A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS
IN SIX LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCILS IN SYDNEY

by

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This thesis is my own work

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ABSTRACT

The thesis compares decision making in six suburban local councils in Sydney: Bankstown, Burwood, Ku-ring-gai, Leichhardt, Liverpool, and North Sydney. Three types of political issues or decisions are distinguished: distributive decisions, or 'doing favours' (parochial or individual-oriented and particularistic); regulative decisions (rule-bound and affecting larger categories of people through precedent), and redistributive decisions (affecting broad categories by redistribution of wealth).

Sydney suburban councils are basically administrative bodies. However, much of local politics involves disputes over what would normally be classed as administrative decisions; that is many local political issues are distributive. In the six councils, elections are often characterised by very localised personal support for candidates and by parochial or distributive issues rather than issues of policy. Local interest groups are mostly organised at the neighbourhood level and press parochial interests. Many aldermen pay more attention to individual constituency pressures than to council officials. In making decisions, aldermen are often highly susceptible to pressures from within their own ward. A description of actual decisions in the areas of planning administration and budgetary decision making shows that distributive issues are common-place, often in areas of administration that are intended to be regulative.

Distributive decision making tends to be found more in larger councils; in poorer areas where service needs are greatest; in areas undergoing rapid development (often the outer suburbs); and in councils with Labor Party control. There are some similarities
between these aspects of local politics and the politics of the American urban machine. The notion that the middle class adopt a 'public-regarding' ethos as distinct from a working class 'private-regarding' ethos has some relevance in accounting for the incidence of distributive politics, in the way it helps account for machine politics. Some explanation is also found in differences in local political cultures. These stem from peculiar local factors as well as from differences in social attitudes supposedly held by broad categories of the population.

It is concluded that while local councils are not an ideal form of government for making some types of administrative decisions, there is some value in enabling a degree of personal intervention in rule-bound administration, and in ensuring that very immediate and important parochial interests are properly represented. There is great value in retaining a system of government that permits the occasional expression of broader choices about important policy matters, through local elections and community group activity.
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Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION

Decision making and politics in local government councils are in many ways qualitatively different from governmental processes at other levels and in other forms of government. This chapter aims to show this and also to outline the approach to be adopted in the study. Whilst the discussion may be applicable to various systems of local government in different national and local settings, the remarks are confined largely to local councils in New South Wales and, more specifically, to suburban councils in Sydney.

Local government in New South Wales took a long time to become firmly established and, when it did, failed to achieve the status enjoyed by institutions of local government in the U.K. Early attempts by colonial administrations to institute a system of local self-government were often opposed by reluctant taxpayers and schemes for compulsory incorporation of areas failed. Badly drafted legislation containing 'loopholes' and the State government's unwillingness to give initial financial or technical assistance contributed to an inauspicious beginning. However, by the end of the nineteenth century, most of the Sydney urban area and the country immediately surrounding it, were incorporated under the provisions for voluntary local incorporation by means of petition. But it was not until 1906 that legislation provided for compulsory incorporation of all the populated areas of the State. A consolidating Act of 1919, now much amended, is the basis of the present system of local government.
The functions delegated to local government were minimal and remain so. Local roads and bridges, footpaths, drainage, street lighting, garbage removal, public health and building controls and parks and recreation still form the basis of council activities, although during the present century important additions have included public libraries, swimming pools, various minor 'welfare' services and the administration of statutory town planning controls. State government retained police and education. Semi-independent ad hoc government authorities or statutory corporations were entrusted with the fire brigade, harbour construction and administration, water supply and sewerage disposal, electricity reticulation and the provision of public housing. Some of these functions were in part undertaken by local councils but various metropolitan-wide authorities (some with local government representation, but directly responsible to State parliament or a government minister) have fully taken most of them over.

The Labor Party in New South Wales tried on several occasions to give local government broader responsibilities. These attempts were associated with proposals for the creation of larger local government areas in Sydney, or the creation of a single metropolitan government. These proposals largely failed, partly because of opposition from local government itself, fearful of a loss of autonomy and wary of the Labor Party's political designs. Conservative parties often added their voices to this opposition and the New South Wales Legislative Council, with an anti-Labor
majority for most of its life, consistently blocked such reforms. These pressures forced the post-1941 Labor government to modify its proposals for the amalgamation of over sixty metropolitan councils into eight new areas. The Local Government (Areas) Act of 1948 finally created thirty nine councils in the metropolitan area, a structure that remains largely unchanged.

Table 1-1  Suburban Councils (Sydney), General Fund Ordinary Expenditure: % total expenditure by major categories of expenditure 1910-1969

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Administration</th>
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<th>Public Health</th>
<th>Public Services</th>
<th>Council Property</th>
<th>Other</th>
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<td>1910</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>54.3</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>4.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>60.2</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>65.2</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939*</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>58.8</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>47.7</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959*</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>41.6</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>7.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>1969*</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>39.8</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>5.8</td>
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* 1940, 1960 and 1970 figures not available
1 Includes contributions to Department of Main Roads.
2 Includes parks and reserves expenditure.
3 Comprises: street lighting, town planning, libraries, fire prevention, pools and beaches, public markets, donations and 'Other'.
4 Includes interest paid on loans.

