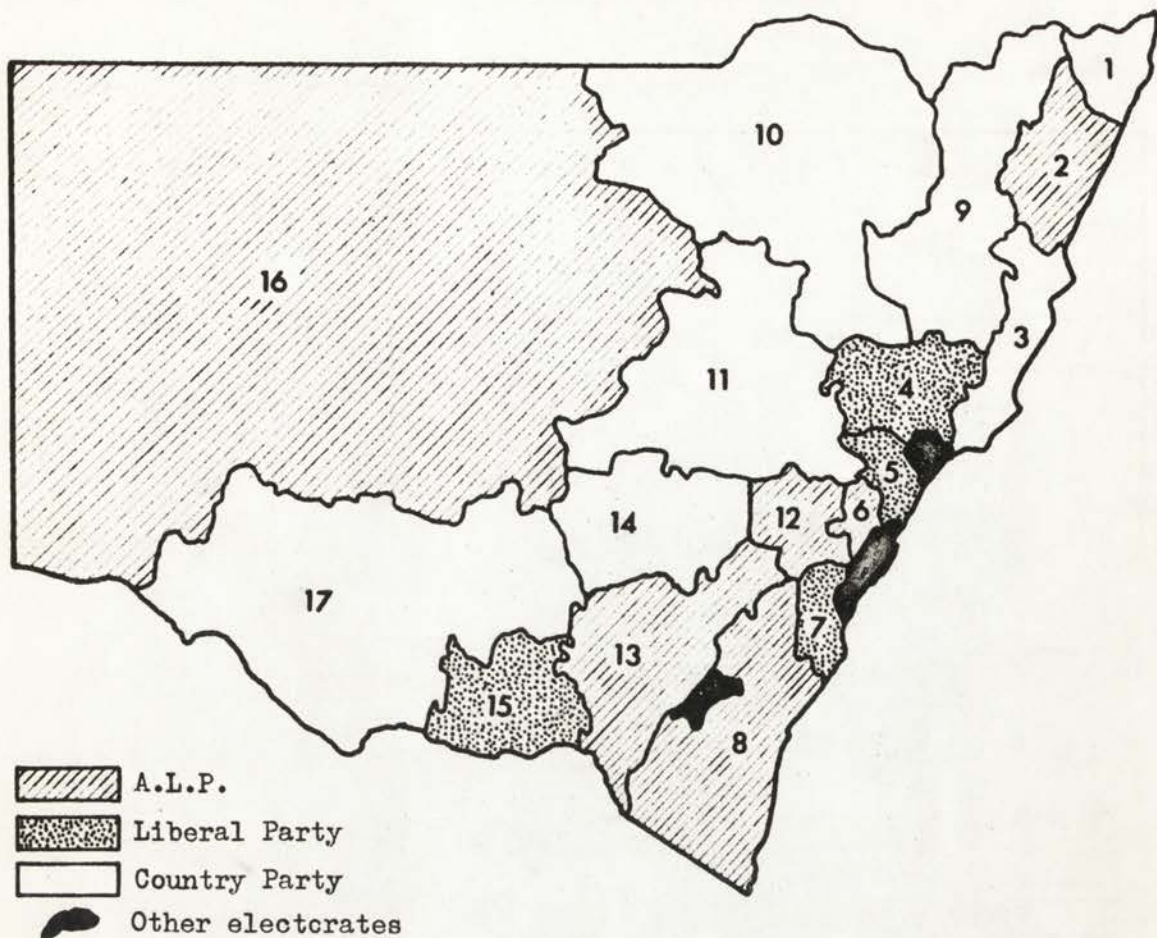


Map 1: Party Representation in N.S.W. Country Electorates in April 1961

Key to Electorates:

- | | | |
|-----------------|----------------------|------------------|
| 1. Byron | 13. South Coast | 25. Burrinjuck |
| 2. Lismore | 14. Monaro | 26. Albury |
| 3. Casino | 15. Tenterfield | 27. Barwon |
| 4. Clarence | 16. Armidale | 28. Castlereagh |
| 5. Raleigh | 17. Tamworth | 29. Dubbo |
| 6. Oxley | 18. Liverpool Plains | 30. Temora |
| 7. Gloucester | 19. Upper Hunter | 31. Wagga Wagga |
| 8. Maitland | 20. Mudgee | 32. Murray |
| 9. Gosford | 21. Orange | 33. Cobar |
| 10. Hawkesbury | 22. Bathurst | 34. Sturt |
| 11. Nepean | 23. Young | 35. Murrumbidgee |
| 12. Wollondilly | 24. Goulburn | 36. Hartley |

Source: Working sheets for a Handbook of Australian Politics being compiled in the Department of Political Science, Institute of Advanced Studies, Australian National University.



Map 2: Party Representation in N.S.W. Country Electorates after the Federal Elections of 1961

Key to Electorates:

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| 1. Richmond | 10. Gwydir |
| 2. Cowper | 11. Lawson |
| 3. Lyne | 12. Macquarie |
| 4. Paterson | 13. Hume |
| 5. Robertson | 14. Calare |
| 6. Mitchell | 15. Farrer |
| 7. Macarthur | 16. Darling |
| 8. Eden-Monaro | 17. Riverina |
| 9. New England | |

Source: Parliamentary Handbook and Record of Elections for the Commonwealth of Australia, Fourteenth Edition, Canberra 1962

THE ORGANISATION OF THE AUSTRALIAN COUNTRY PARTY
(N.S.W.), 1946 TO 1962

A Thesis
Submitted for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in The Australian National University

Donald Alexander Aitkin
February 1964



This thesis is my own original work.

Don Atkin

1 February 1964

...farming is rather more than a business;
it is a way of life.

The Royal Commission on the Wheat, Flour and Bread Industries, Second Report, 1935, p.250.

Rulers have always found foreign wars useful to blot up discontent, to repress opposition, to promote "unity" at home. In domestic politics sectionalism represents a sort of sublimated foreign war in which one part of the country acts as a unit against the rest of the nation.

V.O. Key Jr, Southern Politics in State and Nation, New York 1950, p.15.

ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations have been used throughout this thesis:

AC	..	Annual Conference
A.C.P.J.	..	Australian Country Party Monthly Journal
AMCC	..	Annual Meeting of Central Council
CC	..	Central Council
CCCM	..	Minutes of Meeting of the Central Campaign Committee
CCCR	..	Report of the Central Campaign Committee
CE	..	Central Executive
CCM	..	Minutes of Meeting of Central Council
CEM	..	Minutes of Meeting of Central Executive
CEER	..	Report of Central Executive
C.P.D.	..	Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates
FCM	..	Minutes of Meeting of Federal Council
FEM	..	Minutes of Meeting of the Finance Executive
F.S.A.	..	Farmers and Settlers' Association of N.S.W.
G.A.	..	Graziers' Association of N.S.W.
GSR	..	Report of the General Secretary
N.S.W.P.D.	..	New South Wales Parliamentary Debates
OSR	..	Report of the Organising Secretary
O.Y.B.C.	..	Official Year Book of the Commonwealth of Australia
O.Y.B.N.S.W.	..	Official Year Book of New South Wales
PPM	..	Minutes of Meeting of the N.S.W. Parliamentary Party
SEC	..	State Electorate Council
SOR	..	Report of the State Organiser
U.C.M.	..	United Country Movement
U.C.P.	..	United Country Party

PREFACE

The research for this thesis was carried out in the course of a three-year scholarship at the Australian National University between 1961 and 1964, and followed research undertaken for a thesis entitled The United Country Party in New South Wales 1932-1941, A Study of Electoral Support, for which the writer was awarded the degree of Master of Arts with First Class Honours by the University of New England in 1961.

The first year of research for this thesis was spent by the writer in general reading and in short field trips to become acquainted with the Country Party's local organisation. From October 1961 to March 1962 the writer made an extensive field trip throughout New South Wales covering 25,000 miles, in the course of which he travelled to almost every state and federal country electorate in the state, met hundreds of Country Party officials and workers, observed the party's campaign in the federal elections of December 1961 and the N.S.W. elections of March 1962, and consulted party records in the various electorates.

In the second year the writer spent some time at the Head Office of the Country Party, where he was given access to almost all the party records held there. In addition he carried out a survey of some fifty country newspapers between August 1961 and April 1962. A number of short field trips was undertaken to complete the writer's

coverage of party records, and he attended the annual Conferences of the party in 1961 and 1962.

When research was commenced the writer had intended to concentrate on the electoral organisation of the Country Party, but it soon became evident that a more profitable study could be made of the organisation as a whole. The emphasis throughout the thesis has been placed on the structural aspects of the party's organisation: as a result the party's electoral history, the course of its changing policies, and the activities of the parliamentary Country Parties have been treated only where they bear on the central theme.

The burden of thanks owed by the writer is immense. It is impossible to thank all those who helped the writer in the course of the three years, but particular reference must be made to a number of persons whose assistance has been vital. The writer pays especial tribute to John F. Dredge, the General Secretary of the Australian Country Party (N.S.W.). and also the Honorary Federal General Secretary, who generously allowed the writer access to all records that he wished to consult. These included the party's Central Council and Central Executive Minute Books which date from 1919, the Minute Books of the Australian Country Party (Federal), which date from 1926, the minutes of all the party Conferences, and the party's membership records. The thesis rests on these records. In addition Mr Dredge placed the services of the party's Head Office at the writer's disposal for the carrying out of postal survey of party members in October 1962, and

made it possible for him to attend the annual Conferences of the party.

The co-operation of the General Secretary of the party in the writer's research was matched at all levels of the party and at all times. Parliamentarians and party officials made time and records available to the writer without hesitation, often when this meant personal inconvenience to themselves. In this context the writer would like to thank the parliamentarians Charles Cutler M.L.A. (Leader of the N.S.W. Country Party), Bill Chaffey M.L.A. (Deputy-Leader), Davis Hughes M.L.A., George Freudenstein M.L.A., Frank O'Keefe M.L.A., Leon Punch M.L.A., James Brown M.L.A., Ian Robinson M.H.R. (formerly M.L.A. for Casino), P.E. Lucock M.H.R., John England M.H.R., Lt Col C.G.W. Anderson V.C. (formerly M.H.R. for Hume), and Lt Col the Hon. Sir Michael Bruxner D.S.O. (formerly M.L.A. for Tenterfield and Leader of the N.S.W. Country Party).

Similar thanks are due to John F. Mellings (State Organiser of the Country Party), Ian Maxwell (party organiser in Hume federal electorate), Keith Reid (Chairman of Calare FEC), Bruce Cowan (Chairman of Lyne FEC), John French (Chairman of New England FEC), Harry Bryant (Chairman of Young SEC), Max McCaffrey (Hon. Secretary of Oxley SEC), Morton Trotter (Chairman of Oxley SEC), and Percy Fredericks (Hon. Secretary of Casino SEC). The writer recalls with pleasure the hospitality of country people in all parts of the state who made him welcome and who were only too willing to help with information, records, and discussion.

Mr Ulrich Ellis, whose generosity towards students of the Country Party is widely known and appreciated, kindly allowed the writer to read his History of the Australian Country Party in MS, and his comments on aspects of the writer's work were often fruitful.

The writer owes a special debt to Dr Bruce Graham, his supervisor over the three years, whose enthusiasm for the project was accompanied by an unflinching patience with the writer. The writer is also grateful to Dr Colin Hughes, his second supervisor, who made many helpful suggestions on the course of the project, and who, with Dr Graham, read and criticised the thesis in draft form. Thanks are also due to the Librarians and staffs of the R.G. Menzies Library of the Australian National University, and of the National Library, Canberra.

Finally the writer would like to thank the members of his Department, staff and students, whose assistance and friendship have helped to make the preparation of this thesis a rewarding experience.

SUMMARYI. SITUATION

Founded by primary producers and encouraged by separatists, the Country Party in New South Wales won parliamentary representation in 1920 and a share in government in 1927. By 1941 it had been in power in a series of coalition governments for 12 of the preceding 14 years in New South Wales and for 13 of the preceding 18 years in federal politics. The great advance of the A.L.P. in the 1940s did not destroy the Country Party, as it did the U.A.P., but caused it to alter its structure. From a political organisation run by and for the primary producers' organisations it emerged in 1946 as a 'popular' political party with a mass membership no longer directly connected to industry organisations.

The recovery of the Country Party after 1946 was rapid, and in 1949 it entered, with the Liberal Party, another federal coalition which has survived up to the time of writing. However, the non-Labor parties were unable to regain power in New South Wales. The Country Party's role in the 1950s and 1960s has begun to change: its numbers are fewer, its influence has declined, its future is less secure.

Its divorce from its founding organisations, accomplished in 1944/5, removed a good deal of its sectional support, and as the importance of the rural industries to Australia's economy has been recognised, so has their need for a separate political party further declined. At the same time, the regional basis of the Country Party's

electoral support - anti-urbanism - has been assailed by growing prosperity and better communications, and the pattern of population drift in Australia suggests that country electorates will continue to grow fewer, thus weakening the party's position in both federal and state parliaments.

II. STRUCTURE

The Australian Country Party (Federal) is a weak federation of well-nigh autonomous state Country Parties, which possess all the real powers, save that of formulating federal policy. Party members, most of whom are farmers or graziers, and who pay at least £2. 2. 0. per annum to become full members, are organised into branches. Branch delegates form electorate councils (for each state and federal electorate), and the chairmen of the electorate councils, together with some co-opted members, form the Central Council, which elects from among its members the Central Executive. All the institutions of the party are represented at the party's annual Conference.

The Country Party is oligarchic. At each level a small group controls the party organisation, and the oligarchic pattern is most clearly seen in the Central Executive, the ruling body of the party, whose composition changes slowly.

Each of the party institutions possesses a certain competence and the local institutions are given a great deal of autonomy. But the power of the Central Council and Executive is real, final, and

unchallenged. The annual Conference of the party possesses only limited powers: although it alone possesses the power of altering the Constitution, it has never done this to increase its own power.

Throughout the party great emphasis is placed on, and respect given to, leadership. In part this reflects an old rural tradition, and it accounts to some extent for the oligarchic pattern of the extra-parliamentary organisation and also for the virtual autonomy of the state parliamentary Country Party. The great majority of the rank and file members of the party are only nominal members, perfectly willing to let a small group run the affairs of the party. For these reasons factionalism is rare; and because the party has had limited material objectives, ideological disputes are almost unknown.

III. ACTION

The Country Party is organised to put men into parliament, and for this purpose its organisation is highly efficient. Its nomination and endorsement procedures reflect its concern for local autonomy and allow the participation of the rank and file in the selection of party candidates. In financing elections the party makes much use of its own members as a source of campaign funds, and once again the autonomy of the local institutions has its responsibilities: the electorate councils are expected to finance their own campaigns. In the conduct of the campaign the party's success in reconciling local and central aims, powers and responsibilities is most noticeable. The election

campaign is for many party members the whole point of being a member of the party, and recurring elections are most important in maintaining the interest of party members and in integrating the party as a whole.

At the local level the struggle between the parties is not as clear-cut as it is at the state or the national levels, and the problems involved in maintaining the party's identity and purpose in local areas are often made more difficult by local circumstances. Furthermore, the party is faced with a communication problem. Its emergence was aided by a sympathetic country press. But the country newspaper, where it is not extinct, is fast becoming a-political, and the metropolitan newspapers which are taking its place are often hostile to the Country Party.

IV. CONCLUSION

The Country Party's problem is one of survival. Its organisation has helped it to make the most of its position in Australian politics and to recover from past reverses. But the party is faced by a combination of adverse trends - a declining electoral base, a weakening sectional support, a growing rapprochement between the Country and the City - which together will make the future path of the Country Party a more uncertain one. Its organisation may soon be called upon to adapt in a fundamental way, to become the party of all country people, not simply those who live on the land. It will be the party's success in resolving this problem which will determine its future.

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INTRODUCTION

In 1914 the first of the Australian Country Parties emerged, in Western Australia. It was followed, in succession, by those of Queensland in 1915, Victoria in 1917, South Australia in 1918, New South Wales in 1920, and Tasmania in 1922. A federal Country Party was formed in 1920.¹ Although the Tasmanian and South Australian Country Parties failed to survive, and that of Queensland had an uncertain development until 1944, the Country Party movement in the other states and federally has had a continuous existence to the present day. Eventually the Country Parties established themselves as tough minority parties of the Right, although in Victoria this process was prolonged for longer than in the other states.

The Australian Country Parties can be compared with the rather similar agrarian movements in North America and in New Zealand - the Populist Party in the U.S.A., the Progressive Party in Canada and the Country Party in New Zealand.² The North American parties arose from the economic grievances of the farmers in the new wheatlands, who were attempting, through political action, to break the power of business monopolies in the railroad and wheat-marketing industries. But Australian wheatfarmers were not faced with private railway monopolies,

¹ Ulrich Ellis, The Country Party - A Political and Social History of the Party in New South Wales, Melbourne 1958, Chapter 40, (hereafter cited as The Country Party).

² B.D. Graham, The Emergence of the Australian Country Parties, (forthcoming), Chapter 1. B.D. Graham, "The Country Party Idea in New Zealand Politics, 1901-1935", in Robert Chapman and Keith Sinclair (eds), Studies of a Small Democracy, Auckland 1963, pp.175-200.

although they, too, suffered from a privately-controlled and monopolistic commodity market. They sought political power largely to influence governmental decisions in the fields of tariffs and land administration, which decisions affected not only wheatgrowers, but primary producers generally. Furthermore, in seeking power the primary producers were able to capitalise on a general feeling of 'separateness' which existed in country areas, a feeling whose historic origins lay in great distances and poor communications.

Not only were the Australian Country Parties generally multi-sectional as well as regional, but, also unlike the American parties, they were able quickly to come to terms with the party system. By forming coalitions with the other party of the Right, they were able not only to share in government and thus implement their policies, but also to safeguard themselves to some extent from electoral attack. And a favourable electoral system aided their break-through and their survival.

For political scientists the Country Party poses three problems. Firstly, why did it emerge? Secondly, how was it able to establish itself in the political system? Thirdly, why has it been able to continue as a permanent minority party? This thesis is concerned with the third of these questions, although the first two have been considered.

Several broad answers have been advanced by political scientists to explain the continued existence of the Country Party. Professor Overacker, for example, ascribes the phenomenon to the continued existence of "countrymindedness" outside the Australian cities.³ Various writers,

³Louise Overacker, The Australian Party System, New Haven 1952, Chapter 8.

from different points of view, have pointed to the party's success in advancing country interests when in government.⁴ Professors L.F. Crisp and L.C. Webb have suggested that the Country Party is in fact simply an extension of the principal non-Labor party, which tolerates it because the Country Party can mobilise non-Labor support in the country.⁵

Professor Duverger implies that its survival has depended upon a propitious electoral system.⁶ In the accounts of these and other writers the separate themes of strategy, tradition, utility and social basis constantly recur. But each of these explanations has been offered almost en passant. No writer has yet examined the Country Party in detail to see to what extent these themes have been reflected in its organisation or structure, or to relate the party to its social and economic environment in order to discover to what extent the survival of the party has owed to the nature of rural society in Australia.

The aim of this thesis, then, is to examine the structure and organisation of the Country Party, firstly to illuminate the nature and problems of a minority party in a party system dominated by two much

4

Ellis, Chapter 40; Ulrich Ellis, A History of the Australian Country Party, Melbourne 1963 (hereafter cited as The Australian Country Party); J.T. Lang, I Remember, Sydney 1956, Chapter 67; Alan Reid, "The Country Party Today", The Bulletin, 18 August 1962; F.W. Eggleston, Reflections of an Australian Liberal, Melbourne 1953, Chapter 5.

5

L.F. Crisp, The Parliamentary Government of the Commonwealth of Australia, London 1957, Chapter 4. L.C. Webb, "The Australian Party System" in S.R. Davis (ed.), The Australian Political Party System, Sydney 1954, p.86.

6

Maurice Duverger, Political Parties - Their Organisation and Activity in the Modern State, (trans. North), London 1959, p.218.

larger parties, and secondly to discover the reasons for the survival of the Country Party. Because this is a study in detail, it has been necessary to concentrate on the party in one state, New South Wales, and to limit the investigation to some degree to the period 1946 to 1962, the era of the modern Country Party. We shall see that the Australian Country Party is a very weak federation of almost entirely autonomous state organisations. This both justifies the selection of one state party as a subject for study, and at the same time makes it difficult to generalise from the results of the study. Australian political science unfortunately lacks any detailed studies of the structure and organisation of the political parties in the various states.⁷ For this reason it has been difficult to compare, except incidentally, the Country Party's organisation with that of its rivals.

In the course of writing this thesis, two terms, 'section(al)' and 'region(al)', have had to be used extensively, and they require some preliminary definition. By 'section' the writer refers to economically-related groups within the rural community.⁸ Thus by the 'wheatgrowing section' is meant all those country persons whose living is derived directly from the wheatgrowing industry. 'Region' is used as a geographic term, to refer either, depending upon the context, to the country as

7

Although Mrs K.O. West's forthcoming Power in the Liberal Party will help to fill the gap so far as the Liberal Party is concerned.

8

V.O. Key Jr, in the passage quoted at the beginning of the thesis, uses 'sectionalism' where this writer would use 'regionalism'.

opposed to the city, or to people in one particular area of the country, as in the 'New England region'.

The Country Party in New South Wales has undergone one major and two minor changes of name. From 1919 to 1925 it was the "Progressive Party", from 1925 to 1931 the "Country Party of N.S.W.", from 1931 to 1943 the "United Country Party of N.S.W.", and since 1943 the "Australian Country Party (N.S.W.)". Unless the context has determined otherwise, the term "Country Party", always the generic name of the party, has been adopted in this thesis.

PART I

SITUATION

CHAPTER 1

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE COUNTRY PARTY IN
NEW SOUTH WALES, 1919-1941

I. BEGINNINGS (1919-25)

Almost since the beginning of Australian politics there has existed a tradition of rural protest, manifested sometimes in separation movements and at other times in rural pressure groups and 'country factions' in parliament. Whatever their form, all of these groups have expressed similar grievances of which poor communications, unfavourable tariff policies and unsympathetic government land administration have been among the most important. During and after the first world war rural interest in politics entered a new phase with the establishment of a federal Country Party and more or less firmly based Country Parties in all states. Their creation was largely a response to the consequences of the government's wartime control of the marketing of primary products, but was also related to a growing anxiety amongst primary producers that they were losing contact with the centres of political power.¹

Despite their common origins, the state Country Parties were identical neither in form nor in outlook, and the N.S.W. party was the most heterogeneous of them all. Unlike all the others, it was not born as the "Country Party", its first title of "Progressive Party" reflecting the presence and the importance of its metropolitan members. Unlike most of the others it represented the interests of large graziers as well

1
For the origins and formations of the various Country Parties, see B.D. Graham, The Political Strategies of the Australian Country Parties from their Origins until 1929 (hereafter referred to as The Strategies of the Country Parties), unpublished PhD thesis, 1958, A.N.U.; Ellis, The Country Party, Chapter 40, and The Australian Country Party, Chapters 1-3.

as those of small farmers, and it was the first to establish a party organisation parallel to that of its supporting pressure groups. These three factors were to be most important in the evolution of the Country Party in New South Wales.

The N.S.W. Country Party may be dated from October 1919, when the Farmers and Settlers' Association of New South Wales (F.S.A.) and the Graziers' Association of New South Wales (G.A.) established a Central Electoral Council to direct the campaign for the Progressive Party in the coming state election. The People's Party of Soldiers and Citizens sent delegates to the first meetings of the Council but withdrew after a short time because of policy differences.² Several members of the Nationalist Party, some representing Sydney seats, declared themselves to be Progressives, and the new party's platform was broadened to increase its appeal in city electorates.³ The election, the first to be held under the proportional representation system introduced in 1918, saw the return of 45 Labor Members, 26 Nationalists, 15 Progressives and four Independents, and a Labor Ministry under John Storey took office.⁴

This result placed the Progressive Party in an awkward position. Its members had not been elected on an anti-Labor policy and, indeed,

² Minutes, Central Electoral Council, 13 October 1919, 12 November 1919. (Central Council Minute Book).

³ Graham, The Strategies of the Country Parties, p.274; Minutes, Central Electoral Council, 16 October 1919.

⁴ Country Party representations in the N.S.W. Legislative Assembly and Council from 1920 to 1962 is given in Appendix A.

had criticised the previous Nationalist regime during the election campaign. It was thus as difficult for them to side immediately with the Nationalists as it was to support openly the new administration. The strategic problem greatly concerned both the F.S.A. and the G.A., whose different ideas about the party's role were shortly to become apparent.

For the F.S.A., the Progressive venture was the culmination of a series of attempts to establish a parliamentary Country Party.⁵ Formed in 1893 as the selectors' organisation in the land struggle with the graziers, the F.S.A. had endeavoured at various times to influence the legislation affecting land settlement and tenure, tariff policies and arbitration, and the administration of the Lands and Railways Departments. Its political activities involved it in co-operation with country factions within the Legislative Assembly, notably in 1893 and 1902. From the outset, some members of the F.S.A. wanted it to support its own candidates in elections, and in 1905 they succeeded in having F.S.A. branches empowered to take part in elections in support of any candidate approved by them.

After 1905, the Association became steadily more involved in party politics. In 1913 it endeavoured to form a parliamentary Country Party but the Members it helped to elect refused to take this final step. During the war the F.S.A. became dissatisfied with the state Labor Government's administration of the wheat pool, and it assisted G.S. Beeby in

5

The material upon which this and the following two paragraphs are based has been taken from Graham, The Strategies of the Country Parties, Chapters 8-10; Ellis, The Country Party, Chapters 3-6 and 8-11; and W.A. Bayley, History of the Farmers and Settlers' Association, Sydney 1957, Chapter 6.

his attempt to form a Progressive Party, which Beeby saw as a broad, liberal, centre group. But Beeby and the Progressives were absorbed into the National Party which was formed after the Labor split of 1916. In 1918 and 1919 the F.S.A. complained that both the N.S.W. and the federal National Governments were neglecting farmers' interests; it resented in particular the continued maladministration of the state wheat pool, the moves to introduce higher tariffs, and the fixing of meat prices in 1918. The 1919 Conference of the F.S.A. carried a resolution calling for a political party sponsored by primary producer organisations: this motion led to the formation of the Central Electoral Council in October 1919.

Like the F.S.A., the G.A. dated from the early nineties; as the Pastoralists' Union, it had been formed to fight the shearers' strike of 1890. Playing a more limited role than the F.S.A., it had served mainly as an employers' association in opposition to the Australian Workers' Union. During the war its membership was widened to include the very small graziers, and its constitution altered to give the rank and file a greater say in the Association's affairs, a change symbolised by the adoption of the name "Graziers' Association" in 1916. Like the F.S.A., it resented the meat price-fixing agreement and grew anxious about the trend to more and higher tariffs. Further, it became suspicious of the ex-Labor influence in both federal and state Nationalist Governments, especially the former. For these reasons it was ready to join the F.S.A. in establishing the Central Electoral Council. But

it was by no means committed to the idea of a permanent third party, as the interests of its wealthier members were akin to those of supporters of the National Party. Consequently, local Committees of the G.A. were allowed to decide whether or not to support Progressive candidates in 1920.

Although the F.S.A. and the G.A. were the principal sponsors of the new party, it received support from at least three other sources. Firstly, early in 1920, ten sitting Nationalist Members had joined the new party and they campaigned in the elections as Progressives. Some of the ex-Nationalists had been the 'Beeby Progressives' of 1917, but others were malcontents, dissatisfied with Holman's leadership and the ex-Labor influences in the National Party itself.⁶ Secondly, it received the support of the growing New State Movement in the north of the state.⁷ In the north the new party and the New State Movement were related, and the latter's aims and attitudes were to flavour much of the party's policy and platform. Finally, the new party came into existence at a propitious time. The reputation of the National Party was unsavoury, and the Labor Party was still associated by many with "unpatriotism" over the conscription issue. Many, especially returned soldiers,

⁶ Lang, p.361; H.V. Evatt, Australian Labor Leader: The Story of W.A. Holman and the Labor Movement, Sydney 1945, pp.473-4, 487.

⁷ For the history and underlying causes of this New State Movement, see R.N. Birch, The New State Movement in Northern New South Wales, unpublished B.A. thesis, 1947, N.E.U.C.; and Evelyn Moore, The Causes of the Agitation, after 1901, for the establishment of a New State in Northern New South Wales, unpublished M.A. thesis, 1953, N.E.U.C.

thought politics should be "cleaned-up".⁸ Observers noted a

dissatisfaction with the methods of the party organisations and in particular with the method of pre-selection, which deterred many eligible citizens from coming forward and was thought to give too much power to the old Parliamentary hands. 9

The Progressive Party's recent birth, its abhorrence of pre-selection¹⁰ and its apparent lack of other manifestations of "machine politics" won it support from those wanting a new era in N.S.W. politics.

The first problem which faced the parliamentary Progressive Party was one of identity. The newer members expected the party to play an independent role as the defender of the rural interest, others desired strong links with the Nationalists, while the metropolitan members wanted it to supplant the National Party as the main non-Labor force.¹¹ This latter group grew more and more restless in a party dominated by primary producer organisations. Finally, at the end of 1921, the metropolitan members, led by T.R. Bavin and J.T. Ley, were able to convince the party Leader, W.E. Wearne, that a coalition with

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Mr G.L. Kristianson, of the Department of Political Science, A.N.U., has identified at least six separate ex-soldiers' political parties in the immediate post-war years. All were characterised by a desire to 'clean-up' politics.

9

The Australian correspondent of Round Table, March 1922, pp.406-7, quoted in Crisp, p.128; cf. Ellis, The Country Party, pp.54-5.

10

See below, Chapter 12, part IV.

11

Graham, The Strategies of the Country Parties, pp.284-5; for the circumstances of the "True Blue Split" see Graham, op. cit., Chapter 12, Ellis, The Country Party, Chapter 12, and S. Encel, Cabinet Government in Australia, Melbourne 1962, pp.204-5.

the Nationalists was both desirable and possible, now that Holman (who had lost his seat in 1920) was no longer leading the Nationalists. But when, in December 1921, Wearne accepted a coalition offer made by the Nationalist Leader Sir George Fuller, a minority of the parliamentary Progressive Party, all representing country seats, dissented. The coalition was nevertheless established, only to be defeated by a parliamentary manoeuvre within seven hours of its formation, whereupon the Progressive-Coalitionists remained with the Nationalists and were eventually absorbed. The rump of the Progressive Party, known as the "True Blues" in the party's hagiography, and now led by Lt Col M.F. Bruxner, a Tenterfield grazier, declared its separate identity, in which it was supported by the Party's Central Council, by the F.S.A., and (somewhat reluctantly) by the G.A. The G.A., anxious to prevent Labor winning another election because of non-Labor disagreements, persuaded the Progressives to agree to an informal alliance with the Nationalists and the Wearne group during the 1922 election campaign. The elections returned 42 Nationalist members, 37 Labor members, nine Progressives, one Democrat, and one styling himself Independent Labor.¹² Sir George Fuller formed a Nationalist administration on the assumption that he could depend upon the support of the Progressives. The Progressives, now holding the balance of power, were faced with their second problem, that of strategy.

12

See Appendix A.

Bruxner had opposed the Wearne-Fuller coalition on the principle of integrity, but in February 1923 the sanctity of this principle was called into doubt by the action of the Leader of the federal Country Party, Dr Earle Page, in arranging a coalition with the Nationalist leader, S.M. Bruce. The federal parliamentary Country Party had been formed before the opening of the 1920 session of the Commonwealth Parliament from an oddly-assorted group of members sponsored by various state farmers' organisations.¹³ After the elections of 1922 the Country Party held the balance of power in the House of Representatives,¹⁴ and was able to force the resignation of W.M. Hughes, the former Prime Minister and Leader of the National Party, as a pre-condition of a National/Country Party coalition. In the Government that was subsequently formed, the Country Party's representation was out of all proportion to its strength in parliament.¹⁵ In 1924 Page and Bruce negotiated a pact for the 1925 elections under the terms of which sitting members of either party (except in a few cases) would not be opposed by candidates of the other party. The F.S.A. and the G.A. approved the coalition and later the pact, although their approval in the latter instance was qualified,

¹³ For the origins and formation of the Federal Country Party, see Ellis, The Australian Country Party, Chapters 1-4, and Graham, The Strategies of the Country Parties, Chapters 21-2.

¹⁴ Country Party representation in the House of Representatives from 1919 to 1963 is given in Appendix C.

¹⁵ Country Party representation in federal coalition Ministries from 1923 to 1963 is given in Appendix D.

especially on the part of the F.S.A.¹⁶

The existence of a successful federal coalition made it difficult for Bruxner to justify the Progressives' strategy of conditional support for the Fuller Government. But this was only one cause of the Party's unenviable position.

The Country Party had held the balance of power for three years, when he, himself, was Leader. It was most unsatisfactory. They had all the responsibility but had to have some very definite subject on which to turn the Government out of power. To hold the balance of power and expect to have your policy put into effect was not at all possible, nor was it a satisfactory position. 17

Furthermore, the parliamentary party was under pressure from the Graziers' Association not to oppose the Nationalist Government on any important issue,¹⁸ and the party felt that it was under attack from all sides: Bruxner, as Leader, found the position "intolerable".¹⁹ The defeat of the Fuller Government in 1925 terminated the party's trials, at least for the moment, but the unhappy experiences of the previous three years completely discredited the conditional-support strategy in the eyes of the Progressives and made it most unlikely that such a policy would be resumed when non-Labor was again in power.

¹⁶

CCM, 22 July 1925.

¹⁷

CCM, 22 October 1931.

¹⁸

CCM, 29 April 1924.

¹⁹

Ibid. Bruxner concluded a long address to the Council by wryly admitting "We do not embarrass the Government half as much as they embarrass us."

II. FIRST TASTE OF POWER (1925-1930)

Throughout the early 1920s, the local organisations of the F.S.A. and the G.A. acted as the electoral machinery of the Progressive Party. Delegates from F.S.A. branches and G.A. local committees formed electorate councils to conduct the local campaigns, and these councils were financed both locally, from the F.S.A., and centrally (through the party's Central Council), from the G.A. But it soon became evident that something more was needed if the party was to develop its electoral support in the country towns and throughout the north coast, where neither the F.S.A. nor the G.A. was active.²⁰ A suitable device existed in the rudimentary branch organisation set up by the metropolitan Progressives (and for which provision had been made in the Constitution).²¹ An attempt was made in 1922 to set up Progressive Party branches in country towns,²² and in 1924 the Central Council decided to establish a branch system on the north coast.²³ Neither experiment succeeded, mainly because the party lacked the necessary funds. But the events which occurred during the first Lang Government (1925-1927) were later to

20

Minutes, Joint Meetings of Central Council and the Parliamentary Progressive Party, 20 April 1922 and 15 May 1923; see Graham, The Strategies of the Country Parties, Map 4 (Appendix), for F.S.A. branch distribution. The G.A. had no organisation on the north coast.

21

GSR to CC, 14 November 1921.

22

Graham, The Strategies of the Country Parties, p. 340.

23

CCM, 15 October 1924.

provide both the incentive to found a comprehensive branch network and the finance to make it possible.

The elections of 1925 resulted in a narrow victory for the Labor Party, which won 46 seats; the Nationalists won 33, the Progressives nine, and one Independent and one Protestant Labor member made up the Assembly.²⁴ Shortly after the elections the Progressive Party changed its name to "Country Party" and Bruxner asked to be relieved of the leadership.²⁵ He was replaced by E.A. Buttenshaw, a Wyalong wheat-farmer. With the need to make a decision about its relationship to the National Party postponed for a year or two, the Country Party settled down to a policy of qualified opposition to the new Labor Government. But the radical nature of the Government's legislation quickly brought the Country Party to become as anti-Labor as the Nationalists.²⁶

When the Lang Government restored single-member constituencies and substituted preferential voting for proportional representation,²⁷ the Country Party had little hesitation in joining with the National Party in an electoral alliance for the 1927 elections. The alliance aimed

24

See Appendix A.

25

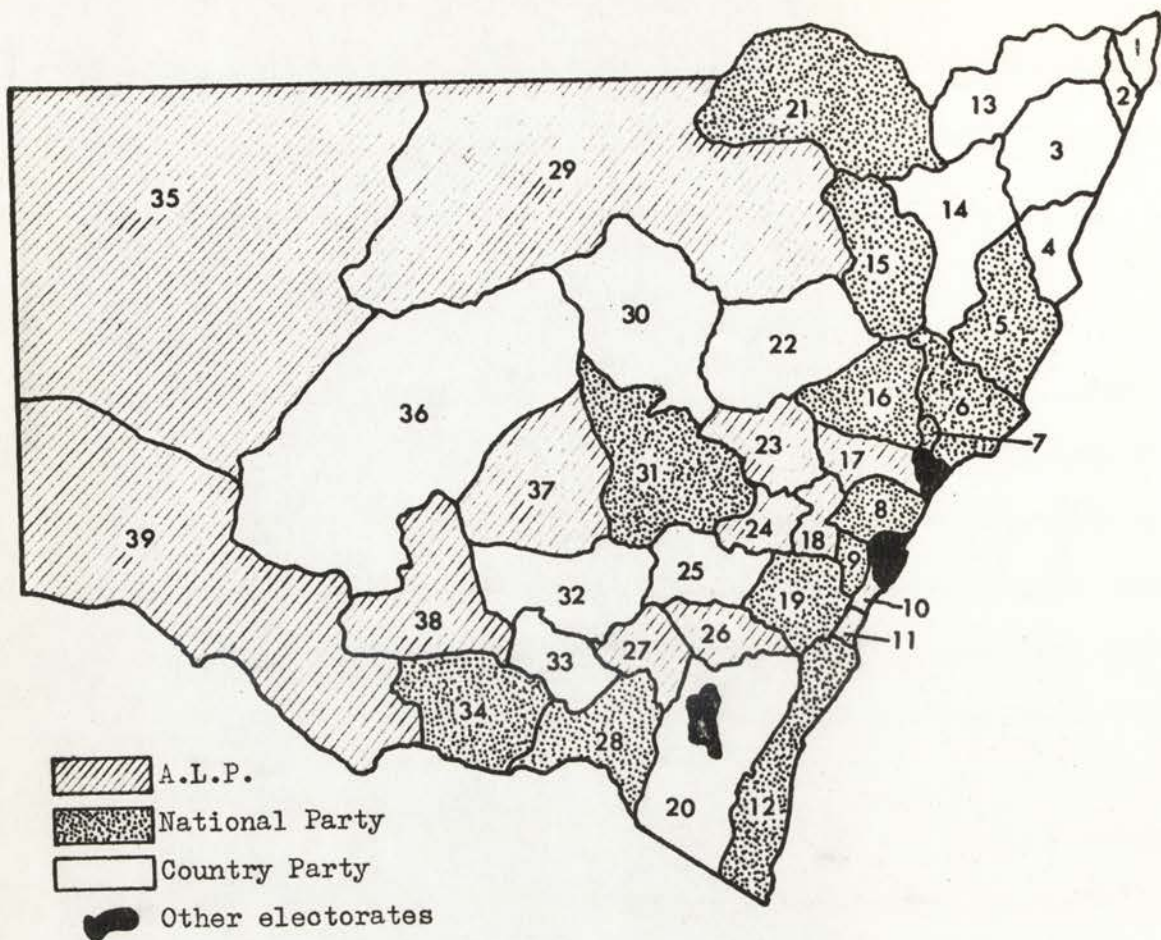
Ellis, The Country Party, p.95.

26

It voted against the Government on 515 of the 530 divisions of that parliament, Graham, The Strategies of the Country Parties, p.377.

27

See K.J. Cosgrove, The 1927 State Election, unpublished Government III (Hons) thesis, n.d., University of Sydney, D.A. Aitkin, The United Country Party in New South Wales, 1932-1941 - A Study of Electoral Support, unpublished M.A. (Hons) thesis, 1960, U.N.E., pp.6-9 (hereafter cited as The United Country Party), Graham, The Strategies of the Country Parties, pp.386-95.



Map 3: Party Representation in N.S.W. Country Electorates
after the State Elections of 1927

Key to Electorates:

- | | | |
|-----------------|----------------------|------------------|
| 1. Byron | 14. Armidale | 27. Cootamundra |
| 2. Lismore | 15. Tamworth | 28. Albury |
| 3. Clarence | 16. Upper Hunter | 29. Namoi |
| 4. Raleigh | 17. Cessnock | 30. Castlereagh |
| 5. Oxley | 18. Hartley | 31. Orange |
| 6. Gloucester | 19. Wollondilly | 32. Temora |
| 7. Maitland | 20. Monaro | 33. Wagga Wagga |
| 8. Hawkesbury | 21. Barwon | 34. Corowa |
| 9. Nepean | 22. Liverpool Plains | 35. Sturt |
| 10. Illawarra | 23. Mudgee | 36. Lachlan |
| 11. Wollongong | 24. Bathurst | 37. Ashburnham |
| 12. South Coast | 25. Young | 38. Murrumbidgee |
| 13. Tenterfield | 26. Goulburn | 39. Murray |

Source: Aitkin, The United Country Party, Appendix Y.

at preserving intact the non-Labor vote and foreshadowed a coalition government upon a joint victory at the polls. Wherever possible the two parties were to avoid contesting the same seats, and joint local committees were to decide which candidate had the better chance of winning in disputed seats.²⁸

However, the agreement had not specified the distribution of portfolios in the coalition if Labor was defeated, and the non-Labor victory at the 1927 poll was followed by a few days of frantic bargaining between the parties on the share of places and portfolios. The Country Party finally gained four places, including the Deputy-Premiership, in a Cabinet of 14.²⁹ The party's weak tactical position on this occasion impressed Bruxner with the importance of getting an agreement on Cabinet composition before the election; when he became leader again this was a policy he followed whenever possible.

Participation in government gave the Country Party its first real chance to put into operation its own policies. Not only could the party frame legislation in detail (instead of merely influencing it, as had been the case on the cross-benches), but it could also claim credit for policies associated with government departments under its control.

28

CCM, 8 December 1926.

29

The bargaining is outlined in Graham, The Strategies of the Country Parties, pp.407-9, and the circumstances are fully set out in the Minutes of two Central Council meetings, those of 13 and 14 October 1927. Country Party representation in N.S.W. coalition Ministries between 1927 and 1941 is given in Appendix B. Seats won by the Country Party in 1927 are shown in Map 3.

Although the onset of the depression cut short the coalition's programme, enough had been accomplished to indicate the general lines of Country Party administrative and legislative policy.³⁰ Rural development was accelerated in several fields: more money was spent on country roads and railway lines (it was the last era of railway-building in the state), on dams, on wheat-storage facilities, on water-supply and sewerage schemes for country towns, and on providing more schools in rural areas. Along with these schemes went others whose basis was somewhat more doctrinaire: a Teachers' College was set up in a country town as the first step in the establishment of a rural University; changes were made in school curricula which emphasised vocational at the expense of academic values; Junior Farmers' Clubs were instituted as a means of keeping young people in the country, and a Rice Marketing Board controlled by growers was set up to market the rice crop.

The country-directed measures of the Bavin/Buttenshaw coalition were supplemented by similar policies at the federal level carried out by the Bruce/Page government. Rural services, particularly those of the P.M.G. Department, were rapidly extended; special help was given to the fruit, meat, sugar and butter industries; federal finance was provided for state roads (mainly in the country); and Commonwealth Bank credit was made available to co-operative and marketing bodies.³¹

30

There is a full account of the Bavin/Buttenshaw Government's achievements in Ellis, The Country Party, Chapters 19 to 21, from which this paragraph is derived.

³¹For details see Ellis, The Australian Country Party, Chapters 7-12, Graham, The Strategies of the Country Parties, pp.718-22, 758-60, Geoffrey Sawer, Australian Federal Politics and Law, 1901-1929, Melbourne 1956, pp.227-35.

But coalitions did not permit either the N.S.W. or the federal Country Parties to satisfy demands which the Nationalists were not prepared to accept or which were unrealistic. Both the state and federal parties made little attempt to further separatist demands for a new state, despite the strong and influential northern contingents within the parliamentary parties.³² The principle of all-round protection enunciated by Earle Page satisfied neither the wheatgrowers nor the graziers, who were strong supporters of free trade.³³ And neither the federal nor the state parties were prepared to make an issue of the wheatgrowers' demands for compulsory wheat pools.³⁴ By 1928 the Country Party was experiencing difficulties in placating some of its supporters, many of whom had been opposed to the coalitions from their inception.

These difficulties were overshadowed in 1929 and 1930 by the approaching depression. In New South Wales the government's counter-measures, all too late, were reactionary and precipitate, and in the 1930 elections Labor won a landslide victory, being returned with 55 members, its largest parliamentary representation up to that time.³⁵ The

32

When the federal government's inaction on the issue was criticised by the Executive of the Northern New State Movement in 1928, V.C. Thompson M.H.R. (New England), one of the founders of the Movement, replied that the Country Party was "unable to stake its existence upon a New State in the North". Moore, p.112.

33

Graham, The Strategies of the Country Parties, pp.729-30, 764-8.

34

Ibid., pp.401-7, 431; see also Bayley, Chapter 7.

35

Appendix A. See also Aitkin, pp.11-13.

principal sufferer was the National Party, which lost 12 seats. Although the Country Party lost two seats to Labor, it won the new north coast seat of Casino, and in fact the total Country Party vote increased from 100,086 to 129,813.³⁶ While the general result of the 1930 elections was a disappointment to the Country Party it was not, nor was it felt to be, a catastrophe.³⁷

.....

The survival of the Country Party in New South Wales in the 1920s had not been easily accomplished. In 1922 the True Blue split could have resulted in the disintegration of the party, the conditional-support period had been unsuccessful and had led to strained relations between the parliamentarians and the industrial organisations, and the party's coalitions with the National Party had seemed to many of its supporters to have jeopardised the integrity of the party. But the lessons of these years had taught the Country Party the strategy of survival.

Firstly, it had been taught that solidarity was essential, and the change of name in 1925 symbolised the awareness that to achieve solidarity the party must abandon any hope of containing within itself both country and city elements. Only as a country party could it hope to create an

36

See Aitkin, Appendix D.

37

CCM, 19 November 1930. The party attributed the loss of its two seats to the dissatisfaction among wheat growers.

identity which would enable it to withstand the attacks both of the Right and the Left.

Secondly, it now realised that a conditional-support strategy was impossible if the party was to remain opposed to Labor. From 1927 on the party was committed to electoral, parliamentary and governmental alliances with the other non-Labor party, for it was only in this way that the Country party could influence policy; and it was only by influencing policy that the party could justify its separate existence. A recitation of the achievements of the Bavin/Buttenshaw and Bruce/Page coalitions was the best defence against charges that the Country Party, as a minority party, was ineffective.

Thirdly, to assert both the party's separate identity and its role as the protector of country interests in government meant that the party would have to fight both the National and the Labor Parties. This meant, in its turn, preserving an even balance between its regional and its sectional appeals: regional, to counter principally attacks from the National Party, and sectional, to counter principally those from the A.L.P. Party policies had to maintain this balance; thus promises of new states and of decentralisation generally had to be accompanied by promises of assistance to primary industries.

Finally, to survive into the future, the party had to convert the early enthusiasm of its supporters into a solid organisational foundation. As useful as the local organisations of the F.S.A. and the G.A. undoubtedly were, a purely Country Party organisation was essential if the

party was to expand and if it was to develop a primary loyalty to itself among its supporters. Furthermore, once the party achieved power, the sectional demands of its supporting industrial organisations had proved embarrassing.

Accordingly, the late-1920s witnessed the formation of a purely Country Party organisation in New South Wales. The necessary finance was provided in 1927 by the F.S.A. and the G.A., partly because of their desire to defeat the much-disliked Lang Government, and partly because of the need to strengthen local organisation now that the electoral system had returned to single-member constituencies.³⁸ A new General Secretary, E.J. Munro, appointed early in 1927, directed organisers in the setting up of Country Party branches, principally in the electorates being contested by the party. By election day they had established over 300 branches,³⁹ which were designed "to draw the business people of the country towns into the Country Party."⁴⁰ Women's Branches were also set up, although women could join ordinary branches if they so desired. It was intended that the branches would be a permanent institution within the party, since they were given five representatives on the Central Council - a membership equal to that of one of the producers'

38

CCM, 30 September 1926.

39

General Secretary's Report to the First General Conference, 10 November 1927.

40

A.K. Trethowan (Chairman) to the First General Conference, 10 November 1927. Minutes, 1927 General Conference.

organisations.⁴¹ And, to complete the creation of a separate party organisation, the first General Conference for delegates of Country Party branches was held later in 1927.

Although the General Secretary hoped that the branches would collect finance via the bank order system,⁴² they in fact acted as little more than election committees and most faded out after the 1927 elections.⁴³ Furthermore, even the effectiveness of the branches as part of the local organisation during elections was challenged. Where the F.S.A. was strong it was felt that it would have been better to strengthen the F.S.A. organisation rather than set up Country Party branches.⁴⁴ Others, such as C.L.A. Abbott, the Country Campaign Director, thought that the branches were unnecessary.

I must state again that formation of Country Party Branches will not in my opinion, meet the position. The branches only absorb our present supporters and do not increase them. 45

Not only did the new branch organisation lack continuity, but it also lacked funds, and despite its numbers on Central Council it had

41

Minutes, AMCC, 19 January 1927.

42

Report of the General Secretary to General Conference, 16 August 1928. Under the bank order system members paid their annual subscription via an order on their bank, which remained in force until cancelled by the member. Membership subscriptions, therefore, had to be collected once only.

43

When Munro visited the northern electorates in 1929 he had to "resuscitate" (his own word) many of the branches formed in 1927
GSR to CC, 21 August 1929.

44

Minutes, Temora SEC, 12 November 1927.

45

C.L.A. Abbott, Report to Central Council, 1 November 1930.

little effect on decision-making. Indeed, during the late-1920s the branch delegates merely listened from the side of the stage to the duologue between the two producers' organisations.

That the F.S.A. and the G.A. were able to co-operate in the affairs of the party was itself a great, and perhaps unexpected, achievement. The F.S.A. had brought into the Country Party a large organisation but little money; the G.A. a smaller and electorally less useful organisation but a source of large supplies of finance in its Special Purposes Fund.⁴⁶ Although this was an excellent combination of resources, it nevertheless gave rise to frequent misunderstandings and to charge and counter-charge of lack of support.⁴⁷ A more serious divergence, most obvious during the unhappy conditional support period (1922-5), lay in the dissimilar political aims of the two organisations. The F.S.A. was in general at least as concerned with the party's "separate identity" as it was with the advantages to be gained from alliances with the National Party. As for the G.A.,

Their idea was definitely to keep Labour out of office. If it could be shown that the maintenance of a 3rd party...was the best method of keeping Labour out...the Progressive Party

46

See Graham, The Strategies of the Country Parties, pp.275-6.

47

For example, in regard to the 1926 referendum the G.A. was prepared to spend a large amount of money on the campaign if the F.S.A. would donate funds as well. But the F.S.A. argued that its local organisation would perform work worth much more than the money that the G.A. was offering. The G.A. pointed out that whether this was so or not, more hard cash was needed. It was a heated meeting. CCM 20 August 1946.

would find the members of the Graziers' Association wholeheartedly in the movement and supporting it. 48

Because of its financial dominance, the G.A. generally succeeded in getting its own way, and in 1926 was able to insist on the pact with the National Party.⁴⁹ Although both organisations had originally agreed to make equal contributions to the party's Head Office, the F.S.A. cut its contribution from £1,000 to £200 when the depression affected its own revenue.⁵⁰ By early 1932 the G.A. was assuming practically the entire responsibility for the party's finances.

III. THE UNITED COUNTRY PARTY (1931-1941)

The defeat of the federal and state coalitions in 1929 and 1930 proved providential for the Country Party. Not only was it thus able to escape association with the worst effects of the depression but in opposition it was able to rebuild its organisation and revive its emotional support.

In rural areas the depression was first revealed in a sharp fall in the prices of primary products. By November 1930, the N.S.W. wool price index had fallen from the 1929 average of 162 to 99, while that

48

J.W. Allen (the G.A. General Secretary), Minutes, Joint Meeting of Central Council and the Parliamentary Progressive Party, 20 April 1924.

49

This was admitted by the Chairman of the party in 1932. CCM, 4 February 1932. See also Graham, The Strategies of the Country Parties, pp. 389-90.

50

GSR to CC, 4 February 1932.

for wheat had fallen from 140 to 74 and that for butter from 204 to 144. By August 1931 the index of wheat and wool prices was even lower (88 and 62 respectively).⁵¹ The fall in prices had an immediate effect in the country towns, where prosperity declined and unemployment grew rapidly.⁵² Inevitably the federal and state governments were held up as incompetent, if not wholly to blame.

As unemployment grew, so did the number of explanations for the origins of the depression. But the public, incapable of understanding the arguments, looked for simpler causes and found the politicians ready to supply them. For Lang, the new Labor Premier, the scapegoats were the foreign bond-holders; his opponents looked no further than Lang himself. Rational arguments were drowned in a sea of vilification, and as economic conditions steadily worsened the non-Labor parties began to recover their morale and their support. The federal National Party, moribund in 1930, merged with other non-Labor elements and some disaffected Labor members in the United Australia Party (U.A.P.) and a somewhat similar re-grouping occurred in New South Wales. The Country

51

These figures were taken from the relevant issues of the Monthly Summary of Business Statistics, prepared by the N.S.W. Government Statistician. The index number of 100 represents the average prices for these commodities in 1911.

52

In one country town of about 6,000 persons, expenditure on new buildings dropped from £81,620 in 1929 to £16,645 in 1930, when there were at least 100 cottages available for letting. Towards the end of 1931 there were over 240 men out of work. D.A. Aitkin, Unemployment and Unemployment Relief in Armidale, 1930-1932, unpublished B.A. (Hons) thesis, 1958, U.N.E., Chapters 1 and 2.

Party, after some anxious moments, decided to maintain a separate existence.⁵³

Distress and discontent produced also an extra-parliamentary reaction in the growth of political movements such as the All for Australia League and para-military organisations such as the New Guard and the Labor Army.⁵⁴ In the country there was a revival of new statism, and by July 1931 there existed four separate movements, of which only two, the Northern and Riverina movements, had substantial support. The latter movement had developed without much contact with the Country Party, and the ideas of its young and ambitious leader Charles Hardy, although vague, were in some ways opposed to those of the Country Party.⁵⁵

Unity among the country groups was most important for the Country Party since outside donations had almost ceased and were unlikely to be resumed until unity was achieved.⁵⁶ The logic of their situation drew the new state movements into an alliance, in the form of the United Country Movement (U.C.M.), which almost immediately decided to seek a

53

Sir Earle Page, Truant Surgeon: The Inside Story of Forty Years of Australian Political Life, Sydney 1963, pp.212-3; CCM, 8 May 1931, 25 May 1931, 2 June 1931, 12 June 1931.

54

Aitkin, The United Country Party, pp.29-35.

55

For example, Hardy advocated the abolition of all state governments and their replacement by Provincial Councils, while the Country Party was uncompromisingly federalist. See Ellis, The Country Party, Chapter 26; Page, p.207, see also U.R. Ellis, New Australian States, Sydney 1933, pp.206-13; W.A. Beveridge, The Riverina Movement and Charles Hardy, unpublished B.Ec. (Hons) thesis, University of Sydney, 1954.

56

CCM, 16 July 1931.

political outlet. After some hard bargaining, it was agreed that the Country Party should be widened to include the U.C.M., and, as the "United" Country Party, adopt the U.C.M.'s form of organisation, which in turn was modelled on that of the Riverina Movement.⁵⁷

However, there had been little progress in the transition to this system when, in May 1932, the Governor dismissed Lang for issuing a circular which the Governor deemed illegal. He called upon B.S.B. Stevens, the Leader of the U.A.P., to form a Government. Stevens immediately offered Bruxner (who had resumed the party leadership early in 1932) and the Country Party participation in the Government, an invitation which was accepted without hesitation. The new coalition set an early date for elections and did not call parliament together.⁵⁸

After the elections of 1932, the Country Party was at the apogee of its success, having more than doubled its representation from the 12 after the elections of 1930, to 25.⁵⁹ The U.A.P. won 41 seats, and the Labor Party, now the smallest party in the Assembly, 24. The elections almost coincided with the start of economic recovery. Wool prices were at their lowest point in May 1932, as was the level of savings bank

57

Ellis, The Country Party, Chapter 27.

58

Since it would have promptly lost control of the House, as Lang had a very large majority. For the circumstances and legality of the Governor's action, see A.B. Keith, The Dominions as Sovereign States, London 1938, esp. pp.230-31, H.V. Evatt, The King and his Dominion Governors, London 1936, A.B. Piddington, The King and the People, Sydney 1932, Encel, pp.65-68.

59

Appendix A.

deposits, while unemployment was at its highest.⁶⁰ Economic recovery, harmonious relations within the coalition, especially between Stevens and Bruxner, and continuing discord within the Labor Party were to make the elections of 1935 and 1938 merely repetitions of the 1932 result.⁶¹

The electoral fortunes of the Country Party in New South Wales were mirrored in federal politics. Impressed by the need for unity, Page and Lyons, the leader of the federal U.A.P., agreed to fight the 1931 elections on a joint programme.⁶² However, the results of the elections gave the U.A.P. an absolute majority,⁶³ and Lyons formed an entirely U.A.P. administration which continued until after the elections of 1934. After these elections the Country Party once again held the balance of power and Lyons, after some hesitation, offered the party participation in government on terms which the party could accept.⁶⁴ This federal coalition continued until the death of Lyons in 1939.

The extent to which the Country Parties could achieve gains for country interests during the 1930s was limited by the financial stringency caused by the depression, and, towards the end of the decade, by the necessity for re-arming, and finally by the war itself. For

60

Relevant issues, Monthly Summary of Business Statistics.

61

Appendix A.

62

Page, p.214.

63

Appendix C.

64

Page, pp.227-30.

these reasons the 1930s, by comparison with the 1920s, were not years of great achievement and much of what was done followed on from projects outlined during the 1920s.

Immediate problems involved rehabilitating the primary producer, particularly the leaseholding wheat farmer, whose problems of low returns, high costs and indebtedness had become chronic. Legislation put through by the Stevens/Bruxner Government in 1932 reduced interest and rents payable by farmers to both private creditors and the state, and wrote off or deferred arrears of interest and principal.⁶⁵ Supporting federal legislation was sponsored by Page in 1934.⁶⁶ There was an extension of water conservation and irrigation schemes, forestry projects and country road-building.⁶⁷ But no new railways were built, and no major construction work was started and finished during the state coalition's nine-year term. However, a University College was established in a country town.⁶⁸ Less noticeable, but no less important, was the diversion of revenue into Departments controlled by Country Party Ministers. The proportion of the state budget spent by these Departments in 1931/1932 was 23.527 per cent; in the first three years of the coalition it increased each year: to 24.832 per cent in

65

The principal acts were Farmers' Relief Act, 1932 and Crown Lands (Amendment) Act, 1932. The former was subsequently extended by the Farmers' Relief (Amendment) Act, 1933.

66

Page, pp.234-5; Ellis, The Australian Country Party, Chapter 19.

67

Ellis, The Country Party, Chapter 32.

68

Ibid., Chapter 33; D.H. Drummond, A University is Born, Sydney 1959.

1932/1933, 27.129 per cent in 1933/1934 and 30.102 per cent in 1934/1935, at which level it stabilised.⁶⁹ Bruxner, as Minister for Transport, cut freight rates for primary producers and liberalised the conditions under which they could operate road transport.⁷⁰ At the federal level, Page set up the Australian Agricultural Council (to promote uniform policies for marketing and product quality) and regularised the domestic market for wheat.⁷¹ Other attempts to promote orderly marketing were frustrated by judicial decisions and the defeat of the 1937 referendum on marketing powers.⁷²

Both coalitions were powerfully aided by the slow but steady improvement in economic conditions, which ensured that the lack of government action in rural development would be overlooked. But once recovery was more or less complete, public discontent with the non-Labor governments became more vocal and coincided with schisms within non-Labor and the re-unification of the A.L.P. The death of Lyons was followed by the breakdown of co-operation between the U.A.P. and the Country Party and at the federal elections of 1940 the Country Party lost two N.S.W.

69

These percentages have been derived from figures given in the Premier's Speech on the Budget for the appropriate years (New South Wales Parliamentary Debates).

70

The Bruxner Papers contain a number of documents dealing with the subject, especially a Submission to Minister, dated 10 August 1933, by the Commissioner for Road Transport, and a Press Release (1935) entitled Achievements of Transport Administration under Present Government. For the Bruxner Papers, see Appendix S.

71

By the Wheat Industry Assistance Act, 1938.

72

Page, Chapter XXVI.

seats. The undignified bickering that occurred between and within the non-Labor parties did much to discredit the coalition and had its effect in New South Wales, where a similar crisis occurred.

Continual electoral success in New South Wales had been accompanied by only minor changes in the state Ministry and a disappointed faction grew up within the U.A.P. which blamed the Country Party for its members' failure to obtain Cabinet places.⁷³ In August 1939 several dissident U.A.P. members brought forward a no-confidence motion on which the Government was defeated. Although Stevens resigned, the rebels were suppressed and the coalition was re-formed under another U.A.P. Minister, Alex Mair. But the impressive appearance of co-operation, solidity and amity which had characterised the coalition, vanished overnight. Furthermore, in the month following the crisis, the A.L.P. rejected J.T. Lang and chose as Leader W.J. McKell, a moderate,⁷⁴ and in a by-election held shortly afterwards, the A.L.P. had an easy victory.

With popular support quickly waning, the Country Party now depended upon its organisation to minimise the reaction at the elections of 1941. However, little organisation, at least at the local level, remained. Years of electoral success had developed within the Country Party a monumental apathy, and in many electorates there had been no activity

73

The N.S.W. crisis is outlined in Aitkin, The United Country Party, pp.44-6, and in Encel, pp.206-8.

74

See Aitkin, The United Country Party, pp.46-8.

since 1935.⁷⁵ Although anti-Langism and the revival of separation had enabled the party to make rapid gains in 1931 and 1932, these emotional movements had disoriented the party and its organisation, and the lessons of the 1920s were forgotten.

In any case, the abandonment of the old branch/electorate council system of organisation for Charles Hardy's Riverina Movement plan had proved most unwise. In Hardy's plan,⁷⁶ the emphasis had been placed on the smallest unit - the Sub-Group - which had been made responsible for the conduct of local campaigns. Electorate affairs were the responsibility of the Group (composed of the Leaders of the Sub-Groups) and they in turn were responsible to the Divisions, the organisational remnants of the New State Movements. The Divisions were the links between the Groups and Sub-Groups on the one hand, and the Central Council and parliamentary parties on the other. This system could only work if the Sub-Groups possessed initiative. This they manifestly lacked. As D.H. Drummond, the party's Deputy-Leader, complained in 1934,

There is nothing wrong with the machinery, but already the old virus of a tendency to lean on the central council for everything is making itself apparent. 77

75

In 38 of the 90 contests in 1938, the sitting members were either unopposed, or were opposed by candidates of the same party or by Independents. Country Party records which go back into the 1930s suggest that little attempt was made to fight vigorous campaigns.

76

Ellis, The Country Party, Chapter 38.

77

Australian Country Party Monthly Journal (hereafter cited as A.C.P.J.), Vol. 1, No. 2, March 1934.

The decline of the Divisional system was rapid indeed. One of the original New State movements collapsed almost as soon as Lang was dismissed.⁷⁸ Sub-Groups which had flared into life in 1932 had been extinguished by 1934.⁷⁹ The causes of the decline were appreciated by the party leaders.

Lang in power made it easier, and gave the movement an impetus but when he was got rid of and this Government came into power, the position became harder both in the city and the country. The people were lulled into a sense of security and there was a certain amount of apathy...Lang had brought the Movement together politically. 80

The Government's tardiness in implementing its 1932 promise to set up a Royal Commission to enquire again into the New States question, and its failure to act upon the Commission's findings, disillusioned the genuine New Staters, who lost interest in making the U.C.M. system work. The New England Division resolved to return to the old system of branches and councils in 1936,⁸¹ but by then the crusading enthusiasm of 1931 had disappeared.

From 1936 there came repeated demands for an end to the Divisional system. V.C. Thompson M.H.R., once Secretary of the Northern New State Movement, argued the case strongly in the party's Journal.

78

Minutes, United Country Movement Conference 1932.

79

For example, the Armidale Sub-Group, which held only four meetings, two in 1932, and one each in 1933 and 1934. It was reformed as the Armidale Branch in 1943. Prior to becoming the Armidale Sub-Group it had held 17 meetings as the Armidale Branch between 21 April 1928 and 3 March 1932. Minute Books, Armidale Branch.

80

Minutes, United Country Movement Conference 1932.

81

A.C.P.J., Vol. 3 No. 27, April 1936.

It is clear that the New State Movement should never have been merged into the Country Party, for the effect has been to sink the subdivision movement out of sight without bringing any strength to the political party. 82

A General Conference held in 1938 (the first since 1931), resolved that there should be a return to the branch/electorate council system.

Although this resolution was re-affirmed in 1939, nothing was done.⁸³

Thus when elections were held in 1941 there had been little check to the near-anarchy caused by the decline of the Divisional System and the party had little active organisation at a time when this was of the greatest importance. For, quite apart from the coalition's internal problems, external circumstances were working entirely to the advantage of the Labor Party.⁸⁴ The critical war situation and the weakened public confidence in the federal coalition had their influence in state politics; wheat farmers had been suffering from a return to low prices and had not forgotten the withdrawal of federal assistance to the industry in 1939;⁸⁵ the rejuvenated Labor Party had attracted young and personable candidates in many country electorates, while the Country Party was embarrassed by the announced intention of some of its prominent members not to seek re-election in 1941.

82

A.C.P.J., Vol. 3 No. 26, March 1936.

83

Minutes, General Conferences, 1938 and 1939.

84

For the circumstances of the 1941 election, see Aitkin, The United Country Party, Chapter 6.

85

Page, p.240.

The election was a rout.⁸⁶ The Labor Party was returned with 54 seats, while the U.A.P. and the Country Party were decimated, retaining only 14 and 12 members respectively. Ten Independents, of varying beliefs and attitudes, made up the Assembly. The Country Party, which lost nearly all its western and southern electorates, retreated to the security of its northern fortress, in which it puzzled gloomily over its defeat and worried about its future.

CHAPTER 2

THE WAR YEARS: DEFEAT AND REBUILDING

I. THE WAR YEARS

If the results of the 1940 federal elections had proved inconclusive, those of the 1941 N.S.W. elections showed with great clarity the rapid decline in the popular support of the non-Labor parties. In Canberra the declining morale of the government parties contrasted with the tighter discipline and self-confidence of the Labor Party. Menzies' several attempts to form an all-party government had failed; Curtin and other Labor leaders were only too conscious of the danger to their party of such a coalition, and anticipated that the non-Labor Government would destroy itself in time, whereupon the Labor Party would be able to govern in its own right.¹ At length, after a little more than a year of office, and after the replacement of Menzies by A.W. Fadden, the Leader of the Country Party, the two Independents whose support had kept the coalition in office since 1940 voted with the Opposition, and Fadden resigned. Curtin was commissioned to form a government, which, with the support of the same Independents, remained in office until the elections of 1943.

Labor in office faced the 1943 elections with many more than the "two tremendous advantages over the Opposition" with which it was credited by the Sydney Morning Herald,² although these, the unchallenged

1

Paul Hasluck, The Government and the People, Canberra 1952, pp.250 et seq., 264, 269, 365-6, 501-3; L.F. Crisp, Ben Chifley, Melbourne 1961, pp.129, 132, 138.

2

Sydney Morning Herald, 19 August 1943. Reprinted in Warwick Fairfax (ed.), Men, Parties and Politics, Sydney 1943, p.73.

position of John Curtin as Leader, and the teamwork of the Labor Cabinet, were real enough. In 1943 Labor was still in the ascendant: Curtin, as Prime Minister, had captured the public imagination in a manner reminiscent of W.M. Hughes in the previous war. The Government had "won wide acceptance for its sincerity and capacity to get things done."³ Furthermore, this was a 'new' Labor Party, in which the leading figures - Curtin, Chifley, Evatt, and in New South Wales, McKell - had had only a passing connection with Labor's mortification during the depression. In contrast, the luckless U.A.P., now approaching an unlamented end, still lacked real leadership, and the internal bickering which had characterised it since 1939 had not noticeably lessened.

The result was a landslide to Labor, which gained outright majorities in the House of Representatives and the Senate. In the House, the U.A.P. was reduced to 14, and the Country Party to ten (compared with 15 in 1940 and 16 in 1931).⁴ Within a few months there occurred the normal state elections in New South Wales, in which the non-Labor parties won even fewer seats than in 1941, and faced Labor's total of 56 (its highest ever) with but 23 seats.⁵

The U.A.P. did not survive these defeats. Its name now a mocking reminder of its vanished power and pretensions, it collapsed both within

3

Crisp, Ben Chifley, p.159. See also Geoffrey Sawyer, Australian Federal Politics and Law 1929-1949, Melbourne 1963, pp.155-7.

4

Appendix C.

5

Appendix A.

parliament and outside it. Even before the 1943 elections there had emerged a "Liberal - Democratic Party"⁶ and the elections were followed by the formation, in New South Wales, of the "Democratic Party", which became the principal non-Labor party in that state (although the federal parliamentarians retained the U.A.P. label).⁷ All attempts to reunite the warring groups had failed when Menzies chose the 1944 referendum campaign as the opportunity to commence the re-organisation of the non-Labor parties. A unity conference held in Canberra in August 1944 was followed by a similar conference in Albury at the end of the year. From this conference emerged the "Liberal Party", which was not an "uneasy partnership" of the old parties, but a new party intended to advocate liberal (though pragmatic) ideas and to be founded on a strong mass organisation.⁸ The Country Party, which had not been invited to either conference, welcomed the end of the strife within its old ally,⁹ and both parties prepared for the 1946 elections, hopeful that the electoral pendulum would by then have swung away from the Government.

⁶
For the formation of the Liberal-Democratic Party see Sydney Morning Herald, most issues, 3 to 22 April 1943.

⁷
For the formation of the Democratic Party, see Sydney Morning Herald, December 1943 to February 1944.

⁸
Overacker, pp.241, 243.

⁹
e.g. Chairman's Address to the 1945 Annual Conference [of the Country Party].

II. ORGANISATIONAL DECLINE

The Country Party had not, as had the U.A.P., destroyed itself during the early years of Labor's supremacy. Nevertheless, by the time of the 1946 federal elections it had passed through much the same sequence of defeat, despair and reconstruction, and the Country Party of 1946 was almost as distinct from the party of 1941 as was the Liberal Party from the U.A.P. of that year.

The party's defeat in 1941 was its first real set-back, since Labor's success in 1930 had been almost entirely at the expense of the National Party, and the lack of any earlier experience of defeat accentuated the despair and the angry searching for scapegoats which followed the elections. All the settled issues of identity and strategy were revived at Conferences and on Central Council. The following motion sent forward to the 1943 annual Conference was typical:

That it is the opinion of this meeting that the Country Party has lost its popularity:

- (a) Through its association with the U.A.P., preventing it from fostering the interests of the primary producer.
- (b) Through representing the interests of the large landholder and neglecting the interests of the smaller farmer.
- (c) Through allowing the Labour Party to take the lead in rural reform and thus capture the vote of the farmer. 10

Delegates to the 1942 conference of the F.S.A. complained that the party leaders had lost touch with the rank and file,¹¹ and sections of the

10

Motion 35, from Reefton Branch, F.S.A. It lapsed for want of a seconder. Minutes, 1943 AC.

11

Report of the Proceedings of the Forty-Ninth Annual Conference, Sydney 1942, p.54.

country press, which had been staunchly pro-Country Party since the early 1920s, criticised the party's actions and its performance in government.¹²

The deterioration of the party's organisation accompanied the decline in morale. It was accelerated by the call-up for military service, which took away the party's Publicity Officer, many branch and electorate council officials, and even the General Secretary (for a short period).¹³ The problems and progress of the war overshadowed the policies and promises of the opposition parties, especially in the state sphere.¹⁴ Petrol rationing and other restrictions helped keep electorate council and branch meetings infrequent, and attendances down.¹⁵

The state of the party's organisation was revealed in the by-election for the seat of Dubbo in 1942, occasioned by the death of the Country Party M.L.A. The General Secretary found the local organisation apathetic and immediately took charge: Head Office planned the campaign, executed it, and paid most of the expenses. The Labor candidate had

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e.g. Country Life, described by Bruxner as "really a party organ", was reprovred for its hostile comments both in 1941 and 1942. CCM, 26 September 1941, Minutes, AMCC, 9 February 1942. The Northern Daily Leader (Tamworth), one of the earliest supporters of the Country Party, came out against it in 1943. Minutes, Annual Meeting New England FEC, 30 October 1943.

13

GSR to CC for 1941.

14

"...people do not seem to be very interested in politics at the present moment." Ibid.

15

Minutes, Annual Meeting Temora SEC, 7 February 1942.

an easy win.¹⁶ The result was not a good omen for the 1943 federal elections, but it proved to be an accurate one.

After the elections, in which the party's N.S.W. seats were reduced to three, the leaders became aware of the poor contrast the party provided to the A.L.P. J.P. Abbott M.H.R. (who had been the party's Chairman in 1939) compared the parties in the elections as follows:

Labour's organisation was superb. They had a large number of speakers. They were making a great appeal to youth, which, unfortunately, we were not.... Our organisation had to be built up. 17

Another delegate at the same meeting complained that the party lacked "loyalty and discipline".

Very soon after the federal elections, Labor won another by-election, for the Assembly seat of Lachlan, formerly a blue-ribbon Country Party electorate. The party's campaign on this occasion was conducted by the state Deputy-Leader, D.H. Drummond, whose report to Central Executive concluded with this frank admission:

Our organisation was so weak, our preparations so belated, our direction so poor and our advertising so late, that apart from the calibre of our candidates, we were beaten before we really started.... The most disquieting thing is that immediately after a Federal election, when one would have naturally expected the machinery to be well oiled and running, practically no machinery at all existed, except some clogged, rusty and inadequate parts. 18

16

GSR to CC for 1942.

17

CCM, 16 September 1943.

18

Report...on the Lachlan By-election [to Central Executive] by D.H. Drummond, 29 September 1943.

Continuing electoral defeats and the lack of any sign of recovery increased the agitation for change. In Central Council support for more progressive attitudes and policies increased after the 1943 elections, and Council eventually resolved to hold a Conference to overhaul the party's platform.¹⁹ Dissatisfaction with the traditional position of the party was not confined to New South Wales. A Western Australian delegate to the 1943 federal party Conference in December seemed to speak for all his fellow delegates when he

questioned if the original ideas of the Country Party were satisfactory, or whether we should have something different and more appealing to the people. 20

Nowhere was this basic dissatisfaction more pronounced than in the Farmers and Settlers' Association. Wheat farmers had grown critical of the federal non-Labor Government because of its failure to establish a stabilised price for wheat when low prices and drought in 1938 and 1939 threatened many farmers with bankruptcy.²¹ Their anger increased when the Menzies Government, as a wartime measure, withdrew the federal assistance which they had been receiving.²² Delegates to the 1939 F.S.A. Conference accused the parliamentarians of not doing their job.²³ Even when the industry was stabilised under wartime regulations in

19

CCM, 16 September 1943.

20

Minutes of the Australian Country Party Association, 4 December 1943.

21

Report of the Proceedings of the Forty-Sixth Annual Conference, Sydney 1939, p.15.

22

Page, p.240.

23

Proceedings, p.63.

1940, many wheat farmers were dissatisfied with the results.²⁴ Appeals for faith and understanding by the parliamentary leaders only further irritated the farmers:

We will be asked during this Conference as during previous Conferences, not to embarrass the Government...there is no more sinister suggestion. We owe all that we have and are to embarrassed Governments... 25

Furthermore, many delegates felt that the influence of the F.S.A. within the Country Party was not as great as it should have been. In 1942, delegates charged that

The Association had largely lost control of the Country Party, although it was instrumental in forming the party. 26

Others complained that the Association was losing support at the branch level because of its affiliation with the party. The usefulness of this affiliation was seriously questioned when, in 1943, the Labor Government guaranteed a wheat price nearly one-third higher than the ruling price under non-Labor.²⁷ By 1944 the party leaders were complaining that the farmers had forgotten what they owed to the Country Party.²⁸ In that year the movement within the F.S.A. for

²⁴Hasluck, pp.373-4; Report of the Proceedings of the Forty Eighth Annual Conference [of the F.S.A.], Sydney 1941, pp.38-9.

²⁵Report of the Proceedings of the Forty-Seventh Annual Conference [of the F.S.A.], Sydney 1940, p.32. The speaker was H.S. Robertson, later Country Party M.H.R. for Riverina and a Federal cabinet minister. See Appendix D.

26

Proceedings, p.54.

²⁷Ian Shannon, Rural Industries in the Australian Economy, Melbourne 1955, p.48.

²⁸e.g. see M.F. Bruxner's speech to the 1944 F.S.A. Conference, Report of the Proceedings of the Fifty-First Annual Conference, Sydney 1944, p.60.

ending the affiliation with the party was receiving support from two sources. Those farmers sympathetic to the Labor Government found the affiliation distasteful, while those who remained loyal to the party were nevertheless aware that continued association with a discredited opposition party might jeopardise the industrial aims of the F.S.A. Thus the 1944 Conference passed by a "substantial majority" a motion ending the F.S.A.'s association with the Country Party.²⁹

Although it did not have the same specific grievances as the F.S.A. the G.A. was also becoming dissatisfied with the Country Party by the late 1930s. In particular, many graziers (especially in the north) were upset by the party's failure to do anything constructive regarding new states, while others felt that the federal and state coalitions were dominated by city interests.³⁰ Both the leadership and the parliamentary parties in general were increasingly criticised.³¹ At the 1944 Conference the debates were most pointed. One delegate argued that "...the Country Party is losing caste among the mixed farmers", and a motion "That the Association has no confidence in the Country Party..." was on the agenda, although it was subsequently withdrawn. It was argued that the G.A. should cease affiliation, since

²⁹

Proceedings, p.69. The deliberations were held in Committee.

³⁰

Verbatim report, 22nd Annual Conference [of the G.A.], 1939, p.255 (typescript); Verbatim report, 23rd Annual Conference, 1940, pp.255-63 (typescript).

³¹

Verbatim report, 24th Annual Conference [of the G.A.], 1941, pp.436-43 (typescript); Verbatim report, 25th Annual Conference, 1943, pp.441-43 (typescript). There was no Conference in 1942, because of the war.

We are not getting anywhere in approaching the Governments of the day because of our political views.

And another delegate, in support, pointed out that disaffiliation would be in the interests of the Country Party, as the smaller producers' growing sympathy for Labor was producing strange anomalies:

At a recent conference of the Country Party there were some who were very strong Labor men. 32

The withdrawal of the F.S.A. provided the final impetus: it would be politically disastrous for the Country Party to have the open support of the G.A. only. The 1945 G.A. Conference resolved to end the affiliation (although by only 54 votes to 49).³³

The party tried to put the best possible face on the matter. The disaffiliation was regarded as "purely a matter of political expediency"³⁴ and one delegate even welcomed the withdrawal:

it would not greatly harm the Country Party if they did so, as many people expressed the opinion that the Country Party was run by the Graziers. 35

By the time of the 1945 party Conference the actions of the F.S.A. and the G.A. had been re-interpreted in a more acceptable fashion:

Both these organisations have now considered the time has come when the Country Party should be strong enough to go forward as an organisation, dependent upon the individual effort of its (sic) rank and file supporters of this Party. 36

³²
Verbatim report, 26th Annual Conference, 1944 (typescript).

³³
Verbatim report, 27th Annual Conference, 1945, p.31 (typescript).

³⁴
D.H. Drummond, CCM, 22 March 1945.

³⁵
Minutes, AMCC, 25 January 1945.

³⁶
Chairman's Address to the 1945 AC.

However calmly the withdrawal of the two organisations seemed to be taken, its effects were serious indeed. With the departure of the F.S.A. went much of the party's organisation, especially in the south-west, as well as a great deal of local finance. With the departure of the G.A., the party lost its financial guarantor. It was left with a few hundred members and little organisation or independent finance. But the party was now its own master, and thus the movement for reconstruction and reform within the party was given a free rein.

III. REBUILDING AND ITS PROBLEMS

Labor's electoral expansion in the early-1940s was a spring tide: U.A.P. representation in rural electorates almost completely disappeared, and the Country Party, apart from one or two islands in the south-west, retained ground only in the north. However, the Country Party could not survive for long merely as a northern party; the northern electorates had to be used as a base from which to regain lost possessions as the flood receded.

Rebuilding the fortunes of the party was no easy task. Members and finance were urgently needed, and a new organisation and Constitution had to be planned and established. Yet the strong separatist feelings of the 1920s and 1930s had weakened; the Lang bogey could no longer be used; and the party had lost the powerful support of the farmers' and graziers' organisations. The contemporaneous rebirth of the U.A.P. as the Liberal Party added further difficulties. Nevertheless, the party possessed two great assets: it did have a firm electoral base,

and its leaders had never lost their confidence that the party's set-back was only temporary.

1. The Importance of the North

That the Country Party, unlike the U.A.P., was able to rebuild its organisation without making a completely fresh start owed much to the nature of its defeat in the early 1940s. For the results of the state elections of 1941 and the federal elections of 1943, especially of the former, were much more serious for the U.A.P. than for the Country Party. The U.A.P. had lost 23 seats in 1941 compared with its position in 1938, and, reduced to 14 members, it was only slightly larger than the Country Party. To some extent it seemed that the U.A.P. had received the bulk of the public's censure of the non-Labor governments.

No less important was the Country Party's retention of its northern electorates. None of its northern sitting members were defeated in 1941 and candidates in two other northern seats lost by only narrow margins. The party thus possessed a strong base from which to engage in the reconstruction of its organisation and the recapture of its support. The north's loyalty to the Country Party contrasted with the Labor victories in the south and west and pointed to the change in the party's character since 1920. For the smaller Riverina wheat farmers the Country Party was the political extension of their F.S.A., and for them 'new states' and 'anti-Langism' were not so important as the chronic problems of the wheat industry. Once the Country Party had failed consistently to realise and alleviate their economic position they voted Labor. When

the Labor Party showed a willingness to do something for them, they kept supporting it.

But the economic motivation for support of the Country Party in the north was much less specific. Furthermore, it was perhaps not as important as the symbolic significance of the Country Party in the context of northern new statism and anti-urbanism. The north possessed a long history of agitation for communications and development, which, when unsuccessful, had often become agitation for a new state. Thus, although the formation of the party had taken place outside the north, it received immediate support from northern voters. Not only were the party's economic ideas in harmony with those of northern farmers and graziers, but it also represented for grazier and townsman alike a means of ending their isolation from political power, and, for the dedicated new-stater, a means of fulfilling separatist ideals.

Northerners very quickly achieved prominence within the party. Earle Page, from the north coast, soon became the party's federal Leader, while V.C. Thompson (New England), a newspaper editor and convinced new stater, became a federal Minister, as did C.L.A. Abbott (Gwydir), H.L. Anthony (Richmond) and J.P. Abbott (New England), at various times. In the state sphere the northern hegemony was no less pronounced. M.F. Bruxner (Tenterfield) assumed the leadership in 1922 and, except between 1925 and 1932, held it until 1958. D.H. Drummond (Armidale) was the party's Deputy-Leader from 1932 to 1949, as well as being a Minister for 12 years, while R.S. Vincent (Raleigh), C.A. Sinclair (Namoi) and A.W. Yeo (Castlereagh) were Ministers for varying periods.

The northern press, which had been strongly separatist, quickly became enthusiastically pro-Country Party,³⁷ and there was a strong link between the press and the party: Thompson, Page and Vincent together owned, controlled or influenced a substantial number of northern newspapers and radio stations.³⁸

Thus by 1941 the north had begun to see the Country Party as its own, a party whose merits could not be assessed by an analysis of performance but which consisted in its separate identity together with the advocacy of certain policies. For the north was as committed to the idea of separate entity, although for different reasons, as was the F.S.A. In such circumstances the progress of coalitions, the unity of Labor or even the state of the nation were only marginally relevant: the elections of 1941 were not seen in these terms, and nor have subsequent elections.

37

In 1922 only three of the 17 newspapers in Raleigh electorate did not support the party, according to R.S. Vincent (Minutes, Joint Meeting Central Council and the Parliamentary Progressive Party, 20 April 1922). In the same year the General Secretary reported that over the whole state, 50 per cent of the country newspapers supported the party, 20 per cent were neutral, 20 per cent Nationalist, five per cent Labor and five per cent without any politics. The principal northern newspapers supported the party. Minutes, "Central Council of the Australian Country Party", 4 October 1922. (This Council was an ad hoc committee set up by the F.S.A. and the G.A. to manage the 1922 federal election campaign for the federal Country Party in New South Wales). See also below, Chapter 16, part II.

38

Page owned shares in the Grafton Daily Examiner and other coastal and inland papers, while Thompson was editor of the Northern Daily Leader. For the widespread Vincent family interests in northern papers see Graham, The Strategies of the Country Parties, pp.291-3.

The continuity of leadership of men such as Bruxner and Page was matched by equivalent continuity within the Central Council and Executive, which was, in turn, a reflection of the continuity of leadership within the F.S.A. and the G.A. Thus, when the Finance Committee met in early February 1941, three of its nine members could have traced their association with the party back to the first Central Council in 1920, two more to 1921 and 1922, one to 1925 and two to 1927. They had been directing the party organisation since its creation, and were therefore unlikely to despair at one reverse, however severe. Furthermore, the 1920s and 1930s had both been decades of great success for the party and there were many who felt, with the party's Chairman, that

The party has been passing through a phase which is a natural corollary to being in opposition, and the aftermath of being in office for so many years. 39

There was, therefore, little faintheartedness within either the parliamentary parties or the Central Council, and the homogeneity of the parliamentary parties helped to prevent the emergence of the faction fights which finally destroyed the U.A.P.⁴⁰ Secure in the knowledge that the party's northern fortress had proved impregnable to even the most wholehearted Labor assaults, the Country Party was able, during the war years, to mute its story of achievement in coalition and to

39

Chairman's Address to the 1943 AC.

40

For an analysis of the backgrounds of Country Party parliamentarians, see below, Chapter 10, part II.

emphasise the distinctiveness of country people and their problems, together with the special role of the Country Party as their interpreter.

2. The Drive for Membership

The intention of both the F.S.A. and the G.A. was that their own rank and file members should be encouraged to join the Country Party directly. To assist this the Graziers' Association in 1944/5 made available sufficient finance for the party to employ organisers. Later it guaranteed the payment of the organisers' salaries for a period up to six months after the Association's withdrawal from the party.⁴¹ The amount of leeway that had to be made up by the organisers in obtaining members, and thus revenue, was considerable. The party's administrative and organising expenses alone for 1944 were nearly seven times its income from members' subscriptions, the remainder of the party's income being made up from direct donations (principally from the G.A.).⁴²

In April 1945 the party was employing seven organisers, including a Chief Organiser. Their task was simple enough: to interview all members of the F.S.A. and the G.A. who were not already members of the party (as well as anyone else who might be a prospect), and persuade them to sign an order form on their bank in favour of the party. Unless countermanded by the signer, the order empowered the bank to deduct

41

CER to CC, 14 February 1946.

42

Chairman's Address to the 1945 AC.

from the signer's account each year the sum indicated (not less than £1, though often much more). The signing of the bank order entitled the signer to all the rights of membership without further charge. It was also the organiser's responsibility to form branches and thus provide a place within the organisation for the new members.⁴³

More efficient use of organisers and an increase in their number were reflected in a rapid increase in both membership and income. The 1945 membership figure had been trebled by the end of 1947 and bank order revenue had increased by more than 250 per cent.⁴⁴ So swift was the progress that the departure of the F.S.A. and the G.A. was beginning to be seen as a blessing in disguise; with some pride the Chairman told the 1946 Conference:

Today the Party is soundly established on an entirely new footing. We were sorry to lose the close connection with those organisations of primary producers which gave us birth, but the vast majority of their members are now enrolled in our branches. Our ranks, which for a time were a little ragged are again neat, continuous and in considerable depth. 45

3. The Rise of the Liberal Party

Those factors which were instrumental in maintaining the party's continuity when the U.A.P. was destroying itself also kept the party from being absorbed by the Liberal Party. For the reformation of the

43

CEM, 28 February 1945. The high membership fee was partly a reflection of the need for finance.

44

Appendix E.

45

Chairman's address to the 1946 AC.

non-Labor party poses special problems for the Country Party. From those engaged in the reconstruction come charges that the existence of the Country Party itself is a major cause of the decline of non-Labor, inasmuch as it emphasises non-Labor's "disunity". In the building of the new non-Labor party great pressure is exerted on the Country Party to abandon its "purely sectional aims" in the over-riding need for unity amongst those elements opposed to Labor. There is the additional implication that this kind of unity is a sine qua non of future electoral success.

Under these circumstances the old questions of identity and strategy are revived, particularly in the Central Council. Some councillors are frightened by the thought of a Grand Non-Labor Alliance from which the Country Party would be excluded and which it would be unable to influence. Others want the party to enter the Alliance in order to lead it. Some, again, are fearful of the electoral consequences should the party remain aloof from the new grouping: others warn of the consequences should the party be associated with it in any way.

These had been some of the effects of the formation of the U.A.P. in 1931, and they were repeated during that party's demise and the formation of the Liberal Party. The rumours of a re-formation of the non-Labor forces after the 1943 elections produced anxiety within some Central Councillors lest the Country Party be left out of any arrangements made,⁴⁶ and when the party was invited to send delegates to a unity conference

46

CCM, 16 September 1943.

in late 1943, they were adamant that the invitation be accepted. Protagonists of "separate entity" just as forcibly opposed sending delegates. The dilemma was well expressed by D.H. Drummond:

If we went to the meeting we would be damned, and if we did not go, we would be damned.

The resulting compromise pleased neither side: by eight votes to seven Council decided to send delegates, but they were empowered only to state that the party must preserve its separate identity.⁴⁷

The virtual parity in Assembly seats between the Democratic and Country Parties after the elections of 1944 led to a hope that the Country Party could take the lead in the re-organisation of the non-Labor parties in New South Wales. This hope was based not only on an appreciation of the relative strengths of the parties but also on a feeling that there had been a fundamental shift in the centre of gravity of Australian rural politics. As the chief exponent of this view (E.C. Sommerlad) explained it:

[the] old lines of political demarcation have now largely disappeared.... The fight of the future will not be on the battlefields of decentralisation and tariffs (which together brought the Country Party into being) but upon the broad question of socialisation and union domination.

Sommerlad proposed a co-ordinated opposition with separate metropolitan and country wings, but under joint control in such matters as general

47

CCM, 3 November 1943. The Minute Books gives the date as 16 September 1943 (the previous meeting), but internal evidence supports 3 November.

finance and policy.⁴⁸ Anathema to many, this proposal still impressed Council sufficiently for it to set up a sub-committee to investigate his proposal.⁴⁹ Although an informal discussion of the question took place between the two parliamentary parties,⁵⁰ there had been no real progress when the August 1944 Canberra unity conference was announced, and this caused a halt in the N.S.W. negotiations. By the time the Liberal Party was formed, the initiative had long since passed from the Country Party.

Nevertheless, it welcomed the emergence of the Liberal Party, which had caused the "new interest...rising throughout the city areas", and expressed the hope that

together we may be able to give the people throughout the Commonwealth a new opportunity to provide stable government soundly balanced. 51

It was soon evident, however, that the Liberal Party would not be as tolerant about Country Party 'prerogatives' in the country electorates as the U.A.P. had been. Even while its organisation was in the provisional stage, Liberal Party organisers were operating in country electorates, not differentiating between Country Party and Labor seats.

48
"A State Election Analysis-What of the Future?" (a Memorandum to Central Council by E.C. Sommerlad, 8 September 1944).

49
CCM, 8 September 1944.

50
E.C. Sommerlad to E.J. Munro, 9 October 1944; (copy, in Central Council Minute Book).

51
Chairman's Address to the 1945 AC.

They were reported to be having "great success" amongst townspeople.⁵² Furthermore, despite Menzies' earlier declaration that amalgamation with the Country Party had not been desired,⁵³ it became equally evident that, for the N.S.W. Division of the Liberal Party at least, absorption of the Country Party was seen as a necessary pre-condition of gaining power. It thus became important for the Country Party to halt the Liberal Party organisation in country electorates and come to an arrangement for the 1946 federal elections without, at the same time, being absorbed by the other party.

The Liberal Party Executive delayed replying to the Country Party's requests for a conference, ostensibly because their organisation was still provisional. The Country Party feared that the delay was caused by the Liberals' desire to extend their local organisation as quickly as possible so that they might have stronger claims when the inevitable pre-election talks took place.⁵⁴

Finally, in October 1945, well over eight months after the first Country Party request, and after at least three subsequent ones, the

52

CCM, 22 March 1945; OSR to CE, 21 June 1945.

53

Overacker, p.242.

54

It is felt that, unless some preliminary understanding is arrived at, electorate organisation might take shape in the meantime which will complicate, and possibly prejudice, subsequent arrangements.

From the final draft of a letter approved by Central Council for sending, over the name of the Chairman, to the President of the N.S.W. Division of the Liberal Party. CCM, 22 March 1945.

Liberal Party sought a conference at the federal level. The Country Party immediately agreed.⁵⁵ At the conference the Liberals declared their objective to be the complete amalgamation of both parties, under a name and a leader to be agreed upon. It rejected as unacceptable a Country Party counter-suggestion of complete collaboration for the elections. Although the Liberals agreed to discuss the matter further, this general position remained unaltered, while the Country Party, enthusiastically engaged in the quest for members (which was already showing great promise) was in no mood to consider offers of amalgamation. There the matter rested.

But as the 1946 federal elections drew close, the pressure on both parties to come to some agreement increased. In February 1946 the Country Party received an offer of a combined Senate team, candidates to be able to nominate for any seat, and an exchange of preferences between the parties.⁵⁶ This was rejected as insufficient, since it made no mention of an agreement on policy. At last, in April 1946, the Liberals offered an agreement on policy in addition to their earlier proposal, and this was accepted.⁵⁷

It was in this somewhat loose alliance that the two parties faced the election. But the amalgamation issue had been postponed, not

55

CER to CC, 14 February 1946. This report is the source of all the information in this paragraph.

56

CCM, 14 February 1946.

57

CCM, 9 April 1946.

finalised. When it was raised again the Country Party had become much stronger, both financially and organisationally, and could dismiss the proposals with more asperity than would have seemed justified in 1945. In part this owed to its new role as a mass, popular party. Although this was in turn mostly due to the withdrawal of the F.S.A. and the G.A., it represented the culmination of a long-established though spasmodic movement within the party to create a wholly separate, popular, party organisation.

IV. CONSTITUTION - BUILDING

The origins of the Progressive Party determined its early organisation. The F.S.A. and the G.A. both possessed extensive organisation and employed organisers. In addition, the local organisation of the F.S.A. had already been used in elections. Thus the new party needed not electoral machinery, but a central directing body to co-ordinate the resources of the F.S.A., the G.A., and the metropolitan Progressives. The first party Constitution (published in 1920) was therefore a simple document, largely a description of the powers and responsibilities of Central Council, which was to act as the political management committee for the party's sponsors, and on which they had equal representation.⁵⁸

58

The Progressive Party of New South Wales, Constitution and Rules for the Guidance of Electorate Councils and Branches, Sydney 1920.

The continuity in office of the first Councillors and their increasing expertise, together with the party's firm hold on life after 1922 and its early acquisition of a permanent Head Office and staff, all enabled the Council to establish its prerogatives, vis-à-vis its sponsors, within a remarkably short time.⁵⁹ And as it gained the confidence of the producers' organisations it was given more and wider powers, among the most important of which was the power to alter the party's platform.⁶⁰

When it became necessary to create for electoral purposes a separate and parallel party organisation, in areas where neither the F.S.A. or the G.A. were active, both organisations acquiesced in the widening of the party to include supporters who were neither farmers nor graziers.⁶¹ A General Conference was set up for the new members, and they were given representation on Central Council. In both Conference and Council the new Country Party members began to assert their special place within the party, and to demand a larger share in the making of decisions.

During the 1930s, under the influence of new statism, there was a thoroughgoing attempt to decentralise the power within the party. When this failed it was the electorate councils, no longer merely election

59

It rebuked the G.A. when the latter complained directly to the parliamentary party over its attitude to a motion before the Assembly, and declared that such communications should always be forwarded to Central Council. CCM, 30 August 1923. The incident had no later parallel.

60

Constitution and Rules, amended to 20 September 1923.

61

See above, Chapter 1 part II.

machinery, but now the established centres of power and influence at the electoral level, which inherited most of the finance and authority of the Divisions.

At the same time, and perhaps in response to the party's own argument that it represented all country people, the purely party organisation was increasing its importance. Its representation on Central Council increased from five in 1927 to eight in 1933, and to more than 15 in 1939 when the presidents of federal electoral councils became members of Central Council ex officio.⁶² Over the whole of this period the representation of the F.S.A. and the G.A. remained at five each. The approval of the party's Central Council had become necessary for the alteration of the party Constitution and later the approval of the party's Conference was necessary.⁶³ By 1939 the party organisation no longer occupied an inferior position in relation to the F.S.A. and the G.A. and consequently their withdrawal caused less damage than might have been expected to the much-amended Constitution.

After the defeat in 1941, those pressing for a more democratic party in outlook and nature grew more vocal, and some almost welcomed the defeat:

...a spell would probably do us a lot of good.
 We could re-align our policy and thoughts....
 We would have to democratise our Party. 64

⁶²The United Country Party of New South Wales, Constitution and Rules for the Guidance of Divisions, Electorate Councils, Sub-Groups and Women's Auxiliaries, revised August 1933 and 1939.

⁶³Council: 1933; Conference: 1939.

⁶⁴CCM, 1 August 1941.

The re-arrangements necessitated by the departure of the producers' organisation, and the drive for thousands of members, as well as the democratic spirit of the times, provided the opportunity for an attack on the oligarchic spirit which had permeated the earlier Constitutions. On the other hand, the party's traditional dislike of "machine politics" meant that moves for Council dominance over the parliamentary party, for instance, were unlikely to attract much support.

The 1946 Constitution,⁶⁵ much of which had been foreshadowed during the debates at the Conferences of 1944 and 1945, thus represented something of a compromise, in which notions of intra-party democracy were qualified by the veneration of experience and tradition characteristic of the farmers' and graziers' associations and (thus) of the early Country Party. The appearance of democracy could be seen in the mandatory annual General Conference, which alone could alter the Constitution or lay down the general policy of the party. However, the Conference neither elected the party's officers nor exerted any other control over them. All honorary positions within the party were elective, but the principle of indirect elections was paramount. Members in their branches elected a branch chairman (automatically a delegate), and other officers and delegates. Branch delegates formed both state and federal electorate councils; and the chairmen of state and federal

65

The Australian Country Party (N.S.W.), Constitution and Rules for the guidance of Central Council, Electorate Councils, Branches, Women's Branches and Younger Sets, ratified April 1946. Note that for the first time, the Constitution and Rules are for the guidance of Central Council as well as the minor party institutions.

electorate councils formed the party's Central Council, which also included six trustees and five other co-opted members chosen because of their special qualifications. Central Council elected, from among its number, the party's principal officers and the Central Executive, which carried on the general supervision of the party's affairs.

A similar compromise was evidenced in the distribution of power within the party. Its leaders had learned from experience that too much centralisation of power led to organisational atrophy, while too much decentralisation led to organisational anarchy. Adhering to the principle that even bad government is better than no government, they gave Central Council the widest possible final powers, while allowing electorate councils the right to run the local affairs of the party very much as they wished, and providing them (through a statutory division of the party's resources) with the finance to make this possible. Because they had learned that it was impossible to keep most branches functioning as anything more than triennial election committees, branches were treated as subordinate electoral machinery and were not given direct representation on Central Council. Furthermore, since general organising and the recruitment of members (once a branch function) had become very largely bureaucratised through the organiser system, the branches were starved of central finance: an enthusiastic branch would be able to raise its own funds.

