macandie concluded that 'the Union Jack may be flown at any school, or by any British subject on shore' he was making use of Lord Crewe's 1908 statement in the House of Lords. It was less confusing for Australians to fly the Union Jack. But if they were permitted to fly the Union Jack, the flag of government in Britain, why were they forbidden to fly the

Australian Ensign, the flag of the Commonwealth government? At this point, Macandie thought as a naval man: blue ensigns were for 'Departments, Establishments or vessels of the Government only'. Macandie's opinion meant that, State schools aside, Australians wishing to fly a flag for patriotic purposes had no alternative but to use the Union Jack. Already civilians had begun making such enquiries. One wished to know 'whether there are any restrictions as to the use by civilians of the Blue Australian Ensign. Of course', he added, 'I am aware of the restrictions on the use of the white & blue ensign afloat but can find nothing at all about the Australian Blue flag being prohibited on land'.

There was no reply.

1916: The Drive to be British in South Australia

Maughan in South Australia had moved to consolidate the position of the Union Jack in State schools just at a time when more Australians were seeking to fly the Australian flag. By contrast Victorian authorities were unobtrusively acknowledging that schools, State and private, could fly that flag, while in New South Wales the government was beginning to deliberately encourage it. This re-positioning of the flag in schools occurred at a time of intense debate in the three States, especially in South Australia. Ostensibly the debate concerned the use of English in Lutheran schools but an analysis of the discourse surrounding these schools reveals that the real issue was nationality.

South Australia, from the arrival of its first German settlers in 1838, had continued to have the largest percentage of German-Australians of any Australian colony or State, although increasingly German immigrants were attracted to Queensland. By 1911 about 6.5 per cent of South Australia's population was of German descent compared with 4 per cent for Queensland, 0.9 for Victoria and 0.4 for New South Wales. Of those in South Australia, the

107 C. Hamilton to Secretary, Department of Home Affairs, 31 May 1916, original emphasis, CRS A461/1 B336/1/1 Pt 2, AA (ACT).
108 The figures for those of German descent can only be an approximation, based on those adhering to the Lutheran faith; figures for the German born are more precise. Both are taken
great majority (about four-fifths) were Australian-born; for the Queenslanders it was about half. However, Australia's 'Germans', particularly in country areas (and most lived in the country), constituted largely self-contained communities, held together by the Lutheran Church and its schools. This was especially so in South Australia which had forty-nine Lutheran primary schools in 1915 in a region stretching from Adelaide and the surrounding hills, through the Barossa Valley to the mid north and the Murray Mallee. Victoria, near Hamilton and Horsham in the west, had eleven, and New South Wales three, near Albury in the Riverina.\(^{109}\) Essentially these had developed as German language schools, which, together with the Lutheran churches, guaranteed the survival of the German language. Even so, there were significant differences within the Lutheran Church, especially with regard to the use of German and relations with the state, represented by the three major synods.\(^{110}\)

These German communities trod a difficult path maintaining their language and traditions while seeking acceptance in the wider community. At times they were conscious of discrimination, as in 1900 during the South African war. One writer in the *Australische Zeitung*, Australia's major German newspaper, protested that 'while Englishmen, Scots and Irishmen [were] allowed to give their opinions openly and freely', Germans had to 'give unqualified support for everything the English [did] in the Transvaal'.\(^{111}\)

Nevertheless South Australian senators, when debating the Naturalization Bill

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\(^{109}\) Education Act 1916, South Australia; Thomas Livingston, Minister of Public Instruction, 15 June 1915, *Victoria Parliamentary Debates* (hereafter *VPD*) 1915, vol. 139, p. 837; John Garland MLC, Minister of Justice and Solicitor General, for Augustus James, Minister of Public Instruction, 8 Aug. 1917, *NSWPD* 1917-18, vol. 67, p. 460.


in 1903 for the new Commonwealth of Australia, stoutly defended the rights of Germans who had been naturalised in South Australia before federation. Asserting that these 'Germans', 'the very pick of the population', were indignant that their loyalty was being questioned, they argued successfully that those already naturalised in an Australian colony should not have to apply again now that federation had occurred.112

Many German-Australians, although naturalised, thought it important to keep their 'feelings for the old Fatherland ... to remain German'.113 Hugo Muecke, the German consul in Adelaide, put this view in 1913. He had migrated as a child, been naturalised in 1866 and become a respected and successful businessman with several directorships including one in BHP, Australia's premier miner and steel manufacturer.114 In April 1914 he became the company's chairman. The occasion for his view was the celebration of the 25th Jubilee of Wilhelm II's accession to the German throne. In speaking of remaining German, Muecke was careful to add,

'But', he returned to his original point, 'we can remain German in our minds, in our customs'. In this, he believed, the role of the German language was central, adding, 'I fear we often underestimate its worth and the influence it has on our feelings and our whole life'. His remarks underlined the importance of the Lutheran schools in keeping that language alive. State registration was soon to make that more difficult.

Victoria had legislated in 1905 to regulate private schools. The Council of Public Education, set up in 1911 to represent State and private schools,

113Reported in the Australische Zeitung, 18 June 1913 and quoted by Kwan, Living in South Australia ... vol. 2: After 1914, p. 3 from Harmstorf, Guest or Fellow Countryman?
subsequently agreed to register Lutheran schools if they used English for most lessons and taught the same subjects as State schools. South Australia did not follow until the long-awaited overhaul of its education system in September 1915. This meant that debate about regulating Lutheran schools in that State occurred at a time of growing animosity against Germans.

Questions began to be asked about Lutheran schools in Victoria and New South Wales in June 1915, a few weeks after a German submarine had torpedoed the Lusitania. They reflected the suspicion that use of the German language constituted disloyalty and encouraged sedition. In New South Wales the Holman Labor government opposed calls for restrictions on the use of the German language in schools. 'We are at war with the German nation ... not ... with German literature', the Minister of Public Instruction, Arthur Griffith declared. His Liberal counterpart in Victoria, Thomas Livingston, had anticipated such concern by raising the issue in cabinet a month earlier and calling for a report on Lutheran schools. It became the basis for his assurance to parliament: there were no schools where lessons were given only in German; and their German textbooks, imported from the United States, were far from seditious, ignoring as they did German history after Luther. Even so, the minister thought it necessary to tighten registration requirements. Lutheran teachers were now to teach the State course of instruction, using the prescribed books, with the use of English extended from three and a half to four hours a day. Inspection of these schools was now to be the same as for State schools. The minister also withdrew exemption rights for children absent from State schools for lessons in German language and religion.

119Three days later the Queensland government withdrew similar rights from 'children of German offspring' who had been absent from State schools on the fifth day of each week for
South Australia's response to 'the German problem' later in 1915 in the Education Act was mild by comparison. It introduced registration of private schools for the first time, making it dependent on English being the medium of instruction for at least four hours a day.\textsuperscript{120} However, discussion was much more extensive than in Victoria because of Verran's attempt to amend the bill to ban the use of German altogether in Lutheran schools. His views illustrated how pressure of war emphasised British rather than Australian nationality. Verran assumed that, because of the Lutherans' belief in religion as the basis of their children's education, and their insistence that it be taught in German, prohibition of that language would mean closure. Impatient with registration and inspection of these schools, he argued that the legislators, 'as British people', should 'close them and bring them under the national education system' of the State.\textsuperscript{121} Australia, he believed, was involved in a 'great national struggle', a struggle between the British and the Germans. As a self-styled 'Britisher under the British flag ... expressing what a lot of honourable members [were] not game to express', he demanded that Lutheran children 'be taught pure English, and taught by those who are British, and taught what it is to be British'.\textsuperscript{122}

Other legislators were not convinced. Ephraim Coombe, the Labor member for Barossa, the heart of the German-speaking community, spoke for the Lutherans, putting their view that they wished to retain their language in the same way that other 'good British subjects' in the Empire did: the Scots and Irish in Great Britain, Afrikaans-speaking South Africans, and French-Canadians.\textsuperscript{123} Thomas Smeaton, Labor, and Laurence O'Loghlin, Liberal, went

\textsuperscript{120}Clause 53 (1), \textit{Education Act}, 1915.
\textsuperscript{122}ibid., pp. 1138, 1140.
further, defending the Lutherans as 'Australians'. However, that term did not carry much weight with other speakers. Thomas Butterfield, Catholic farmer and Labor member, thought that 'in the ordinary course' the second and third generations of non-English-speaking immigrants would become 'Australians or Britishers', but that as long as the government allowed them to teach their own language 'we shall never make Britishers of them'. Richard Butler, Liberal, was more of Verran's view: 'Being a British community, we intend to breed Britishers, and the English language shall be the language of Australia ... the language ... of the country I am so proud to belong to, Great Britain'.

Exactly what was a Britisher was the subject of some debate. Verran had, in his colourful way, wildly pledged every drop of his blood for the British flag in this dispute over schools. But the pastoralist, Albert Robinson, Liberal, while acknowledging Verran's 'bold and patriotic address' and the 'fashionable' convention of asserting one's Britishness, thought fellow Liberal and auctioneer, Richard O'Connor, was the most British member of the House in urging inspection before closure of the schools. The leader of the opposition, A.H. Peake, concurred. Asserting that they were 'all patriotic in trying to do the best [they could] to secure the recognition and practice of patriotism', he argued that liberty was 'one of the basic principles' of a people who lived under the British flag. Legislation based on prejudice, he warned, would 'rob [them] of [their] national character'. His view matched that of the Labor Premier, Crawford Vaughan, when he spoke of the importance of giving the children of German immigrants 'that English upbringing which is essential to the children of our

country'. To them being British was to understand and practise the ideas of liberty as played out in English history in the development of a liberal system of government.

Verran had a simpler view which became evident when some members questioned him as to the Catholic schools. This fiery Methodist lay preacher and freemason had no complaint about these schools: 'The Catholic is an Irishman, and is living under the British flag. He is part of the Empire and is fighting for us. He speaks English'. For Verran to emphasise the ethnic differences between the English and Irish (especially in the period before the 1916 Easter uprising in Ireland), or to recognise Australians as constituting a separate nationality would weaken his argument. 'Our Empire today', he declared, 'demands a British race and British loyalty'. But despite his passionate arguments, his amendment to force the schools' closure in 1915 failed.

The loyalty of Lutheran schools was questioned again in Victoria in March 1916, the month which saw British conscription legislation come into force, the arrival of the Australian prime minister in London, and the landing of the first Australian troops in France. The Council of Public Education, led by Dr Alexander Leeper, Irish-born Protestant and Warden of Trinity College at the University of Melbourne, recommended the abolition of 'German' schools. Subsequent ministerial inquiry found no evidence of disloyalty but advised that German should no longer be used in religious instruction and that textbooks published in Germany should be prohibited. However, in accepting the advice, the government found that it had no power in the matter because religious instruction was outside the curriculum required by the State for registration.

129Crawford Vaughan, ibid., p. 1537.
131Verran, 26 Oct. 1915, ibid., p. 1540.
132Selleck's analysis of Australian attitudes to Germans during the war concerns Victoria, especially its Lutheran schools, and the employment of German nationals in the University of Melbourne, "The Trouble with My Looking Glass". For the issue of Lutheran schools in 1916 see pp. 13-23. Selleck establishes the unscrupulous role played by Leeper on both the Council of the University and the Council of Public Education.
The federal government did have such power under the *War Precautions Act*, but only if the schools 'were preaching sedition, were untrue to British ideals' and that was not the case.\(^\text{133}\) Victorian legislation giving the government power to close those schools refusing to use English for all instruction was introduced early in August and passed within a month. It was at a crucial stage in the war when huge losses in the campaign on the Somme during the northern summer had decided the prime minister, now back from Europe, to hold a referendum on conscription.

The Victorian debate of August 1916, much more extensive than that of the previous year, concerned two aspects: first, whether closure of schools should be limited to the period of the war and immediately afterwards; and second, whether Lutheran schools should be closed even if they used only English as a medium. The Minister of Public Instruction, Harry Lawson, agreed to include in the bill the suggestion of the Labor Leader of the Opposition, George Elmslie, that there should be no time limit on closure.\(^\text{134}\) But the House rejected the amendment calling for closure proposed by Liberal member and long-time ANA enthusiast of Protestant Irish descent, Dick Toutcher.\(^\text{135}\)

Throughout the debate members spoke of the importance of language. Their real concern was nationality. Their discourse revealed a belief in Australian nationality, but an inability to separate it from British nationality. Lawson spoke of the need to be true to 'British tradition' and to 'Australian ideals', to teach children 'the principles of loyal Australian and Imperial citizenship'. A fellow Liberal, John Mackey, a close friend of Frank Tate, quoted with approval the view expressed in the *Age*: 'The most important part of education in the Commonwealth is the creation of a British-Australian citizenship. Its first duty is to instil into the minds of the children an undivided loyalty to Australia and Australian institutions — to make the pupils devoted


members of the British race, proud of its history'.\textsuperscript{136} He was also of Protestant Irish descent. Toutcher spoke of saving German-Australian children 'from growing up distinct and apart, not only from the Australian nationality, but from our British and Australian traditions'.\textsuperscript{137} Of Liberal speakers on the issue, only William Kendell, a farmer in the Legislative Council, was more precise in calling for an education which would 'in the first place, make [children] good Australians, and in the second place, good citizens of the British Empire'.\textsuperscript{138} Among Labor Party members, interest in Australia was more sharply defined. Owen Sinclair, Australian-born glassblower and tobacconist from Port Melbourne, put it simply: immigrants 'should be taught the Australian sentiment, if not the British sentiment'.\textsuperscript{139} Elmslie, Labor leader and Australian-born stonemason, referred to the need 'to build up a national character, an Australian sentiment — the feeling of Australian nationhood'.\textsuperscript{140} Nevertheless, he assumed an essential Britishness in Australians: it was defined by their willingness to defend the principle of liberty in the current war. America, by contrast, he argued, no longer possessed this 'national spirit': it had been weakened by its policy of allowing immigrants from Europe to retain their languages in distinct communities.

Whatever their objective — the banning of the German language or the closure of the schools — members could not justify their opinions on Australian grounds alone: British race, traditions and history had to be used. James Farrer, a Liberal grazier, expressed it most concisely: the government should 'see that they [Germans] are as Australian as Australians can be ... We desire, as a people, to offer to all our own people, and the Germans alike, a British

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item[135]Richard Toutcher, \textit{ibid.}, p. 896. Of the 9 approving closure, 8 were from the Labor Party. 'Richard Frederick Toutcher', \textit{ADB}, vol. 12, p. 246.
\item[136]John Mackey, 16 Aug. 1916, quoting the \textit{Age} of that date, \textit{ibid.}, p. 805. Mackey, a teacher and lawyer, was Australian-born of Protestant Irish descent, 'Sir John Emanuel Mackey', \textit{ADB}, vol. 10, pp. 309-311.
\item[140]George Elmslie, 16 Aug. 1916, \textit{ibid.}, pp. 801, 802.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
education in a British school'. There was a difficulty, though, in defining this 'British education in a British school'. Were Catholic schools British? English-born Liberal, Oswald Snowball, did not think so. A high-ranking freemason and Orangeman, and a fierce opponent of the anti-conscriptionist, Dr Daniel Mannix, Coadjutor to the Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne, he argued that the scope of the bill should be widened to enable the closing of these schools. They were, he said, 'far and away more disloyal than the German schools'. 'Dr Mannix's spirit', he declared, was 'the spirit breathed into the children attending them'. Citing the Catholic Church's decision in Sydney to celebrate Australia Day on Empire Day, he concluded that 'the whole influence of these schools, and of the Roman Catholic Church ... is anti-national and anti-British'. He refused to condemn the Lutheran schools without evidence of disloyalty when there were these other schools 'showing every evidence of want of sympathy with us in our national and Australian ideals'.

Snowball's outburst on 22 August may well have prompted Lawson to send his circular the next day to private schools, seeking to know whether they were prepared to follow the State school example in holding regular patriotic ceremonies. The result of his inquiry showed that there was some substance in Snowball's view. Whereas the Catholic response was diffident and ambivalent, that of the Lutheran schools was impeccable from the government's point of view. That was not surprising: the Lutheran schools had been under special public scrutiny since the beginning of the war. The Catholic school system, traditionally aloof from the State, was now also likely to harbour Irish-Australian antagonism to Britain's brutal suppression of the Easter rebellion in Ireland, and to the federal government's determination to hold a referendum on conscription.

141James Farrer, ibid., p. 829. Farrer was Australian-born of English descent, Browne, Biographical Register, p. 65.
The Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne, Thomas Carr, responding on behalf of Catholic schools, stated that all teachers were 'willing to comply' with the minister's request. He explained that in the past the teaching of patriotism had varied according to school size and teachers' preferences. However, he conceded that with the war-time need for 'the development of the highest patriotic spirit', he would direct teachers 'to cooperate, as far as possible, with the State schools in making patriotic lessons and displays as effective and imposing as possible'. It was a diplomatic response: appearing to cooperate with the government's request, he left the matter to teachers as before, effectively disguising any opposition. Some were willing to hold a flag ceremony, in fact had already done so on occasion with State schools. Sister Kathleen at Rochester, south of Echuca, said she did not know of the Monday morning practice, but would adopt it. Others made their participation dependent on the department supplying a flag — perhaps another form of diplomacy. The head teacher at St Mary's school in Lancefield, an agricultural town 50 km south east of Castlemaine, was one who wrote with particular feeling in seeking a flag:

Though our poor little school is keenly feeling the hard pinch of these depressed times, and can scarcely raise sufficient funds for my sparce (sic) salary, yet both myself and pupils will be proud indeed to have the grand old 'Union Jack' flying over our school, and to salute it every Monday morn. Though we are poor, our hearts are loyal.

The department remained unmoved: it refused to supply flags. The response from the Lutherans was quite different. Their students had been saluting the flag each week since the instruction had been issued to State schools late in 1914, and in some cases before that.
The sharpest criticism of the circular, however, came from well established Protestant schools: Wesley College and Trinity Grammar School. L.A. Adamson, English-born Anglican headmaster of the Methodist college, expressed abhorrence at the idea of a flag ceremony: his older boys would not tolerate it; his younger boys would be insulted by it.\textsuperscript{147} Their views would be similar, he thought, to those of boys in Kipling's \textit{Stalky & Co}.\textsuperscript{148} Adamson's approach was rather to create an 'esprit de corps ... where a boy breathes an atmosphere that makes him sincerely believe that his school is the best school'; that 'habit of mind' made him believe in his country and Empire. Rousing patriotic songs at morning assembly played an important part 'in creating patriotic feeling': these included \textit{A Hymn of Australia}, \textit{An Australian National Hymn}, and \textit{Anzac}.

At Trinity the headmaster was the English-born Anglican clergyman and member of the Royal Society of St George, Arthur Tonge, who had taught in private schools in England and Australia. He told the Minister that he thought his circular was 'ill-timed & impertinent' in implying that private schools were lacking in patriotic spirit, given the high rate of enlistment by their former students.\textsuperscript{149} Patriotism, he believed, did not need to be taught to the boys of 'public schools' because it was 'in the air they breathe at these schools'. He went on to assert defiantly that '[their] flag' was hoisted not on Empire Day but 'Trafalgar Day & other historic occasions & also on the day which should have been the national day, St George's Day'. Empire Day, he was 'glad to say' occurred during the school holidays. He disliked it because 'it merely bore[d] boys & girls & foster[ed] an unthinking pride at the expense of a real sense of duty & past national sin'. Others among Tonge's peers had a similar view of Empire Day. At Xavier College, the Prefect of Studies, Father Eustace Boylan, had commented in his diary: 'None of the Public schools keep this day. We sent

\textsuperscript{147}Lawrence Arthur Adamson', \textit{ADB}, vol. 7, pp. 11-13; Adamson to Minister of Public Instruction, 25 Aug. 1916, VPRS 10298 Box 9, PROV.
\textsuperscript{148}See above, Chapter 2, p. 83 for details of the incident to which he referred.
no contingent to Kew to salute the Flag'. The mayor of Port Melbourne was to propose a Eureka Day instead.

Lawson hastened to assure the headmasters that he was not imposing any ceremony on their schools. Nor was he reflecting on their patriotism. His concern was that 'the national flag' be displayed and pupils taught its significance. The whole exercise provides a more complicated view of schools and their role in shaping children's ideas of nationality than McKernan acknowledges when he refers to them as 'seedplots of Empire loyalty'. State schools were the most vulnerable to imperial pressure through government control as the war continued. However, although 'the larger number of State schools' flew the Union Jack, some were using the Australian flag.

However, while the strongest opposition to the minister's suggestion came from the Protestant private school sector, W.S. Littlejohn at Scotch College was more accommodating. The College had already changed its motto in 1914 from Deo et Litteris to Deo, Patriae, Litteris. However, it is not clear whether Patriae was intended to refer to England (as in the poem, For England, by Scotch scholar, J.D. Burns), to the Empire (Scottish-born Littlejohn's 'abiding concern'), or to Australia. Brian Lewis believed it was England. Commenting on the Burns' poem which he and other Wesley College boys sang, he wrote: 'This was what we felt. It was an honour and a duty to go to fight for England; not for Britain; not for the Empire nor for Australia, but for England, and we were

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149A.W. Tonge, Headmaster, Trinity Grammar School, to Minister of Public Instruction, 25 Aug. 1916, VPRS 10298 Box 9, PROV.
150Entry for 3 June, King's Birthday (for which the school gave a half-day holiday), Prefect of Studies Journal, 1912, Xavier College.
151The mayor was E.F. Russell, ALP, in 1914, Nancy U'Ren and Noel Turnbull, A History of Port Melbourne, Melbourne, Oxford University Press, 1983, p. 193. My thanks to Professor F.B. Smith for this reference.
152See Lawson's replies to Tonge, Adamson and Howard, 29 Aug. 1916, ibid.
153H.S.W. Lawson, Minister of Public Instruction, to L.D. Howard, Norfolk Girls' School, 29 Aug. 1916, ibid.
154D.T. Merrett cites Littlejohn as the cause of the change in the motto; Geoffrey Tolson, the school's archivist, said the change was initiated by the boys, who thought that the motto should reflect more clearly their belief that service to the school was service to the country'. D.T. Merrett, "The School at War": Scotch College and the Great War', in Stephen Murray-Smith (ed.), Melbourne Studies in Education 1982, p. 226; Geoffrey Tolson, comment to author, 5 June 1992.
proud to be able to help'.\textsuperscript{155} Despite the Scottish background of Burns' college, his 'banners of England, unfurled across the sea' stirred powerful emotions for his generation.\textsuperscript{156}

In South Australia Peake had suggested in 1915 that private schools might also adopt a flag ceremony. However, no more was heard of the proposal. Verran had been heartened by the Victorian parliament's decision to ban the use of German in Lutheran schools, even though he believed the legislation did not go far enough. But he was determined that in South Australia those opposed to Lutheran schools would be more successful in having them closed. The All-British League, which had emerged in South Australia at the beginning of the war, rallied support for a petition calling for the closure of Lutheran schools and the disenfranchisement and dismissal from official positions of persons of enemy origin.\textsuperscript{157} It was similar in objectives to the Loyalist League in Victoria. James Wilson, a Vice-President of the All British League's Grand Council and a Labor member of the Legislative Council, presented the 49,000 signatures to the chief secretary on 2 September 1916.\textsuperscript{158} He was Welsh-born, an infant immigrant like Verran.\textsuperscript{159} A bootmaker before entering parliament, he had managed the portfolios of industry and agriculture in Verran's cabinet of 1910-1912. His deputation in 1916 made clear to the acting-premier that if his government did not implement these policies, its right to govern would be challenged. Wilson later explained in parliament: 'That there is a strong

\textsuperscript{155}Lewis, \textit{Our War}, p. 222.
\textsuperscript{156}The first two stanzas of Burns' poem, quoted by Merrett, "The School at War", p. 217, read:

\begin{quote}
The Bugles of England were blowing o'er the sea,
As they had called a thousand years, calling now to me;
They woke me from dreaming in the dawning of the day,
The bugles of England — and how could I stay?

The banner of England, unfurled across the sea,
Floating out upon the wind, were beckoning to me;
Storm-rent and battle-torn, smoke-stained and grey,
The banners of England — and how could I stay?
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{157}\textit{All British Sentinel}, July 1918, p. 14.
\textsuperscript{158}James Wilson, 9 Nov. 1916, SAPD 1916, vol. 2, p. 1965; \textit{Register}, 4 Sept. 1916, p. 5. John Verran was a member of the committee of the Adelaide branch of the league in July 1918 and probably earlier, \textit{All British Sentinel}, 1 July 1918, p. 18.
growing British sentiment goes without saying, but it has been greatly accentuated, particularly since the beginning of the present war'.

Vaughan's response to the mounting pressure was to introduce legislation similar to Victoria's, empowering the government to close schools which used German.\(^{160}\) It was just three days after the first conscription referendum. Debate was brief. Vaughan argued for fostering in schools 'British ideals, habits, and thoughts'; parents wanting their children to learn any other language could teach them at home.\(^{161}\) Howard Vaughan, the premier's brother and Attorney-General, echoed the sentiment: 'we should induce the German-Australian in our midst to be of us, with us, and in every sense to become a Britisher in language, thought, and sentiment'.\(^{162}\) While still prepared to keep Lutheran schools open, the premier was concerned that they might encourage the development of 'a little empire within an empire', an extension of Verran's 'colony within a colony' in 1915.\(^{163}\) He cited the current dispute in Canada where difference in language divided even those of the same faith: 'a great controversy ... between the French-Canadian Catholics, who wish the French language used in the schools, and the Irish Catholics, who very properly contend that English should be used'.

The issue Vaughan referred to was the Ontario schools question, which, like the Manitoba schools question a decade before, affected politics throughout Canada, especially in the volatile atmosphere of war.\(^{164}\) In Ontario the number of French-Canadians had increased significantly since the late nineteenth century. By 1910 they constituted 10 per cent of the province's population.\(^{165}\)

\(^{159}\)James Phillips Wilson, Coxon et al., Biographical Register, p. 242.
\(^{160}\)Introduced on 31 Oct. 1916, the second reading was on 1 Nov.; it was given assent on 16 Nov.
\(^{162}\)John Vaughan, 9 Nov. 1916, ibid., p. 1965.
\(^{163}\)Crawford Vaughan, 1 Nov. 1916, ibid., p. 1786.
\(^{165}\)Choquette, Language and Religion, p. 252.
Whereas in 1890 there had been very few English-French schools in the public and separate (or denominational) sectors, by 1912 there were 122 and 223 respectively.\textsuperscript{166} Attempts by the French-Canadians to consolidate bilingual rights in education led J.P. Whitney’s Conservative government in 1912 to attempt to limit the use of French to the first two or three years of school.\textsuperscript{167} The Catholic community split over the issue. English-speaking Catholics, led by Irish-Canadian clerics, feared that French-Canadian militancy would threaten the very existence of their schools, as had happened in Manitoba in 1890 and Saskatchewan and Alberta in 1905.\textsuperscript{168} Early in 1914 they petitioned the government to dissociate their English-speaking separate schools from the bilingual separate schools and to end all teaching of French in separate schools. An attempt in the Canadian House of Commons in the northern spring of 1916 to protect French-Canadians’ right to be educated in French failed, as members on both sides of the House crossed party lines according to their ethnicity. The issue continued to create animosity, soon to be whipped into violence the following year as the Canadian government attempted to implement conscription in Quebec. By then the newly-elected Liberal government in Manitoba had abolished bi-lingual teaching, which had involved not only French but also German, Polish and Ukrainian.\textsuperscript{169}

Against this background, referred to by more than one speaker in the South Australian parliament, the complete banning of South Australia’s minority language, German, seemed a natural response. Vaughan

\textsuperscript{166} Barber, 'The Ontario Bilingual Schools Issue', p. 64.

\textsuperscript{167} This was the infamous Regulation 17 in the Ontario Department of Education Circular of Instructions, Choquette, Language and Religion, p. 167.

\textsuperscript{168} Choquette concludes that ‘the bilingual schools controversy in Ontario was primarily, at least after 1910, a struggle within Canadian Catholicism itself’, ibid., p. 258. He points out that the English or Irish Catholics, with 20 per cent of Canadian Catholics (compared to the French-Canadians’ 72.56 per cent), were much more powerful in the Catholic hierarchy: they held five of the nine metropolitan sees and fifteen of the thirty-two episcopal sees, p. 184. He comments on the particularly difficult position of Ontario’s English-speaking Catholics, who ‘felt trapped between the upper millstone of French-Canadian nationalism and the lower millstone of Protestant bigotry’, p. 77.

\textsuperscript{169} T.H. Johnson, a member of the Icelandic community, led the legislative move to end bi-lingual schooling; the vote was 38 to 8. W.L. Morton, Manitoba Schools and Canadian Nationality, 1880-1923, in E. Brian Titley and Peter J. Miller (eds), Education in Canada: An Interpretation (1981), Calgary, Detselig Enterprises, 1982, p. 117.
acknowledged that there were practical difficulties with political implications in allowing 'German' schools to remain open. There were cases of 'British children' in remote farming settlements being forced to attend 'German' schools because there were not enough children in the district to open or to keep open a State school.\textsuperscript{170} This should not have mattered greatly, given that under the 1915 act most instruction had to be in English. However, with wartime public opinion roused against those of German descent, attendance by 'British' children at a 'German' school was unthinkable. Critical extracts from inspectors' reports on Lutheran schools, quoted by Vaughan in parliament, underlined the point: 'The children did not know the oath of allegiance ... the school does not possess a Union Jack, nor are there any royal pictures. The "National Anthem" was not sung'.\textsuperscript{171} Another inspector had reported seeing no flags, either inside or outside the school 'to show that it was a British school. [He went on] ... children should know under which flag they live'. Yet another noted that although it was Empire Day when he had called at the school, 'no reference was made to it'. Verran, unsuccessful in his amendment of 1915, now carried the assembly in insisting on closure of Lutheran schools.\textsuperscript{172} Despite the Legislative Council's attempt to soften Verran's amendment, it now became law.

The months between August and November 1916 had been critical for governments in Victoria and South Australia responding to pressures to close Lutheran schools. Liberals in Victoria had not succumbed to such pressures; Labor in South Australia had, justifying its position by the need to be British. The larger percentage of South Australians of German descent and the greater number of Lutheran schools were significant factors in driving Verran and his supporters to argue their case in terms of British nationality. In the process both

\textsuperscript{171}Crawford Vaughan, 7 Nov. 1916, \textit{ibid.}, p. 1886.
\textsuperscript{172}See the succession of education bills: House of Assembly No. 54 of 1916, 31 Oct. 1916; House of Assembly No. 69, 7 Nov. 1916; Legislative Council No. 31a, 9 Nov. 1916, \textit{South Australia: Bills Introduced}. The critical clause in the \textit{Education Act 1916} read: 'After the expiration of six months from the passing of this Act, but not later than the thirty-first day of December, nineteen hundred and seventeen, all the schools referred to in the Schedule hereto shall be closed'.
governments defined what ideas of nationality they expected to be taught in the schools. In Victoria there was a willingness to recognise an emerging sense of Australian nationality, by allowing the use of the Australian flag instead of the Union Jack. South Australia, by contrast, insisted on British nationality, emphasised by the British flag. Such insistence, which redefined 'country' as Empire, accompanied the legislation closing Lutheran schools.

Aftermath

Lutheran children were apprehensive during 1917 as they began attending the nearest State school, or saw their own school taken over by a strange teacher.\textsuperscript{173} 'For the first week I could not get them to speak above a whisper when saluting [the] flag', one teacher reported to the director of education.\textsuperscript{174} Maughan, concerned about the transition, had requested the teachers to comment at the end of July on the attitude of Lutheran parents and children to the new arrangements. Of the children he especially asked: 'I am hoping that they will become more bright and cheerful. Do you see any signs of this?'\textsuperscript{175} Most teachers thought they did. Maughan's conclusion, that the 'children evidently appreciate the milder government of the English Teacher', pleased A.H. Peake, the new Liberal Premier.\textsuperscript{176} He was soon to head the Liberal-National Coalition in the wake of the split in Vaughan's government over conscription.

Teachers in Lutheran areas where there had been no flag pole in schools reported communities' willingness to provide one.\textsuperscript{177} Maughan was having second thoughts about the daily flag ceremony. There had been some criticism

\textsuperscript{173}Maughan reported on 21 May 1917 to Vaughan that of the forty-nine Lutheran schools, six had been closed and the children relocated, fourteen more could be absorbed by the nearest State schools; a further fourteen could be taken over at the end of June when teachers became available, leaving fifteen schools 'that we cannot touch yet', GRG 18/2/1917/1288, SRSA.

\textsuperscript{174}J.L. McCabe, teacher of Bower Public School (35 children), formerly a Lutheran school, to Director of Education, early August 1917, GRG 18/2/1917/1955, SRSA. Bower was a railway station and post office 25 km east of Eudunda, Geoffrey H. Manning, Manning's Place Names of South Australia, Adelaide, published by the author, 1990, p. 45.

\textsuperscript{175}Director of Education to teachers of Lutheran children, 31 July 1917, GRG 18/2/1917/1955, SRSA.

\textsuperscript{176}M.M. Maughan, Director of Education, to Minister of Education, 13 Aug. 1917 and response by A.H.P[eake], 15 Aug. 1917, \textit{ibid.}

\textsuperscript{177}Teachers at Peter's Hill and Moculta to Director of Education, 2 and 4 Aug. 1917, \textit{ibid.}
that it was becoming 'commonplace and meaningless'. However, when he sought the opinion of the school inspectors, only two endorsed the criticism. Even then, they favoured the daily showing of the flag, leaving the full ceremony to once a week. Most inspectors thought that the standing of the ceremony, whenever it was held, would reflect the attitude of the head teacher: 'if that spirit is right', wrote D.J. Pavia from Mt Gambier, 'there will be no lack of true feeling'. More than one inspector feared that the ceremony, if not done every day, 'is likely to be forgotten altogether'. Only J.S. Gold considered the wider implications of changing the requirements: 'During the progress of the war I do not think that the daily salute should be omitted. To do so suddenly at this particular period would be likely to have a more injurious effect than is likely to be produced by its continuance'.

The frequency of patriotic demonstrations was also becoming a concern in New South Wales. During the early part of the war the Education Department had not insisted on flag ceremonies in schools. But then the habit of saluting the flag had not been established before the war as in South Australia and Victoria. However, in November 1916 Arthur Griffith, in one of his last directives as minister of public instruction after the Labor Party split, required the national anthem to be sung at the end of each day to impress on children 'the magnitude of the struggle in which the Empire is now engaged, and the principles for which it is striving'. The Nationalist government followed this requirement with another a year later: that children salute 'their country's flag' each morning 'wherever facilities exist ... before starting school work'. The Minister specified 'either the Union Jack or the Australian flag, whichever may be

178Director of Education to Inspectors, 28 Apr. 1917, reporting the criticism of a teacher, who presumably had included the terms 'commonplace' and 'meaningless', since many of the inspectors' responses mentioned them, GRG 18/2/1917/1569, SRSA.
179John Harry from Willunga, south of Adelaide, and S.H. Warren from Crystal Brook in the mid north, 1 May 1917, ibid.
180D.J. Pavia, Mt Gambier, 2 May 1917, ibid.
181John C. Noack, Tumby Bay on Eyre’s Peninsular, 2 May 1917, ibid.
182Original emphasis, J.S. Gold, from Maylands, an Adelaide suburb, 5 May 1917, ibid.
184EG, Nov. 1917, p. 256.
available'.\(^{185}\) It was a significant change from the pre-war encouragement of 'British and Australian flags' and a marked contrast to the Education Department in South Australia which insisted on the Union Jack.\(^{186}\) By then P.J. Wallace in the Government Education Stores had clarified with the federal government that schools could fly the Commonwealth Ensign, the blue Australian flag. However, in Victoria a tradition was growing, encouraged by the flag manufacturers, that schools must use the Commonwealth Merchant Flag, the red Australian flag.

If war encouraged the use of the Australian flag, at least in some parts of Australia, it also exacerbated the ambiguous status of the two Australian ensigns, evident since their design in 1901. The Union Jack had been commonly known as 'the national flag'; that was not yet a phrase readily applied to the Australian flag. 'National' retained its British associations, which after the Easter uprising in Ireland became even more clearly English associations. They were reflected in Australian politics, most obviously in the titles of the political parties which emerged during the war over conscription. The National Labor Party, later the Nationalist Party, supported conscription; the Australian Labor Party did not. To be national was to emphasise imperial connection and obligation. 'The advice to put Australia first and the Empire second', the recently-resigned Liberal Minister for Education in South Australia, David Gordon, warned before the second conscription referendum in December 1917, 'is evil and mischievous'.\(^{187}\) So outraged was the All British Sentinel, the organ of the All British League, the British Empire Union and the British Women's Alliance, at the defeat of conscription for a second time that it thought Britain

\(^{185}\) Emphasis added.