Source: Statistical Register, New South Wales: Local Government.

Table 1-1 shows the prominent place occupied by public works expenditure - roads, drains, footpaths, kerb and gutter and so on - in the overall expenditure of suburban councils. A tendency to spend less on these 'essentials' in relation to the so-called 'luxuries' is evident from the table and has sometimes been opposed in local government circles. Local councils have traditionally been seen as the means of providing 'basic necessities'.
As the major source of local government finance has always been the property rate, it has been argued that local services should largely be for the direct benefit of property owners, or 'services to property', rather than amenities that benefit the community at large, or that sector of it that does not own property and does not pay rates.

This narrow view of the functions of local government is based on a particular conception of how local councils should be run. Local government administration (with the emphasis on 'administration') has traditionally been conceived of as a matter of providing a range of basic services as cheaply and efficiently as possible. 'Good government' and 'the public interest' are served by sound management and balancing the budget. Property owners pool their resources and elect a board of 'trustees' to manage certain common affairs. Bluett, the author of the standard 'practitioner's guide' on local government, first published in the 1920's and now in its eighth edition, sees local council administration in this light:

It must be kept in mind that the fundamental principle behind local government is that the community contributes to a common fund to purchase for itself the essential needs of civilised living. It elects from its numbers representatives to decide what money is required and how it will be spent.

That is the task....

In this picture of local government the notion of an elected body in charge of council affairs occupies a somewhat ambivalent position. Local government in New South Wales was well behind the State government in calling for and attaining universal suffrage, although it has been
far ahead of its counterparts in other Australian States in this respect. Plural voting was abolished in 1906, but a restricted property owning and occupancy franchise was not abolished until 1926. It was not until 1941 that the removal of a six month residence qualification brought the franchise into line with State and Federal electoral law, with the exception that non-resident landowners retained a vote. The 1926 and 1941 measures were the work of Labor governments. A common argument used against extending the franchise was expressed by W.E.V. Robson in the Legislative Council, opposing the 1926 measure when he said 'the people who find the money...should control the election of the representatives in the council'. He also claimed that the councils were 'purely administrative'. Mr Bavin (who was to become Premier in 1927) spoke against the same Bill and expanded on this argument:

(A council's) primary duty is one of administration...However devoted a man may be to the abstract idea of universal suffrage, no one can say that that is the best method of obtaining the best men for the purpose of carrying out administrative work. No man in his senses...would have men elected by universal suffrage to carry on the administration of a business.

The idea that running a local government body is little different from running a business is closely linked with the view that the major test of good local government is the efficiency with which it is managed.

In this view there is no room for politics and, in particular, party politics. Bluett sees party politics as 'a negation of the purpose and spirit of local
government'. 6 Liberal Party member of the State Legislative Assembly, Mr Mutton, expressed the view that—

...there is no room for party politics in local government. One cannot have a political decision about a footpath, a drain or a building application. Council administers the law: parliament legislates. 7

His party colleague Mr McGinty (a former mayor of Willoughby), extended his condemnation to 'pressure groups'. Decisions should be made 'in accordance with the Local Government Act' and 'solely in the public interest'. 8 Bluett says of party politics:

There is no surer way of cutting the heart out of local government and destroying its image as the people's own community government, coming as it does right to the doorstep of every home with benefit to all and favours to none. 9

The representative has no need of any pressure group, party organisation or sectional interest to tell him how best to act in the public interest. Deciding what is in the public good is a matter of common sense, for the questions are practical ones, not political ones. They are matters of administration, not legislation; good management and efficiency, not party doctrine.

The currency of these views is demonstrated by the frequency they appear as slogans in local elections. In particular they are used to attack Labor Party candidates, (the Liberal Party espouses the anti-party doctrine as official policy and does not contest local elections). It is a common combination of campaign themes to find candidates promising to combat party politics by offering the alternative of 'business-like efficient modern management'. Many of these candidates boast of their
business or administrative experience. The ratepayer whose criterion of good management is 'value for money', is attracted to these views, and non-party candidates do have considerable success.

Legislators concerned with local government have often taken the position that one of the most useful functions local councils perform is to unburden the parliament of minor matters of local interest. The instigator of much of the very early legislation, Governor Gipps, held this view, (although he was also of the opinion that local government was to be valued as an end in itself for the sake of democratic life).¹⁰ He held fears that the newly elected Legislative Council for the Colony would become bogged down in matters of parochial detail and petty disputes unless local government were instituted. As it turned out, much of the opposition to wider incorporation of local areas came from members of parliament who were reluctant to surrender their powers of patronage in 'roads and bridges' and other local matters. The notion that parliament was concerned with higher and finer things was expressed by Premier J. H. Carruthers in 1906, in an off-the-cuff response to an interjection on the dangers of giving councils more power, during his speech in support of the 1906 legislation for which he was largely responsible:

Why should not Parliament surrender some of its powers? What do these powers consist in? Now honourable members have to humiliate themselves by going to the public offices for every twopenny-halfpenny thing which ought to be attended to by some council. We are only
giving up that which degrades Parliament, in order that we may uplift ourselves by having more time to legislate for the country. 11

J. H. Carruthers may have believed that the institution of local government was valuable as an end in itself, but in his speeches he gave no indication of this, arguing for stronger local government on the ground of administrative convenience.