The new Constitution was hailed within the party as a great and progressive step forward and there was a feeling that the party had

now come of age.⁶⁶ In truth, it had become a 'popular' political organisation in which it was possible for any member to hold any position within the party, even the highest, by process of election. Furthermore, it matched the realities of Country Party politics far more successfully than any of its predecessors, save that of 1920: since 1946 there has been only one major alteration to the Constitution (regarding endorsement procedure).⁶⁷ Nor has there been any major agitation to alter it, as there had been in the 1920s and 1930s. Whether oligarchic or democratic, it has suited the needs of the party in the 17 years that have elapsed since its acceptance.

66

cf. Chairman's Address to the 1946 AC.

67

See below, Chapter 12, Part III.

CHAPTER 3

THE COUNTRY PARTY IN THE POSTWAR PARTY SYSTEM

By the end of the second world war the two problems of strategy and identity, which had seemed to be solved in the 1920s, were re-appearing in a new guise. On the one hand, years of co-operation with the National and United Australian Parties had blurred the sharpness of the party's separate identity for supporters no less than opponents, and on the other, the realisation that there existed a powerful rural interest was now common to all parties, and they wooed the rural electorates with much the same policies and promises. As the 1940s became the 1950s these problems were overshadowed by one even more serious for the Country Party - declining electoral support.

Although the non-Labor parties were entitled to feel in 1950 that there had been a magnificent recovery since 1945, the Country Party was nevertheless aware that its own recovery had been less than complete. Federally its position relative to the Liberal Party after the 1949 elections was much worse than in 1937, and in New South Wales the Labor Party was still in power and still in possession of many of the Country Party's old seats. For the Country Party then, the postwar party system was not a return to the 1930s; the retreat of Labor, a more dangerous Labor Party, had not been complete, and it had been accompanied by the expansion principally of the Liberal Party. The relations between the two non-Labor parties now began to hold more significance for the Country Party.

Table 1

Support for A.L.P.* candidates in electorates contested
by the Country Party in New South Wales: federal elections,

1943, 1946

(the percentages are based on the final figures)

<u>Electorate</u>	<u>1943</u> %	<u>1946</u> %	<u>+ or -</u> %
DARLING	71.55	60.71	- 10.84
NEW ENGLAND	48.91	39.43	- 9.48
GWYDIR	59.50	50.09	- 9.41
COWPER	47.40	38.23	- 9.17
MACQUARIE	64.95	58.41	- 6.54
CALARE	54.37	48.20	- 6.17
RIVERINA	55.32	50.57	- 4.75
RICHMOND	36.40	31.71	- 4.69
EDEN-MONARO	53.11	50.17	- 2.94
ROBERTSON	50.41	50.50	+ 0.09
HUME	51.43	51.79	+ 0.36

* The disintegration of non-Labor in 1943 and the relative stability of Labor make the A.L.P. figures the clearest indicators of voting trends.

Source: Parliamentary Handbook and Record of Elections for the Commonwealth of Australia, Tenth Edition, Canberra 1945, and Eleventh Edition, Canberra 1953.

I. RECOVERY AND STABILITY, 1946-1962

The enthusiasm with which the Country Party faced the 1946 federal elections was based almost entirely on the successful solution of its internal problems, and bore little relation to the political realities of the mid-1940s. For the Labor Party's victory in 1946 was decisive, especially in view of the substantial majority it held prior to the elections.¹ In all, the Government lost only six seats, and two of these went to notable Independent Labor candidates.² The Country Party not only failed to recapture any of its lost seats in New South Wales, but suffered a further embarrassment when the Liberal candidate won (from the Labor sitting member and the former Country Party member), the old Country Party stronghold of Calare. In addition the party noted with dismay that it had been the A.L.P. which had attracted the support of youth, both as voters and workers.³ But there were some encouraging signs: as Table 1 shows, support for the A.L.P. had declined in nearly all the electorates contested by the Country Party. And here and there, in contrast to 1943, the party's local electoral organisation had been most efficient.⁴

¹Appendix C.

²J.T. Lang (Reid, N.S.W.), and Mrs Doris Blackburn (Bourke, Vic.), widow of the former member.

³The Secretary of the Armidale Branch, for example, found it difficult to get any young people to help with election-day work, and contrasted this with the efficiency of the Labor Party's numerous youthful workers. Minutes, Armidale Branch, 29 November 1946.

⁴It had "never...been in better trim" in Richmond. Minutes, Richmond FEC, 30 August 1946.

The party organisation continued to expand. Six new electorate councils were formed during 1946⁵ and membership and income grew apace. At the end of 1948 the party possessed more than four times as many members as in 1945 and received well over three times the 1945 revenue from membership subscriptions,⁶ by now the party's most important source of income. In something of a departure from past practice, the party commenced organisational work close to the city. Branches were started in many outer Sydney suburbs and were capped with a super-structure of state and federal electorate councils.⁷ But despite the increase in membership the party was making little headway in the country towns, where it still possessed few members. In Albury the party had only ten town members, and in Orange only 12, at a time when the hinterland of these towns contained hundreds of party members. Even in the "solid north", Inverell Branch contained 58 town members, but 344 members who lived outside the town.⁸

Thus the party was consolidating its traditional support rather than breaking new ground, and even this had not proceeded as fast as had been hoped. The party's lack of success in 1946, (and in the N.S.W. elections of the following year) led to renewed apathy in some

⁵
Administration and Finance Report to CC, 10 April 1946.

⁶
Appendix E.

⁷
Minutes, Blacktown Branch, 21 March 1946, 12 February 1948, 14 April 1948; Minutes, Mitchell FEC, 7 October 1948.

⁸
SOR to CC, 25 August 1947.

electorates.⁹ More generally, the old non-Labor shibboleths of the "socialist menace" plainly had a more restricted currency than in pre-war days. Even worse, the Labor Party's deliberate selection of moderate candidates for country seats¹⁰ had paid handsome dividends in the reluctance of possible opponents to come forth and in the lack of drive of the opposing organisation. So widespread was this phenomenon that the Chairman felt obliged to warn the faithful during the 1947 party Conference that they should not

be misled into voting for, or supporting a candidate of the dis-credited Labour (sic) parties simply because you like his personal attributes. Judge him rather on the company he keeps.¹¹

And the party fumed at Labor propaganda which endeavoured (with seeming success) to picture the A.L.P. as "the moderate party".¹²

Thus the bank nationalisation issue, which arose without warning in August 1947, appeared to the party leaders as a godsend. It was an issue on which party lines would be clear-cut, an issue which would give the

9

Thus the secretary of Casino SEC introduced his annual report for 1946 with "pleasure", that for 1947 with "mixed feelings", and that for 1948 with "disappointment". Minutes, Annual Meeting Casino SEC, 12 May 1949.

10

Labour (sic) has taken special care to ensure that its country candidates will appeal in their electorates. Practical farmers, shire councillors, stock breeders and men from local families of long standing have been chosen.

Sydney Morning Herald, 1 May 1941. See also J.T. Lang's "Wagga's Stormy Political Past", an article in the "Inside Politics" series, Truth, 8 December 1957, and Aitkin, The United Country Party, pp.91-2.

11

Chairman's Address to the 1947 AG.

12

The Countryman, Vol. 1 No. 8, December 1946 and Vol. 2 No. 1, March 1947.

Country Party a sense of purpose it had lacked since the early 1930s, and above all, an issue which, by linking the A.L.P. firmly with socialism and by relating all the scattered criticisms of the Government, could destroy Labor's accumulated store of goodwill in the electorate. Within a fortnight of the Cabinet decision Central Council had determined on a plan of action and put it into operation.¹³

Organisers began forming 'non-political' Citizens' Protest Committees (of which 112 were established in the country), provided petition forms and literature at 835 points in New South Wales, and organised the collection of 19,000 names and the transmission of petitions.¹⁴ From September 1947 onwards the party newspaper, The (New South Wales) Countryman, made banking the central issue in its propaganda, and in January 1948 it commenced a full-blooded campaign aimed at identifying the A.L.P. with socialism and communism, a campaign which continued past the elections of 1949 and which, indeed, has never really ceased.

Sensing that the political initiative was passing from Labor, the Country Party intensified its drive for members and money. A target of £1,000 in annual revenue for each state electorate was set organisers in late 1947,¹⁵ and by March 1948 four electorates were past this

¹³
CCM, 27 August 1927. Cabinet's decision was taken on August 16; Crisp, Ben Chifley, p.327.

¹⁴
SOR to CC, 30 October 1947.

¹⁵
GSR to CC, 31 March 1948.

figure, and four others were approaching it.¹⁶ Fourteen months later twelve electorates were returning more than £1,000 per annum,¹⁷ and with the minimum membership fee at £1 per annum, this represented a high level of membership in the electorates concerned.

No less important than finance was the need for a modus vivendi with the Liberal Party. Although the 1948 annual Conference had resolved that the party should contest every seat at the next elections,¹⁸ the Conference had barely finished when Central Council sought a pre-election agreement with the Liberal Party.¹⁹ The latter seemed no less eager, and, after a formal obeisance to amalgamation, agreed to discuss election arrangements. The negotiations occupied the early months of 1949 and resulted in an "Agreement" ratified by Central Council on March 25, 1949. The Agreement specified which seats were to be contested by each party, and the composition of the joint Senate team; questions of policy were to be left to the Federal leaders.²¹ The agreement was generally accepted and the only vocal dissidents

16

SOR to CC, 25 March 1948.

17

SOR to CC, 18 May 1949.

18

Minutes, 1948 AC.

19

CCM, 17 August 1948.

20

Copy of a letter, W.H. Spooner to E.J. Eggins, 22 November 1948, (Central Council Minute Book).

21

The agreement is set out in Appendix F.

within the party came from the near-Sydney area, which had been allocated to the Liberals.²²

The campaign for the 1949 elections began early. Indeed many Country Party candidates were campaigning in earnest by November 1948, thirteen months before the elections. The non-Labor parties were aided not only by the bank nationalisation issue, from which every possible implication was drawn, but also by a drawn-out and unpopular coal strike in the winter months of 1949, which added point to the claim that the Government was "soft" on communism.²³ The Labor Government suffered from its own enlargement of the House of Representatives: the locking up of large Labor majorities in smaller electorates made the swinging seats even harder for Labor to win. In addition, the non-Labor parties promised an end to the austerity which was still part of the Australian scene, a promise which the Labor Government was not prepared to match.²⁴

In the event, the Government was heavily defeated. In the new House Labor had 47 seats to the 55 of the Liberal Party and the 19 of the Country Party, compared with the pre-election balance of Labor 43, Liberal Party 18 and Country Party 12. In New South Wales the party

22

Especially in Mitchell, where the endorsed Country Party candidate threatened to run as an Independent. Minutes, Mitchell FEC, 21 August 1949.

23

J.D. Playford, Doctrinal and Strategic Problems of the Communist Party of Australia, 1945-1962, unpublished Ph.D thesis, A.N.U., 1962, p.152. For an opposing view see Crisp, Ben Chifley, p.339.

24

Crisp, Ben Chifley, pp.369-72.

had retained its three seats (Cowper, Richmond and New England), regained some old bailiwicks (Hume, Gwydir and Riverina), and won the new seats of Lyne (north coast) and Lawson (central west). But it had expected to do a little better than this, and it was greatly disturbed at the Liberals' success in winning the new rural seats of Paterson and Farrer.²⁵

The election was followed by the formation of the first of Menzies' post-war Ministries, which comprised 14 Liberals and five members of the Country Party. Fadden became Deputy Prime Minister as well as Treasurer, and the other Country Party Ministers, all veterans, were J. McEwen (Commerce and Agriculture), Sir Earle Page (Health), H.L. Anthony (P.M.G.) and W. Cooper (Repatriation). Page and Anthony were from New South Wales, Fadden and Cooper from Queensland, and McEwen from Victoria. All save Cooper (the only Senator of the five) had had previous ministerial experience.

Communism, the state of the economy, and the integrity of the A.L.P. were to be the persistent themes in the federal elections after 1949, at all of which the coalition was successful, sometimes narrowly, sometimes by wide margins.²⁶ Before each election the Liberal/Country Party agreement was renegotiated, in substantially the same form, and most elections were followed by a reconstruction of the Ministry,

²⁵

Minutes, Central Campaign Committee, 13 February 1950.

²⁶

Appendix C.

in which the Country Party proportion and position deteriorated slightly.²⁷ Over the whole of Australia, as Appendix C shows, Country Party representation fluctuated only slightly and in New South Wales the only changes involved two seats, Hume changing hands on five occasions, and Cowper being regained by the party in 1963 after an unexpected Labor victory in 1961.

The Menzies Governments were fortunate in holding office during a period of almost uninterrupted national prosperity. Only in the early sixties did economic problems become really embarrassing, and even then their effects were confined largely to the urban areas. In the countryside, good seasons, good prices and improved productivity kept rural incomes generally high.²⁸

In New South Wales politics, by contrast, the Country Party has been in opposition since 1941. The banking issue raised non-Labor hopes in New South Wales, especially after the non-Labor victories in Victoria in 1947 and federally in 1949. However, the failure of the Liberal and Country Parties to present a united front for the state elections in 1950, together with an electoral boundary redistribution,²⁹

²⁷ Appendix D. In 1949, Country Party Ministers comprised 26.3 per cent of the Ministry; in 1956 this proportion had dropped to 22.7 per cent. After the elections of 1963, however, the Country Party was given six portfolios in an enlarged Ministry of 25, or 24 per cent.

²⁸ See below, Chapter 4, part I.

²⁹ Inter alia, the Assembly was increased from 90 to 94 seats by the abolition of four rural and the creation of eight new metropolitan and industrial seats.

enabled the Labor Government to survive. Since 1950 the Labor Government has not been seriously troubled, partly because of its own caution, and partly because of the internal dissensions of its opponents.³⁰

In keeping with the political stability of the 1950s, the party's own organisation has remained remarkably stable, in terms of membership, finance and efficiency. The rapid expansion of membership after 1945 ceased abruptly in 1950, and from that year the organisers concentrated on keeping membership at the 1950 level. Inflation after 1949 quickly converted the comfortable affluence of the late 1940s into a continuous financial crisis, which was not completely alleviated by an increase in the membership subscription from £1 to £2.2.0d. in 1954.³¹

Once the 1949 elections had decided the representation of the rural electorates, much of the party's local organisation in the Liberal-held electorates of Farrer, Paterson, Calare and Mitchell began to atrophy. In the case of Mitchell the organisation was formally wound up.³² Although it was never openly admitted, much the same situation existed in the Labor-held state seats of Monaro and Bathurst,

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Appendix A.

31

Minutes, 1954 AC. Between 1950 and 1954 the cost of the organiser system almost doubled, but the party's income from bank orders increased only very slightly. The party had to make up any short-fall from donations, which could not be budgeted for, and, as Appendix E shows, varied widely from year to year.

32

Minutes, Mitchell FEC, 12 April 1955. This was the Council's fifth meeting since 1949 and the first for two years.

while the long series of defeats at election time had sapped the enthusiasm and drive of party workers in other Labor rural seats.

But throughout most other rural electorates the party's organization remained interested and active. Conferences and electorate council meetings were generally well-attended, and the party's effort at the numerous elections and referenda after 1949 rarely lacked finance or workers. Indeed, to the outside observer the party presented an appearance of vitality and efficiency.

II. THE COUNTRY PARTY IN THE PARTY SYSTEM

1. Self-appraisal

The Country Party has no doubts about its own role in the party system and its views have merely been strengthened by the passage of time. Firstly, and fundamentally, it regards itself as having a historic purpose and destiny.

The party was formed as a protest against the lack of balance in Australian development and the failure of Governments to take the steps necessary to correct that lack.... The Country Party commenced a constructive and systematic campaign to correct these [the country's] disabilities one by one. 33

Charges that the existence of the Country Party seems to have had little effect on this imbalance are countered by arguing that the position would have been much worse but for the Country Party's endeavours. The

33

Speech by Rt Hon. Sir Earle Page M.P., Chairman, Australian Country Party, to Federal Council, 27 November 1959; (typescript, in possession of writer).

commitment of the party to this long-term objective underlies much of the optimism with which, the implications of demography notwithstanding, the Country Party faces the future.

Secondly, the party sees itself as both the spokesman and the watchdog for the primary industries. This role, too, the party sees as continuing almost indefinitely.

There is a most insidious form of propaganda current to the effect that the Country Party has now achieved its aims and consequently has outlived its purpose.... There is truth in the statement that we have achieved many of our aims, but gains can be lost, and in fact there is a strong tendency for events to again take the course that brought this party into being. 34

Thirdly, the party sees itself guarding the rights of country people against the unscrupulous and "octopus-like" encroachments of the City, assisted by its political spokesmen, the Labor and Liberal Parties. In this context the party is quick to object to suggestions of further centralisation, expensive metropolitan public works or the curtailing of rural services (such as postal services or small schools). Most especially it inveighs against electoral boundary changes, which profit only their architects, the Labor and Liberal parties, and which, it claims, are aimed at the very existence of the Country Party:

...the only party which has received no benefit from the successive redistributions of recent years has been the Country Party. Nor has it anything to hope for from the latest legislative atrocity.... All the more reason, therefore, why the country voice should be clear and strong, as the Country Party alone is free to make it. 35

³⁴Chairman's Report to CC, 29 October 1954.

³⁵Chairman's Address to the 1952 AC.

Denying one common criticism, it claims to be a "specialist" rather than a "sectional" party, which, though possessing wide general aims and policies, concentrates on those problems of most interest to country people.³⁶

Finally, the party regards itself as the "middle-of-the-road" party, and has always done so. A letter of appeal in 1920, over the signatures of the party's trustees, claimed that the party offered

a common meeting ground for electors who find the atmosphere of the old political parties and the shibboleths of the new agitators equally incompatible. 37

This claim was echoed by Senator Charles Hardy in 1934:

...the people did not want parties which swung the pendulum from the left wing of Labour to the right wing of capitalism, but a centre party, which the U.C.P. could fill. 38

The growth of the Liberal Party caused a further re-statement of this position. D.H. Drummond informed members in 1948 that the Country Party pursued a course between "unbridled capitalism and an enslaving bureaucracy".³⁹ Drummond's own fellow branch members located the party, rather more precisely, as lying between "the moderate left and the moderate

36

The writer first heard this ingenious counter-argument during the Liverpool Plains by-election of March 1961, when it was put forward by Davis Hughes M.L.A. (Armidale).

37

Copy of appeal letter, signed O.E. Friend, D.W. Roxburgh, no date, but certainly in late 1920; (Central Council Minute Book).

38

Sydney Morning Herald, 7 September 1934; see also Beveridge, p.52.

39

Minutes, Mitchell FEC, 7 October 1948.

right".⁴⁰ At the same time, the party has often felt it necessary to point out that it is not a "negative party", and many party members find the tag of "Anti-Labor" personally distasteful as well as electorally unrewarding. "We have become known as Anti-Labor", grieved a delegate to the 1962 annual Conference.

That is a disastrous name. The Country Party was never an inactive party. Let us be pro-Country Party. 41

2. Realities

Like many self-portraits, that of the Country Party presents an amalgam of truth, fiction and evasion. For all its protestations about its separate identity, and its desire to be taken seriously as a party of "initiative" rather than as one of "resistance", it is clear that the Country Party for most purposes fits quite comfortably into the conventional Labor/Anti-Labor dichotomy.

In both federal and New South Wales politics, the Country Party has set itself to fight the Labor Party, and accordingly it has from time to time formed electoral and governmental alliances with the Labor Party's other principal foe, the Liberal Party and its predecessors. Experience has taught the Country Party that its special objectives are best served when it is a partner in a coalition (since, federally at least, it has not been able to govern alone). The cross-bench, support-for-concessions strategy does not give the party the access to

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Minutes, Annual Meeting Armidale Branch, 4 January 1946.

41

Minutes, 1962 AC.

the day-to-day decision-making within government departments which is of such importance to its supporters. At the present time (1963), when the regulation of the primary industries themselves is becoming increasingly bureaucratised, control of the relevant departments is of the utmost importance.⁴²

Nevertheless, the alliance with the Liberal Party exists at the parliamentary level only. Even when an electorate is 'ceded' to the Liberal Party in a pre-election agreement, the skeleton of the Country Party local organisation there is maintained, in order that the seat may be contested again in the future. Thus was the federal seat of Calare ceded to the Liberal Party in 1949 and re-won by the party at a by-election in 1960. In such ceded electorates the Country Party organisation is kept entirely separate from the Liberal Party: during elections the local Country Party branches may campaign on behalf of the Liberal M.P., but they do so separately, as Country Party branches.⁴³ Furthermore, the Country Party has always fought vigorously to contain the Liberal Party within those electorates which it presently holds, and its loudest cries are heard at reports of intended Liberal Party activity in Country Party territory - as, for example, when the Liberal Party presented a candidate for the Gwydir by-election in

42

See below, Chapter 4, part VI.

43

There have been exceptions to this rule, and they are discussed below, in Chapters 14, part II, and 15, part II.

1953.⁴⁴ However, the long tradition of pre-election agreements has reduced the frequency of these electoral encounters and thus their disruptive effect.

But the Liberal Party challenges the Country Party only in a very few electorates, and then only on isolated occasions. Not so the A.L.P., which is the party's customary and wholehearted electoral opponent. Even in the party's safest seats the Labor Party maintains an electoral organisation of some strength, despite decades of crushing defeats. Its persistence has been rewarded, albeit tardily: the Country Party's grip on the north coast belt of electorates was broken in 1959, when the A.L.P. won the state seat of Lismore in unusual circumstances,⁴⁵ and it duplicated this feat in 1961 by winning the federal seat of Cowper, for 42 years the personal fief of Sir Earle Page.⁴⁶ It also held, for a brief period (1953-6), the safe state seat of Armidale. Elsewhere the two parties have been engaged in a closely contested war of attrition, and there are few rural seats which have not been held, even for short periods, by both parties. Whatever the transient issues at election-time, it is clear that in these electorates

44

See Henry Mayer and Joan Rydon, The Gwydir By-Election 1953 - A Study in Political Conflict, Canberra 1954, pp.31-44.

45

For details see below, Chapter 12, part II.

46

In 1963 the Country Party selected as its candidate for Cowper the highly popular young M.L.A. for Casino, Ian L. Robinson. Nevertheless, the Labor Member, F.W. McGuren, had established himself so well that he was defeated by a slim margin only, 2,341 votes in a poll of 38,321.

the contest is between Labor and non-Labor no less than it is in metropolitan electorates.

3. A Two-Party System?

The common tendency of observers to describe the Australian party system in terms of the A.L.P. has led many of them to see, if somewhat hesitantly, only a two-party system,⁴⁷ and to conceive of the Country Party, in the words of L.C. Webb, as "a regional and autonomous extension of the main non-Labour Party".⁴⁸ More extreme accounts portray the Country Party as the means by which non-Labor maximises its electoral support. For L.F. Crisp, the Country Party is

a device for attempting to stabilize one section of the former "floating vote" on an anti-Labour line - that section being the small farmers. 49

Nevertheless, such comments are unfortunate over-simplifications. As J.D.B. Miller has pointed out, they

ignore the fact that the Country Party has developed, in the same way as the other two parties, a persona, a view of itself as separate and distinct, which its supporters share. It has its own characteristic way of acting within the general

47
Among them Crisp, Parliamentary Government of Australia, p.63
D.W. Rawson, Australia Votes, Melbourne 1961, pp.2-4; L.C. Webb, "The Australian Party System", in S.R. Davis (ed.) The Australian Political Party System, p.86; and S.R. Davis, "Diversity in Unity" in S.R. Davis (ed.), The Government of the Australian States, Melbourne 1960, p.579.

48
Webb, p.103.

49
Crisp, Parliamentary Government of Australia, p.129. Cf. Webb, loc. cit.; ...by virtue of its ability to mobilise the country interest, the Country Party enables non-Labour to win more seats than would be possible if there were only one non-Labour Party.

framework of Australian politics, and has established its claim to be a permanent factor in the system. 50

How has the Country Party established this claim? In the first place, it has survived, both federally and in New South Wales, for over forty years, and it has done this without the upheavals which have periodically agonised its two rivals. Secondly, it has left its stamp on the statute books of state and Commonwealth, and altered, perhaps permanently, the policies and attitudes of the other parties. Thirdly, although in a general sense many of its policies are anti-Labor, many others are, and have always been, opposed to those of the Liberal Party, inasmuch as the Country Party represents both a free enterprise and an agrarian socialist viewpoint. Fourthly, it has resisted with some success the attempts of the Liberal Party, which denies any necessity for the existence of a separate rural party, to replace it.

Furthermore, although "it is...a striking fact that the appearance of the Country party coincided with the introduction of the preferential vote",⁵¹ it is clear that the party's existence does not now depend on the maintenance of preferential voting. However, the electoral system has affected the Country Party in fundamental ways. Preferential voting made possible the party's extensive break-through both federally

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J.D.B. Miller, Australian Government and Politics (second edition), London 1961, p.63.

51

Duverger, p.218.

and in New South Wales in 1919/20. Had the simple-majority system been in force, the Country Party's first electoral successes would probably have been on a smaller scale, and the party's parliamentary membership more homogeneous. The result may well have been a small and industrially-oriented farmers' party in both state and federal spheres. But preferential voting allowed the conservative graziers of the north to vote for Country and Progressive Party candidates without thus ensuring a Labor victory, and it has been the influence of the graziers within the party, as much as any other factor, which has caused both the federal and N.S.W. Country Parties to pursue their consistently anti-Labor course.

The party has continued to find the preferential voting system a means of security. Firstly, it has enabled the two non-Labor parties to engage in continuous and occasionally fierce electoral warfare without at the same time presenting the disputed seats to the A.L.P. In this context the Country Party profited greatly from preferential voting during the period of its great expansion - the late 1920s and early 1930s. Secondly it has allowed the party to run more than one endorsed candidate in any seat, thereby catering to the traditional rural antipathy towards pre-selection, while curbing factionalism within the local party organisation.⁵² Although the party realises that a return to simple-majority voting would make further electoral expansion

52

See below, Chapter 12, part III.

very difficult, it does not regard preferential voting as essential in its safe seats. When such a change was proposed for New South Wales in 1925, Colonel Bruxner asserted:

Personally, I know of no system which will better suit my colleagues and myself than...single-member electorates and "first past the post"...there are many parts of the State to-day where no one of any other political creed would have a chance at all. 53

In fact the electoral toughness of the Country Party is probably nearly as great as that of the other parties in their chosen seats. Such few experiments that the other non-Labor party has made to test this toughness have usually been dismal failures.⁵⁴

The Country Party, then, derives its longevity neither from the quirks of the electoral system nor from any usefulness as the mobiliser of the rural non-Labor vote. Rather it is the political expression of an articulate rural interest which, in Australian politics, is both economically and philosophically distinct. Its outlook is based on "countrymindedness", an explicitly regional attitude, but a perfectly real one, nevertheless.⁵⁵ The hope which the Liberal Party in New South Wales professes to nurture, that the Country Party will see the

53

N.S.W.P.D., Vol. 103, p.2045, 3 November 1925.

54

Thus, for example, a U.A.P. candidate who nominated for New England in 1934 received 12,210 votes to the Country Party's 21,325. The Liberal candidate in Gwydir in 1953 polled fewer votes than either of the two Country Party candidates.

55

Henry Mayer, "Liberal-Country Party Rivalry is Real and Permanent", Voice, Vol. 4 No. 12, December 1955, p.19.

need for amalgamation and join with it in forming a "truly national non-Labor party" has never been founded in the realities of the present. Amalgamation offers no advantages to the Country Party - at least at present. As the junior partner in a coalition its position has always been a strong one, and it has exploited it skilfully: frequent Liberal complaints of the Country Party's "undue influence" and "domination in Cabinet", though often highly exaggerated, demonstrate this.⁵⁶ As a separate party it benefits under the electoral system, and has almost always been over-represented in parliament (that is, in terms of the proportion of votes won).⁵⁷ Finally, "countrymindedness" is not a creation of the Country Party, but a prime cause of its existence, and there is a great deal of reason in the party's belief that

if the identity of the Country Party were merged in some other party, a new Country Party would almost certainly come into being. 58

III. THE COUNTRY PARTY IN THE POST-WAR PARTY SYSTEM

The role of a party in a party system is rarely fixed or certain for very long. Parliamentary numbers change, old issues and disputes

56

Ibid., p.17; Aitkin, The United Country Party, p.44.

57

See the tables in Webb, pp.97 and 100, the graphs in Miller, pp.102 and 103, and Aitkin, The United Country Party, Appendix F.

58

From a statement circulated to members of the Central Executive in 1947, and reprinted in Ellis, The Country Party, as Appendix J, p.250.

fade as they are replaced by others, and in time the role of a party subtly alters. In modern Australia this trend has been, on the whole, slow and uncertain. Yet it is clear that the Country Party of 1963 is not the party of 1923 despite the many resemblances. In brief, its distinctiveness has faded, its numbers are fewer, its influence has declined, and its future is less assured. These changes have assumed a different importance in the two milieux in which the party operates, for although the federal and the N.S.W. party systems have both changed in the post-war years, they have changed in different ways.

1. The Federal Party System

In the post-war federal party system the links with the past are immediately apparent. The three-fold party division which has existed since 1919 is still sharp in 1963.⁵⁹ The pattern of electoral support, at least for the Country Party, seems to have been remarkably stable over two generations,⁶⁰ and the parties have been led, during the whole of the post-war years by men whose interest and experience in politics date from before the second world war. The post-war years have even witnessed a major division in the Labor movement, no less bitter, nor less important electorally, than those of 1916/7 and 1930/1.

The important changes have been in emphasis. The political debate of the inter-war period moved from marketing to arbitration, from

59

Though see Rawson, Chapter 1, for another opinion.

60

See part IV of this Chapter, below.

fiscal policy to banking and defence. But the dominant political theme of the post-war years has been communism, and around this theme each party has played its own distinctive obligato. That of the Country Party has been unusually strident and long-lasting. Indeed the party's post-war advocacy of a total ban on the Communist Party pre-dates that of the Liberal Party, having been formulated at the party's annual Conference in 1946,⁶¹ while the Liberal Party did not adopt the same intransigent attitude until two years later.⁶² Nor has it been merely, or even principally, an election attitude. The party Conferences of the early 1950s accepted without question that communism (and socialism) in Australia posed an immediate and real threat to the Australian way of life. There is no doubt a good deal in the argument that this represents not a greater awareness of the threat than the Liberal Party, but rather a smaller degree of sophistication.⁶³ In any case it is hard to avoid the contradiction between the party's stand on communism and its avowed position as the "middle of the road" party; indeed, on communism, as on so many other issues of the 1950s, its viewpoint was not distinguishable from that of the Liberal Party.

The blurring of the Country Party image has been assisted by the

61

Minutes, 1946 AC.

62

Playford, p.115.

63

Rawson, p.53.

party's own success in establishing as settled policies many of those economic objectives for which it entered federal politics. The continued existence of wheat stabilisation and dairy subsidies no longer depends on Country Party pressure, and rural industries in general are treated with a governmental solicitousness unknown before the war.⁶⁴ Yet the increasing acceptance of the importance of the rural industries has resulted to some degree in their removal from the field of public controversy, and this has made the party's old raison d'etre harder to justify.

No less important has been the Country Party's relationship with the Liberal Party. In part this has merely reflected the slow relaxation of the Country Party's hold on the diminishing number of rural electorates. Page matched Bruce's 30 seats in 1922 with 14 of his own, and in fact had slightly better numbers when negotiating with Lyons.⁶⁵ But the Liberal Party secured many of the new rural seats in the enlarged House, and Fadden had only 19 seats in 1949 to Menzies' 55. The Country Party's share in Government has declined more than proportionately since the glorious days of 1923 when Page had only one less portfolio for his party than had Bruce. Even by the end of the Bruce-Page Ministry the Country Party had only one portfolio to every two administered by the National Party, a ratio which was more or

64

The political implications of the changing rural economy are discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

65

This paragraph is based on Appendices C and D.

less maintained during the 1930s. But in 1949 it was only 1:3, and after 1955 it was beginning to approach 1:4. The disparity was even wider in the Cabinet, the inner group of Ministers set up by Menzies in 1956, in which the Country Party proportion was once 1:5.

There has been no suggestion that the partnership between the parties is an equal one, as Page was fond of implying was the case in the Bruce-Page Ministry.⁶⁶ In fact the Country Party has been most distinctly a junior partner: Menzies has from the beginning dominated the entire Ministry, not just the Liberal section.⁶⁷ He undoubtedly learned from his own experiences in 1939/40 of the advantages of maintaining good relationships with the Country Party, and his actions since the formation of the Liberal Party have won him a tremendous amount of goodwill from the Country Party. In particular he has refused to allow the federal Liberal Party to become embroiled in state Liberal/Country Party feuds,⁶⁸ a decision which, along with others, has brought forth many adulatory references at Country Party Conferences.

But his ascendancy also owes to the nature of the Liberal Party

66

Page, p.103, for example.

67

For some sidelights, see H.B.S. Gullett, "Parliamentary Government in Australia", in John Wilkes (ed.), Forces in Australian Politics, Sydney 1963.

68

During the Gwydir by-election of 1953 he refused to speak on behalf of the Liberal candidate alone, and supported both Liberal and Country Party candidates impartially. Mayer and Rydon, pp.37-8. Actions such as this have caused Sir Robert to be seen as the archetypal "good Liberal" in many Country Party eyes.

itself. Although it is the lineal descendant of the U.A.P. and of the National Party before it, the Liberal Party is both more efficient and more democratic than its ancestors. It is beholden to no other organisation for financial or any other kind of support,⁶⁹ and the Country Party aside, is non-Labor's best attempt yet at forming a mass party of the Right. In addition it has a confidence, a morale and a freedom from factionalism unknown to its predecessors, and all in such measure that in 1963 it looks no nearer the end of its life than it did in 1953. As a result the Country Party is weaker in two further respects vis-a-vis its ally: it can no longer feel the indefinable sense of moral superiority it felt when comparing itself with the U.A.P. or the National Party, and, though its loyalty is not doubted, it can no longer, as it did in the last days of J.A. Lyons,⁷⁰ maximise its power within the Ministry by being the little group upon whom the Prime Minister could personally depend.

Thus, while the Country Party plays much the sort of role in 1963 which it played forty years earlier, those forty years have had their effects. The party's initiative and its power and importance have declined. If the rural seats continue to decline in number, the

69

Rawson, p.33. See also B.D. Graham, "The Place of Finance Committees in non-Labor Politics, 1910-1930", Australian Journal of Politics and History, Vol. VI No. 1, May 1960, pp.41-52.

70

Ulrich Ellis, MS notes for a History of the Country Party. (In possession of this writer).

Liberal Party will soon possess an absolute majority - indeed it has fallen short of this goal by only narrow margins on two occasions.⁷¹

A succession of Liberal administrations which did not at any stage depend on Country Party support would test severely the regional basis of the party's support, and might eventually present the party with an unpleasant choice: whether to fight on as an independent party with the hope of gaining once again the balance of power, or to merge while it still has the initiative and thus keep some influence on legislation and administration. This problem has been facing the Victorian Country Party since the advent of the Bolte Liberal Government in June 1955. Thus far the regional support of the Victorian party seems unwavering, but regionalism has most point in state politics, and one might argue that the decline of the federal Country Party will be faster than that of its state counterparts.

2. The Party System in New South Wales

In New South Wales the elements of continuity in the party system have been a little less marked. Party policies, electoral support and relationships are the parties' inheritance from pre-war days. In addition the A.L.P. has also inherited its leaders. But in contrast

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Although it should be observed that in periods of Labor decline the other non-Labor party will often approach an absolute majority, as has happened, for instance, in 1925, 1931, 1955 and 1958. But these are exceptional circumstances and the Country Party can afford to wait until the pendulum moves the other way, depriving the Liberal party of a dozen seats but the Country Party of only one or two.

to the regular change in governments up until 1932 (or even 1941), N.S.W. politics since the war have been marked by the total failure of the non-Labor parties to achieve power.

Furthermore, there has been a significant change in the A.L.P. In 1940, when it finally rejected Lang, it also rejected the Lang strategy of concentration on working-class support.⁷² In 1941, and even since, it has aimed for as much middle-class and farmer support as possible, using as its weapons the election of 'conservative' candidates in border-line seats, the choice of moderate leaders, the avoidance of contentious issues and the ready adoption of any worthwhile Opposition policy. In the country it has carried on, almost without alteration, those developmental projects initiated by the Country Party, furthered its policy of decentralised education, and in general responded fairly readily to the requests of rural groups. Little affected by the appearance of the D.L.P., it has been extraordinarily successful in keeping a bland, efficient, almost 'non-party' image of itself before the electors, who have come close to rejecting it only once - in the 1950 elections when federal issues were particularly intrusive.

This general policy has been most astute. On the one hand it has made the A.L.P. in New South Wales 'respectable', and kept it so (a memorable achievement in view of its inter-war history). On the

72

Irwin Young, "The Impact of J.T. Lang on the New South Wales Labor Party", A.P.S.A. News, Vol. 8 No. 1, May 1963, p.22.

other hand, it has made it very difficult for the non-Labor parties to establish a sharply defined image of themselves which could be contrasted with that of the A.L.P. For the Country Party this has been especially galling. As Ulrich Ellis, the party's only theoretician, pointed out to Central Executive in 1947:

I doubt if we will make much progress by merely attacking communism or socialism...Labour leaders are now attempting to assume the role of advocates of rural development and the retreat from cities. They are, in fact, challenging us on our own ground, and we must recognise the importance of their technique. 73

In fact the Country Party has found it impossible to win much public acceptance for its claim that the "City-dominated" A.L.P. has neglected the countryside. And Labor members have been so assiduous in cultivating their electorates that concentrated attacks on individual constituencies have proved expensive and well-nigh useless.⁷⁴

But over and above Labor shrewdness has been the failure of the two non-Labor parties to convince the electorate that they were united enough to form an effective government. In part this has reflected the internal stresses of the Liberal Party, whose experiments in leadership, intrigues and the diletante impression given by many of its members, made it seem that the party was unready for power.⁷⁵ But it

73

Report to Central Executive, 23 May 1947.

74

These points are argued further in Chapter 15, parts I and II.

75

Katharine Holgate, "Liberal Party Problems in New South Wales State Politics", Australian Quarterly, Vol. XXXIII No. 4, December 1961, pp.15-22.

owed also to a basic hostility between the parties. On the one side it was founded in the distrust by the Country Party of the leaders of the Liberal Party, whom it saw as "the same elements...which had wrecked the Stevens-Bruxner Government."⁷⁶

On the other side it owed to the determination of the Liberal Party leaders to bring about the amalgamation of the two parties. This they hoped to achieve by public pressure, through the columns of the metropolitan press - there were amalgamation 'blitzes' of this kind in 1947, 1948, 1953 and 1954 - but, if this failed, "by competition and defeat".⁷⁷ However, the Liberal Party has been careful in its choice of battlefields, and has only once (Gloucester, 1950) opposed a sitting Country Party Member. The Country Party has replied to press comment and criticism whenever it has been offered, but in this sort of paper war it has never had much success.

Statements sent for publication refuting such editorial misrepresentation, or replying to the views of others, have in most instances, either not been published at all or have been mangled. ⁷⁸

Before each election the Country Party sought some form of pre-selection agreement. In 1947 and in 1950 it apparently failed to secure

⁷⁶
 Bruxner, at a meeting of the Federal Council; FCM, 13 September 1947. E.S. Spooner, who caused the split in 1939, was a brother of W.H. Spooner, the President of the New South Wales Division of the Liberal Party in the late 1940s, and then, as now, its most powerful figure.

⁷⁷
 Holgate, p.16.

⁷⁸
Chairman's Report to AMCC, 20 May 1952. See also below, Chapter 16, part II.

more than an agreement to exchange preferences.⁷⁹ In 1952 the parties entered into negotiations for the elections of the following year, but these came to nothing.⁸⁰ Towards the end of 1954 the State Council of the Liberal Party again refused a request for co-operation,⁸¹ although it finally agreed not to attack the Country Party in seats where both parties were opposing Labor sitting Members.⁸² The elections having been fought and lost, amalgamation was again offered to, and again rejected by, the Country Party's annual Conference.⁸³ The offer was repeated in late 1957,⁸⁴ but this time with seemingly little enthusiasm, and both the offer and its rejection, together with the press support for the former,⁸⁵ seemed now to have become a ritual in the pattern of Liberal/Country Party relations.

Only towards the end of the decade did the pattern seem likely to change. The Country Party gained new blood and leadership in the last few years of the 1950s. Colonel Bruxner, the party's leader,

⁷⁹
Sydney Morning Herald, 29 January 1947; The Countryman, May 1950.

⁸⁰
CCM, 20 May 1952, 19 September 1952.

⁸¹
Sydney Morning Herald, 14 December 1954.

⁸²
Sydney Morning Herald, 21 February 1955, 22 February 1955. But by the time of the election, there was not even an agreement to exchange preferences. GSR to CC, 19 June 1956.

⁸³
Minutes, 1956 AC.

⁸⁴
Sydney Morning Herald, 2 September 1957.

⁸⁵
e.g. Sydney Morning Herald, 3 September 1957 (leader).

inspiration and sage for almost thirty years, retired in 1958 and his place was taken by a youthful ex-schoolteacher, Davis Hughes, who had, since his election to the Assembly in 1950, provided much of the intellectual content of the party's policy and pronouncements. Hughes had replaced D.H. Drummond, Bruxner's "political twin"⁸⁶ in the northern seat of Armidale, on Drummond's entering federal politics. The deputy-leadership also went to a younger member, C.B. Cutler, who had won Orange in 1947, and who replaced Hughes as leader during the latter's illness in 1959. From 1959 there was a steady replacement of the older state Country Party parliamentarians by younger men, until in 1962 only two of the 14 members were older than 50.

As the 1959 elections drew near, the Liberal Party dropped its antagonistic attitude towards co-operation and concluded a detailed pre-election agreement with the Country Party. It seemed a genuine rapprochement. As the Chairman of the Country Party told the story to the 1959 annual Conference,

Some time, about November last year, we had met the Liberal Party when running the fourth candidate for the Senate and after the conclusion I said to Mr. Cotton, [the President of the New South Wales Division of the Liberal Party] - I think it would be in the best interests of both our parties if you and I got to know each other better. He felt the same way....

86

Bruxner and Drummond entered parliament on the same day, as members of the same party and for the same seat (the three-member Northern Tablelands electorate), held adjoining seats after the abolition of proportional representation, were Ministers together between 1927 and 1930 and between 1932 and 1941. Drummond was Deputy-Leader to Bruxner from 1932 to 1949. Bruxner retired in 1962, Drummond in 1963.

We spent 3 or 5 hours and talked things over.... I told him we felt they would just as soon fight us as fight the Labor Party. He assured me that he and his executive no longer had that feeling. 87

However, the campaign, though enthusiastic and hard-fought, was unsuccessful, and Labor retained power with a slim, though adequate, majority.

Shortly after the elections the Liberal Party elected a new leader, R.W. Askin, its fourth leader since 1954, and under his firm leadership⁸⁸ the party seemed to settle down to full-time politics. Between 1959 and 1962 the two parties strove to create the impression that they were a united and vigorous opposition, entirely prepared for the responsibility of office. Nevertheless, the electors seemed no more convinced in 1962 than they had been in earlier years, and the Country Party concluded with some exasperation that it had no idea how it could get rid of the Labor Government. A delegate to the 1962 Conference expressed a common feeling:

We felt we had a really excellent policy and we certainly had excellent men amongst our members and [we want to know how] the opposition who had neither of these things were able to beat us at the present time. We want to find out what it is the public wants so that we can get into power. 89

Federally, then, the Country Party is faced with the need to re-assert its separate identity at a time when its power to do this has

87

Minutes, 1959 AC.

88

Holgate, p.22.

89

Minutes, 1962 AC.

declined, while in New South Wales it is confronted with a serene and long-lived Labor Government which has successfully challenged the party on its own ground. But neither of these problems bears the same implications for the party's long term prospects as does the demographic constriction of the rural areas, for this affects the party's electoral support.

IV. THE ELECTORAL SUPPORT OF THE COUNTRY PARTY⁹⁰

The prime cause of the persistence of the Country Party in both state and federal politics has been the high level of support which it has always enjoyed among country voters. But the characteristics of this electoral support repay close attention, for they indicate a fundamental weakness in the Country Party's hold on its rural electorates.

Country electorates may be considered as comprising three separate groups of voters: those who live in the towns, those who live in the townships and those who live outside these settlements; that is to say, urban, township and rural voters. The Country Party has generally polled very well indeed among rural voters, sometimes receiving more than 80 per cent of their votes (in some areas of the north coast). But in most areas of the state outside the north coast it has found

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The section is based almost entirely on Aitkin, The United Country Party, and a paper delivered by the writer to the 3rd A.P.S.A. Conference in 1961 entitled Voting Trends in Country Electorates.

it difficult to secure much more than a narrow majority among urban or township voters.

This general pattern of electoral support is affected according to the land use of the electorate. Dairying areas contain few hired rural employees and most rural voters are farmers and their wives and families. In sparsely settled grazing areas, however, rural workers of all sorts often outnumber employers and their families. For perhaps this reason, the level of rural support for the Country Party has tended to be higher in dairying than grazing electorates, with rural support in wheatfarming electorates somewhere between these extremes. It is significant that the party's safest seats have been traditionally those of the north coast and tablelands, and not, with one or two exceptions, those of the inland.

The consistency of this voting pattern is striking. Although the Country Party realised very early in its history how important it was to secure a substantial majority of the urban vote, it has done very little until recently to attract it, and where the party does poll well among urban voters this is probably due to the personality of the member or some other local circumstance. Its dependence on one source of faithful electoral support has caused the Country Party to be greatly affected by each redistribution of electoral boundaries. The rural population of New South Wales has been declining steadily since 1911, that of the provincial towns has been rising slowly but steadily and that of the metropolis and the industrial cities has been rising

Table 2
Rural and Non-rural
Federal Electorates in New South Wales

	<u>1919</u>	<u>1925</u>	<u>1937</u>	<u>1949</u>
Rural	13	12	13	15
<u>Non-rural</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>32</u>
Total	27	26	28	47

Note:

Non-rural includes the Newcastle-Coalfields seats, and for 1949, the Illawarra industrial seats.

Source:

Based on working sheets for a Handbook of Australian Politics, being compiled in the Department of Political Science, Institute of Advanced Studies, Australian National University.

fairly rapidly. In consequence rural seats in the Assembly have been abolished (one in 1940, four in 1949, one in 1961) to make way for new metropolitan seats, while those that remain have grown progressively more urban in character. As Table 2 shows, the same trend has occurred in federal electorates, where the big decline in rural representation has also been a post-war development.

Were elections in rural electorates merely contests between the Country and Labor Parties this would be a serious enough trend. However, the Liberal Party poses and will continue to pose an equally serious threat. The Liberal Party has never heeded its ally's plea that it should concentrate on the metropolitan area and leave the country to the Country Party, and indeed it has been successful in snapping up country seats under the nose of the Country Party. It is clear that the Liberal Party has more success in the larger country towns, where links with the countryside are not so all-pervading, than has the Country Party, and its two most recent acquisitions (Wagga Wagga and Dubbo) have been seats dominated by large provincial towns. If the Liberal Party were able to win a few more rural seats it might thus reduce the electoral importance of the Country Party to a point where amalgamation might be unavoidable.

The Country Party has only recently realised the full implications of its possession of a declining electoral support. In New South Wales it can do little but protest loudly every time a re-distribution occurs, but federally its access to power has enabled it to block

very recent redistribution proposals which might have cost it three seats.⁹¹ In addition, it is beginning to adopt policies which are designed to make the townsman feel an integral part of the Country Party, as well as intensifying its drive for townsman members. But this may be a little late. The Labor Party, as well as the Liberal Party, is benefiting from increasing urbanisation. Electorally, New South Wales is witnessing a real, though unacknowledged race: the Country Party is endeavouring to attract the support of the townsman, the other parties that of the farmer and grazier. Only the most sanguine Country Party supporter would argue that the long-term chances of his party were not the slimmest of all three parties.

Indeed, both the federal and the N.S.W. Country Parties have drawn close to the point where their traditional strategies will lose their relevance. To the Liberal and Labor Parties the Country Party is now a known quantity; they have learned how to attack it and how to consolidate their gains once made. The traditional support of the party is declining; not only has this led to a weaker position in federal and in future state coalitions, but it is making the party's hold on its own electorates less secure. The margin for error in the conduct of the Country Party's strategies is becoming smaller.

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For details see below, Chapter 16, part III.

CHAPTER 4

THE COUNTRY PARTY AND THE RURAL INDUSTRIES

The Country Party was created by farmers' organisations, and it has always professed to be their parliamentary spokesman, a claim never seriously contested by either of its opponents, although the Labor Party has often avowed a special protective interest in the small farmer. But the improved position of the rural industries in recent years has brought suggestions that the party's concern for the problems of individual industries is now unnecessary and that this role is finished. Thus J.D.B. Miller:

Now that the farmer's battle for marketing boards and guaranteed prices has been largely won, the party concentrates more upon attacks on the trade unions and the Labour Party, which are supposed to increase the farmer's labour costs and so diminish his reward....¹

This type of argument misconceives the relationship of the party to the rural industries as much as it misinterprets the developments in the industries themselves. The fortunes of the rural industries are not permanently influenced by political action, and the Country Party has probably been less successful (and certainly less wholehearted) in influencing the rural economy than it has been in promoting its wider social objectives. To understand the party's relationship to its industrial support it is first necessary to understand the problems of the rural industries themselves.

¹Miller, p.77; cf. footnote 34 in Chapter 3 above.

Table 3

The Sources of Australia's Export Income
1955/6

<u>Commodity</u>	<u>£A,000,000 (f.o.b.)</u>
Wool and Sheepskins	353
Meats	61
Dairy products	49
Wheat and Flour	67
Fruit and Vegetables	35
Sugar	25
Other food, Drink, Tobacco	<u>29</u>
TOTAL RURAL	619
	—
Fuels and basic materials	50
Base metals	42
Other manufactures	<u>45</u>
TOTAL NON-RURAL	137
	—
<u>GRAND TOTAL</u>	<u>756</u>
	—

Source: Adapted from D.B. Williams, Economic and Technical Problems of Australia's Rural Industries, Melbourne 1957, p.15.

I. THE RURAL INDUSTRIES AND THE AUSTRALIAN ECONOMY

The Australian economy has always depended upon imports and these have traditionally been paid for, apart from loans and direct overseas investment in Australian industries, by export earnings. Australia's export income, in turn, has been very largely that of its rural income. Table 3 sets out the components of Australia's export income in 1955/6, a not untypical year.

Yet the importance to the economy of the rural industries has only rarely been reflected in the general economic policies of Australian governments. In part this has owed to the division of powers in relation to rural industries between the state and the federal governments, in which the latter has been limited to matters of external trade, and the former to land settlement and use, production, and internal trade. Furthermore, in the earlier decades of the century, apart from a doctrinaire reluctance to interfere with the processes of the market, there was a tendency to consider bad times as a passing phase and to ignore serious weaknesses in the cost structure of rural industries. In addition, all federal governments since the end of the first decade have been committed to a policy of fostering the growth of secondary industry by means of tariff protection, a policy which has had adverse effects on all the exporting rural industries.

Such rural policies as evolved were essentially ad hoc and illustrated the differing policy goals of changing governments. At different times governments have implemented stop-gap, palliative

measures to help industries, or sections of industries, in temporary distress. Their desire to iron out fluctuations in farmer incomes has helped in establishing price stabilisation schemes. They have sought increased efficiency by altering taxation laws and setting up extension services, and attempted to equalise rural and non-rural incomes by allowing the "averaging" of rural incomes for taxation purposes (which has generally assisted all but the largest farmers).² The dream of a prosperous yeomanry has prompted many closer settlement schemes and decentralisation programmes. But in general, the "submergence of rural policies in general economic policy is... [a] major characteristic of Australian agricultural policy".³

Only recently has this pattern altered, and even then the impetus came from a general economic crisis. The second world war was followed by a government-sponsored drive for industrialisation and full employment, which further weakened rural industries already run down by the war. Industrialisation caused the diversion of scarce resources to secondary industry, while full employment made rural labour hard to obtain and expensive. The record prices for wool in 1950/1 gave "a sudden enormous boost to local demand pressures"⁴ and caused a balance of payments crisis in the following year.

2

D.B. Williams, Economic and Technical Problems of Australia's Rural Industries, Melbourne 1957, p.2.

3

Ibid.

4

Prime Minister's Department, Commonwealth of Australia, Australia, 1956: An Economic Survey, p.23, quoted in Williams, p.10.

As a result, the federal government decided on a "Commonwealth-wide programme of agricultural expansion...to maintain [Australia's] capacity to import".⁵ To this end the rural industries were to have equal priority with defence and coal production. Targets for increased production were set, fertilizer, materials and machinery became more readily available,⁶ while taxation concessions made it profitable for the farmer to improve his property and thus increase productivity.⁷ At the same time the federal government financed the states in the enlargement of their extension services and allocated greater sums to scientific research in the problems of the industries.⁸ Finally, the new policy involved the government in a (to date highly successful) search for markets.⁹

While it is still too early to decide what the long-term effects of the new policy will be, it is clear that the increased productivity of the rural industries in the 1950s¹⁰ has been instrumental in

⁵

J. McEwen, Minister for Commerce and Agriculture, February 1952, quoted in Williams, p.12.

⁶

J.G. Crawford et al., Wartime Agriculture in Australia and New Zealand 1939-50, Stanford 1954, p.195.

⁷Williams, p.16.

⁸J. McEwen, Address to the Federal Council of the Australian Country Party, 27 November 1959 (roneed; in possession of writer).

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰The index of rural productivity, which was 121 in 1950/1, had risen to 200 in 1961/2. Rural Productivity, an unpublished submission by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics to the Vernon Committee, 1963 (Courtesy Mr F.G. Gruen, Australian National University).

Table 4

Rural Holdings Classified According to Type of Activity
New South Wales: 1959/60

<u>Type of Activity</u>	<u>No. of Holdings</u>	<u>Acreage</u>
Sheep-Cereal Grain	11,922	20,411,710
Sheep	21,488	130,615,451
Cereal Grain	637	660,921
Beef Cattle	3,960	9,381,816
Dairying	13,595	4,674,716
Fruit	4,879	411,545
Vegetables	1,936	332,621
Poultry	2,142	157,038
All other classified holdings	<u>13,396</u>	<u>2,124,050</u>
TOTAL	<u>63,955</u>	<u>168,769,868</u>

Source: Adapted from Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics,
Classification of Rural Holdings by Size and Type of
Activity, 1959-60, Bulletin No.1 - New South Wales,
p.58.

maintaining rural incomes while commodity prices have been falling, and certainly the greater governmental interest in markets and research have helped toward this result. But perhaps most importantly, the new policy is a realisation "that laissez-faire for rural industries...was inadequate in an economy so dependent on administrative decisions of the Government...."¹¹

II. THE RURAL INDUSTRIES OF NEW SOUTH WALES

In New South Wales, as in Australia as a whole, most of the usable land is devoted to grazing, and as Table 4 shows, the grazing of sheep, either alone or in combination with wheatgrowing, is the principal occupation on half the classified rural holdings in the state. Using this yardstick, dairying is next in importance, followed by cereal-growing, either alone or in combination with sheep-grazing. These are the main rural industries, although fruit-growing, beef cattle-raising and poultry-farming are not unimportant.

The three principal industries lead also in the value of rural production. Table 5 (facing p.107) demonstrates the pre-eminence of the pastoral industry, which is responsible for about half the gross value of rural production in New South Wales. The dairying and wheat-growing industries contribute approximately another 30 per cent. Table 6 (facing p.108) illustrates the extent to which the three main

¹¹

Williams, p.12.

Table 5

Gross Value of Rural Production

New South Wales: 1955/6

<u>COMMODITY</u>	<u>£'000</u>	<u>%</u>
<u>Pastoral</u>		
Wool	140,451	41.7
Sheep and Cattle slaughtered *	<u>32,020</u>	<u>9.5</u>
	<u>172,471</u>	<u>51.2</u>
<u>Dairy and Farmyard</u>		
Butter, Cheese, Milk	40,287	12.0
Poultry	19,500	5.8
Pigs, Cows and Calves slaughtered	<u>13,755</u>	<u>4.1</u>
	<u>73,542</u>	<u>21.9</u>
<u>Agricultural</u> **		
Wheat	28,301	8.4
Other cereals	9,271	2.8
Hay	9,122	2.7
Fruit	11,270	3.3
Vegetables	7,249	2.2
Other	<u>5,353</u>	<u>1.6</u>
	<u>70,566</u>	<u>21.0</u>
<u>Forestry</u>	15,343	4.6
<u>Fishing</u>	2,684	0.8
<u>Trapping</u>	<u>1,822</u>	<u>0.5</u>
<u>GRAND TOTAL</u>	<u>366,428</u>	<u>100.0</u>

Note:

* Beasts of N.S.W. origin only.

** Year ending 31 March.

Source: Adapted from Official Year Book of New South Wales,
No.56 (1959), pp.276-8.

rural industries absorb the greater part of the rural work force (although the agriculture and mixed farming figures include much more than just the wheatgrowing industry). Table 7 (facing p.109) shows that owners and their families far outnumber their rural employees, and in fact the predominant pattern of land management is the family-owned and family-run farm; this is especially true of the wheat and dairy industries.¹²

The principal industries are well defined geographically (see Map 4, facing p.110). Ninety-one per cent of all dairying holdings are located in the high-rainfall, climatically-moderate coastal strip, especially in the far north of the state, where 46 per cent of dairying holdings are concentrated.¹³ The tablelands immediately to the west of this narrow coastal strip are given over to woolgrowing, although there is some beef cattle-raising especially in the north. The slopes to the west of the tablelands are also predominantly occupied by woolgrowers, although there are areas of varying size where wheatgrowing is important. The wheat belt largely follows the eastern limits of the plains, especially in the north, but wheatgrowing is intensive in the southern plains - the Riverina. However, the wheat belt is also highly suitable for woolgrowing and it contains almost

12

Ibid., pp.25, 48.

13

The information upon which this paragraph is based has been drawn from Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, Classifications of Rural Holdings by Size and Type of Activity 1959-60, Bulletin No. 1 - New South Wales.

Table 6

The Rural Work Force^{*} in New South Wales
1933, 1947, 1954

<u>Type of Activity</u>	<u>Years</u>		
	<u>1933</u>	<u>1947</u>	<u>1954</u>
Agriculture and mixed farming	83,705	69,140	58,259
Grazing	44,198	40,156	52,628
Dairying	36,181	30,165	29,365
Other	<u>11,812</u>	<u>7,692</u>	<u>8,594</u>
TOTAL	<u>175,896</u>	<u>147,153</u>	<u>148,846</u>

Note:

* Includes owners, lessees, sharefarmers, relatives not receiving wages, employees; males and females.

Source: Adapted from Official Year Book of New South Wales, No.56 (1959), p.933.

as many holdings devoted entirely to sheep-grazing as to mixed farming and grazing. Further west, where rainfall averages between six and 12 inches per year, sheep grazing is unchallenged.

Electoral boundaries tend to follow natural boundaries wherever possible, and thus there is a good deal of industrial homogeneity in many rural electorates. Nowhere is this more true than on the coast, where the western boundary of most rural electorates, state and federal, is the eastern escarpment of the tablelands; in terms of the predominant rural industry, these are 'dairying' electorates. Similarly, the far western seats and those tablelands electorates whose western boundaries cut through the slopes may be termed 'grazing' seats. While the predominant form of rural industry in the mid-western and Riverina seats is mixed farming and grazing, since these electorates contain the great majority of the N.S.W. wheatgrowers, they may be (and often are) described as the 'wheat' seats. A classification of N.S.W. state electorates in these terms is illustrated in Map 5 (facing p.111).¹⁴

The three main rural industries of New South Wales are chiefly export industries, and as such their history in the last 40 years is bound up with that of the same industries in Australia as a whole. It is the individual problems and histories of these industries to which we turn.

¹⁴Such a classification for N.S.W. state electorates, 1930-41, may be seen in Aitkin, The United Country Party, Appendix Y, Map 8. Federal electorates are in general too large in area for such a classification to be of much utility.

Table 7

Persons Permanently Engaged on Rural Holdings

New South Wales: 1956

	<u>Owners Lessees Sharefarmers</u>	<u>Relatives not receiving wages</u>	<u>Employees</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>Males</u>	74,571	7,732	31,379	113,682
<u>Females</u>	<u>1,544</u>	<u>6,762</u>	<u>976</u>	<u>9,282</u>
<u>Total</u>	<u>76,115</u>	<u>14,494</u>	<u>32,355</u>	<u>122,964</u>

Source: New South Wales Statistical Register, 1954-55, p.173.

III. THE WOOLGROWING INDUSTRY¹⁵

The woolgrowing industry occupies a dominant place in the Australian rural economy, and indeed in the economy as a whole. Wool is Australia's most important export and its most important single rural product, its value being about one third of the value of all rural products and about eight per cent of the gross national product.¹⁶ Its unique position derives from the extraordinary suitability of a large proportion of the Australian continent for the grazing of sheep, and the low cost of production in Australia compared with other countries.

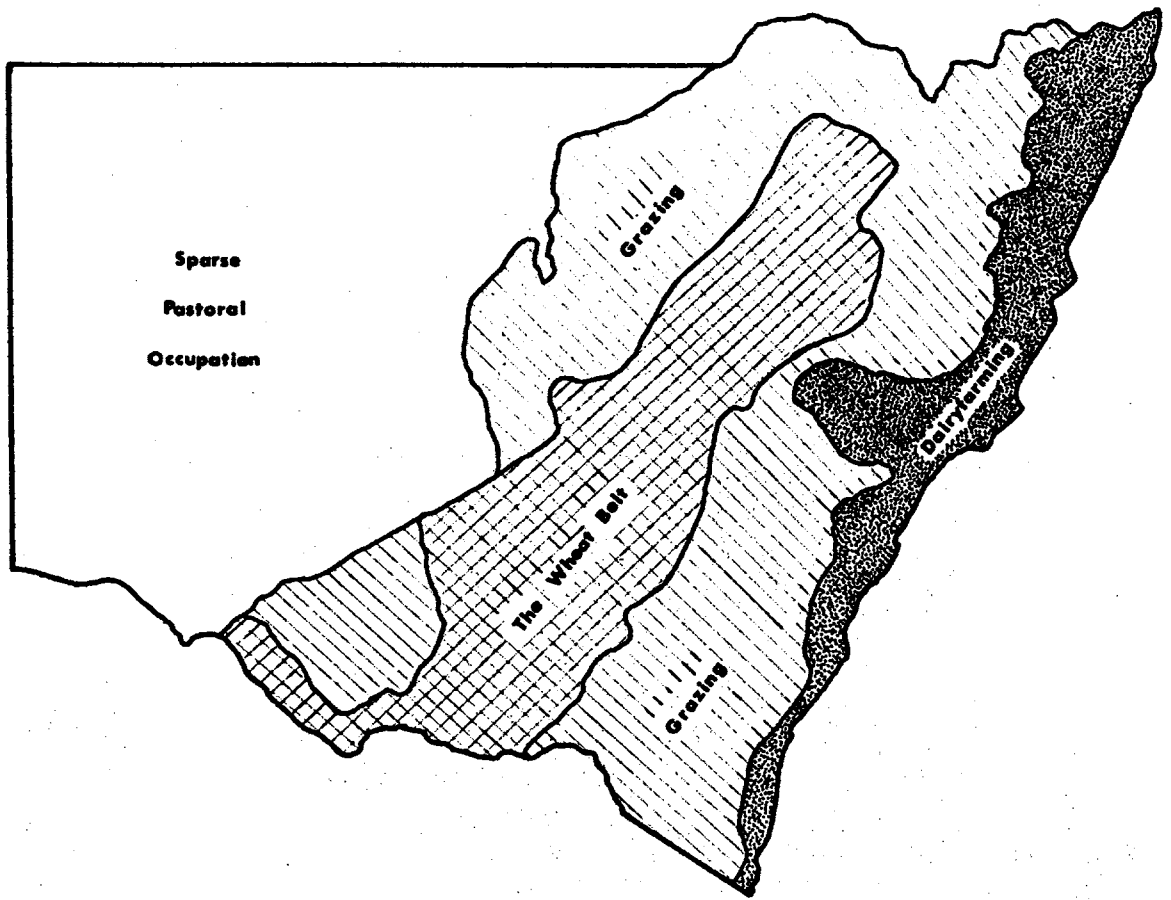
Wool prices are determined by overseas demand, since only a very small proportion of the clip is consumed locally. The supply of wool is relatively constant in normal times as it takes some time to appreciably increase production. Furthermore, the proportion of cost in the final woollen product represented by raw wool is relatively small: in woollen garments, for example, a typical proportion is 10 per cent.

15

Very many graziers in the mixed farming areas also grow sheep for meat and are likely to intensify fat lamb production if wool prices drop. However New South Wales is not an important exporter of meat (about 1/10 of Australia's beef exports and about 1/15 of mutton and lamb exports in 1955/6 O.Y.B.N.S.W. (1959) pp.966, 971; O.Y.B.C. (1962), p.1034). The export of meat to the United Kingdom, by far the largest market, is regulated by the 15 Year Meat Agreement (1952-67) which guarantees the grower both a price and a market. Domestic meat prices are not controlled. New South Wales is predominantly a woolgrowing state in that merino (fine wool) sheep outnumber crossbred (wool and meat) sheep by about 10:1. O.Y.B.N.S.W. (1959), p.1010.

16

Williams, p.41.



Map 4: The Location of the Principal Rural Industries of New South Wales 1959

Woolgrowing
 Wheatgrowing
 Dairyfarming

- Note:
1. The western boundary of the dairyfarming zone also approximates the eastern boundary of the grazing zone. There are, however, some tableland areas which are so rugged that they are totally unsuited for primary production.
 2. The wheat belt shown is that of the 1939-40 growing season.

Source: Adapted from Official Year Book of New South Wales, No.56 (1959), p.9.

Consequently, changes in demand are reflected almost entirely in changes in price, and price fluctuations in wool have been most marked.¹⁷ However, the inherent profitability of the industry has allowed it to progress without direct government subsidies and assistance, although woolgrowers have, of course, profited from all the general benefits available to primary producers.

During the first world war the entire Australian clip was purchased by the British government, which finished the war with an accumulation of 2,500,000 bales - more than one year's Australian production. The disposal of the carry-over wool was entrusted to the British Australian Wool Realisation Association (B.A.W.R.A.) which was formed in January 1921 and which assisted in stabilising prices during the critical 1920/1 and 1921/2 seasons.¹⁸ But attempts to convert B.A.W.R.A. into a co-operative marketing organisation failed, owing to the hostility of the brokers and almost all of the graziers' associations.¹⁹

The demand for raw wool varies greatly with changes in the level of consumer income, and thus the depression caused a drastic fall in wool prices, much greater than in other rural products. The price

17

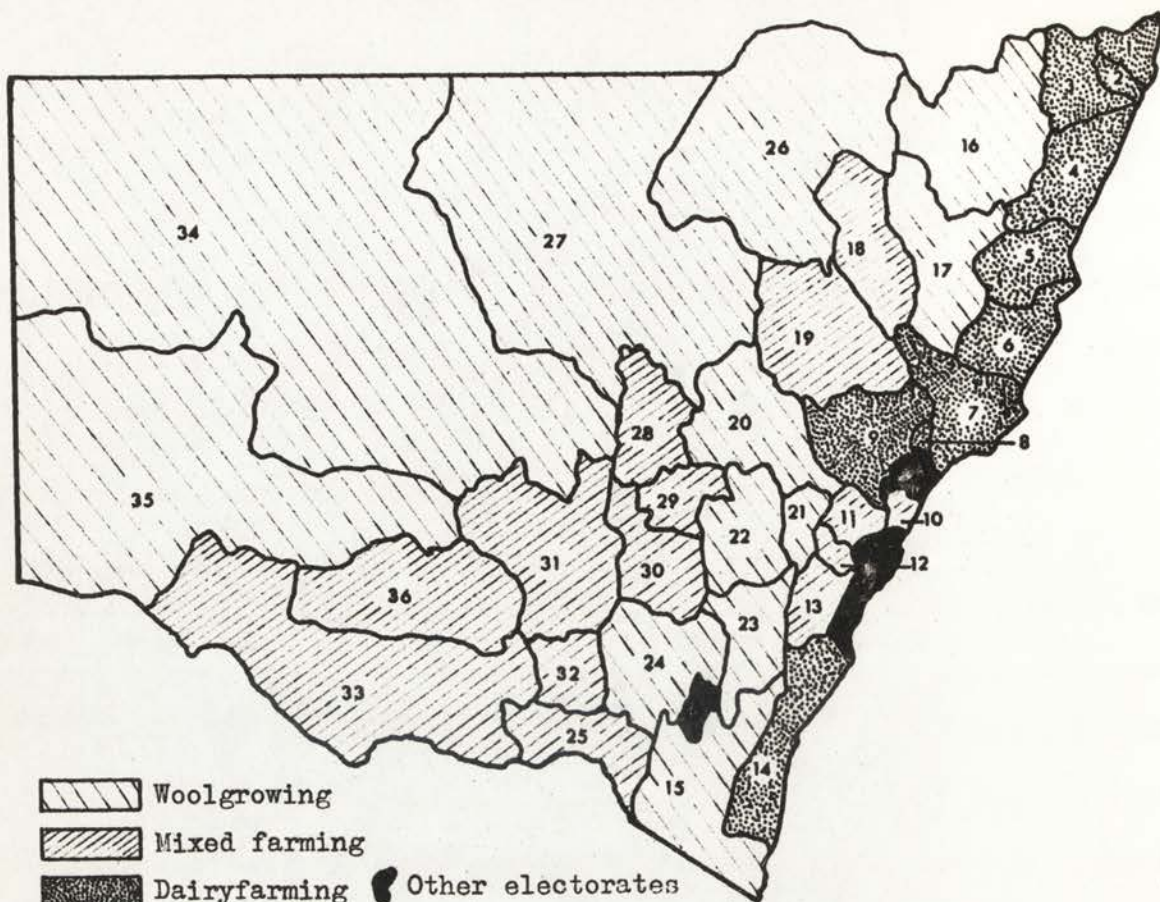
M. Weisser, "Stabilisation of Wool Prices", in Alan Barnard (ed.), The Simple Fleece, Studies in the Australian Wool Industry, Melbourne 1962, pp.507-8.

18

Shannon, p.27.

19

B.D. Graham, Pools and Politics : the issue of co-operative marketing in the Wheat and Wool Industries, 1910-1922, a paper delivered at the 5th A.P.S.A. Conference, Melbourne 1963, p.13.



Map 5: The Predominant Rural Industry in N.S.W. Country Electorates
1959

Key to Electorates:

- | | | |
|-----------------|----------------------|------------------|
| 1. Byron | 13. Wollondilly | 25. Albury |
| 2. Lismore | 14. South Coast | 26. Barwon |
| 3. Casino | 15. Monaro | 27. Castlereagh |
| 4. Clarence | 16. Tenterfield | 28. Dubbo |
| 5. Raleigh | 17. Armidale | 29. Orange |
| 6. Oxley | 18. Tamworth | 30. Young |
| 7. Gloucester | 19. Liverpool Plains | 31. Temora |
| 8. Maitland | 20. Mudgee | 32. Wagga Wagga |
| 9. Upper Hunter | 21. Hartley | 33. Murray |
| 10. Gosford | 22. Bathurst | 34. Cobar |
| 11. Hawkesbury | 23. Goulburn | 35. Sturt |
| 12. Nepean | 24. Burrinjuck | 36. Murrumbidgee |

Source: Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, Classification of Rural Holdings by Size and Type of Activity, 1959-60, Bulletin No.1 - New South Wales.

Alison M.Kingsland, "The Distribution of Farming in New South Wales", Review of Marketing and Agricultural Economics, Vol.18 No.2, June 1950, pp.160-7.

index of all rural products dropped by 32 per cent between 1929 and 1933, while that of merino wool fell by 54 per cent.²⁰ The price remained generally low throughout the 1930s, when probably only the most efficient producers grew profitable clips.²¹ The low demand for wool resulted, apart from the generally slow recovery, from a deterioration in wool exports to the U.S.A., France and Japan, all large buyers of wool in earlier days.²²

Two weeks after the outbreak of the second world war the United Kingdom Government announced its decision to purchase the entire Australian clip for the duration of the war plus one wool year. But owing to the war, wool consumption was only at 65 per cent of pre-war levels, and Great Britain again finished a war with large stocks of wool, in this case equal to two entire Australian clips. It was estimated that it would take 12 to 13 years to dispose of these stocks without wrecking the market.²³ The United Kingdom-Dominion Wool Disposals Ltd (the Joint Organisation, commonly referred to as the "J.O.") was formed to market the stocks. The J.O. fixed a reserve price and endeavoured to stimulate demand. However, post war demand for wool was much greater than was anticipated and the J.O. had sold all its stocks by 1951.

20

Shannon, p.28.

21

Ibid.

22

Ibid., pp.30-1.

23

Ibid., p.33.

Table 8

Wool Prices * at New South Wales Auctions
1945 - 1958

<u>Year</u>	<u>Price (pence)</u>
1945	15.1
1946	15.1
1947	23.6
1948	37.9
1949	46.8
1950	61.8
1951	145.3
1952	76.5
1953	85.1
1954	81.8
1955	70.6
1956	61.6
1957	80.5
1958	62.8

Source: Official Year Book of New South Wales,
No.56 (1959), p.1023.

* average prices for greasy wool

The post-war years saw a rapid increase in the price of wool, as Table 8 shows. The Korean war and the unwillingness of Australia to abandon the auction system caused a rise in the Australian export income from wool from £313,000,000 in 1949-50 to £633,000,000 in 1950/1.²⁴ Fear of the inflationary effects of this extra income caused the government to bring down special legislation (the Wool Sales Deduction Acts)²⁵ to ensure that a proportion of this money remained out of general circulation. With a slump in wool prices in the following year the legislation was repealed.

Following the decline in prices after 1951 and increased competition from synthetic fibres²⁶ there came a revival of suggestions that the wool industry should adopt some form of stabilised marketing scheme in place of the traditional free auction system. When the J.O. scheme had neared completion in 1950, a plan for the continuation of this form of controlled marketing was devised and accepted by the governments of the countries involved. It was, however, defeated when put to a poll of Australian woolgrowers in August 1951, 80 per cent of whom voted against participation.²⁷ Nevertheless, marketing remained a

²⁴
Williams, p.10.

²⁵
Nos 1 and 2, 1950, together with the Wool Sales Deduction (Administration) Act, 1950.

²⁶
See G.O. Gutman and Margaret Fead, "Competition between Fibres : Economic", in Barnard, pp.550-73.

²⁷
Shannon, p.35.

live issue and the large vote in favour of the auction system in 1951 may well have been a function of the abnormally high prices. The problems involved in stabilising the industry are real ones. Wool is a heterogeneous product (over 1,500 types of wool were classified during the last war)²⁸ with multiple uses, and the sort of stabilisation appropriate to the wheat industry would be unsuitable for wool.²⁹ Furthermore none of the various schemes proposed have yet gained the support of a majority of growers.³⁰ But if in 1963 an alternative marketing system seemed as far away as ever, the issue was nevertheless still a live one.

IV. THE WHEATGROWING INDUSTRY

Until the end of the nineteenth century, woolgrowing dominated land use in New South Wales, and the colony produced barely enough food for its own consumption. Although there had been spasmodic exports before this, in 1897 a substantial export trade in wheat commenced, and from that year wheatgrowing increased rapidly: the acreage devoted to crops more than quadrupled between the 1890s and the 1920s.³¹

28

Ibid., p.18.

29

F.H. Gruen, "A Case for the Present Marketing System"; R. Boyer, "Thoughts About a Central Marketing Authority for Wool"; and M. Weisser, op. cit., in Barnard, pp.490-542.

30

G.D'A. Chislett, "Wool Marketing", Australian Quarterly, Vol. XXXI, No. 1, pp.7-16, March 1959.

31

Average 1891-5 : 1,048,544 acres; average 1921-5 : 4,655,362 acres; wheat acreage comprised about 75 per cent; O.Y.B.N.S.W. (1959), p.955.

From the early years of the 20th century more than 60 per cent of the Australian wheat crop has customarily been exported³² and consequently the income of the grower has depended on the ruling overseas price. The sharp fluctuations in the world price for wheat have contributed ver largely to the instability of the Australian wheat industry.

However, there is a more fundamental cause of the industry's instability. Most Australian wheatgrowing takes place on family-owned farms, and high prices for wheat tend to encourage the farmer to reduce his own labour, that is, to take some of his increased crop value in leisure and reduce his acreage for the following season. On the other hand, since farmers' costs include a large fixed component in the form of interest, a fall in prices is likely to be followed by an increase in production, as farmers endeavour to maintain their incomes. Thus when wheat prices are low, more wheat is produced, and the price is further depressed.³³ A production cycle of this kind can be interrupted only by a drought, or artificially, by stabilising the industry.

The first world war saw a sharp increase in wheat prices, and the level was maintained into the 1920s. The expectation that these prices would continue indefinitely led to an unsound expansion into marginal

32

Edgars Dunsdorfs, The Australian Wheat-Growing Industry 1788-1948, Melbourne 1956, p.220.

33

This argument is set out in more detail in Shannon, pp.38-9.

Table 9

Export Prices, Australian Wheat

1915 - 1962

(per bushel, nearest penny)

<u>Year</u>	<u>s.</u>	<u>d.</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>s.</u>	<u>d.</u>
1915/16	5	7	1938	3	5
1916/17	4	10	1939	2	6
1917/18	5	3	1940	4	0
1918/19	5	1	1941/42	4	2
1919/20	5	6	1942/43	4	2
1920/21	9	0	1943/44	4	4
1921/22	5	9	1944	5	4
1922/23	5	5	1945		*
1923/24	4	8	1946	10	11
1924/25	6	8	1947	16	8
1925/26	6	4	1948	18	8
1926/27	5	7	1949/50	15	5
1927/28	5	6	1950/51	16	1
1928/29	4	10	1951/52	16	4
1929/30	5	0	1952/53	16	6
1930/31	2	6	1953/54	14	0
1931/32	3	0	1954/55	12	7
1932/33	3	0	1955/56	12	11
1933/34	2	10	1956/57	14	3
1934/35	2	8	1957/58	13	10
1935	3	2	1958/59	13	2
1936	4	2	1959/60	13	3
1937	5	1	1960/61	13	5
			1961/62	14	4

- Note:
1. 1915-1934, price represents the average in the principal markets of Australia.
 2. 1930-1940, price represents weighted average of shippers' limits for growers' bagged lots, Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide.
 3. 1940-44, approximate prices.
 4. 1945, wheat sold only in January, February and December.
 5. 1946-1954, Australian Wheat Board basic export price.
 6. 1955-1962, price represents average export return (f.o.r. terminals).

Source: C.Y.B., Nos 14, 16, 20, 24, 27, 29, 33, 36, 37, 40.
 (1915-1953)
Quarterly Review of Agricultural Economics, Vol. XVI No.4,
 October 1963, p.202. (1954-1962)

areas and to inflated land values.³⁴ This expansion was accompanied by increasing indebtedness, and by 1928 two-thirds of the wheatgrowers' assets belonged to their creditors: their recovery would have needed the entire proceeds of two and a half harvests.³⁵ The increase in wheatgrowing in Australia was paralleled overseas. World production increased from 2,260 million bushels in 1915 to 4,699 million bushels in 1928.³⁶ When the depression brought a lowered demand, stocks had already begun to accumulate and the price fell from 5s. Od. per bushel in 1929 to 2s. 6d. in 1930 (see Table 9). Unfortunately, growers were urged by both state and federal governments (seeking foreign exchange) to increase their acreage. In the following year production increased by 22 per cent and most growers failed to recover even their working costs.³⁷ By 1932/3 the assets of the industry equalled its liabilities.³⁸

In the context of the depression the state of the wheatgrowing industry was a national problem. Bounty and relief payments to wheatgrowers commenced in 1931³⁹ and in 1934 a Royal Commission was appointed to inquire into the state of the industry. It reported that 60 per cent

³⁴
Ibid., p.41.

³⁵
Dunsdorfs, p.257.

³⁶
Ibid., p.263.

³⁷
Shannon, p.42.

³⁸
Dunsdorfs, p.256.

³⁹
For details, see ibid., p.280ff.

of growers were unable to grow wheat at less than 3s. 3d. per bushel (the 1933/4 price had been 2s. 10d.), and advocated as remedial measures a home consumption price higher than the export price and a compulsory marketing scheme.⁴⁰ These recommendations were partly followed in the Wheat Industry Assistance Act of 1938 which established a home consumption price, and under which £13,000,000 had been distributed to growers by 1947.⁴¹ On the outbreak of the second world war the federal government set up the Australian Wheat Board to acquire the whole crop, and guaranteed a price for a crop of a certain size. Surplus receipts above the guaranteed price were to be paid into a stabilisation fund, from which payments would be made to growers in lean years.⁴² In 1942/3 a quota system was instituted whereby the guaranteed price was paid only on the first 3,000 bushels; "non-quota" wheat received a lower price. The quota was suspended in 1945.⁴³

The wartime stabilisation of the industry carried into the late 1940s and was confirmed by the Wheat Industry Stabilisation Act of 1948. Under the Act the federal government guaranteed a price (based on production costs) for 100,000,000 bushels of wheat exported in any

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Royal Commission on the Wheat, Flour and Bread Industries, Second Report, 1935, pp.44, 254. There had been wheat pools during and after the first world war (1914-21) and, on a voluntary basis, in some states during the 1920s.

41

Shannon, p.47.

42

Crawford, pp.56-7.

43

Ibid., pp.59-60.

one season. If the export price exceeded the guaranteed price, then the difference (up to 2s. 2d. per bushel) was to be placed in a stabilisation fund for distribution when the home price exceeded the export price. The government guaranteed payments from the fund. The act was to be in force for five years, and has been succeeded by similar acts in 1954 and 1958. The stability of the industry has been further aided by the International Wheat Agreement, the aim of which is the maintenance of a stable world price, and which established quotas and price-ranges for both exporting and importing countries.⁴⁴

These post-war developments have immeasurably strengthened the industry. Since a stable price for wheat is to almost everyone's advantage, the renewal of the stabilisation schemes has become almost a matter of course.

V. THE DAIRYING INDUSTRY

The dairying industry developed slowly during the nineteenth century and received its impetus, like the wheat industry, towards the close of the century when refrigeration, pasteurisation and other mechanical processes for the treatment of milk, together with improved shipping facilities, made an exporting dairying industry feasible.⁴⁵ There developed two distinct branches of the industry, one concerned wholly with the supply of fresh milk for local consumption, and the

44

Dunsdorfs, pp.310-3; Shamon, pp.49-50.

45

O.Y.B.N.S.W. (1959), p.1043.

Table 10

Work Force and Value of Production
Australian Dairying and Grazing Industries

	<u>Work Force</u> <u>1954</u>	<u>Gross Value of Production</u> <u>1954-5 (£m)</u>
<u>Grazing</u>	123,876	538.5
<u>Dairying</u>	111,557	151.0

Source: Adapted from D.B.Williams, Economic and Technical Problems of Australia's Rural Industries, Melbourne 1957, p.15; and 'some members of the Faculty of Economics, University of Sydney', An Economic Survey of the Australian Dairy Industry, Progress Report, Sydney 1958, p.37.

other (much larger) concerned with the production of milk for butter and cheese manufacture. By 1920 the butter industry was exporting 40 per cent of its total production, and this proportion has remained relatively constant.⁴⁶ While the producers of fresh milk have been able to secure a reasonable price for their product, the return of the butter producers has been affected by the export price for butter, and it is this latter sector of the industry which has required the constant help of governments.

Dairyfarming is both capital and labour intensive and thus increases in domestic costs have been much more serious for dairy farmers than for graziers. Furthermore, the industry has been over-supplied with labour and this "prohibit[s] the achievement of any reasonable standard of efficiency".⁴⁷ The difference between the grazing and dairying industries in this regard is quite striking, as Table 10 shows.

In addition the industry suffered during the depression because of an increase in production brought about by a switch to dairying on the part of mixed farmers outside the normal dairying areas. In a period of a low prices the number of cows milked increased by 40 per cent (seven years ending 1936).⁴⁸ By the beginning of the second world war

⁴⁶ 'Some Members of the Faculty of Economics in the University of Sydney', Economic Survey of the Australian Dairy Industry, Progress Report, roneoed, 1958, pp.8, 91 (Courtesy F.G. Gruen).

⁴⁷ Williams, p.47.

⁴⁸ Shannon, p.64.

the industry was impoverished and demoralised.⁴⁹

Once the tariff increases of the early 1920s decreased the profitability of dairyfarming⁵⁰ the industry sought measures to reduce the fluctuations arising from the unstable export market. It argued especially that the domestic price ought to bear some relation to the cost of production.⁵¹ The first step was the adoption of the "Paterson Plan" in 1926, a voluntary arrangement whereby butter factories (nearly all of which were co-operatives controlled by the dairyfarmers) paid a levy on all butter produced sufficient to pay a bounty on all butter exported. While this raised dairyfarmers' incomes (returns were equalised so that dairyfarmers received a common price), not all butter factories co-operated, and the scheme was abandoned in 1934. Attempts to remedy this problem by legislative action in 1933 were foiled by the Privy Council decision in James v. Commonwealth (1936), but an improved plan, depending again on voluntary support, proved reasonably effective. Nevertheless, the schemes had not greatly improved conditions in the industry, as they "merely offset some of the cost handicap under which they the dairyfarmers had been placed by tariff protection".⁵²

⁴⁹
Crawford, pp.83-4.

⁵⁰
Shannon, p.63.

⁵¹
N.T. Drane and H.R. Edwards (eds), The Australian Dairy Industry - An Economic Study, Melbourne 1961, pp.192-3.

⁵²
Economic Survey of the Dairy Industry, p.11.

By the end of the 1930s the dairy industry was "notorious for the low standard of living it provided for the bulk of persons engaged in it",⁵³ and the outbreak of war was followed by the rapid loss of rural workers from the industry to both the armed forces and the munitions industries.⁵⁴ Profitability and production declined.⁵⁵ The federal government was concerned both to increase production and to avoid an increase in the domestic price for butter. Accordingly, in 1942, it decided to grant a subsidy of £1,500,000 as a temporary measure.⁵⁶ In March 1943 the industry argued before the Prices Commissioner that a return of 1s. 6d. per pound (representing an annual subsidy of £6,500,000) would be necessary to secure a reasonable income to the dairyfarmer,⁵⁷ and a subsidy of this order was granted.⁵⁸

Early in 1944 the government announced that it would subsidise the industry for a two-year period, and towards the end of 1947 it intimated that returns would be guaranteed for the five years from 1947/8 to 1951/2.⁵⁹ The 'temporary' subsidy was now clearly a permanent

⁵³ Crawford, p.81

⁵⁴ Ibid., p.80; Shannon, p.65.

⁵⁵ Shannon, p.65.

⁵⁶ The Dairy Industry Assistance Act, 1942.

⁵⁷ Drane and Edwards, pp.200-1.

⁵⁸ The Dairy Industry Assistance Act, 1943.

⁵⁹ Drane and Edwards, p.201.

feature of the industry. For the purposes of the 1947 guarantee,⁶⁰ a Joint Dairy Industry Advisory Committee was set up to carry out cost surveys of production on which the guaranteed return was based. A stabilisation fund along traditional lines was established. The guarantee extended in principle to all production, but since the export prices were higher than the guaranteed prices for the whole of the period, home market sales only were subsidised.⁶¹

With the defeat of the government's proposals in the 1948 Prices Referendum price control was handed back to the states, which promptly froze the price of butter. Under the terms of the act, increases in production costs had to be met by either an increase in prices or an increase in the subsidy, so the federal government's commitment increased from 6d per pound in 1947/8 to 1s. 1½d. in 1951.⁶² When the question of the renewal of the plan arose in 1951, the Commonwealth successfully insisted on the return of the price-fixing power as a condition of renewal. The 1952/3 stabilisation plan⁶³ closely followed that of 1947, with some important differences. The federal government fixed the ex-factory price for butter, and the guarantee applied only to the quantity sold for domestic consumption plus 20

60

The Dairy Industry Assistance Act, 1947.

61

Shannon, p.65.

62

Drane and Edwards, pp.202-3.

63

The Dairy Industry Assistance Act, 1952.

Table 11

Annual Margarine and Butter Consumption:

Australia, 1935 - 1957

	<u>Margarine Consumption</u> <u>per Head (lbs)</u>	<u>Butter Consumption</u> <u>per Head (lbs)</u>
average 1935-39	...	32.5
average 1936-39	4.9	....
average 1956-57	8.3	28.0

Source: Adapted from 'some members of the Faculty of Economics, University of Sydney', An Economic Survey of the Australian Dairy Industry, Progress Report, Sydney 1958, p.10.

per cent (if produced); an independent tribunal was to recommend the guaranteed return which was to be based on production costs. Although in the first years of the scheme the subsidy was flexible, in 1955/6 it was fixed at £14,500,000 and in the succeeding years at £13,500,000. This plan was renewed without significant change in 1957 for a further five years.⁶⁴

No less important than the butter subsidy is the statutory restriction on the production of table margarine, of which only about 16,000 tons may be marketed (compared with the annual consumption in Australia of around 115,000 tons of butter).⁶⁵ The world trend has been for the consumption of butter to fall and that of margarine to rise.⁶⁶ In Australia this trend, though present, has been inhibited by the quotas on margarine production. It has been suggested that if overseas trends in butter consumption had also operated in Australia, per capita butter consumption in this country would have fallen to 20 lbs per annum.⁶⁷

Despite subsidies and other props, the dairy industry remains in a distressed condition. In 1958 one-third of the industry only was enjoying satisfactory returns, one-third was receiving unsatisfactory

⁶⁴

The Dairy Industry Assistance Act, 1957.

⁶⁵

Drane and Edwards, p.220. The total allowable production in 1959 was 16,072 tons, of which 9,000 tons constituted the N.S.W. quota.

⁶⁶

See table in ibid., pp.56-7.

⁶⁷

Economic Survey of the Dairy Industry, p.10.

returns, and the remaining one-third was losing on capital.⁶⁸ For a variety of reasons the industry's rate of productivity increase is low. As productivity in other sectors of the economy increases at a faster rate, real wages outside the industry rise and lead to higher costs for the industry; thus either higher prices (and thus increased pressure for margarine) or a higher subsidy will result. The present size of the subsidy draws comment and demands for increased efficiency in the industry by the elimination or amalgamation of the smaller, uneconomic, dairy farms. This could only be achieved either by eliminating supports, and thus forcing the marginal producer off the land (which no government is prepared to do, if only for political reasons), or by compensation of marginal producers who leave voluntarily, which, because of the size of the industry, would be a most expensive undertaking. The social consequences of such a policy - because of the dependence of very many country towns on the dairying industry - also make its implementation unlikely. The long-term problems of the industry remain unsolved.

VI. THE COUNTRY PARTY AND THE RURAL INDUSTRIES

The Country Party has always claimed the credit for the implementation of most of the legislation benefiting the rural industries, and for the inspiration of the rest. Thus:

⁶⁸

Ibid., p.14.

The Country Party gave a home consumption price to the wheat industry, and the principle is now generally accepted if not always conceded by other parties.... Stabilisation of the primary industries on a long-term basis has been the practical policy of the Country Party ever since it came into being. All stabilisation schemes owe their origin to the party's efforts. 69

However, praise and blame for agricultural policy cannot be so neatly allocated. In neither New South Wales nor the Commonwealth has the party ever been able to govern by itself, and its self-proclaimed role as sole guardian of the rural interest must be assessed in the context of the tradition of joint cabinet responsibility, even in coalition governments. Furthermore, the groups which have traditionally supported the party have not always been in sympathy with one another. "If I want to eat margarine," objected a grazier at one party Conference, "I hope I will be allowed to eat margarine".⁷⁰ The compromises forced upon the party by its coalition strategy and its heterogeneous support have made its stance on rural industry questions appear often as equivocal as that of the other parties. As Sir John Crawford has observed,

Clear and complete statements on agricultural policy have not been a marked characteristic of any political party in Australia. 71

Nevertheless, at least in the interwar period, the party's aims and objectives were reasonably distinct from those of the other major

69

The Australian Country Party, Mileposts, Sydney 1956, p.4.

70

Minutes, 1954 AC.

71

Crawford, p.175.

parties. The National and United Australia Parties believed in laissez-faire for rural and protection for secondary industries, and they represented, in economic terms, the mercantile class which saw the compulsory pool as a threat to its existence. The Labor Party believed in high wages, cheap food, protection for secondary industries; it advocated compulsory pools (but not the grower control thereof) as a means of fixing the price of foodstuffs. The Country Party represented demands for stabilised marketing and grower control, for lower costs, for the elimination of uneconomic secondary industries, and for an interpretation of the Australian economy in which the rural industries received their due prominence.⁷² During the depression, both the Labor and United Australia Parties were unhappy at the thought of subsidising whole industries, preferring to give relief only to necessitous cases, while the Country Party saw the problem as industry-wide.⁷³

The second world war permanently altered party attitudes. At its end the necessity for governmental involvement in the primary industries was no longer seriously questioned. All parties supported the 1948 wheat stabilisation bill, and the only difference of opinion concerned

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See J.P. Abbott, "Contemporary Party Policies : The Country Party" in A. Campbell Garnett, Freedom and Planning in Australia, Madison (Wis.) 1949, pp.299-306.

73

See for example the remarks of J.G. Latham (U.A.P.) C.P.D., Vol. 127, 16 December 1930, pp.1484 et seq.; J. Curtin (Labor), C.P.D., Vol. 149, 17 March 1936, p.185.

the Country Party's attempt to gain grower control of the scheme,⁷⁴ successfully resisted by the Labor Government (which had in this matter the sympathy of many Liberals).⁷⁵ But when the 1954 plan was being debated, the wider powers given to the Minister by the bill were defended by one Country Party member;⁷⁶ no-one thought it worthwhile to draw comparisons. The three wheat stabilisation debates (1948, 1954 and 1958) were chiefly interesting in that each was marked by claims from all sides for the credit for establishment of the wheat stabilisation scheme, and there was similar competition for the honour of having stabilised the dairy industry.⁷⁷

The degree of initiative and influence which the Country Party has had in the formulation of post-war agricultural policies can probably never be assessed very accurately. But this influence is unlikely to have been as decisive as has been claimed by the party. Firstly, as has been noted in an earlier chapter, the party's share in the general responsibility of government has declined and is now minor, while the scope of governmental activity has increased, and the government now accepts a good deal of financial responsibility for the rural industries. Secondly, much of the present legislation affecting

74

C.P.D., Vol. 199, 10 November 1948, pp.2775-2784.

75

e.g. A.G. Cameron, C.P.D., Vol. 199, 3 November 1948, p.2439; and P. McBride, Vol. 199, 4 November 1948, p.2555.

76

L.J. Failes (Lawson, N.S.W.), C.P.D., Vol. (H of R) 5, 28 October 1954, p.2420.

77

e.g. R.T. Pollard, C.P.D., Vol. (H of R) 21, 1 October 1958, p.1831.

the rural industries was shaped during the Curtin and Chifley Governments, and has not been materially altered by the Menzies Administrations.

Thirdly, as has been argued above, the Australian economy has become more tightly integrated, and this process has involved changes in the status of rural industries. As governments have accepted more responsibility for the financial stability of these industries, so have the budgetary and other implications of financial assistance assumed importance. Furthermore, guaranteed prices now necessitate cost-of-production studies, and although the final decisions regarding price supports remain political ones, those making the decisions must now balance "justice to growers" against "efficiency in production".

Finally, the stabilisation of rural industries has meant the transfer of a good deal of decision-making from parliament to semi-autonomous boards. This has not only decreased the importance of the Country Party's role, but increased that of the industry organisations,⁷⁸ which are in many cases directly represented on the boards and on the cost inquiry committees. The wealthier of these organisations now employ expert research staff in order to match the resources in expertise of the regulating government departments (which are also represented on the boards).

Nevertheless it would be wrong to discount entirely the influence of the party. Within the limits set for it by circumstances it has

⁷⁸
cf. Williams, p.36.

proved highly effective in safeguarding rural interests when they seemed to be overlooked because of pressing general economic problems. In 1950, for example, when wool prices boomed, the government feared rapid and injurious inflation.

The suggestion was advanced and publicised that a tax of 33-1/3% should be imposed on wool, and this became known as the Copeland (sic) plan.

This plan was rejected outright by Federal Country Party Members and it was due to the absolute refusal of Country Party Ministers to entertain the proposal under any circumstances whatever that the plan never became operative.

It was during a period of acute tension that the present Plan of Advance Payments was initiated by the Leader of the Country Party who thus secured a measure that eventually became acceptable to both parties. 79

In addition to the presence of the Country Party in parliament and government is a guarantee (if one were needed) that the present governmental assistance to the industries will continue. Nothing has been heard, for example, of the government's intentions regarding the implementation of the report of a committee inquiring into the dairy industry in 1959-60 which recommended, inter alia, the abandonment of the butter subsidy.⁸⁰ No doubt Country Party Ministers were as adamant in this matter as they were in regard to the proposed wool tax of 1950.

Finally, the Country Party endeavours to keep the public aware of

79

Acting Chairman's Address to CC, 2 February 1951. This controversy is set out below in Chapter 16, part III.

80

Sydney Morning Herald, 10 November 1960.

the importance of the rural industries and of their grievances. In doing so it also endeavours to maintain a climate of public opinion in which the large-scale financial subvention of the primary industries is seen as being in the national interest rather than as a sectional form of political bribery. It also provides a parliamentary medium for the expression of the views of the industry organisations, and the inspiration for many speeches of Country Party parliamentarians is readily acknowledged. These aspects are of much greater importance when, as in New South Wales, the party is in opposition. Thus the Country Party M.L.A.s in New South Wales who represent dairying constituencies are perpetually watchful lest the Labor government increase the margarine quota. In the last seven years no major session of the Legislative Assembly has been without a Country Party question seeking the government's intentions on this matter.

But if the party's own view of itself as the champion of the rural industries and the architect of their welfare is a romantic one, the views held by its rivals and some commentators are sometimes little more accurate. The most common, held by the A.L.P., portrays the party as the instrument of the large graziers and the stock and station companies - the "Pitt Street farmers".⁸¹ This view has been given a wider currency through its exposition by Professors Overacker⁸² and

⁸¹ For a recent Labor philippic along these lines see the speech of F.M. Daly, C.P.D., Vol. (H of R) 38, 2 April 1963, pp.283-7.

⁸² Overacker, pp.228-9.

Crisp (for whom the Country Party is the party of "country capital").⁸³
In fact the party speaks for all rural producers in their common concerns - lowered costs, cheaper freights and higher prices. But it has often been uncertain and equivocal in regard to specific policies for individual industries.

The relationship of the Country Party to the rural industries is a complex and a changing one. The interest groups which formed the Country Party had clearly-defined economic objectives which they expected the party to further. But once the party achieved power it realised that some of these objectives could not be attained without risking the future of the coalition. By this time the party's regional support was becoming as important electorally as its sectional support, and neither the federal nor the N.S.W. Country Parties were prepared to stake their power in government on the uncertain prospect of fulfilling individual sectional demands (as, equally, they were not prepared to sacrifice their position to satisfy regional demands for new states). Thus the party's economic aims were essentially opportunistic rather than the product of a carefully considered policy.

Once the war and postwar reconstruction drew the rural industries firmly within the ambit of government policymaking the rural industry organisations established permanent relations with the government at a non-party level. Increasingly they have become part of the process of

83

Crisp, Parliamentary Government of Australia, Chapter IV.

decision-making, and accordingly their dependence on the Country Party, or on any political party, has lessened.

Nevertheless, the Country Party remains useful. It provides an alternative means of publicising issues and grievances should the normal industry-government negotiations break down. And in New South Wales, where the close contact between government and rural industry is not present to the same degree, the party's role as spokesman for sectional demands is still important.

But there is little doubt that this importance, at both federal and state levels, is slowly decreasing. As the sectional support for the Country Party has declined so has the significance of its regional support increased. In one sense the withdrawal of the F.S.A. and the G.A. in 1944/5 can be seen as marking the point at which the Country Party became a regional party with sectional support, in contrast to its earlier role as a sectional party with regional support.