\(^{187}\) David J. Gordon, 'Britishers, Keep your Flag Flying', *All British Sentinel*, 1 Dec. 1917, p. 26. Australian-born of Scottish parents, Gordon was a journalist and active in Liberal politics. He resigned as minister soon after the Liberals formed a coalition with the National Labor Party. He was a Congregationalist. 'Sir David John Gordon', *ADB*, vol. 9, pp. 51-52.
should declare martial law in Australia — now that 'the enemies of our race are in a majority'.

The columns of the *All British Sentinel* provide vivid illustrations of the tensions in nationality provoked by war. The predominant emphasis of the journal was British as might be expected for the mouthpiece of the All British League, open to all those of 'British extraction'. The league approved of the sentiment of the Governor of Victoria, Sir Arthur Stanley, reported as seeking 'an even higher name than Englishmen or Australian — Britons'. Yet complaints of the 'English' being constantly ignored formed a constant theme throughout the journal. Charles Owen Smyth, the founder of the Royal Society of St George in South Australia and Vice-Patron of the All British League, deplored how the press 'lauded the Scotch, the Irish, the Canadian, and the Anzac soldiers' but overlooked 'the backbone of the army, the English Tommy'.

The Governor-General, Lord Forster, later wondered why the English were 'shy of speaking of their country and themselves as "England and the English"'. He thought that it reflected either modesty or a fear of stirring the Scots who preferred the term 'British'. That the Scots could be stirred was shown by their reaction to the flying of St George's flag from South Australian government buildings on his day, 23 April. The Caledonian Society's request for a similar right on St Andrew's Day went as far as the colonial secretary in London who found that, contrary to Owen Smyth's advice to the South Australian premier, the king had not given his permission for St George's flag to be flown from government buildings in England. The South Australian government subsequently withdrew its permission.

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188 Editorial, *All British Sentinel*, 1 Dec. 1917, p. 3. This was the first issue of the journal.
190 *ibid.*, 2 Sept. 1918, p. 5.
192 He was proposing the toast at a St George's Day dinner, *Daily Telegraph*, 25 Apr. 1921, p. 4.
193 Correspondence between the Caledonian Society, the Chief Secretary, and the Colonial Secretary, 6 Oct. 1919 - 7 Oct. 1920, GRG 24/6/1919/1416, SRSA.
Contributors to the *All British Sentinel* were most uncomfortable with the term 'Australian', which they saw as ambiguous: 'When we speak of an Australian', 'Red Ensign' commented in January 1918 ' ... it conveys little to the mind unless qualified by the nationality of the parents' as in 'German-Australian' or 'British-Australian': 'the only Australian who is entitled to use the single word Australian is the aborigine'. A speaker at a meeting of the British Women's Alliance, agreed, warning his listeners not to 'mislead your youngsters with the word "Australian". The word at present has no meaning here beyond its application to the aborigine, the kangaroo or the continent. It was a term the journal distrusted because it 'shelter[ed] anything from a Hun to a Greek dago, and has been of inestimable value to the first-named'. However, ignoring the term became increasingly difficult. The response was to define it to mean British-Australian through Australia's soldiers: 'the word "Australia"', the journal declared, 'is represented by the 360,000 men who have left these shores at duty's call. They are Australians in the real sense of the word'.

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194 *ibid.*, 1 Jan. 1918, p. 12.
195 Capt. A.C.H. Chapman, a Vice-President of the league, *ibid.*, 1 Aug. 1918, p. 17. Chapman was 'the originator' of the journal, *All British Sentinel*, 1 June 1918, p. 21.
196 'Open Letter by the Man in the Street', *British Sentinel* (as renamed from 2 Sept 1918 issue), 1 May 1919, p. 8.
197 Editorial, *ibid.*, 2 Sept. 1918, p. 3.
Members of the All British League in South Australia were not the only ones who portrayed the soldier as the supreme example of the 'good Australian': the Australian who had answered the call of Empire and race. Charles Bean, Australia's official historian for the war, believed that soldiers' experience at Gallipoli and beyond had made the Australian people — soldiers and civilians — 'fully conscious of itself as a nation'.¹ As he wrote for young Australians at the end of the war, 'They made our people a famous people ... they made it so famous that every Australian is proud for the world to know that he is an Australian'.² For Bean this did not deny but rather affirmed Australians' wider British nationality.

The awakened sense of Australian nationality, as mediated by the returned soldiers in the post-war period, fascinated K.S. Inglis and Geoffrey Serle. Serle wrote of 'the schizophrenic double loyalty' of 'the conservative classes', 'intense Australian patriots and intense imperialists both', who commandeered the digger legend to promote a 'right-wing variation of Australian nationalism'.³ Inglis, whose work on 'the Anzac Tradition' raised the issue for Serle, is less willing to see this development in class terms, suggesting that loyalty to class and to nation could be compatible.⁴

There are two points of interest here. First, 'the schizophrenic double loyalty': did it affect only 'the conservative classes'? How did Australians adjust Australian and British — and other — loyalties in the immediate post-war

period? Serle argued in 1965 that there was 'a marked change in the balance of Australian loyalties to Australia, Britain and the Empire'. The change, he noted, was especially evident in the Protestant middle class and the non-Labor parties. By 1973, however, Serle was not so sure, a view he reiterated in 1987: 'Protestant conservatives thumped the imperial drum and deplored political manifestations of Australianism ... even more strongly than before'. No wonder he was dissatisfied with the terms 'nationalism' and 'imperialism'. Second, how did those supreme Australians, the returned soldiers, use the power politicians gave them as makers of the Australian nation to negotiate the 'double loyalty'? In turn, how would the Nationalist and Labor Parties shape their appeals, in terms of Australia and the Empire, to these men as voters?

Charles Bean urged young Australians, including those in the AIF: 'You have to choose whether you will ... give ... your enthusiasm to your nation, ... your own people, your country — to Australia'. The Labor Premier of Queensland, T.J. Ryan, wanted delegates at the federal Labor Party Conference in 1919 to retain the emphasis on 'Australian sentiment' in the party's objectives since he believed that returned soldiers 'were convinced ... that Australia was the best country in the world, and, like other Australians, they were anxious to put their own country first'. But were they?

For the historian trying to answer such questions, flags are useful symbols marking the adjustment of Australian and British loyalties. There were the two national flags — Australian and British — but with the further complication that one included the other. The standing of these flags was quite different. The

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5Serle, 'The Digger Tradition', p. 150.
8Bean, In Your Hands, Australians, p. 16.
Union Jack had been unequivocally the national flag of Australians. But others beside Moran and O'Reilly had begun to question its adequacy. Within the Australian Natives' Association (ANA) there was an attempt during the war to modify the Union Jack, 'to make the flag in a more real sense ... the flag of the Empire as well as of Great Britain and Ireland'.

The Australian flag was new, still uncertain in its standing as a national flag, especially in the form of two ensigns. There was also confusion as to whether these ensigns were for Commonwealth use only: the Commonwealth government with the Ensign; and Commonwealth-registered ships with the Merchant Flag. In the past, attempts to promote the use of the Australian flag had been justified on the grounds that it included the Union Jack; there could be no disloyalty. But would that justification now be necessary?

The national flag, as Carlton Hayes's work reminds us, is nationalism's 'chief symbol of faith'. Raymond Firth believed that it represents not merely 'ideas and actions of great consequence to [a] societ[y]' but also 'repressed emotional material of great importance to the ego'. In post-war Australia protagonists manipulated national flags for a range of purposes. Nowhere is this more evident than in incidents surrounding two events: St Patrick's Day of 1920 in Melbourne; and May Day of 1921 in Sydney. My interest is in the use of the Australian flag especially: who used it, for what purpose, and with what effect? But the context in which it was used is also important: we need to see the Australian flag in relation to other flags, most often the Union Jack, but also

10Major H.C.R. Batchelor suggested an 'addition to the Union Jack, which will typify the intimate relation which exists between all parts of the Empire and the Motherland' at the ANA (SA) general conference in 1916. W.J. Sowden, past Chief President replaced his motion with another recommending that the board of directors 'negotiate with the boards of the other States and representatives of the other Dominions and colonies, the question of special representation on the British flag of all dominions and other colonial possessions'. Sowden's motion was carried. The New South Wales board approved the idea; the Victorian board did not. In August 1918 the South Australian board deferred consideration of the proposal. ANA (SA), Minutes of the General Conference and Proceedings, 18-20 Apr. and 9 May 1916, and Minutes of the Board of Directors, 26 July 1916, 12 Mar. 1917, Minute Book, vol. 6.

11For example, General Secretary, ANA (WA) to Andrew Fisher, Prime Minister, 11 Apr. 1913, CRS MP 472/1/0 1/13/4322, Australian Archives (Victoria), hereafter AA (Vic.); and H.S.W. Lawson, Minister of Public Instruction, to L.D. Howard, proprietor of Norfolk Girls' School, Sandringham, 29 Aug. 1916, VPRS 10298, Public Record Office Victoria (hereafter PROV).

Irish flags (tricolour and green harp flag) and the Red Flag. Among these the Australian flag was a relative newcomer — indeed, an uncertain newcomer, which allowed it to continue as such an ambiguous symbol in the Australian context. Events surrounding St Patrick's Day in Melbourne in 1920 and May Day in Sydney in 1921 exacerbated its uncertain position, revealing the Australian flag as a symbol of disloyalty unless accompanied by the Union Jack.

St Patrick's Day, Melbourne, 1920

Two large Australian flags (fig. 24) headed the St Patrick's Day procession in Melbourne on 20 March 1920 — deliberately chosen to make an anti-British statement. This was not the first time the Catholic Church had used the Australian flag to make a tactical point on the Irish issue. In 1911 on Empire Day, which Cardinal Moran had renamed Australia Day, Irish and Australian flags, not the Union Jack, had flown from the towers of St Mary's Cathedral in Sydney. Archbishop Mannix in Melbourne was taking the point a step further. To appreciate the significance of that step in relation to Australian and British — and Irish — loyalties, we need to interpret the symbolism not only of the negotiations which preceded the procession, but also more importantly the film of it made for propaganda purposes.

The lengthy negotiations from January to March concerning the procession, even influencing the mayoral election, indicated the highly controversial nature of the day. Flags were the centre of attention. The previous year there had been no procession because of the conditions — including the carrying of the Australian flag and the Union Jack at its head — imposed by the lord mayor after republican emblems of the Irish Sinn Fein appeared in the

14See above Chapter 4. In Cygnet, Tasmania, the Catholic Church's deliberate refusal to fly the Union Jack was also evident in 1919, Christopher Leslie Martin, War and After War: The Great War and its Aftermath in the Tasmanian Region: The Huon, 1914-1926, MA, University of Tasmania, 1992, p. 81.
procession of 1918. This, against the background of the worsening Anglo-Irish War, ensured that St Patrick's Day became a test of strength between its organising committee, behind which stood Dr Daniel Mannix and John Wren, Melbourne businessman, and an alliance of various loyalist bodies led by the President of the Loyalist League of Victoria, Dr Alexander Leeper. The Irish-born Mannix's opposition to conscription had attracted the wrath of loyalists during the war; now they reacted to his support for Irish independence. His ally, Wren, a Catholic but not a practising one, was the *bête noire* of Melbourne's establishment. Although favouring conscription, he had made his Richmond racecourse available in November 1917 for Mannix to speak against the Nationalist Hughes government when trustees of the Exhibition Building had refused him access. Now Wren wished to honour Mannix with an extraordinary procession. Leeper was well known for his imperialist views: he had been Victoria’s foremost opponent of the Lutheran schools during the war; he was also a vocal critic of the first Australian postage stamps — the kangaroo on the map of Australia. Following the 'disloyalty' of St Patrick's Day procession in 1918, he and businessman Herbert Brookes had begun organising Melbourne's loyalists. Sectarian, ethnic and national issues were at stake.

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16 Other conditions: no symbols or tableaux indicating Sinn Fein or republican sympathies; the playing of 'God Save the King' on leaving St Patrick's Hall, Bourke Street, and arriving at the Exhibition Building; and the use of LaTrobe rather than the busier Bourke Street. See Minute from the Lord Mayor on street processions, attached to draft memorandum from the Lord Mayor, 23 Jan. 1920, VPRS 3183 Series 3, Box 155, VPRO; the *Advocate* explained the abandonment of the procession in 1919 in terms of the influenza epidemic, rather than these 'humiliating conditions', 25 Mar. 1920, p. 10.


18 He spoke on behalf of the Australian Women's National League, the Victorian Protestant Federation, the Loyal Orange Institution, the Ulster and Loyal Irishmen's Association, the Protestant Alliance and the British Empire Union. The Victorian Protestant Federation appears to have emerged in response to the provocative St Patrick's Day procession of March 1918. See Frank Engel, *Australian Christians in Conflict and Unity*, Melbourne, Joint Board of Christian Education, 1984, p. 206.

19 'Daniel Mannix', *ADB*, vol. 10, p. 400.

In 1920 the Lord Mayor, John Aikman, a Nationalist MLC, ruled that the procession should go ahead, despite the loyalists' prediction of sectarian violence in the streets of Melbourne. However, although he refused to impose any special conditions, his concern that Sinn Fein emblems might appear in the procession led to a series of discussions about flags — in particular the Union
Jack and the Australian flag — between the mayor, the combatants and the press. The outcome was equivocal. The St Patrick's Day Committee assured the mayor, in person and in writing, that there would be 'no emblems that will give offence to the most exacting citizen in the Commonwealth'. But he understood, and led the press to believe, that there would be 'nothing of any kind which could give reasonable offence to loyal citizens of the Empire'. Leeper and the conservative Argus were suspicious: the absence of Sinn Fein emblems was not enough; the Australian flag and the Union Jack should be 'conspicuously displayed'. But the St Patrick's Day Committee reassured the mayor that 'the Union Jack [would be] emblazoned on the leading banner — St Patrick's and the Australian Coat of Arms on others'.

Aikman was relieved, especially in view of reports of Dr Mannix's refusal to 'make an Irish procession look like a British procession'. Some might be disappointed, Mannix had said, that the procession would not be Irish enough, but he assured them that 'it would not be British at all'. Given British 'despotism' in Ireland, no one, he explained, could 'reasonably expect' Catholics to march behind the symbol of that rule. While Mannix had become the pre-eminent leader of Australian Catholics, some did not share his view of the Union Jack. It stung prominent lawyer and former senator, Anthony St Ledger, to speak up on behalf of Catholics and Irish nationalists who believed that the Union Jack was the very guarantee of their liberty. St Ledger, 61, a Yorkshire-born Catholic, had been a teacher then lawyer in Queensland until elected as an Anti-Socialist to the Senate in 1906. Although believing, with those for whom he spoke, that 'cutting off the limelight and silence [were] the best means for

21Notes of deputation to the Lord Mayor relative to St Patrick's Day procession, 30 Jan. 1920 (emphasis added), and L. Egan, General Secretary, St Patrick's Day Celebration Committee, to Lord Mayor, 30 Jan. 1920, VPRS 3183 Series 3 Box 155, VPRO.
22Draft of memorandum from Lord Mayor to Town Clerk, 4 Feb. 1920, emphasis added, ibid.
23Leeper on behalf of loyalist organisations to Lord Mayor, 10 Feb. 1920, ibid.; Argus editorial, 5 Feb. 1920, p. 6.
24L. Egan, Honorary Secretary, to Lord Mayor, 21 Feb. 1920, VPRS 3183 Series 3 Box 155, VPRO.
27Argus, 2 Mar. 1920, p. 9.
dealing with many of Dr Mannix's ebullient utterances on national matters', he was also concerned that such an attitude might be misunderstood, especially now that Mannix refused to honour the Union Jack.

St Ledger referred to the lesson his parents had taught him as a child: that the Union Jack was the symbol of freedom. His statement was the classic formulation of the *Civis Britannicus sum* of Palmerston's day: 'Wherever I go ... not a hair of my head can be touched without the Power that dares to do so being called to account and redress by the Union Jack'. He continued, 'The freedom I enjoy ... can only, for the present, be secured and assured from foreign aggression by the Union Jack'. That may have been so for St Ledger, born in the United Kingdom and living as British subject and citizen in Australia. However, his legal training and role as a senator from 1906 to 1913 should have alerted him to the fact that the status of a British subject/citizen was not so simple. Only some weeks before the *Argus* had reported the outcome of a recent Australian case concerning nationality in which a court in England ruled that an oath of allegiance taken in Australia did not confer the rights of a British subject elsewhere.29 Not until later in 1920 did the Commonwealth parliament pass the *Nationality Act* which ensured that aliens naturalised as British subjects in Australia were recognised as British subjects elsewhere in the Empire.30

Aikman continued to assure the Melbourne City Council, still jittery about his decision to allow the procession, 'that the Union Jack will be carried in the very front' and that without it the police would not allow the procession to proceed, a comment which provoked the commissioner of police to request an

30After much discussion between Britain and the Dominions, the British Parliament passed the *British Nationality and Status of Aliens Act* of 1914 (later amended by a 1918 Act) which the Commonwealth parliament incorporated in its *Nationality Act* of 1920. It established the common code, most importantly a standard period of five years' qualification for becoming a naturalised British subject within the Empire. The matter of dominion citizenship was a separate matter left to each dominion. Geoffrey Sawyer, *Australian Federal Politics and Law 1901-1929*. Carlton, Vic., Melbourne University Press, 1956, p. 192.
immediate retraction. The mayor was impressed that Catholic returned soldiers wished to participate in the procession and believed they would 'guarantee' its loyalty. Sergeant Maurice Buckley, VC, DCM, one of the St Patrick's Day Committee delegation to the lord mayor, had argued the case for 600 of his fellow Christian Brothers old boys, who before the war had marched in St Patrick's Day processions. As returned soldiers could they now be denied that right? But did the St Patrick's Day Committee intend these men to guarantee the loyalty of the procession? The numbers given by Buckley on 30 January indicated they would be a minority. By 11 March, when the secretary informed the chief commissioner of police of the estimated number of people participating, returned soldiers numbering between 3,000 and 5,000 had become a majority. As well there were to be 500 to 600 mounted men. The usual involvement of the various Irish societies and school boys was being sidelined. Rather than a guarantee of loyalty, the returned soldiers were being used to make quite a different statement.

The idea of involving large numbers of returned soldiers was developed by Wren to demonstrate the loyalty of Irish Catholic Australians, at the same time honouring Mannix, the target of Melbourne's Protestant establishment. Wren's committee collected the names of soldiers outside Catholic churches on two Sundays and gained permission from the State Commandant of the Army, Brigadier-General Charles Brand, for the men to wear green ribbons on their uniforms. But the crowning glory of the march was to be a bodyguard of VC winners on grey chargers escorting Dr Mannix at its head. Wren spared no expense in bringing them to Melbourne from as far away as Western

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31 Extract of shorthand notes of meeting of Melbourne City Council, 8 Mar. 1920, and Chief Commissioner to Town Clerk, 9 Mar. 1920, VPRS 3183 Series 3 Box 155, VPRO.
32 The total strength of the procession was estimated at between 5,050 and 9,100, Chief Commissioner to Town Clerk, 11 Mar. 1920, ibid.
33 Wren's plan, as explained to journalist Hugh Buggy, *The Real John Wren*, Camberwell, Vic., Widescope, 1977, pp. 188-194. A large framed collection of photographs, with Wren and Mannix in the centre surrounded by the VCs, hung in a place of honour in Raheen, the archbishop's residence, until Mannix's death. It now hangs in the Melbourne Diocesan Historical Commission Archives.
Australia. But in fact, as his film of the procession, *Ireland Will Be Free*, makes clear, he and Mannix were using the returned men as a threat against the Empire.

This forgotten silent film has survived, at least in part, and is now held by the National Film and Sound Archive in Canberra under two titles, the Australian-made *Ireland Will Be Free*, taking the original title, and part of the overseas-made segment as *Martyrs of the Easter Weekend 1916*. The Australian segment was produced by Australasian Films, the Melbourne company which at that time controlled film production and distribution in Australia. Some footage appears not to have survived. Taken together, the two surviving segments of *Ireland Will Be Free* indicate much more clearly than contemporary press and government intelligence reports the nature of the threat Mannix, and Wren, the organiser and financier of the procession and film, were making on behalf of Australia's Irish Catholic community, and indeed of Australians generally, in support of an Irish republic.

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Fifteen VCs were to have escorted Mannix, according to an advertisement in the *Herald*, 17 Mar. 1920, p. 10, but one, Frank McNamara, a Catholic from Victoria who had been volunteered by his brother without his permission, announced his withdrawal the next day. The *Argus* of 22 Mar. 1920, p. 8, reported thirteen; the film stated fourteen, a figure which is not possible to verify from the footage; as did the *Advocate*, 25 Mar. 1920, p. 10. Later at Raheen, twelve were introduced by name and filmed with Mannix and Wren. Of the fifteen, eight were Catholic (indicated by *): Thomas Axford*, Maurice Buckley*, John Carroll*, George Cartwright, William Currey, John Dwyer*, John Hamilton, George Howell, John Jackson, Lawrence McCarthy*, Frank McNamara*, Joseph Maxwell, Walter Peeler, Edward Ryan* and John Whittle*, ADB, vols 7-13 and ADB files. Buggy estimated that the cost of the film (including the transport costs of the VCs and the purchase of their horses) was almost £3000, *The Real John Wren*, p. 193.

*Both black and white silent films were given to the Archive by the Melbourne Diocesan Historical Commission: *Ireland* is 1150 feet in length, *Martyrs*, 300 feet (16 mm). The 16 mm version is slightly different in content from the 35 mm one.*

*Andrew Pike and Ross Cooper, *Australian Film 1900-1977: A Guide to Feature Film Production*, Melbourne, Oxford University Press and the Australian Film Institute, 1980, p. 4.*

*For example, that showing a re-enactment of the execution of rebel leaders in Ireland (the footage which provoked most outrage in Australia); Mannix's departure for overseas in May 1920; the deportation of Father Jerger, the Catholic priest accused of disloyalty during the war, in July; and the death of Terence McSwiney, Lord Mayor of Cork, from a hunger strike in October. Footage marking the death of Thomas Ryan, Australian Labor leader and prominent supporter of self-government for Ireland, in August 1921 survived in the segment *Ireland*. See handbill and report of local advertisements for the film in July 1920 and May 1921, one referring to Mannix as 'Ireland's leader in Australia'. Enclosure, Col. Julius Bruche to Sec., Department of Defence, 2 July 1920, and A.R. Townsend, Secretary, Department of Trade and Customs, to Percy Whitton, Acting Comptroller General, 28 May 1921, CRS A457/1 D514/1, Australian Archives (ACT), hereafter AA (ACT).*
The film shows no Union Jack leading the procession, but two Australian flags. The Argus reporter and others aware of the preceding lengthy negotiations were curious as to when the Union Jack "'emblazoned on the leading banner'" would appear.38 But the newspaper's description of the Union Jack on St Patrick's banner (thirty minutes into the procession, after the archbishop's car with its VC escort and 6,00039 returned soldiers), did not make

39 This was an Argus estimate; the figure cited by the Advocate, 25 Mar. 1920, p. 10, and the film was 10,000. Even accepting the lesser estimate, 6,000 is a significant proportion, given my rough estimate of the approximately 15,000 Catholic soldiers returning to Victoria. Michael
clear whether it referred to that flag in its usual position on the Australian flag or superimposed on it in some other way. The film leaves no doubt: the only Union Jack evident is part of the Australian flag, though even then it was an unorthodox Union Jack (fig. 25). This, then, was the basis for Mannix's view that the procession 'would not be British at all'. It also explains the committee secretary's confident assertion to the lord mayor that 'the most exacting citizen in the Commonwealth would be satisfied'. The committee had used the Australian flag as a means of avoiding the Union Jack, yet if challenged, could point to that flag in the upper hoist. The lord mayor, mindful of sectarian and ethnic sensitivities in the light of his earlier assurances about the Union Jack, simply acknowledged, when asked to comment by the press, that 'a suitable flag' was on the leading banner.

The snub to the Union Jack and all it stood for was deliberate, especially when it had featured equally with the Australian flag only two nights before the procession at the welcome home to Catholic soldiers in the Exhibition Building organised by Wren's committee. Had the Union Jack been ignored then, there was a danger of alienating some returned soldiers who were to march, given the tension between Australian and British loyalties evident among returned soldiers at that time. For the procession, however, the Australian flag on its own was a perfect symbol, signalling both loyalty and dissidence at the same time. It also had the advantage, unlike either of the Irish flags, of being a less divisive symbol for Australians with Irish sympathies. Since the uprising of 1916 the Irish tricolour of green, orange and white, banned

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40 A photograph illustrates the same strange Union Jack on a flag (with four stars of the Southern Cross but no Federation Star) on the St Patrick's banner of 1906, Chris McConville, Croppies, Celts & Catholics: The Irish in Australia, Caulfield East, Vic., Edward Arnold, 1987, p. 102.

41 Argus, 23 Mar. 1920, p. 6.

42 Age, 19 Mar. 1920, p. 8. The Argus made no comment about the Union and Australian flags, only that the proceedings closed with 'God Save Ireland' and hundreds of green flags.

43 See, for example, Bobbie Oliver, "The Diggers' Association": A Turning Point in the History of the Western Australian Returned Services League', Journal of the Australian War Memorial, no. 23, Oct. 1993, p. 31.
by Melbourne’s lord mayor, symbolised the republic of the outlawed Sinn Fein; the green harp flag represented the pre-1916 goal of Home Rule — self-government within the Empire. The film shows unequivocally that this essentially military parade was an exercise in legitimising Irish protest against English rule: a show of force for the Irish point of view; a threat that these Australian soldiers were prepared to defend that view against England’s government. The film provides invaluable evidence of the organisers’ intentions not only for the procession and its aftermath at Raheen, the archbishop’s residence, but also for the film itself. Rather than demonstrate Irish Catholic loyalty to the Empire, the procession and film did quite the opposite.

The culmination of the day’s event at Raheen was a meeting of the VC winners, which passed a resolution on behalf of the other soldiers who had marched, urging that ‘self-government on the lines demanded by an overwhelming majority of the Irish people be given to Ireland’. The deliberate phrasing indicated support for the republican cause, but without saying so. In the British elections of December 1918 the Sinn Fein had won seventy-three seats to the discredited Irish Parliamentary Party’s six, out of a total of 105 Irish seats. 'We fought for liberty', the resolution continued, 'and we claim that Ireland should not be denied freedom'. The film detailed the meaning intended by the words. Wren, shown at the train meeting the Western Australian VCs, had said they had come 'in the name of Ireland for whom ... [they] would lay down [their] ... lives'. He trusted they would 'help to replace Ireland among the free Nations of the World'. Later the audience sees him greeting the VCs from New South Wales as 'defenders of liberty and champions of Ireland’s sacred cause. Ireland’s steps towards the restoration of her National rights', he said, '[would] not falter while she [had] brave sons like [them] to demand justice for

45This and other quotations from the film, unless otherwise stated, are from the segment Ireland.
her'. At the Cathedral Hall in Melbourne Mannix had reminded them that 'While Ireland [was] in bondage [their] fight for the small Nations [was] unfinished'. He was more explicit in farewelling them at Raheen: 'England cannot ignore you, Ireland is grateful to you'. They had made their choice clear: Ireland over England, republic over empire.

These returned soldiers, the film declared, were 'brave men [who could] not fail to achieve victory no matter how big the odds'. They had been 'proud to salute a great Irishman and an eminent prince of the church' as they passed Mannix stationed on the footpath below Victoria's Parliament House, still accommodating the Commonwealth Parliament. The threat embodied in the military leadership of that procession was also implied by its civilian participants: the film described the 30,00047 as 'strong young men' and 'resolute Irish-Australians', who 'proclaim[ed] their love for an oppressed country'. Even the school boys, 'Young Australians', would 'help to free the land of their fathers and mothers'. These scenes became the basis of the film, intended as a 'striking, if silent testimony of Australia's sympathy with Ireland'. Mannix, due to leave for the United States of America and Ireland early in May, wanted the film to assure kinsmen in Ireland that 'AUSTRALIA and her Soldier Sons [were] with them heart and soul in their final effort to shake off an alien oppressor'.48

Care was taken in wording the statements and choosing the symbols featured in the Australian-made segment since those who were 'Friends of Ireland', the introduction explained, were duty bound 'not only to attend [the film] whenever possible, but to bring along those who differ from us'. The assumption was that once they knew of Ireland's struggle for 'self-determination', for 'National rights', for 'freedom', they, like the returned soldiers, would support her cause. The film turned on its head English rhetoric of Empire and its role in the Great War, so that England represented

47The Argus, as did the Advocate, estimated the whole procession as no more than 20,000.
oppression, not liberty. Only rarely was reference made to England, her law, her leaders, her oppression and her guns; and there was no specific reference to the British Empire. The appeal emphasised Ireland, especially as country and nation, rather than republic: the latter term was noticeably absent from the Australian-made segment, in contrast to its overseas-made counterpart. In neither segment is there evidence of the tricolour and national anthem (Soldier's Song) favoured by the republicans. Instead, the film used the green harp flag and God Save Ireland, by then largely discredited in Ireland though not among the Catholic hierarchy, but still the least divisive of the two sets of symbols in the Irish-Australian context following the breaking up of the United Irish League in Australia after the 1916 rising.49

At the first showing of the film in Melbourne just before he left for overseas, Mannix set aside its diplomatic words, asserting that 'these pictures would go all round the world to shame ... those who stood behind the outrages that are done under the shadow of the Union Jack'.50 He encouraged Australians to identify with Australian rather than British loyalties by using the Australian instead of the Union flag. Why, he asked, must Australians, in

48Message from Mannix in the booklet distributed at screenings of the film, Ireland Will Be Free: Souvenir of St Patrick's Day Celebrations, Melbourne, March 1920, enclosure in CRS A457/1 D514/1, AA (ACT).

49The difference in emphasis can be seen from a comparison of the songs' choruses, taken from Encyclopaedia of Ireland, Dublin, Allen Figgis, 1968, p. 172 and 'Song' by T.D.S[ullivan], The Nation, 7 Dec. 1867, p. 249:

Soldiers are we, whose lives are pledged to Ireland;
Some have come from a land beyond the wave.
Sworn to be free, no more our ancient sireland,
Shall shelter the despot or the slave.
Tonight we man the Bearna Baoil [the gap of danger],
In Erin's cause come woe or weal;
'Mid cannon's roar and rifle's peal
We'll chant a soldier's song.'

"God save Ireland," said the heroes,
"God save Ireland," said they all;
"Whether on the scaffold high,
Or the battle-field, we die,
Oh, what matter, when for Erin dear we fall!"

50Reported by Director, Investigation Branch, to Secretary, Attorney-General's Department, 31 May 1921, CRS A457/1 D514/1, AA (ACT).
celebrating events, go 'fossicking about for some other flag ... instead of the flag of the Australian nation'? Critical of the State school practice of saluting the Union Jack on Anzac Day, he urged, 'Why not put up the flag of Australia?' It was not that he objected to 'the other flag', he said, 'provided it took second place to the Australian flag'. This 'second place' became the critical issue and distinguished his view from that expressed by the ANA and the Returned Sailors' and Soldiers' Imperial League of Australia, commonly referred to as the Returned Soldiers' League (RSL). Mannix was applying the same terms to Australia and Australians as the film did to Ireland and the Irish: Australians constituted a nation, as the Irish did; Australia was a country in its own right, as Ireland was. The point had particular force, given the much-spoken-of birth of the Australian nation at Gallipoli. Unspoken and unwritten but implied by Mannix's words was the message: Australia, like Ireland, could become a republic.

Protestant sensitivity to even the milder form of this message was revealed in an incident in Bendigo in July 1920. An 'indignation meeting', organised by the Masonic Lodge with the support of the Victorian Protestant Federation and the RSL, expressed outrage at the 'disloyal sentiments' of a play, Advance Australia, performed on 3 July in Bendigo's Royal Theatre. In particular, it condemned 'the mendacious and dastardly reflections on the English soldiers who fought side by side with the Australians'. The play's author was Father John Kennedy, DSO, an Irish-born priest at Bendigo, who

51 Mannix was laying the foundation stone for a new Catholic primary school in Sandringham, Argus, 10 May 1920, p. 10.
52 The President of the ANA (Victoria), G.D. McLean, remarked at the annual conference that 'they did not in any way wish to depreciate the grand old Union Jack, the flag which protected them, but associated with that flag should be the flag of Australia', Argus, 17 Mar. 1920, p. 11. For the RSL see below p. 288. Not until 1965 did the organisation formally change its name to Returned Servicemen's League, G.L. Kristianson, The Politics of Patriotism: The Pressure Group Activities of the Returned Servicemen's League, Canberra, Australian National University Press, 1966, p. xix. Later there were further changes: the Returned Services League; and the Returned and Services League.
53 In March 1921 the annual conference of the Victorian Labor Party discussed the issue of an Australian republic, Argus, 26, 28 Mar. 1921, pp. 9, 6; Labor Call, 31 Mar. 1921, p. 7.
54 N.G. McRobert, Acting Honorary Secretary, Citizens' Committee, Bendigo, to Premier, Victoria, 12 July 1920, and Sydney S. Dorman, President, Victorian Protestant Federation, Bendigo Branch, to Chief Secretary, 17 July 1920, VPRS 3392/P Box 2146 file C6944, PROV.
had served with distinction as a chaplain with Australian troops in France in 1916 and 1917.\textsuperscript{55} The play was written and performed in aid of the local convent. Its central character was a doctor whose experience in France led him to regard Australia's participation in the war as 'a sacrifice for nothing!'\textsuperscript{56} He cursed the English 'whose politicians summoned us from over the seas to aid them in the alleged crusade for the rights of small nations', and 'the dastards of the new English army who let us ["Australia's bravest and best"] down every time'. He cursed, too, 'the opportunists in our own land who batten on the blood of the heroes; who deceive our electors with their camouflage of patriotism, and endeavour to fetter our free Australia with the shackles of conscription'. Acknowledging himself as an Australian, not a Britisher or a colonial, he declared that, should he return from the war, he would 'put down jingoism and Imperialism'; his 'watchword' would be 'Australia, advance Australia!'