Other advocates have taken a more 'fundamentalist' line, epitomised by the view expressed in a pamphlet issued by the Local Government and Shires Association of New South Wales: 'The failure of Local Government will mean the end of true Democracy'. In summary, their well rehearsed arguments were that any system of government 'should give the maximum opportunities to participate, and Local Government does just that'; 'power should at all times remain with or as near as possible to the people', i.e. with local government; local government provides a good training ground for citizenship and the acceptance of responsibility for public affairs by members of the community at large, and a good training ground for public office-holders; and local government is the best safeguard against excessive centralisation and bureaucratisation of government.12

The firm adherence to the belief of an elected body in local government gives rise to an ambiguity in traditional views towards local government. Elections mean politics, but local government is administration. Similarly, the view of the representative as close to the
'grass roots' and accessible to his electors, coupled with the notion that the representative in a local council provides a safeguard against excessive bureaucratisation, are also somewhat at odds with the purported administrative character of local government functions and roles. In expressing an 'anti-bureaucratic' sentiment, advocates of these views have a particular picture of bureaucracy in mind: inaccessible, remote and unresponsive to or unfamiliar with local conditions. Liberal Party leader in the New South Wales Parliament of 1948, V. E. Treatt, warned that the Labor Government's amalgamation proposals of 1947-8 'widened the gap between the ratepayer and the alderman' and provided a 'happy hunting ground for the bureaucrat, the Socialist and the Communist'. At the 1972 New South Wales Local Government Conference, Prime Minister McMahon warned against proposals to 'abolish' local government and to replace councils with 'a series of arrogant and disinterested bureaucracies... remote from the local problems of the citizen himself'. He conjured up a picture of the citizen trying to 'obtain a response from a remote bureaucrat about an offensive drain or an unsatisfactory garbage service'. This seems to suggest that the role of the local elected representative is to 'iron out' the inefficiencies and possible injustices of bureaucratic administration. On the other hand, there is perhaps a dilemma in that while local councils are performing 'administrative' functions, the representative has direct and immediate access to the administrative system, for the sole purpose of intervening in the normal
detached and 'disinterested' process that characterises the impartial bureaucratic approach to case by case administration. It is perhaps unfair to pick on Mr McMahon's use of the term 'disinterested', but the notion that there are cases in which special effort has to be made to find a way around the rules and 'cut the red tape', in an individual case where the rules seem to do an injustice, is an important theme in this general view of the local representative's role.

This problem is one that receives perennial attention in debates about the proper roles of the elected representative and the paid official in local councils. The debate stems directly from the nature of a system of administration in which politicians are performing administrative functions. In fact, of course, we have seen that in the orthodox view of local government the representative should not be a 'politician'. The structure of local council bodies, following the U.K. tradition, compounds the problem. The elected representatives (referred to in municipalities as aldermen), are directly responsible for all aspects of council business. There is no separate executive body exercising authority independently from the council. Although the mayor is termed the 'chief executive officer', he is elected by the council annually and given little independent formal authority. The committee system, often much praised as the core of the U.K. system of local government, encourages aldermen to enter into detailed consideration of matters in discussions with the paid
officials. Bluett recommends that councils should make full use of the system as it

...enables council to... ensure that proper consideration is given to all matters, even of a minor nature. 15

At the same time, he is quite adamant that

The staff never intrude in policy for this is the preserve and authority of the people's elected representatives; nor, on the other hand, should members of the council stray into the field of administration. 16

The New South Wales Department of Local Government is equally certain and seems to indicate that councils are in need of reform in this matter:

The popular conception of a council as a body which has to deal with every minor detail of... administration is obsolete.

The obvious solution is the creation of an efficient committee system... 17

It is not necessarily bad for aldermen to be concerned in matters of 'detail', so long as the council itself can 'concentrate upon the framing of... policy'. At the same time the Department does recommend the greater use of powers of delegation to paid officials (powers which were only granted to councils by an amendment to the Act in 1945 and which they appear to have been reluctant to take advantage of).