If the party has not always fought wholeheartedly for the interests of some sections of its support, they have nevertheless demonstrated a remarkable loyalty to the party over 40 years. Perhaps the myth has contributed to the party's consistent electoral support. But it is clear that it cannot alone explain the continued existence of the party and it is the importance of the institutions of the party in this regard which we shall now examine.

PART II

STRUCTURE

CHAPTER 5

CONTEXT AND SETTING

For the reasons which have emerged in the previous chapters it is clear that the Country Party faces the problem of survival. Our enquiry from this point onwards will be directed to discover to what extent the party is equipped to meet this challenge. The purpose of this chapter is to place the party in its context and to describe, in a general way, its organisation, purpose and regions.

I. A GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE COUNTRY PARTY IN NEW SOUTH WALES

1. Purpose

The Country Party is essentially an autonomous state organisation, intended to maintain the strength of the parliamentary Country Party in the N.S.W. Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council, and to maintain the size of the N.S.W. contingent in the federal parliamentary Country Party.

Local government it officially ignores, for a number of good reasons. Firstly, in most country areas local government is considered to be outside "party politics", and the Country Party supports this as a principle. Secondly, in many shires and in some municipalities, members of the party control the councils in fact, if not in name. Thirdly, to organise publicly for local government elections, especially in the towns, might cause the A.L.P., which is often badly organised in the country, to become active.¹ Fourthly, local government has a

¹However, party work at such elections is not unknown. Armidale Branch officially supported Davis Hughes as a Country Party candidate for the Armidale municipal elections in 1953. Minutes, Armidale Branch, 27 November 1953.

markedly inferior status in New South Wales, as in Australia generally; all local councils are ultimately and effectively controlled by the state Department of Local Government, and as much can be done by gaining control of this Department as can be achieved by winning power in every shire and municipality.² The control of this Department will be one of the party's goals in any future state coalition.

2. Structure

The pyramidal hierarchy of the Country Party organisation is very similar to the formal structure of the Labor and Liberal parties, and the similarity reflects both the electoral situation and the need for the parties to establish links between the party and the mass of the voters at all levels.

The Country Party organises its members into party branches, and because of the scattered population of country electorates there are numbers of these branches in every electorate. The branches are multi-purpose institutions, serving as local electoral committees, administrative units of the party's Head Office, keepers of the party's values and traditions, and policymakers. The branches elect delegates

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This is not to say that the party is unaware of the importance of local government. Participants in a postal survey conducted by the writer were asked which of the three spheres of government they considered to be most important for country people. Not quite one third of the respondents (31.1 per cent) considered local government to be the most important. The high valuation of local government reflects the high proportion of landowners (and thus ratepayers) in the party: 66 of the 82 respondents regarding local government as most important were primary producers. See Appendix G.

to separate electorate councils for their state and federal electorates, and each electorate council is represented on other councils covering the same territory. The councils are the party's important election machinery. They are in complete charge of the election process as it effects the party in the electorate: they select candidates, finance and conduct campaigns, and keep the local organisation in working order between elections.

The chairman of each electorate council is ex officio a member of the Central Council, which also includes a number of co-opted members. Central Council possesses the final powers within the party on all questions. Because of its size and the consequent expense involved in holding Council meetings, the day-by-day administration of party affairs is delegated to a smaller Central Executive, which in turn works through a permanent General Secretary, controlling a Head Office and a field organising staff. The Head Office of the party is situated in Sydney, the centre of political and financial power in New South Wales, and all Central Council and Executive meetings are held there.

Delegates from both councils and branches, and Central Councillors and parliamentarians, make up the General Conference, which is held annually. The Conference is intended to deal with those questions of broad policy which affect the members in general; it also constructs the party's platform and alters its Constitution. It does not, however, elect officers, nor are any party officials responsible to it. Provincial Conferences, comprising delegates from branches and councils

in a specified region, recognise the existence of the special interests of smaller areas within the state.

Each state Country Party sends delegates to the Federal Council of the Country Party, which administers the party at the federal level. However, the powers of the federal body are small; its principal function is to decide the federal policy of the party, which it does in consultation with the federal parliamentary party. Otherwise, the powers and finance of the Country Party in federal matters rest with the separate state Country Parties.

These are the institutions of the party and their formal relationships. However, it is the field staff - the organisers - which is basic to the party's organisation. Its function is threefold: to recruit members and thus collect finance, to form members into party branches, and to ensure that these branches continue to function both during and between elections. It is not too much to say that the organisers are indispensable in the party's present organisation or that the presence of a large field staff has been principally responsible for the stability and efficiency of the party's organisation since 1946.

II. THE FEDERAL SETTING

The Federal Council of the Country Party consists in theory of 27 persons, and as far as possible the four state Country Parties are equally represented.³ There is one federal parliamentary representative

³The Constitution referred to in this and the following Chapters is the most recent printed version, reprinted in August 1960. References to the Constitution are by subsection and page.

from each of the four affiliated states, one women's representative, the state parliamentary leader, and three other state representatives not being parliamentarians and chosen by the state Central Council. The other three Federal Councillors, ex officio, are the Federal Leader and Deputy-Leader, and the Immediate Past Chairman.⁴

The Federal Council must meet once per year at least and elect annually a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman and a Secretary, who need not be delegates; it may elect other officers. These officers, together with the Federal Leader, form the Federal Executive. The Executive must be representative of all the states, and it possesses only those powers delegated to it by the Federal Council. The quorum for the Council is eight, but the eight must include representatives from at least three states. Any two state Central Councils can demand a meeting of the Federal Council.⁵

The Council has the power of veto over the entry of the federal parliamentary party into a coalition ministry. In addition, in consultation with the parliamentary party, it determines the party's federal policy; such policy determination must take place at least once every three years, and only the Federal Councillors may vote. The state Central Councils are given complete freedom to make such arrangements as they find necessary to secure Senate representation, and each state

⁴
Constitution, 4A, pp.7, 8.

⁵
Ibid., 4C, D, E, p.8.

Central Council has full power within its own state to decide matters relating to the conduct and financing of federal election campaigns.⁶

Each state organisation pays an annual affiliation fee to the Federal Council, and these fees provide the Council's income. In 1960 these fees were:

New South Wales	- £150
Queensland	- £100
Victoria	- £100
Western Australia	- £ 50

Finally, the Federal Constitution can be altered by a three-fifths majority of Federal Council at a meeting of the Council called for the purpose.⁷

Even a cursory reading of this Constitution suggests that the Country Party is not strongly organised federally. Firstly, and most importantly, the income of its federal body is restricted to £400 per annum. Secondly, the Federal Council possesses only two real powers: a veto on the entry of the party into a coalition ministry, and the right to determine federal policy: all the residual powers belong to the state organisations, and these include the powers of endorsement, and of the conduct and financing of campaigns.⁸ Thirdly, parliamentarians

⁶Ibid., 4I5, 6, generally; 7A, B; pp.8, 9.

⁷Ibid., 8, 10, pp.9, 10.

⁸Of course, the Country Party is not unique among Australian parties in this regard. Ian Campbell has pointed out that the concentration of "all power of pre-selection in the hands of the states, thereby eliminate[s] an essential pre-requisite for national party organisation." "Parties and the Referendum Process", Australian Quarterly, Vol. XXXIV No. 2, June 1962, p.79.

play a vital role in the Federal Council: at least ten of the 27 Councillors will be parliamentarians, and at least six of them, federal parliamentarians. Fourthly, the negotiations with the Liberal Party will take place at the state, not at the federal level.

Clearly the Federal Council has few duties and little power. Nevertheless, it does give the federal parliamentary party a semblance of 'responsibility' as well as providing an essential link between the state Country Parties and the federal parliamentary party. It is the clearing-house, for example, for all resolutions affecting federal policy matters passed by annual Conferences of the state Country Parties. And it does take its policy-making function fairly seriously: about two in every three meetings of the Federal Council in the 1950s amended the federal platform.⁹

The weakness of the Federal Council is plainly intentional. Indeed, as the most federalism-conscious of the Australian political parties, a powerful federal body would have been contrary to the party's philosophy. Sir Arthur Fadden developed this argument at a Federal Council meeting in 1954.

In our organisation we practice what we preach - decentralisation in action and administration, common action in matters of national concern, the fullest degree of autonomy and independence for local units, and an absence of rules emanating from a central source with the object of imposing disciplines or restrictions on the State branches or individual members.

9

Minute Books of the Australian Country Party (Federal).

There is no Federal Country Party, in fact, for one and all we base our essential loyalties on the State organisations which conduct our domestic affairs. 10

In practice this means that the federal parliamentary party is left with a great deal of freedom. Federal Council did not meet between January 1949 and July 1952, during which period there occurred two federal elections, the anti-communist referendum, and the wool sales taxation crisis.

More thoughtful party members in the states have been concerned at both the infrequency of Council meetings and the lack of contact with the federal party. The Acting-Chairman of the Queensland Country Party felt that the Federal Council had been operating "in a slipshod manner" over the wool taxation controversy.¹¹ J.B. Fuller, later to be the N.S.W. party's Chairman, expressed a common feeling to the 1952 annual Conference:

...Federal Council has not met for three years...and is a useless body. That means that Federal Parliamentary members have nobody to turn to for advice - nobody concerned in the party that can give them the feeling of the electors. 12

10

FCM, 10 September 1954.

11

Most especially, he said, because none of the state Central Councils were told about the proposed taxation in advance:

That struck a body blow to State organisations throughout Australia.... No-one understood it.... I did not know what it was either so I could not explain.

Minutes, 1951 AC.

12

Minutes, 1952 AC.

Seven years later, Fuller made much the same complaint to the Federal Council itself.¹³ The more active state delegates have sometimes criticised the federal parliamentary party for taking little notice of Federal Council decisions. The N.S.W. Chairman, for example, told his Central Executive in 1956 that

he had been somewhat disappointed with the last Federal Executive meeting, and he objected to the way in which the Parliamentary Party shelved the resolutions passed by the Federal Council and Executive. 14

But these are infrequent complaints. The tradition of trust in the parliamentary parties operates as much for the federal parliamentary party as it does for its state colleagues. And the jealously guarded autonomy of the state parties militates against any extension of federal power in the organisation. A projected permanent federal secretariat, greatly desired by Fadden and Page, who saw it as the publicity instrument of the federal parliamentary party, did not attract offers of financial support from any state other than New South Wales and had to be abandoned.¹⁵

In the affairs of the federal Country Party, New South Wales has played the major role, as it has traditionally supplied the largest number of federal M.P.s, and it provided Earle Page, the party's early

¹³
FCM, 27 November 1959.

¹⁴
CEM, 31 August 1956.

¹⁵
CEM, 13 February 1946, 2 May 1946; FCM, 15 February 1946; CCM, 14 February 1946.

leader and subsequently its eminence grise. Furthermore, because of its access to the Special Purposes Fund of the N.S.W. Graziers' Association up to 1945, the N.S.W. party provided most of the funds of the federal party. Approaches by other state parties for financial assistance began as early as 1922,¹⁶ and continued throughout the 1920s and 1930s.¹⁷ Even after the Federal Council was assisted financially by affiliation fees, New South Wales was still providing most of the special finance: the whole cost of the federal publicity for the party in 1949 and 1950, for example, was borne by the N.S.W. Country Party.¹⁸

Interstate contact between the parties is formal and infrequent. Apart from Federal Council and Executive meetings, and the N.S.W. General Secretary's role as Federal General Secretary, which brings him into touch with the other state organisations, the only regular contact occurs at the annual Conferences of the state parties, which are almost invariably attended by representatives of the other

¹⁶

Minutes of the "Federal Council of the Australian Country Party", 6 November 1922.

¹⁷

CEM, 15 May 1929; GSR to CC for 1929; Minutes, AMCC, 11 February 1931; GSR to Triennial Convention A.C.P.A., 20 November 1933; "We did Well - But We Must Learn Some Lessons", A.C.P.J., Vol. 1 No. 9, October 1934; CCM, 18 November 1937.

¹⁸

GSR to CC, 14 February 1950. The dominance of New South Wales has had some bizarre results. Since the Federal Council does not have endorsement powers, it was the responsibility of the N.S.W. Country Party in 1951 to endorse and provide funds for candidates in the party's interest in elections for the Northern Territory Legislative Council and for the federal seat of Northern Territory. CCM, 30 March 1951; GSR to CC, 22 May 1951.

(eastern) parties.¹⁹ Once again, New South Wales has helped other state organisations: it sent election propoganda, on request, to both the Queensland and Western Australian parties for the 1954 federal elections, for example.²⁰ But this sort of co-operation is unusual, and none of the state organisations have heeded a suggestion of the Federal General Secretary in 1953:

I feel that more use can be made of the Federal Secretary, if only on the level of contact between affiliated State organisations. I would be very pleased to act as a clearing house for ideas, publicity and information, if the affiliated States wish to use me as such.

I feel that on the organisational level, useful ideas and even warnings could circulate between affiliated States to their mutual advantage. 21

III. THE FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK

The Country Party in New South Wales was originally financed from donations, principally from the Graziers' Association, but also from the F.S.A. and from metropolitan and country business interests. Thus the receipts of the party for 1921 appeared as follows:²²

Donations	-	£1,950.12. 6.
Affiliation Fees	-	£ 12.15. 6.
		<u>£1,963. 8. 0.</u>

¹⁹
Western Australia usually sends telegraphed greetings.

²⁰
GSR to Central Campaign Committee, 14 June 1954.

²¹
GSR to FC, 28 November 1953.

²²
First Annual Report of the General Secretary to Central Council, 14 November 1921.

The affiliation fees (6d per member per annum from all G.A. and F.S.A. branches) rose to about 30 per cent of revenue in 1923, but were totally insufficient as a source of income, while donations could not be budgeted for. Both the parliamentarians and Central Council were conscious of the need to secure a regular source of funds, preferably one without attached strings. Accordingly in 1928 the party began to employ organisers to secure bank order subscriptions, initially from supporters of the party in the towns, then from supporters anywhere.²³

The organisers had hardly begun work when the onset of the depression caused the termination of their employment. After the United Country Party was formed, organising became the responsibility of the Divisions, and the central party funds received 25 per cent of bank order revenue.²⁴ The Divisions made little effort to ensure that Head Office received its share, however, and by the end of 1934 party finances were chaotic.²⁵ For every pound provided by bank order revenue in 1934, the Graziers' Association was contributing another £5.10. 0., and other donations nearly £9.²⁶ The party was still almost entirely dependent on donations of one kind or another.

23

GSR to CC, 29 November 1928; GSR to CC, 14 May 1929. The idea was borrowed from the Western Australian Country Party.

24

Minutes, Executive Meeting, Western Division, 4 December 1934.

25

Analysis of Country Party Finances (A Report by E.C. Sommerlad to Central Executive, 13 November 1934).

26

GSR to the Financial Executive, 13 November 1934.

When the party re-organised in 1945, Head Office took over the employment of the organisers. In the early distributions of postwar bank order revenue, Head Office received half, and the electorate councils one quarter each, the SEC providing 2/- to the branch.²⁷ It was very quickly discovered, however, that the Head Office proportion would have to be increased to cover the costs of collecting the bank orders.²⁸ There have been further modifications of the distribution, and since 1957 bank orders payable at Head Office have been allocated as follows:²⁹

		(on a £2.2.0. subscription)
Bank Charge (if Applicable)	1/-	1/-
Branch Membership Fee	2/-	2/-
<u>Countryman</u> subscription	3/-	3/-
Special Reserve Fund	10%	4/2

From the balance,

Federal Electorate Council	15%	4/9 $\frac{1}{2}$
State Electorate Council	15%	4/9 $\frac{1}{2}$
Head Office	70%	£1/2/3

Head Office receives the whole of the first year's subscription.

The amounts to which branches and electorate councils are entitled are placed in special accounts at Head Office, and these accounts can be drawn on by the branches and councils at will. However, Head Office much prefers that the money remains relatively untouched since these

27

CEM, 28 February 1945.

28

OSR to CE, 21 June 1945; Minutes, 1946 AC.

29

Minutes, 1957 AC. Bank charges for the bank order, originally paid by the party, are now payable by the member.

accounts, containing collectively many thousands of pounds, are the party's No. 2 bank account, and its guarantee for the Head Office working overdraft.

As we shall see, the finances of the party underlie the more general intra-party relationships. In fact, the various shares of bank order income reflect, in some degree, the relative importance of the party institutions. But it is important, at the same time, to observe that each level of the party has its own share of the party's income, and that this is protected by the party's Constitution.

IV. THE REGIONS OF THE COUNTRY PARTY

The Country Party in New South Wales can be thought of as the party of a number of regions within the state. Each of these regions has its own social and economic character, and the Country Party's image is different in each. These regions are, in general terms, the north coast, the northern tablelands, the north west, the central west, and the Riverina.

The most important of these regions, as well as the most easily identifiable, is the northern tablelands. In terms of state electorates (see Map 1, frontispiece) it consists of Tenterfield, Armidale, Tamworth and Upper Hunter. This is the home of the northern New State Movement, and also of two of the party's state Leaders (M.F. Bruxner and Davis Hughes) and Deputy-Leaders (D.H. Drummond and W.A. Chaffey). Much of it is fine grazing country originally settled well over one hundred

years ago by men whose descendants still control much of the land. The New State Movement gives the northern tablelands its special character. The origins of the northern separatist movement can be traced easily to 1859, when much northern sentiment favoured the inclusion of the north in the colony of Queensland.³⁰ Since then, new-statism in one or other of its forms has been a notable element in northern politics, especially since Federation. A formal New State Movement was created in 1915, revived in 1930, and reformed again in 1948. It is still vocal and active in 1963. Separatism is not merely a rural agitation in the north. It has strong support among urban business and professional men and from the northern press. And certainly the historic association of the Country Party with new-statism has accounted for much of the faithful support of the party in the north.

There are pockets of separatist sentiment on the north coast, but they are isolated. The north coast has been, and probably still is, too parochial for a regional movement to gather widespread support. Much of the north coast is densely settled (by rural Australian standards) dairying country, prosperous, but not wealthy. The north coast electorates, Byron, Lismore, Casino, Clarence, Raleigh, Oxley, and Gloucester were until 1959 among the party's safest seats. But in that year Lismore was won by the A.L.P. after a disputed election, and

30

Ellis, The Country Party, p.79. See also E.J. Tapp "The Colonial Origins of the New England New State Movement", Journal and Proceedings of the Royal Australian Historical Society, Vol. 49 part 3, 1963, pp.205-21.

the sitting Member for Oxley defected to the Liberal Party. The political mores of the coast are not those of the tablelands. Defections are more frequent, personalities more important, apathy more usual. Rural/urban hostility is uncommon, not because of new-statism, but because the towns and the rural community have familial ties: dairyfarming is economically the industry of small men. The Country Party has generally polled almost as well in the towns as it has done among the farmers.

In the grazing north-west, politics tend to be much more a function of socio-economic class than is the case on the northern tablelands. This is partly an effect of the rural industry. Poorer rainfall, and in some areas, poorer soil, have led to larger properties, fewer owners and self-employed, and more employees. The Australian Workers' Union, moribund on the tablelands and a curiosity on the coast, maintains a sort of existence if it does not actually flourish. Town populations, generally smaller than on the tablelands or on the coast, have higher proportions of wage-earners. New statism is a cult of the grazier, not of the townsman. In these electorates, Barwon, Castlereagh, Cobar, Liverpool Plains and Mudgee, electoral contests have often become straight-out Labor/non-Labor fights. At the same time, the electorates contain some of the Country Party's most virile local organisations, in Gwydir FEC, and Barwon and Liverpool Plains SECs.³¹ In recent years

31

The electorate of Liverpool Plains was abolished in 1961.

the Liberal party has been making inroads into the north west, setting up full local organisations, and contesting elections in Mudgee and Castlereagh.

In the central west it is the competition between the Country and Liberal Parties which provides the principal ingredient in local politics. The Country Party has never had a strong hold in the area, and had lost all its central western seats by 1944. Of the present electorates, Orange, Bathurst, Dubbo and Young, it won Orange for the first time in 1947, and re-won Young in 1959. Dubbo it regained in 1950, but lost again three years later. The Liberal Party won Dubbo in 1959 and nearly won Young in 1956. Moreover, in 1946 the Liberal Party won the federal seat of Calare, which comprises the whole of the Orange state electorate and parts of the other three, and held it until 1960 when the Member resigned and the Country Party won the seat in the ensuing by-election. The area is long-settled, wealthy, and dominated by some large provincial cities, Bathurst, Orange and Dubbo, from which the Liberal Party derives much of its support.

The south-west, or Riverina,³² is different again. Largely devoted to wheat farming and to mixed farming and grazing, it is the stronghold of the F.S.A. Although the Riverina was one of the early fortresses of the Country Party, the party's influence there has declined. In these electorates, Burrinjuck, Albury, Temora, Wagga Wagga, Murrumbidgee

32

Traditionally, all the land between the Murrumbidgee and Murray Rivers.

and Murray there is now a settled party occupancy. Burrinjuck is a fief of the Labor Minister for Health, W.F. Sheahan. Albury and Wagga Wagga, both dominated by large towns, are held by the Liberal Party, Murrumbidgee is another seat firmly held by a Labor Minister (A.G. Enticknap), and Murray and Temora are held by the Country Party. With the exception of Wagga Wagga, which the Liberal Party won from the A.L.P. in 1957, the party representation of these seats has been the same since 1941 or earlier. Of the three federal electorates, Riverina is held by the Country Party, Farrer by the Liberal Party and Hume alternately by the Country Party and the A.L.P. The state electorates are also dissimilar industrially: the incidence of wheat farming increases towards the west - Burrinjuck is principally a grazing seat, Murray principally wheat farming. Murrumbidgee contains intensive irrigated fruit and rice growing areas. New-statism, once a burning issue in the days of the Riverina Movement, is no longer of any importance.³³

There are three other regions in which the Country Party has not gained a foot-hold: the south, the near-metropolitan area, and the far west. It is now more than 20 years since the party held Monaro, its only southern seat; it has never won either Goulburn or South Coast. The Country Party's expansion south west from New England and north

33

Members of the party who participated in the postal survey were asked whether they were in favour of New States in Australia, which is, of course, party policy. Whereas respondents from the northern tablelands and north coast were strongly in favour (87.8 per cent and 73.5 per cent respectively) support from the Riverina was much more subdued (58.8 per cent). See Appendix G.

east from the Riverina seemed to by-pass the south. The southern tablelands were perhaps too close to Sydney (like the seats of Wollondilly, Hawkesbury and Nepean), the south coast too isolated from the rest of the state, for the Country Party to become powerful there. The far western electorates, Cobar and Sturt, are and have traditionally been mining seats, since each contains a substantial part of the mining city of Broken Hill. Nevertheless, the party maintains an organisation in the west and usually presents candidates in elections - despite their poor chance of victory.

Thus the Country Party is a regional party, and not simply in the sense that its strength is drawn from outside the capital city, or that its strongest and most consistent support comes from one region, the northern tablelands. It is a different party in different regions: a dairyfarmers' and townsmen's party on the coast, a graziers' party on the tablelands, and a wheatgrowers' party in the Riverina. Each region has its own problems and its own political attitudes, and these provide the major sources of tension and dispute within the party.

I. FORMAL¹

The formal process of becoming a member of the Country Party is simple. An intending member must not be a member of any other Australian political party, and he must accept the Constitution, policy and platform of the party.² He applies for membership either directly to the General Secretary or to the nearest branch.³ Branches are not required to investigate the applicant, but merely to vote on his admission after he has been nominated and seconded.⁴ Once elected to the branch the member must pay a fee of 5/-, either directly to the branch, or as part of his bank order subscription for at least £2. 2. 0.⁵ Upon application, the latter membership subscription may include the member's spouse.⁶ Aged or invalid pensioners, or returned servicemen or women who receive a Totally and Permanently Incapacitated pension may receive branch membership for 1/- per year.⁷

The proper sequence of these formal requirements is not usually observed. The new member is normally enrolled by the local organiser at

¹
A copy of the party's Constitution is enclosed in a pocket at the end of the thesis.

²
Constitution, VI (a) (2), p.18.

³
The Constitution does not make it clear whether intending members must join a branch, although the implication is that they should.

⁴
Constitution, VI (b) (1) (1), p.19.

⁵
Ibid., VI (a) (4,5), p.18.

⁶
Ibid., VI (a) (5), p.18.

⁷
Ibid., VI (a) (6), p.18.

the former's property or place of work, and is assigned to the nearest branch (or that of the new member's preference). His membership of the party, as far as Head Office is concerned, dates from the signing of the bank order, and he is probably never formally admitted to the branch: the writer has attended at least 20 meetings of different branches, and while new members have been "welcomed" at these meetings they have never been admitted formally. However, branches often formally admit 5/- members.⁸

While the £2. 2. 0. subscription entitles the member to all the rights and privileges of membership, including the right to stand for office within the party and to seek nomination as a parliamentary candidate, the 5/- subscription bestows restricted rights: such members are not eligible for office, may attend meetings of their own branch only, and are not eligible for nomination as parliamentary candidates. Both classes of member receive the party newspaper, The (New South Wales) Countryman,⁹ and 3/- is deducted from every subscription to cover its cost.

Members may not belong to more than one branch, save that members who live in Sydney may belong to both the Metropolitan and a country branch. However, members can attend meetings of other branches, at which they may not vote. Any member can be expelled by his branch for

8

See below, Chapter 7, part III.

9

All the state Country Party newspapers are known as The Countryman, prefixed with the name of the state.

Table 12

Variations in Annual Subscription Fees:
Young State Electorate, 1958

<u>No. of Members Paying</u>	<u>Amount</u>		
	<u>£.</u>	<u>s.</u>	<u>d.</u>
1	10	6	0
117	1	1	0
574	2	2	0
20	3	3	0
2	4	4	0
14	5	5	0
1	10	10	0

(729 members)

Source: Young State Electorate Council Membership
Records

improper conduct, but this must be done at a duly called meeting of the branch at which he may speak in defence of his actions, and at which two thirds of those present vote in favour of his expulsion. The expelled member may appeal to Central Council.¹⁰

II. NUMBERS

Counting bank order members, cash subscribers and branch members the party comprises about 20,000 members, and this figure has been maintained since 1950. No accurate enumeration is possible, since Head Office has no complete record of branch members and many members subscribe with more than one bank order.¹¹ In fact Head Office has ceased keeping a record of membership figures and now records only membership finance. About 95 per cent of the members are full members, the remainder being 5/- branch members. The latter are found in every electorate, but most commonly in the coastal seats.

Despite the doubling of the annual subscription from £1. 1. 0. to £2. 2. 0. in 1954, many members have not adjusted their bank orders accordingly. As Table 12 shows, 117 of the 729 bank order subscribers in Young state electorate were still paying only £1. 1. 0. in 1958. Nevertheless, there is no evidence that subscribing members who pay less

10

See below, Chapter 7, part III.

11

After the membership fee was increased to £2. 2. 0. in 1954 many members who already had one bank order for £1. 1. 0. wrote out a second for the same amount.

Table 13

Membership:

Numbers in Selected State Electorates, 1961

<u>Electorate</u>	<u>Predominant Rural Industry</u>	<u>Number of Members</u>
TEMORA	Mixed farming	1,797
RALEIGH	Dairying	1,126
TENTERFIELD	Grazing	979
ARMIDALE	Grazing	768
YOUNG*	Mixed farming	729
BURRINJUCK	Grazing	704
UPPER HUNTER	Grazing	693
CASINO	Dairying	691
GLOUCESTER	Dairying	662
ORANGE	Mixed farming	606
OXLEY	Dairying	555
BYRON	Dairying	524
LISMORE	Dairying	416

Note: * Young figures are for 1958.

Source: Appendix H.

than £2. 2. 0. per annum are prevented from enjoying full membership rights. Thirty-seven of the Young subscribers were paying more than £2. 2. 0.; from membership records it appears that the incidence of larger bank orders is greatest in the grazing and lowest in the dairying electorates. Larger bank orders, however, do not bestow greater privileges on the subscribers.

Apart from some traditional and safe Labor and Liberal seats, where Country Party membership is generally small, most state electorates contain between 500 and 800 party members. Table 13 illustrates the range in membership numbers in 13 state electorates in 1961.¹² Nine of the 13 electorates contained between 500 and 800 members, and seven contained between 600 and 800 members. The very much higher levels of membership in Temora, Raleigh and Tenterfield are the result of special circumstances in each case. Temora SEC employed its own organiser from 1947 to about 1954 (when its annual income from its own bank orders exceeded £3,000), and the work of this organiser is still shown in Temora's high level of membership.¹³ In Raleigh, membership was raised from much less than 600 in 1959 to the present figure by a concentrated membership

12
It was not possible to do a similar analysis for each state electorate, partly because the information originally came from local sources and partly because of an understandable reluctance on the part of the party to make its membership records available for study. By the time permission to use these records had been obtained, it was too late to make a complete analysis.

13
Minutes, Annual Meeting, Temora SEC, 19 February 1948, Annual Meeting, Temora SEC, 18 March 1954.

drive in 1960, planned by Head Office and executed by organisers and local party members.¹⁴ Tenterfield contained over 1,000 members by 1949, and successive organisers have found it easy to maintain this level.¹⁵

While most electorates fall within the 500-800 member range, the grazing electorates tend to be at the top of the range, while the dairying electorates tend to be at the bottom. Perhaps we should expect an even wider disparity, because of the differing economic circumstances of graziers and dairy farmers. Organisers have always found coastal electorates difficult for money-raising,¹⁶ and some coastal branches have been distrustful of the bank order system.¹⁷ In fact the disparity between grazing and dairying electorates is far greater in annual bank order income, because the average bank order in grazing electorates is significantly higher than that in dairying electorates.¹⁸ The

14

Minutes, Annual Meeting Raleigh SEC, 2 March 1960; Minutes, Raleigh SEC, 28 September 1960.

15

SOR to CC, 25 March 1949. All the organisers spoken to by the writer who had worked in Tenterfield thought of it as "good territory" (in contrast, for example, to the far north coast).

16

See below, Chapter 11, part V.

17

Thus, an annual meeting of one Oxley electorate branch resolved "that we do not recommend the taking out of Bank orders at the present time".
Minutes, Annual Meeting Hannam Vale Branch, 19 January 1951.

18

Not only are bank orders for 10, 15 and 20 guineas common in some grazing electorates, but a very common coastal bank order is £1. 6. 0. - i.e. 6d per week.

Table 14

Membership:

Numbers in Selected Federal Electorates, 1961

<u>Electorate</u>	<u>No. of Members</u>
CALARE (Containing Orange State Electorate and parts of Dubbo, Young, Temora and Bathurst)	1,580
HUME* (Containing Burrinjuck, and parts of Bathurst, Young, Goulburn, Temora and Albury)	1,802
LYNE (Containing Oxley, and parts of Raleigh, Gloucester and Maitland)	1,426
NEW ENGLAND (Containing parts of Armidale, Tenterfield, Tamworth, Clarence and Raleigh)	1,630
RICHMOND (Containing Byron, Lismore and parts of Casino)	1,227

Note: Young figures are for 1958.

Source: Appendix H.

variations in membership in state electorates are reflected, to a lesser extent, in the federal electorates, as Table 14 shows.

Recruitment of members goes on regularly, save for election times when organisers concentrate on raising campaign finance. Because organisers have large territories, years often elapse between their visits to branch areas, and thus branch membership fluctuates according to the activity of the organiser. Graph 1 (facing p.157) illustrates this aspect of membership clearly. Orange Branch area received visits from the organiser in 1945, 1950, 1952, 1958 and 1961, and each of these visits resulted in more than 30 new members. The Bonalbo subdivision branches, in remote and difficult country, and the Armidale Branch, in a safe seat, had more widely spaced visits.¹⁹

Members do not resign from the Country Party; they quietly cancel their bank orders.²⁰ For this reason it is impossible to estimate how many genuinely disaffected members leave the party each year. When a bank order recorded at party headquarters fails to be paid by the bank on the due date Head Office asks the bank for the reason. The Head Office records of bank order "wastage" (which cannot be quoted here)

19

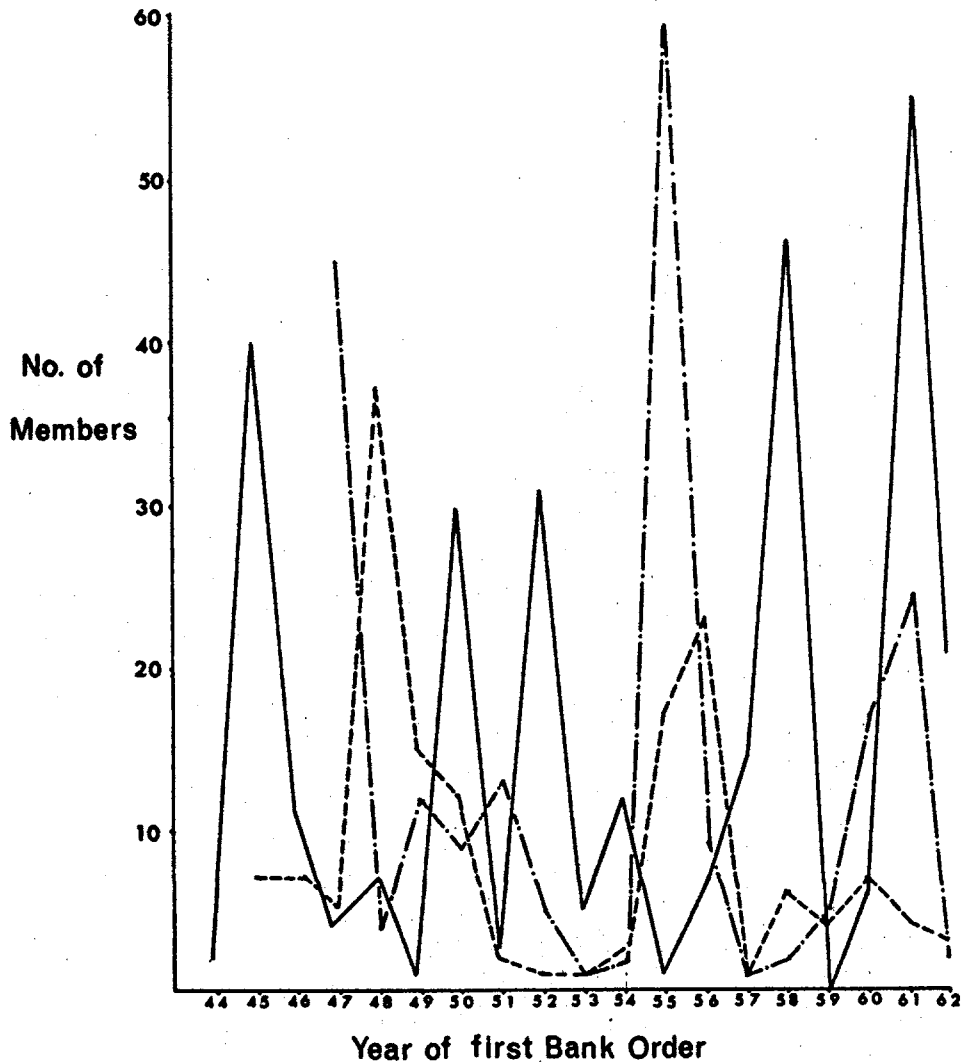
Also, the Orange area has always had an organiser since the war, because the party has been endeavouring to build up its organisation in the central west, whereas the north has often been without a permanent organiser.

20

However, external and internal crises usually produce a small crop of angry formal resignations. The 1950 Wool Sales Deduction Act caused a number of resignations, as did the party's decision to adopt as policy a limited form of state aid to church schools. These instances are notable for their rarity.

Graph 1

Evidence of Fluctuations in the Recruitment of New Members:
Selected Branches, 1944-62



Note:

1. ——— Orange Branch
----- Armidale Branch
-.-.-.-.- Branches in the Bonalbo Subdivision of the Casino state electorate (Bonalbo, Drake, Legume, Mallanganee, Tabulam, Urbenville, and Woodenbong Branches)
2. It is assumed that there has been a constant bank order cancellation rate for all branches and for all years. (See text.)

Source: Head Office Membership Records

indicate that genuine defections are rare. Table 15 (facing p.158) analyses the causes of non-payment, as given by the banks, of 36 bank orders written in the Armidale electorate between 1959 and 1961. Of these, only the eight under "Cancelled Authority" and the five under "Contact Subscriber" are likely to be defections; Head Office believes that of the first group most will have cancelled their bank orders for economic reasons. Head Office is also sadly aware that many people sign the bank orders just to get rid of the organiser, and cancel them immediately afterwards.²¹ Finally Head Office believes, on good evidence, that the vast majority of those who do not cancel their bank orders in the first few weeks will remain members of the party almost indefinitely.

III. OCCUPATIONS

Appendix H sets out the occupations of party members in the same 13 state electorates in 1961. The occupations, taken from the electoral rolls, are those given by the members when they first registered to vote at that address, and have been divided into six classes: Farmers, Graziers, Farmers and Graziers, Labourers, Home Duties, and Other.

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One woman respondent to the postal survey of members (Appendix G) gave as her reason for joining

"The organiser who came around talked me into it as my husband was away..."

A farmer respondent was also pestered by an organiser,

"and the easiest way to get rid of him I found was to join the Party."

In addition, organisers suspect that many bank managers (putative Liberals) dissuade their farmer clients from maintaining bank orders for avowedly financial reasons.

Table 15

Non-payment of Bank Orders by Banks
Armidale State Electorate, 1959-61

<u>Reasons Given by Bank</u>	<u>No. of Bank Orders</u>
1. Subscriber closed his a/c	11
2. Subscriber cancelled authority	8
3. Subscriber deceased	5
4. Contact subscriber	5
5. Subscriber has no a/c	3
6. Subscriber has left address	1
7. Authority has lapsed	1
8. Subscriber has transferred a/c	1

Source: Armidale State Electorate Council Records

Between three and six per cent of the members could not be traced in the 1961 electoral rolls, and their number appears in a further column (N.T.). The proportion of those untraced is small and would not appear to invalidate any of the following general arguments.²²

At first glance, the most striking impression given by the analysis of occupations is the very high proportion of primary producers in the party. Table 16 (facing p.159) shows this more clearly. In the left-hand column is given the proportion of farmers, graziers and farmer and graziers in the membership in each electorate. In only one electorate are primary producers less than 50 per cent of the membership, and in ten of the 13 seats they are more than 60 per cent.

The influence of the land is even greater than these figures would suggest. Nearly all the members whose occupation was given as Home Duties possessed rural addresses; two thirds of the Labourers were obviously rural workers (i.e. "station hand", "farm worker" and so on) and the majority of the remaining third may be considered also as rural rather than urban labourers. If these two categories are added to the primary producer categories to form a 'rural interest' within the party, then this interest is clearly dominant. The right-hand column of Table 16 shows that the rural interest contains less than 60 per cent of the membership in only one electorate, more than 70 per cent in ten electorates, and over 90 per cent in one electorate.

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For a further comment on the methods, see the notes to Appendix H.

Table 16

Membership: the "rural interest"

<u>Electorate</u>	<u>A</u> Farmers Graziers <u>Farmers & Graziers</u> %	<u>B</u> Labourers A + <u>Home Duties</u> %
(Predominantly Grazing)		
ARMIDALE	60.8	74.7
BURRINJUCK	74.7	86.1
TENTERFIELD	67.4	79.0
UPPER HUNTER	73.2	84.2
(Predominantly Mixed farming)		
ORANGE	74.8	86.1
TEMORA	79.6	90.1
YOUNG	76.8	86.3
(Predominantly Dairying)		
BYRON	68.7	77.3
CASINO	69.4	80.7
GLOUCESTER	50.8	60.5
LISMORE	64.9	70.2
OXLEY	47.2	56.8
RALEIGH	55.7	68.8

Source: Appendix H.

The rural working class is better represented than might have been expected, and in one electorate rural workers are very nearly one member in every ten. Furthermore, they are nowhere insignificant, even in wheat growing areas. Similarly, there is a small, but state-wide, representation of housewives, nowhere more than seven per cent, but nowhere entirely absent.

The final broad occupational category includes all those not otherwise classified: that is, in general terms, all members with non-rural occupations. Although it is not the largest single group in any electorate, it is of considerable size in some seats, and in two it is over 35 per cent. Furthermore, it is at least ten per cent in all but four electorates.

This, then, is the broad pattern of party membership, in terms of occupations. Firstly, the majority of the members are primary producers. Secondly, there are small but not insignificant proportions of rural workers and rural housewives. Thirdly, there is a minority, large in some electorates, of members with non-rural occupations. But while all the electorates examined fit this pattern, there are important regional differences.

Only dairying electorates and to a lesser extent the northern grazing electorates contain large proportions of non-rural members. In the south and west their proportion is low, in fact not much higher than that of labourers. Two general explanations can be advanced to account for this difference. In the first place, dairying electorates are

small in area, comparatively densely settled, and well provided with roads and transport services. The economic status of the dairyfarmer is not any higher than the townsman (if indeed it is higher), rural-urban contact is frequent, and the sons and daughters of the farmers migrate to the towns (where they were educated) for employment. In inland areas, on the other hand, the economic status of the farmer and grazier is generally superior to that of the townsman, his children (for reasons both of finance and distance) will tend to be sent away to boarding school for education, and are unlikely to go to the town for employment, because of its limited range of opportunities and their greater expectations. Rural-urban hostility, almost non-existent on the coast, is common inland.²³

In addition, town and country hostility in the north has been muted, even if only to a small degree, by the regionalism underlying the New England New State Movement, which has traditionally emphasised the similarities between and the common grievances and aims of the town and rural populations. Northern people are used to thinking of themselves in regional terms, and the New State Movement has always included among

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One might have added that coastal towns are aware of the importance of their local industry, be it fishing, timber or dairying, because of the processing and packing factories in the towns, whereas most wheat and wool is sent from the country to the cities in its raw material state often without passing through the towns in any form. For these and related reasons, coastal townsmen are not ignorant about the problems of their local industries: one suspects that many townsmen in grazing and wheat areas are utterly and happily ignorant of the problems of these industries.

its leaders and supporters many northern business and professional men, and has always been backed by the provincial newspapers in the north. This sort of regionalism has never really existed in the central west, and had only a short life in the Riverina.

The corollary to these arguments should be noticed. The Country Party is much more nearly a true "farmers' party" in the Riverina than it is on the north coast or the northern tablelands. Although the party has been avowedly recruiting townsmen since 1922,²⁴ it has apparently had little success in Temora, which has had a Country Party M.L.A. since 1927. Furthermore, although the Liberal Party has not attempted to organise in the north, it maintains an effective organisation in the central west and the south west, and it is probably true that many townsmen who would join the Country Party if they lived in Tamworth have joined the Liberal Party in Young and Orange (though not Temora).

A closer analysis of the occupations in the Other category seems to reinforce many of the above arguments. Appendix I sets out the occupations of these members in eight groups: Professional, Business, Associated with the Land, Local Industries, Skilled Trades, Unskilled and Semi-skilled, No occupation and Deceased Estate, and Other. Dairying electorates contain small numbers of urban working class members, as do the northern grazing electorates, but the other electorates contain none at all. The highest proportions of professional men among the members

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Minutes, Joint Meeting of Central Council and the Parliamentary Progressive Party, 20 April 1922.

were in dairying and northern grazing electorates.

The relatively high proportions of members engaged in local industries in some coastal electorates is a reflection of the importance in these electorates of the timber and fishing industries, which have no parallels inland. But these local industry representatives are not merely the proprietors. While Raleigh, for example, possessed 14 sawmiller members, there were also 12 mill hands, eight teamsters, five timber workers, three sawyers and two sleeper cutters in the local Country Party. Indeed the extent to which the timber industry is represented within the party both by employers and employees is surprising, and may be a function of family ownership within the industry.

IV. THE MEMBERS IN SOCIETY

To the above description of the party member as economic man we can add some information about him as social man. Most of this information comes from Appendix G, an analysis of a postal survey of party members in three areas, Armidale (grazing), Kempsey (dairying) and Young (mixed farming and grazing). The members were asked to complete a questionnaire which sought personal details as well as attitudes to some key issues within the party. The response to the survey was not large enough for the survey to form the basis of a thorough sociological investigation, and the results of the survey are used here only to support other evidence, to support the writer's own observations, or,

in the absence of any other evidence, to suggest what cannot be stated more strongly.²⁵

1. Sex

We have already observed that about five per cent of the members are housewives. To this five per cent of female members should be added a small group of female farmers, graziers, clerks and shop assistants, who would probably not amount to more than 0.5 per cent of the membership in any electorate. The Country Party in New South Wales is overwhelming a party of men.²⁶

2. Age (QAI)

No-one who studies the Country Party can fail to be aware of the large number of old men within the party, especially among the leaders, at all levels. Conversely, one will remark almost as quickly on the virtual absence of young men in their twenties.²⁷ These subjective impressions are borne out by the survey. Over 25 per cent of the members replying were over 60 years in age, and 18.5 per cent were over 65.

On the other hand only 8.3 per cent of the members were aged under 30

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For an explanation of the technique used and an argument for the partial validity of the results of the survey, see the notes to Appendix G.

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But not in Victoria, where there is a flourishing Women's Country Party, the attendance at whose annual Conferences is usually larger than that which attends the annual Conference of the N.S.W. Country Party. This lively party auxiliary is much envied in New South Wales, where the women of the party have always played a subordinate role.

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The writer recalls the first party Conference he attended (1961) at the age of 24, when he seemed to be at least ten years younger than the youngest delegate. However the 1963 Conference included at least two delegates in their twenties.

years, and indeed only 17.8 per cent were younger than 40 years. The other major age-group within the party seemed to be the middle-aged - 40 to 55 years - who comprised a little over 40 per cent of the respondents.

These figures are not surprising. The party is only 43 years old in New South Wales, and it attracted in its foundation years many younger men as leaders and supporters. Bruxner, Drummond, Page, Hugh Main,²⁸ R.S. Vincent,²⁹ Sir Norman Kater,³⁰ E.C. Sommerlad,³¹ F.B. Fleming,³² P.A. Wright,³³ H.F. White,³⁴ to name but a very few, were in their twenties or thirties when they joined the party, and the men of this age-group have shown a continuing interest in the affairs of the party. The dominance of the older men, in its turn, has almost certainly been one of the principal reasons why the party has found it difficult to attract younger men as members. In Armidale, where the party has been

²⁸
Farmer, M.L.A. for Cootamundra, 1920-27, for Temora, 1927-38. Minister for Agriculture and Forests, 16 May 1932 to 17 June 1932, Minister for Agriculture, 18 June 1932 to 1 April 1938.

²⁹
Newspaper proprietor, M.L.A. for Oxley, 1922-27, for Raleigh 1927-53. Minister for Mines and Forests 18 June 1932 to 16 May 1941, Minister for Agriculture 2 April 1938 to 13 April 1938.

³⁰
Surgeon and grazier, M.L.C., 1923 to 1955. Member of the Central Council from 1920 to present.

³¹
Newspaper proprietor, M.L.C., 1932-52. Member of the Central Council 1931-52; Chairman of the party 1950-52.

³²
Grazier, Member of the Central Council from 1920 to 1962.

³³
Grazier, Member of the Central Council from 1932 to present (with some gaps). Chairman of the New England New State Movement.

³⁴
Grazier, M.L.C., 1932-34.

Table 17

Religious Affiliation in Rural New South Wales

1954

<u>General</u>	<u>CE</u> %	<u>RC</u> ¹ %	<u>P</u> %	<u>M</u> %	<u>B</u> %	<u>O</u> ² %	<u>T</u> %
New South Wales (3,423,529)	42.8	21.7	8.9	8.0	1.2	17.4	100.0
Country Towns ³ (787,243)	40.6	26.3	10.4	10.1	0.9	11.7	100.0
Rural Population ⁴ (570,564)	43.8	23.0	11.6	9.4	0.9	11.3	100.0

Survey Areas⁵

Armidale (8,661)	41.9	24.9	13.7	6.9	1.6	11.0	100.0
Dumaresq Shire (4,420)	46.3	18.6	15.8	4.8	2.4	12.1	100.0
Kempsey (7,489)	35.2	21.6	8.2	20.8	0.5	13.7	100.0
Macleay Shire (8,472)	38.7	25.4	5.9	20.1	(0.008)	9.9	100.0
Young (5,503)	37.1	42.4	7.7	6.9	0.1	5.8	100.0
Burrangong Shire (4,720)	42.4	34.8	8.3	8.6	0.1	5.8	100.0

Note:

1. Catholic and Roman Catholic
2. Other Christian, Non-Christian, No Religion, No Reply.
No Reply accounts for most of this category.
3. Municipal towns and non-municipal towns over 500.
4. Shire population less than in *2 above.
5. The shires are those surrounding the towns whose names they follow.
6. CE = Anglican, P = Presbyterian, M = Methodist, B = Baptist, O = Other, T = Total.

Source: Census of the Commonwealth of Australia, 30th June, 1954,
Canberra 1955, Vol.1, pp. 116-33.

established since 1920, the proportion of men over 65 is very high indeed, more than 33.3 per cent.³⁵

3. Marital status (QA2)

In view of the age of the respondents it is hardly surprising that nearly 90 per cent of them are married. The proportion would probably be higher in the party as a whole, since Kempsey's high proportion of young men is atypical.

4. Religion (QA4 a, b)

The graziers and farmers who first settled rural New South Wales seem to have been overwhelmingly Protestant,³⁶ and as Table 17 shows, rural New South Wales is rather more Protestant than the metropolis.³⁷ Since the Country Party draws its members very largely from the farming population we should expect something of an over-representation of Protestants within the party. In fact party members often see the Country

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The relatively high proportion of younger men in Kempsey owes to the recent membership drive in Raleigh. The M.L.A. for Raleigh is young and well-liked, and the organisers endeavoured, with some success, to sign up members in the young age-groups.

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Thus the Vicar-General of the Roman Catholic diocese of Sydney in 1850 pointed out to his superiors that the Catholic flock were "the labouring and trading classes" while "the wealthy landholders... were almost exclusively Protestants." H.C. Gregory, Account to Propaganda of the Mission in New Holland, ca. 1850, quoted in H.N. Birt, Benedictine Pioneers in Australia, 1911, Vol. 2, p.171. The writer is indebted to Mr J.H. Barrett for bringing this reference to his notice.

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The extraordinarily high proportion of Roman Catholics in the Young area is probably a reflection of the presence of Irish emancipists and settlers at the Lambing Flat goldfields in the early 1860s. Lambing Flat was the original name of the town of Young.

Party as a Protestant political party,³⁸ and consider the proper political vehicle of Roman Catholics to be the A.L.P. (or, in more recent times, the D.L.P.). The Country Party has had only one Roman Catholic M.P. and only one Roman Catholic Central Councillor.³⁹

The results of the survey emphasised the Protestantism of the party. Only 7.8 per cent of the respondents claimed to be Roman Catholics, while nearly twice that proportion claimed to be Methodists. Yet in New South Wales as a whole Roman Catholics are between two and three times as numerous as Methodists. It is worth noting that Presbyterians seem to be even more strikingly over-represented, especially in the grazing and mixed farming areas.

All the respondents answered this question (compare the proportion in all New South Wales which did not reply to the similar question in the 1954 Census), and only three claimed to have no religion. Furthermore the respondents seem to take their religion seriously: over 60 per cent claimed to have attended their church at least once per month.⁴⁰

³⁸Cf. Leicester Webb, "Churches and the Australian Community", in E.L. French (ed.), Melbourne Studies in Education 1958-1959, Melbourne 1960, p.120: "The correlation between the Country Party and Protestantism seems sufficiently marked to warrant the attention of political scientists."

³⁹R.L. Fitzgerald M.L.A. (Gloucester, 1941-1962); T.J. Wilson, Chairman of Temora SEC. Both Fitzgerald and Wilson were pointed out to the writer in refutation of a comment that the party seemed to be dominated by Protestants. They were, however, the only examples.

⁴⁰Cf. Creighton Burns, Parties and People - a Survey based on the La Trobe Electorate, Melbourne 1961, p.159, and Colin A. Hughes and B.A. Knox, "The Election in Brisbane", in Rawson, Australia Votes, p.211. Burns surveyed Liberal and A.L.P. party workers: Liberal religious affiliation and attendance at church strikingly resembled that of the Country Party members in Appendix G. The A.L.P. workers were much more agnostic. Similar results were found by Hughes and Knox, although the agnosticism of the A.L.P. workers was less pronounced.

Religion, then, is another factor in the homogeneity of the party: a Protestant/Catholic split within the party is unlikely, and could have few serious effects on the membership.

5. Length of Residence (QA7 a, b)

The majority of the members seem to share a lengthy residence in the country. Of the primary producer respondents, nearly 70 per cent came from families already settled on the land, while of the non-landed members, one half had lived in the country all their life, and a further 25 per cent had lived there for at least 20 years. The Country Party, then, is the party of the permanent residents of the country, those who are unwilling, for whatever reason, to overcome the difficulties of living in the country by moving to the city.

6. Family connections (QA8 d, e)

Nearly 70 per cent of the respondents had relatives who were also members of the Country Party. This is not surprising, since the passing of three or four generations in a rural area will result in a good deal of intermarriage among the farming families.⁴¹ The "great family", of grand-parents, uncles, aunts and cousins, as well as the more immediate relatives, is important in rural areas as the preserver and enforcer of values and traditions, political as much as social.⁴²

⁴¹
O.A. Oeser and F.E. Emery, Social Structure and Personality in a Rural Community, London 1954, p.38.

⁴²
Frequently the great family is of more importance than is the individual family, in matters of social control, in perpetuating attitudes and forming opinions.
J.H. Kolb and Edmund de S. Brunner, A Study of Rural Society: Its Organisation and Changes, Cambridge (Mass) 1940, p.18.

Analysis of party membership records and personal enquiry have suggested to the writer that party membership tends to be taken up eventually by almost all the male members of a landed rural family in a local area. And the reverse case is often true. The writer was told of one rural "great family" that the party had found it was a waste of time approaching any of them for membership or money: "They're all Lib(eral)s!" In the Gunnedah area there is a large well-known grazing family, all of whose members are staunchly Labor in sympathy.

.....

To sum up, the membership of the party is basically homogeneous, in terms of occupation, religion and family, and this homogeneity is a fundamental source of strength and stability within the party. The typical Country Party member who emerges from the analysis above is a familiar enough figure. He is a middle-aged, married, Protestant farmer whose parents lived on the land and whose father was probably also a member of the party. But although he is a loyal member he is not, as we shall see, a very active one.

V. ACTIVITY

Activity within the party first takes place, for all members, within the framework of the local branch. As we shall see in the following chapter, the party branch is theoretically a multi-purpose

institution, but in reality it has one important function, that of conducting an election campaign in its own area. For a party member to be active, he must contribute either to the existence of the branch itself, by becoming an office-bearer or attending branch meetings, or to the furthering of the branch's chief purpose, by helping in election campaigns. By either criterion, it can be said that the great majority of members are only nominal, contributing nothing save their subscription and their vote to their party's cause.

1. Accepting Office (QA9 d)

Less than one respondent in five had ever been elected to an office within the party. Since the survey covered 14 branches⁴³ and members of 40 years' standing in the party, this is not a very high proportion. The higher proportion of office-bearers from the Kempsey area is a reflection of the larger number of branches in that area compared with Armidale and Young.

2. Accepting Delegacy (QA9 e)

Not quite 12 per cent of the respondents had been delegates from their branch. Appendix J, which contains a closer analysis of some of the material in Appendix G, shows that nearly all the delegates had also been office-bearers: office-bearer/delegates were 11.1 per cent of the respondents. (Appendix J, B1).

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See the introductory notes to Appendix G.

3. Attending meetings (QA9 f)

In later chapters we shall see that branch meetings are generally very poorly attended, except when an important nomination meeting has been scheduled. It is entirely consistent with poor attendance at meetings to find that 64 per cent of the respondents had never, or only rarely, attended a meeting of their branch. Only 13.6 per cent attended meetings regularly: this proportion is only slightly higher than the proportion of office-bearer/delegates (11.1 per cent). In fact, office-bearers and delegates comprised nearly 80 per cent of the regular attenders at meetings (Appendix J, A3).

4. Giving Donations (QA9 g)

If giving donations at election time can be considered a form of activity, then a little more than half of the respondents can be considered to have been active at least once. Supporting the party's election campaign financially was more characteristic of inland members; in the Kempsey area the victory margins are usually large, campaigns are not expensive, and there are consequently only infrequent calls for money.⁴⁴ The opposite is the case in the Armidale and (particularly) the Young areas. The office-bearer/delegates had been conspicuously more generous than the rest of the party in giving donations (Appendix J, B3).

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See below, Chapter 13, part III.

5. Helping at Election Time (QA9 h)

A little over one third of the respondents had done something, at least once, to help the party's campaign. For most, this would have entailed attending the party table outside the polling booth for a short time (usually one or two hours). Once again, and for much the same reason, this sort of activity was more frequent away from the coast, and once again it was much more frequent among the office-bearer/delegates, nearly 90 per cent of whom had done this work. (Appendix J, B4).

What emerges from the analysis above is that there is a well-defined small group of active members within the party, not much more than ten per cent of the membership,⁴⁵ who are virtually responsible for the continued existence of the local organisation. They comprise those members who have accepted both office and delegacy at the branch level, and, of course, above. They are the backbone of the party's local election campaign and a reliable source of campaign finance. For most of the other members, belonging to the party is entirely passive. They do not normally attend meetings, or give money or assistance for election campaigns. Their role is most important, however, and must not be overlooked. Their subscriptions, in toto, make them in a very real sense the financial backers of the party.

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On the assumption that the most engage reply to mail questionnaires, the replies reported presumably over-state activity. See the introductory notes to Appendix G.

The Country Party's membership is large and nominal. Identification with the Country Party at the grass-roots is strong enough for members to accept the bank order system, but not strong enough for the majority of the members to engage in branch activities. There is a small core of militants, but the militants are too thinly scattered to provide adequate cadres, and in their own branches they were usually swamped by the mass of nominal members.

It may be argued that the membership is not sufficiently militant to provide a basis for expansion. The party's evangelical phase has long since passed: the preacher has been replaced by the organiser. More important, the present level of enthusiasm at the branch level may not be sufficient to prevent a gradual drift to the Liberal or Labor parties in some electorates in the future.

Little is demanded of the members of the Country Party, and correspondingly little is given by most of them. For the majority the annual two guinea subscription is enough. It is an affirmation of their 'countryness' and a declaration of their belief that the Country Party does a worthwhile job in their interests. For important elections they may, on request, give a little extra money for the party's campaign. But that is all.⁴⁶ The ordinary members do not wish to be troubled with

⁴⁶ No comparable information is available for other parties. However, there is a general assumption that Liberal Party members (often recruited by organisers) have a low political interest (see Sydney Morning Herald articles on the Liberal Party, 12, 14 and 16 May 1962), and that the highest rate of participation is to be found amongst A.L.P. branch members.

details, and as we shall see, they are perfectly content to let those members running the party, at all levels, continue in their administration.

CHAPTER 7

TYPES OF LOCAL ORGANISATION: I. THE BRANCH

I. FORMAL

Of the 16 pages of the party's N.S.W. Constitution, three and one-half are devoted to the composition, procedures, powers and finances of the party branch. It was clearly the intention of the framers of the Constitution to ensure that, as far as was possible, branches should behave uniformly, whether as the local and locally directed unit of the party, or as an efficient, integral part of the party's organisational apparatus.

A branch may be composed of either men and women, or of women alone, and must contain at least ten members. Younger members and juniors may belong to the branch or form a Younger Set.¹ The branch must meet at least three times annually, and once per year it must elect officers: a Chairman (who must be a subscribing member), two Vice-Chairmen, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and a Committee of not less than five members "to carry on the routine work of the Branch".²

Branches are entitled to send delegates to state and federal electorate councils and to General and Provincial Conferences, on the following basis:

¹ The Constitution merely defines what Younger Sets are. Rules for the conduct of Younger Sets are laid down by Central Council. Constitution, 1(c)13, p.11.

² Ibid., VI(b)1(3); VI(b)3(1) p.19.

branch membership, 10-15: the chairman + one additional delegate;

branch membership, 16-30: the chairman + two;

branch membership, 31-60: the chairman + three;

branch membership, 61-100: the chairman + four;

thereafter, one extra delegate for every fifty members, or part thereof.³

A quorum at meetings of the branch is five, and at Committee meetings, three. The business at any meeting, save the Annual, is to begin with the reading and confirmation of the minutes, and is to be followed by correspondence, the enrolling of new members, and general business. Annual Meetings are to receive reports by the Chairman, the delegates, the Committee, the Treasurer and the Auditor regarding the activities of the past year. Special meetings may be called on the application of five members in writing to the Secretary.⁴ The Constitution contains a little more than a page of formal "Rules of Debate", which, although this is not stated, presumably apply to all meetings of the party at all levels.

³ Minutes, 1962 AC. This rule supersedes that in the printed Constitution. The old rule favoured the small branches as the largest possible delegation from a branch was four, and this applied to any branch with 51 members or more.

⁴ Constitution, VI(b)1(1), (2); VI(b)2; VI(b)3(2); p.19.

Each branch must keep a roll book of members and keep it up to date. Once each year it must notify the state and federal electorate councils of its membership strength and must supply any other information desired by the councils. The Secretary must keep minutes of all meetings of the branch and its committees, and the Treasurer must keep accurate financial records as prescribed by Central Council.⁵

The branch retains 2/- of the ordinary membership fee (the other 3/- goes to pay for the member's Countryman) and is entitled to requisition 2/- for each of its bank order members from Head Office. Each branch must open a campaign account, collect the quota of funds allotted to it by the state or federal electorate council and remit the quota to the council. The remainder shall be available to the branch for campaign work: but six weeks after the election the branch must pay the balance into a special account at Head Office, save for £10 which remains in the campaign account. The branch must appoint two auditors annually.⁶

The Constitution lists 13 "Powers of Branch". Strictly speaking, only three of these should be called "powers", the remainder being more akin to duties. A branch may nominate one candidate for endorsement, enrol members, and initiate

⁵ Ibid., VI(c)1, 2; VI(e)1; p.20.

⁶ Ibid., VI(e)2, 3,4,6; pp.20-1.

resolutions regarding the party's platform, policy and Constitution. The latter are dealt with either by Central Council or the Annual or Provincial Conferences. In addition, as we have already seen,⁷ a branch may expel any of its members for improper conduct. It also has power to raise finance, to see that all party supporters are on the electoral roll, to apply for the removal from the roll of all unqualified persons, to promote social intercourse between members and their friends and to organise debates and lectures on public matters.⁸

II. THE FORMATION, NUMBER AND SIZE OF BRANCHES

The spontaneous, or largely spontaneous, locally inspired formation of a party branch has not occurred since the days of the United Country Movement. Nearly all the branches formed since the war have been formed by organisers, and the steps necessary to form a branch have now become routinised. The formation of a branch is quite distinct from the recruitment of members, and depends upon the organiser finding reliable and enthusiastic local men to form the nucleus of the branch. The organiser will first work through the area signing up members. Once he has sufficient members he will

⁷ See above, Chapter 6, part 1.

⁸ Constitution, VI(f) generally; p.21.

call a meeting of members and supporters in the local hall; he will have arranged for a guest speaker, the local M.P. or a party notable. Before the meeting he will contact personally every member in the area to get him to attend. In addition, he will already have decided who will make the best office-bearers and have arranged, if possible, for their election. Once the meeting is held and the branch formally created, he will arrange for the next meeting another guest speaker, in order to maintain the interest of the members. He will make sure that the newly elected branch delegates know of, and attend, the next electorate council meeting and that they are introduced. This done, the organiser leaves the branch to its officers: it is alive, constitutional, and functioning.

All these steps are necessary if there is to be more to the branch than just one meeting, indeed, if there is to be one meeting, and all these steps demand time and money. It is for this reason that although branches and electorate councils have often attempted to expand local organisation by creating new branches, these attempts have nearly always failed. The Armidale SEC, for example, resolved in 1955 to form branches at Aberfoyle and Hillgrove, but the branches were never formed.⁹ In 1952 the Armidale Branch decided to

⁹

Minutes, Armidale SEC, 18 June 1955.

form a branch at Ebor: the branch was actually formed, but failed to survive.¹⁰ Two carefully planned attempts by the Casino Branch to form branches in the hinterland of the town came to nothing.¹¹ Casino SEC made several unsuccessful attempts to reform a branch at Coraki, and eventually the members in the Coraki area were transferred to another branch.¹²

Undoubtedly these attempts failed largely because both branches and electorate councils failed to find the interested persons upon whom the continued existence of a branch depends. However, parliamentarians, whose energies and time are available for longer periods than those of party workers (and whose concern is more immediate) have often been successful branch-builders. L.C. Jordan M.L.A. built the party's organisation in Oxley almost singlehanded,¹³ and J.A. Lawson M.L.A. is reputed to have been largely responsible for the

¹⁰
Minutes, Armidale Branch, 29 August 1952, 27 September 1952. There was no Ebor Branch in the Head Office list of branches in 1958. See also the list of Armidale electorate branches in Table 19.

¹¹
Minutes, Casino Branch, 18 August 1949, 8 September 1949.

¹²
Minutes, Casino SEC, 6 September 1949.

¹³
Minutes, Inaugural Meeting Oxley SEC, 4 August 1945.

size of the organisation in Murray.¹⁴ Many branches owe their genesis to candidates seeking a nomination. One example must stand for many: Muswellbrook Branch was formed by Dr. J.J.G. McGirr in 1949 when he was seeking Country Party endorsement for Paterson.¹⁵

Ideally, branches should be located in all the major and minor centres of population within an electorate, and also in densely settled rural areas which have no settlement centre proper. There has been an unwritten tradition that the party should aim to have a branch at each polling place, but this has never been achieved, and it is as unnecessary as it is impractical.¹⁶ Head Office has endeavoured to establish branches which are small enough to provide participation in branch activities for every member, and large enough for there to be sufficient skills and revenue for the branch to draw upon.

In recent years, in furtherance of this aim, there have been some attempts to subdivide the very large branches, and

14

The parliamentarian as organiser is not a new phenomenon. D.H. Drummond, then M.L.A. for Northern Tablelands, spent three months in 1927 setting up party branches in northern New South Wales. Minutes, Armidale SEC, 29 September 1927.

15

The motion to set up the branch was moved and seconded by McGirr's own two organisers. Minutes, Formation Meeting Muswellbrook Branch, 3 August 1949.

16

Since many polling place areas are too small to provide branch personnel or to justify a special local campaign.

Table 18

Country Party Local Organisation in New South Wales

September 1958

<u>Electorate</u>	<u>Branches</u>	<u>Women's Branches</u>	<u>Younger Sets</u>	<u>Total</u>
OXLEY *	46	..	..	46
MURRAY *	44	..	..	44
TEMORA	30	..	..	30
ALBURY	21	1	..	22.
CLARENCE *	19	1	1	21
GLOUCESTER *	21	..	..	21
RALEIGH *	20	..	1	21
TENTERFIELD *	18	2	1	21
CASTLEREAGH	19	1	..	20
BARWON *	19	..	..	19
ARMIDALE	16	..	2	18
LIVERPOOL PLAINS	17	..	..	17
MUDGEE	12	1	1	14
MURRUMBIDGEE	13	..	1	14
WAGGA WAGGA	13	1	..	14
BURRINJUCK	12	..	..	12
ORANGE *	11	1	..	12
DUBBO	10	..	..	10
STURT	10	..	..	10
TAMWORTH *	9	..	1	10
YOUNG *	10	..	..	10
CASINO *	9	..	..	9
MONARO *	7	1	..	8
BATHURST	7	..	..	7
BYRON *	7	..	..	7
GOULBURN *	7	..	..	7
UPPER HUNTER *	7	..	..	7
LISMORE *	6	..	..	6
SOUTH COAST *	5	1	..	6
COBAR	5	..	..	5
HARTLEY *	3	..	..	3
ILLAWARRA *	3	..	..	3
MAITLAND *	3	..	..	3
GOSFORD	2	..	..	2
HAWKESBURY *	2	..	..	2
WOLLONDILLY *	2	..	..	2
NEPEAN *	1	..	..	1
	<u>466</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>484</u>

Summary: 37 Electorate Councils, 466 Branches, 10 Women's Branches, 8 Younger Sets.

Note: * Seats held by the Country Party in 1958.
* Dormant councils and branches

Source: Head Office Records .

to amalgamate the tiny ones. Thus the General Secretary welcomed the formation of another branch in the city of Lismore:

It was obvious that the Lismore Branch was too big, and a branch which is too big does seem to suppress the views of minorities.¹⁷

Organisers reforming the party organisation in Oxley following the defection of L.C. Jordan in 1959 decided that in one area the four small branches were too small to be viable, and combined them into a larger district branch.¹⁸ Improved roads, and more and better cars, have led to the closing of some small branches close to towns.¹⁹

The number of branches in any electorate will depend largely upon the work of those who formed the branches. Table 18 sets out the number of branches, women's branches and younger sets in the 37 state electorates in which the party maintains any organisation. The very large number of branches in Oxley and Murray are the result of the work of parliamentarians interested in building a complete election

17

General Secretary to Honorary Secretary Lismore SEC, 8 October 1959 (Lismore SEC records). The new branch, East Lismore, was the result of factionalism within the large Lismore Branch.

18

Organisers' Report, 24 November 1959 (Morton Trotter Papers).

19

Dumaresq Branch, for example, seven miles from Armidale, which wound up its activities in the late 1940s because its members apparently preferred to belong to Armidale Branch. Minutes, Armidale Branch, 28 July 1950.

Table 19

Variations in Branch Size:
Four State Electorates, 1961

RALEIGH

Kempsey	118
Bowraville	114
Bonville	89
Frederickton	79
Bellingen	78
Raleigh-Repton	75
Taylor's Arm	66
Nambucca Heads	65
Sawtell	63
Macksville	59
Willawarrin	46
Stuart's Point- Yarrahappini-Eungai	36
Wilson River	30
Upper Macleay	28
Austral Eden	27
Utungun	27
Gleniffer	26
Thora	26
Gladstone	22
Belmore River	19
South West Rocks	15
Bellbrook	10
Rolland's Plains	8

ARMIDALE

Armidale	160
Walcha	140
Guyra	135
Bundarra	58
Uralla	58
Dorrigo	39
Wollomombi	25
North Dorrigo	20
Hernani	19
Fernbrook-Deervale	18
Bostobrick	17
Whiskey Creek	16
Tingha	16
Tenterden-Tia	15
Black Mountain	9
Emmore	7
Kentucky	7
Kingstown	5

(plus several members from
other electorates)

YOUNG

Young	197
Forbes	146
Cowra	118
Grenfell	117
Greenethorpe	54
Boorowa	35
Koorawatha	24
Mulyandry	24
Woodstock	10

(plus several members who live
in other electorates)

TENTERFIELD

Glen Innes	231
Inverell	198
Warialda	145
Tenterfield	133
Ashford	71
Delungra	70
Deepwater	40
Dundee	28
Emmaville	25
Oakwood	21
Mount Russell	14
Bonshaw	3

organisation. In other electorates, Byron for instance, there has been a positive discouragement of organisation, with the result that branches are small in number. There does seem to be a common range in the number of branches: of the 27 electorates in which the party possesses purposeful organisation, 18 contain between ten and 22 branches.

In all, the party recognised the existence of 466 branches, ten women's branches and eight younger sets in 1958. But of these, 33 branches and two women's branches were "dormant" (the term is the party's own); indeed the whole organisation in nine electorates was considered dormant. These electorates included four safe Labor rural seats and five traditionally Liberal seats, three of which are in the immediate rural hinterland of Sydney. None of the women's branches are known to be active, and in fact the women's branch is something of a relic of the 1920s and 1930s, and even then such branches were not numerous. Of the younger sets, only that of Armidale can trace a continuous history for more than ten years (it was formed in 1944). All the younger sets have, however, recently been active.

Branches vary a great deal in size. The largest, usually branches centering on major towns, can contain hundreds of members, while rural branches are often barely above the minimum of ten. Table 19 illustrates the variations in

branch size in and between four state electorates in 1961. Each electorate possessed a few large branches and a 'tail' of small and very small branches. The pattern of settlement probably accounts for both the large number of middle-sized and small branches in the coastal electorate of Raleigh, and for the tendency in inland electorates for there to be fewer and larger branches.

III. THEORY AND PRACTICE

In practice the conduct of party branches bears only token resemblance to that set out in the Constitution. Table 19 (facing p.182) shows that some branches have smaller membership than that allowed by the Constitution, but this would not affect their status, for practical purposes, within the party, except perhaps at a rigorously conducted endorsement meeting of an electorate council.²⁰ Furthermore, sometimes neither branch nor electorate council is aware of the branch membership strength. Since members are enrolled by organisers, and since probably two-thirds of the members never attend a

20

At the 1961 endorsement meeting of the Gloucester SEC the presence of the two delegates from Branxton Branch was challenged on the ground that the Branxton Branch had only five members. The delegates were accepted when they were able to show that their membership had increased to 17 by the transfer of 12 members from the nearby Singleton Branch. Minutes, Gloucester SEC, 7 October 1961. See also below, Chapter 12, part II.

Table 20

The Number of Meetings Held Annually by 14 Branches
1950 - 1961

<u>Branch</u>	<u>1950</u>	<u>1951</u>	<u>1952</u>	<u>1953</u>	<u>1954</u>	<u>1955</u>	<u>1956</u>	<u>1957</u>	<u>1958</u>	<u>1959</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1961</u>
ARMIDALE	9	8	9	5	3	2	1	2	1	*	*	*
COWRA	*	*	*	1	1	2	2	2	0	3	5	2
GLEN INNES	7	10	3	5	5	6	4	2	2	2	3	4
HANNAM VALE	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1
INVERELL	3	2	4	10	6	8	8	4	9	5	5	7
KYOGLA	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	1	1
LISMORE	*	*	*	5	1	8	4	7	5	3	2	*
MURWILLUMBAH	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	1	*
MUSWELLBROOK	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	3	2	1	2
ORANGE	*	*	*	*	1	4	0	1	2	0	3	3
SINGLETON	3	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	9	1	1	3
TAMWORTH	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	1
TEMORA	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	4	3

Note: * = not available

Source: The Minute Books of the branches listed.

branch meeting, the branch relies on Head Office for information. This is especially true when the branch is reforming. When Muswellbrook Branch was revived in 1957 after seven years' virtual hibernation, the new secretary's first task was to find out from Head Office who were the nominal members of the branch.²¹

If the Constitution were interpreted strictly, then probably only a small proportion of the party's branches are constitutional. While most branches with any pretensions to activity strive to hold annual meetings, only a very small minority of the branches meet the required three times per year. Table 20 sets out the number of meetings held each year between 1950 and 1961 by 14 branches. No branch remained constitutional over the whole period, and Inverell Branch alone approached this desideratum. However, four of the branches had held at least one meeting per year (and to these should probably be added the Lismore and Armidale Branches, for which information is not available). Once again, failure to meet three times annually does not affect the branch's status within the party; nor, except for nomination and endorsement meetings, does failure to hold even one annual meeting. Once a branch has failed to hold a meeting for four years (a period which must cover at least

²¹

Minutes, Muswellbrook Branch, 26 February 1957.

three general elections) it can usually be considered defunct, and will need reforming. But this cannot be done from within the branch; reformation will usually involve the selection of a new branch executive.

Branch meetings, as we might have expected from the results of the postal survey, are usually poorly attended. Although few branches keep accurate records of meeting attendances, it is probably safe to say that the normal attendance at ordinary branch meetings for most branches is between five and 20 members. The outstanding exception to this generalisation concerns the attendance at branch nomination meetings. We shall see that the selection of a candidate to replace a retiring or deceased sitting Member is a major activity for the local Country Party organisation. At the branch level the importance of the occasion is reflected in the very large numbers which attend the branch nomination meetings. Armidale Branch held two nomination meetings within a few months of each other in 1949 and 1950, one to decide the Branch's nomination for the federal seat of New England (consequent upon the retirement of J.P. Abbott M.H.R.), and the other to decide the replacement for D.H. Drummond M.L.A. (who succeeded Abbott in New England). In the first case the nomination meeting was attended by 127 members (compared with 25, 15, 30 and eight at the four previous ordinary branch meetings); in the second case 150 members attended the

nomination meeting (compared with 25, 12, 11 and 14 at the four previous meetings).²² When Singleton Branch met in 1958 to decide upon nominations for Upper Hunter (D'Arcy Rose M.L.A. retiring), 101 members attended, compared with five at the previous meeting and nine at the one following.²³

Despite the formality of branch meeting procedure as laid down in the Constitution, in practice the meetings are characterised by informality. A typical party meeting will start anything up to half an hour late. It will be attended by a handful of members, most of them office-bearers and delegates, present and past, and all of them well known to one another. The Chairman will open the meeting, call for the reading and confirmation of the minutes (they are rarely taken as read), and then bring forward the matter which has prompted him to call the meeting - most commonly an approaching election or referendum. The discussion will be open and highly informal. Whatever the branch decides finally to do will probably appear in the Minute Book as a resolution, but in fact there may have been no vote, and perhaps not even a motion. The Chairman, even after years in office, may be a little uncertain and uneasy in his magisterial role, but no

²²

Minute Books of Armidale Branch.

²³

Minute Book of Singleton Branch.

advantage will be taken of this, and points of order and the finer gambits of meeting procedure are unknown.²⁴

Finally, branches do not generally recruit their members: this is the main function of the organiser. However, active branches, impatient with the slow increase in members from normal organising, or because of the absence of a local organiser, have sometimes tried to increase their membership, either by using the branch secretary as an organiser, or more indirectly, through the mails. Thus in 1946 Singleton Branch paid its secretary 1/6d commission for each 2/- member he secured,²⁵ and Inverell Branch once decided to send out 500 roneoed letters inviting local citizens to become members of the branch.²⁶ Usually such attempts meet with such scant success that they are seldom repeated.

Partly because the branch is not responsible for recruiting its members it is extremely reluctant to discipline them. In fact, as far as the writer is aware, no member has ever been expelled by his branch. Questions of discipline rarely arise, largely because of the homogeneity of the membership and the wide consensus within the party on almost all issues.

24

Unlike most accounts of A.L.P. branch meetings, which are field days for "bush lawyers".

25

Minutes, Annual Meeting Singleton Branch, 18 January 1946.

26

Minutes, Committee Meeting Inverell Branch, 27 May 1955.

When they do arise their origin is generally in endorsement and election disputes, when the issues are almost entirely personal. But such is the unwillingness of branches to disturb the amity within the branch (and within the local community) that many instances of rank disloyalty go unpunished and even unmentioned. This often infuriates the electorate councils, which do not possess disciplinary powers. Oxley SEC tried unsuccessfully to get Port Macquarie Branch to discipline a member (actually one of the Trustees of Oxley SEC itself) who had opposed the endorsed and sitting Country Party member in 1959.²⁷

Nevertheless, even at the council level, the dislike of actually judging another member is very real. After a particularly unfortunate election campaign in Raleigh in 1959, in which temporary defections were frequent, the Chairman of Raleigh SEC could only offer the following suggestions:

Although a few of our members defected when the heat was on, I am sure it is not necessary to take any action at present as it is very difficult to take action against individuals under our present Constitutional set-up. It is up to the

27

Minutes, Annual Meeting Oxley SEC, 2 May 1959. Little more than a year later the party was seeking the disgraced member's assistance in reforming branches. (Organisers' Report, August 1960, Morton Trotter Papers.) It was the 1960 party Conference which decreed that a member who opposed an endorsed candidate should be automatically expelled.

branches to see that the members who are not 100% do not get into responsible positions in the branch.²⁸

At the annual Conference one year later, Raleigh SEC was unsuccessful in an attempt to have the membership of executive members of branches and electorate councils automatically cancelled if they supported other than the endorsed candidate.²⁹ Even when branches have grasped the nettle they have not done so firmly. When a branch member had opposed the endorsed candidate for Lyne in 1958, Taree Branch called upon him to attend the next meeting "to justify the continuance of his membership". He did not attend the following meeting. When he did attend, almost two years after the election, the inquiry collapsed when the accused launched an attack on the sitting Member and alleged that the inquiry was unconstitutional. The meeting weakly expressed its "concern" at his candidature and campaign.³⁰

No doubt these sins of opposition are considered more venial on the coast, where the party's majorities are large, than inland, where they are not. Certainly there are no similar instances in the records of inland branches and council: in these electorates, if a disappointed candidate

28

Minutes, Raleigh SEC, 24 June 1959.

29

Minutes, 1960 AC.

30

Minutes, Taree Branch, 28 July 1959, 13 May 1960, 22 August 1960.

for endorsement wishes to contest the election, he resigns from the party.

IV. BRANCH TYPES

The purpose of the party branch is seen differently at different levels within the party. From Head Office the branch appears as an administrative unit of the Central Council and the electorate councils, especially in electoral and financial matters. More, the branches collectively are seen as the underpinning of the party, since electorate councils are nothing but collections of branch delegates, and Central Council is largely a collection of electorate council delegates. In the words of one party Chairman "Good Branches...mean vigorous State and Federal Electorate Councils".³¹ And the corollary is true: electorates with weak branches also have weak electorate councils. The councils themselves are no less aware of the importance of the branches than is Head Office.

The Federal [Electorate] Council cannot successfully function unless it is supported by it's (sic) constituent members. These are the Branch Presidents and elected delegates...³²

³¹ Chairman's Address to CC, 21 June 1955.

³² Chairman, Hume FEC to Branch Chairmen in Hume Electorate (Circular), 28 August 1950, (Hume FEC Records, Cootamundra Branch Records).

This is an essentially administrative view and it implies that branches do little else than carry out instructions from above. It is nevertheless a fairly accurate assessment of the role of the party branch. As we have seen, the branch has been poorly served by the Constitution in the matter of initiative, since its share of the party finances is small, and it is obliged to collect funds for other party institutions before it can do so for itself. Branch activity must therefore be judged against the background of limited finance. It should also be seen in the context of the electoral situation in the electorate, and the size of the branch itself.

In terms of the focus of their activity most branches can be considered either 'Member-oriented' or 'party-oriented', the former looking to the local Country Party parliamentarian as the raison d'être for their corporate existence, the latter more conscious of their place and role in the whole party. All branches share certain common characteristics - the great majority of their nominal members never attend meetings, for example, and their periods of peak activity occur at election time. But there are significant variations in branch activity, and these reflect the rank and file members' own conception of the fundamental purpose of the party branch.

Member-oriented branches are those in which the influence of the local M.L.A. (and sometimes of the M.H.R.) is dominant. They regard themselves as primarily election committees. Members of such branches have a simple view of the purpose of the branch:

Mr——...stated further that it was not important to have regular meetings and could see the only function of the branch as an organisation necessary during election time to put the right man into Parliament. He expressed that our necessity was to do our own job as good as possible, and to do that we have no time to enter into politics, therefore this is to be left in the hands of the politicians, who's (sic) job this is.³³

This is a widespread view, and one not confined just to members of Member-oriented branches. Branch members who participated in the postal survey were asked to rank in order of importance five functions of a party branch: "Raising finance at election time", "Keeping the local Member informed of current issues in the branch's area", "Educating the local community in political affairs", "Manning the tables at election time", and "Drawing-up and reviewing the platform of the party". Of the respondents 42 per cent, the largest single group and almost double the size of the next largest, placed the Member-informing function first.³⁴

33

Minutes, Annual Meeting Raymond Terrace Branch, 24 February 1961.

34

Appendix G, QBI.

Because the return of the Member is their prime consideration, Member-oriented branches tend to meet infrequently, usually before elections, although some also try to hold annual meetings. Thus, in the first nine years of the 1950s, Alstonville Branch met only in 1952, 1955 and 1958 (to nominate the sitting Member for Richmond).³⁵ If the sitting Member is unopposed, then the branch may not meet at all. Casino Branch met twice in 1955 (both times for nomination purposes), met once in 1958 and did not meet again until 1961.³⁶ The Country Party M.L.A. for Casino was unopposed both in 1956 and 1959.

Since the Member-oriented branch is concerned chiefly with electoral action, and not at all with debate and discussion, attendances at branch meetings tend to be small. For the same reason, such branches are usually little concerned with representation at higher levels. They rarely send delegates to electorate council meetings or Conferences. This leads, in the first place, to a weak electoral council, and in the second, to a virtual absence, from the party as a whole, of the viewpoint of the branch's area. No branch in Byron state electorate has forwarded a motion to the annual

35

Minute Book of Alstonville Branch.

36

Minute Book of Casino Branch.

Table 21

Continuity in Office of Branch Office-bearers
Hannam Vale Branch, 1944 - 1958

	<u>1944</u>	<u>1945</u>	<u>1946</u>	<u>1947</u>	<u>1948</u>	<u>1949</u>	<u>1950</u>	<u>1951</u>	<u>1952</u>	<u>1953</u>	<u>1954</u>	<u>1955</u>	<u>1956</u>	<u>1957</u>	<u>1958</u>
Chairman	A	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	C	:	:	:	:
Vice-Chairman	B	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	F	:	:
Vice-Chairman	C	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	A	:	G	:	:
Secretary-Treasurer	D	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
Delegate	D	:	:	C	E	:	D	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:

Note:

1. Each letter represents a separate person. Thus D, who was Secretary-Treasurer and Delegate in 1944, was Delegate again in 1950.
2. The colon represents a re-election.
3. A did not seek re-election in 1954 as Chairman, but agreed to accept a Vice-Chairmanship.
4. Hannam Vale Branch was entitled to two delegates: the Chairman was automatically the other delegate.

Source:

Minute Book of Hannam Vale Branch (Oxley State Electorate)

Conference since 1945, and Byron branch representation at the Conferences has been negligible.³⁷

Continuity of branch office-bearers in their offices is widespread throughout the state, but it is particularly marked in Member-oriented branches. Because the branch is devoted to the interests of the local parliamentarian, it cannot be used as a vehicle for advancement by politically ambitious rank and file members. There is thus little competition for branch office. A rather dramatic illustration of continuity appears in Table 21. Most Member-oriented branches will retain substantially the same office-bearers for a long period (though rarely for as long as Hannam Vale Branch) and this applies especially to the key offices of Chairman and Secretary. In such branches these officials tend to be personal friends of the local Member, and usually become prominent in the branch at about the time of the latter's entry into parliament. Once elected, they are likely to remain in office until their friend leaves parliament or dies, when the same process may be repeated, with a new Member and new officials.

It is normal procedure for the local Member to address the branch meeting, usually on some such subject as "the

³⁷
Compiled from the Minutes of Annual Conferences, 1944-1962. See also Appendix K.

current political scene" (that is, what he has been doing in the past few months). Such addresses are important, for they provide one means by which the branch members can identify themselves with the party as a whole. In Member-oriented branches, however, the address by the local Member tends to be the only point of contact between the members and the party, and as such it merely reinforces the existing relationship between the Member and his branch.

The branch as the Member's own election committee - his faithful group of personal supporters - is an old rural political tradition. Colonel Bruxner recalled the working of the old system to the 1950 Conference:

provided you got sufficient members enrolled you were quite safe. The plebiscite would be carried and if anyone came in who looked like beating your man you stepped out and got some more of yours - and so it went on. The more you roped in the more you had, but the actual selection became a farce.³⁸

In parts of the modern party organisation there has been only slight change in this respect, and some electorates are notorious for the way in which the M.L.A. controls the organisation. One such case was savagely caricatured by a party organiser.

He would publicise his arrival in the local paper. 'Mr—— will be at the school (or Hall) at...date ...time'. He would then be met by 3 or 4 people,

and after greeting them he would say, 'Now we have to have a branch meeting. You, Joe, are the Chairman, you Bill be the Secretary and you Pete can be the vice chairman, now, you fellows got two bob on you? right' (he puts the 2 bobs in his pocket) 'now you fellows are members of the party. Now what are your troubles?' (He hears a couple of complaints) 'Right, we'll look after that. Now what branch is this again? Oh yes, — Branch. You fellows got something in kitty?' (and on hearing that the branch would have about 6 or 7 quid, he would say) 'You better make me a cheque of a fiver, you know, pretty expensive coming up here.' (The cheque would be written out.) 'Right, thank you...Well, see you fellows next year. No Joe, no need to write to Head Quarters about the officers of the branch. I will look after that. Don't worry, I will look after everything. Be seeing you,' and off he would buzz.³⁹

But Member-oriented branches are inevitable in a rural political party. The strong community feelings, the attitude that good men, when found, are worth supporting, and above all the lack of ideological factionalism within the party, all lead to strong local loyalties to the parliamentarians. And since all parliamentarians fear rivals emerging from within the local party organisation, it is in the Member's interest to keep the organisation quiet and docile on the one hand, and personally loyal on the other. This is especially true on the north coast, where party majorities are so

39

Organisers' Report, 25 November 1959 (Morton Trotter Papers). It should be noted that the organiser has run two incidents into the one story, as he has the Member forming a branch and then accepting a cheque from its bank account.

large that almost the only dangerous opposition comes from within the Country Party itself.

Most party-oriented branches are located in electorates not held by the Country Party. One might argue that such branches are only party-oriented because they cannot be Member-oriented, and certainly there are few party-oriented branches in party-held seats, except in the north where there has been a long tradition of Member-encouragement of active branches.

The most noticeable difference between the two types of branch is in the frequency of their meetings. Many party-oriented branches endeavour to meet every month or every second month, and some have maintained this rate for some years.⁴⁰ Furthermore, party-oriented branches tend to have larger attendances at branch meetings.⁴¹

These differences are due in their turn to the different concept of the branch that is held by its members. They see it, on the one hand, as an outpost of the party, keeping alive party traditions and proselytising among the unconvinced and the apathetic, and on the other hand as the basic policy-formulating body in the party and the keystone of its

40

See Table 20, facing page 184.

41

It is impossible to be more positive, since most branches do not keep records of attendance.

organisation. Thus party-oriented branches tend to provide delegates regularly to councils and Conferences, and the post of delegate is sought after.

Party-oriented branches will hear, and welcome, addresses by the local M.P.s, but they will also hear speeches from organisers, party notables and even guest speakers who are not members of the party. Most of these addresses will be aimed either at giving the members a wider view of their party and a greater understanding of its problems (financial, electoral etc.) or at reviving the members' emotional attachment to the party by recounting the story of its birth, trials and successes. Organisers and Head Office officials generally give addresses of the first type, and party notables those of the second.

A meeting of a party-oriented branch is often a forum for discussion, not necessarily for establishing and advancing the branch's point of view within the party or the community (though these are frequent results) but merely to give the members an opportunity of acquiring information and exchanging views. The Tambar Springs Branch adopted the practice of including a subject for discussion at each of its meetings,⁴² and Temora Branch, more ambitiously, tried to

42

Notice of Meeting, Tambar Springs Branch, 21 October 1959, (Gwydir FEC records).

start a regular debate by sending out "full monthly bulletins of Country Party news and views", and having monthly discussion meetings.⁴³ The press will often be invited to attend these meetings, or the minutes may be sent to the local newspaper for publication.⁴⁴

But with one or two exceptions the party-oriented branches maintain an uneven level of activity. Firstly, an active branch needs money, and the sparse income of even the largest branches is soon swallowed up by the normal expenses of holding meetings and advertising them, and paying for the hire of the hall. Unless the active members are prepared to tithe themselves, and few are,⁴⁵ the more ambitious branch projects are crippled by the shortage of funds. There have been persistent attempts by the active branches to increase their share of the party's bank order revenue (the most recent was in 1961) but these have always failed. Undoubtedly Central Council has argued that if branches wish to be

43

Minutes, Annual Meeting Temora Branch, 26 February 1945. The first meeting saw "many worthwhile, able and keen debates" but after a few meetings interest slackened and the practice apparently died out. A similar scheme was tried by Casino Branch in 1947. Minutes, Casino Branch, 25 June 1947.

44

For example, Minutes, Coffs Harbour Branch, 19 December 1958.

45

Coffs Harbour Branch is the only one known to the writer in which this happened. Minutes, Coffs Harbour Branch, 17 October 1958.

super-active, they can use some of this super-activity to raise funds. And no branch is more unpopular than the one which accepts financial commitments on which it subsequently defaults. Inverell Branch, one of the most consistently active branches in the party, has been consistently plagued by financial worries. In the most recent incident the branch opened an office in Inverell, found the rent to be more than its resources could stand, appealed for help to its electorate councils, and received a sharp reprimand from the General Secretary.⁴⁶

Secondly, party-oriented branches are often troubled with factional squabbling, which may reach the point where the bitterness is so intense that the branch disintegrates; such branches are most difficult to reform. One example may serve for a number. Coffs Harbour Branch began meeting every month in 1958 to discuss local and national problems. Before long sweet reasonableness had so far departed that the branch adopted standing orders to control the debates; the Chairman's decisions were over-ruled; the Chairman and Secretary quarrelled over their respective areas of authority; there was a walk-out. The branch split into two factions. By 1960 the meetings were averaging one every two months and

46

Minutes, Inverell Branch, 16 March 1959, 7 March 1960,
4 April 1960, 6 June 1960.

there was a six-month gap between meetings in 1961. The branch was beginning to collapse.⁴⁷

There are many branches which are neither obviously Member-oriented nor obviously party-oriented, in which there is the minimum of activity and interest. Very often such a branch is passing through a period of senescence, the office-bearers performing the rites necessary to keep the branch "alive", without any clear understanding of what the branch could or should be doing. This is very often the case in electorates now tacitly conceded by the party to be Labor or Liberal strongholds, where only the older members can remember the 1930s when the Country Party held the seat.

These modes of activity are not everlasting. Branches move from being party-oriented to being Member-oriented. Branch activity can cease altogether, in which case the party will rely pro tem upon a stalwart; or they can be reformed. Such changes will reflect a changing electoral situation, a change in local Members, or a general change in party fortunes, or any combination of these factors.

Branch activity is necessarily affected by the size and location of the branch. In general the very small branches

47

Minutes, Coffs Harbour Branch, 1959-1961 generally. The writer also had discussions with members and officials of the branch.

are either inactive or active only at election time. The most active branches, almost without exception, are those of considerable size. Large branches have greater funds but not necessarily greater expenses than small branches. They are almost always centered on towns and their membership is more heterogeneous than that in the small rural branches.⁴⁸ Thirdly, the major branches have, because of the size, large representation on the electorate councils. And because communications between towns are generally better than those between town and hinterland their attendance at council meetings is likely to be more frequent. Thus the large branches tend to supply a more than proportionate number of electorate council officials, who thus have a personal interest in keeping their branches alive. Finally, small branches tend to become Member-oriented much faster than large branches, possibly because traditions of loyalty towards parliamentarians are stronger in the rural areas than in the towns.

The branches of the Country Party are the substructure of the whole organisation. Without a sufficient number of active branches the party's organisation in any electorate will lack information, funds and local machinery. More, it

48

For example, 83 of the 138 members in the Armidale Electorate with non-rural occupations came from the three town branches of Armidale (52), Uralla (11) and Guyra (20).

may lack the necessary personnel to function properly itself. Inactive branches are thus a source of anxiety to both Central Council and electorate councils. From their point of view it would be ideal if branches would meet regularly and become important institutions in the local community.

But most branches never approach this ideal. The party has too many nominal numbers, whose annual subscriptions are merely their way of demonstrating their support for the Country Party, and whose interest goes no further. Many other members regard the branch as merely an electoral committee and branches in seats held by Country Party Members tend all too easily to become dominated by the parliamentarian: he will tend to discourage activity in any case, lest it produce a rival. Branches in other electorates are not necessarily any more active (though the most active branches come from Labor-held electorates), and branches which are active often fail to remain so, because of financial or factional reasons.

In fact, the party branch, originally conceived as a means of conducting election campaigns in local areas, has still this primary function. So too have electorate councils, the party's other form of local organisation.

CHAPTER 8

TYPES OF LOCAL ORGANISATION: II. THE ELECTORATE COUNCIL

I. FORMAL

The electorate councils, and not the branches, possess the local power within the Country Party and this power is considerable. The party Constitution allows electorate councils a very much greater area of decision in the conduct of their own affairs than is allowed the branches. There are separate electorate councils for state and federal electorates, they have equal powers and status, and the formal differences in their composition and prerogatives are unimportant.

Electorate councils are formed entirely from delegates: the chairmen and other delegates from all the branches in the electorate, together with the chairmen and delegates from other electorate councils covering the same territory. Thus on each SEC there will be delegates from at least one FEC, and possibly from two; on some FECs there may be delegates from as many as four SECs.¹ FECs must meet at least once annually, while SECs must hold at least two meetings per year. At the annual meeting each council must elect a Chairman (who becomes the electorate council's delegate to Central Council, the annual Conference and other electorate councils), an alternate delegate (for occasions when the Chairman is

¹Constitution, V(a)1, 2, p.16.

unable to act as delegate), two Vice-Chairmen, a Secretary, a Treasurer, two Trustees, and additional delegates to other electorate councils and the annual Conference (one to each).² Each electorate council may set up an Executive, which must include the Chairman, the Treasurer and the two Trustees. It is up to the council itself to decide the number of and the quorum for the Executive, and what its delegated powers are to be.³

Each electorate council has control over all matters concerning elections and referenda within the electorate (SECs have no concern with federal elections in their territory), and each has control over the disbursement of its own revenue. In addition, in consultation with the other electorate councils concerned, a council can fix a quota for campaign funds for each branch in the electorate. Electorate councils have the power to call for nominations for endorsement, and to endorse or refuse to endorse any candidate. They may also submit the name of a member to Central Council for consideration as a candidate for the Legislative Council. Apart from the endorsement of candidates, councils may delegate any or all of their powers to other councils or to branches. Finally, if a branch submits a resolution to

² Ibid., V(a) generally, p.16.

³ Ibid., V(b) generally, p.17.

an electorate council for consideration and transmission to Central Council, the electorate council may reject the resolution; and electorate councils have power to initiate such resolutions themselves, for consideration either by Central Council or annual Conference.⁴

Formally, then, electorate councils are semi-autonomous bodies with wide powers, guaranteed incomes and some important responsibilities.

II. FORMATION, NUMBER AND SIZE

There were Country Party electorate councils, formed from delegates of the G.A. and F.S.A., many years before there were Country Party branches, and many present-day electorate councils can trace a continuous history from 1927, when the single-member electorate system was re-introduced. Some FECs had even earlier origins.⁵ However, frequent electoral boundary changes and the abolition of several state rural electorates have changed the composition of many councils without changing their name. This is even more true of FECs, since the increase in the size of

⁴ Ibid., V(c) generally, p.17.

⁵ The earliest records of the New England FEC date from 8 February 1928, but from the records of a meeting held on this date it is clear that the council had been in existence for some years before that. Minutes, Meeting New England FEC, 8 February 1928.

Table 22

Country Party Federal Electorate Councils

September, 1958

CALARE	(CP, 1960)
COWPER	(CP, 1919-61; ALP, 1961-3; CP, 1963-)
DARLING	(ALP)
EDEN-MONARO*	(ALP)
FARRER	(Liberal)
GWYDIR	(CP, 1949)
HUME	(CP, 1949-51; ALP, 1951-5; CP, 1955-61; ALP, 1961-3; CP, 1963-)
LAWSON	(CP, 1949)
LYNE	(CP, 1949)
MACQUARIE	(ALP)
NEW ENGLAND	(CP, 1922)
PATERSON	(Liberal)
RICHMOND	(CP, 1922)
RIVERINA	(CP, 1949)
ROBERTSON*	(Liberal)

Notes:

1. * = dormant
2. The party presently representing the seat, and the year in which the Country Party first won the seat after the second world war, or in the early 1920s, in the case of Cowper, New England and Richmond, are shown in parentheses.

Source: Head Office Records

the House of Representatives in 1949 led to the creation of several new rural seats; the formation of several new electorate councils involved the distribution of the assets of the old councils among the new as well as extensive changes in council office-bearers. The income, powers and responsibilities of electorate councils tend to keep them alive: the electoral situation is the only factor important enough to cause inactivity and decline.

In 1958 the party recognised the existence of 37 SECs and 15 FECs.⁶ These covered nearly all the rural electorates in New South Wales, federal and state, the only exceptions being the quasi-rural, outer-metropolitan seats and some mining and industrial seats near Newcastle and Wollongong. Since the councils are made up largely of branch delegates, there is a good deal of difference in their size, but most SECs have a nominal strength of between 40 and 100, and most FECs a nominal strength of between 100 and 200.