The doctor's words, which can also be taken as Kennedy's, are reminiscent of those of the Australian soldiers Bill Gammage studied. 'They say', reported an English-born soldier in Egypt, a teacher from Perth, Western Australia, of the Australian soldiers, 'that they take trenches and the British soldiers lose them again. They admit that the British regulars are good soldiers but not the New Army'.\textsuperscript{57} Major Garnet Adcock, a mining engineer from Rutherglen, Victoria, was more direct two years later in 1917: 'Everyone here is "fed-up" of the war, but not with the Hun. The British staff, British methods, and British bungling have sickened us ... all overseas troops have had enough of the English. How I wish we were with our own people instead of under the English all the time!'\textsuperscript{58} How easily 'British' became 'English'. Lt H.V. Chedgey, a solicitor from Arncliffe, New South Wales, and the son of an English immigrant, was

\textsuperscript{55}John Joseph Kennedy', \textit{ADB}, vol. 9, pp. 565-566.
\textsuperscript{56}Report of extracts from the play, \textit{Argus}, 6 July 1920, in VPRS 3392/P Box 2146 file C6944, PROV.
more discriminating with his ethnic distinctions: 'the Colonials generally', he wrote to his family, 'and the Scotch regiments are absolutely the best troops in the British army. We have never yet failed to get our objective ... What we do worry about, is whether the Blighters [English] on our flanks will get theirs, a much more uncertain proposition'. 59

These were the distinctions, so disparaging of the English, which annoyed Charles Owen Smyth in the All British League in Adelaide, whose son had died at Gallipoli. Australian soldiers found their own ways of reconciling imperial and national loyalties. Capt. H.E.S. Armitage, a schoolteacher from Norwood, South Australia, carefully (and curiously) distinguished in his diary between the 'British' ('Indians and Australians') and 'Pommies' (the 'nondescript'). 60 The war, he believed, had made him 'intensely British and absolutely Australian'. 61 However, as Gammage points out, others made a clear distinction between the two. 62 Still another went further, distinguishing between 'the right type of Australian ... the country lads' and 'the street corner wowsers of the towns'. 63 Gammage's study of the impact of the war on about 1,000 Australian men illustrates how difficult it is to be precise about the changing strengths of their imperial and Australian sentiments. His conclusion contained a paradox: 'the war', he argued, 'dealt the affections of Empire a mortal blow'. 64 Yet 'in some respects', he noticed, 'the war induced Australians', dependent on imperial defence, 'to express more fulsomely than ever the strong Imperial affections they had felt before 1914'. 65 The Anzac tradition, coming out of imperial wartime experience, 'seemed to express the best of both nation and Empire'. Bean

59 Letter from Lt H.V. Chedgey, 15 Oct. 1917, quoted by Gammage, ibid.
60 Diary of Capt H.E.S. Armitage, 29 Aug. 1915, quoted by Gammage, ibid., p. 86.
61 18 Jan. 1916, ibid.
62 Gammage, ibid., pp. 86-87.
64 Gammage, ibid., p. 209.
65 Ibid., p. 277.
captured it visually with *The Anzac Book*: the Union Jack on the cover; and the Australian and New Zealand flags on the frontispiece.66

The title of Kennedy's play was not obviously offensive; indeed, it was the motto of the ANA, the name of its journal in Victoria, and had been part of Australia's first coat of arms. But the anti-English message of the play was another matter. Even before the performance some players withdrew and had to be replaced because of pressure, according to Kennedy, who spoke before the performance. The indignation meeting led to a further meeting by those supporting Kennedy who explained that the purpose of the play was to raise funds for the convent and only 'incidentally to draw attention to the views expressed by a certain section of the community'.67 In the meantime there was a flurry of activity within Victoria's police force as officers considered how to prevent a repeat performance of the play. Kennedy refused to hand the script to the police, arguing that he did not intend to produce it again 'as it [had] served its purpose'.68 Which of the two purposes Kennedy had in mind is not clear — probably both. But the Protestant Federation, standing for 'God, King, and Empire', believed the play was 'tending to sow seeds of discord in the Australian mind' not only in Bendigo but also throughout Victoria.69

Loyalist protest across Australia peaked in November 1920 with a demonstration in Melbourne which combined anti-imperial sentiment with a call for an Australian republic. The central figure at the meeting was the federal Labor member for Coolgardie, Hugh Mahon, who as president of the Irish Ireland League, had organised the demonstration of some 3,000 people on Richmond City Reserve. An activist in Ireland before migrating in 1882, he had continued to work for the Irish-Catholic cause in Australia, especially through

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67*Age*, 20 July 1920, VPRS 3392/P Box 2146 file C6944, PROV.
69Sydney S. Dorman, President, Victorian Protestant Federation, Bendigo Branch, to Chief Secretary, 17 July 1920, *ibid*.
his role as adviser to Archbishops Carr and Mannix of Melbourne. Amongst prominent Catholics Mahon was 'most notable' in holding 'a brooding grudge against Britain's policies in Ireland'.

Two events had triggered the demonstration of 7 November 1920: the refusal of British authorities to allow Mannix to visit Ireland and the cities of England and Scotland with large Irish populations (Liverpool, Manchester and Glasgow); and, more especially, the death on 25 October of the republican Lord Mayor of Cork, Alderman Terence McSwiney, who had been on a hunger strike in protest at British rule. Mahon's reference to his 'infamous murder' led him to say he hoped the widow's sobs would 'one day shake the foundations of this bloody and accursed Empire'. Several motions were passed at the meeting, culminating in the final one:

That this mass meeting of Australian citizens in view of the policy of oppression and tyranny pursued by the English Government in Ireland, and which has brought eternal disgrace upon the whole British Empire, of which Australia forms a part, pledges its support to any movement for the establishment of an Australian republic.

Although Mahon was not present when the republican resolution was put, he had chaired the meeting to that point. As a federal member of parliament he had taken the oath of allegiance to the Crown: that role was now questioned. Parliament's response to Mahon's outburst was swift. Within four days Hughes, the Prime Minister, had engineered his expulsion, a unique event in Australia's federal parliament. Given his uncertain position within the Nationalist Party and in parliament, Hughes could not afford to ignore Protestant pressure.
Two organisations predominated in the letters received from around Australia demanding such action: the Protestant Federation and the Loyal Orange Lodge.74 Special legislation against sedition followed a few days after Mahon's expulsion.75 It enabled prosecution of those speaking out against the Crown, the British or Australian governments; as well, it empowered immigration officials to administer an oath or affirmation of allegiance to British subjects suspected of being disloyal. Many wondered whether Hughes would use it to prevent Mannix returning to Australia. Letters from Protestants and Orangemen argued that Mahon's words were 'completely at variance with the spirit of the Australian people as a whole'; they applauded Hughes' prompt action.76 Opposition to Mahon in Kalgoorlie, the heart of Mahon's electorate, was widespread; it included the Kalgoorlie Roads Board, the Kalgoorlie Council, local branches of the RSL and the Loyal Orange Lodge, the Council of the Eastern Goldfields National Labor Party, as well as citizens at a specially called public meeting.77

The recently formed King and Empire Alliance of New South Wales also wrote to Hughes. Begun about July 1920 because of particular concern at the Bolshevik threat in Australia, the alliance was also critical of 'a number of our own race ... who for various reasons are enemies of Britain and the Empire, and who would glory in its disintegration and downfall', a reference to those supporting Ireland.78 Its founding secretary was Major-General Sir Charles Rosenthal, a highly respected soldier, architect and musician, who had lived in Coolgardie during the 1890s, as had Mahon.79 Rosenthal had also been organist and choirmaster of the Coolgardie Wesley Church. Mahon had been a

74Letters were received by the Prime Minister's Department on this matter from 9 Nov. 1920 to 25 Feb. 1921, CRS A457/1 514/1/4, AA (ACT).
76News cutting reporting the unanimous decision of the Melbourne North District Synod of the Methodist Church, n.d., CRS A457/1 514/1/4, AA (ACT).
77Mahon lost the new federal seat of Dampier in Jan. 1913 after a redistribution, but a few months later won Kalgoorlie without challenge, Mahon, ADB, vol. 10, p. 379.
78King and Empire, journal of the Alliance, 21 Jan. 1921, pp. 5 and 13.
journalist, and was closely associated with the Catholic Church. The alliance was a non-sectarian body attempting to draw together organisations opposed to the dismemberment of the Empire; it was also a secret army, a front organisation for the clandestine movement known as the Old Guard. Rosenthal had supervised the repatriation of Australian soldiers and was concerned about their role in Australian politics. His assistant had been Jack Scott, now treasurer of the alliance.

A few days after Mahon's meeting at Richmond Rosenthal urged the New South Wales Branch of the RSL to affiliate with the Alliance. However, a majority of the league's executive, of which Rosenthal was a member, did not think it necessary, believing 'that there was no more loyal body in Australia than members of the AIF'. The league was treading a fine line on patriotism and loyalty. Its first aim as an organisation concerned relations between returned soldiers: 'to perpetuate the close and kindly ties of friendship created by a mutual service in the great war'. Careful to be even-handed on the matter of loyalty, the league sought 'to inculcate loyalty to Australia and the Empire and secure patriotic service in the interests of both'. However, if the league favoured one above the other it was Australia, as the sixth aim indicated: 'To induce members, as citizens, to serve Australia with that spirit of self-sacrifice and loyalty with which as sailors and soldiers they served Australia and the Empire'.

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82Newspaper report of 12 Nov. 1920, News Cutting Book 2a, p. 4, RSL (Vic) Papers.

83The aims were listed in the constitution as amended by the Congress of 1918 and adopted by Federal Executive, Minutes of Central Council and Federal Executive, 12 Sept. 1919, RSL Papers MS6609 Box 82, National Library of Australia.

84The fourth aim of the constitution, *ibid*.

85Emphasis added. The sixth aim continued 'and to maintain an association non-sectarian and non-partisan in relation to party politics'.
Empire was found in *Soldier*, the *de facto* journal of the RSL begun and owned by George Taylor, craftsman, journalist and businessman.\(^{86}\) This journal, 'as deliberate and authentic a voice of "the digger legend" as had the *Bulletin* been for the bushman', was dedicated 'to preserve and extend the spirit of National Devotion and the faith of Imperial Duty'.\(^{87}\)

Taylor was more sympathetic than the RSL to the King and Empire Alliance. Although an advocate of 'Australia First' early in the century, during the war he began to espouse 'Empire and Australia First'.\(^{88}\) Slogans and mottoes were important in the volatile politics of post-war Australia in indicating the different emphases of the various pressure groups. The Protestant Federation stood for 'God, King and Empire'.\(^{89}\) The motto of the Australian Catholic Federation, by contrast, was simply 'God and Country'.\(^{90}\) The Manly Union for Catholic priests educated at St Patrick's College, Manly went further: 'For God and Australia'.\(^{91}\) The King and Empire Alliance, in attempting to be non-sectarian, set God aside, as did the ANA. That body had more difficulty dealing with 'Empire'. The early slogan 'Advance Australia' appeared straightforward.\(^{92}\) However, so offensive did it become to some in post-war Australian politics that the Federal Council of the association considered replacing it with 'Australia First within the Empire'.\(^{93}\)

The Great War had both blurred and sharpened the distinction between country and Empire. Certainly for Mannix the war had emphasised that distinction, and he encouraged Australians to follow his example. It drew the

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\(^{86}\) George Augustine Taylor', *ADB*, vol. 12, pp. 178-179.


\(^{88}\) Roe, *Nine Australian Progressives*, p. 199. Roe points out that Taylor 'claimed to have persuaded Edmund Barton to exploit the slogan "Australia First"', p. 186.

\(^{89}\) See the letterhead of the federation's West Maitland Branch, NSW, 19 Nov. 1920, in correspondence concerning the Mahon affair, CRS A457/1 514/1/4, AA (ACT).


\(^{92}\) The New South Wales branch regarded their motto as 'Pro Patria Semper', *Report and Proceedings of the Annual Session of the ANA (NSW)*, 1912, p. 8.

\(^{93}\) *Minutes and Proceedings of Annual Meeting and Conference, ANA (NSW)*, 28 Apr. 1923, p. 4.
predictable comment from Thomas Ley, influential Progressive and fiercely sectarian MLA in New South Wales, that Australians who spoke of themselves as a nation were just as republican as the Irish who asserted they were 'a distinct and alien people'. Around Australia people were using the phrases, 'King and Country' and 'King and Empire', interchangeably — but never together — on war memorials: 'country' could mean Australia, Britain, England or the Empire. Seldom did organisations or governments see a need to be more precise. The South Australian government had seen such a need in 1916 in its campaign against Australians of German descent during the war. 'I love my country', in the oath recited by state school children in front of the Union Jack, became 'I love my country, the British Empire'. However, in postwar Australia the use of the phrases 'my country', 'our country' — phrases Charles Long had wrestled with in trying to differentiate between Australia and the Empire — became increasingly problematic. 'Our' was becoming a powerful pronoun in the hands of nationalists, as Sinn Fein, 'ourselves', was demonstrating.

For Mannix, relating Australian and Irish loyalties was difficult. His view varied according to the occasion. In 1918 Mannix had claimed to be 'a loyal Australian' who 'put Australia first, now and always'. On the day of the procession when seeking to reach a wide audience through the VC winners and the returned soldiers, his emphasis was also Australian. But his address on St Patrick's night revealed a more complex position. Irish-Australians who did not support Ireland and the Sinn Fein against Britain, he argued, were not good Australians. They had 'British souls'. 'The Irish-Australians who love Ireland most', he explained, 'love Australia best'. This was the message as reported in Melbourne's Catholic Advocate which Mannix controlled. That paper, however,
did not report Mannix's divisive comment made a few months later in the United States: 'I know of only one national anthem and that is *God Save Ireland*'. It was a diplomatic omission: although a republican, Mannix was not prepared to acknowledge the *Soldier's Song*; but neither was he prepared to offend Catholics whose anthem was *God Save the King*.

The mobilisation of Australian returned soldiers behind the Australian flag against the British government on St Patrick's Day was a message not simply for Melbourne but for all Australia, wherever the film was shown: in Sydney, where Wren personally introduced it in July 1920, and also in Adelaide, Brisbane and provincial centres in Queensland and New South Wales during 1920 and 1921. In Sydney the film attracted the attention of Colonel Julius Bruche, Army Commandant of New South Wales, whose intelligence officer concluded that the aim of the film was to 'excite the bitter antagonism of the Irish Community in our midst to British rule'. Despite some protest from the wider community, the Commonwealth government had no power under trade and customs law to prevent an Australian-made film being shown, and it chose not to apply the newly-introduced section 24A on sedition in the *Crimes Act*. What had begun as a dispute in the streets of Melbourne now had a much wider audience. The issue was not simply the relationship between Ireland and the Empire, but by association, between Australia and the Empire, as symbolised by the use of the Australian flag for Irish and republican purposes.

The St Patrick's Day procession had made the Australian flag a symbol of disloyalty. When promoted by the Catholic community for an Irish cause, the Australian flag, unaccompanied by the Union Jack, became a source of

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100Reports of 5 July 1920 forwarded by Bruche to Secretary, Department of Defence, Melbourne, CRS A457/1 D514/1, AA (ACT).  
101In NSW William Touchell, Congregational minister, had thought of asking Sydney's inspector general of police to act under State sedition law but complained that it would be a waste of his time 'while Dooley [Labor Acting Premier] was in power', Touchell to Acting Prime Minister, 16 May 1921, *ibid.*
suspicion for other Australians. Such suspicion led Frank Tate, Director of Education in Victoria, to disapprove of a suggestion that his department should encourage the use of the Australian flag to mark Anzac Day, the 'nation's birthday': 'Teachers are at liberty to use either the Union Jack or the Australian Flag, but to prescribe the exclusive use of the latter might prove a welcome reinforcement to the propaganda of disloyalists'.

To be Australian without being also British was disloyal. Such a conclusion challenges Patrick O'Farrell's view that the Irish were 'the galvanising force at the centre of our national character'. In this immediate post-war period, which he regards, together with the years 1880-1916, as so critical in the formation of Australian identity, the actions of Irish-Australians under Mannix's leadership encouraged other Australians to be more British and less Australian.

In 1921 loyalist bodies were determined not to be so easily outwitted on St Patrick's Day. The Melbourne City Council, now with the mayor's power to impose conditions, insisted that the Union Jack head the procession. Loyalists hoped that the ruling, particularly with Mannix still away in Britain, would force the cancellation of the event. The procession went ahead, but the English-born derelict paid by Catholic organisers to carry the Union Jack had to be escorted to ensure its safety. Hoots of derision marked its way through the streets. For loyalists the sense of sacrilege was greater than the previous year when there had been no Union Jack. The senior Catholic figure in the procession, Dr Patrick Phelan, the Irish-born Bishop of Sale, could exult: 'We have spat back today the sham loyalty that was sought to be thrust down our throats ... We live ... under the Australian flag, and it is that flag that should be carried in front of the procession'. Events in Melbourne had established the

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102Eileen Whitelaw, Daisy Hill, via Maryborough, to Premier, Victoria, 18 Apr. 1920, and Secretary, Education Department for the Director, to Premier, 21 May 1920, VPRS 1163 Box 513, file 1675, VPRO.
104Ibid., p. 21.
105Extract of Shorthand Notes, Meeting of the Melbourne City Council, 8 Mar. 1920, VPRS 3183 Series 3 Box 155, PROV.
107Ibid.
Australian flag as a symbol of disloyalty because of its association with Irish republicanism. A year later events in Sydney reinforced that reputation, but this time because of its association with international socialism.

May Day, Sydney, 1921

Flags were at the centre of a fracas on May Day and its sequel: the Red Flag, the Union Jack and the Australian flag. The champion of the Australian flag was Bill Lambert, Labor Lord Mayor of Sydney, Secretary of the Australian Workers' Union and President of the New South Wales Labor Party. He sought to use the flag as a weapon against his political opponents, primarily the Nationalists, proponents of the Union Jack, but also against those within the labour movement, particularly socialists and communists, who used the Red Flag to challenge the dominance of the Australian Workers' Union.

On Sunday, 1 May, the central date in the socialist calendar, about 4,000 people gathered in Sydney's Domain under the Red Flag, now no longer banned as it had been during the war. The flag, traditional symbol of revolution and martyrs' blood, was now even more threatening to the forces of law and order: it had become the basis for the flag of the Russian Socialist Federal Republic. At the Domain the Red Flag flew above a lorry providing a platform for speakers organised by the socialist-dominated Labor Council. During the meeting about twenty opponents, including returned soldiers, charged the platform intending to replace the Red Flag with their Union Jack. In the ensuing struggle the Union Jack was allegedly torn and burnt. Conservative

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110 'Red Banner, the Symbol of the Revolutionary Liberation Struggle', *Great Soviet Encyclopedia* (1973), vol. 14, New York, Macmillan, 3rd edn, 1977, pp. 707-708. On the flag of the Republic in 1918 and of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics which replaced it in 1923 were the hammer and sickle and five stars representing workers and peasants on five continents. My thanks to Elena Govor who found these extra details in the Russian language edition of the encyclopedia.
forces, led by the King and Empire Alliance and the RSL, seized on the incident, planning a huge counter demonstration, headed by the Union Jack, for the following Sunday in the Domain, with a symbolic burning of a Red Flag.

The point of the demonstration, organised by the RSL ('collared by anti-Labor', according to the Bulletin\textsuperscript{111}), was to show that 'the Union Jack is the flag for Australia, and that the red flag, or any other emblem of revolution, shall not be exhibited in Australia'.\textsuperscript{112} The rally attracted a crowd, estimates variously ranging between 100,000 and 150,000. Returned soldiers attacked any group in the Domain not displaying or acknowledging the Union Jack. This time they were determined to ensure a different outcome in their battle against the Red Flag. No flag unless accompanied by the Union Jack was safe. The platform of the Returned Sailors' and Soldiers' Political League, also known as the Returned Sailors' and Soldiers' League (ALP Section)\textsuperscript{113} and a rival of the RSL, flew neither the Union Jack nor the Red Flag but the Australian flag. Opposing returned soldiers counted out the speaker and broke up the meeting, trampling the Australian flag. Then they burnt a Red Flag. The criticism was that the Australian flag had been used 'as a substitute for the red flag'.\textsuperscript{114}

Flags had become symbols fighting political battles in New South Wales; they represented ideas and emotions of great significance. In 1921 the Labor Party was in power in the State parliament and the Sydney City Council, but only by narrow margins. Nationalists, scenting the possibility of electoral success, particularly if they could win the support of the smaller opposition party, the Progressives, used the Union Jack with great effect as a weapon against the Labor Party. An unambiguous symbol, it appealed to Protestants,
returned soldier and loyalist groups. The parliamentary Labor Party was predominantly Irish-Catholic, a fact which attracted increased criticism during the Anglo-Irish War.\textsuperscript{115} The State Labor government, already suspect because of its division over conscription during the war, had provoked further suspicion after the war among returned soldiers by its refusal to accept and display war trophies in State schools, and to make Anzac Day a public holiday.\textsuperscript{116} But the Labor government also faced opposition from its own side of politics, especially in the difficult economic circumstances of 1921: John Storey's pragmatic and moderate wing might manage the parliamentary party, but Jack Bailey's Australian Workers' Union controlled the extra-parliamentary organisation, and Jock Garden's communists the Labor Council.\textsuperscript{117}

The two meetings at the Domain had seen the clash between the Red Flag and the Union Jack, with the Australian flag occupying uncertain middle ground. Meetings at the Town Hall saw another concern: the use of the Union Jack and the Australian flag on the Town Hall, especially the issue of which should be given precedence. Bill Lambert as president of the Labor Party and lord mayor of Sydney was at the centre of both disputes. Not only a powerful Labor figure in the State, Lambert was also a Catholic and a supporter of Ireland in its struggle against Britain. Just before becoming lord mayor he had persuaded the Sydney City Council to pass two controversial motions expressing sympathy to the family of the late lord mayor of Cork.\textsuperscript{118} Lambert was an obvious target for the Nationalists, especially following the absence of flags, the Union Jack in particular, on the tower of the Sydney Town Hall during the Anzac Day service.


\textsuperscript{116}During 1921 the Labor Party sharpened its position against returned soldiers, giving preference to unionists instead, \textit{Minutes of meetings, 31 May, 12 July, 4 Aug. 1921}, NSW Parliamentary Labor Party, MSS 4156/1, Mitchell Library (hereafter ML).


\textsuperscript{118}\textit{Proceedings of the Municipal Council of Sydney}, 16 Nov. 1920, Council of the City of Sydney Archives (hereafter CCSA).
Conservative daily papers made much of that incident, emphasising the Town Hall's disregard for the Union Jack, 'a deliberate offence' by Lambert to returned soldiers, the *Daily Telegraph* said.\(^{119}\) There were to be further 'anti-Labor efforts' by such papers 'to divide the Diggers'.\(^{120}\) The *Telegraph* believed the swift response of the Diggers' Vigilance Society, a group dedicated to the suppression of disloyalty, in flying a Union Jack from the Town Hall would teach Lambert 'a significant lesson'. Nationalist Party politicians, particularly those who were returned soldiers, encouraged the press in this view. Lieutenant-Commander Walter Marks, a wealthy lawyer, a leader among returned soldiers and an ambitious Nationalist MHR in the Sydney seat of Wentworth, told a meeting at Bondi Junction on the evening of Anzac Day: 'We have a right to know who gave the order that the flags should not be hoisted'.\(^{121}\) His particular concern was the Union Jack and those who, he said, 'openly ... declare they have no time for it'.

Marks was addressing a meeting arranged by the Protestant Federation, already organising for the expected State election.\(^{122}\) Its president, John Ness, an unsuccessful Soldiers' and Citizens' candidate in the previous election, hoped the federation's decision in March to campaign against the Catholic Church's condemnation of mixed marriages would attract not only Protestant but also Catholic support for its candidates.\(^{123}\) Marks declared that Australians, whatever their religion, owed loyalty to the Union Jack if they accepted the 'privileges' it provided. Another speaker for the Protestant Federation, the Reverend William Touchell, had been less circumspect on the same point a few days before at a similar meeting at Maitland: 'Rome's agents in Australia', he

\(^{119}\) *DT*, 26 Apr. 1921, p. 4

\(^{120}\) *Bulletin*, 19 May 1921, p. 6.

\(^{121}\) *SMH*, 26 Apr. 1921, p. 6.

\(^{122}\) The Protestant Federation, formed in New South Wales in response to the Democratic Party, created in 1919 by the Catholic Federation, aimed to support Protestant candidates of the major parties, O'Farrell, *The Catholic Church*, p. 347. Of the 90 seats won in the elections of March 1922, 38 had had Federation backing, *John Thomas Ness*, *ADB*, vol. 11, p. 3.

\(^{123}\) *Ibid.* Ness had played a central role in the internment in 1918 of Catholic priest, Father Jerger, who was eventually deported in July 1920, despite the last minute efforts of John Wren. See Gerard Henderson, 'The Deportation of Charles Jerger', *Labour History*, no. 31, Nov. 1976, pp. 62-65, 75-76. Ness was elected as a Coalitionist MLA in the 1922 election.
railed, 'were as truly Sinn Fein as Rome's agents in Ireland, and if they had their way there would be a republic in Australia, dominated by the Vatican.' The British Sentinel in Adelaide believed the network of the Empire's enemies stretched much further in asking 'British-Australians' 'whether [they] realise[d] the bond which exist[ed] between the Bolsheviks and the Huns, the Huns and papal Rome and the Sinn Fein?' Touchell, a Congregational minister at Kogarah, Sydney, was well known for his anti-Catholicism, having sheltered in his own home Sister Mary Ligouri, who a few months before had been escorted there by the grand master of the Loyal Orange Lodge of New South Wales, after fleeing her convent in Wagga Wagga. The case against Bishop Dwyer of Wagga Wagga, brought by Sister Ligouri and financed by the lodge, was shortly to be heard amid much publicity.

Lambert, accused of disloyalty over the omission of flags on the Town Hall on Anzac Day, denied responsibility; rather, he said, the organisers, the RSL, were at fault. Smith's Weekly, racy champion of the diggers, was inclined to agree. The president of the New South Wales branch of the RSL retorted with some justification that 'if there [were] any particular building over which a flag, or flags, should have been flown on Anzac Day it was the Town Hall'. But Lambert's main target for criticism was Marks and the Diggers' Vigilance Society, who, he charged, were using returned soldiers and sectarianism 'for base political ends'. He decried Marks's loyalty to the Empire if it did not include loyalty to Australia, as a part of that Empire. Lambert had been caught out on the issue of flags on the Town Hall; at least the town clerk admitted the oversight on the part of staff responsible. Nevertheless Lambert did have a point about the wider issue. The Nationalist Party in New South Wales, in its

124SMH, 26 Apr. 1921, p. 7.
125British Sentinel, Apr. 1919, p. 11. The title changed from All British Sentinel to make clear that the journal was the official organ of two other British organisations as well as the All British League, ibid., Aug. 1918, p. 24.
126'Bridget Partridge', ADB, vol. 11, p. 151.
127Smith’s Weekly, 30 Apr. 1921, p. 4.
128DT, 28 Apr. 1921, p. 4.
130SMH, 27 Apr. 1921, p. 13.
eagerness for office and its difficulty in persuading the smaller Progressive Party to merge with it, was making the most of the incident.

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**It's Our Flag!**

*Our Diggers Fought For It! Our Women Worked For It! Our Bolsheviks Would Haul It Down!*

How much longer will the loyal citizens of Australia suffer this sneaking insidious conspiracy of revolution that is almost ripe in our midst?

In no other country in the world would these disloyalists be permitted openly to preach Bolshevism in a nation that is overwhelmingly loyal.

The Union Jack is befeouled without a public protest. The red flag is brazenly paraded through our streets. The forces of disaffection, of disloyalty, of rebellion take courage by the silence of the patriots.

**IT IS TIME!**

It is time to take action.

It is time to clear the good name of Australia from this disloyal stain.

It is time for every patriot and every loyalist, every believer in The Flag, to make a public protest against this audaciously engineered Bolshevism.

It is time for the overwhelming majority of decent patriotic citizens to put these birds of evil men in their proper place.

We have been complaisant too long. Our good name as a loyal nation has been besmirched. Our Flag has been insulted!

It is up to us!

**PUBLIC MEETING AT TOWN HALL NEXT FRIDAY NIGHT.**

A public meeting will be held in the main hall, at 8 o'clock, to which every loyal citizen, every patriot, every believer in Australia—man and woman—is invited to attend.

The meeting will be a public meeting, not a party meeting, not a sectarian meeting. The cause is too important to be in party hands. The only party will be the patriotic party, which should cross all parties.

All patriotic bodies are cordially invited to co-operate.

At the meeting resolutions will be proposed that promise to be the beginning of an Australia-wide campaign against the evil forces in our midst.

Every loyal and patriotic citizen, no matter of what party or what creed, is invited to attend.

**RALLY ROUND THE FLAG--OUR FLAG!**

Speakers and resolutions will be announced later. Roll up and defeat the disloyalists.

Mr. Ernest Truman, the City Organist, will render patriotic selections between 7 and 8 p.m.

Doors Open at 6.30 p.m. Patriotic Selections on the Grand Organ.

ADMISSION FREE.

Convener: W. Scott Fell, 201 George Street, Sydney.

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Fig. 26. 'Our Flag' — the Union Jack.

*(Daily Telegraph, 4 May 1921)*

The meeting at the Town Hall called by conservatives to publicise their response to the alleged burning of the Union Jack on May Day attracted thousands, who filled the hall in five minutes; 20,000 remained outside (fig. 26).\(^{131}\) Advertised as a 'loyalty meeting' for 'patriots', under 'our flag', the Union Jack, it had the appearance of being non-party political, having been organised and paid for by Scottish-born William Scott Fell, a shipping merchant and

\(^{131}\) *DT*, 7 May 1921, p. 11; 4, May, p. 11, 5 May 1921, p. 7.
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president of the British Empire Union in Australia. He had hopes of election to
the State legislature as an independent non-Labor candidate. The influential
group behind the meeting was the King and Empire Alliance. Its secretary,
Major-General Sir Charles Rosenthal of Sydney, had been an unsuccessful
Progressive candidate for the Legislative Assembly in 1920; but in 1921 he
became an alderman on the Sydney City Council. The meeting passed two
motions condemning the attack on the Union Jack and the parading of the Red
Flag, and affirming loyalty to King and the unity of the Empire.

A further meeting drew crowds to the Town Hall, despite heavy rain. It
was organised by the Protestant Federation, seeking to use the emotions
already aroused and to protest at the extended season of Wren's film, Ireland
Will Be Free then showing in Sydney. Alderman John Ness from Marrickville,
President of the Federation, was accompanied by Walter Marks and several
other Nationalist politicians, as well as the grand master of the Loyal Orange
Lodge and the president of the Methodist Conference. Warming the crowd
with community singing, especially 'Keep the Union Jack Aflying' with its
chorus of 'There's no red flag for us', the organisers succeeded in having several
motions carried, affirming loyalty to King and Empire, calling for the banning
of Sinn Fein emblems and Red Flags in public and an end to 'disloyal
entertainments', such as the film Ireland Will Be Free, and demanding that the
allegiance test be given to Dr Mannix before his re-entry to Australia. The
Nationalists were making 'loyalty' the central issue in politics. Of all the
speakers, Sir Thomas Henley, Nationalist MP and stalwart supporter of the
Protestant Federation, was the most blatant in expressing the Protestant and
Nationalist view: 'All the disloyalists', he said, 'were found in, or in support of,
the class-conscious official Labor Party ... [and] all the disloyal propaganda in

132ibid., 6 May 1921, p. 5.
133SMH, 17 May 1921, pp. 7-8. Barton, the Grand Master, had featured prominently in the
Ligouri case.
Australia and elsewhere emanated from the Roman Church or those in sympathy'. The press reported 'thunderous applause'.

The most explicit rejection in the press of this view came from William Miles, a businessman and rationalist who wrote regularly for Melbourne's *Socialist* and *Ross's Monthly*, 'an iconoclastic polemical journal which discussed cultural issues'.134 He believed that the Catholic Church and the Labor Party were the only organisations capable of challenging the colonial mentality of Australians.135 Emphatic that he was neither Roman Catholic, nor an Irishman, he asserted that 'Loyal Australians', that is those loyal first to Australia, should 'support the R.C. Church in its political propaganda of "Australia First"' against what he called 'the pernicious doctrine of "The Empire (or Britain) First"'.

With the Union Jack and the Red Flag as opposing symbols in the events in Sydney, the role of the Australian flag proved difficult to establish. Brigadier-General Charles Brand, Army Commandant in Victoria, when interviewed on taking up a similar post in New South Wales, reported that diggers in Victoria thought the Australian flag should have priority, but only when accompanied by the Union Jack — a curiously contradictory view.136 In Sydney the *Telegraph* agreed.137 It regretted the introduction of the Union Jack and the Australian flag into 'Domain politics' but warned against those who would distinguish between the two symbols. To be loyal to Australia and disloyal to Britain was not possible, it asserted; the two sentiments were 'incompatible'. Here the paper echoed the comment of Sir Joseph Cook, Deputy Prime Minister, made at a St George's Day dinner in Sydney: 'No man could be a true Australian who was not at the same time a true Britisher'.138 Mannix had vehemently denied the connection on the eve of St Patrick's Day.

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135 *Socialist*, 20 May 1921, pp. 3, 4.
136 *DT*, 4 May 1921, p. 9.
137 *ibid.*, 5 May 1921, p. 4.
138 *ibid.*, 25 Apr. 1921, p. 4.
For the conservative press to pursue an analysis of what was truly Australian might be divisive and uncertain. It was safer to conclude, as the Telegraph did, that 'a collision has come between those who follow the Red Flag and those who gather under our own flag': 'our own' was not defined. Only the advertisements for the 'Great Loyalty Meeting' in the Town Hall indicate that 'Our Flag' referred to the Union Jack (fig. 26). Mary Gilmore, writing for the Australian Worker, had a different view: 'Who dares to trample on our flag? / To soil her silver stars?' she asked. Of the many municipal and district councils urging the State government to introduce a daily flag ceremony in State schools to control 'the element responsible for the insult to our flag on May Day', only one mentioned the Australian flag (together with the Union Jack).

Lambert was not the only target. The Acting Premier, Jim Dooley, Catholic and Irish-born, was also held responsible for allowing the Red Flag in Sydney's streets. The fact that Melbourne's City Council had refused permission for a May Day procession highlighted Lambert's role in Sydney. The Worker took up the cudgels on his behalf, reacting to what its editor, Henry Boote, referred to as 'THE REAL DISLOYALTY', that is, 'the attempt to push forward the Union Jack as the Australian flag'. Boote concluded that this substitution of an 'imperial' flag for the 'national' one was a 'conspiracy' by imperialists in Australia seeking to subordinate Australian interests to those of Britain. He feared a scheme of imperial federation which would bind Australia closer to the Empire. The recent sedition law and the unsuccessful attempt to impose the severe British Army Act on Australia's Citizen Military Force were to him preliminary signs of this tightening of the Australian-imperial bond. Australia's Nationality Act of 1920 was further evidence: the British nationality conferred on those naturalised in Australia was now recognised in the wider Empire.

139 The first two lines of her poem, 'Australia's Flag', AW, 19 May 1921, p. 9.
140 Correspondence from shire and municipal councils, in particular from Taree 1 June 1921, to Under-Secretary, Education Department NSW, 17 May - 13 June 1921, Miscellaneous 20/12809 file 42098, Archives Office of NSW (hereafter AONSW).
141 AW, 12 May 1921, p. 5.
As president of the Labor Party in New South Wales Lambert sought to distance himself and his party from the Red Flag of the May Day procession and its communist organisers by taking up the Australian flag. Barely a quarter of those gathering on May Day had been prepared to walk behind the Red Flag through Sydney's streets; most had gone directly to the Domain.\textsuperscript{142} An 'Australian Rally' in the Town Hall in July 1921, chaired by John Steel, President of the Sons of Australia,\textsuperscript{143} paid tribute to Lambert for his 'services ... to the cause of Australian democracy' and 'for his fearless stand against the exploiters of the Union Jack for political purposes'.\textsuperscript{144} The platform featured the words 'Australia First' and several Australian flags. William Gibbs, President of the Returned Sailors' and Soldiers' Political League, presented him with a framed Australian flag, said to be the one trampled in the Domain. The rally, intended as an answer to those who had done so and raised the Union Jack in its place, led Lambert to respond that he and his party promoted Australian sentiment, and placed Australia 'first on every occasion'. To the \emph{Worker} he was 'the true Australian'.\textsuperscript{145}

The \textit{Bulletin}, once the advocate of 'Australia for the Australians',\textsuperscript{146} criticised the mischievous manipulation of the Union Jack by 'local Tories' in their attempt to discredit the Labor Party.\textsuperscript{147} In 1901 the journal had condemned

\textsuperscript{142}SMH, 2 May 1921, p. 9.
\textsuperscript{144}Extracts from two of the motions passed by the meeting: one proposed and seconded by Arthur Blakeley, President of the AWU and Labor MHR, NSW, and Randolph Bedford, Labor MLC, Qld; the other by T.J. Ryan, Labor MHR, Qld, and Cecil Murphy, Labor MLA, NSW, former president of the Sons of Australia, and Secretary of the Returned Sailors' and Soldiers' Political League, \textit{DT}, 5 July 1921, p. 4.
\textsuperscript{145}AW, 7 July 1921, p. 3.
\textsuperscript{147}'The Monopoly of Loyalty' and 'The Danger of Disruption', \textit{Bulletin}, 26 May and 2 June 1921, p. 6.
the Australian flag as 'that bastard flag', 'a true symbol of the bastard state of Australian opinion, still in large part biased by British tradition, British customs'.\(^{148}\) Now, though much less radical and still unwilling to support the Australian flag, it noted, nonetheless, that the governor-general, as in former times, was attempting to bring the Tories to their senses 'before serious damage is done to the stability of the Empire'. The reference was to the Governor-General, Lord Forster, who, in speaking to the businessmen's Millions Club at Sydney's Town Hall had turned the phrase 'Australia for the Australians' into 'Australians for Australia'.\(^{149}\) The important thing, he said, was to increase the population with suitable settlers, especially children from Britain: children could 'become Australians from the very start'. Lambert was happy to incorporate the reversed phrase a few days later in defending the loyalty of the ALP and distancing it from the violent events associated with May Day.\(^{150}\)

The rally for Lambert also publicised his position on a practical problem at the Town Hall: control of the flags which flew from its balcony, especially the matter of precedence with the Union Jack and Australian flag. The Sydney City Council, after some indecision, had sought to avoid a repeat of the confusion of Anzac Day (when flags had been absent on the Town Hall tower) by assigning the control of flags to the Town Clerk, Thomas Nesbitt.\(^{151}\) This was at Lambert's insistence: he objected to his political opponents giving him the responsibility. However, Nesbitt believed the Union Jack should have precedence when flags were flown. The tension which simmered between the lord mayor (by then also MHR for West Sydney after the death of T.J. Ryan) and town clerk from April erupted in October as flags marked the death of John Storey, the late Labor premier. Lambert over-ruled Nesbitt's authority and directed staff to give the red Australian Merchant Flag precedence on the balcony over the Union Jack at

\(^{149}\)DT, 11 May 1921, p. 9.
\(^{151}\)Proceedings of the Municipal Council of Sydney for 17 and 31 May 1921, CCSA.
the door below. It remained so placed for three days. The Council's Finance Committee deferred Nesbitt's complaint by a majority of one on a party vote. Again the conservative press seized on the issue, sympathising with Nesbitt's plight. Two days later at a civic reception to welcome W.M. Hughes on his return from the Imperial Conference, returned soldiers unfurled a Union Jack on the bare Town Hall balcony. The prime minister made much of the incident, arguing that Lambert's preference for the Australian flag was merely a cover for his true colours, the Red Flag. The likeness between those two flags had caused a problem earlier that year in Bathurst, the heart of Dooley's electorate, when citizens on their way to and from church one Sunday morning were startled and indignant to find what they thought was the Red Flag flying on King's Parade. Police assured them that the Union Jack and Australian flag had become entwined, the one hidden by the red of the other, but some were not convinced.