The Maud Committee on management of local government in the U.K. was concerned to a considerable extent with these questions. It was accepted that the distinction between 'policy' and 'administrative detail' was an extremely difficult one to draw. 18 Guidelines and 'policies' can undergo alteration by being applied to
separate cases and new policies can emerge from precedents set in case by case administration. Minor matters of this nature often come to be charged with political significance; policies generally come under public scrutiny when they are applied and their implications are understood. In many cases, it is difficult to devise adequate rules or guidelines sufficient to deal with separate cases and marginal cases have to be decided. The Maud Committee nevertheless settled on a division of decision making functions that followed the traditional policy - administration distinction, although it was rephrased. Elected representatives should 'exercise ultimate direction and control of affairs', 'take key decisions on the objectives of the authority', and undertake periodic reviews of 'progress and performance of services'. The 'day to day administration of services', 'decisions on case work' and the 'routine process of inspection and control', should be the functions of the paid officers.\(^{19}\) The committee expressed concern that individual 'case work', whilst arousing the 'vivid interest' and the 'sympathy and compassion' of councillors, tended to become the main focus of committee decisions, as this could lead to 'decisions being taken in accordance with the subjective opinions of the members present to the prejudice of a consistent approach'.\(^{20}\)

Maud's criticisms of local government in the U.K. would apply even more to metropolitan suburban councils in Sydney. The tendency to involve themselves in matters of 'administrative detail' is more marked because of the
smaller range of functions performed and the nature of these functions. The political attention devoted to matters of administration of services and application of rules and regulations stems in part from the relative infrequency of major policy decisions. This will become more evident in the course of the study. As to the effect of the sorts of decisions councils are concerned with on the way aldermen perform their roles, this is crucial in understanding local government decision making.

Local government, as Bluett so rightly said, comes 'right to the doorstep of every home'. In 1968 70.7% of total council income was raised by direct annual rate levies in Sydney's suburban councils. Only 3% came from government grants. Levied in a lump sum, the rate has immediate impact on the individual property owner. The impact of the services provided is similarly direct. The state of the road, footpath or the kerb and gutter are immediately apparent and affect directly the 'amenity' enjoyed by separate properties. The great majority of services are highly 'location-specific' in that they are provided piecemeal to separate streets in the case of roadworks or to particular suburbs or neighbourhoods in the case of parks and recreation facilities, community halls and most other community facilities such as branch libraries or baby health centres. The impact of government regulations concerning building, health and town planning requirements is even more specific, as their provisions refer directly to separate parcels of land and directly affect what owners may do with their
property, as well as its value, or the amenity it enjoys by virtue of the nature of development permitted in its immediate environment. Building and health regulations are specified by Acts of Parliament and are rarely the subject of political dispute in themselves. However, their administration and enforcement by councils is by no means always a purely routine matter. Planning regulations are drawn up by local councils in conjunction with the State Planning Authority, but even so the great majority of political conflicts in this area occur when councils implement them or exercise various discretionary powers within their ambit. These conflicts have their root in the specific development application, involving the developer himself and possibly immediate neighbours. The interests involved once again are either individual property owners or relatively small numbers brought together by proximity in a specific street or locality.

The process of administering these regulations and implementing the details of providing services across the municipality is what much of local politics is all about. The property owner is concerned to defend the value of his property or enhance it. The occupant wishes to enjoy a particular standard of amenity in his area in the form of good roads, other sorts of council services or the sort of land use he wants to see next door. This applies to occupants of industrial, commercial and residential property alike, although disputes over residential amenity seem to have a character of their own. Expressions of political involvement by owner or
occupant tend to occur not when the council makes policy
decisions such as how much to allocate to kerb and gutter
construction, but when a decision is made as to whether
kerb and gutter is to be provided to his particular street,
past his front gate; not when the council formulates a
zoning scheme for the municipality, but when a developer
lodges an application to erect a multi-storey block of
flats on the next door property.

To summarise the picture I have presented up to
this point, much of local politics is concerned with
pressures to obtain a favourable intervention in the
administrative process. At the same time there are
also occasions when broader and more far reaching issues
are the subject of local politics. Broad zoning policies,
the level of the rates, or the council's expenditure
priorities do become the subject of political conflict
and may involve the business community or sectors of it,
groups of residents, social or sporting clubs who are
major users of council services, and so on. However,
given the limited scope of local council functions and
powers, it is often the case that the issues affecting broad
categories of people are resolved elsewhere than at the
local level. 22 Thus, real estate interests and business
groups seek to influence the content of local planning
schemes to protect their interests by approaching the
State Government or the State Planning Authority, treating
the issue on a metropolitan, rather than a local, level.
Major decisions about development at the urban fringe,
sitings of major new industrial undertakings, the location
of expressways, the installation of sewerage and water services are made by State Government or by semi-government authorities. Local councils find themselves one amongst many government bodies and interest groups in the process of decision making over metropolitan development. The 'external relations' of local councils are an important aspect of their activities, but the present study is confined to the local level.

The contention that the character of local politics can only be understood by relating political activity to the nature of the governmental activities local councils are concerned with is the stepping-off point for the theoretical approach adopted in the present study. It is adapted from a scheme evolved by T. J. Lowi, in the context of understanding the great variety of political power relationships uncovered by a large number of case studies in American national policy making. Lowi contends that there are three major categories of public policies: distribution, regulation and redistribution. These different 'areas of policy' constitute 'real arenas of power':

Each arena tends to develop its own characteristic political structure, political process, elites and group relations. 23