111. PROCEDURES

Some electorate councils have a permanent headquarters, an office, and perhaps even a telephone. Others tend to be

⁶

See Tables 18 (facing page 181) and 22 (opposite).

migratory, meeting in different centres. These modes of activity usually result from geography or deliberate tactics. In small electorates the predominance of one town (Lismore, Orange) and the short distance to it from almost any part of the electorate make a permanent headquarters sensible and efficient. Alternate meeting places are more appropriate in an electorate of some size, and where there are several important centres. Often there are other reasons. Armidale SEC once decided to meet in Walcha in order to stimulate some enthusiasm in the local party branches prior to an election. This proved so successful that meeting in alternate centres became an accepted practice for some years.⁷

The intention of arousing interest has also prompted more than one electorate council to elect many more Vice-Chairmen than are provided for in the Constitution. This is an old and hallowed practice. Richmond FEC used to elect those delegates who were SEC Chairmen as Vice-Chairmen.⁸ Later it had as many as 23 Vice-Chairmen (1945).⁹ Gwydir FEC has also tended to have more than two Vice-Chairmen.¹⁰

⁷
Minutes, Special Meeting Armidale SEC, 9 September 1950;
Minutes, Annual Meeting Armidale SEC, 14 July 1951.

⁸
Minutes, Richmond FEC, 30 July 1934.

⁹
 These were probably all the branch chairmen.

¹⁰
Minutes, 1949 AC.

Efforts to have the constitutional number of Vice-Chairmen increased have not succeeded (the 1949 Conference defeated such a motion),¹¹ but the practice exists and is apparently accepted. A less common practice has been for organisers to be made secretaries of electorate councils. Several councils, notably those of Raleigh, Clarence and Tenterfield have had organiser-secretaries for short periods, but neither Head Office, nor the organisers, nor the councils have ever been enthusiastic about this close Head Office-electorate council contact, and in recent years it has been discouraged.¹²

Since the work of an electorate council secretary can involve a good deal of correspondence and record-keeping, council secretaries are normally given honoraria. However, the amounts vary widely. Some councils give nothing at all, others give very substantial fees. Temora SEC, the wealthiest of the state councils, has rarely paid for its secretaries' services, while Hume FEC once voted £2 per week plus £3 per week expenses.¹³ Since many FEC and SEC secretaryships have been combined (e.g. Calare/Orange,

¹¹ Minutes, 1949 AC.

¹² This was suggested in conversations with both organisers and Head Office officials.

¹³ Minutes, Hume FEC, 18 February 1950.

Hume/Burrinjuck, New England/Armidale, Paterson/Upper Hunter), the combined honoraria can be quite lucrative: the Secretary of the Hume and Burrinjuck Councils was receiving £7 per week in 1952. Council generosity in this matter has always horrified the more economy-conscious Head Office. The Organising Secretary argued in 1945 that if each council made available to Head Office what it spent (for "absolutely nothing") in honoraria, he could employ another permanent organiser.¹⁴ However, some secretaries refuse honoraria and other accept only token amounts.¹⁵

The continuity of office-bearers in office is no less striking at the electorate council level than it is at the branch: it is, of course, largely a reflection of branch continuity. But it owes also to the greater attractions of office on an electorate council. Those who are delegates to electorate councils are ipso facto the more active party members, and the council is a body of some local power and influence, with a chairman who sits on the party's Central Council. Office on the electorate council thus appeals both to those who wish to exercise local influence and to those who wish to be associated with the running of the

¹⁴ OSR to CE, 21 June 1945; OSR to CE, 26 July 1945.

¹⁵ For example the Secretary of Tenterfield SEC refused £75 in 1951, finally agreed to accept £15. Minutes, Tenterfield SEC, 19 May 1951.

Table 23

Continuity in Office of Electorate Council Office-bearers
Hume Federal Electorate Council, 1948 - 1961

	<u>1948</u>	<u>1949</u>	<u>1950</u>	<u>1951</u>	<u>1952</u>	<u>1953</u>	<u>1954</u>	<u>1955</u>	<u>1956</u>	<u>1957</u>	<u>1958</u>	<u>1959</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1961</u>
Chairman	A	:	:	:	:	O	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
Vice-Chairman	B	:	:	:	:	P	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
Vice-Chairman	C	:	:	:	:	Q	:	S	:	:	U	:	:	Z
Secretary	D	:	J	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	V	:	:	:
Treasurer	E	:	K	L	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
Trustee	F	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	W	:	:	AA
Trustee	G	:	:	:	:	C	:	T	:	:	X	:	:	AB
Delegate	B	:	:	:	:	R	:	:	B	:	W	X	:	Z
Delegate	H	:	:	:	M	S	:	:	:	:	Y	:	:	AC
Delegate	*	I	J	I	N	:	:	T	:	:	*	*	*	*

Note:

1. Each letter represents a separate person. Thus B, Vice-Chairman in 1948, was also a Delegate in 1956.
2. The colon represents a re-election.
3. Two delegates only were elected in 1948 and from 1958 to 1961.
4. A did not seek re-election as Chairman in 1953.
5. J, Secretary from 1950 to 1957, died during his term of office.
6. The senior Vice-Chairman was the alternate delegate to the Chairman.

Source: Minute Book of Hume Federal Electorate Council

affairs of the party as a whole. Table 23 illustrates continuity of office in Hume FEC between 1948 and 1961. As in all councils, the important officers are the Chairman and the Secretary, and once elected these officers are likely to retain office almost indefinitely.¹⁶ The present Secretary of Richmond FEC was first elected in 1943, that of Byron SEC in 1937 (although he was not Secretary during the war), and that of Casino SEC in 1946. The present Chairman of Upper Hunter SEC was first elected in 1939, and that of Oxley SEC in 1948. Tenterfield SEC has had only four Chairmen in nearly 30 years. But delegacy, apart from the alternate delegate, is not so prized, since by tradition delegates from one council do not become office-bearers of another. The more rapid turnover of delegates in Hume FEC is typical of councils in general.

Few councils have kept within the Constitution regarding the frequency of meetings. The pattern of activity of electorate councils is conditioned almost entirely by the sequence of elections. Table 24 sets out the frequency of meetings of four FECs and ten SECs between 1950 and 1961. For all FECs the peaks of activity (in this sense) were in

¹⁶

The information in the remainder of the paragraph has been drawn from Minute Books of the electorate councils mentioned.

Table 24

Frequency of Meetings Held by Electorate Councils
1950 - 1961

	<u>1950</u>	<u>1951</u>	<u>1952</u>	<u>1953</u>	<u>1954</u>	<u>1955</u>	<u>1956</u>	<u>1957</u>	<u>1958</u>	<u>1959</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1961</u>
<u>Federal Electorate Councils</u>												
CALARE	2	3	2	2	1	0	0	1	2	0	1	4
HUME	3	6	1	2	2	2	1	1	3	1	1	2
PATERSON	3	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1
RICHMOND	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	4	2	1	2	2
<u>State Electorate Councils</u>												
BURRINJUCK	6	2	1	5	1	2	3	1	1	2	1	1
CASINO	2	0	2	3	1	1	2	1	1	1	3	3
LISMORE	*	*	*	1	2	2	0	1	1	6	2	3
ORANGE	3	2	1	2	1	2	0	1	1	1	1	*
RALEIGH	*	*	*	1	0	2	3	2	2	3	1	2
TEMORA	3	1	1	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	5	1
TENTERFIELD	3	1	1	2	1	2	2	1	2	1	2	2
UPPER HUNTER	6	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	5	2	1	1
YOUNG	4	2	2	1	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	1

Note: 1. * = not available
 2. Federal election years: 1951, 1954, 1955, 1958, 1961.
 3. State election years: 1950, 1953, 1956, 1959.

Source: The Minute Books of the Electorate Councils listed.

the election years of 1958 and 1961, and to a lesser extent in the election and referendum year of 1951. For SECs the active years were the election years of 1950, (also the year of an extensive readjustment of electoral boundaries and the consequent formation of new electorate councils), 1953, 1956 and 1959. Individual divergences from this pattern can usually be explained by local circumstances. Richmond FEC's activity in 1957 owed to the death of the Country Party M.P. and the resulting by-election. Lismore SEC's uncharacteristic busy-ness in 1959 reflected a thorough-going faction fight which eventually resulted in the A.L.P. winning the seat. Temora SEC's five meetings in 1960 also resulted from a by-election following the death of the Country Party M.L.A., and Upper Hunter SEC's five meetings in 1958 from the announced retirement of the sitting Member and a scramble for endorsement.

The council Executive is much more important than that of the branch, and this in part explains the infrequency of council meetings. Both the Executive and the principal office-bearers are customarily given great freedom of action. Calare FEC has left most decisions to its Executive and usually meets only to ratify them.¹⁷ The Secretary of

¹⁷

For example, Minutes, Annual Meeting Calare FEC, 27 February 1948.

Paterson FEC conducted extensive negotiations with the local Liberal Party without consulting his electorate council, which proved quite ready to ratify all his actions.¹⁸

In large electorates, too-frequent council meetings (which generally occupy a whole day) would quickly prove expensive for and unpopular with the delegates. Some councils have tried to overcome poor attendance by paying delegates' expenses. Oxley SEC paid at the rate of one-half the railway fare, Armidale and Casino SECs at 6d per mile, and Calare FEC at cost to delegate.¹⁹ But the practice has not lasted, probably, in the first place, because councils found it too expensive,²⁰ and in the second because of increasing affluence in the 1950s.

But there is no evidence that payment of delegates' expenses has ever increased attendances at council meetings. The general factors which do seem to affect attendance are distance, the condition of the roads, and the size of the branch. Table 25 sets out the record of attendance at

¹⁸

Minutes, Paterson FEC, 25 August 1951.

¹⁹

Minutes, Casino SEC, 16 May 1947; Minutes, Annual Meeting Armidale SEC, 1 April 1950; Minutes, Annual Meeting Calare FEC, 30 March 1946; Minutes, Oxley SEC, 3 March 1951.

²⁰

Thus, Armidale SEC decided after only one month that if delegates required their expenses to be met, the responsibility should be that of their branch. Minutes, Special Meeting Armidale SEC, 6 May 1950.

Teaterfield State Electorate Council: Branch Representation at Council Meetings, 1942 to 1961

	1942	43	44	45	46	47	47	48	48	49	50	50	50	51	52	53	53	54	55	55	56	56	57	58	58	59	60	60	6
GLEN INNES	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
TEATERFIELD	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
BONALBO					*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
GIYRA	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
DUNDEE								*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
DRAKE	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
URBENVILLE					*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
DEEWATER					*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
EMMAVILLE	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
WOODENBONG					*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
MALLANGANEE					*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
PABULIAN			*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
ILANGOTHELIN	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
BARYULGILL					*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

Notes: 1. There are no attendance records for the first meeting in 1960.

2. * represents the attendance of one or more delegates.

3. (b) and (c) represent respectively the second and third meetings of the Council in any one year.

Sources: Minute Books of Teaterfield Electorate Council

meetings of Tenterfield SEC, over the 20 years between 1942 and 1961. Quite clearly, of all the branches in Tenterfield electorate, the large town branches of Glen Innes and Tenterfield were most regular in their attendance. This is hardly surprising, since meetings were held in either Glen Innes (most commonly) or Tenterfield. Distance must have been a factor (especially considering the poor condition of the roads in the electorate) in the less regular attendance of Woodenbong (141 miles from Glen Innes), Baryulgil (131 miles) and Mallanganee (114 miles) Branches. The important officers of Tenterfield SEC, almost without exception, have come from the Glen Innes and Tenterfield Branches, at least since 1935. The pattern in Tenterfield is probably true of most electorates.²¹

However, exceptional endorsement meetings - when the sitting Member for a safe party seat has retired or died, can attract very large attendances. The endorsement meeting of Gloucester SEC on 7 October 1961 had a complete attendance: all delegates for all branches and councils.²² The writer attended meetings of Hume FEC in 1962 and 1963, at at the second of which a candidate was to be endorsed: the

²¹

Few electorate councils keep as helpful attendance records as does Tenterfield SEC.

²²

Minutes, Gloucester SEC, 7 October 1961.

attendances were 32 and 154 respectively. There was a "full quota of delegates" for Tenterfield SEC's endorsement meeting in 1961.²³

Council meetings are brisker and more formal than branch meetings although meetings are still free from rule-book fussiness. The General Secretary endeavours to attend all annual meetings of electorate councils, and to be represented at those which he cannot attend. No sitting Member will miss a meeting of his electorate council if he can possibly help it. Few councils regularly exercise their right to initiate resolutions on the party's platform and policy,²⁴ and when councils have been moved to remit resolutions to Central Council or annual Conference, such motions have usually dealt with the rights, privileges and finance of the various institutions of the party, and (perennially) with the procedures for nomination and endorsement.²⁵ And councils rarely deal with branch resolutions: branches have always tended to send their resolutions directly to annual Conference without offering them for scrutiny by the electorate council.²⁶

²³ Minutes, Tenterfield SEC, 7 October 1961.

²⁴ For example, when Tenterfield SEC passed some policy resolutions in 1948, it was the first time the party's policy had been discussed at a council meeting since 1935; the next similar occasion was to be in 1952.

²⁵ See below, Chapter 12, part III.

²⁶ As they are perfectly entitled to do. Constitution, VI(f)9, p.21.

IV. AUTONOMY AND CO-OPERATION

The financial relations of electorate councils with other party institutions underlie the more general intra-party relationships. At each level the money flow is a two-way process. Electorate councils look to Head Office to rescue them if they over-reach themselves in campaigning. Thus Head Office carried a £300 debt of the Young SEC, and wrote it off seven years later at the request of the council.²⁷ But at the same time, Head Office is liable to appeal for funds to the councils when the party's central funds are running low. These appeals meet with a mixed reception. Temora SEC, almost embarrassed by its wealth, has not only responded to all such appeals, but has made several unsolicited donations as well: £700 in 1953, £750 in 1956 and £500 in 1959 and 1960.²⁸ Calare FEC, also comparatively wealthy, made at least one large donation to central funds,²⁹ and Paterson FEC has made small donations.³⁰ But when Tenterfield SEC received such a request in 1954 it refused to help, on the grounds that it needed a reserve of £1,500

²⁷ Minutes, Annual Meeting Young SEC, 9 May 1960.

²⁸ Minutes, Annual Meetings Temora SEC, 22 January 1953, 16 February 1956, 6 February 1959, 11 March 1960.

²⁹ £400 in 1958. Minutes, Calare FEC, 12 July 1958.

³⁰ Minutes, Paterson FEC, 26 May 1956, 19 April 1958.

before it could begin to assist Head Office.³¹ Casino SEC has guarded its funds jealously against what its officers see as the clutching hand of Head Office. The Council's Secretary once warned that "Central Council's frequent requests for financial aid" must be treated with caution, and protested against a levy on councils to pay for the state Leader's travelling expenses. When Central Council levied all councils £100 to pay for the Legislative Council Referendum campaign in 1961, Casino SEC voted an amount not exceeding £40.³²

Electorate councils look to the branches to find money, not only for the councils themselves at election time, but often when Head Office has made an appeal for funds. Thus, when Central Council decided that both state and federal electorate councils should collect funds for the 1951 anti-communist referendum, Liverpool Plains SEC passed the responsibility on to its branches.³³ It did the same in 1953

31

Minutes, Tenterfield SEC, 3 March 1954.

32

Central Executive confirmed the original levy, adding that the money could be taken from the council's account at Head Office. Casino SEC was disgusted. Minutes, Annual Meetings Casino SEC, 4 June 1957, 17 June 1960, Minutes, Casino SEC, 11 April 1961, 20 October 1961.

33

Hon. Secretary Liverpool Plains SEC to Chairmen and Hon. Secretaries of Branches (Circular), 29 August 1951. (Gunnedah Branch Records).

when Head Office made a general appeal for funds.³⁴ In part councils are forced into this position because branches are able to tap local finance very much more efficiently (and cheaply) than the councils themselves. Furthermore, branch accounts at Head Office provide one source of immediate and considerable finance. Councils have often urged branches to part with these funds (without much success), and have especially tried to get access to the Head Office accounts of dormant and defunct branches. Burrinjuck SEC asked all branches to forward their "surplus funds" early in 1959, when the council had run short of money for the approaching election.³⁵ Upper Hunter SEC asked each branch to turn its Head Office accounts over to the council in 1953; Tenterfield SEC had tried the same gambit three years earlier.³⁶ The latter council had also tried to have the funds of inoperative branches transferred to itself, but without success.³⁷

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Hon. Secretary Liverpool Plains SEC to Hon. Secretary Gunnedah Branch, 16 August 1953. (Gunnedah Branch Records).

³⁵

Hon. Secretary Burrinjuck SEC to Hon. Secretaries of Branches (Circular), 13 March 1959. (Cootamundra Branch Records).

³⁶

Minutes, Upper Hunter SEC, 3 March 1953; Minutes, Annual Meeting Tenterfield SEC, 26 August 1950.

³⁷

Minutes, Annual Meeting Tenterfield SEC, 16 February 1952.

There is little of a horizontal flow of finance within the Country Party. Branches do not assist other branches financially, and such assistance between councils is rare. Furthermore, it seems to have been discouraged by Head Office. When Gloucester SEC sought financial assistance from Paterson FEC in 1950, the latter refused the request "as Head Office has given a previous ruling against financial assistance by one Council to another".³⁸ However, there have been a few unsolicited gifts. Temora SEC gave £250 each to Hume and Riverina FECs in 1956,³⁹ and Tenterfield SEC donated £50 to Armidale SEC in the same year to assist what was expected to be an exceptionally expensive election campaign.⁴⁰

³⁸

Minutes, Executive Meeting Paterson FEC, 6 May 1950. But in 1946 the General Secretary had asked Upper Hunter SEC to donate £50 to the recently formed Robertson FEC, which had no resources at all. Minutes, Annual Meeting Upper Hunter SEC, 9 February 1946. The reversal in attitude may have reflected a change in General Secretaries. The pragmatic, rather ad hoc E.J. Munro was replaced in 1948 by the accountancy-trained, rule-conscious J.F. Dredge. See below, Chapter II, part IV.

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Minutes, Annual Meeting Temora SEC, 11 February 1956.

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Minutes, Annual Meeting Tenterfield SEC, 17 April 1956. Three years later New England FEC wished to donate £200 to Armidale SEC, but were puzzled about the means. Finally, D.H. Drummond, M.H.R. for New England, suggested that the FEC pay him £200 towards his election expenses whereupon he would donate the same amount to Armidale SEC. And so it was done. Minutes, New England FEC, 7 February 1959.

For most electorate councils at most times, however, these requests to Head Office, branches and other councils are unnecessary. Councils have access to a reliable and reasonably large source of normal income, and donations from within the electorate are usually sufficient to pay for their campaigns.⁴¹

Electorate councillors, many of whom have a well-developed sense of the local importance of their council, are less ready to see the council as merely another administrative unit directed from Head Office. Some councils are quick to bridle at anything they feel is undue Head Office officiousness. When Gloucester SEC was reformed on its own initiative after the electoral boundary redistribution in 1961, the officers of the council were incensed when Head Office called another meeting on the ground that the first reformation meeting should have been called by Head Office.⁴² Hume FEC suggested to Head Office in 1961 that more use should be made of The Countryman for appeals for financial support. When the General Secretary replied that he did not think it would be a good idea, the council retorted with some

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See below, Chapter 13, part III.

⁴²

W.H. Boschman to J.B. Fuller, 25 March 1962. (Courtesy W.H. Boschman). Boschman, the Secretary of Gloucester SEC, finally resigned from the party over this matter and the 1961 endorsement controversy. See below, Chapter 12, part II.

asperity that Hume FEC thought it was a good idea, and instructed him to place the suggestion before Central Council.⁴³

But most council/Head Office tensions arise over the control of the field organisers. The councils object that they have no control over the hiring, firing or deployment of the organisers, and worse, that they are unable to get organisers when they are needed. And although in the late 1930s many councils retained their own organisers, it would be financially unrealistic for a present-day council to attempt to employ its own organiser while Head Office also possessed a large field staff. Councils tend to regard the local organiser as their own, and become upset if he is moved to another electorate. The organiser in Casino electorate, for example, was moved three times in one year, which disrupted the council's plans for organisation. He was then moved away permanently; a replacement was promised, but had not arrived two years later. Casino SEC felt that its interests had been disregarded.⁴⁴ A similar incident occurred in Richmond federal electorate.⁴⁵ Unable to employ

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Minutes, Hume FEC, 8 November 1961

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Minutes, Annual Meetings Casino SEC, 25 March 1948, 24 March 1950.

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Minutes, Annual Meeting Richmond FEC, 28 March 1952.

their own organisers, and with the activity in any electorate largely dependent upon the work of an organiser, electorate councils, especially the active ones, see nothing good in the present system of Head Office control. Nevertheless, Head Office control is unavoidable and inevitable. With insufficient organisers the question of priorities is all-important, and not one which can be solved by an electorate council. Furthermore, as Colonel Bruxner once argued in reply to a request for the further decentralisation of the organisation, it is not so much the active as the inactive councils which need organisers, and they are unlikely to ask for one.⁴⁶

The role of electorate councils in the formation of branches has already been noted.⁴⁷ Councils also have a responsibility to ensure that their branches remain alive. In 1954, at the request of the state Chairman, all council Chairmen undertook to form new branches and to revive dormant ones.⁴⁸ But few councils need directives to make them aware of the necessity of keeping branches alive: the work of any council becomes unmanageable very quickly when branches become dormant. A conscientious council Chairman

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CCM, 27 August 1947.

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See above, Chapter 7, part II.

⁴⁸

Chairman's Address to CC, 21 June 1955.

will try to attend all branch meetings or at least, to be represented there, and many councils try to get their branches to meet quarterly. Electoral defeat will cause a flurry of activity. The loss of Lismore to the A.L.P. in 1959 was followed by anxious re-organisation, as much in the adjoining seat of Casino as in Lismore itself.⁴⁹

Occasionally councils provide a forum for the branches, especially for important public issues. New England FEC held a meeting to consider the Wool Sales Deduction Act in 1950, at which nearly all the branches were represented, by members as well as delegates.⁵⁰ At another meeting of the same council in 1959, a discussion on the Richardson Report on parliamentary salaries followed a branch request for the debate.⁵¹ Nevertheless, these occasions are rare, and most councils would welcome more branch/council co-operation in debate and discussion for the interest it might stimulate among the branches.⁵²

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Minutes, Lismore SEC, 19 November 1959; Minutes, Casino SEC, 23 September 1960.

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Minutes, New England FEC, 14 October 1950.

51

Minutes, Annual Meeting New England FEC, 11 April 1959.

52

But few would go so far as the Secretary of Casino SEC:
The Council has met on three occasions during the year and on each occasion it has received no worthwhile business from the branches, which should of course be the main function of the Council.

Minutes, Annual Meeting Casino SEC, 24 March 1950.

The Constitution provides that a SEC wishing to fix a quota for campaign funds must consult with the FEC concerned (and vice versa). Nevertheless there is little evidence that such consultation ever takes place. In some councils it would be unthinkable (an abrogation of authority), in others it would be quite unnecessary, since the delegates to both councils are the same. The large area of federal electorates has caused FECs to be dependent upon their SECs for organisation. Before the war the SECs in New England federal electorate were accustomed to conduct the federal campaigns, using funds provided by the FEC.⁵³ Most federal electorates include one complete state electorate, and between the two councils there develops a close relationship. The delegates to the SEC are also delegates to the FEC. Both councils will normally meet on the same day, the SEC in the morning, the FEC in the afternoon. The Chairman of the SEC is likely to be a Vice-Chairman of the FEC, and so on. This symbiotic relationship exists or has existed between New England FEC and Armidale SEC, between Hume FEC and Burrinjuck SEC, between Calare FEC and Orange SEC, between Paterson FEC and Upper Hunter SEC and between Richmond FEC and Lismore SEC. So close can the relationship become

53

For example, Minutes, Annual Meeting New England FEC, 12 July 1937.

that the distinctions between the councils blur. In the Minute Book of the Armidale SEC there appears the Minutes of the Annual Meeting "of the State and Federal Electoral Council" (18 June 1938). A meeting of the New England FEC in 1959 decided quotas for the state election of that year; at another meeting of the council in 1960, of nine policy motions carried, only three dealt with federal matters.⁵⁴ The federal council's gifts to Armidale SEC have already been mentioned.⁵⁵

For the other electorates, contact between state and federal councils is rarer. Occasionally a federal M.P. will address a SEC, as when D.H. Drummond addressed Tenterfield SEC in 1956 (on National Service Training and the Wheat Agreement).⁵⁶ Since organisers are based on state rather than federal electorates, a FEC wanting the organisation in one part of the electorate made active will probably approach the SEC to enlist its support. But these incidents are exceptional; state and federal electorate councils generally are little interested in one another's affairs.

Finally, the autonomy of electorate councils extends horizontally. Apart from electoral defeats, what happens

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Minutes, New England FEC, 7 February 1959, 6 August 1960.

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See above, footnote 40.

⁵⁶

Minutes, Annual Meeting Tenterfield SEC, 17 April 1956.

in one state electorate or on one SEC is of little interest or concern to other SECs, and the same is true of FECs vis-à-vis other FECs. The consultation that does take place between councils occurs at Central Council, not in the electorates themselves.

V. TYPES OF COUNCIL

Electorate councils can be considered as being dormant, nominal or active, the latter group being rather residual. Dormant councils (see Tables 18 and 22) are councils in name only. Relics of the postwar expansion which ended in 1949, they will probably not have met for some years. Without extensive work beforehand by organisers they would find it exceedingly difficult to meet at all, since few are based on more than three or four branches, which are also dormant. These councils are located in safe Labor or Liberal seats, which the party no longer contests, and usually in territory where the party has few members and no parliamentary representation. Because of the bank order system, most of these councils will still be receiving income, and be comparatively wealthy, and their funds and old office-bearers will be the basis upon which the party will commence a re-organisation or election campaign, if the electoral situation or some other circumstance leads to a renewal of party activity in the area.

Nominal councils maintain a shadowy existence in state and federal Liberal-held electorates. Because of pacts or agreements they will not conduct election campaigns and they remain established partly to provide a focus for members of the party (lest they join the Liberal Party), and partly to provide a basis for rapid expansion should the party decide to contest the seat.⁵⁷ Paterson FEC is a nominal federal electorate council and Calare FEC was another until 1960. Albury, Dubbo and Wagga Wagga SECs are all nominal. All have substantial funds, since such electorate councils are located in what the party considers to be its own territory, where membership was built up prior to 1950 and has been maintained to some degree since.

Active councils can be separated into those of party-held seats and those of seats held by the A.L.P. Member-domination of an electorate council is by no means as easy to accomplish as member-domination of a branch. Councils have finance and power, especially the power of endorsement; their chairmen sit on Central Council. Nevertheless, the relationship between the M.P. and the electorate council must be a close one, and nearly always is. In one electorate the council is entirely Member-oriented, as are all the branches. The party organisation in fact consists of the

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See below Chapter 15, part II.

electorate council secretary, who disregards the Constitution, relies on individuals rather than branches and considers himself responsible to the local M.L.A. (who has actively discouraged the building of any party organisation in the electorate). According to its Minute Book, this Council did not meet at all between 1949 and 1957 (during which period the M.L.A. was twice unopposed).

But this is an extreme case. Most Member-oriented councils will discourage a multiple endorsement on the grounds that it would give the impression of a vote of no confidence in the parliamentarian. In such councils the Member plays an important part in organisational planning, and the council will act as his liaison with the electorate (in such matters as agricultural shows, public meetings, and so on). His is the dominant role in election campaigns.⁵⁸ The more Member-oriented councils tend to be solicitous about their Member's expenses. Oxley SEC regularly paid their M.L.A.'s advertising and travelling expenses, as well as his taxi and telephone accounts. It even investigated the possibility of providing him with a full-time secretary.⁵⁹

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See below Chapter 14, part II.

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Minutes, Oxley SEC, 30 September 1950, 31 March 1951, 22 March 1958, 2 May 1959; Minutes, Annual Meeting Oxley SEC, 13 February 1954.

Gwydir FEC paid for its Member's radio broadcasts.⁶⁰ And most electorate councils with sitting Members will pay their Member's out of pocket election expenses.

Active councils in Labor-held electorates are no less pre-occupied with elections, but, lacking a permanent focal point for their activity, they tend to be more concerned with party activities in general. Chairmen from these councils are regular attenders of Central Council meetings (compared with Chairmen of some Member-oriented councils, whose record of attendance is poor indeed).⁶¹ Such councils are often better represented at Conferences, and contribute more to Conference agendas than many Member-oriented councils.⁶² But as with party-oriented branches, a successful election is likely to lead to a slackening in this type of activity.

The strong and semi-autonomous electorate councils are one of the striking features of the Country Party. Given the party's strong committal to the principle of local self-determination (e.g. in its advocacy of new states),

60

A.I. Allan to Ralph Hunt, 3 May 1957; Ralph Hunt to A.I. Allan, 20 May 1957 (Gwydir FEC Records). Hunt is Chairman of Gwydir FEC and Allan is the Country Party MP for Gwydir.

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Appendix M.

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Appendix K.

It was inevitable that the designers of the party's organisation should respect the power of local interest and feeling. Yet parochialism is present even below the electorate level; and in any case the electorate is an arbitrary geographical unit. Councils face their own problems of parochialism. Many electorates contain areas which have little in common, or where the traditional rural suspicion of outsiders begins to operate five miles outside the settlement: in such electorates the overcoming of suspicion and distrust of the electorate council itself is one of the latter's first tasks.

We must be prepared to iron out any parochial differences between sections of the Electorate, and work to always show a united front.⁶³

But councils are not equipped to perform this integrative task. Electorates containing 1,000 party members in 30 branches need permanent party staff if interest and activity are not to die, and if the party organisation is to develop a sense of identity with the electorate. But councils do not employ organisers and have little say in the use of those employed by Head Office. And as has been noted already, if the party's members and branches want to identify with the party and the electorate, they are most likely to do so via the local Member.

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Minutes, Annual Meeting Raleigh SEC, 14 March 1958.

CHAPTER 9

THE PARTY CONFERENCE

1. FORMAL

Although the mandatory annual Conference is an innovation of the postwar Country Party there have been general party conferences, albeit irregularly held, since 1927. The farmers and graziers who established the Progressive Party in 1919 had been accustomed to annual conferences in the F.S.A. and the G.A.¹ When the party was widened to include persons who were not members of either industrial organisation, Central Council set up a general party Conference to give the new members the same participation in the affairs of the party as was available to members of the F.S.A. and the G.A.² By 1930 delegates from F.S.A. and G.A. local bodies were also able to attend these Conferences, which possessed the power of recommending changes in the party's platform to Central Council.³

But with the establishment of the United Country Party the Conference lost status. The Divisions were to hold annual Conferences, as was the United Country Movement, but the Country Party's own Conference was to be held only if

¹ Since 1893 in the case of the F.S.A. and 1917 in the G.A.

² Minutes, AMCC, 19 January 1927.

³ The Country Party of New South Wales, Constitution and Rules for the Guidance of Electorate Councils and Branches, reprinted July 1928.

Central Council thought it desirable.⁴ In fact, the next such Conference was held in 1938, after a gap of seven years. The U.C.M. apparently held only two conferences (in 1932 and 1933),⁵ and the Divisions had practically ceased to exist by 1936.⁶ The resumed party Conferences were not entirely satisfactory. The 1938 Conference endeavoured without success to restore some order and efficiency into the formal party organisation following the collapse of the Divisional system.⁷ The Conference of the following year contained much criticism of the party leadership and of the coalitions, and it was also somewhat dubiously conducted.⁸ The 1940 Conference was postponed, amid strong protests.⁹

⁴
 The United Country Party of New South Wales (With Which is Incorporated The United Country Movement), Constitution and Rules for the Guidance of Divisions, Electorate Councils, Sub-Groups and Women's Auxiliaries, revised August 1933.

⁵
Minute Book, United Country Movement.

⁶
 See above, Chapter I, part III.

⁷
Minutes, 1938 AC.

⁸
 Twenty-five motions, nearly all of them critical either of the leadership or its policies, were withdrawn - rather more than 25 per cent of the entire agenda. Many other motions lapsed or were amended. Minutes, 1939 AC.

⁹
 Temora SEC, for example, wrote a strong letter to Head Office making, inter alia, "by whom and what power was the Conference postponed". Minutes, Special Meeting Temora SEC, 13 July 1940.

No Conference was held in 1942 because of the general feeling among Central Councillors that a Conference "would be a linen-washing affair [that] would do a great deal of harm".¹⁰

With the departure from the Country Party of the F.S.A. and the G.A. the party Conference became a much more important institution, and indeed it is the increase of the prerogatives of the party Conference, as much as any other change, that distinguishes the postwar from the prewar Country Party. The Conference is now annual, and its date and place of meeting are fixed by Central Council.¹¹ In 1958 Conference decided that future Conferences should be held alternately in Sydney and in the country¹² (all previous Conferences had been held in Sydney), and Conferences have now been held in Bathurst (1959), Lismore (1961), and Orange (1963).

All branches and state and federal electorate councils are entitled to send delegates to the Conference; the delegates must have been appointed in accordance with the

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CCM, 28 August 1942. The words are those of A.W. Fadden.

¹¹

Constitution (1960), XII(b), p.24.

¹²

Earlier Conferences had remarked on the anomaly of a country party meeting in Sydney. A motion to hold Conference out of Sydney was lost in 1930 (Minutes, 1930 AC), but the 1941 Conference resolved that future Conferences alternate between Sydney and "appropriate country centres". (Minutes, 1941 AC). But nothing was done to implement this.

Constitution (that is, they must have been elected at the last annual meeting of the council or branch: deputies or proxies are not permitted) and they may be asked to produce their authority as delegates. Members of Parliament may attend the annual Conference ex officio, but unless otherwise accredited as delegates, they are not entitled to vote. Central Councillors may attend and vote. The quorum for the annual Conference is 25 members.¹³

The annual Conference lays down the general policy of the party, "which it expects its Parliamentary representatives to follow", but it "shall not attempt to bind its Parliamentary representatives to specific measures". The Conference also has sole power to alter the Constitution. Notice of motion for such alteration must be in the hands of the General Secretary three months prior to the Conference, and must be transmitted to branches and councils one month before the Conference (as, indeed, must the whole agenda). A two-thirds majority of Conference (or a bare majority at two successive Conferences) is necessary for the alteration of the Constitution. A simple majority suffices for all other business.¹⁴

¹³ Constitution, 11(b)22, IX(a), X(d), XII(b), pp.13, 22, 24.

¹⁴ Ibid., 11(b)16, XII(b), XIII(i), pp.13, 24, 27.

Central Council may call Provincial Conferences of the party whenever and wherever it feels this to be desirable. All members may attend and vote at such Conferences, which are intended "to deal with resolutions affecting the development, platform and policy as it applies to the provincial area, and any other matters of National or State importance". The decisions of Provincial Conferences must be submitted to Central Council (or placed on the agenda of the annual Conference).¹⁵

Within the party, the official view is that the annual Conference possesses paramount status. Thus the General Secretary, in appealing to branches and councils for full representation at the 1949 Conference, wrote:

This General Conference is the Parliament of the Party in New South Wales, at which the rank and file dictate the policy and purpose of the Party.¹⁶

The Chairman of the party, farewelling the delegates to the 1955 Conference, gave them a status hardly less important:

When you go back to your homes and your own electorates you will be able to give the right information. You can be ambassadors for the Country Party.¹⁷

¹⁵

Ibid., XII(a), p.24.

¹⁶

General Secretary to all Councils and Branches (Circular), 8 April 1949. (Gunnedah Branch Records).

¹⁷

Minutes, 1955 AC.

Nevertheless, for the Parliament of the party, the annual Conference possesses strangely limited powers. There is, for example, no election from Conference to the Central Council,¹⁸ and none of the party's officers are responsible in any sense to the Conference. The more important party officers and leaders do not "report" to Conference: they "address" it. The finances of the party are neither revealed to nor (in any informed way) discussed by Conference, and it cannot instruct or otherwise influence either the Central Council or the Central Executive.

II. REPRESENTATION

In comparison to those of the Victorian Country Party, New South Wales Country Party Conferences are quite small, the usual attendance being around 200, while 800 commonly attend Victorian Conferences.¹⁹ They are nearly always attended by representatives of the other state Country Parties (usually the Chairmen of Victoria and Queensland: Western Australia sends greetings), and by the Federal

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Though this used to be so. In 1927 the Conference elected five Central Councillors to represent the Country Party Branches, a practice which ended in 1931.

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The Victorian President claimed an attendance of 600-800 in 1954. There was, in addition, a large separate Women's Conference, which has no counterpart in N.S.W. Minutes, 1954 AC.

Leader. Very few members who are not delegates attend, though delegates often bring their wives.

Branches and councils can participate in the work of Conference by contributing to the agenda and/or by sending delegates. Appendix K sets out branch and council participation in the work of the Conferences between 1950 and 1962. The analysis of representation at the Conferences is hampered by the lack of attendance records for many Conferences, and consequently representation has been judged on the basis of six Conferences only.²⁰ Nevertheless, it is clear that council and branch participation in Conferences is at best spasmodic, at worst almost non-existent. The party organisation in Byron electorate has been perhaps the least interested in Conference participation. In the 13 years covered by the analysis there were no motions submitted to Conference either by Byron SEC or by any of the Byron electorate branches. In six Conferences, only two of the seven Byron branches sent delegates, once each. Even the active organisations have not been consistently active. Although 14 of the 17 Liverpool Plains branches had sent either motions or delegates to Conferences between 1950 and 1962, four branches had contributed 66 of the 77 motions, while four

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Furthermore, the fact that a branch delegate attended tells us nothing about his contribution to the debates.

had not contributed any motions, and five others had never sent delegates.

The dairying electorate organisations in general seem to have been little involved in Conference work. Only the branches and councils of Clarence and Raleigh electorates can be considered active in this sense. In the case of Raleigh the activity dates from 1956: in the eleven years from 1945 to 1955 only five delegates and three motions came to Conference from the 20 Raleigh branches.²¹ The comparative lack of interest from dairying electorates may be partly a consequence of the nature of that industry: not only is the dairyfarmer usually poorer than the wheat or wool-grower, but his property also needs an intensive daily supervision quite unnecessary inland. He is likely, therefore, to find it both more difficult and more expensive to leave his farm for the three days of the Conference.²²

Conversely, the greater wealth and freedom of graziers and wheatfarmers may help to account for the generally greater participation of branches and councils from grazing and wheat-growing seats. Certainly these branches and

21

Based on the records of the Conferences for that period. Attendance records are unavailable for a few years.

22

The work schedule of the dairyfarmers affects social and sporting activities in dairying areas. Cricket matches, for instance, usually begin at 11.30 a.m. and finish at 3.30 p.m. so as not to interfere with milking.

councils are better represented at Conferences: even when the Conference was held on the north coast, at Lismore, delegates from the coast seemed to be few and far between, while graziers and wheatfarmers seemed plentiful.²³ On the other hand, the wheatfarmers occasionally feel that there are too many graziers at the Conference.²⁴

The general level of participation in the work of Conference is so low that a comparison between the activity of Member-oriented and party-oriented local organisations is of little value. Both the least-involved and the most-involved local organisations, Byron and Murray, are Member-oriented. Representation at Conferences is essentially a personal matter - a reflection of the delegate's finances and personal circumstances. Delegates do not necessarily attend because their branch or council has submitted a resolution. Indeed, judging from Conference records, the submission of a motion and the sending of a delegate are often not connected at all. In any case, the delegate is very often not the

23

Attendance records were not available for this Conference, but these were the impressions of the writer, who attended both this Conference (1961) and the one of the following year in Sydney.

24

Thus the Chairman of Young SEC once appealed for more delegates to go to Conference from the wheatfarming seats. Minutes, Young SEC, 10 November 1951.

original inspirer of the motion, and is sometimes not even in sympathy with it.²⁵

The continuity of electorate council representation seems much greater than that of the branch. There are good reasons for this. As we have seen, councils tend to have a more regular existence than branches because of their greater income, power and responsibility. But, in addition, the annual meeting of Central Council is held on the day preceding the opening of the Conference. Since the annual meeting of Central Council elects the party's officers and selects the co-opted members, the attendance at this meeting is always large, and many council chairmen (who are also, of course, their councils' delegates to Conference) stay on for the Conference.

The continuity of the other delegates to Conference is also noticeable. It is, again, very largely a reflection of the continuity in office of office-bearers at the branch level. Most parliamentarians and Central Councillors attend, and other council and branch delegates do not change very much from year to year. The General Secretary told the writer that he estimated that at least two-thirds of the

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For example, a delegate to the 1962 Conference made a personal disavowal of support for a motion he moved on behalf of his branch.

delegates to any Conference had attended previous Conferences, though not necessarily the one of the previous year.

Conference lasts for three days, and attendance at Conference will mean for most delegates an absence of at least five days, together with the expense of travelling and accommodation. Undoubtedly the time and cost deter some potential delegates, and branches and councils have occasionally paid all or part of their delegate's expenses. Armidale Branch paid the expenses of two delegates in 1945,²⁶ and Glen Innes Branch those of one delegate in 1950,²⁷ while the Raleigh SEC delegates in 1961 received first-class rail fares (with sleeper) plus £2 per day.²⁸ But these instances are unusual. Most councils and branches expect their delegates to be prepared to pay for the privilege.

III. PROCEDURES

Conference has its own ritual. After delegates' credentials have been checked, and the roll signed, the first day's session begins with the singing of the National Anthem. Apart from the opening song, the proceedings will be quiet and decorous: there will be no cheers, shouts or

²⁶

Minutes, Armidale Branch, 5 January 1945.

²⁷

Minutes, Glen Innes Branch, 6 June 1950.

²⁸

Minutes, Annual Meeting Raleigh SEC, 10 March 1961.

flagwaving. After the National Anthem comes the adoption of the standing orders and the determination of the hours of sitting. The Chairman then welcomes the delegates and visitors and gives his address, a review of the year's activities which will probably last an hour. He will be followed by the Federal Leader, who will officially open the Conference and also deliver a similar address, which will again last about an hour. He will be thanked, probably by one of the interstate visitors, who will in doing so deliver a short address, perhaps for twenty minutes. The Conference will then proceed to the discussion of resolutions in the printed agenda. But before the Conference is over delegates will hear still more addresses, one from the State Leader (one hour), one from the Chairman of the A.C.P. (Federal), if present (perhaps thirty minutes), and shorter addresses from any federal Ministers present.

In effect nearly one day of the three is spent in hearing addresses and in further ritual. The consequent lack of time available for discussion of resolutions has been a persistent source of irritation to many branches and councils. Armidale Branch complained in 1951 that delegates were spending too much time listening to speeches,²⁹ and two years later a motion came forward to Conference seeking

²⁹

Minutes, Armidale Branch, 23 February 1951.

to eliminate all addresses save the opening one. The proposer told Conference

I wanted to put this Conference in the hands of Conference. This is our conference. Members have the radio...³⁰

Attendance at the sessions decreases from the first morning. The best attendance is for the Federal Leader's speech, perhaps because since 1949 he has been Deputy Prime Minister. The first day's agenda usually contains most of the more interesting and controversial resolutions, including those affecting the Constitution, the administration of the party, the electoral situation, and relations with other parties. The second day is usually concerned with economic questions and with resolutions relating to the rural industries and rural life generally. The attendance will have dropped noticeably. From the beginning of the debates on the third day, in which resolutions dealing with the work of government departments and miscellaneous topics are discussed, the attendance will dwindle, until by the late afternoon it may be difficult to maintain a quorum. Night sessions are unusual: social functions, dinners and parties are as much a part of the ritual as the addresses in the mornings.

³⁰

The Chairman disagreed, and in one revealing sentence said: "We have Sir Earle [Page] here. It would be a grave injury to him if he sits mute". The motion was amended into an almost meaningless form and carried. Minutes, 1953 AC.

The agenda is controlled by a subcommittee of Central Council which orders the resolutions submitted by the Central Executive, Councils and branches, and sometimes rewrites them, avowedly because the resolutions are ambiguous or meaningless.³¹ However, there have never been any suggestions that the agenda has been "rigged". The agenda sub-committee also decides whether or not some motions should be printed at all: these are either highly contentious or strongly critical, and if not printed will be given verbally to Conference when it is in committee.

Of the 200 delegates, probably only 50 will speak in the three days, and of these a dozen will be frequent and sometimes long-winded debaters. Motions on the agenda must be formally moved or seconded or they lapse. Since many motions originate in poorly-attended branch meetings³² because of the persistence of single-minded zealots who do not themselves attend Conference, many printed resolutions simply lapse because no delegate is prepared to move or second them. This applies especially to the really contentious, trivial or outrageous motions.

³¹ This curious fact emerged at the 1963 Conference when a delegate complained that a motion appearing on the agenda was not the same as that sent to the General Secretary, who then explained the work of the agenda sub-committee. Minutes, 1962 AC.

³² For example, 14 resolutions at the 1939 Conference originated in one meeting of the Executive of Murwillumbah Branch. Minutes, Executive Meeting Murwillumbah Branch, 20 July 1939.

The Conference agenda must reach branches and councils at least one month before Conference, a provision intended to allow branch and council discussion of the agenda and thus the formulation of attitudes for presentation to the Conference by the delegates. In fact very few councils or branches ever meet specifically, or even mainly, to discuss the agenda; and few delegates leave for Conference with instructions to support or oppose any motion on the agenda. If asked, most branches and councils would probably follow Armidale Branch and say that they left the decisions regarding voting at Conference to the "good sense and judgement of the Delegates after hearing the debate".³³ However, Lismore Branch instructed its delegates to the 1960 Conference to oppose multiple endorsement,³⁴ and a year before Liverpool Plains SEC instructed its delegates to oppose two resolutions regarding pacts with the Liberal Party.³⁵

Little need be said about Provincial Conferences. The first such Conferences were held in Cootamundra, Armidale

³³ Minutes, Annual Meeting Armidale Branch, 24 March 1950. Few delegates ever report back to their branch or council and even fewer local organisations hold meetings soon after Conference to hear these reports.

³⁴ Minutes, Annual Meeting Lismore Branch, 5 May 1960.

³⁵ Minutes, Liverpool Plains SEC, 2 May 1959.

and Wellington on separate days in October 1952, and in Casino during the following month. Invitations were sent to all members within the areas concerned, and the total attendance was a little under 300.³⁶ The purpose of these Conferences was to inform members, rather than for the members to decide policy.

There are a number of highly important matters affecting Australia and New South Wales, including the economic situation (particularly the 'two-level' economy which has developed in Australia) on which country people should be informed. It is intended that this Conference will give our branch members opportunity to obtain information on, and to discuss, political problems which affect them.³⁷

The inspiration for these Conferences was central, and so was the organisation. Armidale Branch, for example, was simply told that a Provincial Conference was to be held in Armidale, and that it would be organised from Sydney. All that the branch had to do was to help provide the audience.³⁸

The success of these Conferences encouraged Central Council to hold a further series of Provincial Conferences in October and November of 1953,³⁹ but the attendance was

³⁶

CCM, 14 January 1953.

³⁷

General Secretary to Chairman and Hon. Secretaries of Branches, (Circular), 5 September 1956. (Cowra Branch Records).

³⁸

Minutes, Armidale Branch, 29 August 1952.

³⁹

GSR to CC, 16 November 1953.

disappointing, and the General Secretary recommended that no more be held for some time.⁴⁰ In their place it was decided to hold a series of conferences at the electorate council level. To these meetings would come the State Chairman, the General Secretary, two or three parliamentarians, and a few Central Councillors.

Opportunity was taken at these Conferences to remind delegates of the characteristics that are distinctive to the Country Party; such as its adherence to the Federal system and decentralisation, its advocacy of amenities for rural areas, its policy of building up our export income by a greater share of finance for rural districts for developmental purposes, and its sustained fight against Communism...⁴¹

As a makeweight, the finances of the party would be discussed by the General Secretary. Nine such meetings were held in 1954, and the results were held to be satisfactory.⁴²

In 1956 Central Executive decided that Provincial Conferences could be held in any area where the local organisation desired one, but that Head Office would not "instigate" them. It was also decided that "as far as possible the setting of the Agenda should be a local responsibility". Once the preliminary arrangements had been made, Head Office

⁴⁰
GSR to AMCC, 15 June 1954.

⁴¹
Chairman's Address to CC, 21 June 1955.

⁴²
GSR to CC, 29 October 1954.

Table 26

Resolutions Submitted to the 1962 Annual Conference

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Number of Resolutions</u>
1. Party Constitution and Rules	14
2. Annual Conference	2
3. Party Administration	30
4. Electoral	4
5. External Affairs	2
6. Defence	10
7. Political	16
8. Taxation	11
9. Tariffs etc.	3
10. Banking	4
11. Constitutional Reform, New States and Decentralisation	7
12. Primary Production, Marketing etc.	13
13. Land and Land Settlement	2
14. Local Government	7
15. Transport	12
16. Electricity and Power	1
17. Water Conservation, Flood Mitigation and National Development	6
18. Posts and Telegraphs	6
19. Social Services	4
20. Education	13
21. Health	4
22. Miscellaneous	3

Source: Agenda for the 1962 Annual Conference

would lend any assistance that was necessary.⁴³ Under this new system Provincial Conferences have been held in Grafton and Dubbo (1956), Gunnedah, Kempsey and Leeton (1957), Grafton again (in 1958), Gunnedah again (1960) and Moree (1961). It is difficult to estimate the effect of these Conferences: they are only one-day meetings, and attendances have not been remarkable. However, they do provide resolutions for the annual Conferences, and certainly they stimulate interest, even if it is only transitory, in the local organisations.

IV., FUNCTION

The agenda of 1962 Conference, which is typical of Conference agendas, contained 174 resolutions for discussion, gathered by the agenda sub-committee into 22 groups (see Table 26). If the groups of resolutions in the agenda are in descending order of importance (as, very generally, they are), then it is clear that the Country Party Conference is not national in the scope of its discussions. There is nothing here about arbitration or urban problems, precious little about social services, and only two resolutions

43

Copy of a letter, General Secretary to Hugh Waterford n.d. but shortly before 15 October 1957. (Gunnedah Branch Records).

about external affairs: social services, health and education are ignored until the close of the Conference. The Conference is directed primarily toward the problems of, and policies for, country people, and the better administration and working of their political party.

The wider, more general problems Conference dismisses as being too general, or demanding expert knowledge, or being outside the scope of Conference. Thus, in discussion of a motion in 1949 calling for secret ballots in union elections, a party notable ruminated:

It seems to me that we who come from the Country have not a full understanding of union affairs, and I do not think we want to dabble in them.⁴⁴

Although parliamentarians are fond of making set speeches on Communism or foreign affairs at Conference, the ordinary delegate usually feels somewhat uneasy in this field. During a rather circuitous debate on nuclear policy in 1957, one delegate reflected, "we get into deep water when we tackle a question of this sort at this Conference".⁴⁵ Many delegates seemed to find almost embarrassing a debate in 1961 on the admission of Communist China to the United Nations.

As we have observed in earlier chapters, the economic and industrial policies of the Country Party are essentially

⁴⁴
Minutes, 1949 AC.

⁴⁵
Minutes, 1957 AC.

conservative. Postwar Conferences have been full of resolutions calling for the maintenance of wheat and dairy industry stabilisation, for the curbing of margarine production, and for the retention of all existing subsidies and bounties. At the same time, there has been vocal support for further government intervention on the side of the primary producer and country dweller. Thus governments have been asked to end "double death duty",⁴⁶ expand longterm credit facilities for primary producers, restrict the protection of secondary industries, liberalise income tax provisions and extend subsidies. Such resolutions are rarely opposed and are always enthusiastically supported and carried.

Yet little of this appears as true policy-making. Rather is it mutual re-affirmation of principles and objectives, held to be true and worthwhile by the delegates. When serious policy-making is intended, the resolutions tend to be introduced by senior party officials and passed without much comment. Thus the 1945 Conference accepted a very long and detailed policy resolution on repatriation

46

That is, the taxation of the estate of a wife after it has already been taxed on the earlier death of the husband. Death duties are anathema to landowners, since they usually involve the division or outright sale of the family property.

without discussion.⁴⁷ The whole Constitution was put through in 1946 in much less than one day,⁴⁸ and the controversial resolution approving state aid to church schools was accepted by Conference in 1961 after only two speakers, the mover and the seconder.⁴⁹

These resolutions nearly always emanate from the Central Executive. As Appendix K shows, the Central Executive submitted 156 resolutions to Conference between 1950 and 1962, that is, an average of 12 per year; more than all the resolutions submitted by all the federal electorate councils in the same period. These resolutions are of three kinds: policy resolutions, such as those described above; publicity resolutions, usually of a topical nature, and designed to gain the party publicity in the metropolitan papers during the period of the Conference; and ritual resolutions, in which Conference is asked to re-affirm sections of the preamble to the Constitution or the party platform. Because of the prestige of those who introduce Central Executive resolutions (and because many of the latter require little argument) nearly all these resolutions are carried.⁵⁰ On

⁴⁷ Minutes, 1945 AC.

⁴⁸ Minutes, 1946 AC.

⁴⁹ Minutes, 1961 AC.

⁵⁰ For an exception, see below, Chapter 14, footnote 26.

the other hand policy resolutions which have not gained the support of the Central Executive are unlikely to pass.

For the considerable prestige of the party leaders, both within and without parliament, allows them to dominate the proceedings of Conference. If the Executive wants a resolution defeated or withdrawn, and it is a motion likely to attract some support, then it is usually necessary only to ask a senior parliamentarian to speak against it. The leaders form a source of mutual support if the debates become critical. When sections of the 1949 Conference strongly criticised the Chairman over the federal pre-election pact with the Liberal Party, first Sir Earle Page then H.L. Anthony stepped up to defend the Chairman's actions.⁵¹ Page, Bruxner and Drummond, perhaps the three outstanding examples, have had such status within Conference that opposing or criticising them has been looked upon almost as a form of sacrilege. Unlike rank and file delegates, the leaders will always get the call, and will almost automatically receive extensions of time.

The high status of the parliamentarians makes it difficult for Conference to hold either the parliamentary parties collectively, or Ministers individually, to account. In the latter case, only the federal Ministers from New

⁵¹Minutes, 1949 AC.

South Wales are expected to defend their actions before Conference. Thus, while H.L. Anthony (Richmond) was Postmaster General, he usually spoke to Conference, defended the work of his Department and answered or commented upon the resolutions relating to the P.M.G.'s Department in the agenda. Similarly, H.S. Robertson (Riverina) has appeared before Conference in regard to Social Services. Whenever motions strongly critical of either parliamentary party come up before Conference, the parliamentarians defend themselves with dignity and with something of a reproachful air ("you should have more faith in your parliamentary representatives"). But most such motions are withdrawn. Perhaps the most bitter conflict between the parliamentarians and the rank and file occurred in 1951, over the Wool Sales Deduction Act. A strongly worded motion of no confidence in the federal parliamentary party was moved, and one supporting speaker declaimed

we must regard Mr Fadden's act as an act of treachery. He has been to this party a false friend.

The speaker wanted Central Executive to force the Federal Country Party to "depose" Fadden as leader. But the intemperateness of his language caused a reaction. Fadden defended himself ably, and speaker after speaker rose to

declare their support for Fadden, despite their declared antipathy to the act itself.⁵²

The dominance of the parliamentarians has long been a sore point with some of the rank and file. The concept of the Conference as the forum of the ordinary member has already been noted.⁵³ A further motion at the 1953 Conference sought to have parliamentarians debarred from speaking at Conference at all, unless called upon to give an account of their activities. There were many strong speeches in support of the motion, but it was too drastic for the majority of the delegates and was defeated.⁵⁴ The more active rank and file delegates sometimes find their role completely frustrating. G.C. McKellar, later to be the Chairman of the party and a Senator, criticised the 1948 Conference as "the most futile" he had ever attended.

We are apparently here as delegates just to endorse the views of the leaders. We all came here in the hope that we would do something to defeat the Labor forces at the next election. If we want a one man Party, let us have it, but not under the name of the Country Party.⁵⁵

The parliamentarians have, apart from all else, one tremendous advantage in Conference: they are accustomed

52

Minutes, 1951 AC.

53

See above, footnote 30.

54

Minutes, 1953 AC.

55

Minutes, 1948 AC.

to public speaking and to debating. The ordinary delegates tend to lack knowledge of Conference procedure and, more importantly, tend to think that the merits of a proposal will be obvious to all without elaboration or argument. The writer often found it difficult to follow the arguments put forward in support of some motions at Conference, and many resolutions which seemed, on the surface at least, to possess merit, were poorly received because of poor presentation. The reasons given by the Secretary of Raymond Terrace Branch for the defeat of his branch's resolutions at the 1960 Conference could apply to many more.

we lost due to the following reasons:

1. Our resolution was not properly formulated.
2. Our case was not strongly enough put forward.
3. Our incapability to handle a matter technically correct, with regard to a debate procedure.
4. Our incapability to bring forward a proper and convincing speech and therefore not being able to raise the interest of the audience. 56

Policy-making, then, is the province of the leaders. Indeed the policy-making role of Conference is not as important as the Constitution implies, since the parliamentary parties are under no obligation to accept the decisions of Conference. The decision by Conference in 1961 to adopt a policy of limited state aid for church schools had to be

56

Minutes, Raymond Terrace Branch, 26 June 1960. The Secretary was a Dutch immigrant, hence the somewhat stilted English.

argued out again in the state party rooms before it became party policy.⁵⁷ And some resolutions carried by Conference are quietly ignored by the parliamentary parties.

Local organisations have often wondered at the outcome of Conference decisions, particularly when their own resolutions are concerned. Armidale Branch suspected in 1944 that its resolution had been pigeonholed, and asked for information on progress.⁵⁸ Blacktown Branch followed the same course of action in 1951. When it finally received an answer to its request, it found the answer "unsatisfactory", and decided to raise the matter at the next Conference.⁵⁹ But most dissatisfaction on this count arises from a simple misunderstanding of the process of policy formulation within the party; Conference is only a part of the process, not the process itself.

Only the most determinedly idealistic of the rank and file would see the Conference as the Parliament of the party: its power are too limited. Nevertheless, since the inception of the party Conference, there has been a persistent feeling that it could be more useful. The Armidale

⁵⁷ So C.B. Cutler told the 1962 Conference. Minutes, 1962 AC.

⁵⁸ Minutes, Armidale Branch, 11 January 1944.

⁵⁹ Minutes, Blacktown Branch, 7 June 1951, 31 March 1952.

delegate to the second party Conference in 1928, for example, did not consider the Conference too successful from a strictly Country Party view. There seemed to be more direction from the Chairman than anything else.⁶⁰

Twenty-five years later, Blacktown Branch delegates were most dissatisfied with the general atmosphere at the Conference, and felt there was much room for improvement in the manner in which it was carried out.⁶¹

Perhaps this improvement would come if Conference were to have wider powers. And in theory these powers lie within the grasp of Conference, for it can alter the Constitution to provide for them. But there is little likelihood of a fundamental change in the Constitution while the Central Executive and the parliamentarians are opposed to it. There is no reason why they should support such a change: the present distribution of powers is of their own making, and it suits them very well. For the leaders, Conference does serve useful purposes. It gives them an opportunity of observing the new blood within the party, and it serves as an approved (and controlled) forum in which opposing views,

60

Minutes, Committee Meeting Armidale Branch, 29 September 1928.

61

Minutes, Blacktown Branch, 19 March 1953. Even the leaders have been prepared to admit that Conference could be better. "I think that we don't always, perhaps, get all we should out of Conferences", observed Colonel Bruxner to the 1948 Conference. Minutes, 1948 AC.

jealousies and incipient factions can be brought into the open and dealt with without much danger to the party. And finally, it gives the active rank and file, upon whom the local organisation depends, a sense of identity with the party as a whole which they cannot get in any other way.

CHAPTER 10

THE PARLIAMENTARY PARTIES

I. FORMAL

Neither the state nor the federal parliamentary Country Parties have constitutions of their own, and neither is regulated by the Constitution of the Australian Country Party (Federal) or that of the Australian Country Party (N.S.W.). Furthermore, their relationships with the non-parliamentary organisations are simple. We have already observed that parliamentarians may attend annual and provincial Conferences (although they may not vote at the former unless accredited as delegates) and that both the state and federal Country Parties are represented on the Federal Council, each by the Leader and two other delegates, and the approval of the Central Council is necessary before the state parliamentary party can enter an alliance with another party.¹

II. THE PARLIAMENTARIANS AND THEIR LEADERS

One of the important factors in the early electoral success of the Country Party was the quality of its candidates. The leaders of the party were well aware of the factors operating in elections in country seats, and one

¹Constitution, 11(a)2, (b)20, pp.12, 13.

student of the party has suggested that it capitalised on them:

in the country electorates the Progressive Party was providing for men of local body experience an avenue of political advancement that had never existed in the Nationalist organisation. A glance through the qualifications of the Progressive candidates reveals one after another with years of good service on Shire and Municipal Councils, Pasture Protection Boards, F.S.A. branches and Graziers' Association Local Committees - all the community leaders whose opportunities for parliamentary careers had previously been much more restricted.²

At the height of the party's success, in the 1930s, a distinctive type of Country Party parliamentarian had emerged.³ Of the 30 Country Party members of the Legislative Assembly between 1932 and 1941, 23 had some interest in primary production; 12 were farmers and graziers, six were farmers and five were graziers. Very generally, the Members who followed agricultural or pastoral pursuits were engaged in that rural industry which predominated in their electorate. Sixteen Members belonged to the F.S.A., 12 to the G.A. and three to the Primary Producers' Union.⁴ Ten had affiliations with both the F.S.A. and the G.A., and

²

Graham, The Strategies of the Australian Country Parties, p.339.

³

This paragraph is based on Aitkin, The United Country Party, Chapter 15 and Appendices R and S.

⁴

The Industrial organisation of the coastal dairymen.

many had been prominent in these organisations. At least 13 of the 30 Members had had experience in local government, and at least 21 had been actively engaged in community affairs. Most of the northern Members had been associated with the New State Movement, and more than one-third of the Members had served in the first world war. In terms of background, occupation and experience, then, the parliamentary Country Party was a homogeneous body.

While we do not yet possess equivalent information about the Members of the postwar Country Party, it seems nevertheless that the postwar parliamentary Country Party representatives fit the traditional pattern.⁵ Of the 29 Country Party Members of the Legislative Assembly between 1946 and 1962, 21 were primary producers. Of the eight Members with non-rural occupations, five came from the coastal dairying districts, where rural/urban hostility is rare. The other three all had occupations which brought them into contact with the man on the land. Charles Cutler, before his election to the Assembly in 1947, was the business manager of a primary producers' co-operative society in Orange. Davis Hughes was, before his election in 1950, the Deputy Headmaster of The Armidale School, the only Great Public School in the country in New South Wales, and one

⁵

This paragraph is based on Appendix L.

which recruits its pupils very largely from the sons of farmers and graziers.⁶ Frank O'Keefe, who won Liverpool Plains in 1961, and upon its abolition, Upper Hunter in 1962, was a Gunnedah tractor and farm machinery agent. With the exception of Cutler and O'Keefe, all the Members with non-rural occupations came from electorates in which there is a high non-rural component in the party membership. The evidence that is available suggests that the Members of the Country Party still enter the Assembly after some years of activity in local government and community affairs, and that a high proportion have had war service.⁷

What is true of Country Party Members of the Legislative Assembly is no less true of their federal colleagues from New South Wales. Of the 13 N.S.W. Country Party Members of the House of Representatives between 1946 and 1961, ten were primary producers.⁸ Of the other three T.J. Treloar (Gwydir 1949-53) was a Tamworth businessman, Ian Allan (who succeeded Treloar in Gwydir) an A.B.C. radio announcer in Tamworth specialising in rural programmes, and P.E. Lucock (Lyne 1952-) a Presbyterian clergyman with an R.A.A.F. background.

6

It was also the school of Colonel Bruxner, who was its Captain in 1900.

7

See Ellis, The Country Party, Chapters 36 and 37.

8

This figure includes Sir Earle Page, who was much more a grazier than a doctor after his election to the House.

Both the N.S.W. Country Party Senators, A.D. Reid and G.C. McKellar, were farmers and graziers.

The occupational background of Country Party Members of the Legislative Council, however, has tended to be oriented more to the business and commercial than to the agricultural and pastoral worlds. Of the 14 Country Party M.L.C.s between 1932 and 1941, ten had non-rural interests, while only three were farmers. However, six shared their time between farming or grazing and commercial pursuits. Their experience in local government or community activities was not nearly so striking as that of their fellows in the Legislative Assembly.⁹

These proportions have been roughly maintained among the postwar Country Party Legislative Councillors.¹⁰ Ten of the 15 Country Party M.L.C.s between 1946 and 1961 had professional or commercial interests, while only five were primary producers. Three only had shared interests. Few of the postwar Country Party M.L.C.s had been noted for their activity in local affairs before their election to the Council.

The contrast between the Country Party Members in the two Houses is readily explainable. In the first place, the

⁹ Aitkin, The United Country Party, Chapter 15 and Appendices T and U.

¹⁰ This paragraph is based on Appendix L.

qualities and experience desirable for candidates seeking election to either the Legislative Assembly or the House of Representatives are not needed by potential Members of the Legislative Council, who are elected by the Members of the Assembly and Council sitting together as an electoral college.¹¹ Secondly, because of the method of election, the Country Party needs the support of the Liberal Party if it is to get the maximum number of Members elected in its interest. For this reason, Legislative Council elections are attended by much delicate diplomacy, and the high proportion of Country Party M.L.C.s with business interests is at least in part a reflection of the need to win the support of the Liberal Party. Thirdly, membership of the Legislative Council has become a means of rewarding party members whose activity in public life has been largely within the Country Party itself. E.C. Sommerlad, J.M. Carter and J.B. Fuller, all Chairmen of the party, and E.L. Sommerlad, all owed their election to the Council largely to their services to the party.¹² Finally, there is still a strong tradition within the party that the Legislative Council is a "non-Party

11

Constitution Amendment (Legislative Council Elections) Act, 1933.

12

As did Senator McKellar, party Chairman in 1957 and 1958, his election to the Senate in 1958.

House",¹³ and this has made it possible for the leaders to defend the election of certain Members who had not been noted either for their public activities or for their service to the party, on the grounds of their knowledge of a particular industry or of a region of the state.

In one sense the Country Party Legislative Councillors have complemented their colleagues in the Assembly. Their business interests have been with few exceptions those of the country towns or those associated directly with rural industries.¹⁴ Sir Norman Kater and R.C. Wilson served as directors of the Grazcos Co-operative Ltd., while G.D. Bassett was the Chairman and Managing Director of the Farmers' and Graziers' Co-operative Company. E.C. and E.L. Sommerlad were both concerned with Country Press Ltd. and with country newspapers, while H.V. Budd was the managing editor of The Land and F.W. Spicer the manager of a country radio station. E.J. Eggins and W.A. Walmsley were both interested in business enterprises serving the dairy industry.

The veneration of the parliamentary Leader and his dominance within the party as a whole are characteristics

¹³

A polite fiction with a long history. See Sir Henry Manning, The Upper House, The People's Safeguard, 1856-1953, Sydney 1952 (?), especially p.19 et seq.

¹⁴

The information on which this paragraph is based comes from Ellis, The Country Party, Chapter 37.

of parties of the Right, and the Country Party is far from being an exception to this rule. In no other Australian party, with the possible exceptions of Sir Robert Menzies in the Liberal Party, or Sir Thomas Playford in the L.C.L. of South Australia, do parliamentary leaders possess as much prestige within their party as do the Leaders of the Country Party. Furthermore, in both federal and N.S.W. politics, the party has been very well served by its Leaders.

Excepting the brief reigns of W.J. McWilliams (1919-20) and Archie Cameron (1939-40), the Federal Country Party has been led by three notable parliamentarians for long periods. Sir Earle Page (1920-39), the architect of the party's strategies for its first 20 years and its most famous figure, was a country medical practitioner before his entry into politics. As an opportunist and a shrewd negotiator he has had no peer in federal politics in the last half-century. Sir Arthur Fadden, a former Queensland accountant who assumed the leadership in 1940, lacked Page's cunning and his imagination, but excelled in campaigning. John McEwen, a Victorian farmer who replaced Fadden in 1958, possesses neither the mental agility of Page nor the common touch of Fadden, but is probably admired more highly within the party than either. McEwen's image is that of a man of

integrity and a fighter. To a greater extent than either Page or Fadden, he appears to Country Party members as a fearless exponent of country values and country interests, speaking in the authentic tones, simple and direct, of the farmer. But Page, Fadden and McEwen have all shared a complete awareness of the conditions of the Country Party's survival, and none, save perhaps for Page's uncharacteristic attack on Menzies in 1939, have allowed immediate considerations to interfere with the task of maximising the party's position in federal politics.

In New South Wales, the party's leadership has been dominated by Colonel Bruxner, who was Leader for 29 of its 43 years of existence. He was first elected Leader in 1922, following the True Blue split, resigned the leadership in 1925 for family reasons, resumed it again in 1932 at the party's request, and remained Leader until his final resignation, at the age of 76, in 1958. Bruxner's unchallenged position as Leader arose from his abundant personal qualities. A much-decorated cavalry officer in the first world war, he was a man for whom personal honour was of primary importance, and whose own integrity was unquestioned. But he possessed also an eloquence and a friendliness which attracted all who met him, and his skill in negotiation and as both an electoral and a parliamentary tactician reinforced his position.

In a completely literal sense, Bruxner is the Country Party's hero. In contrast, the three other Leaders of the N.S.W. party emerge, rather naturally, as more shadowy figures. Ernest Buttenshaw (1925-32) lacked toughness, and preferred conciliation to confrontation. The unfortunate eclipse of Davis Hughes (1958-9) was a severe blow to the party, for Hughes had a genuine flair for leadership, based partly on an intuitive sense of what was required, and partly on gifts of intelligence and imagination equalled in the Country Party only by Page. Charles Cutler, who succeeded Hughes in 1959, has yet to prove himself. Like Hughes, and unlike Bruxner, he became Leader after a good deal of parliamentary experience, and like them both he is widely popular among the rank and file of the party. A young man himself, he leads a party very largely composed of young men. Yet his position as Leader is overshadowed by the memory of "the Colonel". To consolidate his position he needs above all else an electoral victory and a period as Deputy Premier. Nevertheless the Country Party has always chosen its Leaders with care, and Cutler will no doubt prove as capable as his predecessors.

The replacement of one Leader by another has generally taken place without friction. Indeed in the history of the N.S.W. party there has never been an overt struggle to gain

the leadership. The transitions from Bruxner to Hughes, and from Hughes to Cutler, took place without the slightest indication of factionalism, horse-trading or recrimination. And although there were open contests for the leadership of the federal party in 1939/40 these had no long-term effects on the party's harmony or stability.¹⁵

III. PROCEDURES

The shared backgrounds of the Country Party Members of Parliament facilitate unity within the party,¹⁶ and the parties themselves are run rather informally.¹⁷ In New South Wales the parliamentary party meets every Tuesday morning while the Assembly is sitting. The party's Legislative Councillors do not normally attend these meetings unless the business of the meeting involves the Legislative Council (as, for instance, when an election for the Council is approaching). At these Tuesday meetings the legislative

¹⁵

Ellis, The Australian Country Party, Chapters 21 and 22. There are no written records available of the meetings at which the parliamentary Leaders were elected. However, conversation with members of the parliamentary parties leads the writer to believe that in recent elections the result has been obvious before the poll.

¹⁶

As one "veteran leader" put it to Professor Overacker, "they are a lot of good chaps who come with a special purpose". Overacker, p.231.

¹⁷

I am indebted to Charles Cutler M.L.A., Davis Hughes M.L.A., George Freudenstein M.L.A. and P.E. Lucock M.H.R., for the information on which the remainder of this paragraph is based.

programme for the week is discussed, and party tactics worked out. If a Member decides, for reasons of conscience, or because of the possible reaction from his electorate, that he cannot support the party's policy on a particular bill or motion, he says so at this meeting. The rest of the party may attempt to dissuade him, but his right to independent action is unchallenged.¹⁸ If, because of an unexpected crisis later in the week, a Member has been unable to declare his position to the party, he must see the Leader before he goes against the party's policy. The procedures and mores of the Country Party in the House of Representatives are very similar, although there are complications arising from the party's share in the responsibilities of government.

Within the N.S.W. parliamentary party the Leader possesses a very high status. This is in part merely a reflection of the very high status of leadership in the party as a whole. But it is also a result of the role of the Leader in the selection of Members of the Legislative Council, who in one sense all owe their seats directly to him.

The federal and state parliamentary parties are not associated formally in any way, although an informal liaison

¹⁸

Compare "Neil Webb's" account of the practice in the Victorian Country Party. A.F. Davies, Private Politics, Melbourne 1962, p.77.

was maintained during the 1950s through Senator Reid (himself once an M.L.A. and Minister for Agriculture), until his death in 1962.¹⁹ However, federal and state parliamentarians for the same district tend to develop strong working partnerships, especially at election time.²⁰

IV. AUTONOMY AND CO-OPERATION

There is little contact between the federal parliamentary party and the N.S.W. party organisation, at least at the top level. The potential federal party representation on the Central Council has never been fully exploited, and years may elapse between the attendances of the federal Leader. When this is coupled with the infrequent meetings of the Federal Council, the virtual autonomy of the federal party is readily seen. The crisis brought about by the Wool Sales Deduction Act in 1950 and 1951 revealed very clearly the poor articulation between the federal and the state Country Parties, and apart from more frequent meetings of the Federal Council there is little evidence that the situation has improved much since then.

It is not a situation which the Central Council welcomes. During the 1950s the General Secretary regularly

¹⁹

I am indebted to the late Senator Reid for this information.

²⁰

Cf. "Neil Webb" again, Davies, p. 72.

drew Council's attention to the lack of interest which the federal parliamentarians seemed to display in the party organisation. In 1955 he went further:

I again appeal for better contact between our Parliamentarians and Head Office. The position is not so bad in the State sphere, but Federal Parliamentarians appear to be becoming a separate entity within the party. I do assure the Parliamentarians that contact between individual members and headquarters on an organisational level is much to be desired and much appreciated. No news may be good news - but some news is better.²¹

The lack of contact owes partly to the formal relationship between the federal and state parties. The views and anxieties of the state parties are in theory supposed to be transmitted to the federal party through the state representatives on the Federal Council, who are not themselves parliamentarians.²² And despite the strict autonomy of the state Country Parties the first loyalty of the federal Members is to the federal Leader and the Federal Country Party. Indeed, a federal Member has only two important roles, one as a Member of the Federal Country Party and the other as the Federal Member for his electorate; his role as a N.S.W. member of the Federal Country Party is unimportant and virtually non-existent.

²¹ GSR to AMCC, 21 June 1955. See also GSR to AMCC, 15 June 1954, GSR to CE, 29 July 1955.

²² See above, Chapter 5, part 11.

The relationship between the N.S.W. parliamentary party and the Central Council is much closer and more interesting, and it is one which was determined in the party's first twenty years. Before the True Blue split in 1922 the parliamentarians were represented on the Central Council, and the Council kept a close watch on the parliamentary party, the metropolitan members of which it did not wholly trust. The presence and votes of the parliamentarians were held to have been partly responsible for the split.²³ After the split the True Blues themselves were also opposed to representation on the Central Council,²⁴ and the Council was reconstituted without any parliamentary representation at all. Instead, the Central Council and the parliamentary party were to hold joint meetings whenever circumstances made close Council/party contact desirable.

But the Progressive Party had originated as a party free from "machine politics", and this freedom, if it meant anything at all, meant the negation of outside control of the party. Very soon, Bruxner, as leader of the parliamentary party, was being left to decide the tactics of the

²³

By W.W. Killen, for example. Minutes, Joint Meeting of Central Council and the Parliamentary Progressive Party, 20 April 1922.

²⁴

According to Bruxner at the above meeting.

parliamentary party himself,²⁵ and the frequency of the joint meetings declined. Finally, the joint meetings ceased altogether,²⁶ and a few parliamentarians were invited to attend Council meetings. In 1925 direct parliamentary representation was resumed. But in the interim some fundamental changes had occurred. Firstly, the Council had learned to trust the parliamentary party (now entirely a "country" party). Secondly, Bruxner's handling of the tricky conditional support strategy of the party had won him, and thus the position of the parliamentary leader, great prestige. Finally, and consequently, the parliamentary party was beginning to establish its own prerogatives vis-à-vis Central Council.

Once the party entered government, the prestige of the leader and the parliamentary party generally rose greatly. Furthermore, many of the parliamentarians were becoming "old hands", with the added confidence that experience bestows. By the time of the Stevens-Bruxner Government, the parliamentarians were beginning to dominate the party. Even in the years of the Bayin-Buttenshaw Government the Council had begun to find the parliamentary party hard to influence,

²⁵

Minutes, Joint Meeting of Central Council and the Parliamentary Progressive Party, 5 October 1922.

²⁶

The last such meeting was held on 12 October 1923.

and both the Council and the Executive were appealing for more contact and co-operation between the parliamentary party and the organisation.²⁷

Bruxner was given complete freedom to negotiate with Stevens over Cabinet places and portfolios in 1932²⁸ and again with regard to the successive electoral pacts of the 1930s.²⁹ Page, too, enjoyed a similar freedom. Whereas in the 1920s he had often had to argue and bluster to get support,³⁰ he was given "full authority" to negotiate for the conduct of the 1934 federal elections in New South Wales.³¹ Furthermore, Bruxner's close relationship with Stevens gave him an advantage in negotiations with the U.A.P. which Central Councillors neither individually nor collectively possessed. By 1938 Bruxner's own prestige was so high that a mere suggestion of his resignation was enough to quell some unrest within the party.³²

27

CEM, 12 December 1928; CCM, 10 July 1929. The Central Council, for example, failed completely in its attempt to have the adult franchise clause removed from the Local Government Act. CCM, 25 May 1928, 29 November 1928.

28

CCM, 15 May 1932.

29

CCM, 1 November 1934; FEM, 2 March 1928.

30

For example, in the meeting of 22 July 1925. CCM, 22 July 1925.

31

CCM, 31 May 1934.

32

Local United Country Party organisations in Yass and Gloucester electorates wished to present candidates in these

By 1941 the pattern of parliamentary party/Central Council relations was firmly established. The state parliamentary Leader was the most important and the most powerful person within the party, and the parliamentary party itself enjoyed a very high status. Neither the Leader nor the party was subject to any direction from the Council or the Executive. If consultation was needed the Leader might address the Council, or alternatively he might have private talks with the Chairman or the General Secretary. Twenty years of electoral defeat have had only a slight effect on these relationships, partly because for nearly all of them Colonel Bruxner remained as Leader.

What changes have occurred have resulted from the different nature of the Central Council and Executive. Now much more truly representative of the party organisation as a whole,³³ both Council and Executive have been endeavouring to establish some of their own prerogatives. In particular there have been disputes over the selection of Members of the Legislative Council and over the organiser system and its implications.

electorates (both held by the U.A.P) for the 1938 elections. This would have been contrary to the terms of the pre-election pact, and although there was some sympathy and support on Central Council for this request, Bruxner refused to consider it and hinted that he would resign if the local organisations went ahead with their plan. FEM, 2 March 1938.

33

See below Chapter II, part I.

Before the Legislative Council was reconstituted in 1933, it was a nominee Council to which life appointments were made by the Governor on the advice of the Premier. After 1933, the Council was reduced in size to 60 Members elected for twelve-year terms by an electoral college consisting of the Members of both Houses of Parliament. While the Stevens-Bruxner coalition continued there seems little doubt that the two leaders decided the composition of the non-Labor parties have led to more and more negotiation being necessary for the election of Council candidates. At the same time, the growth of an active Country Party organisation has led to demands for a rank and file say in the choice of the party's Legislative Councillors.

Even by 1942, the parliamentary party as a whole had begun to meet in order to decide its policy towards the nominations, and by 1948 the parliamentary party was selecting the candidates, on the advice of the Leader.³⁴ The Conference agenda of 1952 included a resolution from Liverpool Plains SEC that Central Council nominate the party's candidates. The motion was attacked by Bruxner but when a show of

³⁴ PPM, 27 August 1942, 11 April 1945, 8 June 1948, 22 February 1950, 6 November 1951, 14 September 1954. In 1945 Bruxner was given complete freedom to secure the election of candidates in the party's interest. The 1948 and 1950 meetings were held with the party's Legislative Councillors present. One quarter of the Legislative Council retires every three years, hence the triennial meetings.

hands was called for, the motion was carried by the necessary two-thirds majority.³⁵ In the following year another resolution sought the participation of the electorate councils in the nomination process. This was again attacked by Bruxner, but was strongly supported by a number of delegates on the ground of democratic principle. This motion was defeated,³⁶ but when it re-appeared in 1957 (from the same branch) it was carried by the necessary majority: electorate councils were to have power to nominate on candidate, and Central Council was to make the final selection.³⁷

There has been a long-standing disagreement between members of the state parliamentary party and Central Council over the functions and deployment of the field organisers. From the time when the party first decided to set up Country Party branches (in some north coast electorates in 1924) there has been criticism and opposition from the parliamentarians.³⁸ A typical attitude was expressed by A.J. Pollack M.L.A. (Clarence), who thought that there was no purpose in spending

any money in organising the North Coast, as it was solid Country Party, and the sitting members could look after any organisation required.³⁹

³⁵ Minutes, 1953 AC.

³⁶ Minutes, 1954 AC.

³⁷ Minutes, 1957 AC.

³⁸ CCM, 15 October 1924.

³⁹ CCM, 10 July 1929.

V.C. Thompson, M.H.R. for New England (1922-40) had only one experience of organisers,

and that had not been a satisfactory one. He doubted if the party was getting full value for the money thus spent.⁴⁰

When the party commenced large-scale organising in 1946 it found almost immediately that organisers were not getting co-operation from some of the parliamentarians, and Central Executive was forced to ask the Members concerned to help rather than to hinder.⁴¹ But there was little improvement, and one of the Members finally asked for the removal of the organiser from his electorate.⁴² In a by-election held in the same area two years later, the organisers sent in to help by Head Office were almost ignored, the candidates apparently thinking them of little use.⁴³ The successful candidate, in his turn, also discouraged the organisers in his area. Relations between one of the Members in this district and the party organisation were so bad that Head Office had begun to refer to him as "Independent Country Party".⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Minutes AMCC, 8 February 1934.

⁴¹ CEM, 7 March 1946.

⁴² This was apparently done. SOR to CE, 13 October 1950.

⁴³ SOR to CE, 19 May 1952.

⁴⁴ GSR to CE, 26 August 1955; SOR to CE, 26 August 1955.

The reluctance of some Members to have an organiser working hard to build up a strong party organisation in their electorates accounts for much of the disparity between the standards of the various electorate organisations. All members tend to distrust the organiser, not only as a potential rival, but also as the creator of a powerful electoral instrument over which the Member fears he will have no control. Each solves the problem in his own way. One endeavours to get rid of the organiser, another tries to get him to concentrate only on signing up members, leaving the work of organisation-building (if indeed the Member wants an organisation) to the Member himself. A third, more subtly, will make friends with the organiser, and establish him as the Member's right-hand man. But except in the safest coastal electorates, the Members have had to become accustomed to the presence of the organiser; the party as a whole now depends on the organising staff for the bulk of its revenue, and so, too, does the Member's electorate council.

For the most part, however, the relations between the parliamentary party, on the one hand, and the Central Council, Central Executive and Head Office, on the other, are amicable enough. There has never been any good reason for the weakening of the trust which has been reposed in the

parliamentary party, although it must be granted that the party's long sojourn in opposition has reduced the possible sources of friction. And, in the postwar party, there has nearly always been at least one representative of the parliamentarians at every Central Council meeting.⁴⁵ Finally, a Central Council composed largely of electorate council chairmen is bound to be at least more sympathetic to the problems of the parliamentary party than one composed of representatives of interest groups which regard the party as essentially a means to an end.

There is, of course, close contact between the parliamentarians and their electorate councils. As we have seen, the Member plays a crucial role in the life and activity of his branches and electorate council: indeed, the organisation in party-held electorates is very much what the Member allows it to be (this applies much more to M.L.A.s than it does to M.H.R.s). But while the Member-oriented organisation ensures that the Member will not face opposition from within the party, it does frustrate the genuinely party-oriented members, who see a potentially strong party organisation atrophying from neglect and blame the local Member. In the following quotation from a branch Minute Book, the

45

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quasi-shorthand of the secretary has still captured much of the bitterness of the speaker.

Mr—— spoke. He had been a member for many years, sees many new faces, but where are the business people? They all turned Liberal. Where are the C.P. Branches? Nothing to bring the members in. What is the good of us meeting? Labour M.L.A.s attend branch meetings. We never see anyone. "We are left bereft",⁴⁶

And more than one speaker, at annual Conference or electorate council meetings has criticised the "lack of appreciation of the rank and file members of the party by some members of the Parliamentary party".⁴⁷

Nevertheless, such disgruntled members are rare. The goal of most members in Labor-held or Liberal-held electorates is to secure the election of their own candidate. Once he is elected, they support him unquestioningly.

V. FUNCTION

Outside their strictly parliamentary and Ministerial roles, the parliamentary parties perform three vital functions within the party. Firstly, they are the final policy-framers, and, on many issues, sometimes the only ones. Conferences may pass resolutions, but the public

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Minutes, Dungog Branch, 26 November 1957.

⁴⁷

J.B. Fuller at a meeting of Liverpool Plains SEC. Minutes, Annual Meeting Liverpool Plains SEC, 14 April 1956.

utterance of these resolutions as practical party policy is the prerogative of the parliamentary party. (Although, as we have seen, federal policy is determined by joint meetings of the Federal Council and the federal parliamentary party.) So much can happen during the course of a parliamentary session that the formulation of the day-to-day policies of the Country Party is entirely in the hands of the parliamentarians.

Secondly, because they are the public speakers for the party, they are its important publicity-makers. Ex cathedra pronouncements by the Chairman or the General Secretary are so uncommon as to be remarkable. The rare exceptions to this have been on the occasion of the conclusion of a pre-election agreement with the Liberal Party, when the agreement is released to the press over the names of the two party Chairmen, and when electoral boundary redistributions have been announced.

Finally, and again because they are the party's spokesmen, the parliamentarians are the main bearers of the party's traditions, values and mores, both to the party members and to the electorate.

CHAPTER II

THE OLIGARCHY AND ITS MACHINE

I. FORMAL

The Central Council of the Country Party is the party's governing body. It is composed of:

- (a) the chairman of each federal electorate council;
- (b) the chairman of each state electorate council;
- (c) the Chairman of the Metropolitan Branch;
- (d) the Leaders of the state and federal parliamentary Country Parties and two additional delegates from each party;
- (e) the Immediate Past Chairman of the party;
- (f) the N.S.W. Women's Representative on the Federal Council;
- (g) a Treasurer and not more than six Trustees elected by Council itself; and
- (h) not more than five members whom Council considers to have "special qualifications or knowledge" and who may be elected annually by Council.¹

At full strength, then, Central Council in 1958 would have consisted of 63 members, of whom 52 would have been electorate council chairmen.

Council elects annually the principal officers of the party, a Chairman (who may not hold office for more than five successive years), two Vice-Chairmen, the Treasurer, the N.S.W. representatives on the Federal Council, the

¹ Constitution, 11(a)1-6, pp.11, 12.

Central Executive, and the five co-opted members. It also elects the six Trustees, who are appointed for three-year terms, and two of whom retire each year. The quorum for any meeting of Central Council is eight members.²

The Constitution gives the Central Council practically every important power within the party. The only substantial limits to its domination are its inability to alter the Constitution, and its sharing of some powers with inferior institutions (for example, electorate councils have the power of endorsing candidates, and both branches and electorate councils have constitutionally guaranteed incomes). But for all practical purposes, its final authority is real and unchallenged. In brief, Central Council has power to appoint or dismiss all employees of the party; endorse or refuse to endorse candidates for the Legislative Assembly, the Legislative Council, the House of Representatives and the Senate; direct the organisation of the party, its publicity and propaganda, and the collection of its revenue; control all matters relating to election campaigns; act as the final arbiter in all matters of dispute within the party, including the interpretation of the Constitution;

²
Ibid., 11(a)6, 1-7, p.12.

cancel any membership or endorsement and terminate the office of any Central Councillor; and publish a newspaper. It is the party's principal negotiating body with regard to other parties, and the director of its general political strategy and tactics.³

Central Council must elect annually a Central Executive, of at least eight members, and of which the state and federal parliamentary Leaders are members ex officio. The Central Executive supervises the activities of the party between Central Council meetings; but it exercises only those powers delegated to it by the Council, and its decisions must be ratified by Council. The quorum for all meetings of the Central Council is seven members.⁴

II. REPRESENTATION AND CONTINUITY

Members of the Council and Executive are paid all necessary expenses for attending meetings, and these payments are made from a general levy on electorate councils.⁵ The

³ Ibid., 11(b) generally, pp.12, 13.

⁴ Ibid., 111, p.14.

⁵ The practice of meeting Councillor's expenses dates from 1943, when they received 1½ guineas plus expenses per meeting (CCM, 8 July 1943). A fund was set up in 1945 into which all electorate councils paid £7 each for each Central Council meeting; the money was subtracted from electorate council accounts at Head Office (CCM, 26 July 1945). By 1960 £7 had

calling together of Central Council is thus an expensive undertaking, and may cost anywhere between £200 and £1,000. It is not surprising, then, that the payment of members' expenses to Council meetings was followed by a decline in the number of Council meetings, and an increase in those of the smaller Executive. Whereas Council had met eight times in 1943, compared with the six meetings of the Executive,⁶ there were only three meetings of the Council in 1947 to 11 of the Executive.⁷ This ratio has been more or less maintained to the present day. In general, Central Council meets only when this is vitally necessary: for the annual meeting, or to make endorsements and to determine election plans, or to discuss a crisis in Liberal/Country Party relations. Central Executive usually meets on the last Friday of those months in which there is no Council meetings, and it is the Central Executive which has assumed the real responsibility for the direction of the affairs of the party.

proved insufficient, and the levy was increased to £10. (General Secretary to Chairmen and Hon. Secretaries, all Electorate Councils, Circular, 1 April 1960. Lismore SEC Records.) The levy has been one of the causes of resentment felt in some councils towards Central Council and Head Office.

6

Minutes, 1944 AC.

7

GSR to CC for 1947.

Nevertheless, the Council is still of great importance, and it is impossible to become a member of the Executive without first becoming a member of the Council. But despite the absence of expense to the Councillors and the power and prestige of the office, Central Council meetings have not, in the postwar years, seen anything approaching a full attendance of members. The average attendance at Council meetings in 1949 was 65 per cent, and it declined steadily in the ensuing years: to 55 per cent in 1950 and to 50 per cent in 1952 and 1953; the last percentage has become the norm.⁸ While those Councillors who attend meetings at all tend to do so regularly, there are many electorate council chairmen who are infrequent attenders. Appendix M sets out the representation and attendance at Central Council meetings between August 1948 and June 1954. It is clear that many SEC chairmen are indifferent to their role as Central Councillors. Only six of the SECs were represented at all regularly at Council meetings, and none of these chairmen had attended more than 16 of the 21 possible meetings. On the other hand, 18 SECs were represented at less than half of the meetings, and these included the councils of nine party-held seats. The most infrequent attenders among

⁸

General Secretary's Reports to Annual Meetings of Central Council.

both the SECs and FECs were the delegates from the dormant councils.

FEC chairmen were in general more conscientious attenders, six of the 14 federal councils having been represented at more than 75 per cent of the meetings and the Hume FEC delegate having missed only one. We have already seen that the large size of federal electorates prevents them, in most cases, from having a regional cohesiveness. In addition it is the state government which is the chief provider of public monies at the level of the municipality or shire. Thus FEC chairmen have but little opportunity to establish local empires around the person of the local Member. It is probably for this reason that the FEC chairmen have been more interested in the work of Central Council than have their SEC colleagues.⁹ It is significant, in this context, that the electorate councils of the three small federal dairying electorates (which do possess something of a regional character) were poorly represented at Central Council meetings. Nevertheless, it should be emphasised again that the activity of council chairmen will also depend upon their personal circumstances. Dairyfarming chairmen

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It is not without significance that of the four electorate council chairmen who became party Chairmen, three, E.J. Eggins (Richmond), J.M. Carter (Hume), and G.C. McKellar (Lawson) represented federal electorate councils.

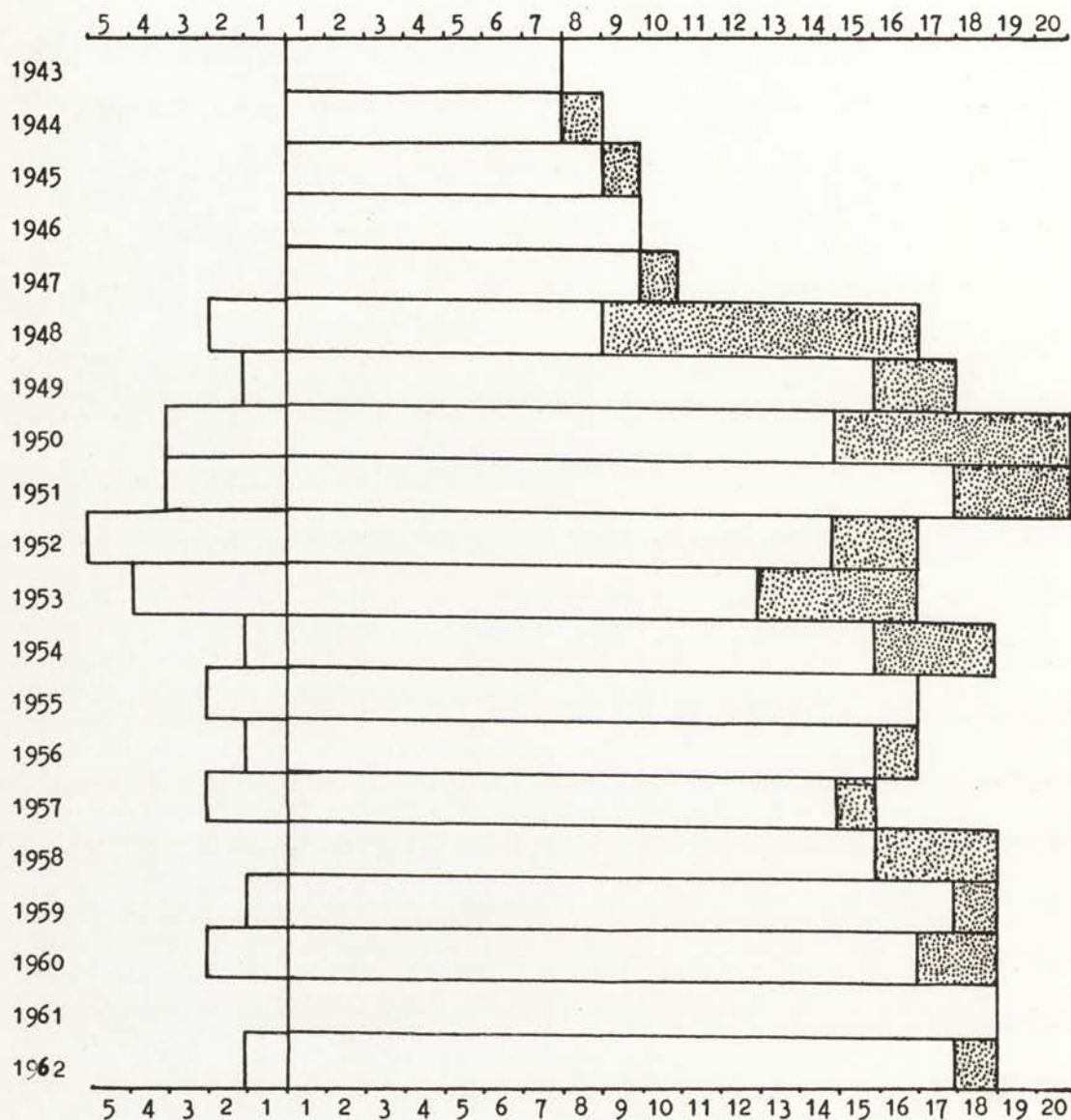
may find it difficult to get away to Council meetings; ill-health causes the irregular attendance of others.

Some of the co-opted members - the Trustees and the Councillors elected under Rule 11(a)7 - were regular attenders, while others did not attend any meetings at all. The system of co-option was introduced into the 1946 Constitution in order to retain the experience of the old F.S.A. and G.A. representatives who had run the party since its inception. Of the co-opted members listed in Appendix M, Nock, Henley and Killen had been F.S.A. representatives, while Martin, Wright, Fleming and Kater had been representatives of the G.A. Only Budd, Cass, Townsend and Carter had not been on the Central Council at some time before 1946. Co-option has also been used to free party Chairmen from their other commitments. Both E.J. Eggins and J.M. Carter resigned their electorate council chairmanships and were co-opted to the Council after their elections as party Chairmen. And co-option has also been used to rescue the party Chairman when his electorate had been abolished: thus J.B. Fuller was co-opted after Liverpool Plains (of whose electorate council he was chairman) was abolished in 1961.

Continuity of office is a feature of both the Central Council and the Central Executive, but especially of the

Graph 2

Continuity of Members of the Central Executive
1943 to 1962



- Note:**
1. Members from the previous Central Executive.
 2. New Members.
 3. Each number represents one member of the Central Executive.
 4. Retiring members are shown to the left of the scale.

Source: Minute Books of the Central Council

latter. Because of the party's respect for experience, its system of indirect election, and the greater prestige and power of the Council and Executive, continuity is probably more striking at this level than at any other. Not only are electorate council chairmen likely to retain their office for long periods, but the co-opted members are generally re-elected until they die or ask to be replaced. The composition of Central Council thus changes slowly.

What is true of the Council is doubly true of the Executive, which has become a self-perpetuating oligarchy. Election to the Executive has become a function of seniority. Graph 2 illustrates the continuity of members of the Executive between 1943, when it was composed of representatives of the F.S.A. and the G.A., and the chairmen of federal electorate councils, and 1962. In the first five years there were no retirements at all, and from 1948 the average number retiring each year from the Executive (which usually consisted of about 18 Councillors) was two. All but one of the council chairmen elected to the Executive during this period had already served for some years on the Council.¹⁰ The 1961 Executive, which had been re-elected in toto, included Bruxner and Drummond, who had both been on the

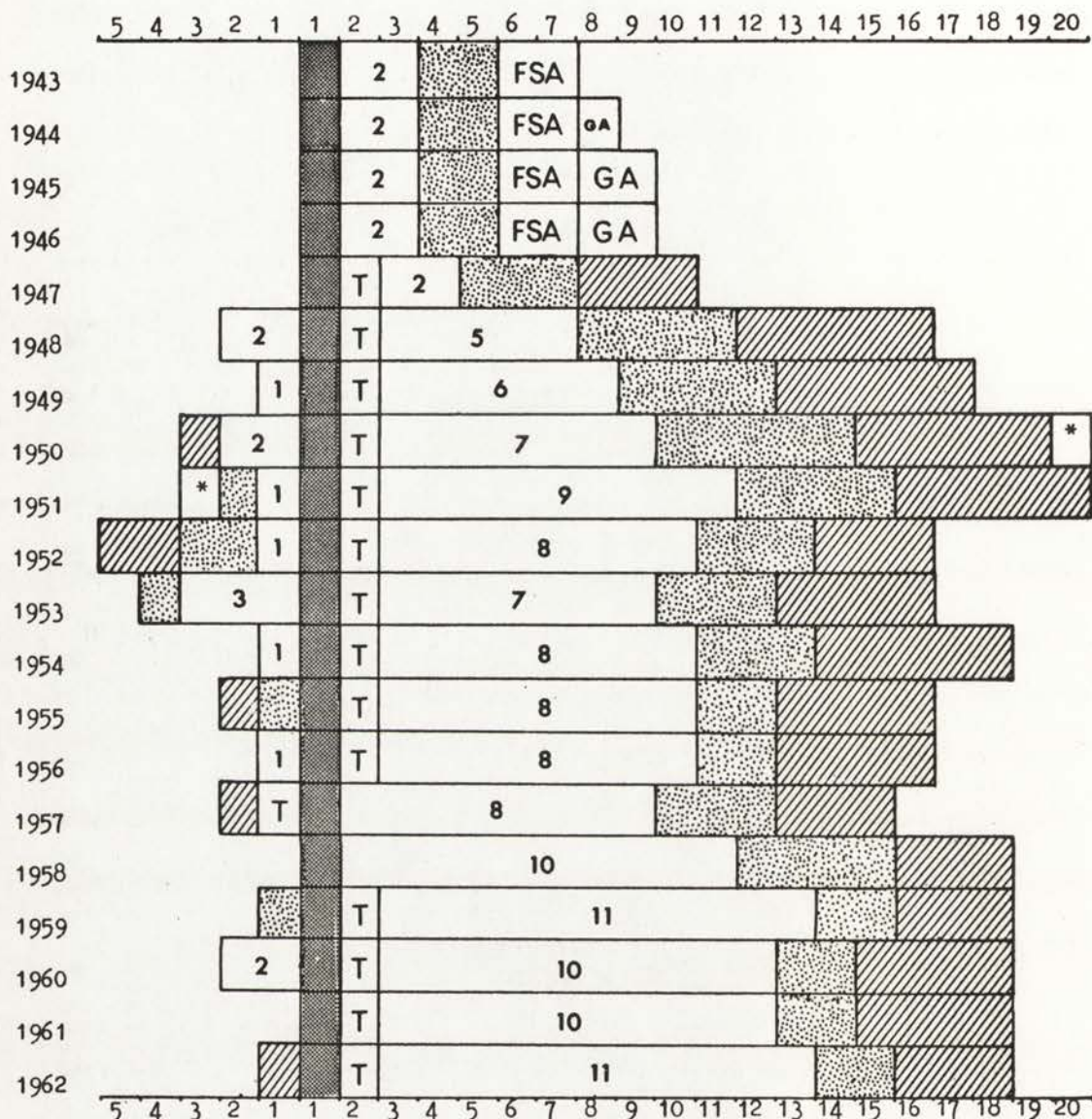
¹⁰

Appendix M.