Lambert set great store on the Australian flag, yet he had not always been so enthusiastically Australian. As president at the 1919 federal Labor Party conference, he had favoured giving greater emphasis to 'collective ownership' at the expense of the other party objectives, especially the first, the long-standing 'cultivation of an Australian sentiment... and the development... of an enlightened and self-reliant community'. The 1921 conference indicated a significant change in Lambert's views: he was one of a small minority unsuccessful in preventing the replacement of the four objectives by a single one: 'The Socialisation of industry, production, distribution and exchange'. The proposal for such a change had come from the All-Australian Trade Union Congress, in which the socialist views of the New South Wales Labor Council

154 DT, 9 May 1921, p. 6.
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were influential. His decision to give the Australian flag precedence on Storey's death underlined that change:

The Australian flag has been adopted by the Australian people and as far as I am concerned it will always take precedence over other flags.

Those who are prepared to sink the Australian sentiment and Australian interests are no good to me or any other member of the Australian Labour Party.

To Lambert the Australian flag, perhaps especially in its red form, represented a middle way between the extremes symbolised by the Union Jack and the Red Flag, the safest way to steer the Labor Party through the volatile politics of New South Wales in 1921. On one side were the Nationalists and their powerful allies seeking to discredit the Labor Party, especially in the eyes of returned soldiers, by emphasising the Catholicism, republicanism and socialism associated with its various factions. On another side were some within the labour movement challenging the dominance of the Australian Workers' Union at a time of unemployment. But not all labour groups were convinced. The Melbourne Trades Hall, for example, flew the Australian flag, but also the Red Flag. The Geelong Trades Hall Council rejected both. The republican connotations of the Australian flag, it argued, were divisive: with it, a member suggested, 'the Party ... might be charged with favoring a Republic'. The Council preferred the Union Jack, believing 'that the time had come to choose between the red flag and that of the Empire'.

Within the Victorian labour movement there had been much discussion of these matters since the savage Labor Call editorial of 12 May, headed 'ENGLAND — OUR ENEMY'. Defining 'England' as 'the British governing classes', the editorial explained: 'Sectarianism, in the guise of Imperialism;

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157Minutes of Meeting 2 June 1921, Labor Council of NSW, A3842-A3843 (FM4/1131), ML.
158Lambert referred here to the decision of the House of Representatives in 1904 to fly the Australian flag on Commonwealth buildings.
159This was part of Lambert's statement, relayed on his behalf to the press in Sydney by James Tyrell, General Secretary, Municipal Employees' Union, while he was attending the ALP Conference in Brisbane, SMH, 15 Oct. 1921, p. 12.
160Crouch to Editor, Labor Call, 2 June 1921, p. 9.
161William O'Shannassy, labourer, reported in the Geelong Advertiser, 8 June 1921, p. 3.
162Labor Call, 12 May 1921, p. 6.
Imperialism in the guise of Loyalty; and Loyalty in the guise of English jingoism in antagonism to Australian patriotism, are the means used to boost the cause of Capitalism'. The particular targets were the English flag, crown and national anthem, 'used to gull mindless mugs, who are made to remember England and forget Australia': the Union Flag represented 'greed, selfishness, and sectarianism'. Loyalty meant 'being true to Australia and the stars of the Australian flag'. The editorial provoked a reaction from Richard Crouch, long the advocate of the Australian flag, and now a member of the Labor Party. He protested that the majority of Australians were English by origin or birth, and that the English working class and labour movement were active against the forces of capital.163 Two weeks later he took up the issue of the battle between the Red and Union flags in Sydney's streets, urging Labor Call's readers to see those flags as complementary rather than opposed: one stood for internationalism and the other for nationalism (of the 'British Commonwealth').164 He thought the Trades Hall Council in Melbourne quite right to fly both the Red Flag and the Australian Flag (which, he noted, included the Union Flag). These symbolised its support for Australia, the British alliance and 'for the future ... for comity with all men'. The editor agreed, likening internationalism to religion, and nationalism to sectarianism. He interpreted the current protest in Australia as being mainly 'against the attempt to foist a bastard sentimental allegiance upon Australians to England merely as England, and to English institutions and traditions, merely as English institutions and traditions'.

The Geelong Trades Hall Council's decision to favour the Union Jack pained one of its former delegates, G.H.L. Smith, who questioned the belief of a speaker reported as saying 'that the Union Jack stands for the same as the Labor Movement — Liberty and Justice.'165 Smith suspected that his 'comrades [had]

163ibid., 19 May 1921, p. 4.
164ibid., 2 June 1921, p. 9.
165ibid., 16 June 1921, p. 9.
grown tired of the fight', and condemned their willingness to put 'expedience' before 'policy'. Similarly he showed no sympathy for workers who refused to participate in the Eight Hours' Day march, fearing that it would be under the Red Flag. In turn, his criticism of the Union Flag offended 'British Laborite', writing to the editor in the next issue. 'Australian Laborite' responded, asserting that 'when it comes to a question of flags the Australian flag is the only flag that matters to the Australian Laborite'.166 He believed that the 'average Australian' knew 'that all this boosting of the Union Jack in Australia is done by Imperialists with the intention of stultifying Australian national sentiment'. Thus, despite what he termed the recent 'deliberate crusade ... of keeping the Australian flag and Australian symbols out of sight' and promoting an 'empire patriotism' as a prelude to Imperial Federation, he thought Australians would not be fooled: 'they intend to be a nation in themselves'.

The Australian Flag: Ambiguity Unresolved

Historians have recognised the importance of World War I and its aftermath in shaping Australians' ideas of nationality. However, the complexities of this shaping have been difficult to trace. Flags are important markers of nationality in the events surrounding St Patrick's Day in Melbourne in 1920 and May Day in Sydney in 1921. In both cities the Australian flag proved to be an ambiguous symbol in sectarian, ethnic and ideological struggles. In Melbourne, in the eyes of Leeper and the loyalists, it was a symbol of disloyalty to Britain, and only the accompaniment of the Union Jack could make it a legitimate Australian symbol: without it, the Australian flag symbolised republicanism, an attack on the Empire, and, because Australia's security depended on that Empire, an attack on Australia itself. In the eyes of Mannix and Wren the Australian flag was a republican symbol, a substitute for the Irish tricolour, an anti-British statement. But it was also an affirmation of loyalty to Australia. In Sydney events

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166ibid., 30 June 1921, p. 5.
illustrated further ambiguous readings of the Australian flag. For the Nationalist Party, the RSL and associated Protestant and loyalist bodies it was a disloyal symbol, representing not only republicanism but also international socialism and revolution, again challenging the notion of Empire. For Lambert, the AWU and the Returned Sailors' and Soldiers' Political League the Australian flag did symbolise their ambivalence to Empire; but it also allowed them, in affirming loyalty to Australia, to distance themselves from the extremism now associated with the Red Flag.

Such ambiguity posed practical problems for municipalities who had to decide which flag — the Union Jack or the Australian flag — to fly, or which to give precedence if they flew both. Inevitably, officials caught up in the confusion about flags in 1921 sought advice. The Local Government Association of New South Wales asked the Prime Minister's Department in June about the use of these flags on days such as Empire Day and the King's Birthday: '(1) Should both the Union Jack and the Australian flag be flown on any or each of these days[?]' and '(2) If both flags are flown together which should be flown on top[?]'

Hughes had been quick to make political capital out of Lambert's preference for the Australian flag. Yet the officials of his own department, in responding to the association's request, favoured the Australian flag over the Union Jack. 'Where only one flag staff is available ...', the acting secretary wrote on the advice of the Department of the Navy, 'it would be proper to fly the Australian ensign in preference to other flags; where two or more staffs are available, the Union Jack might also be flown'.

The association's communication of this advice to all local governments in the State provoked further controversy, especially in Sydney. Tom Mutch, Labor Minister of Public Instruction and of Local Government in New South

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167 A.R. Bluett, Secretary, Local Government Association of New South Wales to Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, 18 June 1921, CRS A461/1 D336/1/1 Pt 1, AA (ACT).
168 Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, to A.R. Bluett, Secretary, Local Government Association, 22 July 1921, along the lines suggested by the Department of the Navy, 12 July 1921, ibid.
169 Shire and Municipal Record, 26 Sept. 1921, p. 589.
Wales, was pleased to publicise the advice on flags for teachers in State schools.\textsuperscript{170} London-born Mutch, a close associate of Dooley's, was a keen advocate of increasing Australian content in the curriculum. But Charles Burfitt, a Catholic, and recent president of the Royal Australian Historical Society, who had commented unfavourably on the selection of an Australian design in 1901,\textsuperscript{171} complained to the \textit{Herald} that the advice from the Prime Minister's Department was 'misleading': the Australian flag, he asserted, was 'not a national flag'.\textsuperscript{172} Nesbitt, Sydney's town clerk who had struggled unsuccessfully with Lambert on the issue of precedence, insisted to the secretary of the Prime Minister's Department that 'the Union Jack MUST always take precedence ... so long as the Commonwealth of Australia is an integral constituent part of the British Empire'.\textsuperscript{173} However, the naval secretary, when questioned, was not convinced. While recognising that controversy over precedence was 'unfortunate', he assured his counterpart in the Prime Minister's Department of the status of the Australian Ensign: 'the facts are that it is a National Flag'.\textsuperscript{174} He added, 'It may be pointed out that the "UNION JACK" is the Flag of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and is contained in the Australian Flag as an essential part of that Flag'. His further memorandum reinforced the point with the suggestion that to avoid the issue of precedence the Union Jack and the Australian flag should not be flown together.\textsuperscript{175} The secretary of the Prime Minister's Department responded accordingly to the disgruntled Nesbitt.\textsuperscript{176}

\textsuperscript{170} The notice about flags for 'National Days' reproduced part of the letter from the Prime Minister’s Department to the Local Government Association, \textit{Education Gazette}, Oct. 1921, p. 164.

\textsuperscript{171} See above Chapter 2, p. 102.

\textsuperscript{172} C.T. Burfitt to editor, SMH, 6 Sept. 1921, in CRS A461/1 D336/1/1 Pt 1, AA (ACT).

\textsuperscript{173} T. Nesbitt, Town Clerk, Sydney, to Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, 12 Oct. 1921, CRS A461/1 A336/1/1 Pt 1, AA (ACT). Nesbitt, a Methodist and freemason of high standing, had been town clerk in Sydney since coming to the post from England in 1902, \textit{Thomas Huggins Nesbitt}, \textit{ADB}, vol. 11, p. 2.

\textsuperscript{174} G. Spurgeon for Secretary, Department of the Navy, to Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, 12 Oct. 1921, CRS A461/1 A336/1/1 Pt 1, AA (ACT).

\textsuperscript{175} G.L. Macandie, Secretary, Department of the Navy, to Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, 26 Oct. 1921, although it was not forwarded until requested by telephone on 6 Dec. 1921, \textit{ibid}.

\textsuperscript{176} Secretary, Prime Minister’s Department, to Town Clerk, Sydney, 14 Dec. 1921, \textit{ibid}.
By the end of 1921 the status of the Australian Ensign as a national flag appeared to be settled, at least among federal government officials, if not publicly. It was an extraordinary outcome. Against the background of the events of 1921 which, with the encouragement of Nationalist politicians in New South Wales, had so emphasised the ambiguous standing of the Australian flag, these officials serving the Nationalist federal government were adamant that the Australian Ensign was Australia’s national flag; the Union Jack was the flag of Great Britain and Ireland — soon to be Northern Ireland. However, enquiries which had begun during the war about which Australian flag — the Ensign or the Merchant Flag — governments, organisations and citizens were entitled to fly had not been settled. In particular they indicated the confusion experienced by State governments as to whether the correct flag was the State flag or the Australian flag. There were other enquiries from Canadians attempting to clarify their own national flag. Finding answers to these enquiries proved difficult and threw into question officials' certainty that the Australian Ensign was the national flag. Attempts by the federal government to resolve the issue between 1922 and 1924 added to the confusion, which was not addressed until 1939 and then by the Victorian government.
On 23 February 1939 the Premier of Victoria, Albert Dunstan, the stocky leader of the Victorian Country Party, wrote to the Prime Minister, J.A. Lyons, asking his government to 'define more precisely the use of the Australian Ensign.' It was the first time since the gazetting of the Australian ensigns in 1903 that a politician had attempted to clarify which one was the Australian national flag. That the politician was from Victoria was significant, as was the fact that the issue prompting his letter related to the use of flags in State schools. Since federation, Victoria had led the other States in introducing first the Union Jack, then the Australian flag into State schools. Now, in attempting to resolve which was the correct Australian flag to fly — the blue Ensign or red Merchant Flag, the Victorian government ensured that the choice of flag became a national matter which the Australian government could no longer ignore.

The Australian Ensign: Whose Flag?

The focus of the previous chapter was the relationship between the Australian flag and the Union Jack as national flags. Subsumed, but not explored until now, was the relationship between the two Australian ensigns. It involved two questions about the Australian Ensign as a national flag. Was it the flag for State and local governments as well as the federal government? Was it the flag for civilians and non-government organisations?

Confusion about the use of the red and blue ensigns went back beyond their gazetting to the competitions for their design in 1900-1901: the red was said to be for 'the merchant service' or 'general use'; the blue for 'naval or

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1A.A. Dunstan to J.A. Lyons, 23 Feb. 1939, CRS A461/1 A336/1/1 Pt 2 Australian Archives (hereafter AA (ACT)); 'Sir Albert Arthur Dunstan', *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (hereafter *ADB*), vol. 8, p. 376.
official' or 'government' use. Once approved, even the Naval Commandant, Captain William Creswell, was puzzled by the lack of regulations defining their use. The fact that the Canadians had informally chosen a red ensign, and the New Zealanders, more formally, a blue ensign, as national flags further complicated the situation. At first those wishing to see an Australian flag used had directed their efforts towards persuading the federal government to fly the Ensign from Commonwealth government buildings. The standing of that flag increased with the decisions of 1908 and 1911 to fly it from Australian forts and warships. By contrast, the status of the Merchant Flag was more uncertain since the Navigation Bill requiring ships registered in Australia to fly that flag, although finally enacted in 1912, was not proclaimed because of the war.

Interest in flying Australian flags during the war provoked the first attempt to clarify the use of the two ensigns. P.J. Wallace from the Government Education Stores in Sydney asked whether the Ensign was for Commonwealth government use only. His particular concern was for State schools: as State government buildings did they have the right to fly the Commonwealth government flag? Civilians were also asking whether they could fly the Ensign. A war-time regulation restricting the use of white and blue ensigns on shore was adopted in 1917 on the suggestion of the British government, at least until the Australian Naval Office granted an exemption in 1918. Apart from this temporary restriction, copied without giving much thought to the fact that Australia's official flag was a blue ensign, the Prime Minister's Department accepted the advice of the Naval Secretary, George Macandie, that the Ensign could be regarded as a flag for State as well as federal governments. However,

2See above Chapter 2, p. 76.
3See above Chapter 3, pp. 102ff., 112-113, 117-118.
5See above Chapter 5, p. 237.
6ibid.
7The fear was that flags resembling the white and blue ensigns would be used to deceive, Memorandum from Downing Street to Governor General, 28 Feb. 1917, and Naval Secretary to Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, 6 June 1918, CRS A461/1 A336/1/1 Pt 1, AA (ACT).
it was preferable, Macandie thought, for State governments to fly the State ensigns specifically designed for them. At that time he made no mention of a flag for civilians, except that the red ensign 'should be flown by ships of the merchant service only'.

An enquiry from Canada was about to draw attention to a flag for civilians.

The General Manager of the Premier Trust Company in London, Ontario, concerned about resolving the uncertain status of the Canadian flag, sent a series of questions about the Australian flag to the Australian prime minister in November 1917. 'Is the Flag authorized to fly on land as well as sea?' he asked. 'Is there a difference in design between the Flag used on land and the Flag used on sea?' The questions reflected the troubled history of the Canadian red ensign: flown on land and sea before being accepted by the Admiralty as a flag for merchant ships, Canadians regarded it as their national flag until Joseph Pope began his campaign in favour of the Union Jack in 1904. Most telling was the general manager's final question: 'Is the Australian Flag generally used in the Commonwealth of Australia?' To an Australian the question was easily misunderstood. The Australian blue ensign had not had the same widespread acceptance and use as its red Canadian counterpart. Essentially the Canadian manager was asking whether government and people used the Australian Ensign as a national flag, as had been the case in Canada. That is not what Malcolm Shepherd, the Secretary of the Prime Minister's Department, understood. Following Macandie's earlier advice, he wrote of the Australian Ensign as a government flag, particularly for the Commonwealth government. However, in assuring the Canadian that 'the Commonwealth flag is generally used in the Commonwealth of Australia', he gave the misleading impression that he was referring here to the Australian Ensign. He was not. The tradition,

8G.L. Macandie, Naval Secretary, to Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, 18 Apr. 1917, CRS A461/1 B336/1/1 Pt 2, AA (ACT).
10Emphasis added, Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, to General Manager, Premier Trust Co., London, Ontario, 29 Jan. 1918, ibid.
as far as it existed in Australia, was for non-government organisations and individuals to use the Merchant Flag. For both the Canadian and the Australian, unfamiliar with the history of flags in the other country, the questions and answers did not quite match the situation or understanding of each. However, the questions did begin to draw Australian officials' attention to the need for clearer direction as to which Australian flag the public should use.

There was further questioning from Canada some two years later — this time from R.J. Manion, Member of the House of Commons, seeking to know 'whether or not you have a distinct flag of your own, separate from the Union Jack of Great Britain'. Referring to 'a certain amount of agitation in this country for a distinctive Canadian Flag', he wanted information on how other dominions had handled the flag issue, in anticipation of it becoming a matter for the Canadian parliament. More cautious this time, Shepherd simply sent a description of the two flags from the Gazette, avoiding the point of the Canadian's question.

However, this point became increasingly difficult for Commonwealth officials to ignore with the explosion of interest in flags in 1920 and 1921. The Attorney-General's Department, when confronted with the question of whether a civilian had the right to fly the Ensign, reported that 'there appears to be no law dealing with the flying of the Commonwealth Blue Ensign on shore'. The admission led the Prime Minister's Department in June 1921 to draft a statement setting out the assumed convention. Although based on Macandie's advice of April 1917, it made two important changes. The first concerned the red ensign which Macandie had mentioned only in relation to merchant ships. Now the statement, 'The Commonwealth Flag (the Red Ensign) is generally used in the

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11E. Wilson Dobbs, the Melbourne heraldry enthusiast, in devising a flag for the Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works, commented to Atlee Hunt, Secretary, Department of External Affairs, 'of course we all know ... that being a Board outside governmental auspices we can only fly the Commonwealth Merchant Flag — with the red ground', 23 May 1908, ibid., Pt 1.
12R.J. Manion, MP, Canada, to Secretary of State, Australia, 21 Apr. 1920, ibid., Pt 2.
13Minute from Secretary, Attorney-General's Department, to Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, 16 June 1921, CRS A461/1 A336/1/1 Pt 1, AA (ACT).
Commonwealth of Australia', headed the draft. It came directly from the first of the Canadian enquiries and Shepherd's response. The second change restricted the use of the Ensign to the federal government, except for State schools. Although Macandie had urged the specific use of federal and State blue ensigns, he had been prepared to regard the Ensign as a flag for federal and State governments.

At the time, however, this document of 1921 marked no more than a stage in the thinking of the Prime Minister's Department. For in dealing with the Sydney Town Hall issue of 1921, that department continued to act on the advice of the Naval Board — that 'it would be proper to fly the Australian [E]nsign in preference to other flags', whether Union Jack or State ensign. The secretary of the Prime Minister's Department had responded accordingly to the Local Government Association: 'the Australian ensign should be flown on all public buildings upon all occasions when flags are used'. Thomas Trumble, Secretary of the Department for Defence, was troubled by several enquiries put to his department concerning the two ensigns. He sought advice from the Prime Minister's Department, urging 'a pronouncement on the subject ... for future guidance in this Department'. The particular dispute he reported concerned officials of the Soldiers' Memorial Hall at Nanneella, south of Echuca, who '[could] not agree as to which is the correct Australian Flag to fly on the Hall'. When advised by the Prime Minister's Department that the Merchant Flag should be used by the general public, he remained sceptical. 'Would it be incorrect to fly the blue ensign', he persisted, '... or must the red ensign only be flown in such cases'? Again he suggested a pronouncement but this time in

14Emphasis added, untitled memorandum, Prime Minister's Department, undated, but about June 1921, ibid.
15Memorandum from Secretary, Department of the Navy, to Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, 12 July 1921, CRS A461/1 D336/1/1 Pt 1, AA (ACT).
16Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, to A.R. Bluett, Secretary, Local Government Association of New South Wales, 22 July 1921, ibid.
17T. Trumble, Secretary, Department for Defence, to Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, 12 July 1921, CRS A461/1 A336/1/1 Pt 1, AA (ACT).
18T. Trumble, Secretary, Department for Defence (responding to Minute of Acting Secretary, Prime Minister's Department of 26 July 1921), to Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, 15 Aug. 1921, ibid.
the form of a press statement, since he thought 'that there [was] a complete lack of knowledge on the part of the public generally as to the uses of the Australian ensigns'. His counterpart in the Prime Minister's Department seemed unsure, jotting 'Can we supply?' in pencil in the margin. The question reflected what both senior civil servants knew — that ignorance about the ensigns was not the preserve of the general public.

In responding to the dispute in Nanneella, the Prime Minister's Department was adamant that the general public must use the red ensign, but at the same time indicated it would seek further naval advice. It did so in the form of another draft statement, this time sent for naval approval. The first clause concerned the Merchant Flag and indicated the next stage in the department's thinking: 'The Commonwealth Flag (the Red Ensign) is generally used in the Commonwealth of Australia, and should be flown by private citizens on occasions when flags are displayed'. The department, as in its June 1921 statement, regarded the Ensign as essentially the flag of the federal government. State governments should fly their own ensign. If they wished to use an Australian flag, they would have to use the Merchant Flag. To the Naval Board, however, there was a problem with the use of that flag, especially by governments: unlike the Ensign, it had 'not yet been recognized as a National Flag'. Although the warrant confirming the Admiralty's acceptance of this flag had been gazetted in 1903, the Navigation Act requiring merchant ships registered in Australia to fly the flag had not been proclaimed. The board agreed that State governments should use their own ensigns rather than the Australian flag. However, if they used an Australian flag, the Board believed they should fly the Ensign not the Merchant Flag. Macandie, on his return from

19 Acting Secretary, Prime Minister's Department to Secretary, Department for Defence, 26 Aug. 1921, ibid.
20 Emphasis added, Memorandum from Acting Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, to Department of the Navy, 26 Aug. 1921, ibid.
21 G. Spurgeon for Secretary, Department of the Navy, to Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, 12 Oct. 1921, ibid.
22 ibid., also G. Spurgeon for Secretary, Department of the Navy, to Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, 29 Nov. 1921 and H.M. Adams, General Secretary, Australasian Steamship Owners' Federation, to Secretary, Department of the Navy, 3 Dec. 1921, ibid.
several months with the Admiralty, reinforced the point in a further document. It was the first time an official had addressed the ambiguity in Crouch's resolution on the Australian Ensign in the House of Representatives in 1904:

As all States of the Federation form a part of the Commonwealth of Australia and no State has an individual national flag, the Naval Board is of [the] opinion that the resolution ... must be considered as applicable not only to Federal, but also to State institutions. The same argument could also be applied to Municipal institutions, thus the same rule would apply to all buildings within the Commonwealth of Australia.23

This was surely recognition of the Ensign as Australia's national flag, a point the Naval Board had made at the time of the controversy at the Sydney Town Hall. Then the all-consuming issue had been precedence: whether the Ensign could be flown as a national flag instead of the Union Jack; and whether, when those two flags were flown together, the Union Jack should be given precedence. The issue of red and blue ensigns was hardly noticed.

The Prime Minister's Department, despite its intention of clarifying the use of the two ensigns, let the matter drop, perhaps because naval advice did not favour its view. It provided no statement for the Defence Department or the press. But the issue refused to go away. In 1923 J.W. Trangmar, a general merchant of Coleraine, centre of an area about 25 km north-west of Hamilton, Victoria, being opened for soldier settlement, wrote to the minister for defence for information 'in the most definite form as it is to settle the question of the character of the Australian Flag'.24 Flags were at the centre of a dispute on the committee responsible for organising the flying of the flag, especially on Anzac Day, at the town's war memorial. Trangmar was the Chairman. 'The Secretary wrote to Melbourne for an Australian Flag', he explained, '— a flag with a blue ground ... was sent — I submit this is the Australian Navy Official Flag. The National Flag of Australia I contend should have a red ground'.

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23Emphasis added, Memorandum from G.L. Macandie, Department of the Navy, to Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, 26 Oct. 1921, ibid.
24J.W. Trangmar, Coleraine, to Minister for Defence, 7 May 1923, CRS A461/1 B336/1/1 Pt 2, AA (ACT).
The dispute underlined the earlier plea of the Defence Department for guidelines. It prompted the Prime Minister's Department to try again in July 1923 with yet another draft, this time for the scrutiny of the Attorney-General's Department and the Defence Department (which now included the Naval Office). The statement was a much simpler version than the previous one of August 1921, essentially recommending the Ensign for government use, as Macandie had done in 1917, and the Merchant Flag for private use. Several more reminders had to be sent before the two departments responded. The secretary of the Attorney-General's Department had no objections to the statement. Trumble, in defence, did. Against the trend of regarding the Ensign as the national flag, at least for governments, he argued it should be reserved for Commonwealth government use only. For the Merchant Flag — and the Union Jack — there should be no such restriction. Anxious to settle the issue, the Prime Minister's Department adopted the Defence Department's statement of December 1923, ending six years of prevarication. Perhaps the proclamation of the Navigation Act in February 1922 had now given authority to the Merchant Flag. However, the effect of the Defence statement was to reinforce Australia's colonial status: there was to be no one Australian national flag which all levels of government, let alone citizens, could fly as in the United Kingdom with the Union Jack. In a very real sense the Union Jack remained Australians' national flag. As if to emphasise the point, the Defence Department added further information regulating the flying of that flag: 'It should never be flown in a position inferior to any other flag'.

Committee members in Coleraine had been waiting for a decision while government departments were reconciling their differences. Eventually informed that the Merchant Flag should be used, the committee secretary wrote

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25 Flags — Commonwealth and Others, Prime Minister's Department, 20 July 1923, CRS A461/1 A336/1/1 Pt 1; Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, to Defence Department and Attorney-General's Department, 24 July, CRS A461/1 B336/1/1 Pt 2, AA (ACT).
26 Flying of Flags, T. Trumble, Secretary, Department for Defence, to Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, 17 Dec. 1923, CRS A461/1 A336/1/1 Pt 1, AA (ACT).
to ask permission to use the flag already bought — the Ensign.\textsuperscript{27} It was readily
given, making a mockery of the whole process. Government departments had
reached a decision about the two ensigns but there was no public
announcement. That was still to come. When it did, it provoked further
complications in the symbolic representation of Australian nationality. In the
aftermath of William Lambert and the Sydney Town Hall, those complications
surfaced most spectacularly in New South Wales.

On 31 January 1924 the Prime Minister's Department sent a circular,
signed by Dr Earle Page, Leader of the Country Party and Acting Prime
Minister, to all State premiers and Commonwealth departments. It was the
Defence Department statement of December 1923 with a preamble which
offered the information as the basis for flying flags and answering enquiries
about them. The premiers did not respond. However, in New South Wales, still
sensitive to the issue of flags, the \textit{Sun}, Sydney's popular tabloid with its motto
of 'Above all "for Australia"', jumped to the defence of the Ensign by defending
States' right to fly it. 'WHICH FLAG? COMMONWEALTH INTERVENES.
RIGHTS OF THE STATES', its headline declared.\textsuperscript{28} 'According to the ukase
[emphasising the government's high-handed approach]', the paper continued,
'the States have no right at all so far as the Australian (blue) ensign is
concerned!' For 'New South Wales authorities' (the paper did not specify
whether it referred to the State government or the Sydney City Council), who
said they did not have a State blue ensign, the choice was either the Union Jack
or the Merchant Flag.

The item caught the eye of a member of the New South Wales RSL
Executive who thought that the federal government's 'ultimatum' to the States
was 'preposterous'.\textsuperscript{29} RSL concern about the right of the States to use the Ensign

\textsuperscript{27}Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, to J.M. Trangmar, Coleraine, n.d.; J. Goldberg,
Honorary Secretary, Coleraine Fallen Soldiers' Memorial Fund, to Secretary, Prime Minister's
Department, 3 Apr. 1924; and Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, to J. Goldberg, 14 Apr.
1923, CRS A461/1 B336/1/1 Pt 2, AA (ACT).
\textsuperscript{28}\textit{Sun}, 20 Mar. 1924, p. 10.
\textsuperscript{29}\textit{ibid.}, 21 Mar. 1924, p. 12.
rather than the Merchant Flag is puzzling. In 1921 its focus had been the Union Jack, 'our flag', as seen in the huge demonstration against the Red Flag organised by the RSL in Sydney's Domain. Certainly the aims of the RSL encompassed 'loyalty to Australia and the Empire', but why should it matter whether State governments were allowed to fly the blue rather than red ensign? Perhaps it was a question of Australian nationality: a protest at the Commonwealth attempting to exclude the States from using the official Australian flag, to limit the standing of State governments. Perhaps, too, for an organisation so closely associated with non-Labor politics, there was distaste for the red ensign now that red was as much associated with socialist revolution and its success in Russia as with the might of the British Empire.

Whatever the precise motive, the executive forwarded the Sun article to the Federal President, Gilbert Dyett, asking him to 'inquire into the facts'. Dyett, highly regarded for his non-party approach in negotiations with governments on behalf of returned soldiers, was also, as part-time secretary of the Victorian Trotting and Racing Association, a close associate of John Wren. The RSL in New South Wales suspected that 'some officious person' had acted 'without reference to the Prime Minister', now S.M. Bruce, the strategically-placed Country Party having refused to serve under Hughes' leadership.

More questions were asked in the House of Representatives. John West, London-born moderate Labor Member for East Sydney, addressed the prime minister about a complaint he had received: that the federal government required the Union Jack instead of the Australian flag to be flown on public buildings in New South Wales. It was a misreading of the Sun article, perhaps

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30See above Chapter 6, p. 288.
31W.J. Stagg, Secretary, RSSILA, NSW, to General Secretary, RSSILA, 22 Mar. 1924, RSL Papers, MS 6609/1/1697B, National Library of Australia; G.J. Dyett, Federal President of the RSSILA, to Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, forwarding the Sun clipping and requesting comment, 27 Mar. 1924, CRS A461/1 A336/1/1 Pt 1, AA (ACT).
33Sun, 21 Mar. 1924, p. 12.
34John West, 3 Apr. 1924, Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates (hereafter CPD) 1924, vol. 106, p. 297; West was London-born and raised, migrating to Sydney at 23 in 1875 as a plumber. An enthusiastic trade unionist, he represented East Sydney from 1910, ADB, vol. 12, pp. 446-447.
deliberately so in the context of New South Wales politics. West wished to know who was responsible for the change in regulations, pointing out that 'previous Ministers have taken no exception to the flying of the Australian Flag, so long as the Union Jack was also flown'. Bruce, unaware of the significance of the issue having been in Europe during 1921, protested that he had no knowledge of any regulations being altered but promised to inquire into the matter.

In New South Wales the Premier's Department had sent Page's circular on flags to the Education Department. It contradicted the advice — that State schools could use the Australian Ensign — given to P.J. Wallace in the Government Education Stores in 1917 and publicised in the *Education Gazette* in 1921. Since the reaction of shire and municipal councils to the events of May Day — the call for the daily saluting of the Union Jack in State schools, the issue of school flags had been highly controversial. The Nationalist-Progressive coalition, following the change in government after elections in March 1922, moved quickly to implement a ceremony. Within a month of taking office, the Minister of Public Instruction, Albert Bruntnell, required children every Monday morning to repeat after their teacher the words

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\begin{align*}
\text{I honour my God} \\
\text{I serve the King} \\
\text{I salute my Flag.}
\end{align*}
\]

and to sing the first stanza of *God Save the King*. This was the first time the words of a pledge had been formalised in the *Gazette*, some 20 years after the Victorians and ten years after the South Australians. Again the words were different:

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35Circular, Premier's Department, New South Wales, to Education Department, 17 Mar. 1924, 20/12721 A360, Archives Office of NSW (hereafter AONSW).
36*Education Gazette* (hereafter EG), 9 May 1922, p. 131.
1939: Victoria Forces the Issue

Victoria

I love God and my country;
I honour the flag;
I will serve the King, and
cheerfully obey my parents,
teachers and the laws.

South Australia (post 1916 version)

I love my country
(the British Empire);
I honour her King
(George V);
I salute her flag
(the Union Jack);
I promise cheerfully to
obey her laws.37

Most noticeable in the New South Wales’ declaration was the absence of 'country', that uncertain entity in the immediate post-war context. For Bruntnell, a Nationalist, it spoke too much of Australia rather than the Empire. Welsh-born, he had migrated to Australia as a Salvation Army officer.38 For him the Empire stood 'white and clean on the summit of civilization'.39

Holding this belief, which also reflected widely-held community views, Bruntnell wanted the Union Jack to be used. He endorsed the view of the Premier, Sir George Fuller, that 'the great driving power behind the AIF was the spirit of loyalty to the Union Jack, and all that it meant, and, with Fuller, criticised those who 'would deny to the rising generation the right to have that spirit encouraged'.40 Fuller had been the hard-line acting premier at the time of the general strike in 1917. But Bruntnell, fearing that insistence on the Union Jack might jeopardise the standing of the ceremony itself, compromised: 'It is the Australian flag which I propose shall be saluted ... In saluting the Australian flag they will at the same time be saluting the Union Jack, which is incorporated in our emblem'.41 In the end the Gazette notice did not specify either flag — simply 'the flag'.

The Australian Worker was scathing in its attack on Bruntnell’s decree. Its article, 'Imperialism in the Public Schools', condemned the 'startling change in our school education policy' where the minister used his office 'for the

39ibid.
40Statement by Sir George Fuller, quoted by Australian Worker (hereafter AW), 1 June 1922, p. 11.
41Albert Bruntnell, quoted by ibid., 1 June 1922, p. 11.
propaganda of his own political or religious creed'. The journalist was Frank Cotton, a former MLA of New South Wales who had been born in South Australia and educated at Prince Alfred College. He had been a shearer, farmer and Methodist lay preacher. Arguing that Australians were 'citizens of an Australian Commonwealth not subjects of an Empire', he wondered what Bruntnell would do with citizens who would not allow their children 'to bow down before the altar of his imperialistic idol'. Another contributor commented that 'the extent to which the Australian flag is kept out of school by the use of any other flag, to that extent disloyalty in Australia is taught'.

The columns of the New South Wales' Public School Teachers' Federation journal were noticeably silent on the issue. But in parliament on the day after the second session opened in 1922, James Dooley, Leader of the Labor Opposition, launched an attack on the government for politicising the State education system. He thought Bruntnell's 'compulsory loyalty' was a 'stunt': 'To say that you can inculcate loyalty by teaching children to gabble off something on a certain day of the week is the narrowest possible view of loyalty'. He could not understand a grown-up man believing in it. Captain William Dunn, a rural Labor member, formerly a teacher, and a returned soldier, also argued against the ceremony. If any flag were saluted, he thought it should be the Australian flag. He defended the loyalty of John Reid, another returned man and the member of the teachers' federation who had moved 'that this Federation asserts that the loyalty of the public schools is unquestioned, and that the circular containing instructions as to the procedure on Monday mornings is unnecessary'. The vote on Reid's motion had been close, 29 to 22,

43 'Francis Cotton', ADB, vol. 8, pp. 119-120.
44 AW, 17 May 1922, p. 9.
reflecting divisions within the wider community. Dooley suggested that many teachers feared for their careers if they did not comply.