The distributive arena is one in which decisions are made in response to demands from a highly disaggregated set of interests - individuals, groups and, very commonly, localities. None of them cares, in the short run, what any one else gets so long as they get their 'slice of
the cake', or the particular favour they have sought. So long as there is enough to go around, 'supplicants' do not necessarily confront one another or enter into direct competition, but rather jostle in the queue. Each decision is an act of patronage and has no ramifications for future decisions beyond perpetuating an expectation that anyone with a 'deserving case' or with sufficient political muscle can expect a favour themselves. The classic example is the dispensing of favours and patronage from the pork barrel, in a 'roads and bridges' programme. In legislative bodies (where pork barrel decisions are typically taken), log-rolling alliances of common interests are typical of the distributive arena. Typical roles are the patron and the broker. Separate allocations are a matter only of a transaction between patron and client, with perhaps a broker involved. Conflict between patrons may be minimised by institutionalising the procedures for dividing the cake amongst them, as in congressional committees in the U.S., or more blatantly, as in the Philippines, where in the past the distribution of funds to specific local projects was the prerogative of congressmen, each of whom received an annual allocation of funds for this purpose, determined by seniority, formal positions in the party or Congress and so on.\(^{24}\)

Regulative policies also involve specific case by case treatment, but each case or political demand cannot be treated in complete isolation. Regulative policies treat all 'similar cases' alike. They involve the
universal application of general rules or guidelines to individual cases, with primary regard to precedent. Because such decisions involve ramifications beyond the separate case, the regulative arena is typified by conflict between broader groups than those involved in the distributive arena. The classic case is that area of government activity known as 'regulatory activities', including such policies as restrictive trades practices legislation, land use zoning schemes and so on. They fall within the context of the 'rule of law' which stresses universalism, the antithesis of the favouritism or particularism characteristic of much of the distributive arena.

Redistributive policies are even broader in impact and involve broader interests again. It is not just a matter of handing out benefits, as in distributive politics, but of taking them away from someone for the express purpose of giving them to someone else. Taxation and welfare policies are often redistributive. The groups involved are often broad classes and fundamental economic interests such as 'big business', 'the poor', and so on.

These distinctions do not correspond neatly with conventional distinctions between 'regulatory activities' and other sorts of government activities involving the direct provision of services and spending of money. While 'roads and bridges' programmes are often of a pork barrel nature, pressures also generally exist to introduce some measure of 'planning', or a 'rational ordering of
priorities according to need' in the process of programme-
determination. These pressures seek to place roads and
bridges decisions in the regulative arena, by setting
out a set of universal criteria, or policy guidelines,
for deciding on a programme. In theory, conflict over
programme decisions would then occur over the nature
of the criteria adopted, as groups deprived by the
application of the policies tried to right the situation.
Similarly, policies that are customarily referred to as
'regulatory' often become matters of distribution. The
rules and guidelines may be so vaguely defined that other
criteria are used in making decisions, criteria which
have nothing to do with the norms of precedent or
universality of rule-application, but which are the
criteria patrons use in distributing favours to clients.
Furthermore, pressures always exist for the rules to be
'bent' or ignored, from individuals or firms who will
benefit from a direct 'indulgence'. Once rules and
policies begin to be ignored - as for instance when
land-use regulations are ignored in approving planning
applications - then each case becomes a separate plea
for patronage. Lowi remarks that the distinction
between regulative and distributive policy arenas is more
a continuum than a sharp division. However, the basic
distinction is still crucial:

...any rule, no matter how vague, begins to
transform distributive into regulatory patterns. For
every example, adding a vague and very mild anti-
discrimination provision to an education subsidy
statute can turn established distributive patterns
inside out. On the other hand, it should be added
that very broad delegations of regulatory authority
to an agency can lead in the long run to a decline
into an all too stable and private politics. 25
It might be argued that no decision about allocating funds can be seen in isolation from the way money is raised, or divorced from considerations of alternative programmes or projects that those funds could have been allocated to, and that all such decisions must then be seen as redistributive ones. In principle, this is true. However, the distinctions I have drawn refer to the way groups involved in politics seek to attain their ends, that is to the way they define the issues themselves. Property developers may find it easier or less 'costly' to exert influence on a council to obtain an exemption from a regulation (an act of patronage and a distributive decision), than to try to alter the regulation itself (a regulative issue). Aspirants for formal office might find it politically advantageous to appeal to disadvantaged groups in the community rather than let others 'get away with' benefits obtained by a distributive (pork barrel) decision. They may even be able to do both at the same time.

Politics operates largely in the short-run and most groups who are able to exert influence are not concerned about the long-term consequences or ramifications of the benefits they obtain, unless challenged. Thus, whilst it is the case that no distribution can be made without an ultimate redistributive effect, it does not usually suit those who are gaining immediate tangible benefits to point this out. Those who have qualified to play the game as it is have little incentive to change the rules. Thus, stable systems of distributive politics
can and do exist and broader implications (some would refer to them as 'the real issues') often are ignored in the public political arena.