Graph 3

Composition of Central Executive

1943 to 1962



Note: 1. 5 Electorate Council Chairmen; Trustees; Councillors elected under Rule II(a)7; Treasurer; Parliamentary representative (D.H.Drummond, 1943-1962);

* Invited non-voting member (Ulrich Ellis).

2. Retiring members are shown to the left of the scale.
3. The numbers indicate the number of electorate council chairmen elected to the Executive, or retiring from it.

Source: Minute Books of the Central Council

Council or the Executive since the early 1920s. Two of the members had been elected in 1948, two more in 1949, two in 1950, two in 1951, one each in 1952, 1953, 1954, 1957, 1958 and 1959, and two in 1960. With one exception, all the members of the 1961 Executive had been re-elected each year since their first election.

In 1946, when council chairmen represented about 80 per cent of Central Council, they were only 20 per cent of the Executive (see Graph 3). The increase in their representation has been very slow. In 1949 it was only 35 per cent and in 1954 it was still only 44 per cent. Since 1958 it has fluctuated between 56 per cent and 62 per cent. However, that proportion of the Executive which was or had been council chairmen is a little larger, since in 1961, for example, it included J.M. Carter, then a Trustee, but once Chairman of Hume FEC.

The north coast electorates have traditionally been poorly represented on the Executive. From 1943 to 1952 there was only one north coast representative; in 1952 and 1953 there were none at all; from 1954 to 1957 there was one, and although there have been three since 1958, only one of them is a dairyfarmer, the others being respectively a businessman and a real estate agent. On the other hand there has generally been an even balance between delegates

from the grazing and mixed farming and grazing electorates: in 1961, for example, there were six representatives from each section. In the entire history of the party only one Chairman, E.J. Eggins, a Lismore businessman, and only one Vice-Chairman, Morton Trotter, a Wauchope dairyfarmer, have come from the north coast.

The paucity of dairyfarming representation compared with the importance of the dairying electorates to the party (seven state and three federal electorates, all of them held at one time by the party) is not generally realised. Many of the coastal organisations are too uninterested in the affairs of the party as a whole to notice, and there has not been any vocal dissatisfaction from the rank and file about the system of recruitment to the Executive. When a resolution came forward to the 1955 annual Conference proposing that New South Wales should be divided into eight zones each returning a representative to the Executive, it received almost no support and was defeated.¹¹ And as the Chairman of Oxley SEC pointed out to his council in the same year, the fault lies with the coastal electorate councils themselves: very few have ever

¹¹ Minutes, 1955 AC.

taken much interest in the work of either Central Council or Central Executive.¹²

III. FUNCTION

Both Central Council and Central Executive are concerned generally with the government of the party, with the management of its finances, with the planning and financing of election campaigns, and with the external affairs of the party. In addition, they are the link between the party organisation and the parliamentarians a role which, as we have seen, they would like to see expanded.

However, as the party's income has expanded, its staff grown and its institutions become more bureaucratised, so have the Council and the Executive begun to develop different functions. It is the Executive which now takes the leading part in the direction of party affairs, while the Council has begun to adopt the more subsidiary role of formal ratifier. Council meets too infrequently for there to develop within it an 'anti-Executive' group, and in any case the Executive, because of the seniority, experience and expertise of its members, would carry too much weight with the rest of the Council for such a group to cause much

¹²

Minutes, Annual Meeting Oxley SEC, 26 March 1955.

trouble. Furthermore, judicious recruitment of the younger and more ambitious Councillors into the Executive has tended to forestall any conflict. Although the Executive has only once run an acknowledged "ticket" at the annual Council meeting,¹³ it is plain that the composition of the Executive is decided very much by the Executive itself.

Time is also on the side of the Executive. So much can happen between Council meetings that often there is little point in the Council protesting about an Executive action, especially if it was taken some months previously. In negotiations with the Liberal Party, for example, the agreement is sometimes public knowledge before Central Council has ratified it, and Council is thus left with a fait accompli. In 1949 Central Executive had ratified the agreement with the Liberal Party for the forthcoming federal elections over a month before the Council met. Despite the fact that, (at least according to one Councillor)

a high percentage of the delegates attending seemed opposed to the attitude adopted by Central Executive over the agreement with the Liberal Party...¹⁴

the agreement was ratified by Council unanimously; to have

¹³

In 1948. CEM, 10 March 1948.

¹⁴

Chairman of Mitchell FEC. Minutes, Mitchell FEC, 21 August 1949. The Executive met on 21 February 1949 and the Council on 25 March 1949.

done otherwise would have been to declare a lack of confidence in the Chairman and the Executive. Such differences of opinion are uncommon. For the most part formal ratification of the actions of the Executive is not even considered to be necessary.

Outside the field of finance or elections neither Council nor Executive have any sustained interest or plans, partly because the finances of the party do not allow much experimentation in publicity or organisation (certainly this is a convenient excuse), and partly because there has never been strong support for innovations on either body. Furthermore, the few new ideas that have been discussed by the Council or Executive have not originated from those bodies, but from the General Secretary or from party supporters like Ulrich Ellis. And as far as the government of the party is concerned, neither body has much to do. Ideological factionalism is almost unknown, and the infrequent local disputes and squabbles are healed either by the local party members themselves or by the organisers.

One source of information for the Council and Executive is their own members, particularly the electorate council chairmen. But both bodies rely far more on the General Secretary and his staff. The party headquarters acts both as an information-gathering service and as the instrument

of the Council and Executive in executing plans. The headquarters staff are divided into two sections: the Head Office, controlled directly by the General Secretary, and the field staff, under the control of the State Organiser, who is in turn responsible to the General Secretary. The party depends on these paid employees no less than it does on the whole substructure of branches and councils.

IV. HEAD OFFICE

The Country Party has had a General Secretary and a Head Office since the 1922 state elections. These were, and are still, felt to be an essential part of the party's claim to respectability as a 'legitimate' party. However, the early staffs were very small; the General Secretary, his own secretary and an office girl comprised the whole of the headquarters staff in the 1920s and 1930s. But the bank order system necessitated a rapid increase in clerical and administrative staff, as well as in the number of organisers, and in 1962 the Head Office staff number eight, including the General Secretary.

The party has had only four General Secretaries in its existence, and only two since 1927. Neither of the first two, H.P. Williams, manager of The Land newspaper (appointed in 1922 primarily to manage the party's election

campaign), nor his successor J.J. Price (1923-7), left a lasting impression on the party's organisation. But both E.J. Munro (1927-48) and J.F. Dredge (1948 to the present) left their personal imprints on the party. Munro, a distinguished soldier in the first world war, was something of a jack-of-all-trades. He was a superb organiser, a highly efficient campaign director and a trained accountant. He was accustomed to travelling long distances each year to keep in touch with party stalwarts all over the state. But he regarded the branches and electorate councils essentially as electoral organisation, designed to function once every three years, and he built up Head Office as the king-pin of the party's organisation, with himself as the essential link between the Central Council and the local organisation.

His successor, J.F. Dredge, also a trained accountant and a first world war man, is of altogether different stamp. Whereas Munro was a rather flamboyant personality, whose plans were often inclined to be grandiose and incapable of realisation, Dredge has been a careful and patient architect of the party's local development. Impressed above all else by the need for continuity and stability in the party, he has kept in constant touch with branches and councils by letter (the party's stationery and postage costs each year form a much greater item of the party's expenditure than

they did before the war), urging them to hold their annual meetings, advising and reminding them of Conference dates, and letting them know quickly of any important decisions of the Council and Executive. His election campaign plans are painstakingly thorough.¹⁵ The extent to which the party's formal organisation has become bureaucratised, probably inevitable in any case because of the sheer size of the party's membership and finances, has nevertheless owed much to Dredge's insistence that his methods are the only efficient way of running the party. Like Munro, Dredge makes frequent visits to the country, but always to represent Head Office at branch and council meetings. And under his Secretaryship, Head Office has grown in size and importance.

Most of the Head Office staff are concerned with the maintenance of membership and financial records, with keeping open communications between Head Office and the branches, and with the detailed planning of Conferences and election campaigns. Unlike the Liberal Party, but like the A.L.P., there is no research section (parliamentarians are expected to do their own if there is any need for it). Neither is there any proper publicity section. Press releases, nearly

¹⁵

See below, Chapters 13, part III, and 14, part I.

all of them extracts from the speeches of the parliamentarians, are assembled and roneoed at Head Office and dispatched to country newspapers over the name of the General Secretary.

The party newspaper, The New South Wales Countryman, is produced and edited in the offices of The Land (the official organ of the F.S.A.), although much of the material in it emanates from Head Office. The Country Party, always the target of unfavourable metropolitan press comment, endeavoured from the beginning to secure its own paper. It toyed with the idea of acquiring an interest in Sir Joynton Smith's Daily Guardian in 1923,¹⁶ and during the United Country Party revival a sub-committee of Central Council was set up in 1931 to investigate the possibility of acquiring an interest in another metropolitan daily; but this came to nought.¹⁷ In 1934 a much less ambitious plan was put into operation, and the party commenced the publication of The Australian Country Party Journal, an eight-page (later 12-page) monthly newspaper edited by V.C. Thompson M.H.R. (himself the editor of the Northern Daily Leader). It reached a peak publication of 4,600

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CCM, 20 September 1923, 19 October 1923, 16 November 1923. The G.A. was not prepared to support the scheme financially, and the negotiations came to nothing.

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CCM, 11 February 1931.

(of which 1,200 were given away) in 1937, and was financed largely from central party funds.¹⁸ It ceased publication, after 55 issues, in October 1938.

From that month until 1946 the party did not possess its own publicity medium. Central Council decided in 1945 that a small monthly newspaper should be published,¹⁹ but the paper was not issued until the 1946 federal elections. By the end of 1948 the average monthly circulation was 20,000 (about which figure it remained), and in 1950 it was increased from eight to 12 pages.²⁰ Although it has accepted a small amount of advertising the paper is financed largely from the 3/- deductions from members' subscriptions. More of a true newspaper than the Journal of the 1930s, it is the principal means by which the rank and file keep in touch with the activities of the party as a whole.

The Countryman gives about equal space to state and federal parliamentarians (principally to their speeches in parliament), and it emphasises the activities of the Leaders. It also contains a letter to members from the General Secretary and news from the local organisations -

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GSR to CC for 1937.

¹⁹

CCM, 26 July 1945.

²⁰

CCM, 23 November 1948; GSR to CC, 14 February 1950.

reports of branch and council meetings, elections of officers, and local happenings concerning party members. The non-political news (of which there is not a great deal) is accented towards the man on the land and his wife. It is still the most ambitious party newspaper in New South Wales.

The increase in the size and status of Head Office has been attended by some friction and resentment from the local organisation. As we have seen, some branches and councils dislike sending money to Sydney on principle. Others regard Head Office as autocratic or extravagant. Thus one motion which came forward to an annual meeting of Armidale SEC asked

That Head Office be requested to watch unnecessary expenditure on circulars etc., with particular reference to duplication of notice of agenda, which is sent to both Chairmen and secretaries, as well as other representatives.

Another part of the same motion declared that

the publication of 'Countryman' is unnecessary waste of money, when its value is practically negligible.²¹

Ignorance of the function of Head Office lies behind much of the criticism. When a speaker attacked Head Office extravagance at the 1953 annual Conference it was soon

²¹

Minutes, Annual Meeting Armidale SEC, 18 June 1955. The motion was subsequently withdrawn.

apparent that his knowledge of the party was slight indeed, and upon explanation from the General Secretary he withdrew his charges.²²

It is hard to escape the conclusion that much of the antipathy to Head Office arises simply from its location in Sydney, an extension of the traditional rural belief that the metropolis corrupts. Casino SEC, for example, once suggested seriously "that Head Office be removed from Sydney to a Country Town".²³ The Chairman of a coastal branch alleged to his branch in 1959 that "a clean-up of Head Office was overdue".²⁴ But it is one of Dredge's achievements that such feelings are now rare. His own visits and correspondence, together with the frequent lectures to branches by organisers on the party's administration and finances, have eliminated much of the old distrust.

V. THE ORGANISERS

The Country Party's extensive use of organisers derives partly, as D.W. Rawson has suggested, from the "problem of organizing a very scattered body of supporters who in many

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Minutes, 1953 AC.

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Minutes, Casino SEC, 29 September 1947.

²⁴

Minutes, Coffs Harbour Branch, 11 December 1959.

cases could not easily be brought together".²⁵ In addition, the organisers are the sine qua non of the whole bank order system, from which the party gains the bulk of its income.

Both the F.S.A. and the G.A. possessed organisers, and in the early years of the party it was able to make some use of these operatives for short periods.²⁶ The decision to set up a purely Country Party organisation was followed by the employment in 1927 of the party's own organisers, whose primary function was to canvass for members, although they were also expected to keep branches alive and to supervise election campaigns.²⁷ The depression and the subsequent decentralisation of the organisation under the Divisional system ended the first experiment with centrally-directed field staff, and it was not until the withdrawal of the F.S.A. and the G.A. in 1944/5 that Head Office was again concerned with their employment and direction. Once again, when the party's membership had reached its peak in 1950, their role as the guardians of the local organisation began to assume a much greater importance.

²⁵ Rawson, Australia Votes, p.55.

²⁶ For example, CCM, 8 June 1923.

²⁷ GSR to AMCC, 22 May 1951.

The optimum size of the field staff has been set at one organiser for every state electorate,²⁸ but this ideal has never been reached, and in fact the number of organisers employed by the party has fluctuated widely. In early 1946 there were 14 full-time organisers, and this figure had risen to 21 by the time of the 1946 federal elections. It dropped to eight in March 1947, rose to 14 in August 1948, and rose again to 18 at the beginning of 1950. But by 1954 it was down to nine, and since then there have rarely been more than 12 nor less than eight organisers working on a full-time basis.²⁹

The organisers are not overpaid, and those who remain in the service of the party after the first few months do so because the job fascinates them.³⁰ In 1958, organisers were paid a basic salary of £18.5.0. They had to possess their own car, and although the party did not assist them in acquiring one, they received £8 per week towards its running expenses. They also received payment for accommodation and travelling expenses incurred in the course of

²⁸

GSR to AMCC, 22 May 1951.

²⁹

These figures are taken from various General Secretary's Reports to Central Council.

³⁰

The one common characteristic of all the organisers with whom the writer has talked has been their enthusiasm for their job.

their duty. If an organiser wrote more than £20 in bank orders in one week, he received 25 per cent of the value of all bank orders above that figure written in the same week, and if he wrote more than £1,000 in bank orders in one year, he received an additional bonus of £200.³¹

However, the bonus has not been won very often, probably because most organisers are interested more in the manipulative organising side of their duties than they are in money-getting.

Certainly canvassing for members is the more difficult of the organiser's two functions. Floods, and wet weather generally, drought, poor prices, bad harvests or an unsympathetic local Member can make the organiser's task unrewarding and frustrating. Dairying electorates are notoriously poor ground for money-raisers. And much of the organiser's job consists of driving from one property to another, meeting here an empty house, there an uninterested or hostile farmer, or worse, one who signs the bank order to get rid of the organiser and then almost immediately rings his bank to cancel it. One day's canvassing by two organisers in a coastal electorate in 1959 resulted in the signing of one bank order. To achieve this, the organisers had

31

This information was given by the General Secretary to the 1958 annual Conference. Minutes, 1958 AC.

visited six homes in which the owner was absent, three farmers who flatly refused to sign, six who were not interested, two who failed to keep their promise, and one fence-sitter who required time to think.³²

Both for membership-canvassing and for branch organisation, the organiser needs the co-operation of the branches, electorate councils and local Members, and his job is almost impossible if he meets with their hostility. We have seen that Members often distrust the organiser and that some discourage his activity. One more case, from the point of view of the organiser, will stand for several.

We managed to overcome at this meeting a tendency on the part of [the endorsed candidate] to play down the need for regular meetings of branches. This had been very evident at the ——— meeting, and was embarrassing to us, as in our canvass we had been stressing the need for branches to be active, in order to make them strong.³³

Most organisers, particularly when entering a new territory, will appeal for assistance to the branches and electorate councils.

32

Organisers' Report, 2 December 1959, (Morton Trotter Papers). See also J.F. Mellings, "A Day in the Life of a Country Party Organiser", A.P.S.A. News, Vol. 1, No. 3, 1956, pp.4-5. Mellings is the State Organiser of the Country Party in New South Wales.

33

Organisers' Report, 4 December 1959, (Morton Trotter Papers).

As all the area is entirely new to me I would need some advice and assistance...on where to go and whom to see...I will do as I am advised.³⁴

The importance of co-operation between the branch and the organiser was eloquently explained by another organiser.

I have found that the effective canvass is multiplied at least three-fold when local co-operation has been given to me - in fact, the branch areas in my territory where I have had good local co-operation in canvassing have as high as 98 per cent membership in the district, and in areas where no co-operation is forthcoming, the percentage of membership in the district is very low. The personal introduction reduces the time per interview so much, that at least three or four times as many calls may be made in a day...³⁵

We have already observed the organiser's role in establishing branches, and their contribution to the continued existence of the branch.³⁶ Organisers find it much more difficult to manipulate electorate councils, since at this level vested interests are much stronger, and the organiser, like as not, will be thought of as a 'Sydney man', a usurper and a threat to the established order in the electorate. Herein lies much of the reason for the Head

³⁴

J.H. Leemon to Ralph Hunt, 25 January 1958 (Gwydir FEC Records). Leemon was the newly appointed organiser in the Barwon state electorate, and Hunt was the Chairman of Gwydir FEC.

³⁵

I.A.T. Maxwell (organiser) to a meeting of the Raleigh SEC. Minutes, Raleigh SEC, 25 February 1959.

³⁶

See above, Chapter 7, part II.

Office/electorate council disputes over the control of the organisers. Some electorate councils, like some parliamentarians, endeavour to confine the organiser's activities merely to money-raising, and grow hostile if he starts to activate the branches. At the Raleigh SEC meeting which is quoted above the Chairman, apparently alarmed at the influence of the organiser in the local branches, attacked "the present set up in regard to Field Organisers".

The Field Organisers should have one mission and one mission only and that is to enrol new members and to check on the bank orders in case a bank order member drops out...³⁷

A less obvious but none the less important role of the organisers is that of the eyes and ears of the Central Council and Executive. It is through the organisers that Council and Executive learn of weak organisation, "trouble-makers" and local disputes generally, and especially of the general political climate in the electorates. The organisers' assessments of the feelings of an electorate may be no more accurate than those of the electorate council chairman, or indeed than that which could be gained in some areas by a careful reading of the local newspapers. But they do provide the directors of the party with an independent,

³⁷

Minutes, Raleigh SEC, 25 February 1959.

private source of information, against which other reports can be assessed.

To the party, the organiser system is a mixed blessing. Organisers bring in the greater part of the party's income and help keep the local organisation reasonably active and ready for unexpected election campaigns. But they cannot do both things well at once. If they concentrate on finance the local organisation suffers; if they concentrate on branch work the party faces a reduced income. And all the time the organisers are consuming anything up to 75 per cent of the Head Office receipts from bank orders. The problem might be remedied by appointing more organisers, but finding the right men is difficult, and for the first few training months of an organiser's career the party gains no financial benefit from his work. The dilemma is a constant one, and there seems to be no easy solution.

The Country Party has been operating with slender resources in the face of an effective Labor attack and the constant threat of Liberal encroachment. But it has used those resources sensibly, and with the organiser system it has created a level of activity which has been sufficient both to maintain the party's position and to enable it to recover after reverses, as in 1961. The party could have

evolved after the war as little more than a cluster of powerful local Members living on past capital. However, it has been the function of Central Council and Executive, of Head Office, and of the field staff, to keep the idea of 'party' alive, to maintain the identity of the party, and to create a sense of party continuity, so that, for example, the replacement of one Country Party parliamentarian is seen as a Country Party activity as much as a local one. In doing so the central institutions of the party have contributed to the confidence and optimism of the party as a whole, and to its stability in the postwar period.

PART III

ACTION

CHAPTER 12

ELECTIONS I. NOMINATION AND ENDORSEMENT

1. FORMAL

The constitutional procedures for the nomination and endorsement of candidates for either the state or federal lower House are relatively simple and straightforward.¹ State and federal electorate councils can at any time call for nominations from branches, which must be of six month's standing. The branch then advertises that it will consider the nomination of prospective candidates at a meeting called for the purpose. A prospective candidate must have been a subscribing member of the party for at least twelve months prior to submitting his name for nomination, although Central Council can waive this condition in exceptional circumstances. Branches can make only one nomination, and the candidate must undertake to accept endorsement from no other party and to run only as a Country Party candidate.²

¹ This chapter is concerned with the procedures adopted in selecting candidates for the Legislative Assembly and the House of Representatives. We have already observed the procedures for selecting candidates for the Legislative Council (Chapter 10). The selection of candidates for the Senate is made by Central Committee from nominations submitted by branches. Very few branches have ever concerned themselves with such nomination, and except for a brief period at the end of the 1950s, there has only been one Country Party Senator from New South Wales since 1949.

² Constitution, XI(b)1-5, p.23.

Once a branch has nominated a candidate he becomes eligible for endorsement by the electorate council. At the council meeting his nomination must be again formally proposed and seconded, and when this has been done the council decides whether or not the candidate meets the required standards in regard to his character, general qualifications and ability. If there is only one candidate his nomination is endorsed. If, however, there are more than one, and each has so far satisfied the council, then the council considers whether the endorsement of all the candidates, or of any number of them, would prejudice the party's chances at the election, determines the number to be endorsed and then, by secret ballot, selects the candidate or candidates. If the personal qualities of a candidate fail to satisfy the council, this fact must be reported to Central Council.³

The endorsement by the electorate council must be ratified by Central Council, which may make further enquiries about the candidates and refuse, if it sees fit, to endorse them. In such cases its reasons must be given to the electorate council. The Central Council will endorse more than one party candidate for any seat only so long as

³ Ibid., XI(b)6-8, pp.23, 24.

the preferential voting system remains in operation. If two or more candidates are endorsed for any one seat, then the party shall be responsible only for expenditure incurred in the interests of the party as a whole.⁴

II. THEORY AND PRACTICE

As we have observed in Chapter 7, the selection of party candidates for parliament is the one important internal activity of the party in which all members can play a significant part, and the endorsement rules have been laid down in great detail by the party because the stakes are so high. In selecting candidates each level of the party's organisation is motivated by different considerations. For sitting Members, their own re-election is of first importance; for Central Council, the selection of candidates who can win seats and thus enable the party to gain power, or to retain it. At the electorate council level the considerations multiply: some councils are preparing for the return of their local Member; others, after a succession of defeats, are seeking a candidate who can win; others again are endeavouring to replace a retiring Member with a candidate acceptable, not only to the electorate, but to the various branches. The branches

⁴ Ibid., XI (b)9-12, p.24.

themselves may be advancing the claims of a 'favourite son', or be renominating, almost automatically, the sitting Member. Some, with no immediate interest of their own in the candidates, will leave participation in the selection process to their delegates to the electorate council; others will play no part in the process whatsoever. All these considerations will have an effect upon the outcome of an endorsement contest.

The most important factor in the selection process is the presence or absence of a sitting Member. The Member's prestige within the electorate and within the party, and his cultivation of the local party organisation, assure him of re-nomination. No sitting Country Party Member in New South Wales has ever been refused endorsement by his own electorate council or by Central Council.⁵

Once a sitting Member has become established in his seat the nomination and endorsement procedure becomes ritualised. The parliamentarian will arrange a number of branch

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Nor is the dominance of the Member confined to New South Wales or to the Country Party. Cf. D.W. Rawson and Susan M. Holtzinger, Politics in Eden-Monaro, London 1958, p.57.

it is rare for a sitting member holding a country seat to be challenged in a selection ballot, and almost unknown for him to be defeated.

The case of the refusal of Gloucester SEC in 1961 to endorse L.A. Punch M.L.A. is discussed later in this chapter.

meetings throughout the electorate, to which he will bring a completed nomination form. After an address from the Member he will be unanimously nominated by the branch: there will be no other candidate for nomination at any of the meetings. His automatic endorsement by the electorate council follows, again with appropriate ritual.

In his first few elections, however, the parliamentarian will not leave anything to chance. He will make sure that all the branches hold meetings, and that he attends each one: by gaining the nomination of every branch he forestalls any possible opposition. Thus for his first election as a sitting Member, L.C. Jordan had in 1946 secured the nomination of 38 branches.⁶ For the election of 1950, now more confident, he sought only 24,⁷ and for that of 1953, 26.⁸

Some parliamentarians are so confident of their re-nomination that they merely send to the branches their completed nomination forms and ask for their return, with the signatures of the branch chairman and secretary. Such confidence is rarely misplaced. Sometimes the selection had been a complete sham, the chairman and secretary of

⁶ Minutes, Annual Meeting Oxley SEC, 10 August 1946.

⁷ Minutes, Oxley SEC, 10 September 1949.

⁸ Minutes, Annual Meeting Oxley SEC, 31 March 1951.

the branch having signed the form without the branch ever having met to consider nominations. Yet many party members see nothing wrong or underhand in this. A motion which came forward to the 1958 annual Conference attacked this practice and proposed a change in procedure to make it impossible, and although the resolution was eventually carried, a number of delegates expressed their unhappiness with the proposed change.⁹

But sitting Members do occasionally meet with opposition from within the party, especially if they are old, or if they have lost contact with the local organisation through living outside the electorate or through simple over-confidence. And of course it is always possible (though in fact these cases are rare) for a branch to become controlled by party-oriented members who feel that the constitutional procedures should be followed and that candidates other than the Member should be given a chance. In 1955, Lismore Branch received two nominations for the federal elections, one from the sitting Member, the Hon. H.L. Anthony, the Postmaster-General and the federal Member for Richmond since 1937, and the other from

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Minutes, 1958 AC. The nomination form was now to include the date of the meeting, attested by the secretary.

B.J. Eggins (a relative of E.J. Eggins, a former party Chairman). Only 15 branch members were present. Eggins stated that his nomination was not intended as a censure of Anthony, and pointed out that multiple endorsement was provided for in the Constitution. Anthony was not present. When the vote was taken, Eggins and Anthony each received seven votes, and the Chairman refused to give a casting vote. The meeting was then adjourned to give Anthony a chance to be present! At the adjourned meeting (still without Anthony), at which 34 members were present, speaker after speaker rose in eulogies of the sitting Member, and much pressure was put on Eggins to withdraw his nomination, which he finally did.¹⁰

If the would-be candidate manages to get a branch nomination, he then has to convince the electorate council that it should endorse either himself alone, or endorse both himself and the sitting Member. This he will find much more difficult. When B.M. Wade secured the nomination of Oakwood and Ashford Branches for Tenterfield in 1950 he placed the electorate council in a somewhat difficult position. The clause permitting councils to reduce

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Minutes, Lismore Branch, 11 October 1955, 3 November 1955. It is rather ironic that Anthony won Richmond in 1937 in a multiple endorsement contest in which he defeated the sitting Member, R.F.H. Green.

the number of candidates seeking endorsement was not incorporated in the Constitution until 1952, and as the Constitution then read, Wade would have to be endorsed unless the council was unable to satisfy itself in regard to his sincerity, character, qualifications or ability. Wade had won Barwon as a U.C.P. candidate in 1932 and resigned it in 1940 to contest the federal seat of Gwydir (in which he was unsuccessful). As an M.L.A. he had been a vocal critic of the Stevens-Bruxner coalition.¹¹ Tenterfield SEC, by 22 votes to 5, finally resolved not to accept his nomination at all

because of apparent lack of sincerity, in view of alleged reported Statements made by him in 1946 to the effect that he did not subscribe to party politics [sic; policies?] being followed by the Country Party and his inability in 1946 to obey his party leaders, another reason which influenced the meeting was his apparent lack of ability.¹²

Central Council, which had no love for Wade, approved Tenterfield's "firm stand".¹³

¹¹

Ulrich Ellis, who knew him personally, described him to the writer as "a man with a perpetual chip on his shoulder". The Oakwood and Ashford Branches had been part of the old Barwon electorate and were now in Tenterfield electorate following the 1950 redistribution of electoral boundaries.

¹²

Minutes, Tenterfield SEC, 18 March 1950. The last was an unkind cut. No-one had previously questioned the ability of Wade, a highly successful and entirely self-made Inverell businessman.

¹³

CCM, 17 May 1950.

On only three occasions in the history of the postwar Country Party have sitting Members fought campaigns within the framework of a multiple endorsement.¹⁴ Two of these campaigns occurred in 1953, both the sitting Members were old, and both were defeated. J.T. Reid, first elected for Casino on the creation of the electorate in 1930, had been endorsed for the 1953 elections in 1950 because it had been expected that the N.S.W. parliament, in which the McGirr Labor Government had a majority of only one, would not run its full term.¹⁵ Reid was now nearly 80 years old, and there was a strong feeling within the local party organisation that he should bow out. Early in 1953, and just before the general elections, there was a surprise request for the re-opening of nominations. It is clear that the request had the support of Casino SEC, and over the objections of the General Secretary two further candidates were endorsed, after "considerable debate and frank discussion".¹⁶

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In 1950, two sitting Members, J.A. Lawson (Murray) and E.T. Kendell (Corowa) contested Murrumbidgee. But in this case Kendell's electorate had been abolished and the new electorate of Murray contained much of his old seat. Lawson, who first won the seat in 1932, won in 1950 and is still the Member.

15

Minutes, Casino SEC, 9 June 1950.

16

Ibid., 14 January 1953. The writer is indebted to Mr P. Fredericks, the Hon. Secretary of Casino SEC, for much of this information.

The candidate who was finally successful at the election, Ian Robinson, was 26 years old and a community leader. Much the same circumstances existed in the adjoining electorate of Lismore where J.S. Easter, a young and successful Ballina carrier and dairyfarmer, displaced the sitting Member, W. Frith, who had held the seat since 1933.¹⁷

The third such case also concerned Easter and the Lismore electorate. By 1959 Easter, for reasons of business rivalry, had earned the hostility of some party members in the city of Lismore, and at the last moment an attempt was made by his opponents to secure a second endorsement, that of the Mayor of Lismore, Ald. C.J. Campbell, who was nominated by Lismore Branch, and who had already nominated for the election as an Independent Country Party candidate.¹⁸ But Central Council endorsement for Campbell was impossible, as no Council meeting was scheduled between the date of the Lismore SEC meeting and the general elections.¹⁹ After a long and heated meeting

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The Lismore SEC Minute Book begins with a meeting held on 29 April 1953, just after the election. The writer's information comes from conversations with party officials in the Lismore electorate.

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Minutes, Special Meeting Lismore Branch, 19 February 1959.

¹⁹

According to a telegram read out at the meeting by the Lismore SEC Chairman.

it was resolved not to endorse Campbell.²⁰ Easter defeated Campbell at the election (there was no other candidate) by one vote, and the election was declared null and void by the Court of Disputed Returns.²¹ A by-election was ordered, and for the by-election both Easter and Campbell were endorsed.²² The A.L.P., sensing an opportunity of profiting from the factional strife within the Country Party, also offered a candidate, the highly respected engineer of Gundurimba Shire, K.C. Compton. The by-election (which was observed by the writer) was marked by personal bitterness between the Country Party candidates and their supporters, and Compton gained enough of Campbell's second preferences (he received 29.1 per cent - the largest "leak" of preferences in any multiple endorsement contest in New South Wales) to win the seat. The antagonism engendered by the circumstances of the campaigns, and the humiliation of the defeat (it was the first Labor victory anywhere on the north coast in more than 30 years) affected the morale of the Country Party in the Lismore electorate.

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Minutes, Special Meeting Lismore SEC, 27 February 1959.

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Sydney Morning Herald, 6 June 1959.

²²

Minutes, Lismore SEC, 6 July 1959.

The Lismore Branch split,²³ the Ballina Branch almost went out of existence, and many office-bearers in both the electorate council and the branches dropped out of active participation in politics. Three years later the Lismore organisation in general was still apathetic, and Compton, who had been promoted to the Ministry in his first term, had an easy win, polling 2,181 votes more than his Country Party rival: neither Easter nor Campbell had been able to secure endorsement for the 1962 elections.

It is significant that these three cases all occurred on the north coast. Endorsement fights of this kind are almost unknown on the tablelands or inland, where loyalties, both to the party and to the local Member, are stronger: a candidate seeking endorsement for the seat of a sitting Member is likely to be considered an upstart lacking in appreciation of the fine work done by the Member. But on the coast, the would-be parliamentarian can often capitalise on parochialism (always more intense in the closely settled dairying districts) while for the same reason the sitting Member may find it hard to overcome feelings of suspicion because of the town or district from

23

The malcontents, opponents of Campbell, formed the new East Lismore Branch. See footnote 17 in Chapter 7 above.

which he comes. Just as the coastal electorates generally are those in which the local party organisations are least interested in the affairs of the party as a whole, so they are the seats where loyalty to the Member is least pronounced.²⁴ Furthermore, until recently there was not on the coast any real threat from the A.L.P., which in the more evenly contested inland electorates has helped to integrate the branches around the Member and the electorate council. Factionalism is a luxury that only the coast can afford.

Nevertheless, even on the north coast the Member is usually untroubled to retain his nomination and win the seat. But in contests where there is no sitting Member, no other person can exert quite the same influence on the selection process. Such contests fall into two broad groups, those on the one hand, in which a sitting Member is being replaced or those in "swinging" Labor-held seats, and those, on the other hand, in seats held firmly by the

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Apart from the cases noted, and moving from north to south, sitting Members were defeated by other endorsed candidates in Richmond (1937) and Clarence (1938); an Independent (Country Party) candidate defeated the endorsed Country Party candidate in Clarence in 1953. Independents defeated sitting Members (both U.A.P.) in Oxley and Gloucester in 1941, and a second Independent defeated the sitting Independent Member for Oxley in 1944.

Labor Party.²⁵ The former group is by far the more interesting. Each nomination contest in this group is almost sui generis, and it is hard to do more than sketch general outlines. However, one characteristic is common to them all: each is a major political event in the electorate, since in effect the chosen candidate will be the new Member.

The intending candidate in such a contest must first secure his nomination by a branch. If he is resident in the electorate then it should be relatively easy to get his own branch to nominate him. But since there may be as many as six candidates seeking nomination, he will try to get the nomination of as many other branches as possible. To allow the candidates equal opportunity in this quest the electorate councils will often try and synchronise the branch meetings, so that they are held on separate nights (a difficult job, especially if there are 30 or more branches, and one which always falls to the organiser). This was, for example, the procedure adopted by Hume FEC in 1963.²⁶ At the branch meetings the candidates in turn

²⁵

The party has not contested seats against sitting Liberal Members.

²⁶

The writer is indebted for this information to Mr I.A.T. Maxwell, the party organiser in Hume federal electorate.

address the meeting and answer questions, and the meeting then decides by secret ballot which candidate is to be nominated by the branch.

Even at this stage there are variations on the theme. Sometimes all the other candidates will retire at the meeting, in order that one of their number, as yet un-nominated, might receive his nomination (Kyogle Branch, 1957).²⁷ Or a branch will, without such graciousness on the part of the candidates, decide to nominate such a candidate "to give him the chance at the electorate council" (Grenfell Branch, 1950; Temora Branch, 1943).²⁸ In other cases, the branch and the candidates know perfectly well that the local candidate is certain to get the nomination, and that for the others, attendance is for form's sake only. But the normal procedures will still be followed and the addresses given (it is still possible to impress a branch delegate). Sometimes, too, the branch has been "stacked" with supporters of one candidate, and the stacking can be blatant:

We have had two examples lately where individuals seeking endorsement of their nominations have come along and stood at the door of a

²⁷

Minutes, Kyogle Branch, 10 August 1957.

²⁸

Minutes, Annual Meeting Grenfell Branch, 17 February 1950.
Minutes, Temora Branch, 17 April 1943.

meeting. They push anybody through the door, take their names, and I pointed out to the Branch Treasurer they were 2/- members. They came along for the express purpose of getting a nomination. This happened twice.²⁹

A candidate for another election

took with him to that Branch meeting sufficient friends or followers from outside the electorate. People who had no interest whatever in that electorate. They nominated him after they had offered their 2/- and asked to be enrolled as members of the branch.³⁰

But the winning of the branch nomination does not necessarily imply that the candidate will receive the support of the branch's delegates at the electorate council endorsement meeting. Many branches, especially when they have no immediate interest in any of the candidates, instruct their delegates "to...preserve an open mind as to the final nomination".³¹ Indeed it may be questioned whether branches are entitled to instruct their delegates one way or the other. When Hume FEC met in 1963 to decide the endorsement for the forthcoming federal elections, the Chairman went to some pains to point out to delegates that whatever their branches had decided about the nomination

²⁹

Minutes, 1949 AC.

³⁰

Minutes, 1950 AC. Conference resolved on this occasion that newly enrolled members could not vote until the next meeting.

³¹

Minutes, Temora Branch, 20 July 1945.

was no longer important or even relevant: they were now sitting primarily as the Hume FEC, not as representatives of branches.³²

The endorsement meeting is, of course, crucial for the candidates. Each is almost certain to be formally proposed and seconded, and to pass the tests regarding sincerity, character, qualifications and ability (since a priori only worthy men could belong to the party, and only notably worthy men could receive branch nomination). But if one of the nominees lacks twelve months' membership he is now likely, unless he is by far the outstanding candidate, to be disqualified. In the addresses and answers to questions, repeated at greater length at the endorsement meeting, each candidate will emphasise his good points, and play down his bad ones. Thus one will point to his long membership and service to the party, another to his potential vote-winning qualities. If a candidate is old, he will emphasise his good health and the longevity of his forbears; if wealthy, his success and ability as a farmer or grazier, particularly if he is

32

This meeting was attended by the writer. Since there are always some branches which have not seen all the candidates, particularly in a federal electorate the size of Hume, this injunction to the delegates had some point.

a self-made man;³³ if a primary producer, his links with the town, if a townsman, his knowledge of and sympathy with, the problems of the rural industries, and so on. Although there will be many delegates who have already decided their preferences before the meeting, there will almost always be a number who are as yet uncommitted, and their votes will reflect the impressions made by the candidates at this meeting.

At the conclusion of the candidates' addresses the meeting will decide how many candidates should be endorsed. This done, the selection of the candidates will take place, by secret preferential ballot. In the best-conducted and most amicable meetings, the declaration of the endorsed candidate will be followed by the congratulations and avowals of support of his defeated rivals; indeed, such expressions of good feeling are traditional and expected. Rancour is in poor taste, and very rare.

One example of such an endorsement process, because of its complexity, must serve for several. Of all the endorsement contests for safe Country Party seats in the entire history of the party, that for the state seat of

33

Cf. Rawson and Holtzinger, p.61

the candidate who has become wealthy may be able to boast of his success; the man who was born wealthy will have to conceal it.

Gloucester in 1961 has been the most interesting.³⁴ Gloucester had been a safe Nationalist/U.A.P. seat until it was won by R.L. Fitzgerald as an Independent in 1941. Fitzgerald, who had contested the seat on earlier occasions, joined the Country Party after the 1947 elections. In 1961, then over 80 years old, and following a redistribution of electoral boundaries which brought into his electorate a large part of the electorate of Upper Hunter, he announced his intention of resigning at the next elections. Gloucester SEC called for nominations and attracted three: Leon Punch, the M.L.A. for Upper Hunter, whose electorate this in fact now was, A.M. Borthwick, a solicitor from Forster in the old Gloucester section of the electorate, and G.B. Doyle, a Gresford dairyfarmer.

Punch was young, personable, and a good speaker, with the added prestige of being already a Member of Parliament. Borthwick had contested Gloucester as an Independent in 1959, when he lost by 2,381 votes, and since the election his supporters had been elected to key positions in many of the Gloucester branches. At the annual meeting of the Gloucester SEC in 1961 nearly all positions were contested, and again party members sympathetic to Borthwick had been

34

Furthermore, none is better documented.

elected.³⁵ Doyle was little known, and declared that he had entered the contest because "he felt a practical man of the land was needed" to replace Fitzgerald.³⁶ He was apparently Fitzgerald's own choice.³⁷

Punch received eight nominations, from Singleton, Dungog and Branxton Branches, all in his old electorate, and Bulahdelah, Clarencetown, Forster-Tuncurry, Stroud, and Williamtown Branches, all in the old Gloucester electorate. Borthwick received three, from Gloucester, Krumbach and Teagardens Branches, all in the old Gloucester electorate; and Doyle received only one nomination, from his own branch, Gresford, in the old Upper Hunter electorate.³⁸ Although Punch received two-thirds of the branch nominations, only one-third of the branches in Gloucester had originally been in Upper Hunter.

At the council meeting, on October 7th, 1961, there was a full attendance of delegates - every branch had sent

³⁵

Minutes, Annual Meeting Gloucester SEC, 23 March 1961. The writer is indebted to Mr W.T. Boschman, once Secretary of Gloucester SEC, for much of the information in the following paragraphs: it is curious that Borthwick's membership was not cancelled after his candidature as an Independent in 1959.

³⁶

Singleton Argus, 20 September 1961.

³⁷

Ibid., 22 September 1961.

³⁸

Ibid., 4 October 1961.

its full quota of delegates, and there were also the two delegates each from Paterson and Lyne FECs. In addition the meeting was attended by Fitzgerald, the three candidates, the General Secretary and the local organiser, none of whom had voting rights, as well as a number of visitors. Each of the three candidates was proposed and seconded. The General Secretary addressed the meeting and advised it of the procedures governing the endorsement. The candidates were then asked if they objected to the presence of any delegates. Doyle queried the presence of the Branxton delegates on the ground that the branch possessed only five members and was thus not a branch within the meaning of the Constitution. Branxton replied that 12 members had transferred from Singleton Branch by October 5th, bringing branch strength to 17 members. The meeting resolved to allow the Branxton delegates to exercise full voting rights. No other objections were made.

The candidates were then allowed ten minutes each to address the meeting and five minutes to answer questions. Borthwick spoke first, then Doyle and Punch. In their addresses both Borthwick and Doyle concentrated on the implications of the proposed New State of New England for Gloucester dairyfarmers. Gloucester is within the Milk Zone, and the N.S.W. Milk Board buys a quota of fresh

milk for consumption in Sydney and Newcastle from Gloucester dairyfarmers at a price nearly double that paid by local butter factories for milk for butter production. Borthwick and Doyle argued that if a New State were established it would include the entire electorate of Gloucester, and that consequently the dairyfarmers would lose their access to the profitable fresh milk market: both therefore opposed the New State. Punch was an ardent New-Stater. As he was not aware of the substance of the Borthwick and Doyle addresses he was unprepared for the questions which followed his address, all of which elicited his strong support for the New State proposals.³⁹

Besides the branch and electorate council delegates, three others present at the meeting possessed voting rights, the Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary of the Electorate Council.⁴⁰ All told, there were 55 members entitled

39

In the election campaign itself Punch pointed out that the advocacy of New States was party policy, to which Borthwick also was committed. See the election advertisements in Appendix Q.

40

There is nothing in the Constitution which prevents an electorate council from choosing as its office-bearers party members who were not delegates to the council, nor to prevent a branch from sending an extra delegate if one of its original delegates is elected as a council officer-bearer. Many council secretaries and treasurers are appointed in this manner.

Punch congratulated Borthwick but immediately stated that he would appeal to Central Council on the grounds that the ballot and procedures were not correct in some particulars. This was believed to be a reference to the presence of the Nabiac delegates, whose branch had been reformed just prior to the endorsement meeting, and some of whose members had attended the Dungog Branch nomination meeting.⁴² But in any case it is clear that some of the delegates whose branches had nominated Punch had voted against him at the endorsement meeting.

The result of the endorsement meeting caused consternation in Punch's old electorate, and while the appeal was pending the party organisation divided into two factions, that supporting Punch centered mainly in the old Upper Hunter part of the electorate, and that supporting Borthwick centered in the eastern part of the old Gloucester electorate. Punch received open support from prominent Liberals in Upper Hunter,⁴³ and the Secretary of Gloucester Branch (which had nominated Borthwick) said that "Gloucester Branch would be out of hand in the near future if Punch was not

42

Ibid.; although this in itself would not seem a good reason for disqualifying the Nabiac delegates from attending the endorsement meeting.

43

Gloucester Advocate, 13 October 1961.

allowed to stand".⁴⁴ Fitzgerald added further confusion when he was reported to be reconsidering his decision to retire.⁴⁵ Central Executive stopped the complete disintegration of the local organisation by endorsing Punch as well as Borthwick.⁴⁶

It was a wise decision. Against Borthwick and both an A.L.P. and a D.L.P. candidate, Punch won easily, polling two votes to each of Borthwick's. Punch's margin over Borthwick was very high in the Upper Hunter sections of the electorate: in Singleton subdivision he collected 89.83 per cent of the total Country Party vote. Clearly the endorsement of Borthwick instead of Punch did not represent the true feelings of the party supporters in the electorate, nor, it may be supposed, those of the majority of party members. Inevitably, Punch's election was followed by the retirement from active politics of many of those who had supported Borthwick, and the reconstruction of the electorate council and many of the branches.⁴⁷

44

Ibid., 24 October 1961.

45

Ibid., 13 October 1961.

46

Ibid., 3 November 1961. The grounds were not disclosed. According to some Councillors who were present, the decision was not made without misgivings nor feelings that the traditional autonomy of electorate councils was being abridged.

47

The writer is indebted to W.B. Cameron, Dungog, the new Chairman of Gloucester SEC, for this information.

But where the Labor Party has established a firm hold on the electorate there are usually few candidates for endorsement, and the endorsement contests themselves are not so vigorously contested. In some electorates, a candidate repeatedly contests the seat in the hope either of whittling down the Labor Member's majority or of being the endorsed candidate when the electoral pendulum finally swings in favour of the Country Party. His first contest as an endorsed candidate would normally entitle him to re-endorsement on a "first refusal" basis; each further election re-inforces his position, as he begins to acquire a quite unrivalled knowledge of the party organisation, and a knowledge of the electorate equalled only by the sitting Member. While he desires the endorsement, it is usually his for the asking.⁴⁸ In some such electorates the electorate council may have to search for a candidate, or even be left in the humiliating position of being unable to present a candidate at all (though this is true only of state seats, and then only of the far western electorates dominated by Broken Hill),

48

F.L. O'Keefe in Liverpool Plains and A.G.M. Johnston in Burrinjuck are examples of candidates in this category. This is also a pattern common in the A.L.P. in country electorates. Enough has been said about local parochialism for it to be apparent that such candidates would be unable to point to their past efforts as a reason for endorsement for another, safer, seat (as often happens in the A.L.P. and the Liberal Party).

The intrusion of Central Council into a local endorsement contest, as in the Gloucester case described above, is very rare. Although Council's powers in this matter are undoubted (and its action in Gloucester well within the Constitution) it is well aware of the jealous attitude of electorate councils in regard to their endorsement prerogatives, and it has in the past 20 years merely ratified council endorsements. Since the rules are clear and detailed, and since the General Secretary always attends endorsement meetings following the retirement or death of a sitting Member, Central Council can confidently leave the selection of party candidates in local hands. Certainly the Country Party, of the three major Australian parties, is in practice the most decentralised in its selection of candidates.⁴⁹

III. MULTIPLE ENDORSEMENT

One of the major features which distinguishes the Country Party from the Liberal and Labor Parties is its practice of endorsing more than one candidate for a seat.

49

In the A.L.P. it is common for the Executive to make the selections itself although a rank and file secret ballot of party members in the electorate is the normal procedure. In the metropolitan seats, Liberal selections are made by a committee consisting of 30 Electorate Conference members and 20 from the State Executive or Council. In the country the selection is entirely local.

Furthermore, multiple endorsement has always been an essential element of the party's special character. It was a product of many factors: the traditional rural antipathy to pre-selection and machine politics; another traditional rural and egalitarian belief that one man was as good as the next; a feeling that 'professionalism' in politics was to be deprecated and that anyone could be a worthwhile parliamentarian; and above all, the existence of a preferential voting system by which the votes cast for one candidate could be distributed to another.

Yet multiple endorsement has always been a contentious issue within the party. In the party's early years a candidate had only to secure a branch nomination for his endorsement to be mandatory. Thus for the election for the state seat of Murray in 1930,

discussion took place as to whether only one candidate should be endorsed, but it was finally agreed that the Constitution should be abided by, and, as the candidates could not come to any arrangement amongst themselves for only one of their number to stand, the whole three, all being members of the Country Party, and suitable candidates, were endorsed.⁵⁰

Five candidates were similarly endorsed for Casino in the same year. But multiple endorsement had other drawbacks besides the proliferation of candidates. Bruxner found some

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GSR to CC, 11 November 1929.

candidates "a burden", and he argued that "although they stood for no pre-selection it was necessary to exercise some supervision".⁵¹ Central Council had to move delicately; if candidates would not withdraw voluntarily, then cajolery or indirect pressure had to be used. For the 1920 election Council instructed the General Secretary to write to one unwanted candidate

pointing out that his sense of loyalty to the cause would prevent any personal feeling being allowed to predominate.⁵²

To a would-be candidate in 1922 it was suggested that, since Council was hoping that another candidate would be elected, "under the circumstances it might be as well for him to retire from the contest",⁵³ and another in 1924 was informed

that the Organising Committee cannot see its way to indicate the likelihood of financial support forthcoming for his proposed candidature.⁵⁴

It was not so easy, however, for electorate councils to apply this kind of de facto pre-selection and so, inevitably,

⁵¹

Minutes of a Joint Meeting of the Central Council and the Parliamentary Progressive Party, 22 April 1922; CCM, 5 March 1923.

⁵²

CCM, 9 February 1920.

⁵³

CCM, 20 February 1922.

⁵⁴

Minutes, Organising Committee of Central Council, 12 February 1924.

councils began to adopt undisguised pre-selection, especially if they possessed a sitting Member. By 1937 pre-selection seemed to be becoming the rule rather than the exception. After an attack by one Councillor on "the form of pre-selection...creeping into the Country Party", Central Council resolved to advertise for nominations at election time and thus prevent the branches and councils from practising a form of pre-selection by failing to call for nominations.⁵⁵ Electorate councils had also begun to decide by ballot how many candidates should be endorsed, although the Constitution provided that all suitable candidates should be endorsed.⁵⁶ A motion carried at the 1939 annual Conference severely criticised any form of pre-selection in the party.⁵⁷

But pre-selection continued, and by tacit understanding it was becoming permissible to select only one candidate in the marginal seats, although multiple endorsement was still desirable in the party's safe seats. But events in the 1949 federal elections started a movement to make some kind

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CCM, 22 December 1937.

⁵⁶

CCM, 14 April 1937. This was the procedure in both Eden-Monaro and Calare in 1945; CEM, 21 June 1945, 26 July 1945. But in both these cases, the electorate councils had secured the agreement of the candidates to the procedure, thus giving it the appearance of legality.

⁵⁷

Minutes, 1939 AC.

of pre-selection constitutional. None of the four Country Party candidates had succeeded in winning the northern coastal/Upper Hunter seat of Paterson in 1949, allegedly because of their failure to work together; and the rival Country Party candidates for New England had been hardly civil to each other.⁵⁸ To the 1950 annual Conference came a motion proposing that electorate councils be empowered to decide whether or not endorsing more than one candidate might imperil the party's chances of winning the seat. Supporters of the motion claimed that multiple endorsement endangered party unity, gave the Labor Party election ammunition, that it lost votes and thus seats, and that unworthy candidates received endorsements.

Opponents were quick to reply with claims that the principle of multiple endorsement was sacred in the party, and that all that was required was for the electorate councils to show some courage, and refuse to endorse on the grounds of sincerity, character, qualifications or ability. They were able to bring forward amateur psephologists who argued that multiple endorsement actually increased the party vote through the mobilisation of the personal supporters of the various party candidates. The motion was

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Minutes, 1950 AC.

narrowly defeated by 38 votes to 34,⁵⁹ and the same motion was defeated again in the following year.⁶⁰ But in 1952 it was carried, against the protests of the die-hard supporters of multiple endorsement, who claimed that the decision heralded the end of the party.⁶¹

Since the adoption of the pre-selection clause the incidence of multiple endorsement has declined sharply. Of the recent examples all but one have occurred on the north coast,⁶² and the lamentable results of the 1959 Lismore by-election caused demands at later Conferences for even more stringent pre-selection.⁶³ The defeat of Sir Earle Page in 1961 prompted a motion at the 1962 annual Conference that endorsement be withheld from any candidate more than 70 years old, but this was not strongly supported.⁶⁴

There seems little doubt that the practice of multiple endorsement will further decline. The parliamentarians

59

Ibid.

60

Minutes, 1951 AC.

61

Minutes, 1952 AC.

62

Casino (1953), Lismore (1953), Lismore (1959 by-election), Clarence (1956), Richmond (1957 by-election), Raleigh (1953 and 1959), and Gloucester (1962). The exception was the Gwydir by-election (1953).

63

Minutes, 1960 AC, 1962 AC.

64

Minutes, 1962 AC.

generally oppose it - for sufficient reasons.⁶⁵ Organisers dislike it because of their own difficult position in a multiple contest (it is hard for an organiser in such a contest to escape the charge of bias from one or more of the candidates), and the General Secretary has had long-standing doubts about its utility.

Whatever the advantages may be in theory, it is certain that in practice it is becoming increasingly difficult to run two or more candidates in one electorate.⁶⁶

Furthermore, multiple endorsement is in principle antipathetic to the present concept of the party's local organisation: its effect is disintegrative where the purpose of the branches and councils is integrative.⁶⁷ With the local organisations firmly established and continuous, it is unlikely that many of them will in the future wish to adopt a campaign method which might destroy their carefully built harmony and efficiency.

⁶⁵

R.L. Fitzgerald M.L.A. referred to it as "a weak point in the Country Party". Minutes, Gloucester SEC, 9 April 1960.

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GSR to CE, 19 May 1952.

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This point is discussed further in the two following chapters.

CHAPTER 13

ELECTIONS II. FINANCING THE CAMPAIGN

The general election campaign is a recurring financial crisis for the Australian political parties, for the modern election campaign is a most expensive undertaking, demanding large-scale advertising through the press, radio and (more recently) television, the despatch of speakers to all parts of the state and Commonwealth, the sending of countless leaflets, pamphlets, cards and other missives through the post, and the employment of professional services of all kinds, from advertising agencies to electricians.¹ Like the other major parties the Country Party has no regular and dependable supply of election finance, and little can be found from normal revenue. The vast bulk of election funds comes from donations large and small, collected immediately prior to (though in some cases after) the election. The task of collecting this money at all levels is a very important one, and it is the most important election job for many party members and officials.

¹ The election finances of Australian political parties are matters which, understandably, are not normally the object of public scrutiny. Although much relevant and important material on this subject was made available to the writer by party officials, his discussion of some of the questions involved must, under the circumstances, be somewhat oblique.

I. HISTORY

Both absolutely and relatively, election campaigns in the 1950s cost the party more than was the case in the party's early days or in the 1930s. In part the increase reflects the abandonment of the old and cheap forms of campaigning - the personal canvass, the street-corner and hall meetings - as the core of the party's local campaign, and their replacement by the expensive facilities of the mass media. But it is also a reflection of the greater intensity of modern election campaigns.² And no contrast better illustrates the difference between the modern and the prewar Country Parties than their respective methods of financing elections.

When the party's finance came principally from the Graziers' Association electorate councils were subsidised by financial grants, which enabled them to conduct extensive election campaigns without being entirely dependent on local finance. For the 1925 state election campaign, for example, Central Council decided to supplement local collections by £4,150, in donations to electorate councils ranging from £100 to £500. Only £1,000 was to be retained for the

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See below, Chapter 14.

party's central expenses.³ When an extra £6,150 was found, nearly all the additional revenue was to go to the councils in five key electorates, at £1,000 each.⁴ For the federal elections later in the same year, £500 was donated to each of the six councils conducting campaigns, while Head Office was to manage the central campaign on £2,000.⁵

But as central campaign directors began to make more use of press and radio advertising, so did Head Office expenses increase. And at the same time the electorate councils, with a share of bank order revenue under the Divisional system, began to find the need of lavish donations from central funds less important. Appendix N sets out the indices of budgeted expenditure by Head Office for federal election campaigns from 1934 to 1961. In 1934 assistance to electorate councils, which had consumed 60 per cent of central election finance in 1925, was now only 33.3 per cent of the budget, and it dropped to a little over 25 per cent in the elections of 1937 and 1940. Appendix O, which presents the same information for state election budgets

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Report of the Subcommittee on Financial Provisions Necessary for the Forthcoming State Campaign, 1925. (Central Council Minute Book).

⁴

CCM, 30 April 1925.

⁵

CCM, 25 September 1925.

from 1938 to 1956, illustrates much the same trend. Assistance to state electorate councils, probably well over 60 per cent in 1925, was down to 31.4 per cent in 1938, and to 29.4 per cent in 1941.

The collapse of the party organisation during the war caused a renewal of Head Office subsidies. For the state election of 1944 assistance to councils had risen to 42.8 per cent of the budget, and although figures for the 1943 federal election are not available, there is every reason to suppose that the increase in that year was proportionate. The rapid revival of the party after the war restored the trend to greater local financial autonomy which had been emerging in the late 1930s. Although 38.2 per cent of the federal election budget for 1946 was intended for assistance to councils, none was so budgeted for the 1948 federal referendum, nor for the federal election campaign of 1949, which saw the biggest election budget in the history of the party. For state elections council assistance dropped from 42.8 per cent in 1944 to 20.0 per cent in 1947, to 6 per cent in 1950 and to nothing at all thereafter. In the modern party the great autonomy of the electorate councils is coupled with their complete responsibility for the financing of their own election campaigns. Moreover the councils, as we shall see,

are expected to assist, from either their regular incomes or from campaign donations, the central campaign fund.

Both appendices also illustrate the mounting cost of the party's election campaigns. While we do not possess any accurate figures regarding the amounts actually spent by electorate councils in the 1920s and 1930s, there is enough information in council minute books to suggest that the great bulk of their election finance came from Head Office. The Head Office budget for the 1934 federal election campaign thus approximated the total party expenditure for that election campaign. But the 1961 budget, of about the same size, represents only Head Office expenditure: to this amount must be added all the money raised and spent locally by the electorate councils and branches. And once again, although there is no available information regarding the sum of these amounts, it is very likely that for any election campaign councils and branches together spend from two to three times the amount spent by Head Office.⁶

II. PROBLEMS

There are several general problems associated with raising election funds. Firstly, and this is perhaps peculiar

6

Monetary inflation over the last forty years robs this comparison of some of its force.

to the Country Party, the party is already receiving an average of a little over £2 each year from 20,000 of its supporters through the bank order system. Many of these members, as we have seen, regard their subscriptions as little more than an annual donation to party funds, and they are averse to contributing more at election times.⁷ Secondly, the state of Liberal/Country Party relations is often important: when the parties are in coalition, substantial donors often make funds available only to the major coalition partner; where the parties are contesting the same seat both Liberal and Country Party canvassers are likely to approach the same people for donations, and the Country Party's own collections are accordingly reduced.⁸

Thirdly, appeals for funds to fight federal and state election campaigns have followed rather too closely in recent years because of the near coincidence of election dates. Since federal elections have preceded those for the state parliament, federal collections have always tended to be larger.⁹ The poorer response to state election appeals

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Organisers and party officials, in conversations with the writer, mentioned this frequently as a major difficulty in soliciting campaign funds.

8

The writer is indebted to party officials in the Young and Calare electorates for this information.

9

CCCR to CC, 8 September 1950; GSR to CE, 21 May 1951.

has probably owed also to a feeling among both members and supporters that the need to replace the "respectable" N.S.W. Labor Government was not as urgent as the need to retain the federal coalition government.¹⁰ Whatever the reason, the difficulty of raising money for state election campaigns is a problem for the party, since, as we shall see in the following chapter, the party's election costs for state and federal campaigns are remarkably similar. Fourthly, partly because of the proliferation of elections and referenda in the postwar period, and partly because of the party's extensive use of the personal appeal method to raise funds, there have been too many appeals. Branch, state electorate council, federal electorate council and Head Office may all approach the same person within a few months, and probably with rapidly diminishing returns.¹¹ Finally, and most importantly, reliance on donations makes the accurate budgeting of election expenditure extremely difficult.

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See also the party activity section in Appendix G.

¹¹

Thus Armidale Branch complained in 1949 that although it was expected by New England FEC to raise £200 for the coming federal elections, it had already appealed for funds for its own campaign, Head Office had sent out appeal letters, there were two candidates also soliciting funds, and there was to be a state election, with more appeals, within a few months. Minutes, Armidale Branch, 31 May 1949.

Table 27

Breakdown of Country Party Central Expenditure in N.S.W.
1958 Federal Election

<u>Item</u>	<u>Budget</u> %	<u>Actual</u> %
1. General press and radio advertising	60.0	66.1
2. Organisers (4 weeks)	22.0	25.9
3. Special Speakers' Expenses	5.0	3.4
4. Printing	5.0	3.2
5. Committee Expenses	0.5	..
6. Sundries	<u>7.5</u> <u>100.0</u>	<u>1.4</u> <u>100.0</u>

Note: Actual expenditure was 89.74% of budgeted expenditure.

Source: Based on figures set out in papers relevant to the 1961 federal election in the Morton Trotter Papers.

III. PROCEDURES

The problem of budgeting is perhaps least difficult for Head Office, since it can estimate its own expenditure fairly easily. If expectations of donations are not realised, then the party can use the No.2 account¹² as an overdraft while it searches for donations to make up the short-fall. Table 27 sets out the Head Office budget for the 1958 federal election campaign. Sixty per cent of the budget was devoted to general press and radio advertising, all of which, prepared in advance and not altered or supplemented during the campaign, could be costed down to the last shilling. The other major item of expenditure, the organisers' salaries and expenses for four weeks, was essentially a book-keeping entry, as the normal cost of the field staff (also known exactly) was simply offset from the donations.

Although Head Office is still dependent upon donations to pay for the bulk of its campaign costs, it has been able to cover some of these costs by levying a "quota" upon the electorate councils. The quota system is an innovation of J.F. Dredge, and was first used for the 1950 state election campaign, when state electorate councils were levied 15 per

¹²

See above, Chapter 5, part III.

cent of campaign donations or £50, whichever was the greater.¹³ The system has not, however, been entirely successful. In the first place many councils resent the levy on principle, while in the second it complicates, for all councils, an already difficult budgetary problem. The Head Office quota is therefore not a matter of first priority for the councils. New England FEC, for example, decided that its own campaign committee should decide what funds, if any, should be sent to Head Office.¹⁴ When the General Secretary pointed out that this was not a matter for local decision, and that Central Council had decided that the amount should represent 30 per cent of donations, the council instructed its secretary to write to Head Office,

requesting that body to refrain from insisting upon 30% from contributions received, and informing that every effort will be made to remit any monies available after the election.¹⁵

In 1953 Tenterfield SEC had refused to remit any funds at all because of the extra expenses of its campaign.¹⁶

In the safest seats, as we shall see, local campaigns can be fought very cheaply indeed, and it is often

¹³ CCM, 17 May 1950.

¹⁴ Minutes, New England FEC, 9 August 1958.

¹⁵ Ibid., 25 October 1958.

¹⁶ Minutes, Annual Meeting Tenterfield SEC, 2 May 1953.

unnecessary for councils to seek donations. Consequently, these councils will be able to supply the quota only from revenue, which they are reluctant to do. And some councils have simply ignored the levy. In general the safest seats have been the poorest contributors to central funds. In 1949 Hume and Farrer FECs contributed more than all the other federal electorate councils combined. Lyne FEC remitted only £13, and Richmond and New England FECs nothing at all. For the 1951 elections nothing was received from Lyne, Richmond, Cowper or New England FECs. The same pattern was true of state election campaigns. Armidale, Casino, Gloucester, Lismore, Oxley, Orange, Raleigh and Upper Hunter SECs all failed to remit any money to Head Office for the 1950 state election campaign.¹⁷

If a council persistently fails to fill its quota, even after repeated requests, then Head Office is entitled to subtract the amount owing from the council's Head Office account. But if a large number of councils default (as commonly happens) this procedure gains the party nothing, since it lowers the No.2 account and thus the ceiling of the party's overdraft. The councils are not unaware of

¹⁷

All the information in this paragraph comes from GSR to CC, 15 August 1951.

this, and their disregard for the levy is certainly prompted to some extent by their knowledge of its unenforceability.

Despite the financial autonomy of the electorate councils, Head Office may be called upon to help a council if it overspends, which can happen when councils overestimate their campaign income. When the Country Party decided to contest the Calare by-election in 1960, the Calare FEC was short of campaign experience, since its last contest had been in 1946. Inexperience, the excitement of the campaign, and a determination that a shortage of money should not deprive the party of victory caused expenditure to exceed income by well over £1,000. Head Office paid the outstanding accounts and debited the council's Head Office account accordingly: since this account had been exhausted by the by-election campaign, the council's future bank order revenue for some years would be needed to pay off the debt.¹⁸ A similar case involving Young SEC has already been noted.¹⁹

The problem of budgeting is most difficult at the electorate council level. The electorate council's

¹⁸

Calare FEC resolved in 1961 to ask all members to donate £1 each to clear the council from this debt. Minutes, Calare FEC, 18 August 1961. The writer is indebted to Mr G.K.R. Reid, the Chairman of Calare FEC, for some of this information.

¹⁹

See above, Chapter 8, footnote 27.

financial resilience is not comparable with that of Head Office, its anticipation of income cannot be so accurate, nor its estimated expenditure calculated so precisely. There is little essential difference between federal and state electorate councils in this regard, except that for federal electorate councils the problems are accentuated by the size of the electorate.

Most councils commence a campaign with at least a small amount of ready finance, since their bank order income usually exceeds their normal annual running expense. For this reason coastal electorate councils, which rarely need to mount expensive election campaigns, can often pay for their campaigns out of normal revenue. Casino SEC rarely exceeded £75 in campaign expenses in the later 1940s and early 1950s.²⁰ The by-election for Richmond in 1957 cost Richmond FEC £121,15,0. It decided to make each of the four candidates a donation of £100 to cover their personal expenses, and paid for both donations and its own expenses from funds in hand.²¹

But inland, where victory margins are narrower, the councils have little option: the campaign costs will exceed

20

Minute Book of Casino SEC.

21

Minutes, Annual Meeting Richmond FEC, 30 May 1958.

by a large margin the amount which the council has saved from income over the last three years. And in by-elections, where much may hang on the result, the expenditure may have to be lavish indeed: two recent by-elections cost the electorate councils alone more than £4,000 each. It is in these electorates that fund-raising becomes almost the most important task in the campaign, and where the importance of good communication between council and branches is most apparent.

Because of the difficulty of estimating campaign income in advance, councils tend to fix on an amount which they feel on past experience to be attainable, and then calculate the amounts to be spent on advertising etc. on this basis.²² The maximum amount to be spent having been determined, the council has two basic alternative fund-raising methods.²³ If the electorate is small enough, and the chairman widely enough known, it can write to potential

22

This was done, for example, at a meeting of Calare FEC, held on September 25th, 1961. The meeting was attended by the writer.

23

Multiple endorsement complicates financing, as each candidate solicits his own funds, and this makes it almost impossible for the council to raise money. However, its campaign is correspondingly cheaper, as the council has only to pay for expenses incurred in the interests of the party as a whole, and these will be slight. See below, Chapter 14, part II.

donors and ask for donations. Such a letter was sent out in the 1962 Lismore campaign. Signed by both the Chairman of Lismore SEC and the party's campaign director, it opened with the apologia that it was essential these days to conduct vigorous and thus expensive campaigns. The A.L.P., the letter continued, received "tremendous financial support from the Trade Union Movement", and the addressee was urged to give unstintingly so that the party could "compete with the opponents of Free Enterprise on an equitable basis".²⁴ Few councils keep individual records of the results of their fund-raising drives, and it is thus difficult to estimate the success of the appeal letter. A similar letter sent out to 300 supporters by the Charles Cutler Campaign Committee in 1959,²⁵ which stressed Cutler's personal qualities rather than political issues, was answered with donations by 70 of the recipients.²⁶

Appeals from the council are not suitable and rarely used in the larger state electorates or in federal electorates, since loyalties to the local branch are likely to be much stronger than loyalties to the distant electorate

²⁴

There is a copy of the letter in the W.G. Blair Papers.

²⁵

The candidate campaign committees are discussed below, Chapter 14, part II.

²⁶

Charles Cutler Campaign Committee Records.

council. In these electorates, the branches will be delegated the function of fund-raising. The normal procedure is for the estimated total expenditure to be broken down into branch quotas, based sometimes on the membership of the branch, sometimes on population figures, and sometimes on imputed capacity to pay. The branches are then advised of their quotas, and instructed to fill them as soon as possible. For the 1958 federal election New England FEC estimated that it would need another £1,000 in addition to funds in hand, and allocated quotas to population areas, on the following basis:

	£
Tamworth and District ..	250
Armidale ..	200
Glen Innes ..	120
Tenterfield ..	100
Bonalbo and District ..	75
Uralla ..	65
Walcha ..	65
Guyra ..	50
Manilla ..	50
Nundle ..	50
	<u>£1,025</u>

Each branch was then allotted a sub-quota (since most of these population areas contained more than one branch).²⁷

²⁷

Minutes, New England FEC, 9 August 1958.

The branch quota system is by far the most widely-used method of electorate council fund-raising. But its success varies. While the Constitution empowers councils to fix quotas,²⁸ there are no sanctions which the councils can apply to branches which fail to fill their quotas, and thus branches can, and do, disregard the quotas with impunity. When Tamworth Branch was told of its £250 quota for the 1958 New England campaign, it replied that New England FEC should expect no more than £150.²⁹ The campaign director for the previous New England campaign told his council that of the 13 subdivisions in the electorate, only a few had contributed any money, and that the bulk of the funds had come from the Armidale subdivision.³⁰ Hume FEC set an ambitious target for the 1949 federal elections in which each branch was given a carefully devised quota, and was mortified to find that not only was the target missed by a wide margin, but that many branches had sent in nothing at all.³¹

²⁸

Constitution, IV(c)3, V(c)3, pp.15, 17.

²⁹

Minutes, Tamworth Branch, 20 August 1958.

³⁰

Campaign Director's Report on the 1955 Federal Election (n.d.). (Minute Book, New England FEC).

³¹

Minutes, Executive Meeting Hume FEC, 4 November 1949; Minutes, Hume FEC, 21 December 1949.

Branch response to the electorate council quotas depends upon the general activity of the branch and the part it is playing in the election campaign. Inactive branches will ignore the quota. Those with some pretensions to activity may make their Head Office accounts available to the council, in which course of action they are encouraged, as we have seen, by the councils themselves.³² Only the active branches are likely to make a conscientious effort to find the money necessary to fill their quotas, but if such a branch is also playing an active part in the campaign it may well begrudge handing over hard-won cash to the electorate council. Cowra Branch, which had been dormant through most of the 1950s, became active again because of the personal friendship between its office-bearers and the party candidate for Young in 1956 and 1959, G.F. Freudenstein. For the 1959 election the branch undertook a most vigorous and expensive campaign, in which an office was rented, a secretary employed at £12.10.0 per week, and a large amount expended upon advertising. The branch found it quite impossible to help the electorate council's fund: its own highly successful fund-raising activities had brought in just sufficient finance to pay all of its own local expenses.³³

³²

See above, Chapter 8, part IV.

³³

Minutes, Annual Meeting Cowra Branch, 5 February 1949;
Minutes, Committee Meeting Cowra Branch, 16 February 1959.

Whether branches are collecting money for their own activities or for those of the council, the methods are much the same. Personal canvassing will be combined with mailed appeals, or used alone.³⁴ Both methods are more likely to be successful when used by the branch than when used by the electorate council. For branch canvassers are known personally to most of their prospects, and even in letters a more informal tone can be used than is possible when correspondence is with supporters known only by name. Thus an appeal letter from the Chairman of Tambar Springs Branch to supporters in the branch's area, asking for finance for the 1961 Liverpool Plains by-election, concluded:

In the near future Mr—— will be calling on you to collect as large an amount as we can possibly persuade you to give. He appreciates the hazards of the job he has undertaken, never the less, he will be travelling unarmed so I would ask you to treat him as gently and generously as you can.³⁵

If a branch undertakes a money-raising job seriously, the normal procedure is for the branch to call a meeting,

The writer is also indebted to Mr A.G. Brien, former Secretary of Cowra Branch, Mrs E. Chapman, the present Secretary, and Mr G.F. Freudenstein, M.L.A. for Young, for some of this information.

34

The appeal to members and supporters is practically the only technique used by the Country Party at any level. Raffles, bazaars, fund-raising dinners and socials and other methods of raising finance are seldom employed.

35

Copy of appeal letter in Liverpool Plains SEC Records.

divide the branch's area into zones (town blocks or country by-roads) and allot each zone to a party member present at the meeting.³⁶ Sometimes, as in the Tambar Springs case, the canvass is preceded by an introductory letter, but this is not invariable. Very rarely the branch will appoint a paid canvasser.³⁷ Once again, little comparative information exists on the success of these operations or even of branch receipts from donations. Nevertheless some indication of the potential of branch money-raising was given at a meeting of Armidale Branch in 1951, when members noted that New England FEC's appeal letter for funds for the 1951 referendum campaign had brought in only £55; their own efforts had produced £78 in a few days, at no cost to the party.³⁸

The present system of election financing satisfied neither Head Office, nor the electorate councils, nor the branches. All would like to be free from the necessity of asking members and supporters for money, and Head Office and

³⁶

This was the procedure used, for example, by Glen Innes Branch in 1951 and 1954, and Orange Branch in 1961. Minutes, Committee Meetings Glen Innes Branch, 9 April 1951, 11 May 1954; Minutes, Orange Branch, 16 November 1961.

³⁷

For example, Minutes, Committee Meeting Glen Innes Branch, 11 May 1954.

³⁸

Minutes, Armidale Branch, 26 October 1951. Candidates themselves, of course, receive donations, but most leave soliciting for funds to their local organisations.

the councils especially would welcome a method by which a reserve could be built up, to safeguard the party against "snap" elections or an election in which circumstances force them to overspend. But it would be extremely difficult to raise money for this purpose, partly because the party already relies so heavily on members for its finance, and partly because it is the immediacy of the election which often parts the donor from his donation.

Nevertheless, there have been recent attempts to have the membership fee raised to provide extra finance for election purposes for the central and local organisations. A motion came forward to the 1961 annual Conference proposing that the membership fee be increased to three guineas per annum for this purpose. Although it attracted a good deal of support, the motion was defeated, largely because it raised other and larger issues, particularly the fear that the increased fee would make the party a "rich man's club". In addition, delegates from coastal branches and councils, whose campaigns are relatively inexpensive, saw only the disadvantages of the proposal.³⁹

Much the same resolution was submitted to the 1962 annual Conference, and this time Conference decided to set

³⁹

Minutes, 1961 AC.

up a committee to investigate and report on the financing of elections: apart from other considerations Central Council and Executive had become anxious about the implications of television for the party's campaign expenses.⁴⁰ If the party is to engage in even a minor way in television campaigning, stable and plentiful election finance will be imperative, and it cannot be provided by the present methods.

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Minutes, 1962 AC.

CHAPTER 14

ELECTIONS III. THE CONDUCT OF THE CAMPAIGN

The election campaign is the most important single activity undertaken by an Australian political party.¹ It is an activity which involves and severely tests the party's organisation at every level. In the long run internal party democracy, enthusiasm amongst the members, activity in the branches and electorate councils, and policymaking at the Conference and elsewhere will lose their importance and vitality if the party fails to win new seats in parliament or to retain its old ones. Moreover, the election campaign serves as a means of re-inforcing the party's claims on its members and supporters, by emphasising the special qualities of its ideals, policies and candidates. The election is the only occasion on which the vast majority of the party's members and supporters will be called upon to re-affirm,

¹ This chapter is based largely on an extensive survey of the election campaigns in five federal electorates, Richmond, New England, Lyne, Calare and Hume, during and after the federal election campaign of 1961, and of 13 state electorates, Byron, Casino, Lismore, Raleigh, Oxley, Gloucester, Upper Hunter, Armidale, Tenterfield, Orange, Temora, Young and Burrinjuck during and after the state election campaign of 1962. During this survey, in which the writer travelled more than 20,000 miles, and which occupied six months, the writer talked with candidates and campaign directors in every electorate, accompanied candidates on tours, met hundreds of branch officials and other party workers, and closely observed the party's campaign at the local level. Where possible, the writer's observations are supported by documentary evidence.

either publicly or privately, their own faith in the party and its purpose. For these reasons regular elections are of great importance in maintaining the interest of the party's members and the vitality of its local organisation.

For all the major parties, election campaigns do not occur at one level, but at several. At the highest level there are the general strategies, the leaders and their campaigns, the major election policies and the central election campaign funds. At the intermediate level, that of the individual electorate, strategy is already decided. What is important now are local issues and tactics, the candidate and his image, and local advertising and skirmishing. Although in many respects these will merely echo the larger and noisier campaign in the state or Commonwealth, they will also possess an individual character which differs from electorate to electorate. At the same time the electorate campaign has to both complement and supplement that at the higher levels. At the branch level, strategy and tactics are the concern of others, but there may still be opportunities to further develop local strengths, exploit weaknesses and engage in minor affrays. Here for the most part the campaign is seen from afar, and is carried on in the area (if at all) only when the candidates pay their brief visits. But on polling day the campaign becomes

almost entirely local: all that can be done is to endeavour to ensure that all party supporters are able to vote, and that every voter is at least aware when he enters the polling booth of the name of the party's candidate.

1. THE CENTRAL CAMPAIGN

In the Country Party the determination of election policies is the responsibility entirely of the parliamentary leaders and their colleagues, although since 1951 the policies of the party at federal elections have been influenced by the party's role in the coalition government. Both federal and state parliamentary parties draw up election policies within the framework of the party platform, but neither needs to seek approval of the Federal or Central Councils for individual policy points. It is the responsibility of Central Council and Executive to ensure first that these policies are broadcast as widely as possible, and second that the party's local organisation is ready for the campaign and aware of its tasks.

Since the 1949 federal election each general election campaign, state and federal, has been managed by a Central Campaign Committee (C.C.C.).² The C.C.C., another

2

With the exception of the 1953 Senate campaign, which was managed by the Central Executive.

administrative innovation of J.F. Dredge, has normally consisted of the party Chairman, three or four members of the Central Executive, and the chairman of each electorate council conducting a local campaign.³ It is the C.C.C. which prepares the central budget, determines the content and placement of central press and radio advertising, and fixes the quota of campaign donations to be contributed by electorate councils. The C.C.C. also controls the Central Campaign Fund (C.C.F.), the main charges on which are general press and radio advertising, organisers' salaries and expenses, special speakers' expenses, and the costs of printing and block-making.⁴

Of these charges, those for advertising and organisers' salaries are by far the largest. Table 27 (facing page 352) sets out the Head Office 1958 federal election campaign budget, which may be taken as typical of both state and federal election budgets since 1949. General advertising was estimated at 60 per cent of the budget: it consumed in fact 66.1 per cent. Organisers' salaries and expenses, budgeted at 22 per cent of expenditure, finally amounted to

³
CCM, 20 July 1949.

⁴
Since some country printeries do not possess adequate facilities, Head Office has blocks for how-to-vote cards made in Sydney and sent to the electorate councils, so that the cards may be at least printed locally.

25.9 per cent. These two items thus consumed 92 per cent of all the funds expended by the C.C.C.

In general election campaigns, Head Office does not try to exercise control over the organisers' activities: this would be inefficient and futile. Instead it sends them on roving commissions into the key seats, where they are attached to electorate councils and act as "trouble-shooters" for the local campaign directors. Although they are expected to "collect as much finance as possible towards the local campaign funds"⁵ this side of their activities is nearly always subsidiary. The organisers' talents and experience are usually too valuable to waste on fund-getting.⁶

It is through the placement of advertising that the C.C.C. endeavours to influence the strategy of the campaign. Normally the C.C.C. will approve the content and format of up to four or five advertisements created by an outside firm.

⁵
General Secretary to Chairmen Federal Councils et al.
 (Circular), 15 September 1958. (Morton Trotter Papers).

⁶
 In one sense, the use of Head Office organisers by electorate councils in election campaigns is a form of Head Office financial support to the councils, and it might be argued that this invalidates the assertion made in the previous chapter that Head Office no longer financially assists the councils. But in fact the loan of organisers to the councils is forced upon Head Office by circumstances: its own contact with individual campaigns is much too tenuous for it to try and direct the organisers from Sydney, and the normal functions of organisers are out of the question during campaigns.

The placement of these advertisements will be handled by Country Press Ltd., the co-ordinating body of the country newspapers in the state, which will send them, and the dates on which they are to be published, to the hundred or more country newspapers in New South Wales which circulate in seats which the party is contesting.⁷ But the decisions regarding dates and the number of times each advertisement is to be inserted are taken by the C.C.C. itself and with strategic considerations in mind. For the 1961 federal election, for example, four advertisements, of similar format but containing a different message, were approved by the C.C.C. During the campaign in the safe seat of Richmond, only two of these advertisements were ever published, but in Hume, which the party feared it would lose, all four advertisements appeared.⁸ In 1962, four advertisements were approved: all four were used in Lismore, which the party was hoping to regain (and some were repeated), but only two appeared in the adjoining safe seat of Byron.

Placement of advertisements varied within the electorates themselves. Different newspapers in the same electorate

7

By using Country Press, the party saves itself a great deal of clerical work and gains in addition a cheaper advertising rate.

8

The information in this and the following paragraph is based on Appendix P. For samples of Head Office advertising, see Appendix Q.

carried more or less advertising according to the C.C.C.'s opinion of the 'safeness' of the newspaper's circulation area. While both the Murwillumbah and Mullumbimby papers ran two advertisements in 1961, the paper circulating in Kyogle, where the party's majority is always higher, was given only one. Much the same pattern was true in every electorate.

What was true of press advertising was equally true of radio. For the 1959 state elections the C.C.C. approved a schedule of radio advertising for each of the country radio stations with an audience in seats being contested by the party.⁹ Examined closely, the schedule revealed a basic radio campaign which was to be employed in the party's safe seats. In three other seats, Orange, the electorate of the Acting-Leader (who was to be absent on a state-wide election tour), Upper Hunter (in which the sitting Member had retired) and Murrumbidgee (which the party had some hopes of winning), the basic campaign was to be increased by 50 per cent. In three more seats, Dubbo, Mudgee and Young, the three key seats as far as the Country Party was concerned, the basic campaign was to be doubled. In this last group was also the

⁹ Estimated Radio Costing - State Elections 1959, an attachment to a letter from General Secretary to Hon. Secretary Orange SEC, 16 February 1959. (Orange SEC Records).

radio station of Inverell, which town was the weak point in the otherwise safe seat of Armidale.

From the point of view of the electorate councils, central advertising is very much a mixed blessing, especially since their 15 per cent or 30 per cent donation quotas help to pay for it. On the wall of the Armidale SEC office there was once a sheet of hints entitled "Work Necessary at Elections", in which item F suggested "try to minimise Sydney advertisements".¹⁰ The attitude is typical, but the complaints are not without some justice. The content of Head Office's four advertisements, which will be seen by anything up to half a million voters, must be general and non-parochial. But as we shall see, local campaigns tend to eschew the general and emphasise the parochial. To the electorate councils, much Head Office advertising is irrelevant. Sometimes it is far worse. In 1953, through some mischance, a series of advertisements extolling the Country Party for its part in having the price of butter increased appeared in newspapers outside the dairying areas, to the consternation and fury of the electorate councils concerned.¹¹ Since then the councils have demanded (without success) that

¹⁰

Through the courtesy of Davis Hughes M.L.A., this document is now in the possession of the writer.

¹¹

Minutes, 1953 AC.

the amounts spent by Head Office on advertising be transferred to the councils.

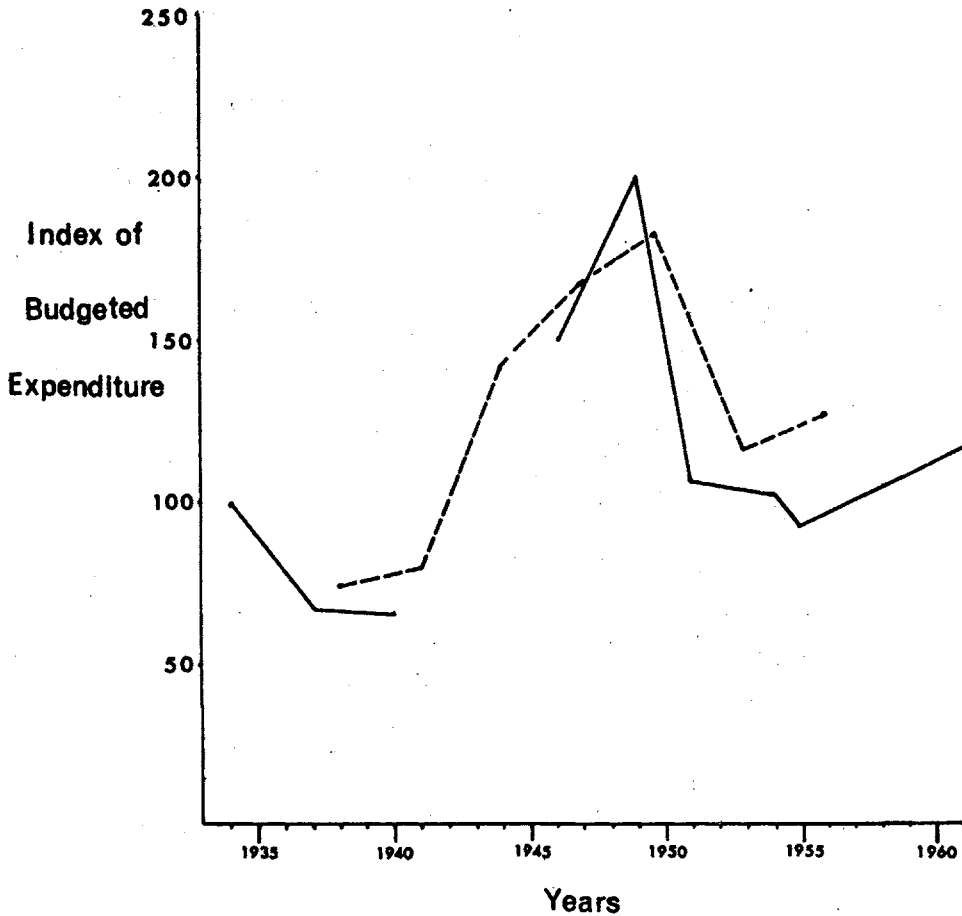
In one sense the electorate council complaints are strange, since the C.C.C. which authorises the advertising is little more than a select committee of council chairmen. The fact is that some Head Office advertising is simply inevitable. Central Council cannot be sure that the advertising of all the councils will be adequate: indeed in a few electorates the central advertisements are the major - in some cases the only - party advertisements in the campaign. Head Office cannot know in advance (though it can guess) where the weaknesses will be. Thus its advertising must be comprehensive in coverage just as it must be general in appeal. Head Office campaigns may not be as efficient as councils would like them to be, but the alternative is risky, and these risks Central Council has never been prepared to take. Moreover, the central advertising commitments are the party's way of thanking the country newspapers for their support (which in the north is considerable).¹² And in Senate elections and referenda, Head Office advertising is crucial, since on these occasions only the central body

¹²

So Colonel Bruxner informed a critic of Head Office advertising at a Tenterfield SEC meeting in 1954. Minutes, Tenterfield SEC, 3 March 1954. For some indication of the support given by country newspapers, see Appendix P.

Graph 4

Total Budgeted Head Office Election Expenditure:
Federal and State Election Campaigns, 1934-61



Notes:

1. ——— Federal election expenditure
----- State election expenditure
2. Total budgeted Head Office expenditure for the federal election campaign of 1934 = 100.
3. The 1943 federal election campaign budget was not available.

Source: See Appendices N and O.

has a proper appreciation of the importance of the campaign and the energy and resources with which to fight it:¹³ electorate councils are generally too concerned with sitting and prospective Members to mount a vigorous and effective campaign when local men are not involved.

The other important function of the central organisation is to ensure that, administratively, the party's local institutions are in working order, that they are kept in touch with the campaign as a whole, that they realise their tasks and they they have enough information and material to fulfil their responsibilities. This is a function that varies little from election to election. The administrative and financial problems of elections for the Country Party in New South Wales are very much the same whether the campaign is federal or state. As Graph 4 shows, the party has spent centrally very similar sums on federal and state campaigns, and as Appendices N and O show, these amounts themselves have stabilised since the early 1950s. Each campaign therefore, is administratively very much like the last, and thus Head Office has developed considerable expertise in planning the groundwork upon which the success of any election campaign finally depends.

¹³

The State Organiser put this forcibly to Central Council in 1956. SOR to CC, 10 February 1956.

No-one else in the party understands the technicalities of the Electoral Acts so well as the General Secretary: the permissible dimensions of electoral posters, the regulations regarding postal, electoral visitor and section votes, the rules relating to polling day procedure and scrutineering. Before each campaign begins he will send to each local campaign director and electorate council a long letter containing all the information they will need on these and related matters.¹⁴ For the benefit of electorate councils with little campaign experience, and as a reminder to older hands, the General Secretary has prepared an outline for the conduct of local campaigns which lacks nothing in detail. This advice, entitled Organisation prior to and during a Campaign, sets out everything that an electorate council should do to ensure the success of a campaign, including the tactics that should be employed as well as the administrative mechanics that many councils neglect (for instance, making sure that all supporters are enrolled).¹⁵ For polling

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The letter preceding the 1955 federal elections, for example, consisted of three closely typed foolscap pages and gave not only this information but also an account of the central campaign and the decisions of the C.C.C. (Bundarra Branch Records).

¹⁵

The writer was told of one case in which an active supporter, after working all day at the party tables, went in to vote and discovered, to her chagrin, that her name did not appear on the electoral roll.

day workers, the General Secretary has prepared a set of Hints which, if followed, would make the party's polling day activity much more than the aimless ritual that it all too frequently is. Much the same can be said about the equally thoughtful and detailed Hints to Scrutineers. Ample copies of these leaflets are sent to all electorate councils prior to the campaign.

The assistance provided by the General Secretary is complemented by the Master Directory Plans of the State Organiser. The Plan is a detailed analysis of both the electorate and the party's organisation therein. It contains road and electoral maps; an analysis of voting by subdivisions in the electorate at the previous election; a list of all the newspapers, radio stations, cinemas and hospitals in the electorate; a complete and up-to-date list of the party membership; the name, address and telephone number of every branch chairman and secretary; a list of past helpers at every polling booth within the electorate; a suggested distribution of campaign literature, electoral rolls and how-to-vote cards; and the composition of the electorate council and the campaign committee. It is an invaluable document, and should be the handbook of every campaign director. (Sadly, from the point of view of the party, but perhaps typically, some campaign directors

leave their Master Directory Plans unopened for the entire campaign.)

Head Office also acts as the liaison between the parliamentary party and the local organisation. Once the parliamentary Leader has worked out his itinerary, it is Head Office which lets the councils know the dates, places and times. But the itinerary of the Leader, and his deployment of the parliamentarians, are matters for the parliamentary party alone.¹⁶ Although each Member will want to remain in his own electorate for as much of the campaign as possible, the party will agree upon which seats are most important, and roster themselves to help the local campaign as visiting speakers. This information, too, is communicated to Head Office, and from Head Office to the councils.

When the results of the election are finally known, the **C.C.C.**, or sometimes the Central Council or Executive, conducts a post-election assessment. These assessments are invariably hampered by lack of information. Although much information flows from the centre to the electorates, the return flow is meagre in comparison. In addition, because the **C.C.C.** and Central Council are composed largely of

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Except, of course, that in federal campaigns the movements of the senior parliamentarians will be influenced to some extent by the decisions of the coalition and the Prime Minister.

council chairmen, assessment is essentially self-assessment. He will be a rare council chairman who will admit to a poorly prepared campaign or inefficient polling day arrangements (and he may not even be aware of the weaknesses). Finally, and this is true of all parties and for all elections, there is no way of measuring the effect of a campaign, of separating, from the multitude of factors which go to make up an individual voting decision, those which were the result of a party's campaign.

Post-election assessment therefore tends often to be an unhappy blend of exculpation and 'scapegoatism'. If the results have been favourable, any kind of rational examination of the causes is lost in the euphoria of victory. But if the party has lost seats, or not won enough, then the cause of the defeats will be found outside the party: the tactics of the Liberal Party (1959),¹⁷ gerrymandering by the Labor Government (1953),¹⁸ or its interference with the Electoral Act (1950).¹⁹ And whatever the result, statistics will be produced to show that the defeat was not as bad as that of the previous election, or that more votes were won

¹⁷ Editorial, Countryman, April 1959.

¹⁸ CCCR to CC.

¹⁹ Leader's Report to Central Executive, 27 June 1950.

even though seats were lost, or that the Liberal Party received a worse drubbing, and so on. To be useful, assessment must be founded on plentiful and accurate information, and it must be accompanied by a willingness to accept blame. Neither of these conditions is satisfied in the Country Party, at the central level or indeed at any other.²⁰

II. THE ELECTORATE CAMPAIGN

It is clear that the party's central campaigns, however expensive, depend for their full realisation upon the quality of the local campaigns in each electorate. This is probably more true of the Country Party than of the Labor or Liberal Parties, firstly because of the greater autonomy of Country Party local institutions, and secondly because one of the great strengths of the party is its ability to mobilise regional and local interests and issues in its support. As in endorsement, and to a lesser extent in fund-raising, it is at the electorate council level that the significant decisions are made.

The activity and quality of the electorate council's campaign will depend primarily on the type of candidate it

²⁰

It might be added that shifts in voting support for the party have been relatively slight in the past 14 years, and there has therefore been a not unnatural tendency on the part of some officials to ascribe changes in support to the "electoral pendulum".

is supporting. If he is the sitting Member for a state seat, then he will almost certainly be the dominant influence in the campaign, in the designing and directing of publicity, in the preparing of the budget and his own itinerary. The campaign director, possibly chosen on the advice of the sitting Member, will be his chief of staff, and the campaign committee will play a subordinate role. The Member will keep in close contact with the director throughout the campaign, but he will be issuing instructions, not receiving them.

In state seats where an untried candidate is campaigning, or in federal seats generally, because of their size, the competence of the campaign director is usually much greater. His appointment may have been made without consultation with the candidate, his budget will have been determined by the electorate council but, within limits, he is free to spend it as he wishes. His campaign committee will also play a more important role. Formed usually from branch chairmen, it constitutes the necessary liaison between the council and the branches, a function that can be performed equally well by a sitting Member through personal contacts. And it decides on the content, format and placement of advertising. The candidate is likely to be consulted about

many of these matters, but (unless he is a federal Member) his opinions are unlikely to be decisive.

In multiple endorsement contests, the management of the campaign is fundamentally different. Each candidate will have his own campaign director, his own campaign committee, his own budget. His funds, unless found from donations, must come from his own pocket.²¹ His is as much a personal campaign as that of a sitting state Member, and more so, since he cannot use the local organisation in the same manner: he must either share it with his other Country Party rivals, or replace it by a system of personal contacts at each polling booth. The latter alternative is more usual, since few branches can resist taking sides: either a branch splits, and personal campaign committees for each of the candidates emerge, or the branch as a whole joins the forces of one of the candidates, thus forcing the others to go outside the branch for workers and supporters. Furthermore, the candidates are likely to be suspicious of all Head Office and electorate council assistance, since this must give equal support to all candidates. As has been suggested, multiple endorsement contests are divisive, and potentially dangerous to the party's organisation. In such campaigns the

21

He may, however, afterwards receive a donation from the electorate council, but this cannot be expected.

electorate council has little to do, and the more active officials are likely to join one or other of the candidates' teams: for the purposes of the campaign, the party's local organisation is by-passed almost completely.

The fourth major campaign type is that managed by the candidate campaign committee. Such committees are found in electorates containing both Liberal and Country Party members, and are formed to enable supporters of one party to work for the other party's candidate without at the same time overtly working for the other party. The modern fore-runner of these committees was the John Howse Campaign Committee, established by the Liberal Party in Calare in 1948 to get Country Party support for their candidate (the Country Party was not presenting a candidate in Calare because of the pact between the two parties for the 1949 federal elections).²² Until his resignation in 1960 each of Howse's campaigns were managed by this Committee. The idea was copied by Charles Cutler, the Country Party M.L.A. for Orange, and all of his campaigns since 1950 have been managed by the Charles Cutler Campaign Committee.²³ The

²²

There was also a Country Party-inspired Charles Anderson Campaign Committee in Hume in 1949, but after Anderson's election subsequent campaigns were fought under the aegis of the Hume FEC.

²³

The remainder of this paragraph is based on Charles Cutler Campaign Committee Records.

Cutler Committee is entirely separate from the Orange Country Party organisation: it has its own bank account, it submits no financial returns to Head Office, it ignores donation quotas, it has office-bearers drawn from outside the Country Party, and its campaigns are focussed on Cutler the man, not Cutler the endorsed Country Party candidate. Outside the city of Orange Liberal influence is not so pervasive, and the branch structure of the Country Party is used by the Committee, but there have been Charles Cutler Campaign Committees in some of the smaller towns.

Candidate campaign committees are a logical extension of the normal Liberal/Country Party co-operation at the electorate level during referenda, when the two parties have normally been on the same side. On such occasions, "Citizen's Vote NO (or YES) Committees" are formed, with funds and personnel drawn from both parties. But in general elections these committees are anathema to party-oriented members, from the party Chairman down. Bruxner attacked them strongly in 1948 as being opposed to party principles,²⁴ and the General Secretary has argued against them both on principle and on technocratic grounds, claiming (rightly) that they lead to apathetic and inefficient local

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CEM, 4 February 1948.

organisation.²⁵ Nevertheless, there is strong support for the committee method at the local level, and when Central Executive tried to have personal committees prohibited in 1955, delegate opposition was so strong that Conference rejected the motion.²⁶

Whatever the form of management of the campaign, its evolution over the four or five weeks preceding polling day is strikingly similar from one electorate to another.²⁷ By the time the campaign begins the candidate will have been endorsed, and will already have started his own campaigning and his visits to branch areas to make or renew contacts with local party workers. About three months before polling day the electorate council will meet, appoint a campaign director and a campaign committee, and decide on the budget. The campaign director and the committee will probably have performed these functions at previous elections, and the

25

For example, GSR to CE, 7 September 1950.