Bruntnell's ceremony was unusual in Australia in that teachers as well as children were to recite the oath. The New Zealand government had gone a step further in requiring its teachers to sign an oath of loyalty.\(^{48}\) The Teachers' Federation in New South Wales was wary of political interference. Bruntnell's Labor predecessor, Tom Mutch, had been a great advocate of 'true Australianism in our own schools', the subject of his address in opening the First Interstate Conference of Public School Teachers of Australia in Sydney at the beginning of 1921: 'I am not one', he declared, 'who says that we should grow up parochially, knowing nothing of countries other than our own ... But at the same time we don't know our own country'.\(^{49}\) The federation's journal was more cautious. It agreed that the greatest purpose of education was 'the expansion and strengthening of the national spirit', but by that it meant 'not that spirit which is merely Australian ... but ... includes all the English-speaking peoples'.\(^{50}\) In contrast to Mutch, the journal argued that such spirit 'grows not by much talking about it, but rather by silence upon it, being nurtured by deed rather than by word'. The next month's editorial was even more pointed: the Labor government expected too much of teachers' 'Australian spirit' when it did not provide enough money to run schools properly.\(^{51}\) Bruntnell intended to

\(^{48}\)The New Zealand government required the saluting of the Union Jack or the New Zealand flag by children and teachers in government schools from May 1921. Later that year it amended the *Education Act* to require the teacher's oath in writing as a condition of employment; it came into effect in April 1922. Roger Openshaw, 'Lilliput Under Siege: New Zealand Society and its Schools During the "Red Scare", 1919-1922', *History of Education Quarterly*, vol. 20, no. 4, Winter 1980, pp. 415, 419-420. The children's declaration was almost the same as in Victoria:

- I love God and my country;
- I honour the Flag;
- I will honour the King,
- And always obey my parents,
- My teachers, and the laws of the land.

T.B. Strong (Chief Inspector of Primary Schools, 'The Inculcation of Patriotism', *Education Gazette*, Nov. 1921, p. 2) specified the New Zealand flag although the order-in-council had indicated 'the New Zealand Flag or the Union Jack', *New Zealand Gazette*, 23 June 1921.


\(^{50}\)Editorial, 'Federal Education', *ibid.*, p. 418.

relieve the funding problem by re-introducing fees for high schools, a policy which led the Director of Education, Peter Board, to retire early in protest.  

Bruntnell’s heavy-handed demands for the teaching of loyalty did not match the approach Board had taken to the teaching of citizenship since 1902.

Dooley combined his protest at the government’s new requirement for a school flag ceremony with a complaint that Bruntnell had condoned an attack on the Red Flag in a State school by his Nationalist colleague, David Anderson. Anderson, a Scottish immigrant with a Presbyterian Orange background, had spontaneously taken over from a teacher when visiting the school and led children in singing ‘We’ll keep the Union Jack a’flying ... No red flag for us’. This flag, Dooley asserted, was ‘the standard of civilisation to the workers generally all over the civilised world, and they believe[d] in it’. No minister controlling public education, he argued, had ‘a right to insult the convictions ... of any scholar or parent in the State’. Reginald Weaver, a Nationalist, a leading member of the Australian Protestant Defence Association, and a fierce anti-socialist, who delighted in using satirical verse against his opponents, seized on the comment:

What! wear a tri-coloured Union Jack,
Symbol of greed and stealth,
And haul from the mast of the Brotherhood,
The flag of the Commonwealth.

I would as soon, help weeds in a garden,
Where sweet flowers cannot grow,
As turn my back on our red flag,
For the tag-rags of the foe.

More than a year after the May Day events, party politics in New South Wales was still being characterised by the Union Jack and the Red Flag. In the Legislative Assembly Dr Cyril Fallon, a Catholic and the representative of the new Democratic Party which had grown out of the Catholic Federation, was

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53James Dooley, 5 July 1922, NSWPD 1922, second series vol. 87, p. 96.
prepared to declare, 'Australia is my country, and Australia is the country to which I am loyal', though even he fell short of endorsing the Australian flag.\(^{55}\)

Given this recent history of flags in schools, New South Wales' interest in, and reaction to, Page's circular is understandable. RSL suspicion that the revision in flag regulations was the work of officials seemed to be confirmed by the disclaimer of the Deputy Prime Minister, Dr Earle Page, at an RSL dinner in April 1924 that he knew nothing of the matter.\(^{56}\) Eric Bowden, Minister of Defence, also at the dinner, likewise pleaded ignorance. The RSL secretary was right to wonder how a circular letter to the premiers when Page was acting prime minister could have been sent with his signature but without his knowledge.\(^{57}\) As for Bowden, his department had introduced the clause restricting the use of the Ensign.\(^{58}\) Bowden's investigation of the matter drew the pained civil servant response that the clause had been included 'on the assumption that the Commonwealth [was] competent to regulate the use of its official flag'.\(^{59}\)

Bruce, now recognising the problem perceived in New South Wales and fearing misunderstanding elsewhere, assured the premiers in May 1924 that he 'did not contemplate, for one moment, that the Commonwealth flag ... should be replaced by the Union Jack'.\(^{60}\) Where there was no State flag available, State governments should use 'the Commonwealth Blue Ensign'. That had already been understood in Victoria, the National Party Premier, Sir Alexander Peacock, assured the prime minister.\(^{61}\) To South Australia's Liberal Premier, Sir Henry Barwell, the federal government's correction made not the slightest
difference to its practice: the State ensign was 'the only official Flag in use in this State', he declared.\textsuperscript{62} That was not true, of course, since his government prescribed the Union Jack for use in schools.

Despite the federal government's clarification in May of States' right to fly the Ensign, correspondence from the Prime Minister's Department to the RSL continued to assume that the Ensign was restricted to Commonwealth government use.\textsuperscript{63} Only after further RSL protest did the department correct its response in the light of the May statement.\textsuperscript{64} Even then, in the following years departmental responses to enquiries about the Australian ensigns continued to assume a restricted role for the Ensign. When, for example, in 1927 the New South Wales Branch of the RSL requested a copy of the flag regulations, the Prime Minister's Department sent those of January 1924 without the important qualification of May.\textsuperscript{65} State governments' right to use the Ensign was still not assured as Albert Dunstan discovered in 1939. His dilemma arose out of difficulties with the flag ceremony in Victorian State schools. However, to understand these we need to see them in the wider context of what had happened to the flag ceremony in the other States since the war.

1930: Taking Stock of the National Salute

William Adey, the still relatively new Director of Education in South Australia, wrote to his counterparts interstate on 22 May 1930 about a problem which had recently come to his attention: the place of the Australian flag in schools. Two days before he and Lionel Hill, the Labor Premier and Minister of Education, had received a deputation from the South Australian branch of the ANA.

\textsuperscript{62}Premier, South Australia to Prime Minister, 14 Apr. 1924, \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{63}P.E. Deane, Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, to General Secretary, RSSILA, 16 May 1924, forwarded to NSW Branch on 19 May, RSL Papers, MS 6609/1/1697B, NLA.
\textsuperscript{64}W.J. Stagg, Secretary, RSSILA (NSW) to General Secretary, RSSILA, 23 May 1924, for forwarding to the Prime Minister, and F. Strahan, Prime Minister's Department, to General Secretary, RSSILA, 10 June 1924, \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{65}Correspondence between the Federal Executive, RSSILA, 29 Apr. 1927, and the Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, 30 May 1927, CRS A461/1 B336/1/1 Pt 2, AA (ACT). See also the correspondence about flags in Launceston between the ANA, the Town Clerk, the Chief Secretary's Office and the Prime Minister's Department 3 June - 23 Aug. 1933, Launceston City
Prompted by the Victorian Branch, it had been seeking a meeting with the minister since February 'to urge the necessity of the Australian Flag being flown more often at Schools'. Adey responded that although his department issued the Union Jack to schools for the daily flag ceremony, it did not object to them also flying the Australia flag 'on special school occasions' if they were prepared to buy it. This possibility, however, had never been advertised in the Gazette. The ANA requested the department to issue an Australian flag to all State schools for use instead of the Union Jack 'with a view to encouraging a greater national spirit in the younger generation'.

At the meeting the deputation made several points in explaining the ANA's position: that the flag ceremony should be conducted 'from the Australian point of view'; that no disloyalty was intended since the Australian flag included the Union Jack — now the standard defence in promoting the Australian flag; and that many children did not know what that flag was. Members divided on the issue of whether the Australian flag should fly alone or be accompanied by the Union Jack. But they were united in wanting to revise the oath the children recited, from

I love my country (the British Empire);
I honour her King (George V);
I salute her Flag (the Union Jack);
I promise to cheerfully obey her laws.

to
I love my country (Australia — a part of the British Empire);
I honour her King;
I salute her Flag; and
I cheerfully promise to obey her laws.

Council, Correspondence Files, two number system, 1922-1955: LCC3, item 5/5-3 'Buildings — Town Hall' (1932-1933). My thanks to Lorraine Macknight for drawing my attention to this.

66George Waterford, General Secretary, ANA (SA), to Director of Education (SA), 6 Feb. 1930, GRG 18/2/1930/1342, SRSA (hereafter State Records of South Australia); Minutes of Meeting of 5 Feb. 1930, Board of Directors, ANA (SA), Minute Book, vol. 11.

67Director of Education to General Secretary, ANA (SA), 27 Feb. 1930, GRG 18/2/1930/1342, SRSA.

68General Secretary, ANA (SA), to Premier, 12 May 1930, reporting a resolution adopted at the recent annual conference, ibid.

69Summary of meeting between the ANA deputation, introduced by John Critchley, the newly-elected Labor MLA for Burra Burra, and the Premier, 20 May 1930, ibid.
Hill promised that his government would consider their request, though he pointed out that with 1,000 schools to supply, the cost of flags would be a factor — especially, he could have added, in such straitened times. He also said he would consult the other States as to their use of flags in schools.

Adey's letter on his behalf explained to interstate directors the ANA's request in the context of South Australia's practice. Their responses revealed just how far the States diverged in the ritual introduced by Sir Frederick Sargood at the time of federation. Three of the States had a regular flag ceremony — each week in Victoria and New South Wales, each day in Queensland. Two did not — schools in Western Australia and Tasmania which had received flags from parents flew them only on special days, such as Empire Day. As to which flag was saluted, one of Adey's two concerns, two of the three States with the ritual — Queensland and New South Wales — specified the Union Jack. Queensland, like South Australia, issued that flag to all schools; in New South Wales it was provided by parents. The Queensland government allowed the Australian flag to be flown also if schools bought it 'out of their own funds and fl[ew] it [incorrectly] below the Union Jack'. Only in Victoria could the Australian flag be flown instead of the Union Jack.

As to Adey's other concern, the words recited, those of Victoria and New South Wales differed markedly from South Australia's. Neither had changed since their introduction in 1901 and 1922. Both retained their pledge to God. Neither mentioned Empire, though Victorian words included 'country'. Queensland children, although saluting the flag, recited no words. In Tasmania the opposite was the case: there was no salute but instead the children's statement:

Our debt to the community resembles our debt to our parents. Very much is done for us. Most of our comforts are provided by the community. We must do our best to repay. We can do this best by

70Replies from Directors of Education in Tasmania (31 May), Victoria (2 June), Western Australia (4 June), Queensland (4 June), and New South Wales (13 June), from which the following information is taken, unless otherwise specified, ibid.
our behaviour, by the way we keep the rules, by the way we do our work, by the way we help others, by our courtesy, and by our speech.

Presumably they had to memorise it. The Education Department in Western Australia had selected an extract from Richard II ('I tender you my service ...') for recitation on Empire Day. Only on special occasions did Tasmanian children recite the words of the South Australian pledge, perhaps a legacy from the close ties between the two Education Departments when W.L. Neale, a South Australian, was director of education in Tasmania.

Adey's use of the information from the other directors was predictable, as will be seen. But equally predictable had been the responses to his enquiry, especially from New South Wales and Queensland. Directors stated current government policy rather than the difficulties in implementing that policy or its awkward history. In New South Wales, where the flag ceremony had become highly politicised from the time of Bruntnell as minister in 1922, its practice depended on which political party was in office. Bruntnell, despite Protestant pressure, had not made the ceremony 'absolutely compulsory', though teachers sensitive to political pressure believed that in effect he had. As soon as the Labor Party returned to government in 1925, the Teachers' Federation passed, this time unanimously, a motion requesting the minister to 'allow schools ... to inculcate love of country and loyalty along unstereotyped lines'. The Monday morning ceremony was 'unnecessary'. Tom Mutch, the Labor Minister of Public Instruction, agreed and made the ceremony optional — dependent on 'the good judgement of teachers' in charge of schools. Sir George Fuller, retiring

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71Education Circular, May 1924, p. 209.
72Elizabeth Campbell comments on Bruntnell's response to a Protestant deputation on 20 Nov. 1924 (miscellaneous files, 1924, E2307, Education Department of NSW Archives), S.H. Smith: His Contribution to the Development of Education in New South Wales, MEd thesis, University of Sydney, 1967, p. 195. Bruntnell was 'shocked' by senior departmental officers' view that "it is not right to interfere with the religious or political beliefs of the people". Although Smith was not as strong as Board in dealing with ministers, he appears in this instance to have modified Bruntnell's stand on the issue. This qualifies the image of Smith presented in the ADB: Smith 'considered himself a loyal agent whose task was to implement the policies of his ministers', 'Stephen Henry Smith', ADB, vol. 11, p. 660. On Bruntnell and the Protestant cause, see 'Albert Bruntnell', ibid., vol. 7, p. 466.
73The motion was proposed, as in 1922, by John Reid, 'The Loyalty Ceremony', Education, Aug. 1925, p. 276.
as Nationalist Party leader, accused teachers of being 'disloyal, and ... though they eat the Empire's bread ... traitors at heart'.74 With changes of political party in power in 1929, 1931 and 1932, each government reversed the decision of its predecessor on the flag ceremony.75 Stephen Smith, the Director of Education responding to Adey in 1930 when the Nationalist-Country Coalition was in power, was correct in saying that the ceremony was compulsory. But he gave no hint that this depended on which party was in power. Nor did he indicate that the choice of flag had been a matter of considerable argument. Board, his predecessor, had consistently included Union Jack and Australian flag in special school celebrations of Empire Day. Since the war he had encouraged the greater use of the Australian flag. Smith might have also mentioned the difficulty of insisting on the ceremony where the department did not provide flags and poles.

The same point could be made of the situation in Queensland. The government provided schools with a Union Jack but only if parent associations or school committees supplied poles.76 There was a hint of controversy in the Queensland response when Bernard McKenna, the director, acknowledged 'several [recent] requests ... to supply the Australian flag instead of the Union Jack'. However, the Minister of Public Instruction, Reginald King of the Country and Progressive National Party, refused to make the change. The Australian flag had first been mentioned officially in relation to Queensland's schools in 1915, when T.J. Ryan, Australian nationalist and ANA member, headed the State's first Labor government.77 It could be flown as well as, but not in place of, the Union Jack. That remained Ryan's policy, even while fiercely opposing conscription of Australian soldiers for the war. In 1923 the cabinet of his successor, the Australian-born E.G. Theodore of Irish-Rumanian descent,

76This tradition began in 1900, *Education Office Gazette* (hereafter EOG), vol. 2, pp. 114-115.
77*ibid.*, Nov. 1915, p. 506.
while retaining the policy of two flags, decided to dispense with any 'ceremonial or ritual' — presumably the salute by the children with the words

> I honour my flag.
> I love my country, and
> I will always obey her laws.78

No mention here of God or King.

This decision to abolish the salute and the refusal of some to implement it provoked a lively debate in the parliament over the two flags and what they represented. Occurring in the context of the government's determination to enforce the teaching of Australian history in schools, the debate underlined basic party differences over what constituted 'the national flag':

Mr Fry [Country and Progressive National Party]: The fact of a member of Parliament coming forward and saying that he is opposed to anyone saluting the national flag —
Mr Pease [Labor]: Not the national flag.
Mr Fry: The national flag is an emblem of our national life and the solidity of our country, and, when anyone is opposed to recognising the flag as such, then he is an advocate of revolution.
The Secretary for Public Instruction [Mr Huxham, Labor]: The national flag is the Australian flag as laid down by the Commonwealth Government.
Mr Fry: ... I have every respect for Australia and the Australian flag [but] ... the loyal people of the community certainly resent the continual utterances by members on the Government side in opposition to the national flag.79

The confusing exchange followed the comments of the new Labor member for Rockhampton, George Farrell, a teacher of fifteen years' experience who had complimented the minister on his abolition of the practice of saluting the Union Jack. 80 Farrell's remarks pained the much older Walter Barnes, an Australian-born former non-Labor minister of public instruction, who believed that saluting the Union Jack did not mean 'loyalty to another Power [but rather to] — our own Power, our own country, and our own people'.81

78Ibid., Feb. 1923, p. 9. The words of the salute, not found in the EOG, were cited by Sir Henry Barwell, Leader of the Liberal Opposition, South Australia, 30 July 1924, South Australian Parliamentary Debates 1924, vol. 1, p. 54.
80George Farrell, 23 Aug. 1923, ibid., p. 1218.
81Walter Barnes, ibid., p. 636.
The minister's decision to abolish the salute was an attempt to please the more radical members of the Labor Party without alienating other members and people in the wider community for whom the Union Jack was important. John Huxham was English-born and -raised, a Baptist lay preacher with a reputation for conciliation within his own party as well as between parties. He himself did not object to the saluting of the Australian flag, but he knew that to replace the Union Jack in schools was then politically impossible. It was better to abolish the ceremony while still allowing both flags to fly. Similarly the decision to encourage Australian history: some in his party, in particular Charles Collins and Myles Ferricks, were calling for the teaching of a history which explained the economic basis of war, a 'history of the rise of the people, the conditions of the people ... for the last ten years in particular'. By emphasising Australian content, Huxham was attempting to steer a middle course between British history and socialist history. However, abolition of the salute lasted only as long as the Labor Party was in power. Within a month of becoming minister in 1929, Reginald King of the Country and Progressive National Party gave instructions to head teachers in schools with flags to have them hoisted every morning and 'properly saluted'. But McKenna wrote nothing of this to Adey in South Australia.

What was Adey to make of the information, so stripped of its historical context, sent by his fellow directors? Taken at face value, only Victoria allowed the Australian flag to be used instead of the Union Jack, and even then local committees rather than the government provided it. In the other States which required a flag in schools, it appeared to be the Union Jack. There seemed to be no precedent pushing South Australia to change its practice. Indeed, quite the

83 Charles Collins, Member for Bowen, an English-born labourer and union official with the AMA, AWU and AFL, who had migrated to Australia as a youth, D.B. Waterson, A Biographical Register of the Queensland Parliament 1860-1929, Canberra, Australian National University Press, 1972, pp. 34-35; Myles Aloysius Ferricks, Australian-born Member for South Brisbane, had had various occupations, including journalist and teacher, ibid., p. 55; Charles Collins and Myles Ferricks, 21 Sept. 1923, QPD 1923, vol. 142, pp. 1210-1211.
84 EOG, 3 June 1929, p. 195.
opposite. As the Depression bit harder, Adey faced increased pressure to cut expenditure — by £100,000; he had already begun to consider reductions in teachers' salaries.\textsuperscript{85} To replace Union Jacks with Australian flags in schools would not only be an extra expense but could also be seen as provocative at a time when the relationship between Australia and Britain was an issue in disputes about how best to handle the Depression.\textsuperscript{86} Adey decided, in summarising the information from interstate, to advise his minister against change, especially since the ANA was the only group pressing for it. He argued that South Australian practice did not differ markedly from that in the other States.\textsuperscript{87} In one important respect his summary was questionable if not dishonest: 'The words [of the pledge] used in New South Wales and Victoria', he advised Hill, 'are of similar import to those used in South Australia'. How could he equate, without semantic gymnastics, Victoria's 'I love ... my country' and South Australia's 'I love my country (the British Empire)'?

Nevertheless, Hill was glad to accept the advice, especially as a Labor minister, on such an issue. Just six years before in July 1924 he had been minister of education at a time when some Labor members were pushing for the Australian flag to be used in schools instead of the Union Jack. It was a minor theme in a larger issue — Labor's alleged opposition to 'Empire patriotism' — seized on by the Liberal Leader of the Opposition, Sir Henry Barwell.\textsuperscript{88} In April Barwell had lost government to Labor, the same month as Labor won government in Western Australia. Even more recently the National-Country Coalition in Victoria had also given way to Labor, an event of some significance in a State which had always had a non-Labor government apart from George Elmslie's thirteen days in 1913. Barwell used these events and

\textsuperscript{85}Colin Thiele, \textit{Grains of Mustard Seed}, Adelaide, Education Department, 1975, p. 170.
\textsuperscript{86}The federal government, facing difficulties in servicing loans from Britain, agreed to Sir Otto Niemeyer from the Bank of England visiting Australia in July 1930 to give advice. Balancing the budget by cutting government expenditure and wages, the basis of the Premiers' Plan of August 1930, became the target of more radical Labor Party members who advocated public works programs for the unemployed.
\textsuperscript{87}Memorandum from W.J. Adey to Minister of Education, 22 July 1930, GRG 18/2/1930/1342, SRSA.
\textsuperscript{88}Sir Henry Barwell, 30 July 1924, SAPD 1924, vol. 1, pp. 52-54.
Labor's alleged anti-imperial policy to warn of the new South Australian government's determination to 'destroy in the coming generations at least all sense of patriotism towards the Empire'.

Destroy Empire consciousness in our children', he explained, 'and the Empire's doom is sealed'.

If the Empire's doom be sealed, [he continued] where will Australia be? Australia will be lost, and become the easy prey of the first foreign Power seeking to extend her boundaries ... I know of no safer and nobler sentiments that could be instilled into the minds of Australian children than the patriotic love of England, and a consciousness of our absolute dependence on the Motherland for our very existence as a free people.

Against this background, he argued, 'nothing could be more wicked than this organised and deliberate attempt which is taking place in the various States of Australia ... to undermine the foundations of the British Empire'.

There was a specific issue in South Australia which provoked this dramatic outburst in 1924: criticism of the new Labor government by the United Trades and Labour Council for 'allowing the schools to be used for anti-working class propaganda on Empire Day'. A delegate of the Federal Ironworkers' Federation argued that 'the Empire [was] built on the exploitation of the working class' and that the ruling class continued 'deluding the minds of children' on days such as Empire Day 'by asking them to respect the laws that have been framed by the ruling class in their interest'. Two moderating amendments were put at the meeting, both by Labor members, requesting the government to limit imperial propaganda in schools and to teach the history of industry rather than war. However, the resolution was left to the executive to re-phrase for a deputation to present to the minister of education. Henry Kneebone, a journalist and new member of parliament, rather than the Premier, John Gunn, or Minister of Education, Lionel Hill, defended the government. He had been one of the three members in the Trades and Labor Council delegation of six to the minister. He was also a returned soldier, as were two others,

89ibid., pp. 52, 54-55.
included to check accusations of disloyalty which so readily came from the opposition. It was Kneebone who complained:

To say that we want the Australian flag does not mean that we do not want the British flag, because the British flag appears in the corner of the Australian flag ... When we federated we wanted a national flag ... and surely there is nothing wrong in asking that that flag should be flying over the Australian schools. ... Yet if we say such things outside they tell us we are disloyal and want to haul down the flag.91

Hill was not convinced by the delegation that departmental regulations encouraged the glorification of war and Empire on Empire Day, and that lessons on international cooperation and industrial history should be taught instead.92 Regarding textbooks, he invited the delegates to suggest changes which the department could consider. Such a response earned the approval of the former Liberal minister of education, Thomas Pascoe, as had Hill's June congratulatory letter to teachers on their Empire Day celebrations. Hill probably chose his words carefully for that very reason. For when he wrote of his pleasure at learning 'that the proceedings throughout throbbed with that patriotic spirit which bodes well for the great nation to which we are so justly proud to belong', his statement allowed readers to assume he referred to the British or Australian nation depending on their preference.93 However, the tone of his Empire Day speech at Le Fevre Peninsula School was definitely not imperial, highlighting as it did the local Port Adelaide football hero. It led Barwell to complain that 'there was not one word in regard to Empire builders or national heroes as we know them on this side of the House. There was not one word in regard to Empire patriotism'.94 Now in 1930, Hill as the new premier had even less cause to arouse the opposition: the government would not supply Australian flags to State schools. The ANA, informed of the decision, tried to keep the issue alive by asking the director to inform local

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90Part of the motion, 'That this Council views with suspicion the way the Government is allowing the schools to be used for anti-working class propaganda on Empire Day for the following reasons ...', moved by J. McDonald, and quoted by Barwell, *ibid.* p. 52.
92*Register, Advertiser*, 2 Aug. 1924, pp. 9, 16.
authorities that schools could also fly the Australian flag. It was to no avail. Certainly there was no such notice in the Gazette.

1939: The Victorian Problem

Victoria may seem to have avoided the difficulties experienced by the South Australian government in 1930 by leaving the choice and cost of flags to local committees. However, there was increasing comment about its patriotic ceremony, both in the press and in the Education Gazette and Teachers’ Aid. It reflected two developments: the continuing confusion felt by teachers, school committees and members of the public as to whether the ceremony should be held weekly or only on ‘national occasions’; and the growing interest taken by the RSL in this aspect of school life.

The tradition begun in 1901 concerned a weekly observance. However, the Regulations and Instructions to which people were referred from 1905 mentioned only ‘national occasions’. In 1914 the minister had increased this confusion by citing the Regulations in support of his direction to schools to hold a weekly ceremony during the war. After the war, without such specific direction, the practice varied according to the head teacher’s understanding of what was required. Such variation worried the RSL. In 1928 at Bacchus Marsh, a dairy industry area 50 km north-west of Melbourne, local members noticed the absence of a flagpole at the high school and presented one together with a Union Jack, ‘selected by the League for its Imperial significance’. The Education Gazette and Teachers’ Aid reported the incident. The next year the State secretary of the RSL wrote to the Director of Education, Martin Hansen, Frank Tate’s successor, seeking information on the department’s policy and a statement from the minister after members reported ‘that flags were very seldom seen at [their]

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94Sir Henry Barwell, 30 Jul. 1924, ibid., p. 54.
95Minutes of Meeting, 6 Aug. 1930, Board of Directors, ANA (SA).
96EGTA, Oct. and Nov. 1914, pp. 361, 412.
local schools'.98 James McRae, the Chief Inspector, perhaps sensing political interference, simply advised that it was 'the regular practice in State Schools to salute the Flag each Monday morning'.99 The following year he was not quite so sweeping in his response to the enquiry from South Australia, referring instead to 'practically all schools'.100

A few months after the RSL letter to Hansen, the Victorian Branch of the ANA approached education officials, reporting concern among its branches at 'the difference of opinion ... in various schools in regard to the flying of the national flag', and requesting the department 'to adopt the Australian Flag as the official School Flag'.101 McRae explained that since local school committees had 'always provided' the flags, the department had allowed them to choose between the Australian flag and Union Jack.102 'In an increasing no. of cases', he added, the committees chose the Australian flag, but the department thought it 'wiser not to exercise any compulsion in this important matter'. Leaving this and other aspects of the ceremony to local authorities, whether teachers or school committees, had enabled the department to deflect criticism about the flags. However, this became increasingly difficult.

Soldier settlers at Woorinen near Swan Hill in December 1931 pressured the local headmaster to hold a flag ceremony every week.103 Challenged by such incidents, the department attempted to resolve the contradiction evident since 1905 in its instructions to teachers about the flag ceremony. In July 1932 a notice in the Gazette asked teachers to add to the Regulations: 'The flag should be flown, and appropriately saluted, every Monday morning on which school is held'.104 The notice reflected the RSL's increasing interest in, and influence over,

98 Charles W. Joyce, State Secretary, RSL (Vic.), to M.P. Hansen, Director of Education, 21 Jan. 1929, VPRS 794, box 1127, 29/1882, Public Record Office, Victoria (hereafter PROV).
100 J. McRae and subsequently the Secretary, Education Department, to Director of Education, SA, 2 June 1930, GRG 18/2/1930/1342, SRSA.
101 S.H. Watson, General Secretary, Board of Directors, ANA (Vic.), to Secretary, Education Department, 2 Sept. 1930, VPRS 794, box 1145, 30/13624, PROV.
103 News item, 1 Dec. 1931, News Cuttings Book 12, p. 127, RSL Papers, (Vic.)
104 EGTA, 26 July 1932, p. 171.
school affairs. By September 1932, with the full force of the department's new regulation behind him, the State secretary of the RSL could insist on the ceremony at Terang Higher Elementary School despite the headmaster's protest at such dictation.\textsuperscript{105} The league, commented the \textit{Age}, had 'succeeded in getting its way' in making the ceremony compulsory.\textsuperscript{106} Shortly afterwards the department responded to further complaints by bringing into line those schools which had been using the revised declaration suggested by the Curriculum Committee in 1933 but not accepted by the department:

\begin{quote}
I will serve the King; \\
I will be true to my country; \\
I will honour the flag.\textsuperscript{107}
\end{quote}

A more secular form of the 1901 pledge, it ignored not only God, but also parents, teachers and the laws — and William Gillies' cheerful obedience. Only serving the king and honouring the flag remained the same:

\begin{quote}
I love God and my country; \\
I honour the flag; \\
I will serve the King, and cheerfully obey my parents, teachers and the laws.
\end{quote}

The Victorian Department of Education had prided itself on allowing schools a choice of flag. However in 1938 a small notice appeared in the \textit{Gazette} to advise that 'the Australian red ensign, the merchant flag, should not be chosen as a school flag. It is preferable to use the Union Jack or the Australian blue ensign'.\textsuperscript{108} The notice may have been prompted by a draft letter circulated to the premiers by the Prime Minister's Department.\textsuperscript{109} Intended in its final form for the Dominion Affairs secretary, the letter addressed the problem of an Australian flag for British subjects resident in Australia with non-commercial vessels, such as yachts, under State rather than Commonwealth jurisdiction. Currently they had to fly the British red ensign, since only commercial vessels

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could use the Australian Merchant Flag. In 1938 the Admiralty extended the right to fly that flag to non-commercial vessels. The decision illustrated two points: another step in the changeover from British to Australian national symbols; and further emphasis on the Merchant Flag as a non-government flag. State schools under government control, it implied, should be using the Ensign.

It is possible that the *Gazette* notice also reflected Albert Dunstan's enthusiasm for the Ensign, stimulated by his close relationship with some members of the Labor Party and Melbourne businessman, John Wren. In Victoria the relationship between the Labor and Country Parties had been unusually close. Dunstan had come to power in 1935, and governed since then with the help of the Labor Party. Arthur Calwell, who claimed to have proposed this arrangement, believed Wren persuaded his 'close friend' to accept it. Wren had been the main organiser of the St Patrick's Day procession led by two Australian flags in Melbourne in 1920. An important figure in Dunstan's cabinet was Ned Hogan, Minister of Agriculture — a farmer, a former Labor premier, and a 'Wren man'. Hogan, a member of the ANA, had protested in 1922 against attempts, following the May Day events, to remove the Australian flag from Victorian schools. In this he had been joined by his then leader of the Labor Party, George Prendergast.

For Hogan, keen to promote the Australian flag, the choice of ensign was obvious. Since the flag of the federal government was the blue ensign then that should be the flag for State and local governments and for the people generally

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111 'Albert Arthur Dunstan', *ADB*, vol. 8, p. 377.
112 Edmund John Hogan', *ibid.*, vol. 9, p. 324.
113 Hogan and Prendergast were members of the Metropolitan Committee of the ANA, which at its monthly meeting in August 1922 passed the motion 'protest[ing] against any attempt to supplant the use of the flag of the Australian nation at school functions, and urg[ing] that it is just as much the King's flag as is that of any member of the British Commonwealth of Nations'. When the chairman attempted to prevent the motion being sent to the press as well as to the Board of Directors of ANA (Vic.), Hogan and Prendergast successfully challenged him. Minutes of meeting, 11 Aug. 1922, Metropolitan Committee, ANA (Vic.). The Australian flag in State schools had been an issue of concern for the ANA in Victoria between November 1920 and November 1922. It welcomed the defence of schools' right to use it by Sir Alexander Peacock, ANA stalwart and Minister of Public Instruction in the National government, Report of Board of Directors Quarterly Meetings of 17 Nov. 1920, 31 Aug. and 23 Nov. 1921, and 3 Nov. 1922, ANA (Vic.), *Conference and Board of Directors Reports*, vol. 12.
— in the same way that the Union Jack was used by all in Britain. Coming from a Labor background, Hogan was aware of the tensions in the labour movement symbolised by the Red Flag, the Australian flag and the Union Jack. The Australian flag, itself an object of suspicion, was more acceptable with a blue, rather than red ground. Hogan, of Irish descent and a devout Catholic, knew the importance of blue: as the ground of both the first Irish harp flag (later incorporated into the British Royal Standard) and the Eureka Flag; and the colour of Mary, Queen of Heaven, soon to be mobilised against communism. Although Dunstan’s government could not insist on schools using the Ensign rather than the Union Jack, given the latter’s significance still for many in the community, it could begin to promote the Ensign as Australia’s national flag.

Whatever the reason for advising schools in 1938 to fly the Ensign rather than the Merchant Flag, the notice caused a problem for Dunstan’s government. Suppliers refused to meet school orders for the Ensign unless given ‘special authority’ because of the assumption restricting its use to the Commonwealth government. Dunstan decided to take the problem to the federal government. The authorisation demanded by the flag manufacturers should not be necessary, he argued, after the federal government pronouncements of January and May 1924. He recognised the federal government’s preference for State government buildings to fly the State ensign but thought its use for ‘patriotic purposes’ was undesirable: ‘young Australians should be taught to associate themselves with Australian nationality as symbolised by the Australian Flag’. Given the nature of the problem in Victoria, Dunstan urged the prime minister to permit State schools to fly the Ensign without restriction or to ‘make a

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115 A.A. Dunstan, Premier, to J.A. Lyons, Prime Minister, 23 Feb. 1939, CRS 461/1 A336/1/1 Pt 2, AA (ACT).
definite pronouncement ... that the Australian Blue Ensign may be used on
shore by any British subject'.

The request was straightforward; the need for clarification was obvious.
Yet, despite regular reminders by Dunstan, the federal government refused
over the next two years to give a decision. Once more civil servants wrestled
with the question, those in the Prime Minister's Department seeking the
approval of their counterparts in the Defence Department for the Ensign to be
used generally as the Australian flag.116 Tom Collins, the Country Party MHR
for Hume in New South Wales directed by Lyons to handle the issue, favoured
Dunstan's suggestion of recognising the Ensign as the national flag for all
Australians. Collins was a grazier and stock and station agent from Young; the
son of Irish-born parents, he was a Catholic.117 He telephoned the high
commissioners' offices for Canada and New Zealand on behalf of the Prime
Minister's Department seeking information about the flying of flags in their
dominions.118 The department even telegraphed the Australian High
Commissioner's Office in London, sketching the nature of the problem: that the
practice in flying flags on land had been to use the Ensign for Commonwealth
government buildings and the Merchant Flag for the general public; that this
had 'apparently' been so from the time the designs had been approved in 1903;
that government files did not indicate the reasons for such practice; and that
there was no Commonwealth legislation governing the matter.119 It requested
the views of 'appropriate authorities' regarding the proposal to allow State
schools and the public generally to use the Ensign.