In a further elaboration of this scheme, R. H. Salisbury tries to provide some general answers to the question of why an authority structure makes one sort of decision rather than another, given that no particular area of government activity is inherently found in one arena rather than another. Salisbury focuses on two major characteristics of the political system - the structure of the 'demand pattern' and the structure of the decision making bodies. Both are characterised according to the degree of integration or fragmentation. A fragmented demand pattern is characteristic of pork barrel politics. Separate localities each seek an 'indulgence' and the interests involved are parochial. But common interests, in seeking a change in priorities, may produce an integration of demands, lessening the degree of fragmentation of political interest groups in the particular area of government activity concerned. This often occurs when relatively deprived groups, for whom an existing pattern of distributive politics is not satisfactory, voice demands. Thus, the way an issue is defined depends on the way individuals and groups perceive their interests and the type of organisations that exist to mobilise these interests.

The structure of decision making bodies also exerts some independent influence on the way issues are defined.
A strong legislative body in which individual members are able to operate relatively free from party discipline provides one ideal setting for pork barrel decision making. The lack of centralised leadership and authority make the organisation of majorities behind major policy matters in the regulative or redistributive arenas very difficult. On the other hand, a strong majority party system or a powerful executive arm can provide opportunities for such issues to be raised and resolved. In the present context of local government bodies there are particular structural characteristics and informal norms or conventions that exert influence on the way issues are defined. Some of these have been discussed above and some of their results noted.

The discussion of the proper role of local government as it is customarily conducted is based on the distinction between politics and administration or legislation and implementation. The new distinctions between different types of decision throw new light on this problem. I have already commented on the nature of local political issues. If this picture is accurate much, if not most, of local politics is concerned with the distributive arena. Councils do not make decisions of a major redistributive content, as other levels of government are the focus for such demands, if they are made at all. There is a sense in which local government is essentially a conservative institution. Local government performs functions delegated by Parliament and its powers are circumscribed by statute. The notion
of 'non-decisions' has some relevance in this context. Bachrach and Baratz have characterised 'non-decision making' as 'the practice of limiting the scope of actual decision making to 'safe' issues'. It is a process by which demands for change in the 'existing allocation of benefits and privileges...can be suffocated before they are voiced'. Some issues simply never 'get off the ground'. In delegating specific powers to local government, the non-decisions have already been made before councils begin to operate. If important aspects of the status quo are questioned, then it will not be in the local arena that the issue is decided. The rhetoric of local government theory that stresses the 'apolitical' nature of council functions is most strongly voiced in the context of other conservative doctrines. My heavy reliance on members of conservative parties in outlining this doctrine is no accident.

Whilst redistributive issues may not be common in local politics there is still some scope for disputes over resource allocation, which may become defined in some measure in redistributive terms. There are also on occasions important regulative issues in local politics. Even here though, councils are concerned to a large extent with enforcing regulative policies which have been decided elsewhere, as with building and health regulations and to some extent planning regulations. It is in the framing of planning regulations that councils find themselves facing regulative issues, but at the same time it is in the administrative process of development control - the
case by case treatment of development applications - that the majority of issues arise and many of these are of a distributive nature. The case by case process of enforcement focuses political attention on the particular case and its special circumstances. As James C. Scott sees it, 'influence at the enforcement stage...is... almost exclusively particularistic'. Favourable government decisions can be achieved not just by combining with those of similar interests to obtain a particular enactment of legislation, but by making an individual approach to obtain a particularistic decision at the point of enforcement of existing legislation. This means ignoring the content of the rules and applying other criteria to the decision. In some cases this may involve corruption, and in all cases favouritism or patronage and what Lowi referred to as 'private politics'. This is what the distributive arena is all about. Indeed it becomes rather meaningless to talk of 'enforcing legislation', as policies are not a feature of the distributive arena of politics, except insofar as the cumulative effects of discrete acts of patronage or the granting of favours may lead to an observable regularity in output. But this is not the meaning of the term 'policy' that I prefer to apply, as the notion contains some reference to intention as well as effect.

The major aim of the study is to identify those characteristics of local politics that help us understand why councils make decisions in one way rather than another,
or why politics is conducted in one arena rather than others. I have indicated that the major focus of attention will be first the nature of political interests current in local politics and the means by which they are expressed, that is through what sorts of organisations or channels and in what sorts of issues, and second the structure of the decision making process of the council itself. It will become apparent that there is great variety in the issues of local politics from one area to another, in the way local political conflicts are resolved, in the sorts of organisations involved in local politics and so on. Within the framework outlined in this chapter, I shall attempt to explain some of these differences. This will take the form of trying to associate the way decisions are made (illustrated by a series of case studies) with characteristics of the structure of political interests or demands and the structure of the decision making process on the council. I shall look respectively at political recruitment; the electoral process; interest group politics; the relations between aldermen and paid officials and the sorts of interests pursued by the professionals and bureaucrats; and the informal rules, procedures and groupings found in the council decision making process. In seeking to understand differences between the six councils I shall try and relate these features of local politics to various social and economic factors, to see whether they stem from differences in the social and economic context or 'environment' from one area to another. In order to 'set the scene' and provide the points of reference in attempting to point out
some of these relationships, the next chapter is concerned with a brief description of the six areas.

FOOTNOTES


2. On moves to form a Sydney metropolitan government see J. D. B. Miller, 'Greater Sydney, 1892-1952', *Public Administration* (Sydney), June 1954, pp 110-122.