26

Minutes, 1955 AC. This was one of the few times when a Central Executive resolution was rejected by the Conference.

27

It is impossible to encapsulate in a few hundred words all the variety of 20 different election campaigns. Therefore, in what follows an attempt has been made to picture a hypothetical campaign, with an experienced candidate, in a not-so-safe seat, based on the writer's observations of the 1961 and 1962 campaigns, of the Liverpool Plains by-election in 1961, and on the contents of branch and council minute books and other records.

director will be expected to devote his whole time (or at least the greater part of it) to the campaign.

The director will have certain important data when he begins planning the campaign. Firstly he will know the strengths and weaknesses in the party's electoral support in the electorate in great detail, and he will have a good layman's understanding of them. That is to say, he can think of the politics of the electorate in socio-economic terms: here a railway town, a dam site, an impoverished village - strong Labor; there a closely-settled prosperous wheatfarming valley - strong Country Party; in the main town, businessmen, doctors, bank managers, lawyers, accountants - mostly Liberal, and influential. If his experience as a campaign director is long indeed, he will know who the voters are in the smaller areas, the supporters, the out-and-out opponents, the waverers.

Secondly, he will know the strengths and weaknesses in his own organisation: the active, reliable branches, the apathetic ones; who can be trusted implicitly, who needs prodding, who panics. Thirdly, he will be aware of local issues and rivalries, the attitudes of newspaper editors, local church leaders, headmasters and other opinion-leaders. Fourthly, he will by now know who is to be the A.L.P. candidate, and will be already noting his weaknesses and

strengths, not personal, but political - where he lives, his occupation, whom he married, his family history, his age, his religion, his previous participation in public affairs, even, perhaps, his sporting activities. It is not essential that the campaign director possess all this knowledge, although many do, but between them the candidate and the director should, and usually do, possess all this information and more.

With this as given, and without reference yet to policies and issues, the director and the candidate plan the latter's speaking itinerary. The candidate must be prepared to be almost continually on the move for three or four weeks. Every population centre, down to the tiniest hamlet, must be visited, and if possible more than once: the flag must be shown and the candidate seen everywhere in the electorate, for it is in the smallest centres that the party wins its strongest support.²⁸ On the other hand, he will have to pay attention to proven weak spots. Areas of strong Labor support will be visited, though not overmuch (since these are conceded to be opposition territory), but

28

Thus in 1962, J.H. Taylor, M.L.A. for Temora, planned to make a total of 60 speeches, in 19 days (22 counting Sundays) at 41 centres, making sometimes five speeches in one day. (Itinerary courtesy A.G. Hutchinson, Campaign Director, Temora SEC).

marginal areas, especially the towns, he must visit and re-visit.²⁹ Once the itinerary has been drawn up, a copy will be sent to every branch in the electorate, and to "key men" in areas where there is no branch.

Before the Leader has delivered his policy speech, the campaign director and the candidate, perhaps in conjunction with the campaign committee, will prepare the basic advertising for the campaign. There will be three different types of press advertising: notices of meetings and addresses, publicity and propaganda, and, nearing polling day, how-to-vote instructions for party supporters. The first and last type are straight-forward, but the second will require a great deal of thought, for in the drawing-up of press propaganda the director and candidate are deciding the party's local strategy for the campaign.

The content of the propaganda will be determined largely by the circumstances of the local campaign. If the

29

The by-passing of Labor strongholds is traditional. But F.L. O'Keefe, candidate for Liverpool Plains in 1961 (by-election), decided to break with this tradition and carry his attack into the enemy camp, in this case the unpromising railway towns of Werris Creek and Murrurrundi. O'Keefe finally won the seat with a margin of less than 1 per cent. But his vote in Murrurrundi had improved from 30.6 per cent in 1959 to 37.2 per cent in 1961, and in Werris Creek from 22.9 per cent to 29.4 per cent. D.A. Aitkin, "The Liverpool Plains By-election", A.P.S.A. News, Vol. 6, No. 3, August 1961, p.16.

candidate is a sitting Member of long standing, then his work for the electorate will be emphasised;³⁰ if a novice, his personal qualities or experience, especially if he is a person of some standing in the electorate - a Mayor, Shire Councillor or community leader. If the Labor candidate has shortcomings which can be attacked, then attention will be drawn to them (usually^{by}/emphasising their reverse in the case of the Country Party candidate): residence outside the electorate, lack of knowledge of rural areas or industries, or lack of experience in public affairs.

If the Labor candidate cannot be attacked on his personal qualities, then the direction of fire will shift to his party. Particularly in state politics, the A.L.P. will be charged with neglect of the countryside (with local examples), with pre-occupation with the industrial and urban areas,³¹ with being dominated by outside influences, or, if this can be supported by evidence, with passing legislation inimical to the primary producer or to countrymen generally. In federal campaigns the party's propaganda will usually focus upon the links between the A.L.P. and communism, and on the

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For examples of election propaganda see Appendix Q.

³¹

A common Country Party attack in 1962 was to suggest that "N.S.W." for the A.L.P. meant Newcastle, Sydney and Wollongong, the three important industrial centres in the state.

alleged "horrors" suffered by the country under the last federal Labor Governments.

Finally, local propaganda will illuminate the traditions and ideals of the Country Party itself, its freedom to fight exclusively for the interests of country people, its belief in decentralisation and free enterprise, and the quality of its Leaders and parliamentarians. The composition of any local advertising campaign will reflect the importance that the candidate and the director place on each of these issues. It will accordingly vary from electorate to electorate, but in each it will be the local factors that are predominant, the candidate, the issues, or the opposition.

Once the content and placement of the propaganda for press and radio is determined it is relatively fixed: it may be supplemented later, as certain policies and issues become more important, but it cannot usually be replaced.³² In deciding upon format, size and layout the director, candidate and committee will be influenced largely by the amount of money at their disposal, but also by their accumulated experience from past elections. They may choose to

32

Since this would involve the media in additional work, and might therefore cause bad relations with the newspapers and radio stations.

take whole pages because they believe the effect to be dramatic, or to rely upon more and smaller advertisements because they are cheaper and allow greater flexibility. They may decide to use radio advertising more often on this occasion, or less often. They will endeavour, through personal contact with editors (if this is possible), to secure the best place for their advertisements: the front and back pages, or the right-hand side of page 3.³³

Up to this point the campaign has not officially started. But already the campaign director will have been receiving communications from Head Office, advising him of the date of the Leader's speech, the dates of the Leader's visits (if any) and of the visits of other parliamentarians, whether or not an organiser is coming to the electorate, whether or not he is to receive campaign literature, speakers' notes, or how-to-vote cards. This information he must incorporate into the local campaign, change his plans if this is necessary, and let the branches know of any meetings or addresses in their districts.

With the Leader's policy speech, usually broadcast over the national network and relayed to regional and

33

Although this sophistication in approach is probably uncommon. The propaganda-makers are essentially amateurs relying upon personal taste and experience.

sometimes commercial stations, the campaign officially begins. The candidate commences his own itinerary of speeches and meetings, and local advertising starts to appear (as does that emanating from Head Office). The candidate will have one basic speech, which he will embellish as the occasion demands. It will include the important policy points from the Leader's speech, an account of his work for the electorate (if he is a sitting Member), a list of the important local issues as he sees them (a new school here, a better road there, a water supply for somewhere else), and an attack on the Labor Government and its policies. By the end of his campaign, if this is his first, he will be able to give this speech without halting or hesitation, and without notes. The campaign director will give regular "handouts" to the local press, which purport to be an account of the candidate's address at each of his speaking points.³⁴

By the end of the first week, the issues are beginning to emerge. The Labor candidate may have made a spectacular promise - a new High School in one of the towns. Or members may report adverse reaction to an item of Country

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However, they are often written without reference to the speech at all, since the director will not know exactly what the candidate said in many of his speeches.

Party policy.³⁵ Quickly the candidate, now perhaps at the other end of the electorate, is contacted, and fresh decisions made: play down the offending policy; match the promise, or if this is neither possible nor desirable, attack it as an insincere election bid. The campaign director, if he can afford it, will follow this up with new advertisements in the appropriate local newspapers.

At the same time, weaknesses are beginning to appear in the organisation. The candidate reports that no-one was expecting him in one of the villages and that the local branch seems defunct. The campaign director telephones the branch chairman for an explanation and sends the organiser over to re-activate the branch, or, if he has no organiser, goes himself. A party stalwart in another area falls seriously ill; since he is a "key man"³⁶ on polling day he must be replaced: another telephone call and another visit.

By the end of the second week the pace of the campaign has quickened, and the pressure on the candidate and the director increased. And by this time the "pub-talk" has begun to filter in to campaign headquarters. No-one seems

³⁵

As happened in 1962 with regard to the party's promise to aid denominational schools in their building programmes, interpreted by many Protestants as a form of state aid to Catholic schools.

³⁶

This is the party's own term.

interested in the campaign, or it is being widely talked about; the candidate is getting a good reception, or a bad one; the Labor candidate is doing better than was expected, or worse; this issue has died, that one is still causing comment. If the campaign director has budgeted for contingency advertising, he can keep up the flow of new advertisements, and in any case the candidate will be modifying his address, and the handouts will be changed. Perhaps even the itinerary will be added to: another address in this town, where the candidate is reported to be losing ground.

The director will now be keeping in almost daily touch with the branch chairman or secretaries. One or two branches may be conducting their own campaigns: do they need any help? All the branches will already know their tasks on polling day: do they have enough people to do the work? If not, the director will have to supplement the branch workers with some from another branch. By now the how-to-vote cards will be printed (and every printery in the electorate will receive an order) and he lets the branch know, by telephone or letter, when they are being sent, and by what medium.

The campaign in the last week resembles an express train with its throttle jammed wide. The issues, as they

appear to the party, are now fixed. It is too late to change them. It is too late to create new policies, too late to arrange new meetings, too late to call in outside help. All that the campaign director and his candidate can do is to follow the itinerary, and check and check again, that the branches are ready, that the how-to-vote cards have been received, that scrutineers have been appointed, and that all those entitled to postal votes have received them. On polling day the candidate will endeavour to visit as many of the party tables in the whole electorate as he possible can. The campaign director can do little more than cast his vote: on polling day the campaign is finally with the branches.³⁷

III. THE BRANCH CAMPAIGN

Apart from its role in the selection of the candidate and in raising campaign funds, the branch has two important functions in an election campaign. It acts as the local instrument of the campaign director, and through him of the electorate council, and it conducts the campaign in its final stage on polling day.

If Head Office has supplied the electorate council with campaign literature, or if the council itself has

³⁷

Assessment by the electorate council is discussed in the next section of this chapter.

decided to print leaflets or pamphlets, then it is usually the branch's responsibility to distribute these to the electors. These missives may be posted, dropped in letter boxes, or sent out in empty milk cans to dairyfarmers, depending on the electorate, the activity of the branch and the state of its finances. Where a branch has an attached Younger Set, this job may be delegated to it.³⁸ For other purposes, however, the campaign director will rely almost solely upon the branch chairman or secretary: for information, for reports of local feeling, and for supplying a chairman for the candidate's meeting or address.

But the more active branches will often wish to conduct their own campaigns. These campaigns are essentially "press wars", since the movements of the candidate are not determined by the branch and since he may only visit the branch's district on two or three occasions. Such campaigns are only ever waged by town branches, firstly because they are the largest branches with access to more funds and wider skills, secondly because only the towns possess newspapers and radio stations, and thirdly because these branches are most conscious of the importance of the town vote; it is hardly worth the trouble, and it is extremely difficult,

³⁸

As it was for the 1959 state campaign in Armidale.

for a small rural branch to mount a campaign in an area containing only 250 voters, and in which the party already receives 70 per cent of the votes.

If the branch decides to campaign it will form a campaign committee, usually of five to ten members, allow it to use what funds the branch possesses and give it complete control of the campaign. Such campaigns consist of newspaper advertisements, letters to the editor (and replies to replies) and radio sessions. For the 1949 campaign in Gwydir, for example, Gunnedah Branch ran three radio sessions per week in which branch members read prepared speeches in support of the party's candidate.³⁹ Inverell Branch followed this example in 1955.⁴⁰ The campaign conducted by Cowra Branch in 1959, which was matched by a similar campaign by Cowra's A.L.P. branch, has already been noted.⁴¹ All branches are expected to check the electoral rolls, to ensure that supporters are enrolled, and that known opponents who have left the electorate are no longer listed, but such is the confidence of party members in the

39

Hon. Secretary Gunnedah Branch to General Secretary (Copy), 11 November 1949. (Gunnedah Branch Records).

40

Minutes, Committee Meeting Inverell Branch, 29 July 1955.

41

See above, Chapter 13, part III.

accuracy of the rolls that few branches ever bother to make the effort.

The branch, however inactive, will usually meet once during the campaign to plan its activity on polling day. This activity consists of erecting a party table outside the polling booth, perhaps inside a marquee, manning the table with party workers throughout polling hours (8 a.m. to 8 p.m.) and providing for scrutineers to watch the counting of votes at the close of the poll.⁴² Tradition and geography determine which polling booths are each branch's special responsibility. In a large town with one branch there may be three or even four polling booths, and the branch will be expected to provide workers at each. In the rural areas there is normally one branch at each sizeable polling place. In sparsely-settled areas there may not be a branch at all: here the polling day work is the responsibility of the key man.

"Manning the tables" can thus involve a fair proportion of the branch membership, since each booth worker normally spends not more than two hours at the table, and there may be as many as three or four workers at the table at the

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Compulsory voting in Australia obviates the necessity for the branch to "get out the vote", but occasionally branches will provide cars for elderly or infirm supporters.

busiest times. All active members will help, as a matter of course, but the secretary may have to exert some pressure upon recalcitrants ("We only ask you to help once every three years...") to make up the numbers.

Booth work is highly ritualistic. The table will be covered with polling information and how-to-vote cards. The implicit theory is that voters will approach the table, ask whether they are enrolled, and receive an affirmative answer along with a how-to-vote card. The table is also designed to help voters from other subdivisions and other electorates to submit Absent votes. In fact, most of the booth workers generally stand in strategic places outside the booth and hand cards indiscriminately to the entering voters. So too, do the A.L.P., D.L.P. and Liberal booth workers. It is difficult for any voter to reach the booth without collecting at least one how-to-vote card, and all but firm party supporters will probably receive them all (as much from their unwillingness to offend the workers as from any other reason).⁴³ At the close of voting the scrutineers will enter the booth and observe the count: an

43

The writer's experience comes from polling day observations of four general elections in three electorates. In rural areas, there is often only a Country Party table, and this may not always be attended. See also Hughes and Knox, in Rawson, Australia Votes, p.212.

entirely ritualistic procedure, since the count is too fast to be checked properly, and since both scrutineers and counters know that the entire vote will be counted at least once more.

But whatever its effect on the final vote, the branch's activity on polling day is important to the branch, and particularly to its active members. For many it is the justification for the existence of the branch. As the Chairman of Temora Branch explained in 1937, in a remark no less true in 1963,

although the attendance is poor at times, they made up for it coming on election time, when there was something to do...⁴⁴

Nearly twice as many of the respondents to the postal survey had helped the party at election time as had regularly attended branch meetings.⁴⁵ Indeed, as a public display of the members' committal to the party's cause it is much more important than attending branch meetings.

Like the post-election assessment of Central Council, that of the local organisation rarely takes place following a victory: it is too easy simply to indulge in self-congratulation. And, in like fashion, assessment after a defeat is

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Minutes, Temora Branch, 30 July 1937.

⁴⁵

Appendix G.

usually prompted by a desire to lay the blame elsewhere. The active branch will blame the electorate council, as Grenfell Branch did Calare FEC in 1946, for failing to supply the branch with literature and how-to-vote cards.⁴⁶ After Colonel Anderson's defeat in Hume in 1951, Temora Branch blamed the woolgrowers and their ill-founded antagonism towards the federal government over the Wool Sales Deduction Act.⁴⁷ But branch activity is seldom seen at fault. Even when Armidale Branch indulged in an avowedly rigorous examination of its own part in the defeat of Davis Hughes in 1953, criticism was directed mainly at the voting regulations, not at the branch.⁴⁸

Electorate councils, with better information, are more selective, and there is sometimes real evaluation of method and performance. Thus the Charles Cutler Campaign Committee reviewed its practice of sending out how-to-vote cards by mail when booth workers reported that only two of the 800 sent out had been brought to the booths: the Committee decided not to waste money in this fashion again.⁴⁹ Temora

⁴⁶ Minutes, Grenfell Branch, 8 November 1946.

⁴⁷ Minutes, Annual Meeting Temora Branch, 22 February 1952.

⁴⁸ Minutes, Armidale Branch, 27 February 1953.

⁴⁹ Minutes, Charles Cutler Campaign Committee, 19 January 1953. Note that this assessment was taking place immediately before the next election.

SEC's campaign director reported after the 1960 by-election that he doubted the value of how-to-vote cards and brochures sent by post: apart from questions of effect he thought the electoral rolls were too inexact and the postage costs too high. He also suggested that in future campaigns more use should be made of radio, and much less of street meetings, which he considered practically ineffective.⁵⁰ But much council assessment falls back on exhortations to branches to do better next time, or like Central Council, on blaming the sinister machinations of the Labor Government. Thus for the defeat of Davis Hughes in 1953 the "State postal voting system was largely to blame", and playing a minor role was the government's "juggling with boundaries".⁵¹ Hume FEC attributed the failure of the party to regain Hume in 1954 to the failure of a sufficient number of Liberal voters to give their second preferences to Colonel Anderson.⁵²

The lack of worthwhile assessment, at all levels, accounts for the slowness with which the party's campaign methods change. Candidates, campaign directors and councils themselves change slowly, and few see any good reason to

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Minutes, Temora SEC, 3 September 1960.

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Minutes, Annual Meeting Armidale SEC, 18 April 1953.

⁵²

Minutes, Annual Meeting Hume FEC, 3 May 1955.

change methods which have been followed by success in the past, even if on occasion they are followed by defeat. And even if methods are criticised, they are likely to be repeated just because they have always been used in the past.⁵³

Although the party's election campaign is its largest single activity, it must be emphasised that the activity only involves a minority of the party. At the electorate council level, only the chairman, secretary and campaign director will have a great deal to do, and in the branches only the active members will take part in the campaign. But these active members are the party at the local level - the remainder are more truly in the category of supporters. For the latter, the campaign serves as an indication that the party to which they contribute their annual donations is still functioning vigorously and that it is still the same party. For the former it is an opportunity to do something meaningful to help the party and its candidate,

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Thus the writer heard, on more than one occasion, defences of street-corner meetings, or of sending out brochures through the post, which amounted to assertions that "people expect them" or (worse still) that "it's traditional". Yet the defenders would probably not have argued that the party would lose votes if these methods were replaced by others. Note too, J.H. Taylor's long speaking tour in 1962 after his campaign director's dismissal of street-corner meetings as useless two years earlier.

especially if he is the sitting Member. The vigorous campaign is therefore important for two reasons outside that of returning the candidate: it calls upon more members to actively help, and it keeps the party's image before more supporters and for longer periods. The half-hearted campaign (common on the north coast, but not unknown inland) can be disastrous for the morale of the local organisation. Active members, given nothing to do, lose interest and drop out of the branches; supporters hear little of the candidate or the party, and wonder whether their bank orders are really necessary. When the next election comes the task of waging an effective campaign will be much more difficult. The campaign is more than just a means of returning the party's candidate: it is a means of renewing the party's life.

CHAPTER 15

PARTY CONFLICT

Many influential theories of the Australian party system are based on the assumption that the fundamental socio-economic cleavage in the Australian community is that dividing Labor from non-Labor. While such writers as J.D.B. Miller and L.F. Crisp, for example, attribute a minor role to the Country Party within the non-Labor forces, and also admit the secondary importance of urban/rural tensions in affecting political alignments, they see Australian politics dominated by a two-party conflict, present at all levels of government. In addition, they describe this conflict as one about material rather than ideological values; hence Miller's emphasis on the role of "syndicates", or alliances of economic pressure groups, in forming party policies;¹ and Crisp's theme of the forces of "town and country capital" checking the advance of the Labor Party.²

Although this theory explains a good deal about Australian politics, it also diverts attention from several other features, some of which are most important in the countryside. Not the least of these neglected features is the modification of party interaction at the different levels of the political system. To take perhaps an obvious

¹ Miller, p.65 et seq.

² Crisp, Parliamentary Government, p.116 et seq.

example, the parties are differently organised and have different imperatives at the federal and at the state levels; again, the party struggle is seen differently according to whether one is placed at the locality level, where personalities and district concerns seem most important, at the electorate organisation level, where campaigns become technical exercises, and at the parliamentary level, where the central bodies of a party are in direct contact with the flow of legislative and administrative decisions. At the top, the tension between Labor and non-Labor remains high, but the further one works down the system the less real it appears. In particular, and this is a point of the utmost importance for this chapter, the differences between the Liberal and Country Parties, and between the Country and Labor Parties, are often hard to establish at the local level, and here party conflict tends to proceed in a world of its own.

Within each party, specialised functions at each level of activity mark off one institution from another. The parliamentary party, in the legislature and in the cabinet, specialises in the work of influencing legislation and administrative policies; the central organisation is entrusted with the tasks of keeping in touch with grass-roots opinion, of counselling the parliamentarians, and of considering the

party's general electoral and social strategy. And the further one goes down through the party organisation, to the electorate councils, branches and members, the narrower become the concerns, the more limited the strategic and socio-economic horizons. This is not to suggest that the differentiation of functions has led to the complete isolation of different levels of the party; in a very real sense the interaction between branches and M.P., between M.P. and Central Council, between Central Council and electorate councils, is a continuous and creative one. Nevertheless, there remains the fact that the sense of drama and tension generated in politics at the top is seldom communicated in direct and tangible terms to the representatives of the parties who are supposed to be fighting for supremacy at the bottom. Party leaders may appeal to principle in parliament, but in the villages and rural areas men who have lived close together for years find it hard to erect their differences into ideological conflicts. This need not be so, and there have been periods when the struggle between the parties at all levels was both a fierce and an ideological one; but in domestic politics the decade of the 1950s has been essentially a quiet one.

To make this point is not to argue that Australian parties do not appeal to different groups within the community.

While it would be misleading to argue that Australian parties are essentially "class" parties, it is nevertheless true that each of the major parties identifies itself with broad social groups, regionally differentiated, and regards the others as also being class parties with regional bases. The Country Party's own view of the parties' socio-economic bases is perhaps the simplest of all. As the pseudonymous "Neil Webb" explained succinctly to A.F. Davies,

each party represents a different section of the community. The Labour party represents the workers. That's all right. They've got a right to be represented, and to make the government if they can get the support. The Liberal Party - well, I don't think it's unfair to say that the Liberal Party represents the big financiers in the State.... Well, finally, there's the Country Party...we stand for that most vital part of the economy that provides the exports - and the best part of the food and clothing for the rest of the community.³

These stereotypes do not greatly conform with reality, but in the country at least they have some substance. The Country Party is perfectly well aware that three-quarters of its members live on the land, and that neither the rural wage-earners nor the provincial bourgeoisie have ever been enthusiastic about joining the party. It is equally aware of the sources of its own electoral support and its finance. Conversely, it has always recognised the attractions of the

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Davies, Private Politics, p.75.

Liberal Party for the townsman, and the historic attachment of some areas to the A.L.P. While it has enjoyed at various times the support of both rural workers and townsmen, it has never felt sure of this support, nor expected it to remain constant. These are some of the general factors which help to make up political conflict, as the Country Party sees it.

I. MAJOR ENGAGEMENTS

Elections, and to a lesser extent referenda, are the main fields on which party conflict takes place. But they are not the only ones, and if it is true that elections culminate campaigning which has been going on for the past three years, it is equally true that they also represent the points of sharpest conflict in a confrontation which never ends and which is carried on on a day-to-day basis, in parliament, in the columns of the newspapers, and in public and private meetings. For the Country Party, as a minority party, this constant confrontation is a fact of life, for it cannot reach a permanent settlement with either of its larger opponents.

I. The Liberal Party

In elections in New South Wales the Country Party finds itself fighting the Labor Party in most seats, but in fact

the Liberal Party is its main rival; Labor's attacks on the Country Party strongholds are often well-directed and dangerous, but those of the Liberal Party are more subtle, and an all-out offensive from the Liberal Party would probably be attended with more success than one from the A.L.P. Firstly, the Liberal Party could offer itself as the principal non-socialist alternative to the Labor Party in country areas. In its own country electorates the Liberal Party seems to draw upon much the same clientèle which supports the Country Party in other electorates;⁴ and the pattern of its electoral support in its own rural electorates is, as far as can be ascertained, very similar.⁵ In fact, as we shall see, the Country Party contains a large group of members whose opposition to the A.L.P. is their primary political consideration. If these members could be persuaded that the defeat of Labor could be accomplished more easily and more often by a single non-Labor party, the Country Party would lose a great deal of its support.

Secondly, the Liberal Party already possesses extensive local organisation in country electorates. In 1960 there

⁴ Cf. Table III, Rawson and Haltzinger, p.49, where it appears that primary producers and their families might constitute between 30 per cent and 50 per cent of the party membership in Eden-Monaro. The proportion of wage-earners was comparable to that of the Country Party.

⁵ Rawson, Australia Votes, pp.230-7.

were 168 Liberal Party branches containing 6,136 members in country seats. Calare federal electorate alone contained 12 branches and 564 members, and Lawson federal electorate 13 branches and 384 members.⁶ While the party was not and has not been well organised in the north, there is no obvious reason why a patient branch-building campaign centered on the larger northern towns should not bring Liberal organisation in the north up to the level of that in the central west.

Thirdly, the Liberal Party denies the need for the very existence of the Country Party. It asserts that there is no real conflict between country and city interests, both of which it claims to promote. As the cultural orientation of the Country to the City increases, as it has done rapidly in the 1950s and will almost certainly continue to do, this argument may well gain more supporters. Moreover, the growing provincial towns (and there are many of them in the north) present an opportunity for the Liberal Party to capitalise on the growing disorientation of the towns from the rural hinterland.⁷

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Katharine O. Holgate, The Structure of Liberal State Politics in N.S.W., (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Melbourne, 1962), Appendix D.

7

See above, Chapter 3, part IV.

Finally, and in consequence, the Liberal Party has established as one of its major goals the incorporation of the Country Party and the subsequent creation of a single non-Labor party in New South Wales. To this end, as we have seen,⁸ it has repeatedly made merger offers on what it has considered to be eminently reasonable terms. The first such offer set the pattern for those following. In December 1946 the N.S.W. Division of the Liberal Party suggested that a new organisation, the Liberal Country Party, be formed. The leader and deputy-leader of the new party would come from the Country Party, the executive of 15 would have eight country members, and federal parliamentarians elected with the endorsement of the new organisation were to be allowed to sit with which federal non-Labor party they chose.⁹ The Central Executive of the Country Party rejected the offer out of hand, and its action was supported later by the Central Council.¹⁰

The flat refusal of the Country Party to even consider the terms of such a merger¹¹ encouraged the anti-Country

⁸ See above, Chapter 3, part III.

⁹ Katharine O. West, Power in the Liberal Party, (forthcoming). The writer is indebted to Mrs West for permission to consult this book in MS. The MS pages were not numbered.

¹⁰ Minutes, Special Meeting Central Council, 8 January 1947.

¹¹ For example, Central Council refused to discuss working arrangements with the Liberal Party for the 1949 federal

Party wing inside the Liberal Party to press for a show of strength in the electorates. In considering which strategy to adopt the Liberal Party had, after 1950, the example of the Victorian Liberals, who had mounted a frontal assault on the Victorian Country Party, first by luring away in 1949 a number of its parliamentarians into a Liberal Country Party (newly christened for the occasion) and then in 1950 by opposing the party in each of its remaining seats.¹² But in Victoria the Country Party had had close links with the A.L.P., which had kept in office a minority Country Party government for nearly nine years between 1935 and 1952.¹³ In New South Wales, however, the Country Party had followed a resolutely anti-Labor line, and aggression towards it could not be justified, as it had been in Victoria, on the ground of the Country Party's unreliability as a non-Labor ally.

Accordingly the Liberal Party pursued a policy of 'limited engagement', presenting candidates in nine Labor-held

elections unless the "proposals for amalgamation will be considered as beyond the scope of discussion, and will not be raised." E.J. Egginns to W.H. Spooner, 25 November 1948. (Copy in Central Council Minute Book).

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In 1945, seven of the 29 Country Party candidates had been opposed by Liberals, and in 1947, 14 of the 29. But in 1950 each of the 25 Country Party candidates faced a candidate from the Liberal Country Party. After 1952 the Country Party lost its dominant place in Victorian politics.

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An outline of the tangled non-Labor politics of Victoria since the war is given in West, op. cit. See also Encel, pp.208-14.

rural seats in 1947, in eleven such seats in 1950, in two in 1953, and in five in 1956. With the single exception of Gloucester in 1950,¹⁴ no Liberal candidate has ever opposed a sitting Country Party Member. At the same time, merger offers were repeated or hinted at.¹⁵ Limited engagement had only limited success. In 1947, for example, the Liberal Party polled 30,371 votes to the Country Party's 31,843 in the same nine seats. But the Country Party candidates were generally more successful: in 1950, only two of the eleven Liberal candidates who opposed Country Party candidates received more votes than their rivals (and these were in the seats of Wagga Wagga and Bathurst, both dominated by large provincial towns). The contests in 1953 and 1956 had equally inconclusive results.

The Country Party regarded these three-cornered contests with apprehension, despite its own relative success. It disagreed that these contests maximised the non-Labor vote, and argued rather that in entering rural contests the Liberal Party dissipated resources which should have been used to aid Liberal campaigns in marginal metropolitan seats.¹⁶

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In this election the sitting Country Party Member, formerly an Independent, was also being opposed by a second endorsed Country Party candidate.

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See above, Chapter 3, part III.

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The Countryman, July 1950.

Furthermore, the long-term significance of Liberal intrusion could not escape the Country Party. If the Liberal Party managed to win seats in this fashion, then these seats would be lost to the party in any future pre-election pact, and thus further weaken its position in bargaining. And while the Country Party maintained that it was the Liberal Party which was the aggressor (by attempting to disturb the status quo) it could hardly begin contesting rural seats held by the Liberal Party (none of which, in any case, it had much chance of winning). The Country Party had nothing to gain from electoral conflict with the Liberal Party, and a great deal to lose. Indeed, according to one writer,

when relations have been most strained between the opposition parties in the N.S.W. State Parliament, Country Party spokesmen have gone so far as privately to admit that, if their own party could not win, they would prefer a Labor to a Liberal Party victory in rural electorates.¹⁷

The Country Party responded to offers of amalgamation, as we have seen,¹⁸ with overtures seeking pre-election pacts, pointing sometimes to the long-lived Stevens-Bruxner coalition in New South Wales, and at other times to the equally long-lived and more numerous federal coalitions. The party has always regarded the pact (at least since the end of its geographic and electoral expansion in 1932) as an institution

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Holgate, The Structure of Liberal State Politics, p.167.

¹⁸

See above, Chapter 3, part III.

in Liberal/Country Party relations. It realises that it is unlikely to govern (pace the Victorian Country Party) outside the framework of a coalition, or even, given the distribution of seats, to be the senior partner in a coalition, and therefore it prefers to have the coalition agreement as detailed as possible, and decided well in advance of the election.¹⁹

For the Liberal Party, these considerations apply in reverse: the coalition, for the major party, must always be the next-best-thing to governing in its own right. It encourages factionalism, because there will always be a disappointed group of office-seekers which can blame the existence of the coalition for their being outside the Cabinet. To these general factors must be added one peculiar to the structure of the Liberal/Country Party relations in New South Wales. The Liberal Party's aim is to amalgamate the two non-Labor parties. But a coalition, and particularly the attendant pre-election pact, freezes the respective strengths and influence of the parties. Since it is the Liberal Party which is now aggressive, the pact prolongs the life of the Country Party and allows it to consolidate its defensive position. The Liberal Party's frequent rejections

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See above, Chapter I, part III.

of pre-election pacts, therefore, have sprung from its realisation of their tactical implications: for it the pact can only be an expedient arrangement, appropriate for those occasions when the immediate need to replace Labor is of greater moment than the desire to supplant the Country Party.²⁰

Thus in its relations with the Country Party the Liberal Party steers an uncertain course between the Charybdis of principle and the Scylla of expediency. On the one hand it desires to replace the Country Party, on the other it seeks government. But it cannot achieve both ends at once. Within the party there will always be a group antagonistic to the Country Party and conscious of the Liberal Party's own pretensions of being a truly national party. Equally there will always be another group, not necessarily sympathetic to the Country Party, but nevertheless aware of the tremendous problems associated with fighting it seriously and the near impossibility of governing until it is finally defeated, perhaps 20 years hence. The changing strategy that the Liberal Party has employed in its

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Although the pact can still be coupled, as it was in 1959, with three-cornered contests. Sir Frederick Eggleston suggests that Liberals also dislike the coalition arrangement because the less able and intelligent Country Party members weigh down the otherwise brilliant Liberal ministry. This is the reverse of the argument used by the Country Party to justify entering such a ministry. Eggleston, p.105 and Chapter 5 generally.

relations with the Country Party has reflected the changing influence of these groups in the councils of the party.

But neither pre-election pacts nor coalitions are universally supported within the Country Party. For although the coalition has been the desideratum of both the party's parliamentarians and central organisation since at least the early 1930s, there are four discernible points of view within the party about the proper strategy it should employ. The first, and most widely supported, rests on the assumption that the Country Party is primarily a non-Labor party, whose first imperative is to prevent Labor from gaining power. To this end the closest co-operation with the Liberal Party is seen as vital, and if necessary the party should be prepared to offer any concessions necessary to achieve this co-operation. This was predominantly the view of the Graziers' Association throughout its connection with the party, and it is still the most strongly held view. Respondents to the postal survey were asked to state whether they supported co-operation with the Liberal Party, and whether they could see any advantages for the Country Party in co-operating with the Labor Party, at both state and federal levels. From their replies an analysis of the support for various possible strategies has been prepared, and this appears in Table 28. The largest single group of

Table 28

Support for Various Strategies
Analysis of Replies to Postal Survey, 1962

	<u>Armidale</u>	<u>Kempsey</u>	<u>Young</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%</u>
1. Pro-Liberal (anti-A.L.P.)	24	45	35	104	42.8
2. Pro-A.L.P. (anti-Liberal)	13	11	7	31	12.8
3. Conditional Support	11	23	6	40	16.5
4. Independent Role	19	18	18	55	22.6
NO ANSWER	<u>6</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>5.3</u>
	73	102	68	243	100.0
	—	—	—	—	—

Source: Appendix G.

respondents, 42.8 per cent of the sample, favoured co-operation with the Liberal Party at either or both levels, and were opposed to any co-operation with the A.L.P.²¹

Nevertheless, this view did not obtain absolute majority support, and there were three important minority views. One group favoured co-operation with the Labor Party, and was opposed to co-operation with the Liberal Party (12.8 per cent). A second and slightly larger group implied that it favoured the old "conditional support" strategy: its members could see advantages in co-operating with both parties under different circumstances (16.5 per cent). The third group also supported a historic Country Party strategy: it desired no part of coalitions or co-operation, seeking only for the Country Party to stand alone, as an entirely independent party of (presumably) neither the Right nor the Left (22.6 per cent).

Each of these strategies has its vocal adherents. Every Country Party Conference since 1927 has witnessed a debate on the party's role in the party system, and these debates have done little more than to demonstrate the existence of seemingly irreconcilable points of view within the party. But the strongest opposition to pacts (if not the

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Only a very few respondents distinguished between the state and federal branches of either of the other parties. See Appendix G.

most persistent) has always come from the party members most immediately affected by them: the party-oriented members in seats ceded to the Liberal Party under the terms of the pact. Local party organisation cannot survive unless it is allowed to take part in election campaigns, and each pact has been followed by bitter outbursts from branches and electorate councils whose officers first learned of the pact from their morning newspapers, and whose work and activity had suddenly lost all point.²²

But the conclusion of a pact with the Liberal Party has never caused a fundamental split within the Country Party. In the first place the anti-Labor group is much larger than any of the others, and the two most important pacts, those of 1932 in New South Wales and in 1949 for the federal elections of the same year, were both drawn up when the replacement of a Labor Government was being stridently urged as a national imperative. It was thus much easier for the alternative strategies to be discredited. Once the coalitions had been established, and the Country Party was in power, it

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Thus

Strong resentment [was expressed] ...that the Branch had not been notified officially from Head Office regarding the forfeiture of the seat.

The seat was Mitchell. Minutes, Blacktown Branch, 2 March 1949. Mitchell FEC passed a similar resolution. Minutes, Mitchell FEC, 21 August 1949.

was no less difficult for the antagonists of coalitions to gain support, since the success of the coalitions could be pointed to as a reason for their continuation. And since the mid-1920s neither the parliamentarians nor the Central Council have had much doubt that the coalition strategy was the most profitable one for the party to employ, and their whole-hearted support for pacts and coalitions has determined (because of their prestige within the party) the opinions of the waverers.

Nevertheless, the pact has long-term disabilities for the Country Party, which are often overlooked by its supporters. It shields the party, for a time, from the necessity of facing up to the long-term electoral trends which are working against it. For the processes of demographic change and the growing cultural orientation of the rural areas, especially the towns, towards Sydney, are unaffected by pacts. When the coalition is defeated the Country Party has to face, once again, the need to establish its own identity vis-à-vis that of the Liberal Party. Each successive coalition, on the other hand, demonstrates that for practical purposes little separates the two parties. The task of re-establishing its basis as a regional, not a non-Labor, party is made more difficult by its association in government with its principal rival. And at the same

time the rural population is remaining static where it is not actually declining, the provincial towns are growing in size, and communications and rapport between the "bush" and the City are improving. In comparison with the Country Party, the Liberal Party cannot lose by these changes: it is the Country Party which must suffer.

2. The Labor Party

Partly because of the different scope of federal politics, and partly because, as we have seen, rural economic interests are now settled issues at the federal level,²³ there is no real difference in policy and outlook separating the Liberal and Country Parties, which share a generalised anti-socialist attitude towards the Federal Labor Party.²⁴ But in the state politics of New South Wales, the Labor Party has to be fought on its own terms, and in its own way the N.S.W. Labor Party is almost as serious a threat to the continued existence of the Country Party as is the Liberal Party.

Like the Liberal Party the A.L.P. denies the need for a separate Country Party, but it justifies its claim with different arguments. It points to the long attachment of

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See above, Chapter 4, part VI.

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See above, Chapter 3, part III.

some country areas to the A.L.P., and more recently, to the number and the influence of the rural Ministers in the state Cabinet.²⁵ It illustrates the claim with examples of its developmental projects in the country - dams, highways and rural electricity schemes. And it argues that the Country Party is a political subterfuge, designed by anti-Labor interests to hoodwink country people into voting for an anti-Labor party under an assumed name. Although it cannot supplant the Country Party as a non-Labor force it has attempted, with some success, to replace it as a country party by building up Labor's rural reputation.

In attempting to do this it starts with some formidable weapons. It possesses, to begin with, the allegiance of most of the rural and provincial urban working class, an important component of every rural electorate. Secondly, it has always found some support among the smaller farmers and graziers, because of the latter's description of the Country Party as a "rich man's party". Thirdly, in parts of the country there are areas which have traditionally supported the A.L.P., perhaps, as in the south, as a carry-over

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Thus before the elections in 1962, there were nine Labor Members representing country seats in a party of 49. The Ministry contained 5 country Labor Ministers in a total of 16. Country, in this sense, excludes the Newcastle, Illawarra and Broken Hill seats.

from the old gold-mining days, or, as in the central west, because of the memory of squatter/selector squabbles.

Furthermore, as the only true national party, the A.L.P. is organised in almost every electorate; it is the only party which contests all or nearly all the seats in any election. It is able, therefore, to wait for the "breaks"; a big swing away from non-Labor in 1941, for example, resulted in Labor victories in seats that it had been contesting, without much hope and without any success, for years. Such persistence allowed it to win Lismore in 1959 and Cowper in 1961. Because the A.L.P. has been governing New South Wales since 1941 these seats have been hard to regain. Not only are Labor Members less likely to have the outside interests which can prevent both Liberal and Country Party Members from assiduously attending to the needs of their electorates, but the Government has undoubtedly helped them to "nurse" their seats.²⁶ Labor's hold on Wagga Wagga was not broken until 1957, that on Young until 1959, and that on Liverpool Plains until 1961. All these seats were won by the A.L.P. in 1941. Other Labor Members first

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It certainly seemed, for example, that the extraordinarily slow completion of the Keepit Dam on the border of the Liverpool Plains electorate (started 1938, finished 1959) was influenced to some degree by the importance of the dam workers in returning, by invariably small majorities, the Labor Member for Liverpool Plains.

elected in the same year, notably W.F. Sheahan (Burrinjuck), A.G. Enticknap (Murrumbidgee), and J.B. Renshaw (Castlereagh), all of them now Cabinet Ministers, still hold their seats.

Reaching an agreement with the A.L.P. has been out of the question for the Country Party in New South Wales. While J.T. Lang was the dominant force in the N.S.W. Labor Party even the thought of an alliance was impossible; since his departure the A.L.P. has never needed support from another party. Unless there were a fundamental change in the outlook of both parties, it is hard to imagine any form of parliamentary co-operation between them. Supported by basically different groups within the community, their relationship is one of constant opposition.

The Country Party's only strategy under these circumstances is to continually deny Labor's claims and to emphasise the non-rural aspects of the A.L.P.: the fact that its parliamentary representation is drawn largely from urban and industrial areas, that its philosophy is anti-pathetic to private ownership, that its strength comes from organised trade unionism; to make as much as possible of its links with communism. By doing so it tries to re-assert its claim to be the only true country party, uninfluenced and uncompromised by outside or metropolitan interest and especially knowledgeable of those of the country. But it is

the Labor Party, in government, which possesses the initiative. By concentrating on rural development it can make the counter-claims seem hollow or irrelevant. Indeed, much of the longevity of the Labor Government in New South Wales must be attributed to its realisation that the demand for rural development was not just a catch-cry of the Country Party but a cause of its existence. In satisfying that demand it both retains power and erodes the influence of one of its major opponents.

II. MINOR ENGAGEMENTS

The Liberal and Labor Parties therefore serve as yardsticks by which the Country Party establishes its own place in politics, emphasising its "countryness" against the Liberal Party and its anti-socialist nature against the Labor Party. Such measurement is a constant and necessary exercise in any party, and is most commonly performed in ritual speeches, in which the party's traditions and ideals are applied to the problems and issues of the moment. Without the frequent re-emphasis of the party's aims, alliances and enmities, the party's members and supporters might find it hard to relate the total experience of the party to their local situation. For the imperatives which assume such a critical importance in parliament or in the

central councils of the party are not always so obvious at the local level.

This is especially so in the country and for the Country Party. At the level of state or Commonwealth the party conflict is an impersonal business, waged with advertisements, faces on television screens, voices over the radio. But in the electorate politics becomes more personal, and nowhere more so than in the country. There politics is personified by the local Member, who (if an M.L.A. of a few years' standing) has been at least seen by probably 80 per cent of the electorate. On polling day and throughout the campaign party workers are likely to be opposing people who are well known to them.

For this reason the impersonality of the general conflict fails to correspond with local realities. The rank and file Country Party member will reflect that the Liberal Party cannot be composed entirely of Sydney businessmen, because so-and-so (a local grazier) and his wife are members; equally, so-and-so, a Labor M.L.A. who is also a farmer, cannot be a communist. And sympathy with local problems is no party's prerogative.

Rural communities tend to be tightly integrated. At least two generations have passed since there have been strong local tensions in the country, since squatters warred with

selectors and townsmen, and freeholders with leaseholders. Even the bitterness of the depression resolved itself, in the country, into regional rather than class reactions. And none of the provincial towns have been large enough or wealthy enough for major social tensions to have arisen within them. Thus the parties' picture of a divided society often loses its effect when it is received in the electorates.

At the local level the pattern of party interaction is therefore modified, in each electorate by the special circumstances therein. It is not possible to describe all the potential or existing variations, but the following three examples have the virtues of being typical and of being well-documented.

1. The Popular Labor Member

A personally popular Labor M.L.A. for a country electorate is often a source of despair for his Country Party opponents. It becomes impossible to attack him personally, since this alienates the waverers and strengthens his support. It is useless attacking his party, since many voters refuse to connect the two. And each Country Party candidate finds it extraordinarily difficult to build up an acceptable and contrasting image of himself, since his opponent has pre-empted all the worthwhile personal qualities. The longer he holds the seat the firmer his grip becomes, and a legend

develops that "he holds the seat with a large personal vote".²⁷ Continued lack of success disheartens the opposition, which finds it progressively harder to attract suitable candidates, which further increases the Member's majority and thus further demoralises the opposition. At the same time the opposition's organisation begins to be half-hearted in its campaigns, firstly because it doubts that it can defeat him, and secondly because party supporters, for personal reasons, refuse to campaign actively against him.

Such a set of circumstances has existed in Burrinjuck state electorate for 20 years. Here the sitting Labor Member, W.F. ('Billy') Sheahan, has established a large personal following and receives the admiration, grudging in some quarters but admiration none the less, of the majority of his electors. For Sheahan is thoroughly and deliberately controversial, and as a Minister he has been in a good position to nurse his seat. Moreover, he was a local resident and is believed to have at least one thousand voting relatives within the electorate. Sheahan's ascendancy began very soon after his election as the Member for Yass in 1941. Only

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The writer constantly heard this said, in the past tense, of Roger Nott, who held Liverpool Plains from 1941 to 1961, during the by-election in 1961 in that electorate.

three years later a delegate to the Country Party's Yass SEC praised his good qualities.²⁸ Before the 1947 state elections another delegate to Yass SEC "spoke of the good qualities of Mr W.F. Sheahan, particularly as an anti-communist."²⁹ A year later the Chairman of Yass SEC had to point out to delegates that Sheahan was "definitely Labour despite the views of many that he was really not at heart."³⁰ The defeat of their candidate in 1950 was attributed by a delegate to "the lack of confidence in a party member opposing Mr Sheehan (sic)".³¹ Since 1950 the party's campaigns against Sheahan have lacked any real force, and party officials admitted to the writer that they did not expect to win the seat until Sheahan died or retired.

Even when the Member does die or retire, his influence is still present in the ensuing election campaign. The Country Party candidate F.L. O'Keefe was fighting not only the endorsed Labor candidate in Liverpool Plains in 1961, but also the 'ghost' of the retiring Member, Roger Nott. The tenor of the remarks of a Country Party branch chairman

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Minutes, Annual Meeting Yass SEC, 10 March 1944. The electorate was slightly altered, and renamed Burrinjuck in 1950.

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Minutes, Annual Meeting Yass SEC, 22 February 1947.

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Minutes, Annual Meeting Yass SEC, 6 March 1948.

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Minutes, Annual Meeting Burrinjuck SEC, 10 March 1931.

at one of O'Keefe's meetings during the by-election campaign reveals something of the effect Nott had had on the local Country Party organisation.

Now...quite a number of people have told me, and we all most of us realise, what a good man and a good Member Mr Roger Nott was. But they all say the same thing, all the people that have spoken to me about it. And they have said that it is a pity that he belongs to the Labor Party.... My own personal opinion is that I think we have got a man here, in fact I'm sure we have, who's just as capable, just as hard-working and just as intelligent. And he's got that knack of getting things done; and he's just as good an all-round man...as Mr Roger Nott.³²

2. The Popular Liberal Member

The local Country Party organisation in a seat held by a sitting Liberal Member is placed in an extremely awkward position. Unless it receives permission from Central Council, it cannot officially oppose him; and no such permission has been granted in the postwar period. In any case, there will not be unanimous local support for opposition, firstly because the need will not seem important enough to the pro-Liberal members, and secondly because the Liberal Member will, even more so than a sitting Labor Member, gain the respect of many of the Country Party rank and file. But unless the Country Party organisation can take part in the election

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From a transcript of a tape-recording made by the writer at a campaign meeting at Spring Ridge, 9 March 1961.

process, its members will lose interest, and either withdraw from active politics altogether, or defect to the Liberal Party. Consequently the Country Party electorate council and branches will tend to co-operate openly with the Liberal Party, and this re-inforces the position of the Liberal Member and makes it difficult for the Country Party to preserve its own integrity and image. Such a situation has existed in Albury state electorate since the election of D.G. Padman in 1947.

Padman was a farmer before his entry into politics, and had sought endorsement from both the Country and Liberal Parties for a by-election for Albury late in 1946.³³ He finally received the endorsement of the Liberal Party, lost the by-election, but won the seat at the general election in the following year. The Country Party could not find a suitable candidate for the general election and threw its support behind Padman. In 1950 the Albury SEC refused to call for nominations, and resolved to support Padman, apparently as a "Liberal Country Party" candidate.³⁴ Central Executive forbade such an arrangement, and ruled that the Albury party organisation could support Padman only as a

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Report by Ulrich Ellis to Central Executive, 22 October 1946.

³⁴

GSR to CE, 20 March 1950.

Liberal, and was not to enter even a candidate campaign committee arrangement.³⁵ Albury SEC rejected the Executive ruling, and asked that it be permitted to follow its original intention. The Executive repeated its ruling, and added:

To support Mr Padman as a Liberal-Country Party or Country-Party-Liberal candidate is to give recognition to the existence of a Liberal-Country Party organisation. Such organisation does not exist in New South Wales, is contrary to our Constitution, and has been repeatedly rejected by Annual Conferences of the Party.³⁶

But the Albury organisation remained impenitent. In the following year the General Secretary discovered that Padman and the Albury SEC had come to an arrangement whereby the Country Party office was used by Padman, who paid half the rent.³⁷ The Central Executive decided that the office be closed forthwith.³⁸ In 1954, Head Office received a complaint that a Mr D.G. Padman of Albury was not receiving a copy of The Countryman to which he was entitled as a member of the party. To its consternation Central Executive discovered that Padman was in fact a member of the Country Party, and had been for years.

³⁵ CEM, 20 March 1950.

³⁶ CEM, 27 April 1950.

³⁷ GSR to CE, 23 November 1951.

³⁸ CEM, 23 November 1951.

It resolved that his subscription be cancelled immediately.³⁹ But neither Council nor Executive could do much to prevent the existence of a de facto Liberal Country Party organisation in the electorate, and as such it remains today.

3. Log-rolling

The Albury organisation had no outlet for its energies because most of the electorate falls within the Farrer federal electorate, also represented by a Liberal. But in areas which possess both a Country Party and a Liberal local Member, one federal and the other state, a different complex of factors is present. Now the important local consideration is amity between the parties. Each becomes satisfied with its own share of the representation, and an informal bargain is struck in which each supports the other and both refrain from hostile acts. The bargain is often fostered by the parliamentarians themselves, who have everything to gain from it.⁴⁰ It is in such electorates that the non-party candidate campaign committees are used as campaign devices, since the committee is the only means by which the bargain

³⁹ CEM, 23 July 1954.

⁴⁰ Co-operation between state and federal parliamentarians for the same district is necessary and inevitable. See Davies, Private Politics, p.72.

can be implemented at election times without apparently destroying the integrity of the two parties.

Such a settlement was reached between the Liberal Party in Calare and the Country Party in Orange.⁴¹ John Howse and Charles Cutler Campaign Committees were formed for each federal and state election from 1949 to 1959 (Howse retired in 1960). While Howse remained an active local Member the Country Party was generally satisfied with the arrangement. But towards the end of the 1950s Howse appeared to lose interest in his job,⁴² and criticism of the Country Party's role in supporting a Liberal, which had never entirely died,⁴³ increased. In 1958 a motion to present a Country Party candidate at the 1961 elections was only narrowly defeated, and at another meeting later in the year Calare FEC resolved that it was opposed to any future pre-election pacts.⁴⁴ When Howse resigned his seat in 1960 the Country Party had no hesitation in contesting the seat, campaigned vigorously, and won it. The local settlement in Calare had depended upon

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See above, Chapter 14, part II.

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Charles Orlebeke, "The Calare By-Election", A.P.S.A. News, Vol. 6 No. 1, February 1961, p.13.

⁴³

One delegate had described a Calare FEC meeting in 1949 which had decided to support Howse in the federal election of that year as a "hands off John Howse" meeting. Minutes, Calare FEC, 11 February 1949.

⁴⁴

Minutes, Calare FEC, 12 July 1958, 10 October 1958.

good relations between the Members and the opposing parties; with Howse's retirement and the Country Party's victory at the by-election, there was no further need for the bargain. Nevertheless, the vestiges remained; a Charles Cutler Campaign Committee was formed again for the 1962 state campaign. (But the campaign in 1961 of John England, the new Country Party Member for Calare, was managed entirely by the Calare FEC.)

Much the same circumstances existed in the Upper Hunter, where the Liberal Party in Paterson and the Country Party in Upper Hunter have carried on a working partnership since the Liberal Party's victory in Paterson in 1949. Here, however, the candidate campaign committee has not been used, probably because the victory margins for non-Labor until recently have usually been so great that intensive campaigns have rarely been necessary. Furthermore, members of both parties have seen little wrong in manning each other's party tables. Thus the Chairman of Scone Branch of the Country Party reported in 1962 that "we also manned the Liberal Booth at the federal elections."⁴⁵ A combined Liberal-Country Party meeting was held in Dungog in support of L.A. Punch in the

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Minutes, Annual Meeting Scone Branch, 1962 (n.d.).

1959 state campaign.⁴⁶ But here too, the settlement is an ad hoc agreement, based on the continued representation of the two Members. Should the Liberal Party M.H.R. for Paterson retire or die, it is probable that the Country Party will contest the seat.⁴⁷

The Country Party is vulnerable. Unlike the A.L.P. or the Liberal Party it has no final fortress to which it can retreat: it has nothing to match Labor's coalfields or the Liberals' North Shore. The northern tablelands was broached by the A.L.P. in 1953, when it won Armidale and held it for three years. A Labor candidate very nearly won Tenterfield in 1962.⁴⁸ The north coast, once considered impenetrable for Labor, returned Labor candidates for Lismore in 1959 and 1962, and for Cowper in 1961. The Liberal Party lured the Country Party Member for Oxley into its own forces in 1959. In the rest of the state the Country

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Minutes, Joint Meeting of Liberal and Country Party Supporters, 26 February 1959. (Dungog Branch Minute Book).

47

Muswellbrook Branch carried a vote of no confidence in Fairhall, the Liberal M.H.R. for Paterson, in 1961 (Minutes, Muswellbrook Branch, 10 March 1961). Although this was subsequently rejected by Paterson FEC, it was clear that there was a good deal of support for the Country Party to contest the seat, much of it based on Fairhall's alleged neglect of the electorate. Minutes, Paterson FEC, 15 April 1961.

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He lost by 265 votes in a total poll of 17,615. The close result owed much to the retirement of the former sitting Member, Sir Michael Bruxner.

Party shares representation with the Labor and Liberal Parties, or, as in the south, it has been excluded altogether. It is a regional party, but it cannot keep other parties out of its regions. It is a sectional party, but the necessity for the section is continually being challenged and its hold on it continually assailed. It is threatened, as its rivals are not, by the impersonal forces of demographic change.

Thus the Country Party is pre-occupied with the question of its survival, a problem which is uniquely its own, since the A.L.P. has no long-term reason to fear for its future, and the Liberal Party can console itself with the proposition that there will always be a non-Labor alternative, whatever its name. Just as one can postulate a 'threshold' for the Country Party's effectiveness in parliament - the point below which it ceases, more or less permanently, to hold the balance of power, so one can argue that a similar threshold exists at the local level - the point below which country voters cease to see any need for a separate country party, either, on the one hand, as an additional non-Labor party, or on the other, as a regional party. It is perfectly true that political commentators (and political opponents) have been predicting that the party would collapse from either or both of these reasons

almost since its entry into politics more than 40 years ago; true also that the forecast demise has not occurred. But the party is aware of its predicament and never more so when it faces the separate challenges of its two rivals in election campaigns. Thus each campaign for the Country Party is a time of solidarity for its members and supporters and each election result an anxiously awaited index of its chances of survival.

CHAPTER 16

PARLIAMENTARY ACTION AND COMMUNICATION

I. AIMS AND PERFORMANCE

We have seen in earlier chapters that the Country Party is primarily an electoral organisation designed to secure the return of suitable candidates to the state and federal parliaments, and to maintain those Members in parliament once elected. As a minority party with clear and settled economic objectives, it regards parliament, above all else, as a means to power - power to ensure that the interests of its supporters are safeguarded and advanced. In coalition it seeks control of those government departments whose spheres of influence most affect primary producers and country people generally: in federal coalitions, the Treasury, the Departments of Trade, Primary Industry and the P.M.G.; in state coalitions, the Departments of Agriculture, Lands, Transport, Local Government, Mines and Forests, and Education. Both in government and opposition it watches the interests of the rural industries generally, and the local interests of the electorates of its members.

Like the Liberal Party, and unlike the A.L.P., it rarely seeks to use parliament as a forum for expounding a philosophy or a set of ideological principles, except incidentally in the course of furthering its main concerns: most of its members share a traditional rural dislike for "mere words".

For these reasons the parliamentary work of its members, while adequate, has never been remarkable.¹ Appendix R sets out a (necessarily) crude comparison of the parliamentary activity of the members of the Labor, Liberal and Country Parties in the House of Representatives between 1958 and 1961, and in the N.S.W. Legislative Assembly between 1959 and 1962, and of the members of the Labor, United Australia and United Country Parties in the N.S.W. Legislative Assembly between 1932 and 1935.

The parliamentary activity of the members of any party is, of course, fundamentally affected by whether that party is in government or opposition. In government, Ministers consume so much of parliament's time that little is available for government backbenchers. Moreover, malcontents will be expected to air their grievances within the party rooms, and not on the floor of the House. In opposition, smaller numbers and greater opportunities allow much more frequent backbench contributions. Activity is also affected by the nature of the parliament: country electors will forgive a

¹ Australian political science possesses no full-scale attempt to describe and analyse the parliamentary activity of the parties, and formidable methodological problems will face those who seek to fill the gap. In what follows an attempt has been made to sketch briefly some of the considerations affecting activity in parliament, and the general role played in parliament by the Country Party.

lack-lustre appearance in the Assembly if their man is a good "roads and bridges" Member; an M.H.R. is likely to participate more often in debates if only because his activity as a local Member is so much more restricted.

For the Country Party the difference between the two spheres of government has further implications. The state government is concerned with matters which most directly affect country citizens - the state of land laws, inheritance laws, roads, railways, education, agricultural advisory services, and so on. But the considerations of the federal government, if no less important, are often more indirect in their effect upon the citizen: defence, foreign affairs, external trade, and so on. Thus the Country Party M.L.A. will have many more opportunities to speak on subjects about which his party claims a special competence than will the Country Party M.H.R.

Appendix R illustrated these points. In the House of Representatives between 1958 and 1961, backbench contribution to the debates and in questions varied markedly between government and opposition and among the parties. The A.L.P., in opposition, possessed a greater proportion of active debaters than did the government. Country Party Ministers were that party's most active parliamentarians, and little over half its members were infrequent debaters. The quiescence of the

Country Party backbencher was much more striking in the N.S.W. Legislative Assembly between 1932 and 1935, when the party was also in power. Two-thirds of the members, in these years, were infrequent speakers. (And the A.L.P., an unenviably small Opposition, was active indeed.)

But in the postwar Assembly the Country Party has been in opposition, and the activity of its members has risen sharply. Although the Liberal Party in 1959 was almost double the size of the Country Party, the latter possessed more active debaters. (It is worth noting, too, that although the A.L.P. was in power, its backbench 'tail' was not nearly so large as had been that of the coalition parties between 1932 and 1935.) The Country Party's members in all three parliaments have been noticeably more active than those of the Liberal Party, and this has probably been due in part to the natural feeling of a minority party that its opinions must be voiced a little loudly if they are to be heard at all.

II. COMMUNICATION

Like the other parties, the Country Party regards the election campaign as a time of accounting, and in campaigns it revives the issues and struggles of the last three years (and those of the last decade or two decades). It recalls the stands made, the attacks checked, the invaders thrown

back. The election campaign is of vital importance to all the parties in this context since it is the one time when this sort of "politicking" is likely to have an audience. For between elections the parties are forced to rely on much more tenuous communication with the electorate. And the campaign is especially important for the **C**ountry Party for it is faced with a communication problem which is bound up with the nature of the party itself and the role that it has chosen to play.

Besides day-to-day conversations with their fellows, country voters can hear of the **C**ountry Party, its plans and its policies, from five different sources, and each is unsatisfactory from the party's point of view.

1. Party Meetings

We have seen that **C**ountry Party parliamentarians try to attend branch and council meetings in their electorates and that they commonly address these meetings on current political events. But such meetings are held infrequently and are too poorly attended to be of much use to the party in putting forward its views to the wider electorate. The same can be said for the annual and provincial **C**onferences. However, these meetings and **C**onferences are sometimes reported in the country press, especially in the north.

2. Metropolitan Newspapers

The Sydney daily newspapers provide a very full account of the politics of the day, both federal and state, and their sales are no longer confined to the city; there are few places in New South Wales where it is impossible to buy a copy of the Sydney Morning Herald on the date of publication. Improved communications and transport facilities have made it possible for the Sydney newspapers to compete directly with the provincial dailies, and this competition has contributed to the decline of the country newspapers as a political force. Unhappily for the **Country Party**, it has been supported only briefly and left-handedly by the Sydney press; worse, it has rarely been reported.² As E.C. Sommerlad, himself a journalist, complained to the 1952 annual **Conference**,

over the years it [the **Country Party**] has suffered consistently and perhaps understandably, at the hands of a metropolitan journalism which is frequently unjust in its attitude, sometimes actively hostile, and too often irresponsibly ill-informed.³

Far from the press supporting the government's anti-inflation policies in 1954, another party **Chairman** cried to the 1954 party **Conference**,

² The **A.L.P.** has rarely had a sympathetic press either in the country or the city, but at least it has been reported.

³ **Chairman's Address to the 1952 AC.**

practically every measure was misrepresented to the point of downright mendacity, quite simple enactments were so grossly misunderstood by Press writers...as to make plain common sense appear the most fantastic and impossible nonsense.⁴

The attitude of the Sydney newspapers would have been irritating but tolerable if their sales had been restricted to Sydney, but their growing circulation in the country,⁵ especially as one of the principal media for political news and commentary, is a serious long-term threat to the Country Party.⁶

3. Country Newspapers

In the 1920s and 1930s the Country Party was able to rely on the country newspapers to counteract the unfavourable publicity which it received from the Sydney press. In an age when radio was just beginning, television still a scientific experiment and city newspapers restricted by transport and communication difficulties, the country newspaper was the most important source of political news and opinion for

⁴ Chairman's Address to the 1954 AC. A delegate to the same Conference alleged that it was "obvious that the intention of the Sydney Morning Herald is to try and smash the Country Party". Minutes, 1954 AC.

⁵ For which, alas, figures are not available.

⁶ It is only fair to point out that up until 1959 Davis Hughes, alone of the Country Party's M.L.A.s, had received a good press from the Sydney Morning Herald.

country people. These were opinionated journals, in which comment, as often as not, was intermixed with the news itself.⁷ Several of the larger provincial newspapers, such as the Northern Daily Leader (Tamworth), the Northern Star (Lismore), the Daily Examiner (Grafton), the Daily Advertiser (Wagga Wagga) and the Border Morning Mail (Albury), achieved wide circulations because of favourable railway timetables or some other local circumstance, and became influential in their circulation areas. Nearly all the country newspapers gave active support to the Country Party. Even in 1934, E.C. Sommerlad was able to say,

it has to be admitted that the success of the party has been due to a great extent to its goodwill with the country papers, which in about 95% of cases accord it a sympathetic co-operation denied to all other political organisations.⁸

In 1954 Colonel Bruxner echoed Sommerlad when he told the annual Conference of that year,

we have more or less realised that we had to rely on the country press which is very wonderfully disposed towards the party.⁹

But the realities were no longer the same. By the mid-1950s many of the country newspapers had become apolitical. Unable

⁷ See Aitkin, The United Country Party, Appendix Z, part 3.

⁸ Report to Central Executive, 13 November 1934.

⁹ Minutes, 1954 AC.

to compete with the metropolitan dailies and the excellent news broadcasts of the Australian Broadcasting Commission, they had turned their gaze entirely to the local scene; there at least they would be free from competition. Some indication of the political interest of the country newspapers in 1961-62 is given in Appendix P. Of the 50 N.S.W. country newspapers covered by the Appendix only 13 had regular editorials, while another 13 published editorials occasionally. Only 29 printed any political news, and for general news only seven raised their eyes above the immediate local environment. Eleven of the papers ran a political column, and in each case this was a syndicated feature: seven published a commentary by the political writer Don Whittington, which could be described as being vaguely 'left of centre', while the remaining four ran a column written by "Augustus", which was neither as well written nor as interesting, and which was vaguely 'right of centre'. Twenty-four of the papers published the Country Party's own press releases,¹⁰ but none of them with any frequency; and in each case the press releases were published when the news was stale.

Nevertheless, the vestiges of the old country press support for the Country Party could still be seen. In the

¹⁰ See above, Chapter II, part IV.

north the papers were almost as political as they had been forty years earlier. Of the 13 papers with editorials, eight were from the north coast and tablelands, and these papers included six of the seven with an overseas news coverage; 11 of the 16 northern papers carried Country Party press releases, and were the papers which printed them most often. Without exception, these newspapers supported the Country Party.

But in the rest of the state the country newspapers were generally apolitical and local. If they did print what their local Member had said in parliament (from pulls supplied by the Member himself) they did so days or weeks later; and the casual reader would have had little or no idea of the political affiliation of the Member. It is unlikely to be a coincidence that where the Country Party is strong the local press supports it, and that, conversely, where it is not strong the press is apolitical. That the northern press remains interested and loyal is almost certainly related to the stronger hold that separatism has had and still has in the north: these papers espouse the cause of the New State no less often than they do that of the Country Party.

But in general the country newspapers, especially outside the north, cannot be regarded as a satisfactory means

of communication between parliamentarians and the public; nor, except in the north, can they be regarded as important opinion-makers.

4. Radio and Television

For simple news-giving the radio has probably supplanted the newspaper in country areas, particularly where communications are such that papers may not be delivered for two or three days. In the broadcasts of the **A.B.C.** and the commercial stations the **Country Party** receives no more publicity, so far as it is possible to judge, than it should expect on the basis of its parliamentary representation, and probably little less (although delegates at party **C**onferences have on more than one occasion accused the **A.B.C.** of bias against the **Country Party**). And country radio stations have little patronage to bestow: radio time is costly, and cannot be given away as freely as can space in a newspaper. Indeed, most radio stations seem to have adopted a policy of eschewing any controversial topic - including politics - lest they lose their audiences. It is hard to imagine that radio stations have an important effect on forming or maintaining political beliefs.

Country Party branches and parliamentarians have occasionally bought time on radio stations for addresses, but to

be effective these sessions must be regular, so as to build up an audience, and the cost has prevented all but a few of these sessions from lasting. For these reasons the party has devoted much more of its finance to newspaper than to radio advertising. Nevertheless the party greatly overestimates the influence of the country newspapers: more than one Member has suggested to the writer that his tenure of his seat depended to a large extent upon the favourable publicity of the local press; yet the press, in one such case, was almost wholly non-political. The neglect of the possibilities of radio advertising and broadcasts is another reflection of the conservatism of the party in its campaigning techniques.

What has been true of radio may prove to be true also of television. Country television is a product of the late-1950s and early-1960s, and the Country Party, as a political organisation, has regarded its advent with mixed feelings. It fully realises the potentialities of television, but recoils at the costs involved, which are multiplied for it by the number of country television stations.¹¹ Neither the central nor the local institutions of the party have

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The Country Party would have welcomed an agreement between the parties not to make use of television for political purposes, and even tried tentatively to arrange a meeting to discuss the problem. But no such agreement was ever likely.

adequate finances for television campaigning or for regular sessions, and their use of the medium has thus far been slight. And unless the financial problems are solved, the party is unlikely to make much more use of television in the future.

5. The Countryman

We have seen that the publication of The Countryman was brought about by the party's change to a mass membership and organisation after the second world war.¹² The party had previously received whole-hearted support from the industrial organisation papers such as The Land, and discriminating support from similar journals such as Country Life and Farmer and Settler. But these papers did not have a large circulation in the towns, and in any case they could not be expected to publish a great deal of purely Country Party news.

This was the purpose of The Countryman. It has always carried a plentiful supply of parliamentary news. In the year ending August 1955, for example, The Countryman published extracts from 46 speeches by party parliamentarians in the state and federal parliaments, together with a regular commentary on the federal parliament and many special articles on matters of current political interest. In addition, the twelve issues contained a summary of news from branches,

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See above, Chapter II, part IV.

councils and Central Council and Executive, and two issues were largely devoted to the annual Conference. Of its type it is no worse than any other party newspaper, and a good deal better, in layout and general appeal, than many,

It is also widely distributed, since one copy goes to every subscribing member. Indeed it was claimed at the annual Conference of 1954 that "The Countryman has a far bigger circulation than any other political newspaper in this State".¹³ The crucial and unanswerable question is: how many copies are read? Even if they were all read, it is doubtful whether their content is received by the non-member in the country, if only because the majority of party members live on farms and properties.

We can only conclude that it is at election times that the great majority of the party's supporters and the electorate generally discover what the party has been doing for the past three years. But we must qualify this generalisation in one way: if the party's activities become significant in the general flow of politics, then these activities will become the stuff of political news and comment, and will be broadcast through the principal media. It is to such crises, and their implications, that we now turn.

¹³

Minutes, 1954 AC.

III. CRISES

All political parties have positions from which they cannot retreat without permanently damaging their integrity with their members and supporters. The federal Country Party, for example, must defend to the limit the general pattern of rural enterprise. The N.S.W. Country Party must oppose any proposal which increases the costs of the primary industries. Both parties must oppose any attempt to worsen the balance of rural representation in parliament, not only because the Country Parties would be the principal sufferers, but also because they see it as an attack on the country population generally. The following three case studies are examples of such crises. Each was a major political event, in each the Country Party took up an uncompromising stand, and each was widely reported.

I. The Wool Sales Deduction Act Controversy of 1950

The newly-elected federal Liberal/Country Party coalition was almost immediately faced in 1950 with an acute inflationary problem arising from an unprecedented rise in the price of wool. Sales by brokers in 1950/1 returned £633,000,000 compared with £313,000,000 in the previous year.¹⁴ At a time when the Liberal Party was believed to be favouring

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See above, Chapter 4, part III.

revaluation of the Australian pound (then standing at £A125 to £Stg100) as a counter-measure, Professor D.B. Copland, then Vice-Chancellor of the Australian National University but formerly an economic adviser to the Curtin Labor Government, suggested a 33-1/3 per cent tax on the export of wool.¹⁵ There was immediate and widespread opposition to the proposal from all woolgrowing organisations,¹⁶ and mass meetings of woolgrowers were held in every state. One such in Narrandera (N.S.W.) resolved to fight the proposal "tooth and nail".¹⁷ The Country Party was as opposed to the proposed wool tax as it was to revaluation, since the first would have been a sectional impost on an important primary industry while the second would have meant a drop in all rural export incomes. Nevertheless Country Party Ministers were aware of the danger of allowing a flood of overseas income into Australia when goods and services were in short supply.¹⁸

Accordingly, A.W. Fadden, the Leader of the Federal Country Party and the Federal Treasurer, proposed to Cabinet that a system of provisional taxation be introduced whereby

¹⁵ Sydney Morning Herald, 1 September 1950.

¹⁶ Ibid., 2 September 1950.

¹⁷ Ibid., 1 October 1950.

¹⁸ Ellis, The Australian Country Party, pp.285-9.

woolgrowers would part with 20 per cent of their current income as a prepayment of the ensuing year's income tax. In this way the growers would not lose the income, but equally they would not receive all of it at once. The proposal was accepted by Cabinet, since the joint opposition of the Country Party and the A.L.P. would have made revaluation impossible;¹⁹ the prepayment plan was foreshadowed in the Budget, and brought down in a series of bills in October 1950.²⁰

But many woolgrowers, horrified by Copland's draconian proposal, saw the new plan as little better, or as the same. Having been assured that the Government would not accept Copland's suggestion,²¹ they regarded themselves as betrayed. The General Secretary of the Graziers' Association told reporters that graziers' indignation was growing every day, that his Association would lodge a strong protest with the Government, and hinted that it might fight the legislation in the courts.²² More meetings were held in the country.²³

¹⁹ Ibid., p.288.

²⁰ See above, Chapter 4, part III.

²¹ For example, H.S. Robertson, the Country Party Member for Riverina, told the Narrandera meeting mentioned above: "I can assure the rural communities...that there will be no Copland Wool Tax." The Countryman, October 1950.

²² Sydney Morning Herald, 26 October 1950.

²³ The Countryman, November 1950.

It was a magnificent opportunity for a Labor attack on the **Country Party**, especially since it could question the **Country Party's** sincerity and mock its pretensions. R.T. Pollard M.H.R. described the plan as "the price of the retention in Cabinet of Australian Country party members..."²⁴ But P.J. Clarey M.H.R. struck a more telling blow:

instead of this Government, in which the Australian **Country party** is so strongly represented, endeavouring to safeguard the interests of primary producers, as it professes to do, it is going to take from them the right which persons in every other section of the community have to enjoy the fruit of their labours.²⁵

F.M. Daly M.H.R. continued the attack:

this Government which is kept in power by the Australian **Country party** has sold out the wool-growers and let them "take the rap"...²⁶

Immediately the **Country Party** defended its plan, pointing out that it in no way resembled Copland's proposal, and stressing the disasters which would have befallen the countryside had revaluation been adopted. The November Countryman contained a comment by an anonymous woolgrower who claimed that

when the full story of recent negotiations were known the wool industry would praise, not blame, the **Country Party** for its action on the wool issue.

²⁴ C.P.D., 9 November 1950, p.2240.

²⁵ Ibid., 14 November 1950, p.2325.

²⁶ Ibid., p.2333.

The party held special meetings throughout the country, where speakers from the parliamentary parties and the Central Executive justified the Government's action. Branch meetings already held had protested against the tax.²⁷ But the special meetings were very well attended and fairly successful. Most passed resolutions congratulating the Government on its actions.²⁸ At the same time the party conducted an extensive advertising campaign in the country press putting forward its point of view.²⁹

Nevertheless, a great deal of damage had been done to the party's image as the protector of country interests. Revaluation was economic jargon to most woolgrowers, who could only see that they had lost 20 per cent of their income a year before they should have. The loss of Hume in 1951 was directly attributed to grazier resentment.³⁰ The 1951

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Thus Gunnedah Branch had protested against the "sectional and unjust" Wool Tax. Minutes, Gunnedah Branch, 3 November 1950

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For example, the Special Meeting of the New England FEC, held on 14 October 1950, resolved as follows:

this largely attended meeting of the N.E. Elect. Council, having heard Mr Drummond, expresses its complete confidence in the Federal Government.

It also congratulated Fadden on his efforts "to cope with and resolve a very difficult situation". Minutes, New England FEC, 14 October 1950.

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According to Colonel Bruxner, the campaign cost £40,000. Minutes, 1958 AC.

³⁰

Minutes, Hume FEC, 23 June 1961.

annual Conference revealed that many delegates were still antagonistic to Fadden and the federal party.³¹ The collection of bank order subscriptions, especially in the woolgrowing areas, came to an abrupt halt,³² and even as late as 1956 the Wool Sales Deduction Act still rankled with graziers and made bank order signing difficult.³³ Yet there seems little else that the party could have done: revaluation of the pound could have proceeded only with the Country Party outside the government (in which case it could not have succeeded), and Copland's tax proposal was unthinkable. Undoubtedly the party suffered from Copland's earlier suggestion, since many graziers confused the two schemes. Fadden's plan was unpopular but undeniably courageous, and it has taken the party more than a decade to convince its members that his action was correct.

2. The Road Maintenance Contribution Act Controversy of 1958

Long distance road transport has flourished since the war, partly because of the rapid improvement in road surfaces, and partly because hauliers have been able to shelter

³¹ See above, Chapter 9, footnote 52.

³² SOR to CC, 22 May 1951.

³³ GSR to CE, 28 September 1956.

under Section 92 of the Constitution, which prevents governments from levying taxes on the movement of goods between the states. But not only did the expansion of the road transport industry threaten the N.S.W. railways, perennially plagued by debt, but the heavy trucks and semi-trailers were wrecking the roads as fast as they were being re-surfaced.

Asserting that the users of the roads should expect to make some contribution to their upkeep, the N.S.W. Government brought down the Road Maintenance Contribution Bill of 1958, which levied a tax of one-third of a penny per ton/mile on all motor vehicles in excess of four tons tare weight. It hoped, by not discriminating against interstate road hauliers, to thus escape the invalidation of the Act under Section 92.

The controversy over this bill was the most important political issue in the state in 1958, since the government was opposed not only by the parliamentary Liberal and Country Parties, but also by the hauliers (by now a vigorous and vocal pressure group) and by the Transport Workers' Union.³⁴ And although the bill was finally passed, its passage gave the Country Party a good issue on which to fight a government which had rarely allowed itself to seem unsympathetic to country interests.

³⁴

Sydney Morning Herald, 22 March 1958, 25 March 1958.

The essence of the Country Party's opposition to the bill was given by Davis Hughes, the new Leader of the Party, when opening the attack in the Legislative Assembly.

This measure...imposes on the people...in the country areas an additional cost-of-living burden that should not have been inflicted upon them by any government. We, as a party, are implacably opposed to the measure as presented to the House and my colleagues and I will take every action possible to ensure the defeat of the bill...³⁵

Furthermore, the bill did not exempt primary producers who owned such heavy vehicles, and The Countryman made this an issue:

the application of the tax to primary producers by putting them in the same category as the professional haulier was grossly unjust.³⁶

Protest meetings were called (by the hauliers) in the country to which the party gave its support³⁷ and both the annual and provincial conferences of 1958 gave over much of their time to debating denunciatory resolutions. The Countryman devoted several issues in 1958 to attacks on the bill, and the various stages in the controversy were well reported, as far as it is possible to judge, in the country press - especially in the north.³⁸ The Country Party's attitude to

³⁵ N.S.W.P.D., 4 March 1958, Vol. 23 (3rd Series), p.2410.

³⁶ The Countryman, (Editorial), June 1958.

³⁷ The Countryman, May 1958.

³⁸ See, for example, the columns of the Northern Daily Leader, May 1958.

the bill - that this was in fact a tax on country people - was reiterated throughout the debate, and the Opposition called for a division at every stage, including the consideration of separate clauses in Committee. Finally, the issue was brought up again by the party in the 1959 election campaign. Issues of this nature have only rarely occurred in New South Wales since the war, but when they do occur they are seized upon: they are opportunities for the Country Party to discredit the rural pretensions of the A.L.P. and to re-assert its own image as the only true protector of country people and of country interests.

3. Redistributions

Because of the movement of population in Australia since the war (indeed, since the first world war), the re-distribution of electoral boundaries under any system which endeavours to follow the rubric of "one vote, one value" must have meant a decline in rural representation. On each occasion the Country Party has bitterly resisted the change, and in its opposition the party has been able to stand forth as the guardian of rural representation per se, not just as a political party selfishly resisting a necessary and democratic change.

Thus Colonel Bruxner argued in the Legislative Assembly in 1949 in the debate on an amending bill to the Parliamentary

Electoral Act, which threatened the country with the loss of four seats:

I often criticise country representatives who are supporters of the Government because I do not think their policy is as vigorous as that of my colleagues, but at least they are in this Parliament and represent country areas.³⁹

E.C. Sommerlad developed an old Country Party argument in the Legislative Council when he attacked the bill as

a calculated plan by which the country districts are to become a legislative minority notwithstanding that this State, for many years to come, must inevitably draw its national wealth largely from its primary production.⁴⁰

The Countryman kept up a bitter attack on the redistribution for nearly a year, under such headlines as "Seats Plan Blow at Country - Labor Shown in its True Colors"⁴¹ and "Labor to Slash Country Electorates".⁴² It even published a dramatic map in which 63 seats were shown as a little black blob around Sydney, with the remaining 31 seats having to represent almost the entire state.⁴³

Nevertheless the Government could also plead democratic principle and argue that the Country Party's aim was a

³⁹ N.S.W.P.D., 15 June 1949, Vol. 189 (2nd Series), p.2537.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 28 June 1949, Vol. 190 (2nd Series), p.2874.

⁴¹ June 1949.

⁴² August 1949.

⁴³ February and March 1950.

gerrymandered electorate. Thus E.P. Dring M.L.A. considered the Country Party's arguments to be

nothing more than the endeavour of a political party to maintain its precarious existence in this Chamber by dividing the interest of the people in this State as between the city and the country.⁴⁴

The bill was passed, and four country seats were abolished, two of them held by the Country Party, and two held by Labor with slender majorities.

In protesting against the abolition of country seats the Country Party is able to tap a strong stream of regionalism in the country. Whereas metropolitan electorates are often very arbitrary divisions, with boundaries running along streets, country electorates often possess a regional cohesiveness because the boundaries follow natural topographical lines such as mountain ranges and rivers. Rural electorates are often very real to their electors, and the abolition of a regionally well-defined rural electorate is likely to arouse alarm and anger among its inhabitants. They will find it difficult to see how they can get proper representation if they are to be in another electorate - some may even consider themselves to be disfranchised.

When another redistribution of boundaries was held in New South Wales in 1961, only one electorate, Liverpool

⁴⁴

N.S.W.P.D., 23 June 1949, Vol. 190 (2nd Series), p.2799.

Plains only a few months previously,⁴⁵ and it was joined by shire councils and hastily formed ad hoc committees. The Coffs Harbour Boundaries Protest Committee appealed to the Electoral Districts Commission that Coffs Harbour should not be in the same electorate as Grafton, "as the towns had no common interests";⁴⁶ worse, they were commercial rivals, and both were potential sites for a projected deep-sea port on the north coast. The Councils of Hume and Balranald Shires protested against the re-alignment of boundaries in the south as being "detrimental to the interests of their communities".⁴⁷ And support came from an unexpected quarter, the "rebel" Labor M.L.C. T.P. Gleeson, who wrote in a letter to the Sydney Morning Herald:

Who wins Liverpool Plains, be it Labour or Country Party, is of secondary consideration. The important thing is that the country people are being deprived of representation in Parliament at a time when there is greater need than ever for decentralisation of industry and population...⁴⁸

But this redistribution, too, was accomplished, since 1940 the country had lost six seats and the Assembly had increased in size from 90 Members to 94.

⁴⁵ The Countryman, June 1961.

⁴⁶ Sydney Morning Herald, 15 June 1961.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 20 June 1961.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 10 May 1961.

But when the Country Party is in government it can do more than simply protest, and the circumstances of the projected 1962 federal redistribution indicated just how seriously the party regarded the loss of country seats. The redistribution plan, consequent upon the census of 1961, would have resulted in the abolition of the north-western Country Party seat of Gwydir in N.S.W., the abolition of another Country seat in Queensland, and a re-alignment of boundaries in Western Australia which would virtually have cost the party another seat. There were immediate protests in the north. The Mayor of Moree (one of the principal towns in Gwydir) claimed that the proposed changes were indicative of "the way country areas are being squeezed out" of parliament.⁴⁹ The Labor Member for Cowper, whose seat now crossed the Great Dividing Range and descended into the wheatfields of the north-west, described the redistribution as "extraordinary" and "absurd".⁵⁰

It soon became evident that the Country Party would not accept the changes. The Inverell Branch of the Graziers' Association asked Ian Allan, the Country Party Member for Gwydir, to vote against the redistribution,⁵¹ and McEwen,

⁴⁹ Northern Daily Leader, 26 July 1962.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 20 July 1962.

⁵¹ Sydney Morning Herald, 14 August 1962.

the federal Leader of the party, described it as "crazy" and "cock-eyed".⁵² Finally the parliamentary Country Party resolved that it would vote against the proposals,⁵³ and since the A.L.P., for reasons of its own, would not support the new boundaries, the Government admitted defeat and withdrew the whole redistribution.⁵⁴

In defending his party's stand, McEwen dwelt on an old theme:

When I speak of the rural voice I make clear that I am not referring only to the rural voice as expressed through the lips of an elected Country Party representative.... I am referring to the rural voice as expressed through the lips of whatever member representing whatever party the electors choose to send to the Parliament.⁵⁵

The opposition to the proposals by the party had been one of the principal political issues of the year, and the result was seen as a triumph for the Country Party. The Countryman headlined the announcement "End of Federal Redistribution a Great Victory for the C.P."⁵⁶ V.C. Thompson, once the Country Party M.H.R. for New England, wrote a special

⁵²

Courier-Mail (Brisbane), 17 November 1962.

⁵³

Sydney Morning Herald, 27 November 1962.

⁵⁴

C.P.D., 4 December 1962, Vol. (HofR) 37, p.2887.

⁵⁵

ibid., p.2873.

⁵⁶

December 1962.

article for the Northern Daily Leader, in which he rather astonishingly claimed:

For the first time in the history of Federation the voice of the country people has been heard in a challenging move against the forces of Big City domination.⁵⁷

But the Country Party had secured more than the withdrawal of the redistribution proposals. As part of the coalition policy for the federal elections of 1963, the Prime Minister undertook that no seats would be abolished, and that the Electoral Commissioners would be instructed to vary the size of the electorates to a greater degree than had been done in the past.⁵⁸ And in the campaign itself, McEwen wasted no time in pointing out to country electors that it was his party which had led the fight to save the country seats, and his party which had saved them; for it was only the Country Party which appreciated the need for rural representation, from whatever party.⁵⁹

But crises of this sort have rarely occurred in the last two decades, and between elections there seems little interest in politics in the countryside. Branch meetings

⁵⁷

Northern Daily Leader, 12 December 1962.

⁵⁸

Sydney Morning Herald, 13 November 1963.

⁵⁹

So the writer heard Mr McEwen argue in the course of a street meeting address in Cootamundra (N.S.W.) on 25 November 1963.

are poorly attended, the press is somnolent, and the correspondence columns of the papers (if they possess any) are normally free of political criticisms and counter-attacks. However, this is not necessarily a sign of a politically apathetic countryside. Elections are still very keenly contested, and election results still very close.

What is more likely to be a helpful explanation is the old traditional rural trust in the local Member, together with a realisation among the voters of the essentially settled and limited objectives of the Country Party. When major crises develop the party appears to be alive, and to be fighting along the lines and with the arguments which have come to be traditionally those of the Country Party. And in each election, for a period of four or five weeks, the party emerges in full-dress, with those sorts of candidates, policies and arguments which by now the party has established as its own special contribution to the Australian party system.

CONCLUSION

It is possible to argue that the major problem facing the Country Party is one of survival, without also entering into the sterile debate on whether the party is on the point of collapse. The question of its survival has been the chief concern of the party since its formation, but it has so far been able to adapt itself to changing circumstances. Consequently, in 1963, 43 years after the foundation of both the federal and the N.S.W. Country Parties, those parties remain an established force in both parliaments and are supported, in New South Wales, by an impressively large extra-parliamentary organisation.

The longevity of the party, and its stability since the second world war, cannot be explained simply in terms of the electoral system, or of social or economic forces, or of happenings in other parties, although all these factors are relevant and important. More important are the strengths of the Country Party itself, as a political organisation. Firstly, the party has solved two problems which plagued it in the 1920s and 1930s. It has built up, through the organiser system, a permanent source of income and a large, continuous and reliable local organisation. It possesses, therefore, an organisational continuity which it lacked in the early years and which has been the basis of its continued existence since the war.

Secondly, its morale remains high. It is a state party directed primarily to achieving power in New South Wales, and although it has been in opposition since 1941, it has never regarded the battle as lost, and on two occasions, in 1950 and in 1959, it came close to winning power. The continued success of the federal party since 1949 has given the N.S.W. party organisation confidence whenever the problems of state politics have seemed insuperable. Furthermore, the frequent elections and referenda of the postwar period have sustained the activity of the party's organisation as well as the solidarity of its members and supporters.

Thirdly, it has become 'legitimate', and in its strongest regions it is now the established political party, deriving support and loyalty because of its long history in those regions. It can be attacked in its strongholds, but not easily dislodged. And the party is aware of the forces working against it: if it has lost the crusading optimism and enthusiasm of its early years it has replaced them with a dogged determination to preserve its independence and its power to the end.

Fourthly, within the limits it has set itself, the Country Party possesses an organisation of undoubted efficiency. It may lack adequate provision for rank and

file decisions in policymaking, but in its main task, that of returning and maintaining Members in parliament, it has few serious deficiencies. The organisation may be oligarchic in nature, but oligarchy is a fact of rural life; it helps, rather than hinders, the party's efficiency as an electoral organisation.

Finally, the party has been blessed with good leadership. Both in N.S.W. and in federal politics the Country Party has been led by shrewd and able leaders. In Page, Fadden and McEwen the federal Country Party possessed three of the outstanding federal parliamentarians of the last half-century. In Colonel Bruxner the N.S.W. Country Party found a leader whose skill as a negotiator and as an electoral tactician was probably unmatched in N.S.W. politics. The parliamentary leaders have rarely lost sight of the realities of the Country Party's survival, nor of the constant need for flexible strategies. Moreover, all have been men capable of inspiring great loyalty from the party's rank and file. And to administer its extra-parliamentary organisation the party has found, one after another, party Chairmen who were not mere figureheads but men aware of the role and responsibilities of the organisation and who accepted the authority of the parliamentary leaders. The long continuity of both the parliamentary and

the extra-parliamentary leaders of the party has provided it with a fund of experience and counsel, together with a collective confidence in the wisdom of its strategies.

Not only have these strengths been instrumental in preserving the effective existence of the **C**ountry **P**arty in what might be called the "Menzies era", but they will be invaluable in its future struggles. Nevertheless the party is faced with four related problems which have been growing steadily more acute. Firstly, through the process of demographic change, its strongest electoral support is decreasing in size as the rural population shrinks. If it is to preserve its strength the party must win a much greater measure of support in the country towns. This will not be an easy task. The towns have been fertile grounds for both Labor and Liberal intrusions, and a successful **C**ountry **P**arty counter-attack will have to be based on a fundamental re-shaping of policies, together with the moulding of a new identity which emphasises the equal importance of country towns and townsmen with the primary industries and producers.

But, secondly, the cultural differences between the rural, country town and metropolitan communities are now much less than they were a generation ago. The party will **find it** progressively harder to plead cultural and social

separateness as a justification for a rural political party. And although the competition for material resources between **City** and **Country** is unlikely to have an end (if only because of the vastness of the **Australian** continent and the scatter of population), recent prosperity has muted much of the tension which has accompanied this competition. Nevertheless the **Country Party** will in future have to accentuate its role as the spokesman of the economic demands of country people generally, not only because this role is fast becoming its only real one, but because this change will be necessary if the party is to capture the provincial towns.

Thirdly, the cultural orientation of the **Country** to the **City** has been accompanied (and hastened) by the decline of the independent, opinionated country press, whose support nurtured the **Country Party** in its formative years. Moreover, the growing circulation and influence of metropolitan newspapers in country districts has resulted in the party losing friends and gaining enemies, for the **Sydney** press, if not always actively hostile to the party, has been unsympathetic both to its existence and to its pretensions. To keep alive its communication with the electorate the party will increasingly have to purchase space in the newspapers and time on radio and television. The consequent financial problems will be real and acute, for a party which depends upon its

members for the bulk of its income finds it difficult to increase its revenue without straining the loyalties of its supporters.

Finally, the opposition of the Country Party's two major rivals is unceasing. In the party's early years both the National and United Australia Parties, and to a lesser extent the A.L.P., were a little uncertain of the meaning of the new intrusion into the party system, and allowed the Country Party some room in which to manoeuvre. But since the war both its rivals have recognised that the Country Party has passed from its aggressive, expansionist phase into a defensive phase, and have realised that it can be attacked. The Liberal Party attacks by presenting itself as the only necessary anti-socialist party, the Labor Party by claiming to be the only necessary country party. Both rivals realise that time is on their side, and both are certain that their techniques will eventually succeed, since both have had some success already. Neither hopes to eliminate the Country Party tomorrow, but both are prepared to wait. Moreover, both parties can speed the process to some extent by manipulating the electoral system. A determined effort to abolish country "quotas" in fixing upon electoral sizes could permanently harm only the Country Party, while Labor's threatened attack on preferential

voting (renewed in the 1963 federal election campaign) could, if successful, exacerbate relations between the two non-Labor parties; it would almost certainly make any further Country Party electoral gains unlikely.

It is thus impossible for the Country Party to reach a permanent settlement with its opponents: each seizes upon any opening that circumstances or Country Party indecision presents - the Labor Party in Lismore since 1959 and the Liberal Party in Hume in 1963. For the Country Party the risks consequent upon action are becoming greater, and will grow greater still. In demanding a favourable redistribution of electoral boundaries in 1963 John McEwen was not taking the easy alternative. If the demand were pushed too hard it might break the coalition and in the resulting disintegration a strong and open Liberal offensive would be almost certain. There is no obvious course that the Country Party can follow in this conflict other than to sharpen its awareness of the problems and of the implications of action or inaction.

These four factors are inter-related aspects of the major problem of survival. The political, economic and social conditions which led to the rise of the Country Party and which have enabled it to survive are losing their immediacy and force. As these conditions have changed so

has the party adapted its organisation and its leaders their strategies. But a different order of adjustment will eventually be needed. The problems which face the party cannot be solved in the long-term simply by an increase in its membership and finance, and by the appointment of additional organisers. What will have to be achieved is an organic re-orientation of the party's objectives, membership and organisation. And it will be the party's reaction to the problems of this adaptation, as much as anything else, which will determine its future.

THESIS APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

Approximate Party Representation in the New South Wales
Parliament, 1920 to 1962

Note:

1. The major non-Labor party bore the name "Democratic Party in the 1944 election campaign.
2. "Other" includes:
 - Independent,
 - Independent Nationalist,
 - Independent Labor,
 - Democratic (1922),
 - Industrial Labor (1938),
 - Lang Labor (1944 and 1947).
3. The Assembly was enlarged to 94 members before the 1950 elections.
4. The two "Unity" members, elected in 1932 and defeated in 1935, have been included with the Country Party.

Source:

- (a) from 1920 to 1947, Aitkin, The United Country Party, Appendix A;
- (b) from 1950 to 1962, Working Sheets for a Handbook of Australian Politics, Department of Political Science, Institute of Advanced Studies, Australian National University.

Approximate Party Representation in the N.S.W. Legislative Assembly,
1920 to 1962

<u>Year</u>	<u>A.L.P.</u>	<u>Nat UAP Lib</u>	<u>CP</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Total</u>
1920	45	26	15	4	90
1922	37	42	9	2	90
1925	46	33	9	2	90
1927	40	35	13	2	90
1930	55	23	12	-	90
1932	24	41	25	-	90
1935	29	38	23	-	90
1938	28	37	22	3	90
1941	54	14	12	10	90
1944	56	13	10	11	90
1947	52	17	15	6	90
1950	46	29	17	2	94
1953	57	22	14	1	94
1956	50	27	15	2	94
1959	50	27	16	1	94
1962	54	25	14	1	94

1922	2
1925	2
1927	3
1930	3
1932	10
1935	11
1938	12
1941	11
1944	10
1947	7
1950	9
1953	9
1958	10

Source: Ellis, The Country Party, Appendix G

APPENDIX B

Country Party Representation in New South Wales
Coalition Ministries, 1927 to 1941

Note: The electorate represented by each Minister is given in parentheses after his name.

Source: adapted from The New South Wales Parliamentary Record, Volume II, Sydney 1957, pp.88-100

1. Bavin-Buttenshaw Government, 18 October 1927 to 3 November 1930

Ministry of 14

E.A.Buttenshaw (Lachlan)	Deputy-Premier; Works; Railways
H.V.C.Thorby (Castlereagh)	Agriculture
D.H.Drummond (Armidale)	Education
M.F.BruXner (Tenterfield)	Local Government

2. Stevens-BruXner Government, 16 May 1932 to 10 February 1935

Ministry of 15

M.F.BruXner	Deputy-Premier; Transport
E.A.Buttenshaw	Lands
D.H.Drummond	Education
H.Main (Temora)	Agriculture
R.S.Vincent (Raleigh)	Mines; Forests

(R.S.Vincent was appointed on 18 June 1932. Between 16 May and 18 June 1932 M.F.BruXner also held the portfolio of Local Government.)

3. Stevens-Bruxner Government (Reconstruction), 11 February 1935
to 13 April 1938

Ministry of 18

M.F.Bruxner	Deputy-Premier; Transport
E.A.Buttenshaw	Lands
D.H.Drummond	Education
H.Main	Agriculture
R.S.Vincent	Mines; Forests
C.A.Sinclair	Minister without Portfolio

(The Ministry had increased from 15 on 11 February 1935 to 18 on 29 June 1937 when C.A.Sinclair was appointed. E.A.Buttenshaw resigned on 31 January 1938 and was replaced by Sinclair. H.Main resigned on 1 April 1938 and his duties were performed by R.S.Vincent from 2 April 1938 to 13 April 1938.)

4. Stevens-Bruxner Government (Further Reconstruction), 13 April
1938 to 5 August 1939

Ministry of 17

M.F.Bruxner	Deputy-Premier; Transport
D.H.Drummond	Education
C.A.Sinclair	Lands
A.D.Reid (Young)	Agriculture
R.S.Vincent	Mines; Forests

5. Mair-Bruxner Government, 5 August 1939 to 16 May 1941

Ministry of 17

M.F.Bruxner	Deputy-Premier; Transport
D.H.Drummond	Education
R.S.Vincent	Mines; Forests
C.A.Sinclair	Lands
A.D.Reid	Agriculture
A.W.Yeo (Castlereagh)	Lands

(C.A.Sinclair resigned on 6 November 1940 and his place was taken on that day by A.W.Yeo.)

APPENDIX C

Approximate Party Representation in the
House of Representatives, 1919 to 1963

Note:

1. These figures are provisional only.
2. Lang Labor Members have been grouped with the A.L.P.
3. "Other" includes:
 - Independent
 - Liberal (1919, 1922, 1925)
 - Independent Liberal (1922)
 - Independent Nationalist
 - Independent U.A.P.
 - Independent Labor.
4. Country Party figures include the dissident Country Party Members from Victoria from 1928 to 1943.
5. Not included in the table are the non-voting Members for the Northern Territory (from 1922) or for the Australian Capital Territory (from 1949).
6. The figures represent party strengths immediately after the return of writs, and do not take into account the results of disputed elections or of early by-elections.
7. The N.S.W. column refers to the number of Country Party Members elected from N.S.W. divisions.

Source:

- (a) for the periods 1919 to 1925 and from 1937 to 1963:

Working Sheets for a Handbook of Australian Politics,
 Department of Political Science, Institute of
 Advanced Studies, Australian National University;

- (b) for the period 1928 to 1934:

Geoffrey Sawer, Australian Federal Politics and Law,
1901 to 1929, and Australian Federal Politics and
Law, 1929 to 1949.