Perhaps the department was right to be cautious. A few years before, a
German request for information as to whether their naval ships visiting

116'The Australian Flag', memorandum, 6 Mar. 1939, ibid.
117'Thomas Joseph Collins', ADB, vol. 13, pp. 471-472. Collins was closely involved with Charles
Hardy, leader of the Riverina Movement.
118TJC, note reporting telephone requests to Canadian and New Zealand Commission offices,
Sydney, 14 Mar. 1939, CRS A461/1 A336/1/1 Pt 2, AA (ACT).
119Telegram, Prime Minister's Department to Australian High Commission, London, 17 Mar. 1939, ibid.
Australia should use the British white ensign or the Australian flag in the national salute had revealed a confused and indecisive Australian response.\textsuperscript{120} The Navy Office’s advice, after consultation between the Defence and Prime Minister’s Departments, to the German Consulate-General was that the white ensign should be used only if the Australian flag were not available. As Malcolm Shepherd, Secretary of the Department of Defence, explained to the Prime Minister’s Department, ‘The White Ensign is not an "Australian" flag’.\textsuperscript{121} The Australian government requested the Dominion Affairs secretary to inform the Admiralty and foreign countries accordingly. However, Lyons sent the opposite instruction some eighteen months later after amendments to the King’s Regulations and Admiralty Instructions in 1932 indicated that the white ensign should be used for the sake of ‘uniformity of practice’ and to ‘minimis[e] misunderstanding’.\textsuperscript{122}

The response of the Dominion Affairs Office, via the High Commission, was diplomatic, suggesting that the issue was a matter for Commonwealth and State agreement.\textsuperscript{123} It pointed out that some dominions used one or other of the two ensigns, originally marine flags, as ‘national flags’ for use on shore, and further, that ‘it has always been held that question of legality or propriety of the use of such ensign on land in any Dominion depends on local laws and usage’. The advice indicated a superficial view of English files: Canadian records indicated otherwise. In 1911 the Colonial Secretary, at the instigation of Joseph Pope, Under-Secretary of State in Canada, requested the governor-general to inform the public that the Union Jack, not the Canadian ensign was ‘the national flag of Canada’: the ensign was to be used ‘only by Canadian merchant vessels’.\textsuperscript{124} Even more significantly, the despatch of 1911, while immediately

\textsuperscript{120}German Consulate-General to Admiral Evans, Rear-Admiral, Flagship Australia, 24 June 1930, CRS 461/1 Y336/1/1 AA (ACT).
\textsuperscript{121}M.L. Shepherd, Secretary, Department of Defence, to Secretary, Prime Minister’s Department, 17 July 1930, \textit{ibid}.
\textsuperscript{122}M.L. Shepherd to Secretary, Prime Minister’s Department, 24 Mar. 1932 and J.A. Lyons, Prime Minister, to Dominion Affairs Secretary, 6 Apr. 1932, \textit{ibid}.
\textsuperscript{123}Australian High Commission, London, to Secretary, Prime Minister’s Department, 6 Apr. 1939, CRS A461/1 A336/1/1 Pt 2, AA (ACT).
\textsuperscript{124}See above Chapter 4, p. 165.
concerned with Canada, asserted that the principle applied to 'all other parts of His Majesty's Dominions'.

The respective roles of Union Jack and Canadian ensign in Canada had troubled many of its citizens since the early part of the century. At least five times between 1917 and 1936 Canadians sought information from the Australian government about the origin and use of an Australian flag. The 1929 letter was from the highest level of government, the Department of External Affairs, asking for 'the facts and procedure in connection with the adoption of the 'National Flag by your Commonwealth'. By 1936 there were more specific questions, this time from J.G. Harvey, King's Counsel, of Winnipeg. If Australia had 'a National Flag', he asked, when and how had it been adopted? The questions continued, with legal precision:

4. Was the Union Jack formally abandoned?
5. Does the National Flag displace the Union Jack?
6. What place does the Union Jack occupy amongst the flags of your Commonwealth?
7. What flag or flags are displayed by your military in Peace and War?

He requested copies of documents with the replies. Australian responses over those decades had been consistently evasive, most simply forwarding Gazette descriptions of the two flags without any indication of the confusion experienced by governments and people in Australia. However, of particular interest were two statements made in response to Harvey by Frank Strahan, Secretary of the Prime Minister's Department, on the advice of his counterpart in Defence: 'The Union Jack is officially recognised in Australia, but not as the National Flag of the country', and 'The only national flag used by the Military Forces in peace or war is the Australian Ensign'.

125Laurent Beaudry, Counsellor, Office of the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, Canada, to Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, Australia, 23 Feb. 1929, CRS A461/1 B336/1/1 Pt 2, AA (ACT).
127For responses to enquiries of 1929 and 1937 see [TJC], Statement in regard to the adoption of the flag of the Commonwealth of Australia, Prime Minister's Department, May 1931, which a note indicated was probably sent to the External Affairs Department, Canada, on 8 May 1931,
Now in 1939 the Australian government was requesting information from its Canadian counterpart. The response was overwhelming: a nine-page transcript of the recent debate in the Canadian House of Commons, in which the Prime Minister, Mackenzie King, recounted the history of the flag issue from 1870, and his government's attempts to establish the legitimacy of the Canadian red ensign as the flag of Canada. Only in 1924 did an order-in-council authorise the use of this ensign on government buildings — but not within Canada, only abroad. By contrast, the New Zealand response was to point to the legislation of 1901 which established the blue New Zealand Ensign as 'the recognized flag ... for general use on shore'; its red ensign, also defined in legislation, was for merchant ships only. The advice was instructive: New Zealand had not been troubled in the same way as Canada and Australia. In Canada pressure to reinstate the Canadian red ensign had strengthened, especially since the war, though opposing forces were strong enough in 1925 and 1939 to prevent serious consideration of the issue. By 1939 it could still not be flown on government buildings within Canada. South Africa had legislated in 1927 for a new Union flag, moving the Union Jack from its place of honour to share a central position with the Vierkleur and the Orange Free State flag.

Dunstan in Victoria was keen to see the issue of an Australian national flag resolved, particularly as it affected State schools. However, his reminder, sent at the end of May 1939, found the federal government in disarray. Leadership problems within the United Australia Party (UAP) in March, then the death of its leader, Joseph Lyons, in April had led to Robert Menzies' election as leader and prime minister. That, in turn, saw the Country Party,
headed by Dr Earle Page, withdraw from the coalition, leaving the UAP with a minority government at the critical time of Australia's preparation for war. The matter of a flag for State schools, and the related issue of a national flag for all Australians, paled in significance. However, the break up of the coalition does not appear to have disrupted Tom Collins' role within the Prime Minister's Department. Sympathetic to Menzies, he was one of four Country Party members who dissociated themselves from Page's leadership and urged a return to the coalition. Menzies continued to depend on Collins' knowledge of the flag issue until the coalition resumed and he could later appoint Collins to assist him as minister without portfolio.

The investigations Collins had made in March 1939 resulted in June in a substantial paper which recommended that 'the Commonwealth Blue Ensign ... be regarded as the National Flag of Australia' and that restrictions on its use on shore be lifted. The paper explained that the difficulties experienced by State schools in Victoria were part of a wider problem: uncertainty as to which flag, the blue or red ensign, was Australia's national flag. The regulations drawn up in 1924 had been found inadequate, since at that time 'considerable doubt existed — mainly owing to lack of special knowledge ... possessed by Commonwealth Departments — as to the correct procedure in regard to the flying of flags on shore'. Although the House of Representatives in 1904 had encouraged the flying of the 'Australian Flag as officially selected', 'it would appear', the paper concluded, that it has never been laid down definitely whether the Australian National Flag is the Commonwealth Blue Ensign or the

Symbols', Cape Argus, 7 July 1993. My thanks to Dr Bill Nasson for several recent South African newscuttings.


132 W.B. [?], writing to Collins about the flag question, 23 Oct. 1940, referred to 'a submission which you made to Cabinet', most likely the important 'Flying of Flags' document of 5 June 1939 (CRS A461/1 D336/1/1 Pt 3, AA (ACT)); Menzies was delegating the flag issue to Collins in 10 January 1940 (Menzies to Collins, CRS A461/1 A336/1/1 Pt 2, AA (ACT)); the coalition resumed in March 1940; Collins joined cabinet in October.

133 'Flying of Flags', draft of a memorandum for submitting to the Prime Minister 'in connection with representations which have been made to the Government by the Premier of Victoria in regard to the flying of flags', from F. Strahan, Secretary, Prime Minister's Department to Secretary, Department of Defence, 5 June 1939, CRS A461/1 B336/1/1 Pt 5, AA (ACT).
Commonwealth Merchant Flag (Red Ensign)'. The Defence Department substantially agreed.\textsuperscript{134} This, then, was the paper placed on cabinet's agenda. There it sat for more than a year. Two more reminders arrived from Dunstan, in August and October 1939. But on 24 July 1940 the flag item was deleted from the agenda with the terse comment, 'this question is not of moment at present'.\textsuperscript{135} The decision left Dunstan to assume that the issue would not be resolved until after the war, as a further note revealed: 'Presume we cannot tell him that matter has been taken off agenda. Probably better to let Premier revive the matter himself'.\textsuperscript{136}

Dunstan did: not by further requests to the prime minister, but by legislating in October 1940 to permit schools to fly 'the Australian Blue Ensign'. The Education (Patriotic Ceremonies) Bill was brief. More important were the explanatory comments of Country Party ministers which accompanied it. Norman Martin, the Minister without Portfolio who introduced the bill, asserted that schools should regard the blue ensign as 'the Australian national flag'; in future the government would advise them to buy it when choosing an Australian flag.\textsuperscript{137} Sir John Harris, Minister of Public Instruction in the Legislative Council, even indicated that his department would be prepared to supply it to schools, a radical departure from the practice of leaving the matter to local authorities.\textsuperscript{138} However, the legislation also allowed schools with a red ensign or a Union Jack to continue using them, disguising the extent of the change being introduced. Perhaps for this reason members underestimated the

\begin{footnotes}
\item[134] F.G. Shedden, Secretary, Department of Defence, to Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, 21 June 1939, \textit{ibid.}, Pt 3. He reported Naval Board advice that merchant vessels should continue to use the Merchant Flag.
\item[135] F. Strahan, Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, to Secretary, Department of the Navy, 9 Aug. 1940, \textit{ibid.}, Pt 5.
\item[136] Original emphasis in note, probably by Strahan, 9 Aug. 1940, CRS A461/1 A336/1/1 Pt 2, AA (ACT).
\item[137] Norman Martin, 29 Oct. 1940, \textit{VPD}, 1940, vol. 210, p. 1316. Martin, a returned soldier, was a farmer and grazier, and company director; the previous two years he had been party whip, Geoff Browne, \textit{Biographical Register of the Victorian Parliament 1900-84}, Melbourne, Government Printer, 1985, p. 151.
\item[138] Sir John Harris, 19 Nov. 1940, \textit{VPD}, 1940, vol. 210, p. 1605. Harris, the son of Cornish parents, was a medical practitioner at Rutherglen, where he was also active in the Australian Natives' Association and in freemasonry. As Member for North-Eastern Province, he was influential in Victoria's Legislative Council as its unofficial leader from 1920 to 1946 and as government leader from 1935 to 1942, 'Sir John Richards Harris', \textit{ADB}, vol. 9, p. 210.
\end{footnotes}
significance of the change, particularly when it was not the main purpose of the legislation, as indicated below.

William Beckett, veteran Labor MLC and Labor leader in the Council, criticised the government for not being 'game enough' to decide which flag, 'the Union Jack or the Australian flag', should command children's loyalty. A long-time close racing associate of John Wren and Gilbert Dyett, Beckett was one of the few Labor members to comment on the bill. He may have had his own party in mind, given the labour movement's ambivalence to nationalism, when he said that many hesitated to become involved in the debate for fear of being misunderstood. He wondered what sense children meeting from the three neighbouring suburbs of Fitzroy, Collingwood and Richmond would make of the ceremony if their schools each used a different flag. In nearby Flemington the choice of flag had been a source of disagreement. John Holland, trade unionist and Labor MLA for Flemington, reported ANA members' anger at a teacher's refusal to allow the Australian flag to be flown. Not only Labor members complained about this point: Clifden Eager, UAP Member for East Yarra and unofficial leader of the Legislative Council, was sympathetic to those who objected to saluting the Union Jack. Holland also thought that if children had to sing a song in any ceremony, they should sing 'Advance Australia Fair', a point on which the Labor Call agreed.

140 Beckett, then 70, was a furniture broker. His father had been Irish-born; William was a freemason, 'William James Beckett', ADB, vol. 7, pp. 239-240.
142 J.T. Holland, 30 Oct. 1940, VPD, 1940, vol. 210, p. 1357. Holland was Catholic of Irish-born parents. President and Secretary of the Flemington Branch of the ALP, he was also a member of the State Executive from 1931 to 1945, Browne, Biographical Register of the Victorian Parliament, pp. 99-100.
143 Clifden Eager, 19 Nov. 1940, VPD, 1940, vol. 210, p. 1600. Eager, whose father had been Irish-born, was a barrister; an Anglican, he was Vice-President of Trinity Grammar School and President of the Royal Society of St George, Browne, Biographical Register of the Victorian Parliament, p. 58.
144 Labor Call, 14 Nov. 1940, p. 2.
The main purpose of the bill, ostensibly, was to make the weekly 'patriotic' or flag ceremony compulsory in State schools. So empowered, the government could dismiss teachers refusing to conduct the ceremony. However, as the debate and subsequent legislation indicated, children posed a greater challenge than teachers to the authority of the Education Department. Of the 'occasional complaints' made by the public to the department about 'subversive' teachers, only two had justified investigation. In these cases, Martin explained, the teachers 'were not so much anti-British, as adherents of particular sects or groups which were opposed to nationalism or war'. Controlling teachers, however, was to prove easier than controlling children. In the debate Sir John Harris rejected the attempted amendment of Percy Clarey, Labor MLC, which would have inserted the modified pledge of 1933. Discussion of this aspect of the bill revealed the essence of the government's difficulty: it could compel teachers to hold the ceremony, but how could it compel children to participate? The department's confidence in its ability to expel Jehovah's Witness children objecting to the ceremony in May 1940 had suffered a set-back in August: the crown solicitor advised that the department did not have such power. This problem in Victoria was not an isolated one: there had also been press reports of difficulties in enforcing the salute, particularly on Jehovah's Witness children, in New South Wales.

In the United States the sect was also making a stand during 1940, insisting that allegiance could only be given to God. They challenged the laws and regulations requiring the salute in schools introduced by many States during the 1930s. The Supreme Court had ruled against the sect in its first judgement of 3 June 1940, upholding the right of school boards to make saluting the flag a condition of school attendance. In Canada the sect was

146 Argus, 31 May 1940, p. 4; Norman Martin, 23 July 1941, VPD 1941, vol. 211, p. 376.
147 Argus, 30, 31 May, 25 June 1940, p. 4.
waging a bitter battle, especially in Hamilton. The Province of Ontario had introduced a regulation in 1939 which required the singing of *God Save the King* in schools in the morning and afternoon. Some schools also added, unofficially, the requirement of saluting the Union Jack.\textsuperscript{149} The Toronto Board of Education chose not to expel students claiming the right of exemption from patriotic observances. The Hamilton School Board took the opposite view, so beginning the battle that was to last for six years.

Criticism of the bill in the Victorian Parliament in 1940 centred on two aspects of compulsion in regard to children. The first concerned the State's power to compel children to attend school. The requirement that children declare that they would 'love God and [their] country ... serve the King, and cheerfully obey [their] parents, teachers, and the laws' could negate compulsory attendance. For some children, obeying their parents by not saluting the flag meant disobeying the proposed law which required it. Would the government then expel these children? Continuing this line of argument, some thought the affirmation would make hypocrites of the children: even adults did not always obey the laws; when they did, they did not always do so *cheerfully*. Indeed, Beckett reminded members that some of them — the very law-makers — deliberately disobeyed the laws in asking shopkeepers to sell cigarettes after hours.\textsuperscript{150} Beckett had faith in 'the ingenuity of the childish mind' to so distort the words of the affirmation as to make them meaningless.\textsuperscript{151} Even so, Clarey attempted to amend this aspect of the bill. The second aspect concerned the government's responsibility to provide secular education. Members of both the UAP and the Labor Party argued that the bill, by requiring children to declare their love for God, breached the secular provision of the *Education Act*, Clarey citing the opinion of Chief Justice, Sir John Latham.\textsuperscript{152}

\textsuperscript{149}ibid., pp. 124, 127.
\textsuperscript{150}William Beckett, 19 Nov. 1940, VPD 1940, vol. 210, p. 1606.
\textsuperscript{151}ibid., p. 1602.
\textsuperscript{152}Percy Clarey, ibid., p. 1612. Clarey, a Methodist and a union official, had been president of the Victorian ALP 1934-35, president of the Trades Hall Council 1935-36, member of the State
Harris, in attempting to address the problem of compulsory loyalty for children, had considered introducing an accompanying bill to give the government power to make regulations defining the circumstances in which children in State schools could be expelled. But the government immediately allowed it to lapse and discounted the suggestion of members to make the ceremony part of the curriculum: debate indicated a lack of support for these tougher measures. Perhaps the government thought it could rely on public pressure to make further regulation unnecessary. One Country Party member related that a father of children who refused to participate arranged for 'a "Digger" boot [to be] applied in their most vulnerable part'. Should further intervention be necessary the government would have to consider stronger legislation. In the meantime teachers would have to manage 'disloyal' children as best they could. Thomas Hollway, solicitor and UAP member for Ballarat, predicted that the courts would have a field day. He suggested it was an issue for the Commonwealth government. Nevertheless, there was little opposition; the vote taken in the Legislative Council reflected party differences, six Labor members opposing the twenty-four from the Country and United Australia Parties. The bill became law in November 1940.

Teachers were not pleased. The editor of the Teacher's Journal thought it 'questionable whether the weekly ceremony ... will not come to be a mere matter of routine, and so fail in its purpose', echoing the view of the South Australian Male Assistants Association some five years before. The ceremony, the editor argued, should be restricted to special days: Empire Day, the King's Birthday and Armistice Day. The president of the Victorian Teachers'
Union accused the government of avoiding the issue by attempting to push responsibility onto the teacher: 'He [the teacher] must know definitely what to do if children refuse to take part in the ceremony and how far the department will support him'.\textsuperscript{157} No such instruction appeared in the \textit{Gazette}.

Wartime pressures had brought to a head the dispute between the Education Department, determined to enforce its regulation of 1932, and children, particularly of the Jehovah Witness sect, refusing to compromise their religious principles. Similar pressures highlighted the role of flags in the community generally, intensifying the issue for the federal government. In July 1940 after the sudden escalation of the war in Europe, the Council of the UAP in New South Wales had urged Menzies as prime minister to encourage shops and offices in city and country to fly 'the British and/or the Australia flag' on a daily basis, following the continuous flying of flags from some State buildings in Sydney the previous year.\textsuperscript{158} The government, however, thought the flying of flags on special days was enough. Many more questions were being asked about the flying of flags, especially the flying of the Australian flag in relation to the Union Jack, and the choice of the red or blue Australian ensign. The Department of External Affairs, headed by Country Party minister, John McEwen, expressed an interest in the issue. Tom Collins' advice to the secretary of the Prime Minister's Department indicated that precedence was still a sensitive matter: 'A little care is required in answering re the Union Jack. I don't think we have ever said \textit{when} the Union Jack should be flown, but I think that our statement says that the Union J. should never be flown in a position inferior to that of any other flag'.\textsuperscript{159}
Unaware that in 1921 the Commonwealth government had given the Australian flag precedence over the Union Jack, Collins continued: 'the point could possibly be taken that since the 1926 Imperial Conference the Australian flag should be given precedence'. However, he concluded, in answering queries he had 'stuck to the "old-time" statement', probably of January 1924. On this basis he did not think town halls would be allowed to fly the blue ensign, a conclusion the secretary of the Prime Minister's Department questioned. Collins had been forced to rely on the January 1924 statement since cabinet had not considered his memorandum of June 1939 in which he recommended the lifting of restrictions on the use of the blue ensign so that it could be regarded by all as the 'National Flag of Australia'. The secretary saw no good reason why town halls should not fly the blue ensign, since it was 'really the national flag of Australia'. Then, too, as Collins was aware, the press was publicising the view of the Victorian government that, in the Sydney Sun's words, 'the red Australian flag, most often flown, [was] not the real Australian flag'.

The Gair Manufacturing Company of Melbourne, a supplier of flags, and a guardian of the tradition restricting the blue ensign to Commonwealth buildings, had sought urgent clarification from the federal government as the Education (Patriotic Ceremonies) Bill was being debated and reported in the press. Was the Victorian government correct, the managing director asked, when it asserted that press reports of 1924 had announced 'that the State, and also the private individual could fly the Commonwealth Government Ensign, when the State Flag was not available'? His view was 'that the State Flags are not available at any time ... [since] nobody wants to fly a State Flag'. Perhaps he was concerned his company would be left with a surplus of red ensigns and State ensigns. The managing director continued to badger the department.

160W.B. [?], reporting on the response of the Secretary, Prime Minister's Department to Collins's advice, to Collins, 23 Oct. 1940, ibid.
161Ibid.
162Sun, and Argus, 30 Oct. 1940, newscuttings, CRS A461/1 A336/1/1 Pt 2, AA (ACT).
163Managing Director, Gair Manufacturing Co. to Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, 1, 11, 28 Nov. 1940, emphasis added, ibid.
'Every day', he complained, 'we are being asked, what is the correct Flag to fly, and some Firms are now buying the Blue Commonwealth Ensign, and no doubt, their intention is to fly it whether they have the right or not'. By the end of November, still without an answer to his urgent first letter, he concluded that 'the general opinion now is, that since the Victorian Government fly the Commonwealth Ensign, then the private individual is entitled to fly it'.

Collins, in an attempt to deal with this difficulty, drafted a memorandum summarising the flag issue, more briefly this time, in the light of the Victorian government's declaration that the Ensign 'should be regarded as the Australian national flag'. Thinking that such a view 'appear[ed] appropriate', he recommended to the prime minister that a notice be published in the Commonwealth Gazette under the prime minister's name. The Victorian government had forced the Commonwealth's hand. But, sensitive to the difficulties of this issue, especially in war time, Collins added: 'If it is not desired to proclaim the "existence" of a National Flag', then the Gazette could simply announce the lifting of restrictions on the use of the blue ensign on shore. Menzies approved the more cautious approach before leaving for Western Australia to campaign for a by-election. In the middle of December Collins drafted a press release to enable Menzies to 'explain that there [were] two official flags of the Commonwealth'. It indicated that the Commonwealth government thought that there should be no restrictions on the flying of the blue ensign, and also 'freely permitted' all levels of government, schools and the public generally to use it. The next day on that basis the secretary of the Prime Minister's Department responded to the managing director of Gair Manufacturing Company. The draft press statement, though not released for publication because Menzies did not have time to approve it before leaving for Europe late in January 1941, was a significant milestone. The Commonwealth

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164 Commonwealth Flags', Prime Minister's Department, 21 Nov. 1940, ibid.
165 Strahan, Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, to Secretary, Department of External Affairs, 25, 26 Feb. 1941, CRS A461/1. D336/1/1 Pt 3, AA (ACT).
government had not named the blue ensign 'the Australian national flag' but it did allow that flag to be used on shore on the same basis as the red ensign.

Dunstan, having given up expecting a reply to his letter of February 1939, reported to the prime minister in January 1941 the nature of the Victorian legislation, pointing out the three different flags which could be used in the school ceremony and the government's power to dismiss uncooperative teachers.167 There was another letter to the Prime Minister's Department later that month: from the Council of the Shire of Waranga, Rushworth, 50 km southwest of Shepparton, Victoria, putting a different view of that legislation, one which invited a wider consideration of the issue.168 The council did not welcome the act. Rather, it had wanted 'proper supervision' of the 1932 regulations by the Education Department. However, once the bill had been introduced, the council had argued for all schools, not just State schools, 'to conduct a loyal ceremony each month embracing love of God, allegiance to the Empire and observance to [sic] the laws of the Commonwealth'. Unsuccessful in this attempt, the council was now seeking Commonwealth support to persuade the premiers to request principals of private schools to conduct such a ceremony. Beckett, Labor MLC, had wondered during the parliamentary debate why 20 per cent of Victorian school children were not to be included under the act, a complaint which had also been heard during World War I.169 However, the Commonwealth was even less likely than the State to attempt to control private schools. Wily Tom Playford, Premier of South Australia, in responding to the Shire of Waranga's proposal, believed that 'any action or recommendation ... can best be taken or given by the Commonwealth under the

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167 Albert Dunstan, Premier of Victoria, to R.G. Menzies, Prime Minister, 16 Jan. 1941, CRS A461/1 A336/1/1 Pt 2, AA (ACT).
168 W.C. Geyle, Secretary, Shire of Waranga, Rushworth, to Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, 25 Jan. 1941, ibid.
powers vested in them'.\textsuperscript{170} Collins found Playford's response 'a little awkward' and thought the Commonwealth 'hardly likely' to take it up.\textsuperscript{171}

Collins was right. However, the Commonwealth's memorandum to the premiers acted as a reminder to Dunstan in Victoria that he had not yet had an answer on the use of the blue ensign.\textsuperscript{172} Collins quickly responded along the lines of his draft press release, on behalf of the acting prime minister. It was almost two years to the day since Dunstan had initiated the enquiry. However, informing a flag company and now the Victorian government that there were no restrictions on the use of the Ensign on shore did not address the wider issues Dunstan had uncovered. Would the Commonwealth government inform the general public that there were no restrictions on the flying of the blue ensign on shore? Further, would that government take the next step of clearly designating the blue ensign as the Australian national flag?

Pressure to resolve these issues came from an unexpected quarter: William Hodgson, Secretary of the Department of External Affairs, a graduate of the original 1911 class of the Royal Military College, Duntroon, and a Gallipoli man.\textsuperscript{173} His department had become involved in October 1940 in forwarding correspondence to the Prime Minister's Department for advice concerning the flying of the blue and red ensigns and the Union Jack. Now Hodgson, unhappy with Collins' advice given in October, asked that the matter be reconsidered.\textsuperscript{174} He believed that the basis of that advice — the 1924 decision restricting the use of the Ensign — was wrong: 'A country has only one national flag', he argued, 'and the Australian flag is the blue ensign which the general public are not allowed to fly'. He knew of no other country 'where its own nationals [were] precluded from flying their own flag'. The Prime Minister's Department

\textsuperscript{170}T. Playford to Prime Minister, 17 Feb. 1941, responding to Secretary, Prime Minister's Department to the Premiers, 31 Jan. 1941, CRS A461/1 A336/1/1 pt 2.
\textsuperscript{171}Note by TJC, \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{172}Acting Premier, Victoria, to Acting Prime Minister, 25 Feb. 1941 and T.J. Collins, for the Prime Minister, to the Premier, Victoria, 28 Feb. 1941, \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{174}W.R. Hodgson, Secretary, Department of External Affairs, to Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, 18 Feb. 1941, CRS A461/1 A336/1/1 Pt 2, AA (ACT).
assured him that it had lifted such restrictions. But Hodgson, although pleased, pressed for 'some appropriate public statement' to make the public aware of the change in policy.

There were conflicting pressures on the government. The United Protestant Association in Stanthorpe on the edge of the Darling Downs in Queensland, had urged the need to honour 'the National Flag', meaning the Union Jack, by flying it from government buildings, post offices especially, on saints and other holidays 'in order that our people both Protestant and Roman Catholic should know and glory in it'. Undaunted by the response from the secretary of the Prime Minister's Department 'that preference should be given to the use of Australia's national flag so far as Commonwealth Government buildings are concerned', the United Protestant Association persisted. The Australian flag was too ambiguous for an organisation fighting the sectarian battles of a small town, whose growth had been stimulated first by soldier settlers then, in the 1930s, by Italian Catholic immigrants. Its particular concern was the 'Roman Section amongst us who never honours the Union Jack. Their pretence of honour accorded the Australian Flag', the honorary secretaries explained, 'in order that they may flout the Union Jack is an insult'. Hence the request 'to have the Union Jack flown in future from our Post Office'. The Loyal Orange Lodge at Homebush West, a suburb of Sydney, also called for the daily flying of the 'national Flag or Union Jack' from government buildings and banks. Its members questioned 'the boast of the "Thin Red Line" and "The sun never sets on the Union Jack"' commenting 'well, really, can we make the boast in truth, when we hardly ever give the sun a chance to shine

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175 F. Strahan, Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, to W.R. Hodgson, Secretary, Department of External Affairs, 26 Feb. 1941, ibid.
176 Hodgson to Strahan, 28 Feb. 1941, ibid.
177 W. McGaw and P. Ryan, Honorary Secretaries, United Protestant Association, Stanthorpe, Qld, to Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, 25 Jan. 1939, CRS A461/1 D336/1/1 Pt 3, AA (ACT). The first correspondence of 26 Nov. 1938 was addressed to the Postmaster-General. Subsequently F. Strahan, Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, to McGaw and Ryan, 27 Feb. 1939, McGaw and Ryan to Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, 16 Mar. 1939.
on it? The Queensland Branch of the ANA also pressed for the daily flying of flags, but Australian flags, from Commonwealth buildings. However, the Prime Minister's Department remained adamant that everyday use of flags would obscure the significance of special occasions, 'particularly to our young people.'

On 15 March 1941 the Acting Prime Minister, Arthur Fadden, released the press statement Hodgson had been waiting for. Based on the draft of December 1940, it went a little further: there were to be 'no unnecessary restrictions' on the use of the blue ensign, which would 'not only be freely permitted but appreciated'. Records do not indicate whether Menzies approved the release. He was then preoccupied with the agonising decisions being taken in the war cabinet in Britain in preparation for the Greek campaign. Moves afoot in Australia to challenge his leadership were more remote but no less ominous. Yet for all the concern expressed in the Prime Minister's Department about informing the public, the press showed remarkably little interest in the statement, as Collins noted.

In Victoria further legislation to enforce the patriotic ceremony proved necessary. As the government had known when it had introduced the Education (Patriotic Ceremonies) Bill, it did not have the power to enforce children's participation. But tactically, Harris hoped that, having separated the ceremony from its enforcement on children, legislating the latter would be less controversial. Martin introduced the Education Bill in July 1941. It was in two parts. The second part, which dealt with the transfer of technical colleges to the Education Department, drew little comment. The first part proposed giving to

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179Ernest Dawes, Honorary Secretary, Homebush and Armagh Loyal Orange Lodge No. 5 to Acting Prime Minister, 26 Feb. 1941, A461/1 D2336/1/1 Pt 3, AA (ACT).
180F. Strahan, Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, to General Secretary, ANA (Qld), 30 Apr. 1941, ibid.
181Emphasis added, 'The Commonwealth Flag', 14 and 15 Mar. 1941, CRS A461/1 A336/1/1 Pt 2, AA (ACT).
182Martin, Robert Menzies, pp. 325-331.
the department power to make regulations 'for safeguarding health and maintaining order and discipline in State schools'. Martin explained to members that the government did not have such power, although it had operated since 1890 on the assumption that it did. Victoria, through this oversight, he said, was unique in this respect among the Australian States. However, in arguing the case for the government having control over health, order and discipline in schools, Martin alluded to not patriotic, but moral difficulties in schools, where inappropriate sexual behaviour made it necessary for the department to expel students, remove them to other schools, or provide an alternative education by correspondence. At the second reading of the bill his point that it would enable the department to remove children who were 'likely to have a harmful influence on the remainder of the scholars', could be interpreted to indicate both patriotic and moral concerns.

Herbert Cremean, Deputy Leader of the Labor Party, was quick to agree that the government should have the power to expel 'sexual perverts'. But power over those who had different political or religious views was another matter. Beckett, Labor leader in the Council, was also suspicious of government intentions, asking Harris for numbers of children expelled in the last five years and their offences. Harris, who had only just begun such a register, reported medical and moral offences, but also mentioned the expulsion of one family for fifteen weeks because of their refusal to participate in the patriotic ceremony. The first to indicate that the latter was 'a serious problem' was William Dunstone, Country Party member from the north central region of Victoria, not far from Rushworth and the Waranga Shire Council. He reported that people in his district were 'greatly agitated over the matter'. The teacher's special provision for a Jehovah's Witness child, 'who deliberately refuse[d] to obey

184Clause 2, Education Bill, 1941, Victoria. Legislative Assembly Bills Introduced, Session 1941.
186Norman Martin, 23 Sept. 1941, ibid., p. 938.
187Herbert Cremean, ibid., p. 942.
188Sir John Harris, 29 July 1941, ibid., p. 418.
instructions' concerning the ceremony, left 'a bad impression on those children who [were] obeying the law'. Sub-branches of the RSL had been active in the dispute, urging that parents withdrawing their children from patriotic training 'should be put behind barbed wire'. Cremean moved to limit the force of the bill by adding a proviso preventing expulsion of children for their, or their parents', political or religious beliefs. But Martin countered with a further amendment allowing expulsion where those beliefs prevented 'the inculcation of a love of country or the observance of any prescribed patriotic ceremony in the school'. Debate was adjourned for almost a month to allow the Labor Party to consider its view. Returning to the debate on Armistice Day, Cremean reported its continuing opposition after 'long and serious consideration', arguing that children should not be penalised for the opinion of their parents.

Mention of actual cases had been rare during the debate: Harris had mentioned one; Dunstone, another. Subsequently, James Jewell, Labor member for the metropolitan seat of Brunswick, referred to a case currently before the minister, where two children refused for five or six months to salute the flag. The teacher, when informed, had 'made a public exhibition of them', before the 500 or 600 pupils. Cremean cited cases from 'a dozen different schools in the metropolitan area', where the headmasters took a more humane approach, making alternative arrangements when sure that children were acting under their parents' orders, an approach the Labor Party favoured and hoped would continue. In most of the cases reported, the children appeared to be associated with the Jehovah's Witness sect, though concern had also been expressed in 1940 about children of foreign-born or Communist parents. But

190 Herbert Cremean, 14 Oct. 1941, ibid., p. 1233.
191 Norman Martin, ibid.
195 Herbert Cremean, ibid., p. 1686.
those children 'saluted the flag with mental reservations', according to Hollway, UAP, whereas the sect's children would not salute it.\textsuperscript{197} Mrs Ivy Weber, the Independent member for Nunawading, who usually supported the Dunstan government, believed the disobedience was much more widespread, assuring her colleagues that they 'would be astounded to know the extent to which this [disloyal] spirit has spread'.\textsuperscript{198} She did not elaborate.

Quite clearly the government had to have the power to make regulations affecting the health, order and discipline of schools. The difficulty was that it was seeking such power at a time of dispute over the enforcement of the patriotic ceremony. Little thought appears to have been given to the content of the patriotism being enforced. Martin, leader of the government in the Legislative Assembly, spoke of children being taught 'to reverence the Empire and its flag'.\textsuperscript{199} However, James Dillon, UAP member for Essendon, spoke only of the Australian flag.\textsuperscript{200} 'Any pupil', he argued, 'who will not salute the Australian flag should not be allowed to attend an Australian school', and he urged members to 'deal with this matter as Australians'. William Barry, Labor member for Carlton and an associate of John Wren, also spoke of making 'better Australians', though he thought a compulsory ceremony was not the way to foster 'a real Australian sentiment'.\textsuperscript{201} He found such compulsion 'anti-British and anti-Australian'. In the Legislative Council Harris's approach was not so obviously Empire-centred as that of his colleague in the Legislative Assembly, in that he spoke of 'love of country'. Even so, on balance his rhetoric favoured the Empire:

Inherently there should exist in the mind of every right-thinking individual in the community the love of his country, the love of the supreme head of the nation and the love of the flag. Summarized, that represents a love of his country and loyalty. ... it [the Department] does want to inculcate loyalty to the Empire ... All we

\begin{footnotes}
\item[199] Norman Martin, \textit{ibid.}, p. 1677.
\item[200] James Dillon, \textit{ibid.}, p. 1679. Dillon was the son of immigrant parents (Ireland and Scotland); he had been a railway worker, time-keeper and secretary, and MLA for Essendon from 1932 to 1943. He was a Methodist. Browne, \textit{Biographical Register of the Victorian Parliament}, p. 50.
\end{footnotes}
are asking is that children shall be patriotic to the Constitution and the British Flag.202

Harris appeared to forget that schools had a choice of three flags, two of them Australian.

The vote on the bill in the Council was close: thirteen in favour, ten against, where two government members and one UAP member joined the seven Labor members.203 Eager (UAP) and Beckett (Labor) had argued against a compulsory ceremony, both making the point that it was wrong to force patriotism on one section of the population but not on the other. 'If it is right to compel the child of a worker to make this affirmation', Beckett asserted, 'it is surely right to compel the child of every other parent, whether he attends a denominational school or college'.204 The government found, however, once the bill became law, that the awkward questions continued. Citizens of Castlemaine asked why the Castlemaine Technical School did not have the 'full' flag ceremony.205 The school, Martin subsequently explained, was one of fourteen technical schools which had retained their own councils. Although subsidised by the Education Department, it was not a State school; hence it did not come under the 1940 Act.

That Victoria had been driven to legislate for loyalty was a paradox. The most liberal of the States in allowing the Australian flag to be used instead of the Union Jack, it was the only one to go to such extremes in insisting on the flag ritual which had been part of Victorian State school life since 1901. That insistence, together with the Dunstan government's preference for the Australian Ensign, meant that the question of an Australian national flag — blue or red — would have to be resolved. When the federal government prevaricated, Dunstan acted. His legislation and the publicity it provoked forced the federal government to confront the issue. While not yet prepared to

203ibid., p. 2121.
204William Beckett, ibid., p. 2102.
name the Ensign as the Australian National Flag, it removed all restrictions from its use on shore, encouraging Australians to regard it as their flag. However, the decades of confusion, marked by the Union Jack as the national flag and the two Australian flags as mere ensigns, would take more than a press release to dispel.