For a more recent defence of the restricted franchise in Western Australia, see A. E. White, 'Supplementary Paper 111', in Australian Frontier Inc., *Consultation on the Future of Local Government in the Perth Metropolitan Region*, (Canberra 1969).

5. NSWPD, 3 September 1925.


7. NSWPD, 11 September 1968.

8. NSWPD, 11 September 1968.


11. NSWPD, 24 August 1905.


14. Statement by Prime Minister, Mr McMahon, 23 October 1972 (Address to the Local Government Association Conference Luncheon, Canberra).

15. Bluett, op. cit. p 7

16. Ibid p 4


19. Ibid p 39

20. Ibid p 53


22. On the question of the relations between 'metropolitan' and 'local' decisions see: Sydney Study Group, 'A Critique of Intergovernmental Relations Affecting the Sydney Metropolitan Region', Australian Planning Institute Journal, January 1968, pp 5-13


Ledivina Vidallon-Carino, The Politics and Administration of the Pork Barrel, (Local Government Center, School of Public Administration, University of Philippines, 1966)

25. T. J. Lowi, Four Systems of Policy, Politics and Choice, op. cit. p 24


Salisbury and Heinz distinguish between 'structural' and 'allocative' policies, the former encompassing regulative and the latter distributive and redistributive. This comes close to the conventional distinction between 'making a policy' or rule and applying it through an actual 'allocation' of benefits, whereas in my formulation rules can be 'applied' either in regulative or distributive decisions, and some regulative decisions involve a very clear allocation of benefits.


29. Ibid p 44

30. In the context of local council politics, it will become evident that party conflict is of a rather different nature than at other levels of government. The ALP contests local elections, whilst the Liberal Party formally does not, and the ALP often finds it difficult to demonstrate to electors just where party doctrine, or traditional party stands on issues, have relevance for local politics.


32. There are differences between a 'statement of policy', the 'implementation' of that policy, or its apparent and immediate impact and its 'effect', which may be measurable, or incalculable. Policies can be altered as they are applied and they may have effects far different from their intentions. There is another sense in which 'policy' has been taken, by students aiming to find simple measures of government performance or 'output'. This usually takes the form of measuring expenditures. In the present study, 'policy' (in any of these senses) is not the focus of concern, as the distributive arena is not one in which policies are important.
According to several criteria the six local government areas - Bankstown, Burwood, Ku-ring-gai, Leichhardt, Liverpool and North Sydney - represent a fair 'cross-section' of the thirty five municipalities, shires and cities in the Sydney metropolitan area. The study was conceived as an exploratory one in the first instance and this diversity of types of areas was in order to obtain as much variety in the empirical material as possible. This approach sacrificed the greater rigour in comparative analysis that could be achieved, for instance, by choosing areas that were alike in some respects but differed in others, in order to test the effect of these differences.

The criteria used in choosing the six areas were drawn from the data on social and economic background that form the subject of much of this chapter. At the same time, in making the final choice from amongst several alternatives, the local political situation was taken into account. Thus, Leichhardt was chosen because of important social and political changes associated with the upsurge of activity from local residents' groups, a factor that distinguished Leichhardt from most other Labor controlled inner city areas. Observing political change is a good way of pinpointing characteristics of both the old and the new. North Sydney was chosen because of the speed of redevelopment occurring in residential and commercial areas. Ku-ring-gai was chosen from several high status residential areas because it had just experienced
an election campaign in which a ratepayer's organisation campaigning for lower rates had won a majority. Thus, these councils were perhaps exceptional in that much more had been happening in them than was normally the case in local politics. Apart from anything else, the issues involved had intrinsic interest and importance that influenced the choice.

The location of the six councils in the metropolitan area is shown in Figure 11-1. They cover a range from 'inner' to 'outer' suburbs. These are shorthand terms for describing a variety of characteristics, associated with the age of the suburb, the form of settlement characteristic of the period of development, the sorts of development or redevelopment activities going on at the present stage of metropolitan growth and so on.

Table 11-1 shows population changes since 1947, one indication of the pattern of development of each area. Leichhardt, Burwood and North Sydney declined in population up to 1966. Leichhardt's period of greatest growth was before the end of the 19th Century, and its 1971 population was about the same as in 1900. Burwood's growth occurred from 1910-1930, while North Sydney experienced its greatest population expansion from 1900 to 1920 and then in the 1930's following the opening of the Sydney Harbour Bridge linking it to the city.
Table 11-1 Populations of the Six Municipalities, 1947 - 1971, at each census

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bankstown</td>
<td>42646</td>
<td>102384</td>
<td>152251</td>
<td>160004</td>
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<td>31341</td>
<td>31089</td>
<td>31846</td>
<td>32245</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
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<td>52615</td>
<td>74821</td>
<td>86878</td>
<td>98435</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td>64919</td>
<td>61951</td>
<td>59325</td>
<td>70540</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>26610</td>
<td>30874</td>
<td>68999</td>
<td>82270</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
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<td>56768</td>
<td>53024</td>
<td>51756</td>
<td>52920</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

† Boundaries redrawn, and Glebe added, in 1968

Source: Commonwealth Census.