Approximate Party Representation in the House of Representatives,
1919 to 1963

<u>Year</u>	<u>A.L.P.</u>	<u>Nat UAP Lib</u>	<u>CP</u>	<u>CP N.S.W.</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Total</u>
1919	25	36	10	3	4	75
1922	29	26	14	4	6	75
1925	24	34	12	5	5	75
1928	31	30	12	5	2	75
1929	46	14	10	4	5	75
1931	17	39	16	8	3	75
1934	27	32	15	7	-	74
1937	29	30	14	6	1	74
1940	35	23	15	4	1	74
1943	49	14	10	3	1	74
1946	44	17	12	3	1	74
1949	47	55	19	8	-	121
1951	53	52	16	7	-	121
1954	57	47	17	7	-	121
1955	47	57	18	8	-	122
1958	47	56	19	8	-	122
1961	60	45	17	7	-	122
1963	50	52	20	9	-	122

APPENDIX D

Country Party Representation in
Federal Coalition Ministries
1923 to 1963

Note:

1. The home state of each Minister appears in parentheses after his name.

Source:

adapted from Parliamentary Handbook of the Commonwealth of Australia, fourteenth edition, Canberra 1962

1. Bruce-Page Government, 9 February 1923 to 22 October 1929

(a) from 9 February 1923 to 18 June 1926

Ministry of 11

E.C.G. Page (N.S.W.)	Treasury
W.G. Gibson (Vic.)	P.M.G.
P.G. Stewart (Vic.)	Works and Railways (until 5 August 1924)
R.V. Wilson (S.A.)	Honorary Minister
L. Atkinson (Tas.)	Vice-President of the Executive Council (until 16 January 1925, then Markets and Migration)
W.C. Hill (Vic.)	Works and Railways (from 8 August 1924)

(b) from 18 June 1926 to 29 November 1928

Ministry of 13

E.C.G. Page	Treasury
W.G. Gibson	P.M.G.
W.C. Hill	Works and Railways
T. Paterson (Vic.)	Markets and Migration

(c) from 29 November 1928 to 22 October 1929

Ministry of 13

E.C.G.Page	Treasury
W.G.Gibson	P.M.G. (and Works and Railways from 10 December 1928)
T.Paterson	Markets
C.L.A.Abbott (N.S.W.)	Home Affairs

2. Lyons Government, 9 November 1934 to 29 November 1937

Ministry of 14

E.C.G.Page	Commerce; Health
T.Paterson	Interior
H.V.C.Thorby (N.S.W.)	Minister without Portfolio
J.A.J.Hunter (Qld.)	Minister without Portfolio

3. Lyons Government, 29 November 1937 to 7 November 1938

Ministry of 14

E.C.G.Page	Commerce; Health
H.V.C.Thorby	Defence
J.McEwen (Vic.)	Interior
V.C.Thompson (N.S.W.)	Minister without Portfolio
A.G.Cameron (S.A.)	Minister without Portfolio

4. Lyons Government, 7 November 1938 to 7 April 1939

Ministry of 14

E.C.G.Page	Commerce
H.V.C.Thorby	Works; Civil Aviation
J.McEwen	Interior
A.G.Cameron	P.M.G.
V.C.Thompson	Minister without Portfolio

5. Page Government, 7 April 1939 to 26 April 1939

Ministry of 13

E.C.G.Page	Prime Minister; Commerce
H.V.C.Thorby	Works; Civil Aviation
J.McEwen	Interior
A.G.Cameron	P.M.G.
V.C.Thompson	Minister without Portfolio

6. Menzies Government, 14 March 1940 to 28 October 1940

Ministry of 14

A.G.Cameron	Commerce; Navy
H.V.C.Thorby	P.M.G.; Health
J.McEwen	External Affairs

6. Menzies Government, 14 March 1940 to 28 October 1940 (cont)

Ministry of 14

A.W.Fadden (Qld)	Minister without Portfolio (until 14 August 1940, then Air; Civil Aviation)
H.K.Nock (N.S.W.)	Minister without Portfolio

7. Menzies Government, 28 October 1940 to 29 August 1941

Ministry of 16 (19 from 26 June 1941)

A.W.Fadden	Treasury
J.McEwen	Air; Civil Aviation
E.C.G.Page	Commerce
T.J.Collins (N.S.W.)	Minister without Portfolio (until 26 June 1941, then P.M.G.)
H.L.Anthony (N.S.W.)	Minister without Portfolio (until 26 June 1941, then Transport)
J.P.Abbott (N.S.W.)	Home Security (from 26 June 1941)

8. Fadden Government, 29 August 1941 to 7 October 1941

Ministry of 19

A.W.Fadden	Prime Minister; Treasury
J.McEwen	Air; Civil Aviation

8. Fadden Government, 29 August 1941 to 7 October 1941 (cont.)

Ministry of 19

E.C.G.Page	Commerce
T.J.Collins	P.M.G.
H.L.Anthony	Transport
J.P.Abbott	Home Security

9. Menzies Government, 19 December 1949 to 11 May 1951

Ministry of 19

A.W.Fadden	Treasury
J.McEwen	Commerce and Agriculture
E.C.G.Page	Health
H.L.Anthony	P.M.G.
W.J.Cooper (Qld)	Repatriation

10. Menzies Government, 11 May 1951 to 11 January 1956

Ministry of 19

A.W.Fadden	Treasury
J.McEwen	Commerce and Agriculture
E.C.G.Page	Health
H.L.Anthony	P.M.G.
W.J.Cooper	Repatriation

11. Menzies Government, 11 January 1956 to 10 December 1958

Ministry of 22

A.W.Fadden	Treasurer
J.McEwen	Trade
W.J.Cooper	Repatriation
C.W.Davidson (Qld)	P.M.G.
H.S.Roberton (N.S.W.)	Social Services

12. Menzies Government, 10 December 1958 to 22 December 1961

Ministry of 22

J.McEwen	Trade
C.W.Davidson	P.M.G.
W.J.Cooper	Repatriation (until 29 December 1960)
H.S.Roberton	Social Services
C.F.Adermann (Qld)	Primary Industry
H.W.Wade (Vic.)	Air (from 29 December 1960)

13. Menzies Government, 22 December 1961 to 18 December 1963

Ministry of 22

J.McEwen	Trade
----------	-------

13. Menzies Government, 22 December 1961 to 18 December 1963 (cont.)

Ministry of 22

C.W.Davidson	P.M.G.
C.F.Adermann	Primary Industry
H.S.Roberton	Social Services
H.W.Wade	Air

14. Menzies Government, 18 December 1963 to ...

Ministry of 25

J.McEwen	Trade and Industry
C.F.Adermann	Primary Industry
H.W.Wade	Health
H.S.Roberton	Social Services
C.E.Barnes (Qld)	Territories
J.D.Anthony (N.S.W.)	Interior (to take up duties in 1964)

The Cabinet

From 11 January 1956 the Ministry was divided into the Cabinet and other Ministers, the former comprising the 12 or 13 most senior Ministers.

Country Party representation in the Cabinet has been as follows:-

1. 11 January to 10 December 1958

A.W.Fadden Treasury

J.McEwen Trade

2. 10 December 1958 to 22 December 1961

J.McEwen Trade

C.W.Davidson P.M.G.

C.F.Adermann Primary Industry
(from 4 February 1960)

3. 22 December 1961 to 18 December 1963

J.McEwen Trade

C.W.Davidson P.M.G.

C.F.Adermann Primary Industry

4. 18 December 1963 to ...

J.McEwen Trade and Industry

C.F.Adermann Primary Industry

H.W.Wade Health

APPENDIX E

The Country Party's Membership and Income,
1945 to 1959

Note:

1. The index number 100 represents respectively, in column 1, known membership through bank orders on January 1st, 1945; in column 2, the party's income in 1945 from all bank orders made out to Head Office together with the Head Office proportion of bank orders made out to electorate councils; and in column 3, the party's income in 1945 from all donations for which Head Office receipts were given.

2. In the three years ending 1954, bank order income was highest in 1954 and lowest in 1953.

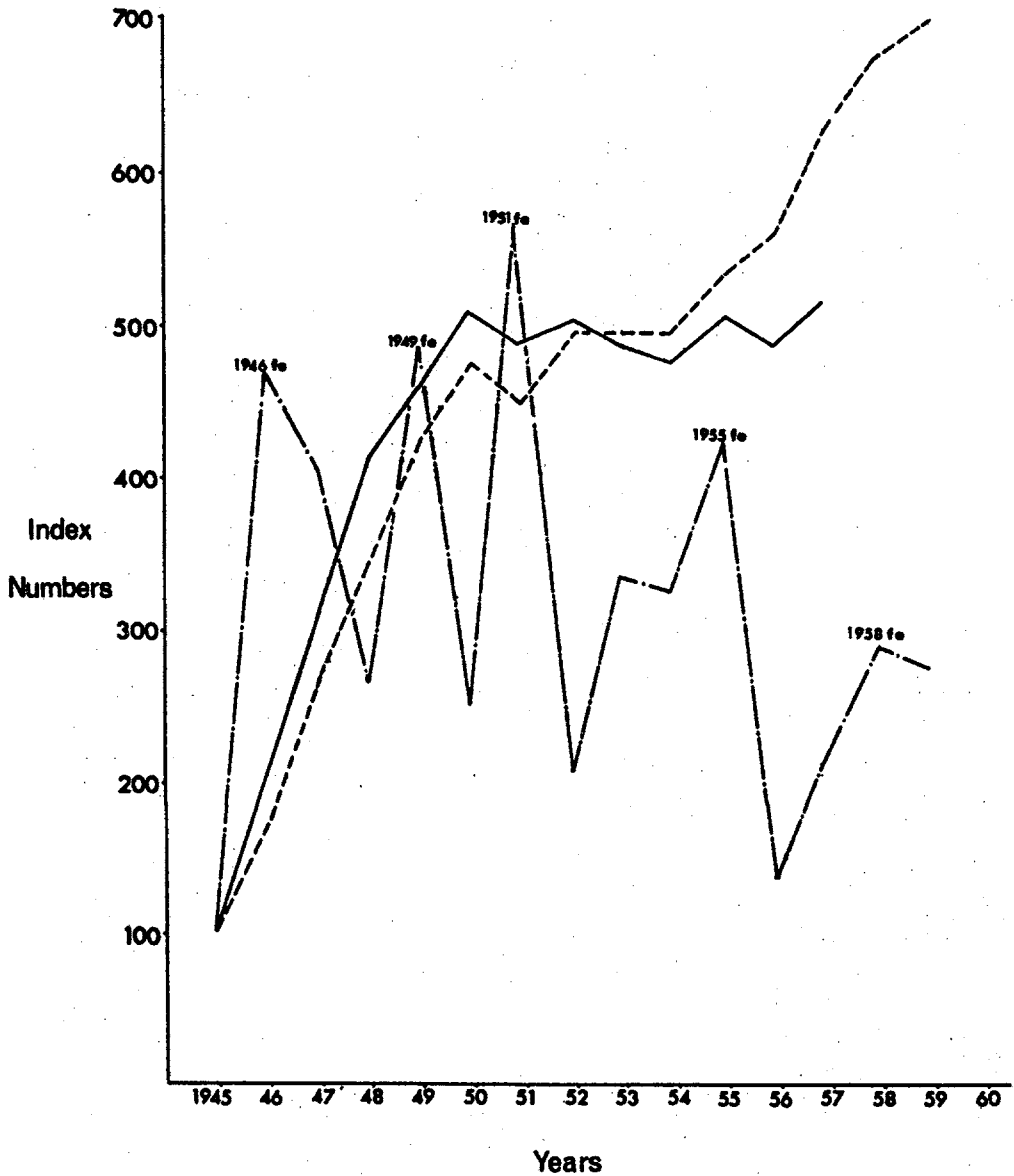
3. The last count of members took place in 1957. Since 1957 membership can be stated only in terms of bank order income. Such an enumeration cannot be accurate, since many members subscribe through more than one bank order.

- Source:
- (a) for revenue, the annual Auditors' Reports from 1945 to 1960 (copies in Central Council Minute Books)
 - (b) for membership, occasional General Secretary and State Organiser Reports to Central Council and Executive (Central Council Minute Books; Central Executive Minute Books)

The Country Party's Membership and Income, 1945 to 1959Indices of Membership and Income

<u>Year</u>	<u>Membership</u>	<u>Income from Bank Orders</u>	<u>Income from Donations</u>
1945	100	100	100
1946	*	175	466
1947	307	266	407
1948	411	342	269
1949	459	423	484
1950	507	471	250
1951	488	446	562
1952	501	492	209
1953	488	492 (+)	331
1954	474	492 (-)	323
1955	503	531	420
1956	487	555	132
1957	513	625	212
1958	*	670	286
1959	*	694	274

The Country Party's Membership and Income, 1945 to 1959



Note: 1. ——— Membership
 - - - - - Income from Bank Orders
 - . - . - Income from Donations

2. fe = federal election

APPENDIX F

The Agreement Between the Liberal and Country Parties
for the Federal Election of 1949

Extract from Minutes of Meeting of the Central Executive of The Australian Country Party (N.S.W.) held at 42 Bridge St., 21/2/49

THE CHAIRMAN then gave a full report to the Central Executive on the agreement which the Sub-Committee had reached with the Sub-Committee of the Liberal Party during their discussions on Friday, 18th, and Saturday 19th February. After discussion and consideration it was moved by MESSRS. FLEMING, and MUNRO:-

"That the Central Executive approves and confirms the agreement made by the Country Party with the Liberal Party Sub-Committee at conferences on the 18 th and 19th February, when it was agreed:-

- (1) That the following Federal divisions would be contested by the Country Party, without opposition from the Liberal Party:-

Cowper	Darling	Gwydir
Hume	Lyne	New England
Richmond	Riverina	

- (2) The following Federal divisions would be contested by the Liberal Party without opposition from the Country Party:-

Calare	Cunningham	Eden-Monaro
Macarthur	Macquarie	Mitchell
Robertson	Werriwa	

- (3) The following divisions would be contested by both the Country Party and Liberal Party

candidates:-

Farrer
Lawson

- (4) That the Paterson Federal division remains, for the moment, the subject of negotiation, as set out in the letter received from the Liberal Party on the 18th February.
- (5) That there be a joint Senate team of four, and that positions in the team be as follows:-
 1. Liberal Party candidate.
 2. Country Party candidate.
 3. Liberal Party candidate.
 4. Liberal Party candidate.
- (6) That there be one Senate How-to-vote card.
- (7) That there be established a standing joint Organisational Committee, to facilitate co-operation between the respective Parties for the election campaign, and that a Sub-Committee, consisting of three from each Party, be appointed by such Parties.
- (8) That the policy of the Parties be left in the hands of the Federal Leaders.

MR. FADDEN, speaking in respect of the above arrangements, assured the Central Executive that he and his colleagues would do everything possible to formulate a policy with the

Liberal Party consistent with the fundamental principles
of the Country Party.

APPENDIX G

The Postal Survey of Members of the
Country Party, October 1962

I. INTRODUCTION

The survey had two aims: to discover what sort of people belonged to the Country Party, and to seek their views on a number of questions which are important to the party.

It was impossible to conduct a series of face-to-face interviews because of cost and distance factors, and the survey was therefore conducted by post. The Head Office of the Country Party permitted the writer to make use of the party's mailing lists, but these were so organised that it proved impossible to use a semi-random sample of members. For the same reason it was not possible to select a number of individual branches for the survey. The party's mailing lists are organised according to Railway Travelling Post Office procedures, that is, members are grouped in the lists according to their nearest major post office.

Consequently, three 'branch areas' were selected: the Armidale area, containing 185 members from the Armidale, Uralla, Wollombombi and Bundarra Branches (but not all the members of those Branches), the Kempsey area (containing 299 members from six branches), and the Young area (containing 201 members from four branches). These three areas were chosen partly because they were well-known to the writer, partly because he was acquainted with the local parliamentarians and party officials, and partly because each area in some ways represents one of the three major regions of the Country Party: Armidale - the northern tablelands grazing area, Kempsey - the north coastal dairying area, and Young - the south-western mixed farming area.

There were two mailings. The first consisted of an introductory letter from the writer explaining the purpose of the questionnaire, and advising that it would be sent within a week, together with a covering letter from the local Country Party M.L.A. approving of the survey and asking party members to co-operate. The second consisted of the questionnaire and a stamped (not franked) envelope addressed to

the writer for the return of the questionnaire.

Both the parliamentarians and the Head Office officials advised the writer that a greater response was likely if the anonymity of the respondent was preserved. After some hesitation the writer decided to follow this advice, although he was conscious that this would make it impossible to follow up those who did not reply. Accordingly, the participants were told in both the first and second mailings that their names were not required and that the questionnaires were not numbered. They were urged to reply fully, frankly and promptly, and it was pointed out to them that the writer had no means of contacting the non-respondents.

To enable some comparisons to be made between branch areas, the questionnaires were printed on coloured paper: white for Kempsey, Green for Armidale, and gold for Young.

The mailing and response were as follows:-

Armidale	...	185 sent	...	74 returned (40.0%)
Kempsey	...	299 sent	...	106 returned (35.6%)
Young	...	201 sent	...	68 returned (33.8%)
<u>Total</u>	...	685 sent	...	248 returned (36.2%)

However, of these replies four were returned because the addressee was deceased, and one was simply returned unopened. Thus the usable replies were as follows:-

Armidale	....	73
Kempsey	....	102
Young	....	68
<u>Total</u>	....	243

These are the base figures for the analysis.

A copy of the questionnaire is enclosed in a pocket at the end of the thesis.

II. THE RESPONSE

The response was small, too small indeed to justify more than cautious speculations from the analysis. A close examination of the replies, however, did not produce any significant skew in the response. It is probable that the replies include a somewhat greater proportion of active members than the contents of minute books and other party records would suggest to be true of the party as a whole, but the bias does not seem on the writer's observations to be marked. The occupational breakdown of the members in the survey is consistent with that of the members in the same areas as shown in Appendix H. The proportions of women in both survey and Appendix H are similar. The proportion of older men among the respondents accords with the writer's experience of party members in all parts of the state. In general it is the writer's belief that the respondents are fairly representative of party members as a whole.

A trial survey on a smaller scale would probably have resulted in a clearer and more useful questionnaire. Some questions proved of little value, while others could have been better worded. Some faults which emerged from the replies are listed below.

(a) The quality of the paper (chosen by the writer because of its better quality) apparently caused pages to stick together, with the result that many respondents failed to answer whole pages, particularly page three and the last page.

(b) Respondents were not given enough opportunity to reply "don't know" or "no opinion". Although this did (quite unintentionally) force respondents to reply either YES or NO if they replied at all, it may have caused some participants to abstain from answering some questions.

(c) The F.S.A. and the Wheat and Woolgrowers' Association merged to become the United Farmers and Woolgrowers' Association some time prior to the despatch of the questionnaire, and this caused confusion for many respondents in regard to QA5.

(d) There was evident confusion between QA5a ("any other primary producers' organisation") and QA6b ("any other bodies"). Junior Farmers' Clubs, Pastures Protection Boards and P.A.&H. Societies, inter alia, appeared in answers to both questions.

(e) A number of respondents who had lived in the country for more than 30 years but who had not been born there found QA7b hard to answer.

(f) QA9f should also have included the alternative NEVER, as many respondents wrote this on the form.

(g) QB9 contained a redundant "should not", but this did not appear to cause any confusion.

Most respondents answered all the questions as instructed and there did not appear to have been much deliberate avoidance of questions. The most frequently unanswered questions were QA8h and QA9g.

Summary of Results

<u>QA1 Age</u>	<u>Armidale</u>	<u>Kempsey</u>	<u>Young</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%</u>
-21	-	-	-	-	-
21-25	1	7	-	8	3.3
26-30	4	6	2	12	5.0
31-35	4	8	6	18	7.4
36-40	3	11	8	22	9.1
41-45	7	12	7	26	10.7
46-50	6	20	7	33	13.7
51-55	13	10	15	38	15.7
56-60	5	5	8	15	7.4
61-65	3	8	6	17	6.7
-65	25	12	8	45	18.5
No answer	2	3	1	6	2.5
	73	102	68	243	100.0

QA2 Marital Status

Single	8	14	4	26	10.7
Married	65	87	64	216	88.9
No answer	-	1	-	1	0.4
	73	102	68	243	100.0

QA4(a) Religion

C. of E.	43	48	35	126	51.9
R.C.	2	11	6	19	7.8
Pres.	19	17	20	56	23.1
Meth.	9	21	7	37	15.2
Bapt.	-	1	-	1	0.4
Other	-	1 (S.A.)	-	1	0.4
None	-	3	-	3	1.2
No answer	-	-	-	-	-

Summary of Results

		<u>Armidale</u>	<u>Kempsey</u>	<u>Young</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%</u>
<u>QA4b Church Attendance</u>						
At least once per week						
	C. of E.	1	6	1	8	
	R.C.	1	7	5	13	
	Pres.	2	4	4	10	
	Meth.	6	5	3	14	
	Bapt.	-	-	-	-	
		10	22	13	45	18.9
At least once per month						
	C. of E.	16	26	20	62	
	R.C.	-	3	-	3	
	Pres.	8	3	8	19	
	Meth.	1	8	4	13	
	Bapt.	-	-	-	-	
	Other	-	1	-	1	
		25	41	32	98	41.2
At least once per year						
	C. of E.	19	9	9	37	
	R.C.	1	-	1	2	
	Pres.	8	6	7	21	
	Meth.	1	4	-	5	
	Bapt.	-	-	-	-	
		29	19	17	65	27.3
Less than once per year						
	C. of E.	6	8	5	19	
	R.C.	-	1	-	1	
	Pres.	1	4	1	6	
	Meth.	1	2	-	3	
	Bapt.	-	1	-	1	
		8	16	6	30	12.6

Summary of Results

	<u>Armidale</u>	<u>Kempsey</u>	<u>Young</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%</u>
<u>QA4b Church Attendance</u>					
<u>Grand Total</u>	72	98	68	238	100.0
No Religion	-	3	-	3	
No Answer	1	1	-	2	
	<u>73</u>	<u>102</u>	<u>68</u>	<u>243</u>	
<u>QA5a Membership of Organisations</u>					
F.S.A.	16	1	38	55	22.6
G.A.	27	1	12	40	16.5
P.P.U.	1	45	2	48	19.7
Other	1	2	-	3	1.2
Trade Union	-	1	-	1	0.4
Prof. Ass ⁿ	11	13	6	30	12.3
No organisation	17	39	10	66	27.1
	<u>73</u>	<u>102</u>	<u>68</u>	<u>243</u>	<u>100.0</u>
<u>QA5b Executive of Organisations</u>					
Yes	11 [3]	20 [10]	15 [9]	46 [22]	26.0
No	45	43	43	131	74.0
Total	<u>56</u>	<u>63</u>	<u>58</u>	<u>177</u>	<u>100.0</u>
(Office-bearers and delegates of the Country Party within square parentheses.)					
<u>QA6a Local Government</u>					
Shire	4	2	3	9	3.7
Municipal	-	1	2	3	1.2
County	1	2	-	3	1.2
None	69	99	63	228	93.9
	<u>73</u>	<u>102</u>	<u>68</u>	<u>243</u>	<u>100.0</u>

Summary of Results

	<u>Armidale</u>	<u>Kempsey</u>	<u>Young</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%</u>
QA6b <u>Other</u>					
R.S.L.	13	18	12	43	17.7
Sporting	13	35	17	65	26.8
Community	42	50	30	122	50.2
None	29	30	23	82	33.7
	(73)	(102)	(68)	(243)	(100.0)
QA3 (Occupation)					
<u>Living on the land</u>					
Yes	53	64	60	177	72.8
No	20	38	8	66	27.2
	73	102	68	243	100.0
QA7a <u>Parents on land</u>					
Yes	50	66	53	169	69.6
No	22	35	15	72	29.6
No answer	1	1	-	2	0.8
	73	102	68	243	100.0
QA7b <u>How long residence in country</u>					
0-5 years	1	-	-	1	1.4
6-10	2	3	1	6	8.3
11-15	1	1	1	3	4.2
16-20	2	1	-	3	4.2
21-25	1	1	-	2	2.8
26-30	5	6	5	16	22.2
whole life	9	22	5	36	50.0
No answer	1	1	3	5	6.9
	22	35	15	72	100.0

Summary of Results

	<u>Armidale</u>	<u>Kempsey</u>	<u>Young</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%</u>			
QA8a <u>How long member of Country Party</u>		(%)	(%)	(%)				
0-5 years	7	10	50	49	10	15	67	27.6
6-10	11	15	11	11	13	19	35	14.4
11-15	11	15	13	13	9	13	33	13.6
16-20	11	15	10	10	11	16	32	13.1
prior to 1939	29	40	15	14	23	34	67	27.6
No answer	4	5	3	3	2	2	9	3.7
	73	100	102	100	68	100	243	100.0
QA8b <u>Member other parties</u>								
Yes	7		5		6		18	7.4
No	65		95		61		221	91.0
No answer	1		2		1		4	1.6
	73		102		68		243	100.0
QA8c <u>Which parties</u>								
Nat.	4		1		1		6	
U.A.P.	1		1		1		3	
Lib.	2		-		3		5	
A.L.P.	-		3		-		3	
D.L.P.	-		-		1		1	
	7		5		6		18	
QA8d <u>Relatives in C.P.</u>								
Yes	52		65		51		168	69.1
No	15		24		13		52	21.4
No answer	6		13		4		23	9.5
	73		102		68		243	100.0

Summary of Results

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	<u>Armidale</u>	<u>Kempsey</u>	<u>Young</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%</u>
<u>QA8e Which relatives</u>					
Father	9	23	21	53	
Mother	16	8	9	33	
Brother	23	27	30	80	
Sister	16	3	18	37	
Uncle	11	14	9	34	
Aunt	7	4	8	19	
Son	13	8	13	34	
Daughter	18	7	10	35	
Other	6	3	3	12	
	(52)	(65)	(51)	(168)	
<u>QA8f Relatives in Other parties</u>					
Yes	2	6	6	14	5.8
No	64	86	58	208	85.6
Don't know	7	10	4	21	8.6
	73	102	68	243	100.0
<u>QA8g Which parties</u>					
Lib.	2	3	5	10	
A.L.P.	-	3	2	5	
Other	-	-	-	-	
	2	6	(6)	(14)	
<u>QA8h Why did you join the Country Party</u>					
Answer	68	92	61	221	90.9
No answer	5	10	7	22	9.1
	73	102	68	243	100.0

		<u>Armidale</u>	<u>Kempsey</u>	<u>Young</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%</u>
QA9a	<u>Acquaintance</u> <u>with local</u> <u>Members</u>					
(i)	M.L.A.	%	%	%		
	Yes	68 (93)	89 (87)	49 (72)	206	84.8
	No	4 (6)	10 (10)	13 (19)	27	11.1
	No answer	1 (1)	3 (3)	6 (9)	10	4.1
		73 (100)	102 (100)	68 (100)	243	100.0
(ii)	M.H.R.					
	Yes	62 (85)	54 (53)	22 (32)	138	56.8
	No	10 (14)	45 (44)	40 (59)	95	39.1
	No Answer	1 (1)	3 (3)	6 (9)	10	4.1
		73 (100)	102 (100)	68 (100)	243	100.0
QA9b	<u>Acquaintance with</u> <u>local Members before</u> <u>entry into Parlt.</u>					
(i)	M.L.A.					
	Yes	38	85	44	167	81.1
	No	30	4	5	39	18.9
		68	89	49	206	100.0
(ii)	M.H.R.					
	Yes	17	12	13	42	30.4
	No	45	42	9	96	69.6
		62	54	22	138	100.0
QA9c	<u>Voted for other</u> <u>parties</u>					
	Yes	18	29	19	66	27.2
	No	55	73	48	176	72.4
	No answer	-	-	1	1	0.4
		73	102	68	243	100.0

	<u>Armidale</u>	<u>Kempsey</u>	<u>Young</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%</u>
QA9c <u>Which parties</u>					
Nat.	6	3	1	10	
U.A.P.	5	3	1	9	
Lib.	7	11	10	28	
A.L.P.	5	16	6	27	
D.L.P.	-	-	1	1	
Don't remember	-	3	2	5	
	<u>18</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>66</u>	
QA9d <u>Office-bearer</u>					
Yes	12	21	14	45	18.5
No	60	81	52	195	80.3
No answer	1	-	2	3	1.2
	<u>73</u>	<u>102</u>	<u>68</u>	<u>243</u>	<u>100.0</u>
QA9e <u>Delegate</u>					
Yes	10	11	8	29	11.9
No	62	91	58	211	86.9
No answer	1	-	2	3	1.2
	<u>73</u>	<u>102</u>	<u>68</u>	<u>243</u>	<u>100.0</u>
QA9f <u>Meeting attendance</u>					
Regularly	7	16	10	33	13.6
Occasionally	9	26	9	44	18.1
Rarely (Never)	51	57	48	156	64.2
No answer	6	3	1	10	4.1
	<u>73</u>	<u>102</u>	<u>68</u>	<u>243</u>	<u>100.0</u>
QA9g <u>Given Donations</u>					
Yes	51	35	40	126	51.8
No	20	67	23	112	46.1
No answer	2	-	3	5	2.1

	<u>Armidale</u>	<u>Kempsey</u>	<u>Young</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%</u>
QA9g <u>Donations 1961</u>					
Yes	31	5	23	59	24.3
No	40	97	42	179	73.7
No answer	2	-	3	5	2.0
	73	102	68	243	100.0
QA9g <u>Donations 1962</u>					
Yes	26	17	19	62	25.5
No	45	85	46	176	72.4
No answer	2	-	3	5	2.1
	73	102	68	243	100.0
QA9h <u>Worked on tables</u>					
Yes	32	30	24	86	35.4
No	40	70	43	153	63.0
No answer	1	2	1	4	1.6
	73	102	68	243	100.0
QA9h <u>Tables 1961</u>					
Yes	11	17	13	41	16.9
No	61	83	54	198	81.5
No answer	1	2	1	4	1.6
	73	102	68	243	100.0
QA9h <u>Tables 1962</u>					
Yes	9	22	16	47	19.3
No	63	78	51	192	79.0
No answer	1	2	1	4	1.7
	73	102	68	243	100.0

Summary of Results

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	<u>Armidale</u>	<u>Kempsey</u>	<u>Young</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%</u>
QB1 <u>Branch Functions</u>					
Raising finance	3	1	7	11	4.5
Informing Member	32	51	20	103	42.4
Educating Community	17	26	20	63	25.9
Manning tables	-	3	2	5	2.1
Policy-making	17	17	17	51	21.0
No answer	4	4	2	10	4.1
	<u>73</u>	<u>102</u>	<u>68</u>	<u>243</u>	<u>100.0</u>
QB2 <u>Other functions</u>					
Yes	13	19	14	46	18.9
No	60	83	54	197	81.1
	<u>73</u>	<u>102</u>	<u>68</u>	<u>243</u>	<u>100.0</u>
QB3 <u>Spheres of Govt.</u>					
Local	23	42	17	82	31.0
State	28	49	24	101	38.3
Federal	22	16	33	71	26.9
No answer	5	3	2	10	3.8
	<u>78*</u>	<u>110*</u>	<u>76*</u>	<u>264*</u>	<u>100.0</u>
* extra because of multiple selections					
QB4 <u>Liberals Federal</u>					
Yes	34	68	41	143	58.8
No	33	33	26	92	37.9
No answer	6	1	1	8	3.3
	<u>73</u>	<u>102</u>	<u>68</u>	<u>243</u>	<u>100.0</u>

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Summary of Results

	<u>Armidale</u>	<u>Kempsey</u>	<u>Young</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%</u>
QB5 <u>Liberals State</u>					
Yes	32	66	35	133	54.7
No	33	33	31	97	39.9
No answer	8	3	2	13	5.4
	<u>73</u>	<u>102</u>	<u>68</u>	<u>243</u>	<u>100.0</u>
QB6 <u>Labor State</u>					
Yes	21	29	12	62	25.5
No	46	70	52	168	69.1
No answer	6	3	4	13	5.4
	<u>73</u>	<u>102</u>	<u>68</u>	<u>243</u>	<u>100.0</u>
QB6 <u>Labor Federal</u>					
Yes	22	27	11	60	24.7
No	45	72	53	170	70.0
No answer	6	3	4	13	5.3
	<u>73</u>	<u>102</u>	<u>68</u>	<u>243</u>	<u>100.0</u>
QB7 <u>Three-cornered seats</u>					
Yes	22	45	27	94	38.7
No	41	50	37	128	52.7
No answer	10	7	4	21	8.6
	<u>73</u>	<u>102</u>	<u>68</u>	<u>243</u>	<u>100.0</u>
QB8 <u>State Aid</u>					
Yes	23	29	18	70	28.8
No	44	69	46	159	65.4
No answer	6	4	4	14	5.8
	<u>73</u>	<u>102</u>	<u>68</u>	<u>243</u>	<u>100.0</u>

Summary of Results

	<u>Armidale</u>	<u>Kempsey</u>	<u>Young</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%</u>
QB9 <u>Sale of Wheat</u> <u>to</u> <u>Red China</u>					
Yes	63	88	64	215	88.5
No	4	10	4	18	7.4
No answer	6	4	-	10	4.1
	<u>73</u>	<u>102</u>	<u>68</u>	<u>243</u>	<u>100.0</u>

QB10 New States

Yes	64	75	40	179	73.7
No	4	24	27	55	22.6
No answer	5	3	1	9	3.7
	<u>73</u>	<u>102</u>	<u>68</u>	<u>243</u>	<u>100.0</u>

APPENDIX H

Membership: Numbers and Occupations in Selected
State and Federal Electorates, 1961

Note:

1. In nine of the state electorates surveyed the writer was given access to membership records. For the remaining four Head Office membership records were used.
2. The analysis of membership in federal electorates was based on that in state electorates, supplemented where necessary by Head Office membership records.
3. Young state electorate membership figures are those of 1958.
4. The names in the membership lists were checked against the electoral rolls, and the occupations of members as given in the rolls recorded.
5. The first five occupational classifications suggested themselves after a preliminary sampling of the rolls. "Other" was used for the remaining major classification, as smaller categories seemed inappropriate at that stage (see Appendix I).
6. Between three and six per cent of the names in the lists could not be found in the electoral rolls. Deaths no doubt account for many of those not traced, while members can belong to branches outside their own electorate (and many do). Finally, many addresses are given in party records as "c/- Post Office, _____".
7. The occupations listed in the rolls are presumably those of the members as young men and women, or when they first came to the electorate, if this was after the age of 21. Time and circumstances may alter occupations without any change being made to the electoral roll, and very occasionally such changes were observed (in the case of persons known to the writer). However, it is probable that this factor

is less important in rural areas than it might be in the more mobile urban areas.

8. The "Labourer" category includes all those who described themselves as such, or as "station hand", "rural worker", "farm hand", "dairy hand" and so on. It does not include obviously urban unskilled labourers, such as "factory worker" or "mill hand". The latter are grouped in "Other". About one in 10 of the rural labourers had the same name as farmers or graziers living at the same address, and may therefore be presumed to be farmers' sons.

9. The abbreviations are as follows:-

F = Farmer
G = Grazier
F&G = Farmer and Grazier
Lab = Labourer
HD = Home Duties
Other = Other Occupation
NT = Not Traced

Membership: Numbers and Occupations (State Electorates)

<u>Electorate</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>G</u>	<u>F&G</u>	<u>Lab</u>	<u>HD</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>NT</u>	<u>Total</u>
(Predominantly Grazing)								
ARMIDALE	141	318	8	75	31	142	53	768
(%)	18.4	41.4	1.0	9.9	4.0	18.4	6.9	100.0
BURRINJUCK	177	318	31	57	23	69	29	704
(%)	25.1	45.2	4.4	8.1	3.3	9.8	4.1	100.0
TENTERFIELD	253	359	48	65	49	162	43	979
(%)	25.8	36.7	4.9	6.6	5.0	16.6	4.4	100.0
UPPER HUNTER	192	293	22	52	24	87	23	693
(%)	27.7	42.3	3.2	7.5	3.5	12.5	3.3	100.0
(Predominantly Mixed Farming and Grazing)								
ORANGE	347	81	25	42	27	49	35	606
(%)	57.3	13.4	4.1	6.9	4.4	8.1	5.8	100.0
TEMORA	1,163	122	146	79	109	114	64	1,797
(%)	64.7	6.8	8.1	4.4	6.1	6.3	3.6	100.0
YOUNG	337	172	51	42	27	54	46	729
(%)	46.2	23.6	7.0	5.7	3.8	7.4	6.3	100.0
(Predominantly Dairying)								
BYRON	360	-	-	29	16	92	27	524
(%)	68.7			5.5	3.1	17.6	5.1	100.0
CASINO	428	51	1	62	16	111	22	691
(%)	61.9	7.4	0.1	9.0	2.3	16.1	3.2	100.0
GLOUCESTER	266	67	3	51	13	234	28	662
(%)	40.2	10.1	0.5	7.7	2.0	35.3	4.2	100.0
LISMORE	266	4	-	17	5	102	22	416
(%)	63.9	1.0		4.1	1.2	24.5	5.3	100.0
OXLEY	253	9		34	15	208	36	555
(%)	45.6	1.6		6.1	2.7	37.6	6.6	100.0
RALEIGH	607	20	2	77	70	309	41	1,126
(%)	53.9	1.6	0.2	6.9	6.2	27.5	3.7	100.0

Membership: Numbers and Occupations (Federal Electorates)

<u>Electorate</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>G</u>	<u>F&G</u>	<u>LAB</u>	<u>HD</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>NT</u>	<u>Total</u>
CALARE (%)	889 56.3	229 14.1	90 5.7	105 6.6	62 3.9	112 7.1	99 6.3	1,580 100.0
HUME (%)	604 33.5	613 34.0	120 6.7	129 7.1	72 4.0	160 8.9	104 5.8	1,802 100.0
LYNE (%)	684 48.0	38 2.7	2 0.1	101 7.1	52 3.6	472 33.1	77 5.4	1,426 100.0
NEW ENGLAND (%)	481 29.5	572 35.1	16 1.0	138 8.4	73 4.5	275 16.9	75 4.6	1,630 100.0
RICHMOND (%)	822 67.0	9 0.7	-	69 5.6	27 2.2	240 19.6	60 4.9	1,227 100.0

APPENDIX I

A Further Classification of Occupations:
The "Other" Category

Note: 1. This Appendix contains a further classification of the occupations of members of the Country Party: those in the "Other" category of Appendix H. These occupations have been classed in eight groups:-

(a) Professional (P)

doctors, dentists, solicitors, accountants, teachers, engineers, optometrists etc. - the largely University-trained upper stratum in most country towns. It is worth noting that most of the teacher-members came from small schools (ie. one-teacher schools) in the less accessible parts of the north coast and not, except in a few cases, from the larger towns.

(b) Business (B)

storekeepers, chemists, journalists, bank managers - those who are usually regarded as being in the "business section" of a country town, with the exception of those in the following three categories.

(c) Associated with the land (A/L)

all those whose primary concern is in some way helping, buying from, selling to, or advising "the man on the land". This group also includes apiarists, market gardeners and milk vendors.

(d) Local industries (L/I)

timber, mining and fishing go in this category, but not dairy processing (previous category).

(e) Skilled tradesmen (S/T)

it is sometimes hard to draw the line between skilled tradesmen and small businessmen, but this category includes all electricians and electrical contractors, builders, carpenters and so on.

(f) Unskilled and semi-skilled workers (U&S)

all those unskilled and semi-skilled workers who have not been grouped in other categories, but not labourers (separate section in Appendix H).

(g) Deceased estates and No occupation (D)

many bank orders have apparently been signed on behalf of the estates of deceased supporters of the party. Many others come from persons whose occupations are given in the rolls as "retired", "no occupation" or "independent means". It is probable that the great majority of these members are or were at one time farmers or graziers.

(h) Other (Other)

Public servants other than teachers or field officers, town clerks, hospital secretaries, jockeys, radio announcers, members of the armed forces and so on.

2. The numbers immediately below the name of the electorate refer to the total number of the major "other" category in the electorate. The other figures are all percentages.

Source: See Appendix H.

Membership: Further Classification of Occupations

<u>Electorate</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>A/L</u>	<u>L/I</u>	<u>S/T</u>	<u>U&S</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>Other</u>
(Predominantly Grazing)								
ARMIDALE (139)	15	39	17	4	6	2	14	3
BURRINJUCK (69)	9	23	42	2	4	-	20	-
TENTERFIELD (162)	14	40	21	5	2	2	12	4
UPPER HUNTER (87)	9	44	23	2	1	4	16	1
(Predominantly Mixed farming and grazing)								
ORANGE (47)	2	41	28	2	6	-	19	2
TEMORA (113)	3	45	23	-	7	-	21	1
YOUNG (54)	6	35	31	-	4	-	18	6
(Predominantly Dairying)								
BYRON (90)	6	60	8	2	9	1	13	1
CASINO (111)	10	36	12	17	5	5	10	5
GLOUCESTER (234)	8	47	11	18	7	2	6	1
LISMORE (102)	13	48	12	1	7	-	12	7
OXLEY (208)	15	43	5	13	10	6	6	2
RALEIGH (309)	8	40	9	18	9	4	9	3

APPENDIX J

The Active Members

Note:

What emerges from a close examination of the answers to questions A8 and A9 in Appendix G is that there is a clearly-defined small group of active members within the Country Party who are virtually responsible for the continued existence of the local organisation. They comprise all those members who have accepted office or delegacy at the branch level. This Appendix contains a more detailed analysis of those members and their activity.

In part A the analysis is applied to all branch officials or delegates. These members constituted 20 per cent of the respondents (A1). More than half attended branch meetings regularly (A2), and they formed the great bulk of those who did attend meetings regularly (A3). They also gave money (A4) and effort (A5) more readily than the ordinary members. Because of these factors they had much closer and more frequent association with their local Members (A6), and they probably form the liaison between the Members and the rank and file.

In part B the analysis is applied to the smaller group who have been both branch officials and delegates, and who represented a little over 11 per cent of all respondents. The smaller group were more regular meeting attenders than the larger group (63.0 per cent to 53.1 per cent), they were harder workers (88.8 per cent to 77.6 per cent), and slightly more of them knew their federal Member (92.6 per cent to 85.7 per cent).

But the important differences are the amount of work they do

at election times, and the frequency with which they attend branch meetings. This smaller group, then, contains the really active party members.

Source: Appendix G

Armidaie Kempsey Young Total %

Part A

1. All office-bearers and/or delegates (OB or D)

	$\frac{12}{73}$	$\frac{22}{102}$	$\frac{15}{68}$	$\frac{49}{243}$	20.2
--	-----------------	------------------	-----------------	------------------	------

2. OB or D and meeting attendance

Regularly	6	11	9	26	53.1
Occasionally	3	9	3	15	30.6
Rarely (never)	3	2	2	8	16.3
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	12	22	15	49	100.0

3. OB or D 'regular attenders' of all 'regular attenders'

	$\frac{6}{7}$	$\frac{11}{16}$	$\frac{9}{10}$	$\frac{26}{33}$	78.8
--	---------------	-----------------	----------------	-----------------	------

4. OB or D and finance

Had given	10	11	13	34	69.4
in 1961	8	2	10	20	40.8
in 1962	$\frac{8}{(12)}$	$\frac{8}{(22)}$	$\frac{8}{(15)}$	$\frac{24}{(49)}$	49.0

5. OB or D and election work

Have done	12	14	12	38	77.6
in 1961	7	9	11	27	55.1
in 1962	$\frac{6}{(12)}$	$\frac{12}{(22)}$	$\frac{11}{(15)}$	$\frac{29}{(49)}$	59.2

	<u>Armidale</u>	<u>Kempsey</u>	<u>Young</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%</u>
6. <u>OB or D and parliamentarians</u>					
M.L.A.	12	22	15	49	100.0
M.H.R.	12	21	9	42	85.7
M.L.A. (before)	8	22	14	44	89.8
M.H.R. (before)	3	4	7	14	28.6
	<u>(12)</u>	<u>(22)</u>	<u>(15)</u>	<u>(49)</u>	

Part B

1. Office-bearers who were delegates (OB/D)

	$\frac{10}{73}$	$\frac{10}{102}$	$\frac{7}{68}$	$\frac{27}{243}$	11.1
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2. OB/D and meeting attendance

Regularly	6	6	5	17	63.0
Occasionally	2	2	1	5	18.5
Rarely	2	2	1	5	18.5
	<u>10</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>100.0</u>

3. OB/D and finance

Had given	8	6	5	19	70.4
in 1961	7	2	3	12	44.4
in 1962	7	4	3	14	51.9
	<u>(10)</u>	<u>(10)</u>	<u>(7)</u>	<u>(27)</u>	

4. OB/D and election work

Had done	10	8	6	24	88.8
in 1961	6	7	6	19	70.4
in 1962	6	8	6	20	74.1
	<u>(10)</u>	<u>(10)</u>	<u>(7)</u>	<u>(27)</u>	

Armidale Kempsey Young Total %

5. OB/D and parliamentarians

M.L.A.	10	10	7	27	100.0
M.H.R.	10	10	5	25	92.6
M.L.A. (before)	6	10	6	22	81.5
M.H.R. (before)	2	3	4	9	33.3
	<u>(10)</u>	<u>(10)</u>	<u>(7)</u>	<u>(27)</u>	

APPENDIX K

Participation in Annual Conferences
1950 to 1962

Note: 1. The period from 1950 to 1962 has been chosen because of the substantial redistribution of electoral boundaries which took place in 1949.

2. The electorate councils and branches of Monaro, Illawarra, Hawkesbury, Wollondilly, Nepean, Maitland, Hartley, South Coast, Goulburn and Blacktown state electorates have not been included because of their generally inactive state throughout this period.

3. Attendance records are available only for 1952, 1953, 1956, 1958, 1960 and 1962.

4. An asterisk (*) denotes a seat held by the Country Party on 1 July 1961.

5. The abbreviations are as follows:-

- A = The number of motions standing in the name of the electorate council for all conferences from 1950 to 1962 inclusive.
- B = The number of years, between 1950 and 1962, in which motions from the electorate council appeared in the Conference agenda.
- C = The number of years, of the years 1952, 1953, 1956, 1958, 1960 and 1962, in which the council was represented at the Conference.
- D = The number of branches in the electorate.
- E = The number of these branches which sent motions to any Conference between 1950 and 1962 or which were represented at any of the Conferences of 1952, 1953, 1956, 1958, 1960 or 1962.
- F = The number of motions standing in the names of these branches for all Conferences from 1950 to 1962.
- G = The number of times, for the Conferences of 1952, 1953, 1956, 1958, 1960, and 1962, that any of these branches were represented. (One branch represented at two Conferences = 2; two branches

represented at one Conference = 2.)

mf = mixed farming electorate

g = grazing electorate

d = dairying electorate

Source:

Minutes of the Annual General Conferences of the
Australian Country Party (N.S.W.), 1950 to 1962

Participation in Annual Conferences, 1950 to 1962
(State Electorate Councils and Branches)

<u>Electorate</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>G</u>
MURRAY* (mf)	51	7	6	44	28	161	15
CASTLEREAGH (g)	30	7	3	19	9	55	14
BARWON* (g)	26	5	6	19	10	78	12
RALEIGH* (d)	23	4	5	20	12	57	18
LIVERPOOL PLAINS* (mf)	16	5	5	17	14	77	20
TAMWORTH* (mf)	16	7	5	9	3	17	5
TENTERFIELD* (g)	16	3	6	18	5	30	14
ALBURY (mf)	15	6	4	21	8	69	9
ORANGE* (mf)	15	3	5	11	6	42	14
TEMORA* (mf)	15	4	6	30	14	31	19
MURRUMBIDGEE (mf)	15	5	3	13	7	31	5
CLARENCE* (d)	9	5	5	19	15	61	12
WAGGA WAGGA (mf)	8	3	3	13	3	16	4
UPPER HUNTER* (g)	7	1	4	7	3	6	3
DUBBO (mf)	6	2	4	10	10	63	15
ARMIDALE* (g)	5	3	6	16	8	72	20
MUDGEES (g)	5	4	4	12	7	4	9
LISMORE (d)	4	2	5	6	4	8	5
YOUNG* (mf)	4	3	6	10	7	54	13
GLOUCESTER* (d)	4	3	5	21	9	10	11
BURRINJUCK (g)	1	1	4	12	5	18	8
CASINO* (d)	1	1	5	9	2	5	3
COBAR (g)	1	1	4	5	1	-	3
STURT (g)	1	1	4	10	4	31	6
BATHURST (g)	-	-	5	7	5	6	8
BYRON* (d)	-	-	5	7	2	-	2
OXLEY (d)	-	-	4	46	11	10	12

Participation in Annual Conferences, 1950 to 1962
 (Federal Electorate Councils and Central Executive)

<u>Electorate</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>
RIVERINA *	33	9	3
GWYDIR *	29	5	4
COWPER *	18	7	3
CALARE *	17	4	1
FARRER	15	5	3
LAWSON *	11	6	4
HUME *	9	2	4
PATERSON	8	3	1
DARLING	7	2	4
LYNE *	6	2	3
RICHMOND *	1	1	1
MACQUARIE	-	-	5
NEW ENGLAND *	-	-	1
CENTRAL EXECUTIVE	156	13	13

APPENDIX L

The Occupational Background of Country Party
Parliamentarians, 1946 to 1962

Note:

This survey is a guide only and does not claim to be either definitive or exhaustive. Many parliamentarians had business interests, major or minor, of one sort or another, but unless commerce was their principal occupation it is not given in the survey. The occupations listed are those of the Members prior to entering parliament and/or while a Member of parliament.

Source:

Aitkin, The United Country Party, Appendices R,S,T and U

and scattered references in

Ellis, The Country Party

Ellis, The Australian Country Party

and

The New South Wales Countryman

The Occupational Background of Country Party Parliamentarians, 1946-62
 Members of the Legislative Assembly

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1.	BROWN J.H.	Raleigh 1959 -	Insurance inspector
2.	BRUXNER J.C.	Tenterfield 1962 -	Grazier
3.	BRUXNER M.F.	Tenterfield 1927 - 1962 Northern Tablelands 1920 - 1927	Grazier; Stock and Station Agent
4.	CHAFFEY W.A.	Tamworth 1940 -	Farmer
5.	COOKE F.G.	Mudgee 1950 - 1953	Farmer; Storekeeper
6.	CRAWFORD G.R.	Barwon 1950 -	Farmer and Grazier
7.	CUTLER C.B.	Orange 1947 -	Business Manager
8.	DICKSON S.D.	Temora 1938 - 1960	Farmer and Grazier
9.	DRUMMOND D.H.	Armidale 1927 - 1949 Northern Tablelands 1920 - 1927	Farmer and Grazier
10.	EASTER J.S.	Lismore 1953 - 1959	Dairyfarmer and Carrier
11.	FITZGERALD R.L.	Gloucester 1941 - 1962	Dairyfarmer and Grazier
12.	FREUDENSTEIN G.F.	Young 1959 -	Farmer and Grazier
13.	FRITH W.	Lismore 1933 - 1953	Dairyfarmer
14.	GAMACK R.B.	Raleigh 1953 - 1959	Dairyfarmer
15.	HUGHES D.	Armidale 1950 -	School teacher
16.	JORDAN L.C.	Oxley 1944 -	Dairyfarmer and lawyer
17.	KENDELL E.T.	Corowa 1946 - 1950	Farmer and Grazier

18. LAWSON J.A.	Murray 1932 -	Farmer and Grazier
19. MEDCALF R.G.	Lachlan 1947 - 1950 Dubbo 1950 - 1953	Farmer and Grazier
20. O'KEEFE F.L.	Liverpool Plains 1961 - 1962 Upper Hunter 1962 -	Machinery Agent
21. PUNCH L.A.	Upper Hunter 1959 - 1962 Gloucester 1962 -	Farmer and Grazier
22. REID J.T.	Casino 1930 - 1953	Dairyfarmer
23. ROSE D'ARCY	Upper Hunter 1940 - 1959	Farmer
24. ROBINSON I.L.	Casino 1953 - 1963 (M.H.R. for Cowper 1963 -)	Dairyfarmer
25. STEPHENS S.T.	Byron 1944 -	Journalist
26. TAYLOR J.H.	Temora 1960 -	Farmer and Grazier
27. VINCENT R.S.	Raleigh 1927 - 1953 Oxley 1922 - 1927	Journalist
28. WELLEY W.R.	Clarence 1955 -	Publican
29. WINGFIELD C.G.	Clarence 1937 - 1955	Storekeeper

The Occupational Backgrounds of Country Party Parliamentarians, 1946-62
Members of the Legislative Council

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1.	BASSETT G.D.	1932 -	Farmer and Company Director
2.	BUDD H.V.	1946 -	Journalist
3.	CARTER J.M.	1954 -	Grazier
4.	EGGINS E.J.	1939 - 1949	Farmer and Businessman
5.	FALKNER O.M.	1946 -	Grazier
6.	FULLER J.B.	1961 -	Grazier
7.	HENLEY H.S.	1937 -	Farmer and Grazier
8.	KATER N.W.	1923 - 1955	Grazier and Company Director
9.	SINCLAIR I.	1961 - (1963)	Grazier and Barrister
10.	SOMMERLAD E.C.	1932 - 1952	Journalist
11.	SOMMERLAD E.L.	1955 -	Journalist
12.	SPICER F.W.*	1925 -	Businessman
13.	STEELE T.	1934 -	Businessman
14.	WALMSLEY W.A.	1951 -	Businessman
15.	WILSON R.C.	1949 -	Company Director

* Originally appointed as Labor (1925), then Independent (1934), and joined the Country Party in 1949.

The Occupational Backgrounds of Country Party Parliamentarians, 1946-62
Members of the House of Representatives and Senators

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1. ALLAN A.I.	Gwydir 1953 -	Radio Announcer
2. ANDERSON C.G.W.	Hume 1949 - 1951 1955 - 1961	Grazier
3. ANTHONY H.L.	Richmond 1937 - 1957	Farmer
4. ANTHONY J.D.	Richmond 1957 -	Farmer
5. DRUMMOND D.H.	New England 1949 - 1963	Farmer and Grazier
6. EGGINS E.J.	Lyne 1949 - 1952	Farmer and Storekeeper
7. ENGLAND J.A.	Calare 1960 -	Farmer and Grazier
8. FAILLES L.J.	Lawson 1949 -	Farmer and Grazier
9. LUCOCK P.E.	Lyne 1952 -	Clergyman
10. PAGE E.C.G.	Cowper 1919 - 1961	Medical practitioner and Grazier
11. ROBERTON H.S.	Riverina 1949 -	Farmer and Grazier
12. TRELOAR T.J.	Gwydir 1949 - 1953	Businessman
13. ABBOTT J.P.	New England 1940 - 1949	Grazier
14. Senator G.C.McKellar	1958 -	Farmer and Grazier
15. Senator A.D.Raid	1949 - 1961	Farmer and Grazier

APPENDIX M

Representation and Attendance on Central Council
18 August 1948 to 15 June 1954

Note: 1. The Minute Books of the Central Council possess after 18 August 1948 attendance records which list the office of each Central Councillor: thus the Chairman of Albury SEC would be listed as "J.Smith (Albury)", or a Trustee as "J.Smith (Trustee)".

2. According to the party's Constitution electorate councils can be represented on Central Council only by their Chairmen or by the alternate delegates. However the practice has grown up whereby the sitting M.L.A. (or sometimes the M.H.R.) represents the Chairman if neither the Chairman nor the alternate delegate can attend. Thus for the purpose of this Appendix, electorate councils are deemed to have been represented if their Chairmen, or alternate delegates, or M.L.A.s attended the meeting.

3. Both the state and federal parliamentary parties had representation on the Council - the Leaders and two other delegates from each party. It is difficult to estimate the attendance of the parliamentarians as parliamentary delegates because of their frequent attendance on behalf of their electorate councils. However it can be said that nearly all meetings of the Central Council in this period were attended by at least one parliamentarian.

4. The following abbreviations have been used:-

* = meeting attended

O = elected to Central Executive

/ = not re-elected to the Executive

(O) = already on the Executive on 18 August 1948

5. The dates beneath the names of the co-opted members refer to their election to or retirement from the Central Council.

Dates of Council Meetings

	18.8.1948	23.11.1948	25.3.1949	18.5.1949	20.7.1949	14.2.1950	17.5.1950	8.9.1950	2.2.1951	30.3.1951	22.5.1951	15.8.1951	22.2.1952	20.5.1952	19.9.1952	14.1.1953	8.4.1953	9.6.1953	16.11.1953	5.3.1954	15.6.1954	Total	
BYRON	*	*	*	*			*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	16
YOUNG		*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	⊙	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	16
BARWON			*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	15
LIV. PLAINS	*	*				*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	⊙	*	*	*	*	15
TAMWORTH	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	15
TEMORA	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	15
DUBBO	*					*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	12
OXLEY			*	*	*	*	*	*	*					⊙	*		*	/	*	*	*	12	
YASS/B'JUCK			*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	⊙	*		/			*	*	*	12
ORANGE	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	11
TENTERFIELD		*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	11
WAGGA WAGGA	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	11
COBAR										*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	10
RALEIGH		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	⊙	*	*	*	*	*	*	/			*	*	*	10
CASTLEREAGH	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	9
MURRUMBIDGEE	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	9
LISMORE			*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	8
MURRAY	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	8
MUDGEE	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	7
ARMIDALE						*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	6
CLARENCE				*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	7
BATHURST				*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	5
CASINO				*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	5
UPPER HUNTER	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	5
ALBURY	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	4
STURT															*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	4
ASHBURNHAM ★	*	*	*	*																			4
GLOUCESTER						*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	3
HAWKESBURY	*	*	*	*						*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	3
LACHLAN ★	*	*	*	*																			3
NAMOI ★	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	3
BLACKTOWN									*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	2
COROWA ★	*	*	*	*																			1
ILLAWARRA				*																			1

★ = electorate abolished in 1950.

Central Council: Representation and Attendance, 1948 to 1954
(Trustees and Co-opted Members)

	18.8.1948	23.11.1948	25.3.1949	18.5.1949	20.7.1949	14.2.1950	17.5.1950	8.9.1950	2.2.1951	30.3.1951	22.5.1951	15.8.1951	22.2.1952	20.5.1952	19.9.1952	14.1.1953	8.4.1953	9.6.1953	16.11.1953	5.3.1954	15.6.1954	<u>Total</u>
<u>A.D.Reid</u> (0)	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	17
<u>H.K.Nock</u> (20.7.1949 →)			⊙	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	17
<u>J.M.Carter</u> (0)★ (20.5.1952 →)				*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	16
<u>H.V.Budd</u> (7.2.1950 →)						⊙	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	12
<u>H.S.Henley</u> (0)	*	*	*	*				*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	12
<u>E.E.Martin</u> (0)	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	12
<u>P.A.Wright</u> (0)			*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	12
<u>E.C.Sommerlad</u> (0) (→ 20.5.1952)	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	10
<u>F.B.Fleming</u> (0)	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	8
<u>The Treasurer</u> (0)	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	8
<u>J.P.Cass</u> (0) (→ 22.2.1951)	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	6
<u>W.Johanson</u> (0) (→ 18.5.1949)	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	3
<u>N.W.Kater</u>														*								1
<u>E.A.Buttenshaw</u> (→ 17.2.1950)																						0
<u>E.L.Killen</u> (→ 22.2.1951)																						0
<u>A.R.Townsend</u> (22.2.1951 →)																						0

★ J.M.Carter was formerly Chairman of Hume FEC.

APPENDIX N

Indices of Head Office Federal Election Budgets
1934 to 1961

Note:

1. There is no record in either the Central Council or the Central Executive Minute Books of the 1943 federal election budget or expenditure.

2. The columns 1948R, 1954, 1955 and 1958 illustrate actual expenditure, those for the other years, budgeted expenditure. It is probable that for all years budgeted and actual expenditure were very similar.

3. £400 in assistance to electorate councils was budgeted for the 1948 Referendum, but none was actually distributed.

Source:

FEM, 24 July 1934

FEM, 22 July 1937

FEM, 28 August 1940

CEM, 27 November 1946

CEM, 27 April 1948

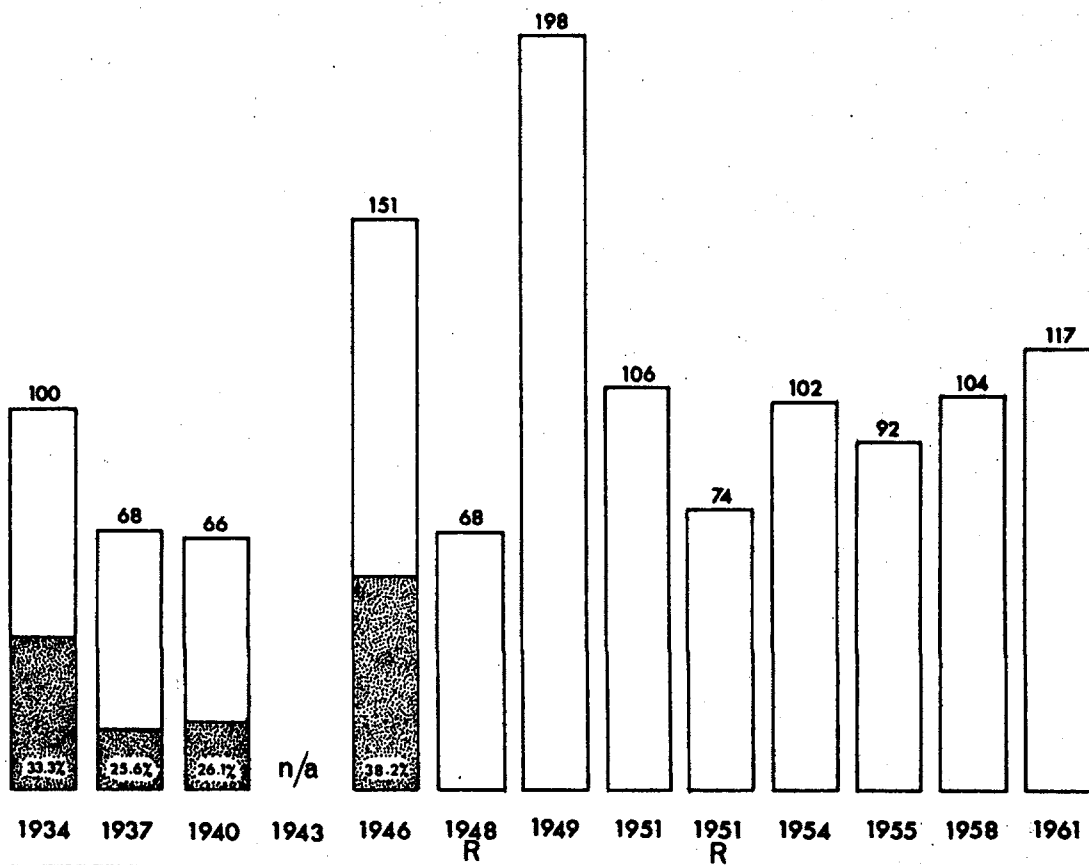
CCCM, 30 March 1951

CEM, 23 November 1951

CEM, 20 December 1955

Documents relating to election expenditure in the
Morton Trotter Papers

Indices of Head Office Federal Election Budgets
1934 to 1961



- Note:
1. 1934 total budgeted expenditure = 100.
 2. The shaded portion represents the proportion of total expenditure devoted to financial assistance to electorate councils.
 3. R = Referendum.
 4. n/a = not available.

APPENDIX 0

Indices of Head Office State Election Budgets
1938 to 1956

Note:

1. The 1947 column illustrates actual expenditure; all other columns, budgeted expenditure.
2. It is probable that actual and budgeted expenditure were very similar for all years.

Source:

FEM, 24 February 1938

Minutes, Finance and Campaign Committee, 28 February 1941

Minutes, Finance Committee, 9 March 1944

CEM, 21 March 1947

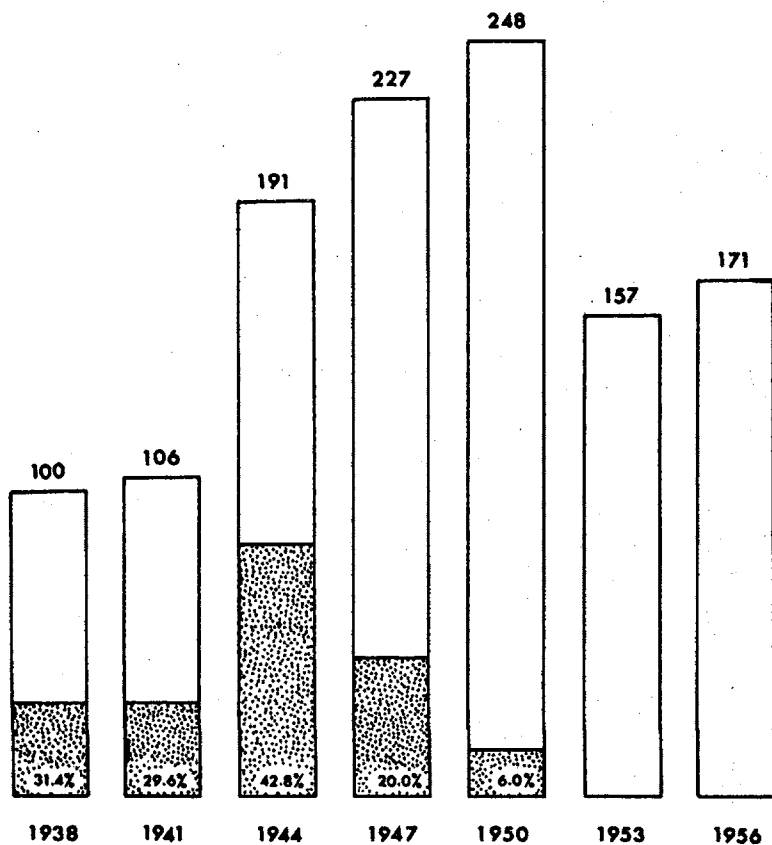
GSR to CE (1947 State Election), 23 May 1947

CCCM, 7 May 1950

CCCM, 14 January 1953

CEM, 20 December 1955

Indices of Head Office State Election Budgets
1938 to 1956



- Note:
1. 1938 total budgeted expenditure = 100
 2. The shaded portion represents the proportion of total expenditure devoted to financial assistance to electorate councils.

APPENDIX P

Politics and the Country Press

Note:

This Appendix illustrates in tabular form the writer's subjective impressions of a selection of the country newspapers of New South Wales between August 1961 and April 1962. These 50 newspapers were those circulating in the electorates being studied by the writer during the federal elections of 1961 and the state elections of the following year. In the table an attempt has been made to compare the newspapers, especially in regard to their interest in politics. Yet much of the information upon which such a comparison is based is not readily quantifiable, and therefore it is not claimed that the table presents anything more than a rough and ready measure of political interest.

The table is constructed as follows:-

- (i) Freq. = Frequency of Publication - the days of publication are given
- M-F Monday to Friday
- (ii) Edit. = Publication of an Editorial
- yes each issue
infr less frequently than each issue
nil no editorial
- (iii) CovPNews = Coverage of Political News
- exc excellent - a full coverage of national, state and local political news
good a fairly full presentation of political news
fair apart from political crises, only local politics reported
poor only the doings of the local Member or of the local party organisations reported
nil no political news

- (iv) CovGNews = Coverage of General News
- O overseas and national news
L local (circulation area) news only
- (v) CPpr = Country Party press releases
- yes published (at any time)
nil not published at all
- (vi) Pol.Comm = Political Commentary
- own publishes a locally written column either about politics or in which political news is discussed
- DW publishes a commentary written by Don Whittington
- Augs publishes a commentary written by "Augustus"
- nil no political commentary
- (vii) A,B and C refer to the three election advertisements authorised by Head Office for the 1961 federal elections; D,E,F and G, to the four similar advertisements authorised by Head Office for the 1962 federal elections. (For examples, see Appendix Q.) An asterisk denotes one placement of one of these advertisements; two asterisks, two placements. Head Office also authorised a fourth advertisement for the 1961 elections, but this appeared in only a few newspapers. Placement of this advertisement is denoted by an asterisk within parentheses immediately after column C.
- (viii) A dash signifies that the advertisement did not appear in this newspaper.
- (ix) The absence of either asterisk or dash signifies that the paper was not being studied for that election. Thus the Richmond River Express (Casino), which circulates in the federal electorate of COWPER and the state electorate of CASINO, was studied only for the 1962 state election.

Politics and the Country Press

Newspaper	Freq.	Edit.	CovP News	CovG News	CPpr	Pol. Comm	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
(North Coast)													
BYRON BAY-BAN- GALOW BEACON	Th	nil	nil	L	nil	nil	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
MULLUMBIMBY STAR ADVOCATE	TuF	nil	nil	L	nil	nil	*	*	-	*	*	-	-
MURWILLUMBAH DAILY NEWS	M-F	yes	good	O	yes	Augs	*	*	-	*	*	-	-
KYOGLÉ EXAMINER	TuF	nil	poor	L	nil	nil	*	-	-	*	-	-	-
BALLINA PILOT	W	infr	poor	L	nil	nil	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
NORTHERN STAR (Lismore)	M-S	yes	good	O	yes	nil	*	*	-	*	*	*	*
RICHMOND RIVER EXPRESS (Casino)	MWF	infr	fair	L	nil	Augs				*	*	-	-
(Central Coast)													
MACLEAY ARGUS (Kempsey)	TuThS	infr	poor	L	yes	Augs	*	*	-	-	*	*	-
BELLINGEN COURIER-SUN	TuF	infr	poor	L	yes	nil				*	*	*	-
NAMBUCCA DAILY NEWS	TuTh	yes	poor	L	nil	nil				*	*	-	-
WINGHAM CHRONICLE	TuF	nil	poor	L	yes	own	*	*	-	*	*	*	*
PORT MACQUARIE NEWS	TuTh	infr	poor	L	yes	nil	*	*	*	*	*	*	-
HASTINGS SHIRE GAZETTE (Wauchope)	Th	nil	nil	L	nil	nil	*	*	-	*	*	-	-
MANNING RIVER TIMES (Taree)	Tu-F	yes	good	L	nil	Augs	*	*	-	*	*	-	-
GLOUCESTER ADVOCATE	TuF	nil	poor	L	yes	nil				*	*	-	-
SINGLETON ARGUS	MWF	yes	poor	L	yes	nil				*	*	*	-
DUNOGG CHRONICLE	WS	yes	poor	L	nil	DW				*	*	-	-

Politics and the Country Press

Newspaper	Freq.	Edit.	CovP News	CovG News	CPpr	Pol. Comm	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
(North)													
MANILLA EXPRESS	W	nil	nil	L	nil	nil	*	*	-				
NORTHERN DAILY LEADER (Tamworth)	M-S	yes	exc	O	nil	nil	*	*	-				
ARMIDALE EXPRESS	MWF	yes	good	O	yes	nil	*	*	-	*	*	-	-
URALLA TIMES	Th	yes	nil	L	yes	nil	*	*	-	*	*	-	-
DON DORRIGO GAZETTE (Dorrigo)	W	infr	nil	L	yes	nil				*			
TENTERFIELD STAR	MTh	yes	fair	L	yes	nil	*	*	*	*	*	-	-
GLEN INNES EXAMINER	MWF	yes	fair	O	yes	nil	*	*	*	*	*	-	-
INVERELL TIMES	MWF	yes	good	O	yes	nil				*	-	*	-
WARIALDA STANDARD	W	nil	fair	L	yes	nil				*	-	-	-
QUIRINDI ADVOCATE	TuF	infr	nil	L	yes	DW				*	*	-	-
SCONE ADVOCATE	TuF	infr	poor	L	yes	nil				*	*	*	-
MUSWELLBROOK CHRONICLE	TuF	nil	nil	L	yes	nil				*	*	*	-
MERRIWA-CASSILIS NEWS	F	infr	nil	L	nil	nil				*	*	-	-
(Central West)													
BLAYNEY WEST MACQUARIE	F	nil	nil	L	nil	nil	*	*	*				
PARKES CHAMPION POST	MTh	nil	nil	L	yes	DW	*	*	*				
PARKES WESTERN PEOPLE	MTh	infr	nil	L	nil	nil	*	*	*				
CENTRAL WESTERN DAILY (Orange)	M-S	nil	poor	L	yes	nil				*	*	*	-

Politics and the Country Press

Newspaper	Freq.	Edit.	CovP News	CovG News	CPpr	Pol. Comm	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
(Central West)													
MOLONG EXPRESS	Th	nil	nil	L	yes	nil	-	*	*(*)	*	*	-	-
CANOWINDRA STAR	Th	nil	nil	L	nil	nil	*	*	*	*	*	-	-
COWRA GUARDIAN	TuF	nil	nil	L	nil	nil	*	*	*(*)	*	*	*	-
FORBES ADVOCATE	TuF	nil	poor	L	nil	nil	*	*	*(*)	*	*	*	-
GRENFELL RECORD	TuF	nil	nil	L	yes	DW	*	*	*(*)	*	*	-	-
(South West)													
SOUTH WEST NEWS PICTORIAL (Young)	MWF	infr	good	L	nil	own	*	*	*(*)	*	*	*	-
COOTAMUNDRA DAILY NEWS	M-F	yes	fair	L	nil	nil	*	*	*(*)	*	*	*	-
GUNDAGAI INDEPENDENT	MTh	infr	fair	L	yes	DW	*	*	*(*)	*	*	*	-
HARDEN-MURRUM- BURRAH EXPRESS	Th	infr	nil	L	nil	nil	*	*	*	*	*	-	-
TUMUT & ADELONG TIMES	TuF	infr	fair	L	yes	DW	*	*	*(*)	*	*	*	-
YASS TRIBUNE	MTh	yes	exo	L	nil	own	*	*	*(*)	*	*	*	-
CROOKWELL GAZETTE	TuF	nil	fair	L	nil	Augs	*	*	*(*)				
TUMBARUMBA TIMES	Th	nil	nil	L	nil	nil	*	*	-				
TEMORA INDEPENDENT	MWF	infr	nil	L	nil	nil	*	*	*	*	*	*	-
WEST WYALONG ADVOCATE	MTh	infr	fair	L	yes	nil				*	*	*	-
ARDLETHAN-BECKOM TIMES	W	nil	fair	L	yes	DW				*	-	-	-

APPENDIX Q

Country Party Election Advertisements

Note:

This Appendix presents a sample of Head Office and electorate council advertising during the federal elections of 1961 and the state elections of 1962. Two A.L.P. advertisements are also included to add point to those of the Country Party. The advertisements are lettered from A to Q, and a key giving the general type of the advertisement, the election, electorate, newspaper, date of publication, and original size, follows.

- A .. Head Office Advertisement, 1961, CALARE, Central Western Daily (Orange), 8 December 1961, 8" x 5"
- B .. How to Vote Instructions (for Italian immigrants) 1961, RICHMOND, Northern Star (Lismore), 7 December 1961, 8½" x 4½"
- C .. Vote for the Man, 1961, HUME, South West NEWS Pictorial (Young), 6 December 1961, 4" x 4"
- D .. Head Office Advertisement, 1962, LISMORE, Northern Star (Lismore), 27 February 1962, 9" x 6"
- E .. Claim and Counter-claim I, 1962, LISMORE, Northern Star (Lismore), 1 March 1962, 9½" x 14½"
- F .. Claim and Counter-claim II, 1962, LISMORE, Northern Star (Lismore), 2 March 1962, 12" x 9"
- G .. Claim and Counter-claim III, 1962, YOUNG, South West NEWS Pictorial (Young), 2 March 1962, 8" x 11"

- H .. Claim and Counter-claim IV, 1962, YOUNG, South West NEWS Pictorial, 2 March 1962, 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 5"
- I .. Multiple Endorsement: Borthwick vs Punch, 1962, GLOUCESTER, Gloucester Advocate, 23 February 1962, 8" x 16 $\frac{1}{2}$ "
- J .. Multiple Endorsement: Borthwick vs Punch (II), 1962, GLOUCESTER, Gloucester Advocate, 27 February 1962, 6" x 16"
- K .. Multiple Endorsement: Borthwick vs Punch (III), 1962, GLOUCESTER, Gloucester Advocate, 2 March 1962, 10" x 6"
- L .. Multiple Endorsement: Borthwick vs Punch (IV), 1962, GLOUCESTER, Singleton Argus, 2 March 1962, 5" x 6"
- M .. The New Candidate, 1962, BURRINJUCK, Cootamundra Daily Herald, 1 March 1962, 15" x 10" (whole page)
- N .. Anti-A.L.P.: Legislation, 1962, LISMORE, Northern Star, 27 February 1962, 12" x 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ "
- O .. The Country Party and Its Members, 1962, OXLEY, Hastings Shire Gazette (Wauchope), 27 February 1962, 9" x 6"
- P .. Local Member, Local Policy, 1962, CASINO, Kyogle Examiner, 2 March 1962, 9" x 7"
- Q .. The Party and its Policy, 1962, UPPER HUNTER, Muswellbrook Chronicle, 23 February 1962, 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 5"



*The Hon. J. McEwen,
Country Party Leader and
Minister for Trade.*

That is for you to decide on Saturday.

The Country Party believes its record of sound, honest Government appeals to the majority of thinking voters.

The success of the present Government in promoting export markets is largely due to John McEwen, Minister for Trade and Country Party Leader. More than ever, Australia needs his drive and proven ability to further increase our export trade.

Promises or Good Government?

Your Country Party candidate knows your problems and is free to work for you — unhampered by metropolitan electorate majorities which control other political parties.

Vote for your Country Party candidate and ensure sound representation in your district.

Thoughtful voters in every walk of life will vote Country Party . . . and follow the joint Government 'How to Vote Card' for the Senate *exactly*.

Country Party means a prosperous country.

COUNTRY PARTY

means a PROSPEROUS COUNTRY

On December 9

VOTE

1

England J. A. for CALARE

Authorised by J. F. Dredge, 42 Bridge St., Sydney

(ADVERTISEMENT)

COME VOTARE PER IL "COUNTRY PARTY"

**GLI ITALIANI DI RICHMOND CHE DESIDERANO VOTARE PER
IL COUNTRY PARTY VOTINO COSI' :**

(Riceverete due schede per la votazione: una color giallognolo ed una color bianco).

La scheda color giallognolo servira' per votare per la Camera Dei Deputati:

1. ANTHONY, J. D.
2. Freeman, R. P.

**DOVETE ASSOLUTAMENTE SCRIVERE UN NUMERO IN OGNI
QUADRETTO !**

La scheda color bianco servira' alla votazione per il Senato:

1. SPOONER, W. H.
2. McKELLAR, G. C.
3. FURLEY, M. E.

e per gli altri nomi seguite l'ordine della fac-simile schedina verde che vi verra consegnata all'entrata. COPIATELA ESATTAMENTE, E controllate se avete fatto errori. In caso avete fatto qualche errore chiedete all'impiegato di darvi un'altra scheda.

E' NECESSARIO SCRIVERE UN NUMERO IN OGNI QUADRETTO !

**AUTORIZZATO DA PARTE D. W. A. WALMSLEY, M.L.C., Campaign Rooms,
15 Molesworth Street, Lismore.**

TRANSLATION

HOW TO VOTE FOR THE COUNTRY PARTY

**ALL ITALIANS OF RICHMOND WHO DESIRE TO VOTE FOR
THE COUNTRY PARTY, VOTE AS FOLLOWS :**

(You will receive two cards for the voting: One colour yellow and one colour white).

The Yellow coloured card serves to vote for the House of Representatives:

1. ANTHONY, J. D.
2. Freeman, R. P.

**IT IS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL TO WRITE A NUMBER IN
EACH SQUARE !**

The White card serves to vote for the Senate:

1. SPOONER, W. H.
2. McKELLAR, G. C.
3. FURLEY, M. E.

and for all other names follow the green facsimile card which you will be given at the entrance. COPY IT EXACTLY and check to see if you have made errors. In case you have made any errors ask the Clerk to give you another card.

IT IS NECESSARY TO WRITE A NUMBER IN EACH SQUARE.

**Authorised for the Party by W. A. Walmsley, M.L.C., Campaign Rooms,
15 Molesworth Street, Lismore.**

C

A LEADER...

V • In War
O • In Peace
T • In Parliament

E HUME'S guarantee
for the FUTURE

[1] ANDERSON,

C. G. W.

(Country Party)

AUSTRALIA needs
ANDERSON, and so do

YOU



MR. ANDERSON, M.P.,
SAYS:

"The Menzies-McEwen Government has raised Australia's reputation high in Asia — our immediate neighbours — but I recall some unhappy incidents during the last Labour administration."

Authorised by Campaign Director, S. P. GRAY, Cootamundra.

GORDON BLAIR



says

“Unite Now to save our towns!”

City-dominated political parties think N.S.W. stands for NEWCASTLE-SYDNEY-WOLLONGONG. The Country Party believes that we country people, who contribute 84% of Australia's income from exports, on which our standard of living depends, should make decisions in Government.

Country men and women — unite! Vote Country Party for a solid policy which will stop the drift to the city; increase trade to country towns; bring equal educational, housing and employment opportunities to country people.

The Country Party promises:

- HOUSING — with government-guaranteed loans
- EDUCATION — with city standards as minimum
- EMPLOYMENT — through decentralisation of industry

Keep your family together — in your town; on your farm

GIVE THE COUNTRY A FAIR GO — UNITE & VOTE

1

BLAIR W. G.

FOR LISMORE

COUNTRY PARTY

We are asking you — the Local Electors: Has Labor given Lismore and District a "fair go"? YOU BE THE JUDGES

CONSIDER THIS ABSOLUTE ALL-TIME RECORD EXPENDITURE ON IMPORTANT PUBLIC WORKS OF **£4,500,000**

Important Public Works completed or commenced in last two years

SCHOOLS:			
Lismore High Block	£ 52,000		
Richmond River High — New Class-rooms, etc	122,000		
Ballina High — New Classrooms, etc.	50,000		
Manual Arts & Home Science Blocks	25,000		
Other District Schools	60,000		
Total	£309,000		
ROADS:			
Wardell-Emigrant Creek	£360,000		
District Generally	85,000		
Total	£445,000		
PORT WORKS:			
Richmond River	£85,000		

HOSPITALS:			
Lismore Nurses' Training Centre	£ 24,500		
Lismore Base — Boiler Room	10,500		
X-Ray Equipment	6,500		
Operating Theatre	5,500		
Old Nurses' Home Conversion	39,000		
St. Vincent's, Lismore — General Works	44,000		
Ballina — New Nurses' Home	39,000		
Casualty and Out-patients Dept.	3,500		
Other Grants	40,000		
Total	£212,500		
BRIDGES:			
Ballina Street (Lismore)	£260,000		
Robert White (Lismore)	138,000		
Wardell	320,000		
Cabbage Tree	17,000		
Total	£735,000		

FLOOD MITIGATION:			
In progress as district project			£885,000
ELECTRICITY:			
Subsidy to Northern Rivers County Council			£1,000,000
HOUSING:			
District total under Labor	£800,000		
Under construction			£30,000
SUNDRY PROJECTS:			
Tropical Fruit Research Station, Wollongbar			£ 40,000
Tick Research Station Wollongbar			88,000
Annual Running Costs			66,000
Northern N.S.W. Tourist Bureau			700
N.S.W. Band Championships at Lismore			500
Lismore Tennis Club			500
Total			£195,700

SPECIAL NOTE: STATE GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS (HOSPITALS, SCHOOLS, ETC.) PLACED UNDER CONSTRUCTION LAST YEAR WERE VALUED AT £21 MILLION... £16 MILLION, OR 75%, WAS SPENT IN COUNTRY AREAS.



This advertisement is contributed by erstwhile supporters of the Country Party and Labor friends in appreciation of his work for the electorate. Authorised by J. B. Clarke, Molesworth Street, Lismore, Campaign Director.

Major Works already projected for 1962-63

SCHOOLS:		
Lismore Technical College	£ 140,000	
HOSPITALS:		
New Lismore Base Hospital	£ 350,000	
BRIDGES:		
Emigrant Creek — 280ft. length — under design	£	
ROADS:		
District Generally	£ 50,000	
HOUSING:		
About to commence	£ 21,000	
Summary		
Total Projected Work	£ 561,000	
Total of works completed or under construction	£3,897,200	
District Grand Total	£4,458,200	

BE HONEST... ASK YOURSELVES A FAIR QUESTION... COULD ANY PARTY DO MORE FOR LISMORE?
On Saturday, make sure the wheels of progress keep turning... continue to have a voice in government... and keep Keith at an influential ministerial level... VOTE THUS:

[1] COMPTON K. C.

• IT'S TIME FOR A CHANGE • IT'S TIME FOR A CHANGE •• IT'S TIME FOR A CHANGE • IT'S TIME FOR A CHANGE

REFERENCE FIGURES IN LABOR'S CLAIMS LET'S EXAMINE THEM ACCURATELY AND THEN JUDGE

ELECTRICITY: Subsidy to Northern Rivers County Council £1,000,000. (Actually £963,495). This is the grand total of all Government subsidies from 1946 to 1961 for the whole country area south to Macksville. £238,780 of the subsidy was for works in Shires of Terania, Woodburn, Gundurimba and Tintenbar. Approximately £100,000 of the £1 million would have been in Lismore Electorate.

FLOOD MITIGATION: Total works contemplated £885,000. The work is estimated to take 15 years. The ratepayers will pay one third (£295,000), threequarters of works will be in Casino Electorate (£663,750).

ROBERT WHITE BRIDGE: £136,000. A Lismore City Council undertaking. Ratepayers of Lismore will pay £68,000. Flood grant received years ago through Country Party representation is £40,000. Remaining £26,000 Government grant.

BALLINA ST. BRIDGE: £260,000.—Obtained by Lismore City Council through Country Party representation.

WARDELL BRIDGE: £320,000.—Not in Lismore Electorate
Is in Casino Electorate.

CABBAGE TREE IS. BRIDGE: £17,000.—Not in Lismore Electorate.
Is in Casino Electorate.

CASINO ELECTORATE FIGURES LAST TWO YEARS

Country Party Representation	
	£
Hospital Extensions	62,000
School Buildings	97,000
Police Building	35,000
Wardell Bridge	320,000
Wardell Bridge Approach ..	115,000
Cabbage Tree Is. Bridge	17,000
Forestry Dept. Works	60,000
Govt. Housing	47,000
Evans Hds. Port Works	175,000
Pacific & Bruxner Highways	315,000
Railway Works	850,000
Grafton Road Tatham, Evans Head Bridges	117,000
	£2,210,000
Flood Mitigation Works in Casino Electorate	£663,750
Also add Electricity Subsidy	

These Corrections Total Almost £2,000,000

LISMORE'S FIGURES ARE MUCH LESS THAN CASINO

Byron Electorate approx. £2m.

Clarence Electorate £1½m.

Vote for Country Party Representation

VOTE

1

GORDON BLAIR

R. A. Waddell, Campaign Director.

• IT'S TIME FOR A CHANGE • IT'S TIME FOR A CHANGE • IT'S TIME FOR A CHANGE • IT'S TIME FOR A CHANGE

The C.P. Candidate's claims are all A.L.P. feats

GEORGE FREUDENSTEIN CLAIMS THESE AS HIS ACHIEVEMENTS:

1. New Section Young Primary School.
2. New Section Henry Lawson High School, Grenfell.
3. New Kindergarten Section, Boorowa.
4. New Manual Arts Section, Boorowa.
5. New Girls Primary School, Boorowa.
6. New School, Wyangala Dam.
7. Additions Frogmore School.
8. Tenders called for: New High School Buildings, Young.
9. Plans for: New High School, Forbes; New Buildings High School, Cowra.
10. Silo Accommodation increased 25% — New silos Grenfell and between Forbes and Stockinbingal.
11. Large number of Commission Homes.
12. Home Units for Aged.
13. First Stage New Hospital, Forbes.
14. New Operating Theatre, Young.
15. New Nurses Quarters, Mercy Hospital, Young.
16. £14m. Wyangala Dam Project commenced.

THIS IS THE TRUE STORY:

1. New section of Young Primary School completed October 1958, on representation from Mr. Fred Cahill (Labour member in 1956).
2. Henry Lawson High School, Grenfell, additional accommodation June, 1958. Following representation P. and C. Association, additional money spent for important additions in 1961.
3. and 4. Boorowa Central School. Works approved March, 1956, after representation by P. and C. Association.
5. New Girls Primary School, Forbes. Originated through Departmental survey.
6. New School, Wyangala Dam, representation by P. and C. Association resulted in Class Room being transferred from Gallymont.
7. Additions Frogmore School. Work originated through Departmental survey, approved March, 1961. No representations were made.
8. New High School Buildings, Young. First raised by P. and C. Association in 1950, resulting in four classrooms in 1954 and Manual Training accommodation in 1958. Tenders have been let for further additions.

THE TRUE STORY (continued):

9. New High School, Forbes. Decided in June, 1958, to build new High School. Representation by Mr. Freudenstein in July, 1959. New High School, Cowra. Representation by P. and C. Association in 1949 and at frequent intervals, resulting in the approval of additions in September, 1961.
10. Silo Accommodation. Overall policy of the Government was to increase Silo Accommodation throughout State. Has been increased from 32 to 75 million bushels through no efforts of Mr. Freudenstein.
11. Commission Homes. Of 430 homes constructed in the electorate, 45 were built during the last three years. Mr. Freudenstein cannot take any credit for this.
12. Home Units for Aged. On personal representation to Mr. A. Landa, Minister for Housing, by the Young Branch of the A.L.P. in April, 1961, Home Units for Aged were granted to Young.
13. First Stage New Hospital, Forbes. Foundation Stone (for all to see) was laid in January, 1959. Building completed in October 1959. Mr. Freudenstein became a member in March, 1959.
14. New Operating Theatre, Young. Approved March, 1958. Minister inspected old Operating Theatre and Nurses Home with Mr. Fred Cahill. Additions to Nurses Home also approved on same date.
15. New Nurses Quarters, Mercy Hospital, Young. Approved March 1958. Representation from Mr. Fred Cahill.
16. £14m. Wyangala Dam Project commenced. Following a report by a firm of Consulting Engineers of the work necessary to enlarge and repair the Dam, the recommendations for the enlargement were approved prior to any representation by Mr. Freudenstein.

REMEMBER . . .

Mr. Freudenstein was elected in March, 1959. Compare this date and the dates presented in the true story. We leave it for you to judge.

Vote [1] Kelly and ensure many more local achievements by returning Labor to power

—Authorised by J. C. McCABE, Young.

South West NEWS Journal, Friday, March 2, 1962.

GEORGE FREUDENSTEIN

Does not make false statements

NORTH YOUNG PRIMARY SCHOOL:—

Plaque on the wall clearly states it was opened by
G. F. Freudenstein, M.L.A.

NEW HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING, YOUNG:—

Promised by the Premier 18 years ago.
Tenders only just called, after P. & C. and Freudenstein
representation.

NEW OPERATING THEATRE, YOUNG:—

Promised 1958, not built until Freudenstein was member,
only opened in 1960.

NEW NURSES QUARTERS, Mercy Hospital, Young:—

Committee working for many years to raise half the
money — not one penny of Government funds spent
until Freudenstein elected March 1959,
Foundation stone laid by H.E. the Governor when
Freudenstein was member.

THESE ARE FACTS— Promises from Labour
mean nothing. Witness Young High School
promised 18 years ago.

Vote **[1] Freudenstein G. F.**

YOUR LOCAL MAN OF HONEST ACHIEVEMENT

—Authorised by T. H. BRYANT, Cowra.

Gloucester Electors! Vote 1 BORTHWICK

BECAUSE..

- BORTHWICK is a product of the Electorate in which he has lived all his life. The Electorate as produced its OWN Member for over 50 years (Hon. Walter Bennett, C. E. Bennett, R. L. Fitzgerald). Why import a Member? Maintain OUR record!
- BORTHWICK has given Gloucester district OUTSTANDING service in Shortland County Council and has brought honour to Gloucester Shire and proven his own worth by appointment as Chairman for 1962.
- BORTHWICK has been a supplier to the Milk Board and a member of the M.Z.D.C. and Australian Jersey Herd Society. He KNOWS problems of milk industry and is opposed to New State movement.
- BORTHWICK has succeeded in his own business — is a trained advocate! Grasp this chance to have him represent US AS OUR MEMBER so that the voice of Gloucester may be heard in the places that matter.

LISTEN TO HIM ON 2XX-NM: FRIDAY 23rd., 7.30 P.M.; SATURDAY 24th., 7 P.M.; SUNDAY 25th. (SPECIAL FOR DAIRY FARMERS), 5.45 A.M.; MONDAY 26th., 9.25 P.M.; TUESDAY 27th. AND WEDNESDAY 28th., 10.30 P.M.

LISTEN TO HIM ON 2EE: WEDNESDAY 28th., 8.32 A.M. AND 6.15 P.M.

Cut out and take to Poll

- 3 Barr
 1 BORTHWICK
 4 Kable
 2 Punch

VOTE :



BORTHWICK MEANS BUSINESS

GLOUCESTER ELECTORS! BORTHWICK WARNS ON NEW STATE!

FACE THESE FACTS:

The Dairying Industry is the very life blood of this Electorate. Cripple it and you will have an economic collapse on your hands! The butcher, the baker, the grocer and the rest — the tourist resorts not the least—in the Milk Zone Electorate of Gloucester — will have few income tax worries. Support the NEW STATE movement and you'll K.O. the dairying industry and the Electorate in the process.

WHY:

Take a map of N.S.W. as it now is. Draw an East-West line just South of Newcastle and call the Northern part New England — the Southern part N.S.W. New England (including Gloucester Electorate) is then in the same position in relation to Sydney milk trade as Victoria — **OUTSIDE LOOKING IN!** Victoria has for years been anxious to supply Sydney with milk for 3/- per gallon. We in New England would have to accept 2/11 or less. If Victoria can do it why can't we? Because the milk Victoria would supply is its **SURPLUS**.

A return of 3/- would be nice for surplus — our farmers now average about 1/8 for it.

Remember, too, since single gauge railway now joins Victoria and N.S.W., express refrigerated trains could easily answer the transport problem. If you were the Premier of N.S.W. could you survive an election if you **IMPORTED** milk to Sydney at 4/2 when you could import it for 3/- or less? You would lose every seat in the city.

MR. PUNCH HAS TIME AND AGAIN (notably at every Nomination Meeting and at the State Electorate Council Meeting by which Borthwick was endorsed) ATTEMPTED HIS SUPPORT OF THE NEW STATE SCHEME!

It is your privilege to support him **AND** his scheme. A vote for Punch is a vote for the new State.

THE NEW STATE FOR DAIRY FARMERS WILL BE BANKRUPTCY!

Be realistic and support a Candidate who will oppose it **BECAUSE HE IS PLEDGED TO MAINTAIN THE MILK ZONE.**

BORTHWICK MEANS BUSINESS



LISTEN TO ME:

WEDNESDAY, 28th —
8.32 A.M. AND 6.15 P.M.

HOW TO VOTE

3 BARR, D. E.

1 BORTHWICK,
A. M.

4 KABLE, L. V.

2 PUNCH, L. A.

K

To all Milk Zone Dairymen ⁵⁶⁴



DON'T BE MISLED BY

LIES

AND FALSE STATEMENTS

**Leon Punch has repeatedly
expressed opposition to the New
England State boundaries.**

**ANY CLAIMS THAT PUNCH SUPPORTED THE NEW
ENGLAND STATE AT NOMINATION MEETINGS
IS FALSE!**

**ESTABLISHMENT OF SOVEREIGN NEW STATES IS COUNTRY PARTY
POLICY. BOTH BORTHWICK AND PUNCH HAVE VOTED FOR THE
PRINCIPLE AT COUNTRY PARTY CONFERENCES.**

**C. B. CUTLER, M.L.A., LEADER OF THE COUNTRY PARTY HAS
SAID: "NO AREA WILL BE FORCED INTO A NEW STATE, IF IT
VOTES AGAINST ENTRY BY REFERENDUM."**

**IT IS A FALSE BOGEY USUALLY DRAGGED UP BY LABOR TO DELIBERATELY
MISLEAD.**

**PUNCH will continue to fight for the dairy farmers
and the Milk Zone!**

HE WILL CONTINUE TO OPPOSE THE PROPOSED NEW ENGLAND BOUNDARIES

SUPPORT A MAN YOU CAN TRUST!

VOTE 1 Punch L.A.

2 Borthwick, A. M.

L

Case for making new states put by Mr. Punch

The above appeared in the "Singleton Argus" on 5th May, 1961, reporting an address by Mr. Punch to Cessnock Rotary Club.

In the Singleton "Argus" of 20th September, 1961, there was a report of the Singleton Country Party Branch Nomination meeting.

Inter alia the following was contained therein:

New State

Mr. Punch was questioned on his attitude to the new state movement in relation to its effect on the dairy industry.

Mr. Punch said he favoured the policy and had done so for many years.

Also in the same issue appeared Mr Borthwick's answer to the same question:

"Any dairy farmer who voluntarily favours the new state is leading with his chin," Mr. Borthwick said.

FOR TRUTH IN ADVERTISING

Vote

1

Borthwick, A. M.

2

PUNCH, L. A.

FOR GLOUCESTER ELECTORATE

NOW YOU KNOW

DAVID ASIMUS

AS THE MAN BURRINJUCK WANTS AND NEEDS

DAVID ASIMUS IS;

- A young man — 29 years of age
- Bachelor of Economics
- Political Science student
- Nuffield Scholar studying political science and agriculture in Great Britain
- Sportsman
- Leader of men

THE RIGHT MAN
TO REPRESENT
THE PEOPLE OF
BURRINJUCK



THE —
**C
O
U
N
T
R
Y**

FOR TOWN AND
COUNTRY
PROSPERITY

DAVID ASIMUS:

"I WILL VOTE, IF ELECTED AS YOUR REPRESENTATIVE, AS MY CONSCIENCE AND THE PEOPLE OF MY ELECTORATE WOULD WANT ME TO — NOT AS PART OF A PARTY MACHINE."

BURRINJUCK AND THE STATE NEEDS A CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT

THIS SATURDAY—

VOTE 1 ASIMUS

DAVID JAMES (C.P.)

THE COUNTRY PARTY IS PROUD OF HIM

REMEMBER! — NUMBER EACH SQUARE

AUTHORISED BY J. PETTIT, HARDEN



FARMERS!

FIGHT FOR YOUR RIGHTS

Vote Country Party to amend the Factories and Shops Bill

Introduced into Parliament by the Labor Government

THE BILL CONTAINS 150 CLAUSES AND PLACES UNDER THE CONTROL OF GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS PRACTICALLY EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENS ON A COUNTRY PROPERTY WHETHER CARRIED ON BY A MAN WHO OWNS A BEEHIVE OR ON THE STATE'S LARGEST SHEEP STATION.

"Inspectors" under this Bill means any persons appointed for the purpose. They will share authority to prosecute with industrial unions.

An inspector may "enter, inspect and examine" at all reasonable hours by day or night wherever he believes there is anything to be inspected and to take with him an Inspector of Health, an Inspector of Nuisances, a Building Inspector, an Inspector under the Inflammable Act, an Interpreter.

The Inspector may prescribe whatever precautions shall be taken in the management of animals, the construction of enclosures in which animals are kept, or he can tell the farmer how to use his "machinery, plant, equipment or appliance" or how "to carry on any operation, use any process or manage animals".

THESE REGULATIONS AND A HOST OF OTHERS WILL TIE YOU UP SO SECURELY IN RED TAPE THAT YOU WILL NEVER GET ROUND TO MILKING YOUR COWS.

THE COUNTRY PARTY WILL AMEND THIS BILL IN YOUR INTERESTS.

VOTE **1** COUNTRY PARTY
BLAIR

Electors of Oxley . . . LOOK TO THE FUTURE

These are the Energetic, Keen Young Men who are supporting

BRUCE COWAN

your Country Party Candidate for Oxley in a crusade for a better deal for Country People.



Mr. Charles Cutler, MLA
Leader of the NSW
Country Party



Mr. P. E. Lucock, MP
Country Party Member
for Lyne



Mr. Davis Hughes, MLA
Country Party Member
for Armidale

The Country Party is the **ONLY** party free of city domination to give free, true and progressive administration to country life.

OXLEY IS TRADITIONALLY A COUNTRY PARTY SEAT KEEP IT THAT WAY BUILD FOR A FUTURE

With Young, Keen Men like Cutler, Hughes, Chaffey, and their colleagues in the State Parliament and Lucock in the Federal Parliament.

Bruce Cowan, Your Local Man, will live amongst you and will always be available for personal contact on District problems

**Saturday
Next, Vote**



**FOR
COWAN**



(Authorised by Morton Trotter, Wauchope)

IAN ROBINSON

HE IS...

- an experienced Member of Parliament
- an able debater
- a member of the Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee
- a practical farmer who has fought to protect the butter industry against margarine and substitute cream
- a resident of the electorate
- a determined fighter for the needs of this district and a workable decentralisation policy
- a vigorous worker for public organisations, local government, education, hospitals and community welfare
- a member of farmers' organisations in the district
- a tireless advocate for progress and prosperity in the Casino Electorate
- a member constantly in touch with all parts of his Electorate
- a man who gets results



THE



WHO STANDS FOR

PROGRESS

AND

PROSPERITY

IN THE

CASINO

ELECTORATE

HE STANDS FOR...