205 Question by G.C. Frost to Martin, 5 Dec. 1941, ibid., p. 2488.
Schools had played a central role in 1941 in the lifting of restrictions on the flying of the Ensign on shore. They were to have a similar role in 1950 in the Menzies government's declaration of that flag as the Australian National Flag, in preparation for its presentation to all schools — State and non-State — in April and May 1951 to mark the fiftieth anniversary of federation. Such a role in 1950 might seem to be easily explained: in presenting the blue Australian Ensign to schools, the government would have to make clear to the public once and for all that it was Australia's national flag, especially given the confusion of the previous fifty years and the custom of regarding the red Merchant Flag as the people's flag.

But more important is to explain why the government decided to present the Ensign to schools. At a pragmatic level, the presentation can be seen as a more effective means than a press release of publicising the status of the Ensign. Not only those of the new generation but also their parents would come to recognise it as their flag. From a wider perspective, the government appeared to be using the Australian flag to develop a sense of Australian nationality. Fifty years before, Sir Frederick Sargood had hoped the Union Jack would maintain in future generations a sense of being British, despite federation. That the decision to declare an Australian national flag was taken during a war — the Korean War — is a reminder of the South African War which had sharpened Sargood's fears. He and his contemporaries, like their counterparts in 1950, perceived the threat to Australia's security as double-edged: a threat from without, from those challenging Australia's major defender, first Britain, then the United States, in the world order; and a threat from within, from those
questioning the nature of Australia's relationships with those two powers. Promotion of the Australian flag can also be seen as an assertion of power by the Commonwealth in a struggle, heightened by World War II, with the States; and in the older struggle between church and state. The gift of the flag was not just for State, but all, schools. These factors all play a part in explaining the significance of that gift, but for my purpose here it is the government's attempt to mediate the double loyalty which is most striking.

Double Loyalty

Despite the press release of 1941 encouraging its use, the Australian flag continued to be a matter of concern for both parties in government during the war, because of its relationship to the Union Jack. This was particularly so when flags were flown on days honouring the major allies, the United States on Independence Day on 4 July, and the Soviet Union on the anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution, 7 November. To fly the Australian flag with the Soviet or American flag without also flying the Union Jack seemed disloyal. The simple matter of logistics gave the question a particular edge. Where two flag poles were available, the choice of flags was difficult enough; one pole made it even more so. In either case two flags would have to be attached to the one halyard, unless a yardarm were used. Yet in responding to this difficulty Labor's John Curtin appeared more protective of the Union Jack than Robert Menzies in the United Australia Party. Initially at least, Curtin was less willing than Menzies to fly the Australian flag without the Union Jack. In this he reflected the Labor Party's sensitivity to the charges and counter-charges of disloyalty shaped by the politics of the 1920s and 1930s.

Sir Edward Lucas, a former agent-general for South Australia and, now in retirement, President of the South Australian Navy League, suggested marking the special day of the United States in 1941.¹ Flying the American flag from

¹Sir Edward Lucas to R.G. Menzies, Prime Minister, 27 June 1941, CRS A461/1 D336/1/1 Pt 3. Lucas, Irish-born and Methodist, had been a draper and Liberal politician in South Australia
public buildings on 4 July, he explained to Menzies, would recognise 'the marvellous assistance' the United States was giving 'our Empire'. However, he thought it necessary to add that 'it may be considered desirable' to display the United States' flag and the Union Jack together to indicate 'unity of purpose'. There was no mention of the Australian flag. Menzies, recently returned from England, immediately approved the idea, responding to Lucas that he had ordered the two flags, the Union Jack and the American flag, to be flown from Commonwealth buildings in the capital cities. However, in subsequent drafts of the directions to be issued by the secretary of the Prime Minister's Department to all departments, premiers and the press, 'Union Jack' became 'Union Jack and/or Australian flag', then 'Union Jack or Australian flag', and finally 'Australian flag'. The wording of the press release was significant in its omission of the Union Jack: 'as far as possible, the Australian flag and the United States flag should be displayed'. Within the space of a few days, from Lucas' initial suggestion to the Prime Minister's Department's final instructions, the Union Jack had been replaced by the Australian flag.

For the Soviet Union's national day on 7 November, the issuing of instructions in 1941 for the flying of flags was a far more sensitive matter. Australia now had a Labor government under Curtin. The non-Labor coalition, having replaced Menzies in August 1941 with Arthur Fadden, Leader of the Country Party, had early in October lost the support of the two Independents on whom it depended. The Soviet Union had become an ally against the Germans after their invasion in June 1941. Thus, although the ban on the Australian Communist Party continued, in practice there was an easing of the restrictions on its activities. Curtin had been prime minister for barely three weeks before his close friend, John Dedman, Minister for War Organisation of Before his appointment as Agent General. 'Sir Edward Lucas', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, vol. 10, pp. 164-165.

2Menzies to Lucas, 30 June 1941, CRS A461/1 D336/1/1 Pt 3.
3Memorandum drafts, Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, *ibid.*
Industry, circularised the premiers on 29 October with the suggestion that Australian and 'Russian' flags be displayed on 7 November. A similar statement had already been issued to the press. It was in line with directions for 4 July a few months before under the coalition government. However, on 30 October Curtin found it necessary to telegraph the premiers with revised directions which included the Union Jack: 'So far as Commonwealth buildings are concerned arrangements are being made that Union Jack will be flown together with Australian and Russian flags. Would appreciate your cooperation in this connection', he added.

In Sydney both the *Herald* and the *Daily Telegraph* reported Curtin accurately as directing that 'as far as possible the Union Jack, the Australian flag, and the Russian flag be displayed'. The *Telegraph* then reverted to Dedman's original preference for the Australian flag with the Russian flag if only two poles were available. At the Sydney Town Hall the display of these flags was a matter for serious discussion in the Council's Finance Committee, a reminder of the fierce dispute about the Union Jack and the Australian flag in Bill Lambert's time as lord mayor in 1921. For the first time in the Town Hall's history the Soviet flag, a direct derivative of the Red Flag, flew from a turret on 7 November. The matching turret flew the Australian flag, and high above both was the Union Jack on the tower, a reassuring sign to those alarmed at the presence of a communist flag at the heart of the city's government. Even so, the appearance of this flag on public buildings, especially when the Australian Communist Party was still a banned organisation, was a matter of concern to the director of the Commonwealth Investigation Bureau. The secretary of the

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4Curtin, of Irish Catholic background, was neither a practising Catholic, nor one to draw attention to his ethnicity. 'John Curtin', ADB, vol. 13, p. 550, and Lloyd Ross, John Curtin: A Biography, South Melbourne, Macmillan, 1977, p. 67.
5J.J. Dedman for Prime Minister to Premiers, circular, 29 Oct. 1941, CRS A461/1 B336/1/1 Pt 3, AA (ACT); Notes on Curtin by D.K. Rodgers, Curtin's press secretary, folder 1926-78, Rodgers Papers, MS 1536, NLA.
6Prime Minister to Premiers, telegram, 30 Oct. 1941, CRS A461/1 B336/1/1 Pt 3, AA (ACT).
7*Sydney Morning Herald* (hereafter SMH), 31 Oct. 1941, p. 6; The wording of the *Daily Telegraph* (hereafter DT) was almost the same, p. 5; it repeated its advice on 6 Nov., p. 6.
8SMH, 6 Nov. 1941, p. 8.
Prime Minister's Department assured him that in future he would notify the bureau of any instructions concerning the flying of foreign flags.9

Only gradually did Curtin relinquish the Union Jack. By 4 July 1942 the United States was now a formal ally after the bombing of Pearl Harbour in December 1941. Both Britain and Australia recognised American pre-eminence in Australian defence, a pre-eminence which had begun to turn the tide against the Japanese in the battle of Midway in June 1942. Instructions for the flying of flags again specified 'the Union Jack together with the Australian Flag and the American Flag' if more than one pole were available; and 'the Union Jack or the Australian Flag and the American Flag' with only one pole.10 The press statement made the preference clear: 'as far as possible, the Union Jack, together with the Australian Flag and the United States Flag should be displayed'. Instructions under the Menzies government had not included the Union Jack.

However, by early 1943 Curtin's instructions for the celebration of Red Army Day, 23 February, made no mention of the Union Jack.11 Red Army Day celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of the army's foundation; it also marked recent Red Army success in pushing German forces back through the Ukraine, almost to the River Dnieper. What the press made of Curtin's statement, however, was not what he intended. In Sydney and Melbourne, neither of the two more conservative dailies, the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Argus*, reported Curtin's directions regarding the flying of flags.12 The *Argus* simply observed that because of the shortage of Soviet flags, 'most buildings will fly the Union Jack'.13 The *Telegraph* and the *Age* both reported instructions along the October 1941 lines, which included the Union Jack.14 Reports of events in Sydney and Melbourne between 21 to 23 February made no mention of the

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9 Director, Commonwealth Investigation Branch, to Prime Minister's Dept, 20 Nov. 1941, and the Secretary's response, 25 Nov. 1941, CRS A461/1 B336/1/1 Pt 3, AA (ACT).
10 Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, to Commonwealth Departments, 24 June 1942, *ibid.*; press statement, 1 July 1942, A461/1 D336/1/1 Pt 3, AA (ACT).
11 W.B. [?] to Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, 25 Mar. 1943, *ibid.* Pt 4. The day was to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Army's foundation, *Argus*, 23 Feb. 1943, p. 4.
12 Editions checked for 17-23 Feb. 1943.
Australian flag. Perhaps it had its place among the 'flags of other United Nations'. Of the flags which were specifically mentioned in Sydney's and Melbourne's major morning papers, reports spoke only of the 'Russian Flag', 'the Hammer and Sickle banner' or the 'Red Flag of the Soviet Union', though the Age reported it flying with the Union Jack 'side by side' from Melbourne's General Post Office.

Curtin's omission of the Union Jack led the Balonne Shire Council, St George, in west central Queensland to query the Prime Minister's Department. Only 25 years before in that State the Red Flag and the Union Jack had symbolised opposing forces in serious clashes. Two of the speakers at the City Hall meeting in Brisbane to honour the Red Army in 1943 referred to that time when 'it was not possible to wave the Red flag without being hounded out of the city'. In the Prime Minister's Department, the staff member preparing the reply to the council checked the files, and noted that the Union Jack had not been included, unlike in previous instructions. He advised 'that mention of the Union Jack should not be omitted in our letter to the Balonne Council and that it was in order to fly either the Union Jack or the Australian Flag (when it was only possible to fly one of the two) along with the flag of the Allied nation'. Had the staff member checked the files of the Menzies as well as the Curtin administration and found the preference for the Australian flag, he might have given different advice. At any rate the secretary simply commented: 'follow the press notice — as UJ is embodied in Aust Flag'. Accordingly, the response to the

14DT, 19 Feb. 1943, p. 2; Age, 18 Feb. 1943, p. 3.
16ibid., and Argus, 24 Feb. 1943, pp. 6, 3.
17The letter from the Shire Clerk of the Balonne Shire Council, St George, Queensland, to the Prime Minister's Department was not in the file. Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, to Shire Clerk, 25 Mar. 1943, CRS A461/1 D336/1/1 Pt 4, AA (ACT).
19Rev. Myles Phillips; also Dr Robert Dalley-Scarlett, a noted Brisbane musician and music presenter on the ABC, Courier-Mail, 23 Feb. 1943, p. 3; 'Robert Dalley-Scarlett', ADE, vol. 8, pp. 197-198.
20Memorandum, W.B. (?) to Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, 25 Mar. 1943, CRS A461/1 D336/1/1 Pt 4, AA (ACT).
shire council was quite precise: where there were only two poles the Australian Ensign and the allied flag should be flown.

During the war the instructions given about the flying of the Australian flag and the reactions they provoked reflected an awareness of Australians' double loyalty to Australia and the Empire. Instructions issued by non-Labor, and increasingly Labor, governments indicated a willingness to prefer the Australian flag over the Union Jack, though the more conservative press, and Australians in general were slow to make the adjustment. However, by 1943 even the ANA, traditionally reluctant to express a preference for the Australian flag, was asking why the Union Jack still accompanied the Australian flag on Parliament House after Australia's adoption in 1942 of the Statute of Westminster, which recognised the independence of the dominions.21 The question was at the heart of the dilemma exposed in the debate on Australia's Nationality and Citizenship Bill in 1948.

There had been talk within the Labor government in 1945 of legislating for Australian citizenship while retaining the notion of British nationality. The common code defining British nationality had been so modified by the various dominions since the 1920s that it held little of its original meaning. Established by Britain in 1914 and subsequently adopted by the dominions in their legislation, the code had enabled those naturalised in each dominion to be recognised elsewhere in the Empire as subjects owning allegiance to the British crown, that is, as having British nationality. At the time the British Nationality and Status of Aliens Bill was debated in Britain, the British Liberal government recognised that the 'local nationality' of a dominion was distinct from British nationality.22 Canadian-born Conservative and imperialist member, Sir Gilbert Parker, called it citizenship, explaining that while naturalisation would confer

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21 H.R. Redding, General Secretary, ANA (NSW) to Dr H.V. Evatt, Attorney-General, 23 Feb. 1943, *ibid.*
the rights of a British subject, it did not give 'the rights of citizenship in any portion of the Empire ... Citizenship must be acquired in each individual country ... according to the laws of that individual country'.

However, the attempt to associate a national or subject with empire, and a citizen with country or dominion, began to break down almost as soon as it had been established. Canada, the Union of South Africa and the Irish Free State all began legislating for their own distinct nationality, the Irish Free State's *Irish Nationality and Citizenship Act* of 1935 showing the change most clearly after the two other dominions led the way. During the 1920s the Irish and British governments had taken some time to agree on the final compromise wording on Irish passports. Australia also contributed to the modification of the common code in 1936 and, with New Zealand in 1946, by protecting the nationality of women marrying aliens. However, it was the *Canadian Citizenship Act* of 1946 which precipitated the further reconsideration of nationality in the British Commonwealth. The United Kingdom, New Zealand and Australia each legislated in 1948 to define citizenship for their countries. Yet such legislation in the United Kingdom, the final admission that the common code was at an end, still attempted to preserve 'the facade' of 1914 by retaining the concept of British nationality for all subjects of the crown, now to be known as either British subjects or Commonwealth citizens.

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23Parker, a prolific novelist, was of loyalist descent, 'Sir (Horatio) Gilbert (George) Parker', *ibid.* 1931-1940, pp. 671-672; Sir Gilbert Parker, 13 May 1914, *PD* 1914, vol. 62, p. 1203.
25Holders of these passports were described as 'one of His Majesty's subjects of the Irish Free State', not a British subject or an Irish citizen, Gretchen MacMillan, 'British Subjects and Irish Citizens: The Passport Controversy, 1923-24', *Eire-Ireland: A Journal of Irish Studies*, vol. 26, no. 3, Fall, 1991, p. 49.
In Australia Arthur Calwell, Minister for Immigration, introduced the Nationality and Citizenship Bill in September 1948. The challenge for the Labor government was to legislate for Australian citizenship without laying itself open to the charge of being anti-British. The founding fathers, in drafting the Australian constitution in the 1890s, had attempted to define an Australian citizen but without success: after exasperating debates they had to make do with the phrase 'subject of the Queen'. Now in 1948 the government was to try again. Calwell spoke of the bill establishing British nationality and Australian citizenship but found it difficult to distinguish between the two. The bill, he said, was a significant step in the life of 'our nation', one that would enable Australia 'to proclaim its own national citizenship'. Early in his speech he stated the nub of the problem: 'To say that one is an Australian is, of course, to indicate beyond all doubt that one is British; but to claim to be of the British race does not make it clear that one is an Australian'. At the centre of his government's response to this problem was the oath or affirmation of allegiance: that of 1948 was significantly different from that of 1920. Besides giving allegiance to the King, an alien being naturalised in Australia would now also be required to swear to 'faithfully observe the laws of Australia and fulfil [his/her] duties as an Australian citizen'.

Most opposition speakers insisted, despite Calwell's denial, that the bill concerned Australian nationality. Eric Harrison, Acting Leader of the Liberal Party while Menzies was overseas, led the attack, arguing that the purpose of the bill was 'to create a fundamental Australian nationality, an Australian citizenship' and was 'part of a plan — a sinister plan — to liquidate the British
Empire'. \(^{33}\) From the blue-ribbon seat of Wentworth in New South Wales, Harrison had been co-founder of the Liberal Party. With little formal education and a reputation as 'a fearless and aggressive debater' and 'a baiter of Labor radicals', he portrayed the legislation as a plot hatched by the socialist Labor governments of Britain and Australia. \(^{34}\) His complaint was that whereas before the bill Australians were primarily British subjects with an assumed Australian citizenship, now they were to be primarily Australian citizens, who, by virtue of that status were also British subjects. Percy Spender, another Liberal from New South Wales, was one of the few opposition members who accepted, though still regretted, the need for such legislation. Citizenship was to be 'the basis for nationality', and the 'common nationality' of the wider Commonwealth would simply be 'a common allegiance to the King'. \(^{35}\) Spender, a lawyer, had entered parliament in 1937 at the expense of the former UAP Minister of Defence, Sir Robert Parkhill, publicly questioning his view that the British fleet would continue to defend Australia. \(^{36}\) A friend of Curtin, Spender maintained his independence from the UAP/Liberal Party as the only one of its representatives to remain on the War Advisory Council through the war.

Les Haylen, a Labor member from the same State with a reputation for urging more 'Australianism' in schools, and chairman of the government's Immigration Advisory Council, condemned Harrison's speech as 'rabid nonsense'. \(^{37}\) He might easily have said the same of the tempestuous Archie Cameron, Country Party member from South Australia. \(^{38}\) Haylen believed the


\(^{34}\) Quoted from Argus of Feb. 1947, Harrison's ADB file. Harrison, an Anglican, was a businessman. His father was from England. Harrison had served in the AIF 1916-19, and was Captain and Liaison Officer to US forces 1942-43. As a UAP member, he had had ministerial positions in 1934, and 1938-41. Co-founder of the Liberal Party, he was its Deputy Leader as well as Deputy Leader of the Opposition, 1944-49. Joan Rydon, A Biographical Register of the Commonwealth Parliament 1901-1972, Canberra, Australian National University Press, 1975, p. 102; Harrison, ADB file.

\(^{35}\) Percy Spender, 18 Nov. 1948, CPD 1948, vol. 200, pp. 3245, 3244.


\(^{37}\) Les Haylen, 18 Nov. 1948, CPD 1948, vol. 200, p. 3247. Haylen, a Catholic, was a journalist and secretary of the Returned Soldiers Non-Party Committee in the Commonwealth parliament. His play on Eureka, Blood on the Wattle, had recently been published. Rydon, A Biographical Register, p. 104; ADB file.

\(^{38}\) Cameron, a soldier settler, a Catholic from a strict Presbyterian background, and a Jacobite, caused a stir on taking his seat in the House of Representatives by making an affirmation
bill essentially concerned Australian nationality. He thought the issue was a pragmatic one: with the passing of the bill, for the first time 'an Australian may call himself an Australian because he holds Australian citizenship'. Before that, he argued, Australians had no legal basis for doing so. He was glad Australia had 'grown up'. John McEwen, a Country Party member from Victoria, vehemently opposed this view, predicting that many would regard the day 'when the British peoples ... separate[d] ... into different nationalities' as 'a black day in their history'. But for Haylen, being 'a good Australian' did not mean being anti-British. He recognised that some Australians feared that the proposed bill would mean 'cutting the painter': the Victorian branch of the RSL had proposed a motion at its congress in Brisbane the previous month 'deplor[ing] the suggestion of a separate Australian nationality as distinct from British nationality' and urging 'vigorous protest'. But the motion was defeated. Instead, the congress moved for the withdrawal of the 'rights and privileges of Australian citizenship' from any person who expresses allegiance to a foreign power. The wording was curious: with the emphasis on 'citizenship', 'foreign' referred to the power the RSL probably had in mind, the Soviet Union; but technically it could also refer to the United Kingdom, though for most Australians in 1948 that would be unthinkable. Haylen did not make the point, of course, but he did say that the government had taken these views of the RSL into account when drafting the legislation.

The difficulty for many Liberal and Country Party members was that Australia really had no choice but to legislate for Australian citizenship, unless she wished to be ranked as a colony and not a dominion. Much as they might try to explain the need for new legislation in terms of the 'racial problems' of

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40 Ibid., p. 3248.
41 John McEwen, ibid., p. 3252. McEwen, educated in State schools, had held several portfolios since his election in 1934, Rydon, A Biographical Register, p. 144.
43 Ibid., p. 3247.
Canada and South Africa (referring to those of French and Dutch descent), the entry of republican India, Pakistan and Ceylon into the Commonwealth (making 'Commonwealth citizen' rather than 'British subject' the appropriate term), or the particular difficulties of Eire, the former Irish Free State (now legislating for the Republic of Ireland), the 'Britishness' of Australia and New Zealand was not enough to hold back the tide of dominion nationality.\textsuperscript{44}

Dominion citizenship legislation simply underlined what the Statute of Westminster had made clear in 1931: that Britain was not responsible for the protection of Australians. Members were reluctant to discard the associations of \textit{Civis Britannicus sum}. Even Jack Lang, the Labor (Non-Communist) member from New South Wales, who, as a former Labor premier of that State, had appeared so anti-British in 1932, now drew on those associations in explaining that British citizenship had carried with it 'all the fundamental principles of British common law and British liberty'.\textsuperscript{45} This had long been the argument of those asserting an essential Britishness, based on the concept of liberty, at the heart of Australian sentiment. But the rhetoric hid a more basic concern, one McEwen stated bluntly: 'separate nationality' for Australians or 'national independence' meant a dramatic loss in status, from being a partner of 'the most powerful, wealthy and good people of the world' to 'a small isolated people'.\textsuperscript{46}

Spender was less concerned with this loss of status than with establishing the meaning of citizenship. His view was that the legislation 'merely defines who are citizens of this country and who shall be given the protection of this country against other nations'.\textsuperscript{47} Howard Beale, a recently elected Liberal from New South Wales, was interested in the same point, arguing that 'at present, we have Australian citizenship without its being exactly defined, and without any

\textsuperscript{44}Harrison, \textit{ibid.}, p. 3231; Howard Beale, Liberal, NSW, 23 Nov. 1948, \textit{ibid.}, pp. 3313-3314.
\textsuperscript{45}Jack Lang, \textit{ibid.}, p. 3301. Lang, as former Premier of NSW during the Depression, had been known for his defence of Australian as against British interests in 1931. He welcomed this legislation of 1948 but queried Labor government intentions by attacking its recent handling of passport matters.
\textsuperscript{46}McEwen, 18 Nov. 1948, \textit{ibid.}, p. 3253.
\textsuperscript{47}Spender, 1 Dec. 1948, \textit{ibid.}, p. 3760.
clear expression of the rights and duties conferred by Australian citizenship'. 48 The validity of their concern became evident in the discussion of the clause regarding deprivation of citizenship. The most obvious rights of a citizen involved the franchise and the right to stand for election to parliament. Yet a British subject, at least one 'of a certain kind' (that is, of European race), resident in Australia for six months, and registered as an Australian citizen, could be deprived of nothing more than the right to say 'I am an Australian'. 49 He or she could continue to exercise the essential rights of citizenship.

Calwell admitted the truth of this interpretation and further explained that under the transitional provisions, British subjects who did not register as Australian citizens would be entitled to not only the franchise but also social service benefits and, where relevant, returned soldier benefits. 50 However, when travelling overseas they would be entitled not to Australian protection but to that of their country of birth. By contrast, Australian Aborigines and other people of non-European descent born in Australia, though British subjects, had mostly been barred from the franchise and related rights. The Nationality and Citizenship Bill declared that 'a person born in Australia after the commencement of this Act shall be an Australian citizen by birth'. Yet debate by both government and opposition speakers indicated that this clause would not automatically confer the right to vote on citizens of non-European descent.

Lang had a point, then, when he complained that the bill 'confers a title of citizenship but gives nothing to go with that title ... This Parliament', he said,

48Beale, 30 Nov. 1948, ibid., p. 3659. A lawyer, Beale, was the son of a liberal Methodist clergyman. He had become interested in politics through family friend, W.A. Holman, former Labor, then Nationalist premier of NSW, who moved Beale’s admission to the bar. On the first Council of the NSW Liberal Party in 1945 and on its first Executive the next year, Beale became known as a ‘small-l’ Liberal. He had been an officer in the Royal Australian Navy, 1942-45 and was a member of the Naval Men’s Association. He became a friend of Labor rebel, Jack Lang. Rydon, A Biographical Register, p. 14; obituary, SMH, 19 Oct. 1983, p. 7 in ADB file; Howard Beale, This Inch of Time: Memoirs of Politics and Biography, Carlton, Vic., Melbourne University Press, 1977, pp. 23, 32.


50Calwell, ibid., p. 3761.
'has not defined the freedom to which the Australian citizen is heir'.\(^{51}\) But in the past the Australian's statement, 'I am a British subject', had been no more explicit about the nature or extent of his or her freedoms than the proposed 'I am an Australian'. The difference was that the former could draw on a long tradition centred on the development of British parliamentary institutions and the power of the Royal Navy with which most Australians were familiar through their schooling and the rhetoric of public figures. However, it was a tradition they had consistently claimed for themselves. That was the difficulty: what political tradition, what power did Australians have apart from the British? As Beale lamented: 'The real difficulty for Australia under this legislation is that by losing the status of Civis Britannicus Sum, we shall lose the power, prestige and authority that went with it'.\(^{52}\)

Beale's opposition to the bill is surprising. Early in 1947 he had championed the Australian blue ensign as the 'Australian National Ensign', pressing the government to publicise its status to correct 'widespread ignorance' among the public.\(^{53}\) Now late in 1948 he decried Calwell's view that the bill 'mark[ed] another step forward in the development of Australian nationhood', and disparaged his plan to have the Nationality and Citizenship Bill proclaimed on Australia Day, 26 January 1949.\(^{54}\) Beale warned, as Harrison had, that Australia had much to lose and nothing to gain by becoming a foreign country to Britain: 'The essence' of Australia's relationship with Britain, he argued, had been 'unforeigness' (sic).\(^{55}\) 'We shall not be exactly aliens', he admitted, 'but the essence of "unforeigness" (sic) will be lost'. George Bowden,

\(^{51}\)Lang, 23 Nov. 1948, *ibid.*, p. 3301.
\(^{52}\)Beale, *ibid.*, p. 3312.
\(^{53}\)Beale had taken up the issue with Chifley, prompting the government to make a press release in February 1947, which Beale missed, leading him to ask a question in the House in May, Beale to J.B. Chifley, Prime Minister, 14 Feb. 1947, John J. Dedman for the Prime Minister to Beale, 21 Feb. 1947, Prime Minister's Department to Beale, May 1947, CRS A461/1 A336/1/1 Pt 3, AA (ACT).
\(^{55}\)*ibid.*, p. 3313.
Country Party member from Victoria, later expressed the same view: 'we shall practically be a foreign power, another nation'.

The Balfour Declaration of 1926 and subsequently the Statute of Westminster of 1931 had, of course, foreshadowed the emergence of separate 'nations' and the fragmentation of the British nation. Both Calwell in the House and Bill Ashley, Labor leader in the Senate, when introducing the 1948 bill referred to the reports of imperial conferences, especially that of 1937, in commenting on the dominion practice of defining the 'members of their own respective communities', that is, those who 'belonged ... for the purposes of civil and political rights and duties'. Others spoke of identity: Thomas Williams, Labor member from New South Wales, thought that defining the 'separate identities' of the Commonwealth countries had the advantage of making clear which citizens had the right to their protection. Ashley advised that unless Australia adopted the proposed bill, it would be 'the only unidentified country from the point of view of citizenship in the British Commonwealth ... the only members of the British family without a name of their own'.

The bill was difficult to argue against, except with 'all the cliches that one hears at an Empire Day dinner', according to Haylen. The transfer from British to Australian citizenship, however disguised by retaining 'British nationality', was a necessity, especially when Britain herself had confirmed the change. J.B. Chifley, the Prime Minister, was to insist the next year on retaining in Australia the term 'British Commonwealth' rather than the newly-devised 'Commonwealth of Nations'. His insistence appears to be as much a matter of

56George Bowden, 25 Nov. 1948, ibid., p. 3570. Bowden, Member for Gippsland, was a farmer, State-educated, who had been in the AIF 1914-1918, Rydon, A Biographical Register, p. 23.
57Bill Ashley, quoting from the 1937 report, and elaborating, 1 Dec. 1948, CPD 1948, vol. 200, p. 3699. Ashley, a Catholic, was a tobacconist from Lithgow, NSW. A senator since 1937, he had been a minister in various portfolios from 1941, and leader of the ALP in the Senate from 1946. Rydon, A Biographical Register, p. 8.
58Thomas Williams, 18 Nov. 1948, CPD 1948, vol. 200, p. 3243. Williams, 51, was a Catholic lawyer, Rydon, A Biographical Register, p. 225.
60Haylen, 18 Nov. 1948, ibid., p. 3245.
practical politics as habit. Menzies' absence from the debate was significant. His habit was to stand apart as the elder statesman from the exaggerated rhetoric and the 'rough and tumble assaults' displayed by men such as Harrison unless there were 'matters of high principle involved'. Given the nature of the bill, perhaps it was fortunate that he was absent overseas, paired with Chifley who was in London for the prime ministers' conference. Its only decision, Menzies noted to Harrison, 'appears to have been that we are no longer British!' He reported that he found 'the "Mackenzie King/Evatt views" on the British Empire ... very prevalent' in Canada, an experience which confirmed his view 'that there needs to be a very great resurgence of genuine British feeling and that we should in all our arguments abandon both retreat and apology'.

Judith Brett has imaginatively explored the basis of the attachment felt by Menzies — 'the colonial man from the periphery' — for '[his] England'. He sent Harrison a copy of his recent article on the British Nationality Act; his views were the basis of Harrison's attack on the Australian bill. At their centre was the criticism that British nationality was now to be 'derived from local citizenship, and therefore something secondary'. 'British nationality ... once the universal title of the British citizen everywhere ... falls at last into the second place', he complained. It was a term reminiscent of the antagonism of an earlier time in Australian politics: when Archbishop Mannix had remarked in 1920 that he accepted the Union Jack in Australia as long as it took 'second place to the Australian flag'; and when Bill Lambert stood by the slogan of 'Australia First' in 1921.

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63 Beale, This Inch of Time, p. 32.
64 R.G. Menzies to E.J. Harrison, 1 Nov. 1948, Menzies Papers MS 4936/1/14/119, National Library of Australia (hereafter NLA).
67 See above Chapter 6, pp. 276, 296.
Yet the Menzies government had issued the press release in 1941 encouraging the flying of the Australian Ensign as a national emblem, and it had not required the Union Jack to accompany the Australian flag in celebrating 4 July in Australia. It was also Menzies' government which was to declare the Ensign the Australian National Flag in 1950 before presenting it to schools to celebrate the jubilee anniversary of Australian federation.

Jubilee Celebrations

The idea for such a presentation seems to have developed from a suggestion in April 1949 of the Royal Historical Society of Australia 'that the children and youth of the Commonwealth be given a part in the celebration so that its significance may be emphasized to the younger generation'. By October that year when a cabinet sub-committee met to consider a paper prepared by the Prime Minister's Department, plans involving school children were well formed: they included a medal for primary students, a booklet for secondary students, and the 'presentation of an Australian flag to each Australian school'. The Jubilee would 'provide a unique opportunity for instilling into the minds of the children a pride in the history of their country and in its achievements'. The department considered the flag idea 'particularly appropriate': the ceremony of handing over the flags would be impressive'. No mention was made of Sargood's movement forty-nine years earlier, and there was no suggestion for a simultaneous ceremony across the country as in 1901. The estimated cost was considerable: £20,000 for the medals, £11,500 for the booklets, and £26,000 for the flags.

68 C. Price Conigrave, General Secretary, Royal Australian Historical Society, to Prime Minister, 22 Apr. 1949, forwarding the council's proposals for the celebration, CRS A461/7 H317/1/6, AA (ACT).

69 Commonwealth of Australia Jubilee. Report for Cabinet Sub-Committee on Jubilee Celebrations', confidential attachment for Cabinet Sub-Committee meeting on 18 Oct. 1949, prepared by Departmental Committee chaired by A.S. Brown, Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, Calwell Papers, MS 4738/9/35/1949 Cabinet Sub-Committee report to plan Commonwealth Jubilee Celebrations 1951, NLA.
One of the cabinet sub-committee members was Arthur Calwell, Member for Melbourne since 1940 and Minister for Information and for Immigration, who considered himself one of the two *enfants terribles* of the government front bench. A power-broker in the Labor Party in Victoria and beyond, Calwell had been associated with John Wren in organising that party's support for Dunstan's Country Party government in 1935. He had known Wren since 1919, and, like Wren, was a great admirer of Archbishop Mannix. Very likely, as secretary of the Young Ireland Society, Calwell was involved in the St Patrick's Day procession of 1920 in which Wren and Mannix had featured Australian flags. Calwell's maternal grandparents were Catholics from Ireland and he was raised in their faith. His interest in the Australian flag had also been stimulated by the American example of honouring the flag. Calwell had a personal link with America through his paternal grandfather who had been born there, a link which he renewed during the war when visiting that country as minister for information.

Calwell believed the Australian flag had an important role to play in making the immigrants of his large post-war schemes 'new Australians'. Responding to a question from Dame Enid Lyons, widow of the prime minister (whose Country Party colleague, Tom Collins, had wanted the Ensign to be Australia's national flag), Calwell declared that 'the time has arrived ... when we should legalize and regulate the use of the Australian flag'. He had been impressed by Americans' use of their flag in courthouses and churches:

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70 Eddie Ward was the other, Crisp, *Ben Chifley*, p. 234.
72 A. Calwell, 'Review of Niall Brennan's *John Wren: Gambler — His Life and Times*, Herald (Melbourne), 4 Dec. 1971, in Calwell Papers, MS 4738/21/82/Wren, John, NLA. Calwell concluded that Wren was an 'anathema to the establishment' because his 'money-making propensities were greater than the many stock brokers, merchants, professional men and graziers who reviled him'.
74 On 3 June 1947 Dame Enid had asked whether, as Minister for Information, he would promote the use of the Australian flag in literature and films; 'in particular, will he seek by these means to encourage an affection and respect for the institutions of this country among immigrants who seek either freedom or opportunity on these shores?', *Hansard* extract, CRS 461/1 A336/1/1 Pt 3, AA (ACT). She later admitted that she 'crossed swords with him more than with any other man in the House'. Yet her question had purpose: not only the flag should
I believe that the American experience has proved that the proper respect which is shown for the American flag has helped to build up Americanism. I am sure that, if proper respect were shown for the Australian flag ... a healthy Australianism would be promoted, and all Australians, whether newcomers or natural-born, would love and respect the laws of this country.}

Certainly the jubilee presented an opportunity for Calwell as a member of the cabinet sub-committee to promote 'healthy Australianism' by supporting the presentation of the flag to all schools. The sub-committee approved proposals for the flag, medal and booklet. Once the demands of protocol had been met by State governments giving the Commonwealth government permission to proceed, Professor R.C. Mills, Director of the new Commonwealth Office of Education and a close friend of Chifley, could approach his State counterparts.

These plans had proceeded far enough by the elections of December 1949 that the new Liberal-Country Party government found it difficult to change them. Menzies, the new prime minister, was not very impressed with the proposals of the previous government, especially those for schools. As he explained to Commonwealth and State government representatives considering the jubilee celebrations in March 1950, 'I remember getting a medal commemorating the establishment of the Commonwealth. That was one of my earliest recollections, but I also have a vivid memory of losing it the next day'. He favoured 'something that will direct a lot of attention to ourselves as a Commonwealth and make the year memorable in the minds of the people': outstanding theatre, ballet and orchestras from overseas, international science and engineering conventions, and pageants throughout the country. 'I would

be promoted but also the institutions it represented. See Dame Enid Lyons, *Among the Carrion Crows*, Adelaide, Rigby, 1972, pp. 133, 139.

Hansard extract for 3 June 1947, CRS 461/1 A336/1/1 Pt 3, AA (ACT).

A.S. Brown, Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, to P.H. Roper, Under-Secretary, Premier's Department, New South Wales, 4 Nov. 1949, CRS A461/7 O317/1/6, AA (ACT); R.C. Mills, Director, Commonwealth Office of Education, to Director of Education, South Australia, 22 Dec. 1949, GRG 18/2/1950/1706, State Records of South Australia (hereafter SRSA). Mills, a Victorian, had been Professor of Economics at the University of Sydney from 1922 to 1945. He was a friend of J.B. Chifley from 1941 and Chairman of the interim council establishing the Australian National University. 'Richard Charles Mills', *ADB*, vol. 10, pp. 517-519; 'Chifley', *ibid.*, vol. 13, p. 415.

sooner spend many times £20,000 and get a result worth having and talking about', he declared, 'than spend £20,000 on medals for school children which would be lost, stolen or strayed within 48 hours'. He made no mention of the raising of the Union Jack in his childhood's Jeparit in Victoria's Wimmera in 1901 when he received his medal. By implication, the presentation of a flag was no worthier than the presentation of a medal. However, H.S. Temby, the Assistant Secretary (Administration) in the Prime Minister's Department, spoke in favour of the flags, arguing that although most schools might have them, they were 'not uniform'.

Discussion of a range of proposals at the meeting indicated that the Commonwealth would have difficulty in arousing what Calwell had called 'a healthy Australianism' for the celebration of federation. 'If too much of the organisation is left to the States', W.J. Jungwirth from the Premier's Department, Victoria stated, 'the thing will need a lot of flogging'. G.M. Gray from the Premier's Department, New South Wales, pointed out that 'a lot of publicity and a large expenditure' would be necessary 'to arouse the enthusiasm and interest', since Australians were not accustomed to mark the anniversary of federation. The comments provoked Allen Brown, Secretary of the Prime Minister's Department, to exclaim that 'the Commonwealth has some right, surely, to expect the States to do something without the Commonwealth driving them'. Long used to Commonwealth interference in their affairs, States did not see that they had a responsibility for Commonwealth celebrations. State loyalties were more immediate.

The size of the problem facing Mills in coordinating the issue of flags for schools became apparent as soon as replies came in from State directors of education. By May 1950 not all directors had final figures for the number of

78A.W. Martin gives a brief description of the Jeparit years for the Menzies family but not the ceremony of 1901 or its impact on Menzies, then 6 years old, in Robert Menzies: A Life: vol. 1 1894-1943, Carlton, Vic., Melbourne University Press, 1993, pp. 5-12.
79R.C. Mills, Director, Commonwealth Office of Education, to Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, 5 May 1950, with an attachment summarising information from the States, CRS
their schools requiring flags, despite the fact that the Commonwealth wanted to distribute them in September. Some governments were adamant that they would not distribute flags to non-State schools: those in Queensland, New South Wales and South Australia. Victoria had not replied, and South Australia's director, Mills noted, was 'anxious that the flag should be the red Australian Ensign which he regards as more appropriate for Non-Commonwealth organisations'.

Menzies, in addressing the inaugural meeting of the Commonwealth Jubilee Celebrations Council in Canberra in May 1950, said that whether or not the council approved the flag proposal, 'an appropriate display by schoolchildren on the public holiday [9 May] should be a feature of the Jubilee Celebrations'. However, by the end of July Lt-Gen. F.H. Berryman, Director-General of Jubilee Celebrations, confirmed that the flag proposal would proceed.

Mills had continued to act as if the project were never in doubt. The problem which concerned him was the one South Australia had raised; the colour of the flag to be presented. On 4 October 1950 David Drummond, Country Party member from New South Wales, asked Menzies a series of questions in parliament about the flag: whether the official flag of the Commonwealth was blue; whether he knew that the official painting of the opening of the Commonwealth Parliament in 1927 showed a red ensign being used; and whether he would arrange to have the painting changed. Menzies wasted few words on the answer: yes, the official flag was blue despite its colour in the painting; but no, he would not have it changed. The next month Lt-Col. Ian Hunter reported to the Secretary of the Prime Minister's Department
Mills' concern that 'there has never been a definite ruling on which of the ensigns is the official Australian flag' and his suggestion that 'a proclamation should be made on the 1st of January'.

Menzies was fully aware of the problem. His UAP government had issued a press release in 1941 encouraging all Australians to fly the blue Ensign as 'a national emblem'. J.B. Chifley as Labor prime minister had also issued a similar statement in 1947, this time referring to the flag as 'the national emblem'. On that occasion the *Sun*, at least, noticed the issue. 'WE'RE NOT RED WE'RE BLUE', its headline declared in a play on the colour red, now so closely associated with communism. Menzies, conscious of the changed status of the colour, later referred to an earlier time 'when red was a respectable colour' (fig. 27). Lack of interest by the press in the prime ministers' statements ensured that the problem remained. The secretary of the Department of the Navy had warned his counterpart in the Prime Minister's Department that it would 'persist until a proclamation or pronouncement is issued clarifying this problem'. His concern was 'the interpretation of the term "The National Flag of Australia" ... and its lawful use on shore by the Public'. He was tired of enquiries, most recently from the Brighton Bowling Club, asking whether the Naval Board objected to its use of the Ensign. Chifley had initiated a departmental conference to make recommendations regarding the use of Australian flags. Its report was the basis of a submission prepared for cabinet in May 1950, now sitting under Menzies.

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84 Lt Col. Ian Hunter for Director-General, Commonwealth of Australia Jubilee — 1951, to Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, 27 Nov. 1950, CRS A462/4 828/1/1 Pt 1, AA (ACT).
85 Emphasis added, see above Chapter 7, p. 352.
87 Sun, 24 Feb. 1947, p. 3; none of the major papers in Melbourne or Sydney noticed the press release.
89 H.C. Allen, Secretary, Department of the Navy, to Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, 28 Feb. 1949, CRS A461/1 B336/1/1 Pt 5, AA (ACT).
90 I have not found Chifley's letter but John J. Dedman, Minister for Defence, refers to it in a letter to J.B. Chifley, Prime Minister, 14 Nov. 1949, CRS A462/4 828/1/1 Pt 1, AA (ACT).
91 R.G. Menzies, 'Australian Flags', Confidential Cabinet Submission, 26 May 1950, *ibid*. I have not found the departmental or conference committee report but a shortened version of its
The situation compared with that of the Victorian government in 1900, faced with Sir Frederick Sargood's proposal for placing Union Jacks in schools: the jubilee celebrations were to begin in a few months — not enough time to consider a design for a new Australian flag. Yet such a possibility was being discussed in 1950 as in 1900. A hard-hitting draft paper, 'Necessity of an Australian National Flag', condemned the design of the Ensign as 'typically colonial', arguing that it 'perpetuated our colonial status', that it was 'an

fourteen recommendations is attached to a letter from George McLeay, Minister for Fuel, Shipping and Transport, to R.G. Menzies, Prime Minister, 2 Feb. 1951, *ibid.*
anachronism to retain the Union Jack in a truly Australian Flag'.\textsuperscript{92} The approach of the jubilee, it concluded, 'is a reminder that the Commonwealth possesses no flags symbolic of its emergence from the colonial chrysalis into a world where it moves freely among sovereign nations'. However, the departmental conference on the flag did not pursue this line of argument. Its first recommendation advised the proclamation of the Ensign as the Australian National Flag.\textsuperscript{93} At the same time the conference report emphasised that this recommendation 'did not in any way restrict the privilege of every Australian citizen to fly the Union Jack at any time on shore'.\textsuperscript{94} Cabinet was then preoccupied with several other important issues. In April Menzies had introduced the Communist Party Dissolution Bill which became law in October. The intervening months were marked by the government's decision to commit Australian warships and then ground troops to the war in Korea.

Mills' request late in November for a statement in relation to his project to distribute flags to schools brought a swift response from cabinet early in December to approve the proclamation of the Ensign as the Australian National Flag.\textsuperscript{95} That was sufficient for Mills to proceed. But there was another matter he wished to settle: a certificate to accompany each flag 'in order to provide some permanent record' of its presentation, with a message from the prime minister, 'which could ... form a basis for the ceremony in each school'.\textsuperscript{96} Since Menzies was then overseas, Charles Bean, a member of Mills' Education and Science Sub-committee for the jubilee, drafted the message which became the basis for

\textsuperscript{92} Necessity of an Australian National Flag', n.d., but about 1950, written in relation to the jubilee of federation, Prime Minister's Department, \textit{ibid.}, AA (ACT).
\textsuperscript{93} This was the first of fourteen recommendations, R.G. Menzies, 'Australian Flags', Confidential Cabinet Submission, 26 May 1950, \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{94} \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{95} A.S. Brown, Secretary to Cabinet, memorandum to Attorney-General, Ministers and Departments of Fuel, Shipping and Transport, Navy, Army, Air, and Department of Defence, 6 Dec. 1950, \textit{ibid.} There was also a press release which not even the \textit{Sun} noticed, L.E. Bardsdell, Press Attache, to Director, News & Information Bureau, Department of Interior, 28 Nov. 1951, referring to Prime Minister's press release of 5 Dec. 1950 announcing cabinet's decision, CRS A462/1 828/1/13, AA (ACT).
\textsuperscript{96} F.H. Berryman, Director-General, Jubilee Celebrations, to Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, 15 Feb. 1951, with C.E.W. Bean's draft for the certificate attached; and Minute submitting draft for, and registering, Menzies' approval, 20 Feb. 1951, CRS A461/7 O317/1/6, AA (ACT).
the words of the certificate.\footnote{Bean's draft, printed as a trial certificate, was extended in the final version: compare the certificates in \textit{ibid.} Folio 125 and GRG 18/2/1950/1706, SRSA.} Bean, the deeply respected official historian of Australia's involvement in World War I, had just completed his history of private boys' schools in Australia, \textit{Here, My Son}.\footnote{C.E.W. Bean, \textit{Here, My Son: An Account of the Independent and Other Corporate Boys' Schools of Australia}, Sydney and London, Angus and Robertson, 1950. See Guy Harriott's review in \textit{SMH}, 9 Dec. 1950, p. 10.} He himself had been educated at such schools in Australia and England and knew their diffidence in displaying national flags which Kipling had described so well. Yet now he identified with a movement to place the Australian flag in these, as well as State, schools. It was a sharp contrast to Sargood's movement in 1900. Then the Britishness of private schools was unquestioned: a Union Jack in these schools was not necessary. Bean's willingness in 1951 to promote the Australian flag in all schools suggests that a loyalty to Australia could not be assumed and had to be encouraged.

Bean described the Australian flag in his draft as the 'symbol of our unity and nationhood'. But although Menzies seemed to approve Bean's draft, the phrase Bean used in drawing attention to Australian nationality did not appear in the final form. The certificate relegated the Australian significance of the flag to second place: the flag was 'not only a constant reminder of our lasting ties with the United Kingdom, but also the symbol of our own free and peace-loving nation' (fig. 28). The illustration of crossed flags underlined the point, with the Union Jack in the position of honour on the left — though not without confusion, given the incorrect placing of the flagstaffs.\footnote{Compare with fig. 4a above p. 7.} The presence of the Union Jack indicated cabinet's view that the decision to create an Australian national flag did not 'in any way restrict the privilege of every Australian citizen to fly the Union Jack'.\footnote{See the acknowledgement in 'Australian Flags' (p. 2), 26 May 1950, submission by R.G. Menzies for Cabinet, accepted on 4 Dec. 1950, and incorporated in the \textit{Flags Act 1953}, CRS A462/4 828/1/1 Pt 1, AA (ACT).}
1951: The Australian National Flag for Schools

On behalf of the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia I have much pleasure in presenting this Australian flag to School.

On the 1st January, 1901, the six colonies on the mainland of Australia were united and our people became one nation. Soon after the opening of the first Commonwealth Parliament the question of an Australian flag was raised, and a world-wide competition was held with the intention of deciding upon a suitable design. Over 30,000 designs were submitted, and the judges awarded the prize for the winning design equally amongst five different persons, who were: Mrs. Annie Boronina of Perth; Mr. J. Evan of Melbourne; Mr. L. J. Hawkins of Melbourne; Mr. E. J. Rutall of Melbourne; Mr. William Stevens of Auckland.

The design which was agreed upon was similar in almost all respects to that of the flag now presented to your School. It included the Union Jack to show Australia's link with Britain and other countries destined to become members of the British Commonwealth of Nations; it showed the Southern Cross as the symbol of our great south land and it contained a six pointed star representing the six States of the Federation. In 1908 a seventh point was added to the star to represent the Commonwealth territories. This is the only change that has been made to the flag.

For over fifty years, in prosperity and adversity, in peace and war, our flag has flown over the Australian people as they have progressed to an honoured position among the peoples of the world. I know that it will have a place of honour at your School and I confidently hope that as the years go by these children who pass through your School will be taught to know and to cherish the flag which is not only a constant reminder of our lasting ties with the United Kingdom, but also the symbol of our own free and peace-loving nation.

Fig. 28. Flag certificate presented to all schools, 1951.

(GRG 18/2/1950/1706, State Records of South Australia)
The words of the certificate indicated an effort to validate the Australian flag, referring to 'a world-wide competition' and the 30,000 entries. But in the process inconsistencies appeared in the document, obvious even to readers unfamiliar with the history of the flag. The question of an Australian flag, it stated, had been raised after the opening of the federal parliament, yet 'our flag [had] flown over the Australian people' for 'over fifty years'. Why should the prime minister then say, 'I know that it will have a place of honour at your School'? Did it not already have that place? Menzies, despite the diffidence towards flags in his own private secondary education (under the legendary Adamson), might also have been expressing the hope that this flag, unlike his medal, would not soon be lost — and thousands of pounds of public money wasted, an anathema to one from a frugal Scots Presbyterian background.101

W.C. Taylor in the Prime Minister's Department was uneasy about the certificate, fearing that the force of statements made later by the prime minister in introducing the anticipated legislation declaring an Australian national flag might 'be weakened by any statement made over his signature in his message to the schoolchildren of Australia'.102 A.D. McKnight, Assistant Secretary (Special Services), agreed that the certificate was 'embarrassing' but that it was too late to do anything about it since some flag ceremonies had already been held.103 He was consoled by the thought that the certificate '[did] not contain any really damaging statement' and that 'it could have been worse'. Not until 1953 did the anticipated legislation, the Flags Act, follow.104

101Martin describes an incident from Menzies' Ballarat days when he lived with his grandmother, illustrating his training in frugality, Martin, Robert Menzies, p. 14. Adamson was the headmaster of Wesley College who quoted Stalky & Co to the minister of public instruction in protesting against his attempt to introduce saluting the flag into private schools in 1916. See Chapter 5, p. 250.
102W.C. Taylor, Prime Minister's Department, to the Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, 27 Apr. 1951, A461/7 O317/1/6, AA (ACT).
103Note, DMcK[night] to W.C. Taylor, Prime Minister's Department, n.d., ibid.
104Menzies, on the Attorney-General's advice had decided that legislation rather than proclamation was the more straightforward mechanism, A.S. Brown, Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, to Secretary, Attorney-General, 8 May, 1951, CRS A462/4 828/1/1 Pt 1, AA (ACT).
How the flag and its certificate were received in schools in 1951 goes beyond the scope of this thesis. School ceremonies were not the centre of attention in May as they had been 50 years before. That place was taken by the Loyalty Despatch Bicycle Relay, an Australia-wide project involving thousands of people, including children, beginning in Darwin, Cairns and Launceston and ending with the delivery of loyalty messages, collected along the way, to Menzies at the steps of Parliament House, Canberra, on 8 May. Almost half of those messages came from school children. To participate in the relay, cyclists had to affirm their 'desire to extend to the Prime Minister [their] loyal greetings on the occasion of the Commonwealth Jubilee Celebrations', the affirmation being displayed on a plaque in front of their machines. This 'gigantic army of good-will ambassadors' was 'entrusted with tangible evidence that Australia's heart is sound and loyal to the ideals of Freedom and Democracy!' The extraordinary demonstration, centred on Menzies and the Liberal-Country Party coalition, occurred at the height of the Cold War as Australians went to elections triggered by a double dissolution.

Easily missed in this outpouring of loyalty — to the king, to the Commonwealth, even to Menzies — was the significance of an item on the official program for jubilee celebrations in New South Wales on 18 April: the 'Australian Flag Ceremony in all Roman Catholic Schools'. Not mentioned on the program for the Catholic Church in any other State, the ceremony was a curious reminder of Cardinal Moran's championing of the Australian flag in 1911. Then, it had been a means of protesting against Empire Day and British rule in Ireland. Now with Eire a republic, that was no longer necessary.

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105 The press reported the arrival of the cyclists, accompanied by 100 children on bikes, and of three trucks carrying 300,000 loyalty messages from cities, towns and shires, and 200,000 'pledge cards' from school children. Canberra Times, 9 May 1951, p. 1. A suggested form for the loyalty message was given in the booklet, Commonwealth Jubilee 1901-1951 Bicycle Rally, in GRG 18/2/1950/1706, SRSA. See loyalty messages collected in the north-west of Western Australia and in the Northern Territory in March 1951, MS 1874, NLA.

106 I am happy and proud with cyclists from all over Australia to participate in the Commonwealth Jubilee Loyalty Despatch Cycle Relay, and desire to extend to the Prime Minister my loyal greetings on the occasion of the Commonwealth Jubilee Celebrations.' Commonwealth Jubilee, GRG 18/2/1950/1706, SRSA.

107 Commonwealth Jubilee (p. 4), ibid.
Nevertheless, that the Catholic Church took the presentation of Australian flags so seriously in 1951 suggests an awareness of the history of the flag issue in New South Wales. In Victoria, by contrast, the presentation of Australian flags to Catholic schools was not noticed. In one sense such lack of interest is surprising, given that Mannix, advocate of the Australian flag in 1920, was still archbishop in 1951. However, like Moran, he had also had Irish purposes in mind in using the flag. As well, in Victoria there had been a stronger tradition in State schools of flying the Australian flag. For Mannix especially the British-Irish-Australian struggle was now dwarfed by a wider struggle, as B.A. Santamaria's marshalling of Catholics against communists within the labour movement approached its climax.

The presentation of Australian flags to all schools in 1951 served several purposes. Suggested by the Labor government as a jubilee celebration which would promote the use of the Australian flag, the idea was adopted reluctantly by the Liberal-Country Party coalition. However, it proved a useful means of establishing the new status of the Ensign as the Australian National Flag without denying the Union Jack, especially at the height of the Korean War. Through its Union Jack, the Australian flag signified the continuing British heritage at a time when Australian citizenship rather than British nationality defined Australians' legal status. The development of Australian loyalties, seen as a necessary part of countering communist subversion, would not mean challenging the older British loyalties. As Menzies stood on the steps of Parliament House to welcome the cyclists on that cold May day, he reflected on the fifty years of federation: 'In those years ... we became Australians ... We are

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108 *Commonwealth of Australia: Jubilee Celebrations 1901-1951: Official Programme Part 1*, p. 16, NLA.
110 See, for example, *Advocate*, 19 Apr. - 10 May 1951; note especially the report of the Catholic celebrations in Sydney which did not mention the flag ceremonies, 19 Apr. 1951, p. 6, 3 May 1951, p. 3. In South Australia Catholic schools, encouraged by Archbishop Dr Matthew Beovich, a 'good friend[s]' of Arthur Calwell, held flag ceremonies — and sang Maurice O'Reilly's *God Bless Our Lovely Morning Land, Southern Cross*, 18 May 19, p. 7. Beovich and
Australians and we must thank God for that. In our 50 years there has never been argument about whether we are British or not. We are British'.

Calwell were scholarship boys at Christian Brothers College, North Melbourne, Calwell, Early Religious Influences.

\footnote{Canberra Times, 9 May 1951, p. 1.}
CONCLUSION

The Australian State school ritual of saluting the flag might be thought an unlikely guide to Australian notions of nationality. Amusing anecdotes attest to the nonsense children made of having 'to gabble off something on a certain day of the week'. One Victorian boy thought he was promising to obey the lords, rather than the laws. Another boy in South Australia believed he was promising Chifley, not cheerfully, to obey those laws. The effect of this gabbling on children, so difficult to measure, has not been part of this thesis. A fascinating subject, it still awaits historians. Perhaps the revival of a compulsory flag ceremony in New South Wales and Victoria in recent times will attract their attention.

Such a ceremony has the support of Labor Senator Nick Bolkus, Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, who believes the motive for its introduction is the same as that which led his government to change the focus of the oath of allegiance for aliens becoming Australians: from the monarch to 'Australia and its people'. 'Australia's symbols', he said, 'need to be unifying, need to give us a common purpose'. The author of the new oath, Senator Michael Tate, Minister for Justice, hoped it would be recited in schools. There were others, however,
such as Mary Bluett, Deputy President of the Victorian Secondary Teachers' Association, who took a more pragmatic view: Victoria’s flag ceremony had been re-introduced to ‘take the focus off education cuts’. Peter Nicholson, cartoonist of the Age, agreed (fig. 29). The move is reminiscent of Albert Bruntnell’s directives of 1922 which made the flag ceremony compulsory in New South Wales while introducing fees for secondary education. Understandably, these circumstances have made historians, particularly those on the left, sceptical about studying this manufactured patriotism.

Fig. 29. A parody of the Australian national anthem, *Advance Australia Fair*, conducted by Jeff Kennett, Premier of Victoria, on Australia Day to illustrate the re-introduction of the flag ceremony at a time of cuts in funds for education. *(Age, 27 Jan. 1994, p. 10)*

However, scepticism about the flag ceremony has led historians to underestimate its value. A study of the manipulation of the flag, the centrepiece
Conclusion

of the ritual, allows us to understand changing perceptions of nationality. Such a study is particularly suited to the ambiguities of nationality in the self-governing dominions of the British Empire/Commonwealth. School ritual, where British and dominion flags vied for the loyalty of children, provides a fresh means of analysing "the problem of "nationalism" and "imperialism" which has long frustrated historians. This thesis explores such rivalry — and accommodation — in Australia, against the wider imperial and Anglo-Celtic background. Its focus is the national flag, the most obvious symbol of the nation. Redefinition of that flag — from Union Jack in 1901 to Australian National Flag in 1950 — was closely associated with, indeed prompted by, the school ritual.

This was especially so in Victoria where the ritual was introduced into State schools by Sir Frederick Sargood at the height of the South African War in 1901. With many others, he hoped that the Union Jack would ensure that federation of the Australian colonies strengthened rather than weakened British sentiment in the younger generation. Most Australians took pride in the British symbol, seen as signifying the freedom and power they shared. But the planting of the Union Jack in State schools at the birth of the Australian nation, just at the time the Australian flag was being designed, marked the beginning of a new tension between the two notions of nationality those flags symbolised. At first such tension was barely noticeable: the two Australian ensigns with the national flag in the upper hoist were hardly a match for the Union Jack. Nevertheless, despite the renewed emphasis on the British flag with the introduction of Empire Day in 1905, the Australian flag began to appear in schools, a trend encouraged by Australian achievement at Gallipoli in 1915. However, in the aftermath of war, many of those caught up in intense ideological, ethnic and sectarian conflict questioned the validity of the Australian flag as a national flag, perceiving a challenge to the authority of the Union Jack.
The same years were marked by confusion about the two ensigns. State schools had been the first of the State institutions conceded the right to fly the blue Australian Ensign, which had come to be regarded as the official flag of the Commonwealth government. But so strong was the popular convention of the red Merchant Flag being the appropriate flag for all but Commonwealth government institutions that the Victorian government, believing otherwise, was forced to take up the issue on behalf of its schools with the Commonwealth. The process clarified the Ensign's status as Australia's national flag. Further clarification, prompted this time by the decision of the federal government to present an Australian flag to all schools for the jubilee in 1951, confirmed and publicised that status beyond all doubt. The *Flags Act* followed in 1953.

That Victoria of all the States should play such a critical role in encouraging and defining the Australian national flag and the Australian nationality it symbolised is not surprising. Melbourne newspapers had begun sponsoring Australian flag competitions in 1900. The Southern Cross of Victoria's flag appeared in their winning designs. Melbourne hosted the new federal parliament from its opening in 1901 to its move to Canberra in 1927. The Victorian government, non-Labor for most of the period after 1901, did not insist on the Union Jack in schools, a policy the Director of Education, Frank Tate, encouraged. Indeed, the government defused the issue of choice of flag by leaving it to local committees (whose discussions, beyond the scope of this thesis, deserve analysis). Such government strategy had the support of the Australian Natives' Association. Founded in Melbourne and stronger in Victoria than elsewhere, the organisation was influential in the major political parties. It promoted the Australian flag but without antagonising those for whom the Union Jack was still pre-eminent. That the Labor Party, whose objectives included the promotion of Australian sentiment and socialisation, was rarely in power in Victoria made the Australian flag seem a less
threatening symbol to conservatives. It was a Country Party government, supported by the Labor Party, which sought to give the Australian flag national status by resolving the confusion about the two ensigns, a view first the Liberal, then the Labor, federal government confirmed.

By contrast, the Australian flag had a much more difficult passage in New South Wales. From the beginning its design was seen as Victorian: its centrepiece was the constellation of the Southern Cross rather than the St George's Cross with stars, symbol of New South Wales and the federation campaign. For non-Labor parties Englishness and Protestantism, symbolised by the cross of St George, patron saint of England, were more important forces than in Victoria because of the success of the Labor Party and its association with Irish Catholicism. Empire Day, originating in New South Wales with the British Empire League as part of conservatives' campaign against the Labor Party's socialisation objective, consolidated the position of the Union Jack in State schools. Its role was further strengthened in 1911 in reaction to the attempt by Irish Catholic interests to promote in Catholic schools 24 May as Australia Day, with Mary, Help of Christians, as patroness of Australia, rather than as Empire Day, the anniversary of the late Queen Victoria's birth. The incident emphasised the Union Jack as the national flag for the majority of Australians, mostly of Protestant British/English descent.

Similar forces were at work in the aftermath of World War I. Sectarian, ethnic and ideological division, stronger than in Victoria, continued to affect people's perceptions of the Union Jack and the Australian flag. Labor's electoral success provoked non-Labor parties to use the Union Jack to attract the support of Protestants, returned soldiers and freemasons. That flag, representing the Protestant monarch, the might of the British Empire, and order and stability, proved to be an effective symbol for non-Labor forces. By contrast, factions within the labour movement variously acknowledged the Union Jack, the Australian flag, and the Red Flag, symbol of revolution and a socialist republic.
Inevitably these circumstances reinforced the Union Jack's position as the flag of the majority — the national flag; by contrast the Australian flag — especially as two ensigns — was an ambiguous symbol unless accompanied by the Union Jack.

The fate of the Australian flag in Victoria and New South Wales illustrates the different forces at work shaping ideas of nationality. For too long States have been ignored in attempts to explain Australian nationality. South Australian research confirms the point. That State's more Protestant English Labor government, taking advantage of the larger German-speaking minority, drove State school children during World War I to promise to be more British than any other Australian children. This was a legacy that took several decades to modify. Even while accepting the federal government's Australian flag in 1951, South Australia still insisted on the pre-eminence of the Union Jack. Preliminary research on the other States suggests other patterns. The same point can be made for the Canadian provinces and the American States, where adoption of the flag ritual also varied, revealing the subtle differences and similarities involved in the shaping of nationality.

The American example has been important to this thesis in creating the precedent for, and emphasising the complexities of, the Canadian and Australian rituals. Canadian material confirms the dominion dilemma experienced in Australia, both in school ritual and in the definition of the country's national flag. It underlines the more extreme form of that dilemma in Canada, where the loyalist tradition among early British settlers, the significant Francophone minority, proximity to the United States, and large numbers of non-English-speaking immigrants resulted in the Union Jack ousting the Canadian red ensign from government buildings until 1945. Drawing on the comparative aspects of that wider perspective in studying the Australian dilemma reveals the significance of inter-dominion discussion on the flag issue.
State schools, the focus of Sir Frederick Sargood's attention in 1901, have inevitably been central to this thesis. Tightly controlled by centralised education departments, in turn directed by ministers of education, they clearly reflected the changing pressures of political parties and interest groups. Less open to government influence were the private schools. For this reason they make comparative study all the more useful, especially in exploring assumptions about class, ethnicity, religion and nationality. Glimpses of them in this thesis, particularly in 1901 in Victoria, in 1911 in New South Wales, and during World War I in Victoria and South Australia, challenge conventional understandings. The loudest protest against the Victorian government's attempt to foist the Union Jack on private schools in Victoria in 1916 came from the Anglican Trinity Grammar School and the Methodist Wesley College. While boys' schools were especially appropriate for this point, the forces shaping the nationality of girls' schools are worth further investigation.

In 1901 private schools had not been Sargood's concern: modelled on the English 'public' school, they were considered securely British — beyond the reach of radicals protesting against British action in South Africa. The contrast in 1951 is marked. The federal government's offer of the Australian flag to all existing schools (and new schools thereafter) demonstrates its need to declare that flag to all Australians. It also reflects the new Liberal-Country Party government's perception of the challenge it faced: war in Korea, which, in the ideological context of the Cold War, mirrored the government's war against the Communist Party in Australia. Australian patriotism, in a world where British power was no longer assured, could be a useful weapon. For the highly respected war historian, Charles Bean, schools were 'the factor[ies] of the nation'.

The federal government's offer is remarkable in another sense — in marking its willingness to trespass on State schoolyards. Even the centralist

Labor government, urged by the Board of Directors of the Australian Natives' Association in Western Australia in 1911 to supply the Australian flag to State schools, had declined to use the opportunity. State-federal government sensitivities were at the very heart of the flag issue from the time of the Australian flag's design in 1901. Confusion over the States' right to use the Australian flag peaked in 1924, but continued throughout the period. In a very real sense, States' use of State ensigns and the Union Jack, rather than the Australian flag, was an assertion of independence from federal control.

Part of the federal-State dispute over flags concerned the most tantalising aspect of my research — colour. Colour was at issue in that dispute of 1924: whether the blue Ensign was for the Commonwealth government alone — in which case States wishing to use an Australian flag would have to be content with the red Merchant Flag. This was the kind of complication to be expected from the increasing use of essentially marine ensigns on shore. More difficult to explain are the reasons behind the changing convention governing which of the ensigns should be the people's flag, the Australian national flag. The colour of the British red ensign, once respectably imperial, and the informal choice of the Canadians (though not the formal choice of the New Zealand government), became increasingly associated with revolution and the working class in the aftermath of World War I. The old colours of the political spectrum — red for the left, and blue for the right — became charged with new meaning.

In ethnic terms, red was the colour for England; for Ireland, green but in the more distant past, blue; blue also for Scotland. For Catholics, blue as the colour of Mary, Queen of Heaven, had increasingly important associations, though red had symbolised the Holy Spirit since medieval times. Australia's colours in the wreath of the first coat of arms of 1908 were blue and white, the dominant colours of both the Victorian flag and the flag of the federation campaign; the colours also of the Eureka Flag, Australian symbol of rebellion. Whether such considerations were important in the search for a suitable symbol
of Australian nationality and the eventual selection of the blue rather than the red ensign as the national flag, the evidence offers little more than hints. The most recent of these, in the debate on the Flags Bill of 1953, came from Arthur Calwell, a Catholic of Irish and American descent and an enthusiast for the Australian flag. He was pleased to remind members 'that the flag of Eureka is perpetuated in the blue background of our flag'. The comment may have been no more than an attempt (which proved successful) to bait the Liberal-Country Party government. But it suggests another layer of meaning to be explored.

That a Liberal-Country Party government should legislate for an Australian national flag is something of a paradox, given the protest, even if largely rhetorical, of those parties two years before at Labor government legislation defining Australian citizenship. It was easy for Robert Menzies as prime minister to justify the flag legislation in view of the confusion of the previous fifty years, though citizenship law had been almost as confused. But to ensure that there should be no misunderstanding, particularly by the more conservative, he not only preserved Australians' right to fly the Union Jack, but also assured them that the 'common practice' of flying that flag with the Australian one would continue. The Union Jack within the Australian flag, once a means of affirming its validity, was not enough in the government's eyes to remind Australians that they were British.

In terms of status the Australian flag and the citizenship it symbolised could not compete with the Union Jack which represented the might of the British Empire and the freedom it guaranteed. To say 'I am a British subject', 'Civis Britannicus sum', was to identify with that 'higher' form of citizenship. Pride in the development of liberal traditions and institutions, seen as integral to Australians' understanding of nationality and citizenship, was rooted in the British, more particularly English, past. This past made acknowledgement of

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9Robert Menzies, 20 Nov. 1953, ibid., p. 368.
the separation of Australian and British nationality and citizenship difficult. Only very gradually did 'our country' come to refer unambiguously to Australia rather than to England, Britain or the Empire, and 'our nation' to Australians rather than to the English or British. In that transition returned soldiers of World War I played a critical role: they made 'Australian' an acceptable term for those of Anglo-Celtic descent. Having fought for the Empire, returned men were 'good Australians',¹⁰ rather than 'real Australians' (Aboriginal Australians). Their ethnic core remained English/British. Not until 1984 did Australian citizens cease to have the status of British subjects. Now Australia's head of state, an English queen, has become a foreigner, no longer 'one of us'.¹¹ The Australian flag — the symbol of Australian citizenship — still carries its British tag. Only in recent years has that symbol been questioned.

The teaching of citizenship in Australian State schools during the first fifty years of federation centred on the ceremony of saluting the flag. Ministers of education regarded it highly as a form of indoctrination. It summarised what citizenship was understood to mean. The children who saluted probably remember the ritual more than any other aspect of their citizenship training. Its focus was the Union Jack: symbol of political traditions and the ethnicity associated with them. Its influence lingers still. Certainly in the current debates about the Australian flag and constitution it is not possible to understand attempts to reject the English/British past (by Ausflag and the Australian Republican Movement) or to preserve it (by the Australian National Flag Association and Australians for a Constitutional Monarchy) without taking into account the symbolism of the Union Jack.

¹⁰Remnants of this attitude can be seen in the current debate about the Australian flag — that only returned soldiers have the right to decide the nature of the Australian flag. 'Designs on the Flag', Lateline, ABCTV, 13 Apr. 1995.
¹¹This was a recurring phrase throughout the address to the nation, An Australian Republic: The Way Forward, by the Prime Minister, P.J. Keating, in the House of Representatives, 7 June 1995. In 1973 the Labor Whitlam government had changed the queen's title in relation to Australia: Elizabeth II became simply 'Queen of Australia'.
APPENDIX 1: THE WORDS OF THE 'NATIONAL SALUTE' WHEN FIRST INTRODUCED INTO AUSTRALIAN STATE SCHOOLS

VICTORIA: 1901
I love God and my country;
I honour the flag;
I will serve the King, and
cheerfully obey my parents,
teachers and the laws.1

SOUTH AUSTRALIA: 1911
I love my country.
I honour her King.
I will cheerfully obey her laws.2

NEW SOUTH WALES: 1917
I honour my God.
I serve the King.
I salute my flag.3

QUEENSLAND: 1919
I honour my flag,
I love my country, and
I will always obey her laws.4

1Education Gazette and Teachers' Aid, supplement, Oct. 1901
2Education Gazette, Aug. 1911, p. 191.
3Education Gazette, Nov. 1917, p. 256, and June 1922, p. 131.
APPENDIX 2: SOUTH AUSTRALIA, 1911-1956
CHANGES IN THE WORDS OF THE 'NATIONAL SALUTE'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>August 1911</th>
<th>October 1916</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I love my country.</td>
<td>I love my country, (the British Empire);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I honour her King.</td>
<td>I honour her King: (King George the Fifth);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will cheerfully obey her laws.</td>
<td>I promise cheerfully to obey her laws.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>May 1939</th>
<th>April 1953</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Optional preamble: I am an Australian.</td>
<td>I am an Australian.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I love my country, the British Empire.</td>
<td>I love my country, the British Commonwealth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I honour her King: King George the Sixth.</td>
<td>I honour her Queen, Queen Elizabeth the Second.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I salute her flag: the Union Jack.</td>
<td>I salute her flag, the Union Jack.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I promise cheerfully to obey her laws.2</td>
<td>I promise cheerfully to obey her laws.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>February 1956</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am an Australian.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I love my country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I honour her Queen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I salute her flag.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I promise to obey her laws.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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3 'Declaration of Loyalty', *ibid.*, Apr. 1953, p. 103.
4 'Loyal Affirmation', *ibid.*, Feb. 1956, p. 79.
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- CRS A461/1 A336/1/1 Pts 1, 2: Commonwealth Flags — Uses of Pts 1, 2.
- CRS A461/1 B336/1/1 Pts 1, 2, 3, 5: Commonwealth Flag Pts 1, 2, 3, 5.
- CRS A461/1 D336/1/1 Pts 1, 3, 4: Display on Public Buildings.
- CRS A461/1 E336/1/1: Flying of Flags on Anzac Day & Armistice Day.
- CRS A461/1 H336/1/1: Flag. Blue Ensign.
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