- exemption from the extortionate Road Maintenance Tax for the carriage of perishable primary products, including milk and cream, and the complete abolition of the Tax on all road transport within two years.
- free T.B. testing of livestock
- immediate action to deal with the crisis in the pig industry
- completely free school bus transport for all school children and Technical College students.
- a better deal for the dairying industry to meet marketing problems caused by the European Common Market and a reorganisation of marketing in N.S.W. of milk and cream.
- new marketing deal for bananas and all primary products
- restoration of the economy of the timber industry by the promotion of greater sales specifying its use in Government jobs wherever possible.
- further hospital extensions in Casino, Kyogle and Coraki
- developmental and public works to provide more and permanent employment.
- subsidies for pre-school kindergartens

**FOR A BETTER DEAL FOR ALL
ROBINSON'S THE  FOR YOUR VOTE**

DO YOU HAVE TO PAY TO SEND YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL EVERY DAY?

IS IT EASY TO SEND YOUR CHILD
TO HIGH SCHOOL?

THE COUNTRY PARTY WILL

1. Provide completely Free School Bus Transport in country areas.
2. Ensure that every country child will have access to High School.
3. Ensure the provision of Hostels to meet this demand.
4. Subsidise boarding costs where children must leave home.

VOTE FOR THE PARTY THAT BELIEVES THAT EVERY CHILD, NO
MATTER WHERE HE LIVES, SHOULD HAVE AN EQUAL
OPPORTUNITY TO RECEIVE THE BEST EDUCATION
FOR WHICH HE IS FITTED



VOTE COUNTRY PARTY

Vote

O'KEEFE [I]

(Authorised by M. Hyndes, Bridge Street, Muswellbrook)

APPENDIX R

Parliamentary Activity

Note:

1. This Appendix illustrates the parliamentary activity of members of the Liberal Party, the A.L.P. and the Country Party in the House of Representatives between 1958 and 1961, and in the N.S.W. Legislative Assembly between 1959 and 1962, and of members of the U.A.P., the A.L.P. and the United Country Party in the New South Wales Legislative Assembly between 1932 and 1935.

2. Activity has been measured by comparing the inches of Hansard index for each member, and then classifying each member in terms of his 'inchage'. This method has been used by A.F.Davies (Australian Democracy, p.37), whose table may be compared with those following. The crudeness of the method is obvious and needs no further comment. Nevertheless it does, as Davies suggests, allow rough comparisons to be made, and there does not seem to be any alternative method.

3. In the following three tables casual by-elections have been ignored if their result did not change party strengths: in this case the inchage of the new member is added to that of the old. In the contrary case, each member is included separately.

4. In each table the distribution has suggested the grouping.

1. House of Representatives, 1958 to 1961

<u>Party</u>	<u>Negligible</u> <u>(0-14.8ins)</u>	<u>Weak</u> <u>(15-24.8)</u>	<u>Moderate</u> <u>(25-40ins)</u>	<u>Strong</u> <u>(43.5+ins)</u>	<u>Total</u>
A.L.P.	5	13	16	13	47
Liberal	15	19	13	10	57
Country Party	3	7	4	5	19
	23	39	33	28	123

Note:-

1. Excludes Speaker (Liberal) and Chairman of Committees (Country Party).
2. Includes the non-voting A.L.P. members for the A.C.T. and the Northern Territory.
3. Includes J.B.Howse (Liberal; 1958-60) and J.A.England (Country Party; 1960-1), M.P.s for Calare.
4. Activity of Ministers:

	<u>Liberal</u>	<u>Country Party</u>
Weak	2	-
Moderate	3	1
Strong	9	3

2. N.S.W. Legislative Assembly, 1959 to 1962

<u>Party</u>	<u>Negligible (0-5 ins)</u>	<u>Weak (6-13 ins)</u>	<u>Moderate (14-33 ins)</u>	<u>Strong (36 + ins)</u>	<u>Total</u>
A.L.P.	9	11	21	9	50
Liberal	2	6	16	5	29
Country Party	1	2	6	6	15
	12	19	43	20	94

Note:-

1. Excludes Speaker (A.L.P.).
2. Includes both R.B.Nott (A.L.P.; 1959-61) and F.L.O'Keefe (Country Party; 1961-2), M.L.A.s for Liverpool Plains.

3. N.S.W. Legislative Assembly, 1932 to 1935

<u>Party</u>	<u>Negligible (0-3.9ins)</u>	<u>Weak (4-9.9ins)</u>	<u>Moderate (10-19.9ins)</u>	<u>Strong (20 +ins)</u>	<u>Total</u>
A.L.P.	1	2	9	12	24
United Australia	7	14	11	8	40
United Country	6	10	5	3	24
	14	26	25	23	88

Note:-

1. Excludes the Speaker (U.A.P.) and the Chairman of Committees (U.C.P.).
2. Activity of Ministers:

	U.A.P.	U.C.P.
Weak	1	-
Moderate	1	2
Strong	6	3

APPENDIX S

Select Bibliography

This bibliography has been set out as follows:-

- I. ... Official Publications

- II. ... Newspapers

- III. ... Country Party Records
 - (i) Minute Books
 - (ii) Other Records
 - (iii) Publications

- IV. ... Private Papers

- V. ... Secondary Works
 - (i) Books
 - (ii) Articles and Monographs
 - (iii) Research Theses

- VI. ... Meetings and Interviews

I. Official Publications

1. Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, Census of the Commonwealth of Australia, 30th June, 1954, Canberra 1955
2. Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, Classification of Rural Holdings by Size and Type of Activity 1959-60
3. Commonwealth Electoral Office, Electoral Rolls, various divisions, various years
4. Commonwealth of Australia, Parliamentary Debates
5. New South Wales, Parliamentary Debates
6. The New South Wales Parliamentary Record, Volume II, Sydney 1957
7. New South Wales Government Statistician, Monthly Summary of Business Statistics, 1929 to 1941
8. Official Year Book of the Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, various years
9. Official Year Book of New South Wales, Sydney, various years
10. Parliamentary Handbook and Record of Elections for the Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, various editions
11. Royal Commission on the Wheat, Flour and Bread Industries, Second Report
Canberra 1935

II. Newspapers

Country Party records were supplemented by the use of the newspaper clipping files of the Department of Political Science, Institute of Advanced Studies, Australian National University, and the Sydney Morning Herald, bound volumes of which are held in the above Department and in the National Library, Canberra.

In addition, 50 country newspapers were purchased for the period August 1961 to April 1962. These newspapers were those circulating in the electorates being studied by the writer during the elections of 1961 and 1962 (see Chapters 14 and 16). For a brief description of these papers, see Appendix P.

(a) (North Coast)

Byron Bay - Bangalow Beacon

Mullumbimby Star Advocate

Murwillumbah Daily News

Kyogle Examiner

Ballina Pilot

Northern Star (Lismore)

Richmond River Express (Casino)

(b) (Central Coast)

Macleay Argus (Kempsey)

Bellingen Courier-Sun

Nambucca Daily News

Wingham Chronicle

Port Macquarie News

Hastings Shire Gazette (Wauchope)

Manning River Times (Taree)

Gloucester Advocate

II.

(b) (Central Coast)

Singleton Argus

Dungog Chronicle

(c) (North)

Manilla Express

Northern Daily Leader (Tamworth)

Armidale Express

Uralla Times

Don Dorriigo Gazette

Tenterfield Star

Glen Innes Examiner

Inverell Times

Warialda Standard

Quirindi Advocate

Scone Advocate

Muswellbrook Chronicle

Merriwa and Cassilis News

(d) (Central West)

Blayney West Macquarie (Blayney)

Parkes Champion Post

Parkes Western People

Central Western Daily (Orange)

Molong Express

Canowindra Star

II.

(d) (Central West)

Cowra Guardian

Fabes Advocate

Grenfell Record

(e) (South West)

South West NEWS Pictorial (Young)

Cootamundra Daily News

Gundagai Independent

Harden-Murrumburrah Express

Tumut and Adelong Times

Yass Tribune

Crookwell Gazette

Tumbarumba Times

Temora Independent

West Wyalong Advocate

Ardlethan-Beckom Times

III. Country Party Records

(i) Minute Books

These may be classified conveniently into six groups:

1. The Minute Books of the party's Central Council and Central Executive, of the Australian Country Party Association, and of the Australian Country Party (Federal). These are all held at the party's Head Office in Sydney.
2. The Minute Books of the party's Annual Conferences, the Reports of the Proceedings of the Annual Conferences of the Farmers and Settlers' Association, and the Verbatim Reports and Minutes of Annual Conferences of the Graziers' Association. The party's Conference Minutes are held at the party's Head Office; there are verbatim reports from 1945 onwards, and semi-verbatim reports for some of the earlier conferences. The F.S.A. Reports are available at the National Library (with the exception of the 1943 Report) and at the Association's Head Office in Sydney. The G.A. Reports are available at the Association's Head Office in Sydney.
3. The Minute Books of federal and state electorate councils, regional office management committees, and candidate campaign committees.
4. The Minute Books of party branches.
5. The Minute Books of the N.S.W. Parliamentary Country Party.
6. The Minute Books of defunct Country Party institutions. Unless otherwise stated, these are held at the party's Head Office.

III. (i)

1. (a) The Minute Books of Central Council

The writer was able to consult the first 15 of these volumes, which cover the period from 13 October 1919 to 28 October 1960.

(b) The Minute Books of Central Executive

The writer was able to consult the first seven of these volumes, which cover the period from 27 April 1928 (the formation of the first Executive) to 15 December 1960.

(c) The Minute Book of the Australian Country Party Association

23 March 1926 to 6 December 1943

The A.C.P.A. was the precursor of the Australian Country Party (Federal).

(d) The Minute Books of the Australian Country Party (Federal)

The writer was able to consult two of these three volumes, covering the period from 20 January 1945 to 26 November 1960.

(e) The Minute Book of the Central Council of the Australian Country Party

26 September 1922 to 6 November 1922

This Council was an ad hoc body set up by the F.S.A. and the G.A. to manage the party's federal election campaign in 1922 in New South Wales.

(f) Minutes of Joint Meetings of the Central Council and the Parliamentary Progressive Party

20 April 1922 to 12 October 1923

These meetings followed the decision of the True Blues not to seek representation directly on Central Council, and regular meetings of this kind were abandoned when direct representation was resumed.

III. (i)

1. (g) Reports of the General Secretary to Central Council and Central Executive

14 May 1929 to 10 April 1930

Following April 1930 these reports were included in the Council and Executive Minute Books and were not bound separately.

2. (a) The Minute Books of the following party Conferences:-

10 and 11 August 1927

16 and 17 August 1928

21 and 22 August 1930

12 and 13 August 1931

26 and 27 September 1938

7 and 8 August 1939

29 and 30 January 1941 (Extraordinary)

10, 11 and 12 March 1943

8, 9 and 10 February 1944

12, 13 and 14 April 1945

10, 11 and 12 April 1946

25, 26 and 27 March 1947

1, 2 and 3 April 1948

19, 20 and 21 May 1949

18, 19 and 20 May 1950

23, 24 and 25 May 1951

21, 22 and 23 May 1952

10, 11 and 12 June 1953

16, 17 and 18 June 1954

22, 23 and 24 June 1955

20, 21, and 22 June 1956

19, 20 and 21 June 1957

18, 19 and 20 June 1958

III. (i)

2. (a)

- 27, 28 and 29 May 1959
- 22, 23 and 24 June 1960
- 21, 22 and 23 June 1961
- 20, 21 and 22 June 1962

Apart from those of 1959 (Bathurst) and 1961 (Lismore), all the party Conferences were held in Sydney.

(b) Farmers and Settlers' Association of New South Wales,
Reports of the Proceedings of Annual Conferences
1917 to 1946 inclusive

(c) Graziers' Association of New South Wales, Verbatim Reports and Minutes of Annual Conferences, 1918 to 1946

3. (a) Federal Electorate Councils

1. Minute Book of Calare Federal Electorate Council
14 June 1945 to 15 May 1954
(Country Party Office, Orange)
2. Minute Book of Calare Federal Electorate Council
12 July 1958 to 26 May 1961
(Mrs J. Hutchinson, Orange)
3. Minute Book of Calare Federal Electorate Council
18 August 1961 to 25 September 1961
(H. Balcomb, Toogong, via Canowindra)
4. Minute Book of Hume Federal Electorate Council
9 October 1948 to 8 November 1961
(S.P.Gray, Cootamundra)
5. Minute Book of Lyne Federal Electorate Council
24 May 1958 to 27 May 1961
(H. Buttsworth, Murrumbidgee)

III. (i)

3. (a)

6. Minute Book of Mitchell Federal Electorate Council
7 October 1948 to 12 April 1955
(Head Office, Sydney)
7. Minute Book of New England Federal Electorate Council
8 February 1928 to 1 October 1960
(J. de Veau, Armidale)
8. Minute Book of Paterson Federal Electorate Council
24 February 1950 to 15 April 1961
(P. Shaddock, Singleton)
9. Minute Book of Richmond Federal Electorate Council
30 July 1934 to 8 July 1941
(C.R.Waldron, Casino)
10. Minute Book of Richmond Federal Electorate Council
19 July 1943 to 29 September 1961
(W.A. Walmsley, Lismore)

(b) State Electorate Councils

1. Minute Book of Armidale State Electorate Council
20 September 1927 to 27 October 1956
(R.N.Hickson, Armidale; courtesy G.S. Harman, Armidale
Teachers' College)
2. Minute Book of Burrinjuck State Electorate Council
11 January 1950 to 8 May 1960
(S.P.Gray, Cootamundra)

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3. (b)

3. Minute Book of Byron State Electorate Council
14 May 1937 to 18 April 1961
(J.L.Banner, Murwillumbah)
4. Minute Book of Casino State Electorate Council
26 April 1946 to 20 October 1961
(P. Fredericks, Collins Creek Road, via Kyogle)
5. Minute Book of Gloucester State Electorate Council
25 February 1956 to 19 May 1962
(W.Cameron, Dungog)
6. Minute Book of Lismore State Electorate Council
29 April 1951 to 28 July 1961
(D.M.R. Page, Lismore)
7. Minute Book of Liverpool Plains State Electorate Council
5 February 1955 to 4 November 1961
(Miss A. Stephen, Gunnedah)
8. Minute Book of Orange State Electorate Council
14 January 1950 to 18 March 1960
(Mrs J. Hutchinson, Orange)
9. Minute Book of Oxley State Electorate Council
4 August 1945 to 26 July 1961
(M. McCaffrey, Hannam Vale, via Taree)
10. Minute Book of Raleigh State Electorate Council
9 January 1953 to 1 December 1961
(R. Hunter, Upper Orara, via Coffs Harbour)
11. Minute Book of Temora State Electorate Council
28 April 1927 to 3 November 1960
(A.G. Hutchinson, Temora)

III. (i)

3. (b)

12. Minute Book of Tenterfield State Electorate Council
2 March 1935 to 27 January 1962
(S. Miller, Glen Innes)
13. Minute Book of Upper Hunter State Electorate Council
9 September 1939 to 15 April 1961
(P. Shaddock, Singleton)
14. Minute Book of Yass State Electorate Council
12 March 1941 to 11 January 1950
(S.P. Gray, Cootamundra)
15. Minute Book of Young State Electorate Council
22 March 1946 to 7 April 1961
(J. Dawe, Greenethorpe, via Young)

(c) Committees at the electorate level

1. Minute Book of the Charles Cutler Campaign Committee
10 January 1953 to 13 April 1953
(Country Party Office, Orange)
2. Minute Book of the Orange Office Management Committee
16 September 1957 to 29 January 1959
(Country Party Office, Orange)

4. The Minute Books of party branches

1. Minute Book of Alstonville Branch (Lismore SEC)
12 September 1952 to 2 November 1961
(Branch Secretary, Alstonville)

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4.

2. Minute Book of Armidale Branch (Armidale SEC)
21 April 1928 to 24 September 1957
(R.N. Hickson, Armidale; courtesy G.S.Harman, Armidale Teachers' College)
3. Minute Book of Ballina Branch (Lismore SEC)
5 April 1956 to 14 September 1960
(A. Cummings, Ballina)
4. Minute Book of Bexhill Branch (Lismore SEC)
12 March 1945 to 14 March 1960
(R. Waddell, Bexhill, via Lismore)
5. Minute Book of Blacktown Branch (Blacktown SEC)
21 March 1946 to 12 April 1955 (two books)
(Head Office, Sydney)
6. Minute Book of Bundarra Branch (Armidale SEC)
13 November 1954 to 15 March 1958
(J.B.R. French, Bundarra)
7. Minute Book of Casino Branch (Casino SEC)
4 February 1946 to 17 January 1947
(C.R. Waldron, Casino)
8. Minute Book of Casino Branch (Casino SEC)
25 June 1947 to 5 March 1958
(C.R.Waldron, Casino)
9. Minute Book of Coffs Harbour Branch (Clarence SEC)
19 September 1958 to 8 December 1961
(Mrs E. Barry, Coffs Harbour)
10. Minute Book of Combined Branches Coffs Harbour Shire
1 June 1960 to 8 November 1961
(Mrs E. Barry, Coffs Harbour)

III. (i)

4.

11. Minute Book of Cootamundra Branch (Burrinjuck SEC)
14 August 1952 to 7 November 1955
(S.P. Gray, Cootamundra)
12. Minute Book of Cowra Branch (Young SEC)
1953 (no precise date) to 2 February 1962
(Mrs E. Chapman, Cowra)
13. Minute Book of Dungog Branch, (Gloucester SEC)
26 November 1957 to 26 March 1962
(I.B. Cameron, Dungog)
14. Minute Book of Glen Innes Branch (Tenterfield SEC)
17 July 1941 to 28 September 1961
(A.C. Mott, Glen Innes)
15. Minute Book of Grenfell Branch (Young SEC)
July 1939 (no precise date) to 21 April 1961
(D. Mitton, Grenfell)
16. Minute Book of Gunnedah Branch (Barwon SEC)
3 November 1950 to 3 July 1953
(Miss A. Stephen, Gunnedah)
17. Minute Book of Hannam Vale Branch (Oxley SEC)
29 January 1944 to 20 January 1958
(M. McCaffrey, Hannam Vale, via Taree)
18. Minute Book of Inverell Branch (Tenterfield SEC)
7 March 1932 to 14 November 1961 (two volumes)
(Mrs R. Farrand, Inverell)
19. Minute Book of Kyogle Branch (Casino SEC)
12 April 1946 to 22 September 1960
(P. Fredericks, Collins Creek Road, via Kyogle)

III. (i)

4.

20. Minute Book of Landsdowne District Branch (Oxley SEC)
6 January 1960 to 21 November 1961
(Branch Secretary, Central Landsdowne, via Taree)
21. Minute Book of Lismore Branch (Lismore SEC)
28 May 1953 to 23 November 1961
(G. Law, Lismore)
22. Minute Book of Murwillumbah Branch (Byron SEC)
21 July 1931 to 8 August 1960
(J.L. Banner, Murwillumbah)
23. Minute Book of Muswellbrook Branch (Upper Hunter SEC)
3 August 1949 to 6 October 1961
(A.L. Gardiner, Muswellbrook)
24. Minute Book of Raymond Terrace Branch (Gloucester SEC)
19 April 1952 to 24 February 1961
(W.H. Boschman, Raymond Terrace)
25. Minute Book of Scone Branch (Upper Hunter SEC)
18 May 1956 to 10 March 1961
(D. Munro, Scone)
26. Minute Book of Singleton Branch (Gloucester SEC)
27 April 1932 to 18 October 1961
(P. Shaddock, Singleton)
27. Minute Book of Tamworth Branch (Tamworth SEC)
26 August 1949 to 17 March 1961
(D. Kelso, Tamworth)
28. Minute Book of Taree Branch (Oxley SEC)
24 May 1958 to 15 May 1961
(M. Buttsworth, Taree)

III. (i)

4.

29. Minute Book of Upper Orara Branch (Clarence SEC)
4 April 1956 to 1 December 1960
(R. Hunter, Upper Orara)
30. Minute Book of Yass Branch (Burrinjuck SEC)
24 September 1955 to 29 March 1962
(Mrs L. Walmsley, Greenfield Farm, via Yass)
31. Minute Book of Young Branch (Young SEC)
22 October 1958 to 13 June 1961
(Miss J. Philip, Young)

In addition to the above the writer was able to consult a number of reports of branch meetings which are included in the Morton Trotter Papers (see below). These meetings, all of branches in the Oxley state electorate, were as follows:-

1. Minutes of a Meeting of Bobin-Marlee Branch
30 August 1960
2. Minutes of a Meeting of Mount George Branch
29 August 1960
3. Minutes of a Meeting of Rollands Plains Branch
7 October 1960
4. Minutes of a Meeting of Telegraph Point Branch
23 September 1960
5. Minutes of a Meeting of Wherrol Flat Branch
31 August 1960

III. (i)

5. The Minute Books of the New South Wales Parliamentary Country Party

The writer was able to consult two of these three volumes, covering the period from 23 February 1932 to 22 November 1955. An earlier volume covering the period from 1920 to 1931 appears to have been lost.

According to P.E. Lucock M.H.R. the federal parliamentary Country Party does not possess a Minute Book.

6. The Minute Books of defunct Country Party institutions
 1. Minute Book of the Political Committee of the Farmers and Settlers' Association
13 July 1915 to 23 February 1916
(Head Office, Sydney)
 2. Minute Book of the Central Council of the United Country Movement
13 July 1932 to 28 June 1933
(Head Office, Sydney)
 3. Minutes of the Executive of the Western Division of the United Country Movement
8 April 1931 to 1 December 1938
(Head Office, Sydney)

III. (ii) Other Country Party Records

These records consist in the main of correspondence files, financial statements, membership lists, and election campaign material - speeches, bills, advertisements and budgets. Except in rare cases these records were not systematically organised, and they usually extended back in time only to the year in which the current secretary took office. Occasionally these records were located in two places; in such cases both sources are indicated.

1. Electorate Councils

- (a) Calare Federal Electorate Council Records
(Country Party Office, Orange; A.G. Halls, Grenfell)
- (b) Cowper Federal Electorate Council Records
(C.R. Waldron, Casino)
- (c) Hume Federal Electorate Council Records
(S.P. Gray, Cootamundra)
- (d) Gwydir Federal Electorate Council Records
(Country Party Office, Gunnedah)
- (e) New England Federal Electorate Council Records
(J. de Veau, Warrane, via Armidale)
- (f) Armidale State Electorate Council Records
(J. de Veau, Warrane, via Armidale)
- (g) Burrinjuck State Electorate Council Records
(S.P. Gray, Cootamundra)
- (h) Byron State Electorate Council Records
(J.L. Banner, Murwillumbah)
- (i) Gloucester State Electorate Council Records
(W.H. Boschman, Raymond Terrace)

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1.

- (j) Lismore State Electorate Council Records
(D.M.R. Page, Lismore)
- (k) Liverpool Plains State Electorate Council Records
(Country Party Office, Gunnedah)
- (l) Orange State Electorate Council Records
(Country Party Office, Orange)
- (m) Tenterfield State Electorate Council Records
(S. Miller, Glen Innes)
- (n) Young State Electorate Council Records
(G.F. Freudenstein M.L.A., Young)

2. Committees at the Electorate level

- (a) Charles Cutler Campaign Committee Records
(Country Party Office, Orange)
- (b) Gunnedah Office Management Committee Records
(Country Party Office, Gunnedah)
- (c) Orange Office Management Committee Records
(Country Party Office, Orange)

3. Branches

- (a) Ballina Branch Records
(A. Cummings, Ballina)
- (b) Bexhill Branch Records
(R. Waddell, Bexhill, via Lismore)

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3.

- (c) Bundarra Branch Records
(J.B.R. French, Bundarra)
- (d) Combined Branches Coffs Harbour Shire Records
(Mrs E. Barry, Coffs Harbour)
- (e) Glen Innes Branch Records
(A.C. Mott, Glen Innes)
- (f) Cootamundra Branch Records
(S.P. Gray, Cootamundra)
- (g) Grenfell Branch Records
(D. Mitton, Grenfell)
- (h) Gunnedah Branch Records
(Country Party Office, Gunnedah; now in possession of writer)
- (i) Raymond Terrace Branch Records
(W.H. Boschman, Raymond Terrace)
- (j) Scone Branch Records
(D. Munro, Scone)

III. (iii) Country Party Publications

1. Constitutions

These Constitutions, all printed, were consulted at the party's Head Office, Sydney. A copy of the 1960 printing of the present Constitution is enclosed in a pocket at the end of the thesis.

- (a) The Progressive Party of New South Wales, Constitution and Rules for the Guidance of Electorate Councils and Branches, Sydney 1920
- (b) as above, amended to 20 September 1923
- (c) The Country Party of New South Wales, Constitution and Rules for the Guidance of Electorate Councils and Branches, Sydney 1928
- (d) as above, amended 1929
- (e) as above, amended 1930
- (f) as above, amended 1931
- (g) The United Country Party of New South Wales (with which is incorporated the United Country Movement), Constitution and Rules for the Guidance of Divisions, Electorate Councils, Sub-Groups and Women's Auxiliaries, Sydney 1933
- (h) The United Country Party of New South Wales, Constitution and Rules for the Guidance of Divisions, Electorate Councils, Branches, Women's Auxiliaries and Younger Sets, Sydney 1939
- (i) as above, amended 1943

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1.

- (j) The Australian Country Party (N.S.W.), Constitution and Rules for the Guidance of Central Council, Electorate Councils, Branches, Women's Auxiliaries and Younger Sets, Sydney 1943
- (k) as above, amended 1944
- (l) as above, amended 1945
- (m) The Australian Country Party (N.S.W.), Provisional Constitution and Rules for the Guidance of Central Council, Electorate Councils, Branches, Women's Auxiliaries and Younger Sets, to be ratified or amended at the Annual Conference, April 10, 11, 12, 13, 1946
Sydney 1946
- (n) The Australian Country Party (N.S.W.), Constitution and Rules for the Guidance of Central Council, Electorate Councils, Branches, Women's Branches, Younger Sets and Members, Sydney 1946
- (o) as above, amended to 1960

2. Newspapers

- (a) The Australian Country Party Monthly Journal
Vol.1 No.2, March 1934 to Vol.5 No.58, November 1938
(courtesy of Ulrich Ellis, Armidale)
- (b) The New South Wales Countryman
March 1946 (Vol.1 No.1) to present

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3. Other Publications

Since 1919 both the federal and the N.S.W. Country Parties have produced great amounts of printed material both during and between elections. Much of this material is of ephemeral interest, and little of it has been used in this thesis. The party's Head Office possesses what is probably the best collection of this material, and references to pamphlets and booklets not available in the party's collection may be found in the bibliography in Graham, The Strategies of the Country Parties, and in a further bibliography compiled by Dr Graham. However, two booklets published by the party were of use to the writer:

- (a) Australian Country Party (Federal), Platform and Policy, re-affirmed November 1953, Sydney 1953
- (b) The Australian Country Party (N.S.W.), Mileposts, Sydney 1956

IV. Private Papers

1. The Bruxner Papers

Lt Col the Hon. Sir Michael Bruxner D.S.O. was Leader of the N.S.W. Country Party from 1922 to 1925, and from 1932 to 1958. His papers, consisting of three very large volumes of press cuttings, a number of Cabinet files, submissions, and correspondence files, and other material, are in the possession of the writer. These papers refer principally to the period 1927 to 1941. A more complete description of the Bruxner Papers is given in the Bibliography in Aitkin, The United Country Party.

2. The Morton Trotter Papers

Morton Trotter, Chairman of Oxley SEC and a Vice-Chairman of the party, allowed the writer to consult his own collection of papers concerning the Country Party and his activity in it. These proved especially useful.

3. The J.B.R. French Papers

John French, the Chairman of New England FEC and a member of the Central Executive, allowed the writer to consult his own collection of papers relating to the Country Party. Mr French is an acute and thoughtful observer of politics, and his comments on both the Country Party and the character of rural politics were most interesting.

4. The W.G. Blair Papers

Gordon Blair, the Country Party candidate for the state electorate of Lismore in 1962, gave the writer access to his papers, which were in effect a complete record of a candidate's involvement in an election campaign.

V. Secondary Works

(i) Books

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4. Bulwer-Thomas, Ivor, The Party System in Great Britain, London 1953.
5. Burnham, James, The Machiavellians - Defenders of Freedom, London 1943.
6. Burns, Creighton, Parties and People - A Survey Based on the La Trobe Electorate, Melbourne 1961.
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8. Crawford, J.G. et al., Wartime Agriculture in Australia and New Zealand - 1939-1950, Stanford 1954.
9. Crisp, L.F., The Parliamentary Government of the Commonwealth of Australia, Adelaide 1949.
10. _____, The Australian Federal Labour Party - 1901-1951, London 1955.
11. _____, Ben Chifley, Melbourne 1961.
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13. _____, Private Politics, Melbourne 1962.
14. Davis, S.R. (ed.), The Australian Political Party System, Sydney 1954.

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16. Drane, N.T. and Edwards, H.R., The Australian Dairy Industry - an Economic Study, Melbourne 1961.
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25. _____, A History of the Australian Country Party, Melbourne 1963.
26. Encel, S., Cabinet Government in Australia, Melbourne 1962.
27. Evatt, H.V., The King and His Dominion Governors, London 1936.
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29. Fairfax, Warwick, Men, Parties and Politics, Sydney 1943.
30. French, E.L., Melbourne Studies in Education 1958-1959, Melbourne 1960.

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31. Garnett, A. Campbell, Freedom and Planning in Australia, Madison 1941.
32. Graham, B.D., The Emergence of the Australian Country Parties, (forthcoming).
33. Hasluck, Paul, The Government and the People, 1939-1941, Canberra 1952.
34. Holt, Alan J., Wheat Farms of Victoria - A Sociological Survey, Melbourne 1946.
35. Keith, A.B., The Dominions as Sovereign States, London 1938.
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38. Lane, Robert E., Political Life - Why People Get Involved in Politics, Glencoe 1959.
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41. Lipset, S.M., Agrarian Socialism - The Coöperative Commonwealth Federation in Saskatchewan - A Study in Political Sociology, Los Angeles 1950.
42. _____, Political Man - The Social Bases of Politics, New York 1960.
43. McHenry, Dean E., The Third Force in Canada - The Coöperative Commonwealth Federation 1932-1948, Los Angeles 1950.
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48. Michels, Robert, Political Parties - A Sociological Study of the Oligarchical Tendencies of Modern Democracy, (translated by Eden and Cedar Paul), New York 1959.
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50. Morton, W.L., The Progressive Party in Canada, Toronto 1950.
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53. Page, Sir Earle, Truant Surgeon - the Inside Story of Forty Years of Australian Political Life, Sydney 1963.
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V. (iii)

10. Moore, Evelyn, The Causes of the Agitation, after 1901, for the Establishment of a New State in Northern New South Wales, an unpublished M.A. thesis, New England University College, 1953.
11. Paul, J.B., The Premiership of Sir Albert Dunstan, an unpublished M.A. (Hons) thesis, Melbourne University, 1960.
12. Playford, J.D., Doctrinal and Strategic Problems of the Communist Party of Australia, 1945-1962, an unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Australian National University, 1962.
13. Rawson, D.W., The Organisation of the Australian Labor Party, 1916-1941, an unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Melbourne University, 1954.

VI. Meetings and Interviews

In the course of the two years of research undertaken for this thesis the writer met and talked with dozens of Country Party officials, parliamentarians and members. He also attended, through the courtesy of Country Party local officials, more than 20 party meetings in different parts of the state in 1961 and 1962.

It would be impossible to list all those who assisted the writer in this way. However, a list of parliamentarians and officials who greatly helped the writer is given in the Preface.

GENERAL PASTOR SURVEY

PART I

1. AGE

Circle the age group to which you belong:

Under 21, 21-25, 26-30, 31-35, 36-40, 41-45, 46-50,
51-55, 56-60, 61-65, 66+

NOTES

1. You are not asked to sign your name, nor reveal your identity in any way. In addition, there are no distinguishing marks on either the questionnaire or the accompanying return envelope.
2. Please answer fully and frankly.
3. When you have finished, please check that you have answered every question.
4. An extra sheet of paper is added in case you run out of space to answer questions or in case you wish to comment on a question. In either case, please feel free to do so.
5. However, nearly all the questions are answered by placing a circle around one or more of the alternative answers. If you feel that these alternatives are not sufficient, please write your answer on the blank sheet.

Thank you,

Don Aitkin

COUNTRY PARTY BRANCH SURVEY

PART A

1. AGE Circle the age group to which you belong:-
Below 21, 21-25, 26-30, 31-35, 36-40, 41-45, 46-50,
51-55, 56-60, 61-65, 66+.

2. MARITAL STATUS Circle whether MARRIED or SINGLE

3. OCCUPATION

(Please be fairly specific. Thus, if you are solely engaged in growing wheat, write 'wheat-farmer' not 'farmer' or 'primary producer').

4. RELIGION a) Circle the Church to which you belong:-

CHURCH OF ENGLAND

CATHOLIC

PRESBYTERIAN

METHODIST

BAPTIST

OTHER (Please name)

NO RELIGION

b) If a member of a Church, do you attend Church

AT LEAST ONCE A WEEK

AT LEAST ONCE A MONTH

AT LEAST ONCE A YEAR

HAVE NOT ATTENDED FOR PAST YEAR

(Please circle)

5. MEMBERSHIP OF ORGANISATIONS

a) Are you a member of

F.S.A.

G.A.

P.P.U.

ANY OTHER PRIMARY PRODUCER'S ORGANISATION (Please name)

.....

A TRADE UNION

A PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION

(Please circle)

b) Have you ever been associated in an executive capacity with any of these organisations?

YES NO (Please circle)

6. CIVIC ACTIVITY Please circle any of the following organisations to which you belong now or have belonged in the past in an executive capacity.

a) Local Government

SHIRE COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

COUNTY COUNCIL

b) Other

R.S.L.

SPORTING BODIES

COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS (such as Progress Associations, Committees for Aged Persons' Homes or Swimming Pools, or Far West, Parents' and Citizens' Associations, etc.)

ANY OTHER BODIES (Please name).....

.....

7. RESIDENCE

a) If on the land, were your people on the land?
YES NO (Please circle)

b) If not on the land, how long have you lived in the country?
less than 5 years, 6-10, 11-15, 16-20, 21-25, 26-30, all my life.
(Please circle)

8. PARTY MEMBERSHIP

a) How long have you been a member of the Country Party?
less than 5 years, 6-10 years, 11-15 years, 16-20 years, since before the War.
(Please circle)

b) Have you ever belonged to another political party?
YES NO (Please circle)

c) If the answer to (b) above is YES, please circle which party
NATIONALIST
U.A.P.
LIBERAL
A.L.P.
D.L.P.
OTHER (Please name)

d) Are others among your close relatives also members of the Country Party?
YES NO (Please circle)

e) If the answer to (d) above is YES, circle which relative(s)
FATHER MOTHER
BROTHER SISTER
UNCLE AUNT
SON DAUGHTER

9. PARTY ACTIVITY (continued)

c) If not ever a member of any other political party, have you ever voted for another political party?

YES NO (Please circle)

If YES, please circle which party

NATIONALIST

U.A.P.

LIBERAL

A.L.P.

D.L.P.

OTHER

DON'T REMEMBER

d) Are you, or have you been, an office bearer in your Branch?

YES NO (Please circle)

e) Have you ever represented your Branch at Electorate Council Meetings or at a Conference?

YES NO (Please circle)

f) Do you attend Branch meetings

REGULARLY

OCCASIONALLY (Please circle)

RARELY

g) Have you in the past donated to campaign funds at election times?

YES NO (Please circle)

Did you do so for the Federal Election late last year?

YES NO (Please circle)

Did you do so for the State Election in March this year?

YES NO (Please circle)

9. PARTY ACTIVITY (continued)

h) Have you ever helped on the tables at election time, or assisted in a similar way?

YES NO (Please circle)

Did you do so for the Federal Election late last year?

YES NO (Please circle)

Did you do so for the State Election in March this year?

YES NO (Please circle)

PART B

1. Set out below are five activities of a Country Party Branch. What do you think is their relative order of importance? (Place the numbers 1 to 5 in the boxes).

- RAISING FINANCE AT ELECTION TIME
- KEEPING THE LOCAL MEMBER INFORMED OF CURRENT ISSUES IN THE BRANCH'S AREA
- EDUCATING THE LOCAL COMMUNITY IN POLITICAL AFFAIRS
- MANNING THE TABLES AT ELECTION TIME
- DRAWING-UP AND REVIEWING THE PLATFORM OF THE PARTY

2. If there are other important functions that you think a Branch could or should perform, please write them down

.....
.....
.....
.....

3. Which sphere of government do you think is most important for country people?

- LOCAL GOVERNMENT
- STATE GOVERNMENT (Please circle)
- FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

4. Do you think that the Country Party should co-operate with the Liberal Party in the Federal sphere, or remain independent?

SHOULD CO-OPERATE

(Please circle)

SHOULD REMAIN INDEPENDENT

5. What about in the State sphere - in New South Wales?

SHOULD CO-OPERATE

(Please circle)

SHOULD REMAIN INDEPENDENT

6. Do you think that the Country Party would ever find advantages in co-operation with the Labor Party in either State and/or Federal politics?

State (i.e. N.S.W.)

Federal

YES

NO

YES

NO

(Please circle)

7. Do you think three-cornered contests (that is, between Country Party, Liberal and Labor candidates in seats held by the Labor Party) are a help to the Country Party?

YES

NO

(Please circle)

8. Are you personally in favour of the Country Party's present policy of State Aid for non-government schools?

YES

NO

(Please circle)

9. Do you think that Australia should or should not sell wheat to Communist China?

YES

NO

(Please circle)

10. Are you in favour of New States in Australia?

YES

NO

(Please circle)

87-4578
C.S.
457
1730

**The
Australian Country Party (N.S.W.)**

Constitution and Rules

for the guidance of
Central Council, Electorate Councils,
Branches, Women's Branches,
Younger Sets and Members

AS RATIFIED AT THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE
April 10, 11, 12, 13, 1946
AND AMENDED AT SUBSEQUENT CONFERENCES

◆
REPRINTED AUGUST, 1960

◆
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PRICE 2/-



The Australian Country Party (N.S.W.) Constitution and Rules

**Additions and Amendments—Authorised by General Conference,
20th, 21st and 22nd June, 1962**

Part IV (c) (Rule 9) is amended to read:—

No motion in pursuance of Rule 8 affecting the name of the Party, or amalgamating with any other Party, shall be taken by the Chairman except on due notice being given and circulated in writing to delegates of the Electorate Council at least 21 days before the date of the meeting.

Part V (c) (Rule 9) is amended to read:—

No motion in pursuance of Rule 8 affecting the name of the Party, or amalgamating with any other Party, shall be taken by the Chairman except on due notice being given and circulated in writing to delegates of the Electorate Council at least 21 days before the date of the meeting.

Part VI (f) (Rule 10) is amended to read:—

Provided that no motion in pursuance of Rules 8 and 9 (Part VI (f)) affecting the name of the Party or amalgamating with any other Party shall be taken by the Chairman except on due notice being given and circulated in writing to members of the Branch at least 21 days before the date of the meeting.

Part VI (d) (Rule 2) and Part VII (a & b) are amended so that:—

Branch delegates to General and Provincial Conferences, Federal and State Electorate Councils shall be:—

Branch membership 10-15 members — two delegates, the Chairman of the Branch or his duly authorised substitute, and one other elected by the Branch.

Branch membership 16-30 members — three delegates, the Chairman or his duly authorised substitute, and two others elected by the Branch.

Branch membership 31-60 — four delegates, the Chairman or his duly authorised substitute, and three others elected by the Branch.

Branch membership 61-100 — five delegates, the Chairman or his duly authorised substitute, and four others elected by the Branch.

Branch membership over 100 — five delegates, the Chairman or his duly authorised substitute, and four others elected by the Branch, plus one delegate for every fifty members or part thereof by which the membership exceeds 100.

And the following clause shall be added to both rules:—

It shall be the responsibility of the Branch Chairman or his deputy to satisfy Electorate Councils and Conferences that his Branch representation is correct.

Part XIII (a) (Rule 1) is amended to read:—

Where there is a Branch whose membership is comprised of residents of two Federal or two State Electorates, such Branch may send delegates to both Federal Electorate Councils and both State Electorate Councils in such area, as laid down in Part VI (d) 2 and Part VII (b), but based on the number of the Branch's members residing in the electorate concerned.

J. F. DREDGE,
General Secretary.

This Constitution is Divided as Follows:

AUSTRALIAN COUNTRY PARTY (FEDERAL).

- Federal Definitions.
- Federal Constitution.

PART I.

AUSTRALIAN COUNTRY PARTY (N.S.W.) CONSTITUTION.

- (a) Name.
- (b) Component Parts.
- (c) State Definitions.

PART II.

CENTRAL COUNCIL.

- (a) Composition of Central Council.
- (b) Powers of Central Council.

PART III.

CENTRAL EXECUTIVE.

- (a) Composition of Central Executive.
- (b) Powers of Central Executive.

PART IV.

FEDERAL ELECTORATE COUNCILS

- (a) Composition of Federal Electorate Councils.
- (b) Executive of Federal Electorate Councils.
- (c) Powers of Federal Electorate Councils.
- (d) Finance of Federal Electorate Councils.

PART V.

STATE ELECTORATE COUNCILS.

- (a) Composition of State Electorate Councils.
- (b) Executive of State Electorate Councils.
- (c) Powers of State Electorate Councils.
- (d) Finance of State Electorate Councils.

PART VI.

BRANCHES.

- (a) Composition of Branches.
- (b) Procedure of Branch Meetings.
 - 1. Ordinary meetings.
 - 2. Special meetings.
 - 3. Annual meetings.
- (c) Records of Branch.
- (d) Officers and Delegates of Branches.
- (e) Finance of Branches.
- (f) Powers of Branches.

PART VII.

BRANCH REPRESENTATIVES (DELEGATES).

- (a) State and Federal Electorate Councils.
- (b) Provincial and General Conferences.
- (c) Other Bodies.

PART VIII.

STATE AND FEDERAL ELECTORATE REPRESENTATIVES (DELEGATES), CENTRAL COUNCIL.

PART IX.

CENTRAL COUNCIL AND CENTRAL EXECUTIVE REPRESENTATIVES.

- (a) Conferences.
- (b) Councils and Branches.

PART X.

STATE AND FEDERAL PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATIVES

- (a) Central Council.
- (b) Central Executive.
- (c) State and Federal Electorate Councils.
- (d) Provisional and General Conferences, Councils and Branches.

PART XI.

NOMINATION AND ENDORSEMENT OF CANDIDATES.

- (a) State Electorate Councils.
- (b) Federal Electorate Councils.

PART XII.

CONFERENCES.

- (a) Provincial Conferences.
- (b) General Conferences.

PART XIII.

MISCELLANEOUS

- (a) Divided Branches and divided State and Federal Electorate Councils.
 - (b) Finance and its Distribution.
 - (c) Campaign Finances of Branches.
 - (d) Finance Generally.
 - (e) Annual Meetings and Financial Year.
 - (f) Indemnity.
 - (g) The Senate.
 - (h) Life Membership.
 - (i) Alteration of Constitution.
-

Preamble to the Constitution of the Australian Country Party (N.S.W.)

THE AUSTRALIAN COUNTRY PARTY stands foursquare on the basic principles of Democracy, belief in the solidarity of the British Commonwealth of Nations as a major factor in world peace and progress, loyalty to the Queen, maintenance of the sanctity of the home, freedom of worship, of speech, and of the Press.

It is an integral part of the political structure of the Australian Commonwealth, finding its origin in historic causes which called it into being more than forty years ago.

Its basic principles are derived from the traditions of free and democratic British Government, which gave the Australian Commonwealth its birth, and the Australian people their heritage of liberty and free, self-governing institutions. Therefore, it places high loyalty to the Queen, and to that Motherland which, in the supreme crisis of civilisation, became the last citadel of human freedom, and by her self-sacrifice ensured that "government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

The Australian Country Party adheres to the belief that the first essential of international co-operation and security is the solidarity of the British Commonwealth of Nations, and the closest alliance with the United States.

It asserts that neither economic, financial or social progress for the Australian nation is possible without a full and balanced development of our national resources, the wise distribution of our population, and an effective decentralisation of government and administration.

In Social policy it believes in protection of the weak, encouragement of the strong and vigorous to use their powers for the common good, and asserts that nothing worthwhile will or can be achieved except by hard work, thrift and self-sacrifice.

This constitution, insofar as it applies to the government and administration of New South Wales, is an expression of the principles stated in this preamble.

AUSTRALIAN COUNTRY PARTY

CONSTITUTION (Federal)

1.—NAME.

The name of this organisation shall be "THE AUSTRALIAN COUNTRY PARTY."

2.—OBJECTS.

The objects of the Party shall be:—

- To fear God and Honour the Queen;
- To help to defend the British Commonwealth;
- To maintain Democracy, Liberty and individual enterprise;
- To increase the well-being of the whole of the people;
- To promote the greatest possible development of primary and secondary industries;
- To encourage the establishment of the Australian Country Party throughout the Australian Continent as an independent political entity;
- To co-ordinate the policy of affiliated States upon a Federal basis.

3.—DEFINITIONS.

1. THE AUSTRALIAN COUNTRY PARTY means the Federal Australian Country Party organisation managed by the Australian Country Party Federal Council.
2. THE AUSTRALIAN COUNTRY PARTY FEDERAL PARLIAMENTARY PARTY means the Australian Country Party Members of both houses of the Federal Parliament.
3. FEDERAL LEADER means the leader of the Australian Country Party in the Federal Parliament.
4. FEDERAL CHAIRMAN means the Chairman of the Australian Country Party Federal Council;
Also in this constitution, except where the context otherwise requires or indicates
5. FEDERAL POLICY means the policy governing Federal politics set out and adopted by the Australian Country Party Federal Council.
6. STATE ORGANISATION means the Australian Country Party organisation within and controlled by any given State.
7. STATE POLICY means the policy governing State politics set out and adopted by the Central Council of any given State.

4.—FEDERAL COUNCIL.

A.—For the management of the affairs of the Australian Country Party there shall be a Federal Council, consisting of:—

- (1) The Leader for the time being of the Australian Country Party Federal Parliamentary Party.
- (2) The Deputy Leader for the time being of the Australian Country Party Federal Parliamentary Party.
- (3) The Leaders of the State Australian Country Party in each affiliated State.

(4) Four representatives elected by the members for the time being of the Australian Country Party Federal Parliamentary Party from their number, one from each affiliated State.

(5) Three representatives elected by the Central Council of the Australian Country Party in the various affiliated States who are not members of Parliament.

Provided that in the event of any State not being fully represented, the delegate or delegates present may vote the full strength of their State.

(6) One woman representative appointed or elected by affiliated Women's Organisations or Women of the Party in each affiliated State.

(7) The Immediate Past Chairman.

B.—It shall be competent for any Central Council to elect alternative delegates, provided always that such alternative delegates are bona fide members of the State Organisation they represent. No delegate shall be entitled to represent more than one State. The Leaders of the State Australian Country Party in each affiliated State may also appoint a deputy to represent him.

C.—The Federal Council shall appoint annually a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, from the members of Council, also a Secretary, and such other officers as it shall deem necessary, such appointees, together with the Federal Leader, to form the Executive of the Federal Council, to be representative of all the States, and have such powers as may be delegated by Council, three (3) to form a quorum. The Executive shall meet at least once between Annual Meetings.

D.—The Federal Council shall meet at least once a year. Not less than four weeks' notice shall be given delegates to attend such meetings. Every member of the Federal Council of the Australian Country Party shall be a financial member of the component organisation of the State in which his or her electorate is situated, and shall not be a member of any other political party or political organisation.

NOTE: Should the responsible authorities of Central Council in not less than two States, or the Chairman, desire a Special Meeting of the Federal Council, the Secretary shall, upon receiving such request in writing, convene a meeting in accordance with the Constitution for Regular Meetings. The place of meeting shall be decided by the majority of affiliated States, and, failing agreement, the meeting shall be at Canberra.

E.—At all meetings of the Federal Council eight (8) members representing at least three (3) State organisations shall form a quorum.

F.—No officer of the Council shall have a deliberate vote by virtue of his office, but he may vote as a delegate if entitled to do so. The Chairman, however, whether a delegate or not, shall have a casting vote.

G.—The Federal Council shall not form with any other political organisation an alliance that does not preserve intact the entity of the Party.

H.—Australian Country Party candidates shall contest elections on policy acceptable to the Australian Country Party.

I.—Unless the Federal Council has decided to the contrary, portfolios in a composite Government may be accepted by the Australian Country Party.

5.—SENATE.

State organisations shall be at liberty to make such arrangements to secure Senate representation as they deem necessary.

6.—FEDERAL POLICY.

- A.—The Federal Policy of the Party shall be determined from time to time by a joint meeting of the Federal Council and the members of the Federal Parliamentary Party.
- B.—Such joint meeting shall be convened by the Secretary of the Federal Council at least once every three (3) years.
- C.—All members of such joint meeting shall have the right of discussion, but only members of the Federal Council present at such joint meeting shall have the right to vote.

7.—CENTRAL COUNCILS.

- A.—The Executive body or Central Council of each State Country Party Organisation shall be deemed to be the Central Council for such State for Federal purposes, and shall have power to co-opt representatives of such organisations as deemed necessary.
- B.—Central Councils shall within the limits of their States and subject to this constitution:—
 - (1) Determine the endorsement and method of endorsement of candidates for Federal elections.
 - (2) Manage all matters whatsoever relating to Federal elections.
 - (3) Direct and supervise propaganda for Federal purposes.
 - (4) Control and supervise the collection and disbursement of funds.
- C.—In the execution of matters relating to Federal policy Central Councils shall be bound by and as far as is possible shall give effect to the policy defined by the Federal Council.
- D.—Each Central Council in existence at the date of the coming into operation of this Constitution shall endeavour to cause to be drawn up regulations to govern the Federal organisation in such State.
- E.—In the preparation of such regulations each Central Council shall be subject to the Federal Constitution then in force governing its powers.

8.—AFFILIATION FEES.

The affiliation fees payable yearly by the affiliated State organisations to the Federal Council shall be:—

New South Wales	£150
Queensland	£100
Victoria	£100
Western Australia	£50

9.—STATE ORGANISATIONS.

- A.—An Association, Organisation, or Committee in a State wherein no Country Party organisation then exists, upon advising Federal Council of its intention of becoming the Australian Country Party organisation in such State, may apply to be admitted to the Party by making written application to the Secretary of the Federal Council. Such application must bear the signatures and addresses of three reputable citizens who purport to have authority to make such application and who shall hereinafter be called "applicants." Such application must state that there is in existence in the State from which the application is made an organisation which in general subscribes to the Federal policy of the Australian Country Party and must be accompanied by a set of draft regulations.
- B.—The Executive of the Federal Council shall, within 30 days from the receipt by the Secretary thereof of such application, decide to admit or reject such application.
- C.—Written notice of Federal Council's decision shall be forwarded forthwith to the applicants. In the event of such notice being notice of admission, then as from the date of posting thereof the draft regulations submitted by the applicants shall be deemed to be regulations under this constitution.

- D.—In the event of the draft regulations submitted by the applicants falling in any respect to comply with the requirements of this Constitution, the Federal Council may nevertheless admit the application forthwith subject to the regulations being altered to comply with this Constitution within a period of 30 days.
- E.—No representatives of the organisation applying for admission shall attend meetings of Federal Council until the draft regulations comply with this Constitution in every respect, except with the consent of Federal Council.

10.—ALTERATION OF CONSTITUTION

No alteration shall be made in this Constitution unless it has first been referred to and received the consent of the Federal Council by a three-fifths majority vote of the members assembled at a meeting specially called for that purpose, and of which not less than three months' notice in writing shall have been given to members of the Federal Council. In the event of the full representation from any Central Council and also to the component bodies of each State not being present at any such meeting of the Federal Council, the representative attending shall vote the full strength of the Central Council which he represents.

Australian Country Party (N.S.W.)

PART 1.

STATE CONSTITUTION.

(a) **NAME.**

The name of the organisation shall be the Australian Country Party (N.S.W.).

(b) **COMPONENT PARTS.**

The organisation of the Australian Country Party (N.S.W.) shall be vested in:—

1. Central Council.
2. Central Executive.
3. Federal Electorate Councils.
4. State Electorate Councils.
5. Branches, i.e., persons who accept the Australian Country Party (N.S.W.) Constitution and Rules, and have paid the current branch or subscribing membership fee to the Party, and have become members of a Branch.
6. Provincial Conferences.
7. General Conferences.
8. Members of the State Parliament of N.S.W.
9. Members of the Federal Parliament.

(c) **STATE DEFINITIONS.**

1. **AUSTRALIAN COUNTRY PARTY (N.S.W.)** means the organisation of the Australian Country Party within the State of New South Wales which is managed by the New South Wales Central Council and which is affiliated with and has representation upon the Australian Country Party Federal Council.

2. **AUSTRALIAN COUNTRY PARTY STATE PARLIAMENTARY PARTY (N.S.W.)** means the Australian Country Party members of both houses of the New South Wales State Parliament.
3. **STATE LEADER** means the Leader of the Australian Country Party in the New South Wales Parliament.
4. **CHAIRMAN** means the Chairman of the Australian Country Party (N.S.W.).
5. **GENERAL SECRETARY** means the General Secretary of the Australian Country Party (N.S.W.).
6. **TRUSTEES** means Trustees of The Australian Country Party (N.S.W.).
7. **COUNCILLOR** means a member of the Central Council of the Australian Country Party (N.S.W.).
8. **DELEGATES** mean representatives elected by Electorate Councils or Branches, who represent such Electorate Councils or Branches at General or Provincial Conferences, at Federal or State Electoral Councils, or as substitute representatives to Central Council.
9. **FEDERAL ELECTORATE COUNCIL** means a Council consisting of Branch and State Electorate Council Chairman and Delegates from State Electorate Councils, Branches, and Women's Branches of the Australian Country Party (N.S.W.), within or partly within a New South Wales Federal Electorate.
10. **STATE ELECTORATE COUNCIL** means a Council consisting of Branch Chairman and Delegates from Branches and Women's Branches of the Australian Country Party (N.S.W.), within or partly within a New South Wales State Electorate, together with Delegates from the Federal Electorate Councils concerned.
11. **BRANCH** means a Branch of the Australian Country Party (N.S.W.), formed in accordance with this Constitution.
12. **WOMEN'S BRANCH** means a branch of the Australian Country Party (N.S.W.), composed solely of women and formed in accordance with this Constitution.
13. **YOUNGER SETS** means younger members and juniors of the Australian Country Party (N.S.W.), formed in accordance with Younger Set rules, as approved by Central Council.
14. **MEMBER** means a person who has paid a branch or subscribing membership fee to the Australian Country Party, and who accepts the Constitution Rules and Policy of the Party, subject to Part VI, Section (a), Clauses 4, 5 and 6, and Section (b), Clause 1.
15. **GENERAL CONFERENCE** means a general State Conference of the Australian Country Party (N.S.W.), at which, among others, every Branch, Women's Branch and Federal Electorate Council and State Electorate Council is entitled to have representation.
16. **PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE** means a Conference called by the Central Council of the Australian Country Party (N.S.W.), within certain boundaries, and at a place named.

PART II.

CENTRAL COUNCIL.

(a) COMPOSITION OF CENTRAL COUNCIL.

The Central Council shall be composed of:—

1. The Chairman of Federal and State Electorate Councils and the Metropolitan Branch (provided that where a Chairman of an Elec-

- torate Council or Metropolitan Branch is unable to attend any meeting of Central Council his place shall be filled by a substitute delegate elected annually by the Electorate Council concerned).
2. The Leaders of the Federal and State Parliamentary Country Parties and two other Delegates from each of these Parties appointed by such Parties themselves, provided that where the Leader or a Delegate of such Party is unable to attend, the Parliamentary Parties shall have the right to appoint a substitute delegate from among their members.
 3. The immediate Past Chairman of the Party, ex officio.
 4. A Treasurer and not more than six Trustees elected as hereinafter provided.
 5. The Women's Representative on Federal Council, ex officio.
 6. Central Council may elect at its Annual Meeting not more than five members from among the members of the Party whom it considers to have special qualifications or knowledge of which Central Council wishes to avail itself. Such Councillors shall hold office until the next Annual Meeting of Central Council. Provided that a quorum shall not be less than eight members.

CENTRAL COUNCIL AT ITS FIRST MEETING AFTER THE ADOPTION OF THIS CONSTITUTION, AND HENCEFORH AT EACH ANNUAL MEETING SHALL:

1. Elect the Chairman of the Party from amongst the members of Central Council, such Chairman to hold office until the next annual meeting of Central Council. No Chairman shall hold office for more than five consecutive years. The retiring Chairman shall automatically hold the office of immediate Past Chairman.
2. Elect two Vice-Chairmen.
3. Elect a Treasurer.
4. Elect not more than six Trustees. Such Trustees shall be members of the Australian Country Party (N.S.W.). They shall hold office for a period of three years, subject to the proviso that for the first two years, two shall retire annually by agreement or by lot each year, but shall be eligible for re-election.
5. Elect the Central Executive from amongst the members of Central Council. Such Executive shall hold office until the next annual meeting.
6. Elect representatives from its members to the Federal Australian Country Party Council in accordance with the Australian Country Party Constitution (Federal), such representatives to hold office until the next annual meeting of the Central Council .
7. Elect not more than five Councillors from among the members of the Party whom it considers to have special qualifications or knowledge. These shall hold office until the next Annual Meeting of Central Council. Provided that, due notice having been given, vacancies under 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 may be filled at any meeting of the Central Council.

(b) POWERS OF CENTRAL COUNCIL.

The Central Council shall have power to:—

1. Elect from amongst its members the Chairman of the Party.
2. Elect two Vice-Chairmen.
3. Elect a Treasurer and not more than six Trustees of the Party.
4. Elect the Central Executive from among its members.
5. Elect, if desired, not more than five Councillors from amongst members of the Party.
6. Instruct the Central Executive in the duties required of it, and to delegate to the Central Executive such powers as it considers fit, or to withdraw any power or powers already delegated.

7. Appoint a General Secretary of the Party who shall be a paid official.
8. Appoint or dismiss all or any paid officials or employees of the Party.
9. Endorse or refuse to endorse any candidates for the New South Wales Legislative Assembly or New South Wales Candidates for the House of Representatives or Senate.
10. Approve, or refuse to approve, nomination for the Legislative Council.
11. Direct organisation, propaganda and publicity.
12. Control and supervise the collection and disbursement of the finances of the Party, either directly or through appointments made for this purpose.
13. Exercise final authority in all matters relative to Federal or State elections or referenda within New South Wales.
14. Decide finally all matters in dispute or likely to cause dispute within the Party.
15. Make, amend or rescind, rules relating to Party organisation, subject to this Constitution.
16. Give effect to any alteration of the Constitution passed at a General Conference by a two-thirds majority or at two successive General Conferences, by a bare majority.
17. Appoint Committees from among its own members, and/or members of the Party, to carry out specific duties assigned to such Committees by Central Council.
18. Instruct any Committee, Branch or Electorate Council of the Party to refuse to accept, nominate or elect, or to cancel accepted nomination or election of any person to (a) any office within the Party, (b) as a candidate on behalf of the Party, (c) as a member of the Party, (d) as employee of the Party, where, in its opinion, such person is not suitable as a member, office holder, candidate or employee
19. Terminate the office of any member of the Central Executive, Central Council or Trustee if, in its opinion, such action is for the welfare of the Party.
20. Confer with and make electoral agreements with other Parties or organisations or persons. Provided Party Parliamentary leaders shall not enter into alliance with any political Party without the consent of Central Council.
21. Give support to a candidate of another Party where no Country Party candidate is endorsed, if thought desirable.
22. Attend any meeting of the Party other than Central Executive Meetings, and to take part in discussions, subject to Part IX of this Constitution.
23. Delegate to or withdraw from Federal and State Electorate Councils such delegated powers as it deems fit.
24. Have the right, at any time, to call an extraordinary general conference of the Party. At least one month's notice of this shall be given to all branches, together with a complete agenda for the conference.
25. Do all things necessary to give effect to the aims and objects of the Australian Country Party, subject to this Constitution.
26. Provided also that all questions affecting the interpretations of the Rules and Constitution must be referred to Central Council for interpretation and decision.
27. To publish a newspaper known as "The N.S.W. Countryman" and provide for the printing, publishing and management thereof in such manner as it thinks fit, and to pay any loss incurred in the publication and management of such newspaper from the funds of the Party.

PART III.

CENTRAL EXECUTIVE.

(a) COMPOSITION OF CENTRAL EXECUTIVE.

1. Central Executive shall be elected annually by Central Council with a minimum of eight members or such greater number as may be determined by Central Council.
2. Federal and State Parliamentary Leaders shall be members ex officio—provided that should either Leader be temporarily unable to act he may appoint a substitute from his Parliamentary Party.
3. At Central Executive meetings seven shall form a quorum.

(b) POWERS OF CENTRAL EXECUTIVE.

The Central Executive shall have power to:

1. Supervise the activities of the Party in the intervals between Central Council meetings.
2. Exercise such powers as are delegated to it by Central Council. Its decisions shall take effect immediately, but shall be subject to ratification at the next meeting of Central Council.

PART IV.

FEDERAL ELECTORATE COUNCILS.

(a) COMPOSITION OF FEDERAL ELECTORATE COUNCILS.

Federal Electorate Councils shall be elected from subscribing members and shall include the State Electorate Council Chairman and one Delegate from each State Electorate Council within or partly within such Federal Electorate, together with the Branch Chairman and Delegates elected in accordance with this Constitution. Provided that a quorum shall be not less than seven members. Such Council shall meet at least once each year and elect:—

1. A Chairman, who shall be the Federal Electorate Council's Representative upon the Central Council, and upon the State Electorate Councils concerned.
2. An alternative Delegate to Central Council, who will be entitled to attend Central Council upon any occasion when the Federal Electorate Council Chairman is unable to be present.
3. Two Vice-Chairmen.
4. A Secretary.
5. A Treasurer.
6. Two Trustees.
7. One Delegate (additional to the Chairman) to State Electorate Councils in its area.
8. Two Delegates to General Conference, including the Chairman.
9. The officers, as above elected, shall be entitled to a vote, by virtue of their office, on all matters before council, but no officer and/or delegate shall have more than one vote, except in the case of an equality of votes when the Chairman shall have a casting vote.

(b) EXECUTIVE OF FEDERAL ELECTORATE COUNCILS.

An Executive may be constituted, and when so constituted, shall comprise:—

1. (a) The Chairman of the Federal Electorate Council (who shall be Chairman of this Executive).
(b) The Treasurer and two Trustees of the Federal Electorate Council.

(c) Members of the Federal Electorate Council (exclusive of (a) and (b), elected at the annual meeting).

THE FEDERAL ELECTORATE COUNCIL SHALL DETERMINE BY RESOLUTION:—

(a) The number of members comprising the full Federal Executive.
(b) The quorum required at Federal Executive meetings.
The Federal Electorate Executive shall meet at least twice each year. The Chairman shall convene such meetings.

2. THE DUTIES OF THE FEDERAL ELECTORATE COUNCIL EXECUTIVE SHALL BE:—

- (a) To carry out the routine organisation of the Party in such Federal Electorate, in between Federal Electorate Council meetings.
(b) Such other matters and duties as are delegated to it by the Federal Electorate Council.
(c) As conferred by this Constitution.

(c) POWERS OF FEDERAL ELECTORATE COUNCILS.

Federal Electorate Councils shall have power to:—

1. Control all matters within its area in connection with Federal Elections and Federal Referenda.
2. Control such portion of Bank order finance raised within its area as may be determined by General Conference.
3. Act in consultation with State Electorate Council to fix a "quota" for Federal campaign funds for each Branch in its area.
4. Call for nominations from Branches and to endorse or refuse to endorse Candidates for its Federal Electorate in accordance with this Constitution.
5. Submit to Central Council the name of one candidate for Legislative Council.
6. Act as co-ordinating body between the various State Electorate Councils within or partly within its area. All such powers of a Federal Electorate Council shall be subject to concurrence of Central Council.
7. Delegate to any Branch or State Electorate Council within or partly within its area, any of its powers, provided the power of endorsement of candidates is not so delegated.
8. Reject resolutions submitted through it, from Branches to Central Council in accordance with Constitution. Electorate Councils shall have the right at any time of initiating resolutions on Policy or Platform of the Party. Such resolutions shall be forwarded to Central Council for consideration. Providing that nothing in this clause shall preclude Electorate Councils from forwarding resolutions direct to General Conference.
9. No motion in pursuance of Rule 8 affecting the policy or platform or altering the name of the Party or amalgamating with any other Party shall be taken by the Chairman except on due notice being given and circulated in writing to delegates to the Electorate Council at least 21 days before the date of the meeting.
10. Federal Electorate Councils shall cause to be kept such books, records, and balance sheets, as the Central Council directs, and shall at each annual meeting present a balance sheet, duly audited by a public accountant.

(d) FINANCE OF FEDERAL ELECTORATE COUNCILS.

A Federal Electorate Council shall:—

1. Open a Bank account with an approved Bank, all ordinary funds shall be deposited therein, and all payments shall be made by cheques signed by the Treasurer and countersigned by the Chairman of such Electorate Council or either of the Trustees.

2. Or its executive shall authorise all Federal Election and Federal Referenda expenditure, and control all money received for Federal election purposes.
3. Or its executive shall, before an election, open a campaign account with an approved Bank, and shall keep such campaign receipts and expenditure separate from its ordinary electorate account.
4. Render to Central Council each year a balance sheet, audited by a Public Accountant, by a date to be notified by Central Council.
5. Within six weeks of the close of a Federal Election or Referendum, render to Central Council a statement of its campaign account, audited by a public accountant.
6. Not be liable for expenditure incurred without its authority or the authority of the Executive. Any candidate, committee or person incurring expense without such authority shall be liable for such expenditure.

The Treasurer of the Federal Electorate Fund and Federal Campaign Fund shall pay all authorised expenditure after receiving vouchers. All accounts must be rendered within thirty days.

PART V.

STATE ELECTORATE COUNCILS.

(a) COMPOSITION OF STATE ELECTORATE COUNCILS.

Each State Electorate Council shall be elected from subscribing members and shall include:—

1. The Chairman of each branch within or partly within its area, and of delegates of each branch elected in accordance with this Constitution.
2. The Chairman of the Federal Electorate Councils and one Delegate from the Federal Electorate Councils concerned, or their deputies, are entitled to membership ex officio.

STATE ELECTORATE COUNCILS shall meet at least twice each year, provided that a quorum shall be not less than seven members, and at their annual meeting shall elect:—

1. A Chairman, who shall be the Council's representative upon the Central Council, and upon the Federal Electorate Councils concerned.
2. A Deputy Delegate, who will be entitled to attend Central Council or Federal Electorate Council, upon any occasion when the Chairman of the State Electorate Council is unable to do so.
3. Two Vice-Chairmen.
4. A Secretary.
5. A Treasurer.
6. Two Trustees.
7. One Delegate (additional to the Chairman) to Federal Electorate Councils in its area.
8. Two Delegates to General Conference, including the Chairman.
9. The officers, as above elected, shall be entitled to a vote, by virtue of their office, on all matters before council, but no officer and/or delegate shall have more than one vote, except in the case of an equality of votes when the Chairman shall have a casting vote.

(b) EXECUTIVE OF STATE ELECTORAL COUNCILS.

An Executive may be constituted, and when so constituted, shall comprise:—

1. (a) The Chairman of the State Electorate Council (who shall be Chairman of this Executive).
(b) The Treasurer and two Trustees of the State Electorate Council.
(c) Members of the State Electorate Council (exclusive of (a) and (b), elected at the annual meeting).

THE STATE ELECTORATE COUNCIL SHALL DETERMINE BY RESOLUTION:—

- (a) The number of members comprising the full State Executive.
(b) The quorum required at State Executive meetings.
The State Electorate Executive shall meet at least twice each year. The Chairman shall convene such meetings.
2. **THE DUTIES OF THE STATE ELECTORATE COUNCIL EXECUTIVE SHALL BE:—**
 - (a) To carry out the routine organisation of the Party in such State Electorate, in between State Electorate Council meetings.
 - (b) Such other matters and duties as are delegated to it by the State Electorate Council.
 - (c) As conferred by this Constitution.

(c) POWERS OF STATE ELECTORATE COUNCILS.

State Electorate Councils shall have power to:—

1. Control within its area all matters in connection with State elections and State referenda.
2. Control such portion of Bank order finance raised within its area as may be determined by General Conference.
3. Fix a quota for campaign funds for State purposes on each branch within its area, in consultation with the Federal Electorate concerned.
4. Call for nominations from Branches, and endorse or refuse to endorse, candidates for its State Electorate in accordance with this Constitution.
5. Submit to Central Council the name of one candidate for Legislative Council.
6. Co-operate fully with its Federal Electorate Councils.
7. Delegate to any Federal Electorate Council or Branch within its area such of its powers as it sees fit for any specific purpose, except that of endorsement of candidates.
8. Reject resolutions submitted through it, from Branches to Central Council in accordance with this Constitution. Electorate Councils shall have the right at any time of initiating resolutions on Policy or Platform of the Party. Such resolutions shall be forwarded to Central Council for consideration. Providing that nothing in this clause shall preclude Electorate Councils from forwarding resolutions direct to General Conference.
9. No motion in pursuance of Rule 8 affecting the policy or platform or altering the name of the Party or amalgamating with any other Party shall be taken by the Chairman except on due notice being given and circulated in writing to delegates to the Electorate Council at least 21 days before the date of the meeting.
10. State Electorate Councils shall keep such books and records as directed by Central Council, and shall at each annual meeting present a balance sheet duly audited by a public accountant.

(d) FINANCE OF STATE ELECTORATE COUNCILS.

A State Electorate Council shall:—

1. Open a Bank Account with an approved Bank. All ordinary funds received shall be deposited therein. All payments shall be made

by cheque signed by the Treasurer and countersigned by the Chairman of such State Electorate Council or either of the Trustees.

2. Or its executive shall authorise State election and State referenda expenditure and control all money received for State Election purposes.
3. Or its executive shall, before an election, open a campaign account with an approved Bank, and shall keep such campaign receipts and expenditure separate from its ordinary electorate accounts.
4. Render to Central Council each year a balance sheet, audited by a public accountant, on a date to be notified by Central Council.
5. Within six weeks of the close of a State Election or Referendum render to Central Council a statement of its campaign account, audited by a public accountant.
6. Not be liable for expenditure incurred without its authority, or the authority of the Executive. Any candidate, committee or person incurring expenditure without such authority shall be liable for such expenditure.

The Treasurer of the State Electorate fund and State Electorate campaign account shall pay all authorised expenditure after receiving vouchers. All accounts must be rendered within thirty days.

PART VI.

BRANCHES.

(a) COMPOSITION OF BRANCHES.

1. Branches of the Party shall be composed of not less than ten members who accept the Constitution policy and platform of the Australian Country Party (N.S.W.), and who have paid current membership fee to the Party. (See Appendix 1.)
2. Branches may elect anyone as a member of the Branch, providing he or she is not a member of any other political Party in Australia, and providing such person subscribes to the Constitution and policy and platform of the Australian Country Party (N.S.W.).
3. Branches may consist of men and/or women, but in cases where the women prefer a women's branch it is competent for them to form a women's branch, composed entirely of women, and such branch shall have the same rules, rights and duties under the Constitution.
4. The Branch Annual Membership Fee shall be 5/- for men and women, and 4/- for juniors under 18. 3/- of such fee in each instance shall be a subscription to the N.S.W. "Countryman". After election to their branch this fee shall entitle them (juniors excepted) to attend and vote at all meetings of their branch. Juniors under 18 may attend all meetings of their branch and take part in discussion.
5. The subscribing membership fee to the Australian Country Party (N.S.W.) shall be a minimum of £2/2/- annually, 3/- of which shall be a subscription to the N.S.W. "Countryman," and upon election to the branch shall entitle the subscribing members without further payment to attend and vote at all meetings of the branch, and to receive such publications as the Central Council may from time to time determine. Upon application (see Appendix 2) the subscribing membership fee shall include the member's spouse.
6. Any person in receipt of an old age or invalid pension, or a returned service man or woman with a Totally and Permanently Incapacitated pension, shall be allowed Branch membership rights for the sum of one shilling per year.

7. Members of a Branch visiting another district may attend the Country Party Branch in such other district, on satisfying the Chairman that they are Country Party Members, but they shall have no vote.
8. Any Branch may expel a member for improper conduct. Due notice must be given to the member of the date of the meeting at which his or her case will be dealt with. He or she will have the right to be heard in defence. The motion for expulsion must be carried by two-thirds of those present voting in its favour. The expelled member may appeal to the Central Council.
9. No person may be a member of more than one Branch or Women's Branch at any given time, with the exception of members of the Metropolitan Branch, who may belong to one other Branch, or Women's Branch.
10. A financial member of one Branch may change his membership to another Branch for the balance of the financial year, without additional payment.

(b) PROCEDURE OF BRANCH MEETINGS.

1. ORDINARY MEETINGS.

- (1) After the foundation meeting a Branch shall at each meeting have the minutes of the previous meeting read and confirmed, followed by the correspondence, and shall then have submitted to it the names of new members wishing to enrol, and the Chairman of the meeting shall call for nominators and seconders, and, on these being obtained, put the names to the meeting for acceptance or otherwise. (Provided persons so elected shall not be entitled to vote until 30 days after such admission.)
- (2) At Branch meetings five, and Executive meetings three, shall form a quorum.
- (3) Each Branch shall hold at least three meetings annually.

2. SPECIAL MEETINGS.

Five members of a Branch may, in writing to the Chairman or the Branch Secretary or Executive, request a meeting to be called, and on receipt of this requisition by five members in writing, such office-bearers shall cause a meeting to be convened within two weeks.

3. ANNUAL MEETINGS.

- (1) A Branch shall, at its first and every Annual Meeting, elect (a) a Chairman, who shall be a subscribing member and who becomes one of the Branch Representatives upon Federal and State Electorate Councils, (b) two Vice-Chairmen; (c) a Secretary; (d) a Treasurer; (e) Delegates to Federal and State Electorate Councils and Conference (as laid down in Part IV, Part V and Part VI (d) Clause 2, of this Constitution), provided these Delegates shall also be subscribing members. A committee of not less than five members to carry on the routine work of the Branch, of which the Branch Chairman shall be Chairman, and which shall include the Branch office-bearers and delegates ex officio.
- (2) The business at each Annual Meeting shall include (a) Minutes of last annual meeting, (b) Treasurer's Statement and Auditor's Report, (c) Reports by Chairman, Delegates and Executive regarding the year's work, (d) Election of Office-bearers.
- (3) Any motion or matter recorded in the minutes may be rescinded by special motion, at least seven days' notice of which shall be given, and this shall be dealt with at the next general meeting or at a special meeting convened for that purpose.

The Chairman shall take the chair at all meetings of the Branch or committees formed in connection with the Branch if he is present. In his absence, one of the Vice-Chairmen shall preside. If Chairman or Vice-Chairman are absent, a Chairman shall be elected by the meeting.

Any questions affecting the interpretation of the Constitution or Rules shall be referred to the Central Council for determination. Any dispute affecting the Branch may, if the Branch desires, also be referred to the Electorate Council or direct to Central Council.

(c) RECORDS OF BRANCH.

1. A Branch shall keep a Standard Roll Book of Members, and shall bring such book up to date each year, and shall notify its State and Federal Electorate Councils yearly of the number of financial members contained within the Branch, and such other information as may be required by these Councils.
2. The Secretary shall keep minutes of all meetings of the Branch and Committees. Also Membership Roll, and all records of the Branch in accordance with the requirements of Central Council.
3. The Secretary shall take charge of all documents, books, papers, and records, and shall keep minutes of all proceedings and attend to correspondence. He or she shall hand all moneys received by him or her to the Treasurer for banking.

(d) OFFICERS AND DELEGATES OF BRANCHES.

1. All office-bearers must be financial members of the Party.
2. Each Branch shall be entitled to send delegates to General and Provincial Conferences and Federal and State Electorate Councils on the following basis:—

Branch membership 10 to 15 members—two delegates, the Chairman of the Branch or his duly authorised substitute and one other elected by the Branch.

Branch membership 16 to 50 members—three delegates, the Chairman of the Branch, or his duly authorised substitute, and two others elected by the Branch.

Branch membership of 51 members and over—four delegates, the Chairman of the Branch or his duly authorised substitute, and three others elected by the Branch.

(Provided that should a branch delegate be elected chairman of a State or Federal Electorate Council the branch may elect another delegate in his stead to the Electorate Council concerned.)

3. No person may hold office until over the age of 18 years.

(e) FINANCE OF BRANCHES.

1. Each Branch shall keep a record of its ordinary receipts and disbursements in such a manner as may be prescribed by Central Council.
2. A Branch shall retain the annual 2/- branch ordinary membership fee collected by it. The 3/- subscription to the N.S.W. "Countryman" shall be remitted to Headquarters. On requisition by the Treasurer to the Central Council or its State Electorate Council, the Branch shall be entitled to receive the sum of 2/- for each cash subscribing member (£2/2/- and over) or Bank Order subscriber for the current year. These funds are to be available for Branch purposes.
3. Each Branch shall open a campaign account and collect the quota for subscriptions allotted to it by its Federal and State Electorate Councils, and shall make such contribution to Federal or State Electorate Councils as shall be agreed upon for election purposes.

4. The remainder of such campaign account shall be available to the Branch for local election work, and any balance remaining after an election shall be paid into a special campaign account at Head Office within 6 weeks of the close of the election, except for £10, which may be retained in the campaign account.
5. The financial year of the Branch shall terminate on 31st December each year. Date of the Annual Meeting shall be not later than 31st March each year. Seven days' notice shall be given by the Branch Secretary to all Branch members of the date on which the Annual Meeting has been called.
6. Two Auditors appointed by the Branch shall audit the accounts each year, and a statement of the accounts so audited shall be presented to the Annual Meeting. (An interim statement of accounts shall be presented to any Branch meeting on request by a member, provided reasonable notice has been given.)
7. The Treasurer shall receive all moneys and deposit the said moneys in the Bank selected by the Branch, and shall pay all accounts authorised by the Committee, and present a yearly balance sheet duly audited. All cheques shall be signed by the Treasurer and countersigned by the Chairman or Secretary.

(f) POWERS OF BRANCH.

A Branch shall have power to:—

1. Nominate one candidate for endorsement as a Parliamentary Candidate in accordance with this Constitution. (See Part XI.)
2. Enrol members.
3. Raise finance for campaign funds.
4. See that the name of every Australian Country Party voter in their district is on the Electoral Roll.
5. Apply for removal from the Electoral Roll any unqualified persons.
6. Promote social intercourse between members and their friends.
7. Organise for the Australian Country Party (N.S.W.) in their town or district.
8. Initiate resolutions on policy, platforms or constitution of the Party, or on any political, social or domestic matters—for reference to Electorate Councils and to General and Provincial Conferences or to Central Council.
9. Initiate resolutions on policy, platform or constitution of the Party, which shall be dealt with by Federal or State Electorate Council, and forwarded to Central Council. Nothing in this clause shall preclude Branches from forwarding resolutions direct to General Conference.
10. Provided that no motion in pursuance of Rules 8 and 9 (Part VI (f)) affecting the policy or platform of the Party or altering the name of the Party or amalgamating with any other Party shall be taken by the Chairman except on due notice being given and circulated in writing to members of the Branch at least 21 days before the date of the meeting.
11. Organise debates and lectures on public matters, and through discussion to further the public knowledge on social and political problems.
12. Initiate or support all worthwhile projects of local or national importance, and promptly bring them under the notice of Federal or State Members.
13. Subject to Rule 10 Branches at any time shall have the right to pass resolutions for Central Council or Annual Conference. Copies of such resolutions shall be sent to the appropriate Electoral Council without delay.

PART VII.

BRANCH REPRESENTATIVES (DELEGATES).

- (a) STATE AND FEDERAL ELECTORATE COUNCILS.
- (b) PROVINCIAL AND GENERAL CONFERENCES.

Branch representation on State and Federal Electorate Councils and Provincial and General Conferences shall be determined on the membership of each Branch as follows:—

Branch membership 10 to 15 members—two delegates, the Chairman of the Branch or his duly authorised substitute and one other elected by the Branch. Branch membership 16 to 50 members—three delegates, the Chairman of the Branch or his duly authorised substitute, and two others elected by the Branch. Branch membership of 51 members and over—four delegates, the Chairman of the Branch, or his duly authorised substitute, and three others elected by the Branch.

- (c) OTHER BODIES.

Representatives on other bodies otherwise not provided for in this Constitution shall be the Chairman of State and Federal Electorate Councils or their duly authorised substitutes.

PART VIII.

STATE AND FEDERAL ELECTORATE REPRESENTATIVES (DELEGATES) CENTRAL COUNCIL.

The Chairman of State and Federal Electorate Councils or their elected substitute shall be members of Central Council.

PART IX.

CENTRAL COUNCIL AND CENTRAL EXECUTIVE REPRESENTATIVES.

All members of Central Council and Central Executive may:—

- (a) Attend and vote at Provincial and General Conferences.
- (b) Attend at any State or Federal Electorate Council or Branch meeting ex officio without the right to vote, provided that any such representative may vote if that right be vested in him.

PART X.

STATE AND FEDERAL PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATIVES.

- (a) The Federal and State Parliamentary leaders and two other members from each of the Federal and State Parliaments shall be ex officio members of the Central Council.
- (b) The Federal and State Parliamentary leaders shall be ex officio members of the Central Executive.
- (c) All State and Federal Country Party members shall be members of their respective Electorate Councils ex officio.
- (d) All Country Party Parliamentary members shall be entitled to attend and take part in discussion at all Branch meetings, Electorate Council meetings, General or Provincial Conferences of the Party, but shall not vote unless otherwise entitled.

PART XI.

NOMINATION AND ENDORSEMENT OF CANDIDATES.

(a) STATE ELECTORATE COUNCILS.

(b) FEDERAL ELECTORATE COUNCILS.

1. Federal and State Councils shall call for nominations from Branches, including Women's Branches, of more than six months' standing for candidates, and shall fix dates by which nominations shall be made.
2. Candidates shall nominate on forms approved by Central Council.
3. Prospective candidates shall not be eligible for nomination or endorsement unless they have been subscribing members of the Australian Country Party for at least twelve months immediately prior to submitting their name for nomination. (Exception may be made, in this clause, subject to consent by Central Council. Such consent may only be granted in exceptional circumstances.)
4. The nomination form, signed by the candidate and accepted and endorsed by the nominating Branch or Women's Branch, shall then be submitted to a meeting of the relevant Federal or State Electorate Council for endorsement. (See Appendix 3.)
5. Nomination will only be accepted on the candidate undertaking to accept endorsement from no other political party and undertaking to run as an Australian Country Party (N.S.W.) candidate.
6. The Federal or State Electorate Council shall make enquiry as to the nominee's:—
 - A. Character.
 - B. Sincerity.
 - C. General qualification.
 - D. Ability.

And, if satisfied on each and all of these points, in cases where there are more than one candidate seeking endorsement, the Council shall:

- (i) Consider whether the endorsement of all such candidates will adversely affect the Party's prospects of success at the election, and, if it shall so decide,
 - (ii) proceed to determine the number of candidates to be endorsed and then
 - (iii) proceed to determine, by a secret ballot, which of the candidates shall be endorsed, and
 - (iv) thereupon endorse the nomination of these candidates, and report to Central Council as to the action taken and the result thereof.
7. Where the prospective candidate fails to satisfy the Federal or State Electorate Council in respect of any one or more of the four points set out under Clause 6 hereof, the Federal or State Electorate Council shall not endorse the candidate, and shall report to Central Council the reasons for the failure of the candidate to satisfy the respective Council.
 8. Where two or more candidates are nominated by Branches or Women's Branches for endorsement by a Federal or State Electorate Council, the Chairman of the relevant Electorate Council shall announce the names of the persons as nominated (in alphabetical order), and shall call for a nominator and seconder of the candidates in that order. If there is no nominator and seconder, the nomination shall lapse. If there is a nominator and seconder, the meeting shall then proceed to satisfy itself that the candidate meets the requirements of character, sincerity, qualifications and ability.

On termination of discussion, the Chairman of the Electorate Council concerned shall put the name to the meeting for endorsement or otherwise as under rule 6. The procedure shall be continued until all candidates have been dealt with.

9. The Central Council may make such further enquiries as it sees fit in regard to the prospective candidate, and may, after such enquiries, either endorse or refuse to endorse such candidate.
10. When a candidate satisfies the abovementioned requirements, and is endorsed by the appropriate Electorate Council, and also satisfies the Central Council, he shall be endorsed by Central Council, so long as preferential voting is in operation in elections for the Federal and New South Wales State Parliament.
11. When one or more candidates are endorsed, the Party shall only be responsible for the expenditure authorised by it in the interests of the Party as a whole.
12. Where Central Council does not accept the endorsement of a candidate endorsed by an Electorate Council, the reasons for such non-acceptance shall be submitted to the relevant Electorate Council.
13. When a Country Party member is not an endorsed candidate and nominates for election against an endorsed Country Party candidate, then his Country Party membership is automatically cancelled.

PART XII.

CONFERENCES.

(a) **PROVINCIAL CONFERENCES.**

Central Council may call Provincial Conferences of the Party at such times and places as it considers desirable in the interests of the Party. Representation shall consist of any number of members of the Party, accredited by their Branches or by their Federal or State Electorate Council. A Provincial Conference may deal with resolutions affecting the development, platform and policy as it applies to the provincial area, and any other matters of National or State importance. Decisions shall be submitted to Central Council. Matters for discussion shall be submitted to the General Secretary at least one month before the Conference.

(b) **GENERAL CONFERENCES.**

A General Conference of the Australian Country Party (N.S.W.) shall be held once in every twelve months at a place and date to be fixed by the Central Council. Every Branch, State Electorate Council and Federal Electorate Council (within the State of New South Wales) shall be entitled to send delegates in accordance with this Constitution. Country Party members of both Houses of Federal and New South Wales Parliaments are also entitled to attend ex officio, but only accredited delegates shall vote. Provided that a quorum shall be not less than twenty-five members. Delegates to General Conference may be called upon to produce their authority as delegates, and must have been appointed as delegates in accordance with the Constitution. General Conference shall lay down the general policy of the Party, which it expects its Parliamentary representatives to follow, but shall not attempt to bind its Parliamentary representatives to specific measures. It shall have power to alter the Constitution.

Resolutions from Branches and Councils for General Conference must be submitted to the General Secretary. The Central Council shall fix a closing date for the receipt of resolutions, and an Agenda shall be prepared and circulated to all Branches and Councils at least one month before the date of the Conference.

PART XIII.

MISCELLANEOUS.

(a) DIVIDED BRANCHES AND DIVIDED STATE AND FEDERAL ELECTORATE COUNCILS.

1. Where there is a Branch whose membership is comprised of residents of two Federal or two State Electorates, such Branch may send delegates to both Federal Electorate Councils and both State Electorate Councils in such area.
2. When there is a State Electorate Council, whose electorate is situated in two or more Federal Electorate Council areas, such State Electorate Council may be represented on all such Federal Electorate Councils. This clause shall also apply to Federal Electorate Council representation on State Electorate Councils. However, in such cases an effort should be made to endeavour to select delegates who reside in the electorate to which they are accredited as delegates; if, however, the delegate does not reside (in the case of Branches only) in the electorate concerned, he shall take part in discussion, but shall not vote.

(b) FINANCE AND ITS DISTRIBUTION.

1. All branch membership fees shall be distributed as laid down in Part VI (a) 4 and Part VI (e) 2.
2. All subscribing membership fees payable to Head Office shall be distributed on the following basis:—

From the gross subscription there shall be first deducted:—

a. Bank charge (if applicable)	2/-
Branch membership fee	2/-
“Countryman” subscription	3/-
Special Reserve Fund	10%

and from the balance:—

b. Federal Electorate Council	15%
State Electorate Council	15%
Head Office	70%

Except that the whole of the first year's subscription, after making the first deductions as marked “a” above, shall be retained by Head Office, to defray costs of collection and supervision, travelling expenses, installation of card system and records, printing, etc., and general organising costs.

3. Where a State Electorate Council desires to pay its own organiser and obtains the permission of Central Council so to do, the distribution of subscribing membership fees (collected by the locally paid organiser) shall be on the following basis:—

From the gross subscription there shall be first deducted:—

a. Bank charge (if applicable)	2/-
Branch membership fee	2/-
“Countryman” subscription	3/-
Special Reserve Fund	10%

and from the balance:—

b. State Electorate Council	50%
Federal Electorate Council	25%
Head Office	25%

(c) CAMPAIGN FINANCE OF BRANCHES.

1. A Branch shall keep proper books of accounts of its campaign expenditure, and after the election shall pay into a special account at Head Office the balance remaining in the campaign account except that a sum not greater than £10 may be left in the campaign account of the Branch.
2. No Branch or Council of the Party shall accept any donations which are not given unconditionally.
3. The Central Council of the Party may itself canvass for funds or may appoint a committee of its members to do so, and shall be entitled to accept funds from any source, provided it has satisfied itself that no conditions are attached to the receipt or use of such funds.

(d) FINANCE GENERALLY.

The finance of the Party, including campaign funds, shall at all times be under the direct control of the Organisation, i.e., the Branches, Electorate Councils and Central Council.

(e) ANNUAL MEETINGS AND FINANCIAL YEAR.

1. The end of each financial year shall be 31st December.
2. In fixing dates, all annual meetings of Branches are to be completed, whenever practicable, before annual meetings of Electorate Councils, which are to be completed before the annual meeting of Central Council.
 - (a) Branch Annual Meeting shall be held not later than 31st March each year.
 - (b) Electorate Council Annual Meetings shall be held not later than 31st March each year.
 - (c) Central Council Annual Meeting shall be held as soon as possible after 31st March each year.
3. Affiliation of Branches shall be effected by notification to the General Secretary, the Federal Electorate Secretary, and the State Electorate Secretary concerned, of the holding of the Branch Foundation Meeting, together with a list of names and addresses of officers elected, and number of financial members in Branch.

(f) INDEMNITY.

1. The Chairman, Treasurer, Trustees, Members of Central Council, General Secretary, and any other officers or servants of the Party shall be indemnified by the Party, and it shall be the duty of Central Council out of the funds of the Party to pay all costs, losses and expenses which any member of Central Council, or any officer or servant, may incur or become liable to pay by reason of any contract entered into or act or thing done by any such member or other officer or servant in the discharge of his duties duly authorised by Central Council or Annual Conference.

Provided, however, the Central Council may in its entire and absolute discretion pay out of the funds of the Party any costs, losses and expenses which any member of the Party or other officer or servant expenses which any member of Central Council, or any officer or may incur or become liable to pay by reason of any contract entered into or act or thing done by any such member or other officer or servant in the discharge of his duties notwithstanding that the act

or thing done by any such member or other officer or servant has not been duly authorised by Central Council or Annual Conference.

(g) THE SENATE.

1. Nomination of Australian Country Party (N.S.W.) candidates for the Senate shall be made by Electorate Councils and/or Branches on the prescribed form and forwarded direct to the General Secretary, when completed. (See Appendix 4.)
2. Candidates must be financial subscribing members of the Australian Country Party (N.S.W.), as provided in this Constitution (Part XI, Clause 3).
3. The number of candidates to be endorsed shall not exceed the number to be elected at any election.
4. The final endorsement of a candidate or candidates shall be made by the Central Council, Australian Country Party (N.S.W.), whose decision shall be final.

(h) LIFE MEMBERSHIP.

1. For the purpose of acknowledging outstanding service to the Australian Country Party, Life Membership be conferred subject to the following conditions:—
 - (a) A life member shall not be required to contribute a membership subscription.
 - (b) A life member may resign by notifying the General Secretary in writing.
 - (c) A life member will forfeit such membership if he becomes a member of another political party.
 - (d) A life member may attend any Branch or Electorate Council meeting or General or Provincial Conference, and may participate in any discussion before such meeting or conference, but shall not be eligible to record a vote—unless otherwise qualified.
2. (a) Branches and Electorate Councils may submit the names of members qualified for life membership.
(b) Life members may be appointed by Annual Conference on the recommendation of Central Council.
3. To be eligible for life membership a member must have a minimum of seven (7) years' membership, be of excellent character, and have rendered service of a high order to the Australian Country Party.
4. An appropriate certificate shall be presented to each life member.

(i) ALTERATION OF CONSTITUTION.

The General Conference of the Party shall have power to alter the Constitution. Notice of motion for such alteration or alterations shall be in the hands of the General Secretary at least three months before Conference, to enable such resolution or resolutions to be in the hands of Branches at least one month before Conference. (See also Part II (b) 16.)

RULES OF DEBATE.

Any member desiring to speak shall stand up and shall address the Chairman or Chairwoman respectfully.

No member may speak more than once to a question, except in explanation or reply.

A member who formally seconds a motion or amendment without making a speech, may speak in support at a subsequent stage of the debate.

A reply shall be allowed only to the member who has moved a substantive motion.

No member shall use offensive or unbecoming words.

The mover of a motion shall not occupy more than five nor any other speaker more than three minutes. The meeting may, by resolution, without debate, grant extension of time to any speaker.

Members shall speak once only to a motion. The mover of a motion has the right of reply, which closes the debate, when the motion will immediately be put to the meeting.

No speaker shall digress from the subject under discussion, and imputations of improper motives, and all personal reflections on members, shall be deemed disorderly.

Whenever the Chairman or Chairwoman rises during debate, the members then speaking shall sit down.

No member shall interrupt another while speaking, except on a point of order.

Any member during the debate may raise a point of order, when the member then speaking shall sit down until the point of order has been decided. The member rising to order shall state concisely the point of order, and the Chairman or Chairwoman, without further discussion, shall give his or her ruling.

It shall be competent for any member to move a motion or dissent from the Chairman's or Chairwoman's ruling. The mover of the motion of dissent shall concisely state his point. The seconder and the Chairman or Chairwoman, only, may speak to the motion.

A member may move the adjournment of the debate. If the motion be resolved in the negative, the mover shall not be allowed to speak again on the question under debate. If the motion be resolved in the affirmative, the mover shall have the right of resuming the debate at the ensuing meeting. No member shall move the adjournment at the end of his speech.

At any time during the debate, any member may, without notice, move: "That the question be now put," and such motion, being duly seconded, shall then be put without debate. If carried, the question shall be put to the vote; if lost, the debate shall proceed.

An amendment may be moved on any original motion. The Chairman or Chairwoman shall put the amendment to the meeting first, and, if carried, it shall be declared to embody the decision of the meeting, superseding the motion. When an amendment has been decided, a further amendment may be moved, which, if carried, shall in turn supersede the motion. If there be no amendment, the original motion shall be put after the mover has replied.

The Chairman or Chairwoman shall refuse to receive any amendment which is a direct negative or which does not preserve the substance of the original motion.

Members rising to a point of order shall confine themselves to a simple statement of the point.

Resolutions shall be decided by voice, or upon a show of hands, unless a division be demanded.

In the case of an equality of votes, the Chairman or Chairwoman shall have a casting vote.

Any objection as to the validity of any vote must be made before the next business is proceeded with.

When the Chairman or Chairwoman is called upon to decide upon points of order, he or she shall simply state his or her ruling, which shall be final subject only to a motion of dissent, which shall be put to the meeting without discussion.

All matters not covered by these rules of procedure shall be determined according to the practice of Parliament.

APPENDIX 1.

THE AUSTRALIAN COUNTRY PARTY (N.S.W.)

42 Bridge Street, Sydney.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP.

TO . . .

The General Secretary,

The Australian Country Party (N.S.W.),

I desire to become a member of the Australian Country Party (N.S.W.) and enclose herewith the sum of £ : :

..... pounds..... shillings..... pence.

by cheque

being my yearly subscription to the Party.

cash

I agree to abide by the Constitution of the Party.

please allot me to..... Branch.

Signed.....

Date.....

Name and Initials.....

(Block Letters)

Full Address.....

(Block Letters)

A.C.P. Representative.....

APPENDIX 2.

THE AUSTRALIAN COUNTRY PARTY (N.S.W.)

42 Bridge Street, Sydney.

SPOUSE'S APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP.

TO . . .

The General Secretary,

Australian Country Party (N.S.W.),

My wife/husband* is a financial subscribing member of the Australian Country Party (N.S.W.), and I desire to become a member under Part VI (a) clause 5 of the Party's Constitution and Rules.

I agree to abide by the Constitution and Rules.

Please allot me to..... Branch.

Signed.....

Date.....

Full name.....

(Block letters)

Full address.....

(Block letters)

A.C.P. Representative.....

*Strike out as applicable.

APPENDIX 3.

THE AUSTRALIAN COUNTRY PARTY (N.S.W.)

N.Z.L. House, 42 Bridge Street, Sydney.

General Secretary:

TELEPHONE: BU 3064.

JOHN F. DREDGE, J.P.

TELEGRAMS: "COPARTY," SYDNEY.

NOMINATION FORM

ELECTORATE

ELECTORATE COUNCILS, in accepting nominations of candidates for Parliament from Branches within the Electorate, shall make it clear to those Branches that the nominations will only be accepted on the understanding that those candidates run as Australian Country Party candidates and shall not accept endorsement from, nor be allied with, any other political Party.

In all cases a proper and free exchange of preferences between Country Party candidates is insisted upon. Any Country Party Candidate not strictly adhering to an exchange of preferences with his fellow Country Party Candidate is liable to have his endorsement by the Party withdrawn and be repudiated as a Country Party Candidate.

I,

of

and by occupation

hereby submit my name for endorsement in the interests of the Australian Country Party for the above Electorate. I accept endorsement in terms quoted above, and acknowledge that I have perused the Rules of the Australian Country Party, and agree to be bound thereby, and particularly by the Rules under Part XI relating to the nomination and endorsement of candidates.

Signature

Witness to Signature

NOMINATED by Branch:

We hereby certify that at a properly convened meeting of the branch of the Australian Country Party (N.S.W.), held on 19

Mr. of was duly nominated as a candidate qualified for endorsement in the interests of the Australian Country Party.

..... Branch Chairman.

..... Branch Secretary.

Date, 19

ENDORSED by Electorate Council:

..... Electorate Council Chairman.

..... Electorate Council Secretary.

Date of Electorate Council meeting 19

ENDORSED by Central Council of the Australian Country Party (N.S.W.):

..... Chairman.

Date, 19

APPENDIX 4

THE AUSTRALIAN COUNTRY PARTY (N.S.W.)

Fraser House, 42 Bridge Street, Sydney.

General Secretary:

JOHN F. DREDGE, J.P.

Telephone: BU 3064.

Telegrams: "Coparty," Sydney.

SENATE NOMINATION FORM

***ELECTORATE
BRANCH**

ELECTORATE COUNCILS AND BRANCHES in accepting nominations of candidates for Parliament (Senate) shall make it clear that nominations will only be accepted on the understanding that those candidates run as Australian Country Party candidates and shall not accept endorsement from, nor be allied with, any other political Party.

In all cases a proper and free exchange of preferences between Country Party Candidates is insisted upon. Any Country Party Candidate not strictly adhering to an exchange of preferences with his fellow Country Party Candidate is liable to have his endorsement by the Party withdrawn and be repudiated as a Country Party Candidate.

I,

of

and by occupation

hereby submit my name for endorsement in the interests of the Australian Country Party for the Senate. I accept endorsement in terms quoted above, and acknowledge that I have perused the Rules of the Australian Country Party, and agree to be bound thereby, and particularly by the Rules under Part XIII (e) relating to the nomination and endorsement of Senate candidates.

Signature

Witness to Signature

***Electorate Council**

On behalf of the Branch of the Australian

Country Party (N.S.W.) we hereby nominate Mr.

of as a qualified candidate for endorsement in the interests of the Australian Country Party (N.S.W.) in the Senate Election.

***Electorate Council Chairman.**

..... Branch Chairman.

***Electorate Council Secretary.**

..... Branch Secretary.

Date, 19

ENDORSED by Central Council of the Australian Country Party (N.S.W.):

..... Chairman.

Date, 19

***Strike out as necessary.**