Suburban settlement in Ku-ring-gai followed the route of the railway line at a fairly steady rate from 1900 to 1950, but in the fifties, growth accelerated. Bankstown followed a similar pattern, but expanded far more rapidly in the early 1950's. During the 1960's, Bankstown's population remained relatively stable, whilst Ku-ring-gai was still expanding as new subdivisions were developed. By the 1960's the urban fringe had passed Bankstown and it was Liverpool that experienced rapid growth. This was due largely to the settlement of a large housing estate at Green Valley built by the Housing Commission for lower-income families.

Table 11-1 also shows the ranking of each area in terms of population size in 1971. The six show a fairly even spread and a great diversity in size. The effect of size on local politics is one factor that will be examined.

Sydney is divided quite sharply on geographic lines into high and low status residential areas. The northern
suburbs (the 'north shore') and the inner suburbs are hillier and typographically more attractive. Those nearer the harbour offer the additional attraction of spectacular views. The western suburbs are flatter and hotter and are shared by industrial development. Lower income people are priced out of the better suburbs and in recent years have found themselves unable to afford housing in formerly working class inner city suburbs, which have been settled by the middle class because of their convenience to the city and the attractiveness of nineteenth century terraced housing.

These differences in residential status are reflected in the socio-economic characteristics of the populations of the six areas. Table 11-2 shows two measures of socio-economic status based on type of employment and also shows the rank of each of the areas on a metropolitan-wide basis. This ranking is based on the use of five indices from 1966 census data on industry and occupation and they are those identified by Jones in a study of social structure in Melbourne as being amongst the best measures of social differentiation.¹

The two measures shown in Table 11-2 are not necessarily on their own good indices of socio-economic status, but they do give an idea of the wide disparity in occupational backgrounds from the higher to the lower status areas.
Table 11-2 Measures of Socio-economic Status, 1966

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>% work-force manufacturing</th>
<th>% work-force community and business services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ku-ring-gai</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>19.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Sydney</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>21.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burwood</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>35.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bankstown</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>42.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leichhardt</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>41.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>43.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The ranking for the thirty five areas was arrived at by using 5 measures: % total work-force in manufacturing industries; % total work-force in community and business services; % male work-force in finance and property; % male work-force in commerce; and % male work-force employer status. Each council was scored separately according to the rank attained for each measure and the scores added. The final rank was derived from this total score. The highest possible was 5 x 35, or 175, the lowest 5. Ku-ring-gai scored 168 and Liverpool 19.

Each of the areas is relatively homogeneous. Few of Sydney's local government areas contain areas of widely different wealth or status, reflecting one of the factors important in the final determination of the 1948 boundary revisions: none of the richer areas was willing to be attached to poorer areas. In 1961 Congalton carried out a survey of Sydney residents' perception of the status of different suburbs, backed up by a survey of estate agents' assessments, and identified the status attached to each suburb on the basis of respondents' rankings from one to seven. Table 11-3 uses data from this survey to show how suburbs within each of the six municipalities were ranked: the ranks used are those Congalton arrived at using all responses.
Table 11-3  Congalton's Status Rankings of Sydney's Suburbs - Six Municipalities, showing number of suburbs of each rank

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ku-ring-gai</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Sydney</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burwood</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bankstown</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leichhardt</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The relative status of each of the areas follows the pattern exhibited in Table 11-2. The data also shows the relative homogeneity of each area. The information is rather old, but there is no reason to expect major differences over the past ten years, with one exception. The late 1960's saw an influx of higher status residents into formerly working class inner city suburbs. In Leichhardt municipality, Balmain and Glebe underwent changes in physical appearance as well as social composition, with renovation by the new owners of 19th Century terraced houses. The same sort of process was beginning to spread to other suburbs, particularly Annandale. The 1966 census figures show Balmain and Glebe containing a higher proportion of higher status occupations amongst residents than other suburbs, although the difference was not very marked. Table 11-4 shows these differences, from ward to ward in the municipality. It is probable that these differences became more marked after 1966.
Table 11-4  Leichhardt: Socio-economic Status by Wards, 1966

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward</th>
<th>Total in workforce</th>
<th>% in finance and property &amp; business and community services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Glebe</td>
<td>7,854</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balmain</td>
<td>6,560</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rozelle</td>
<td>5,138</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annandale</td>
<td>4,712</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lilyfield</td>
<td>5,989</td>
<td>10.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leichhardt</td>
<td>5,165</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Municipality: 11.5

Source: 1966 census, census collector's district data.

Apart from socio-economic status, there are other characteristics of the population that distinguish one area from another. Table 11-5 presents some data on age structure. Liverpool and Bankstown were areas predominantly inhabited by young families; Ku-ring-gai contained a large number of young families but was also a popular retirement area for the wealthy; Leichhardt, as expected with an old inner suburb, contained a fair proportion of old people, as did Burwood and North Sydney. North Sydney was characterised by 'low familism'.

Table 11-5  Ranking of six municipalities by age characteristics of population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% population aged 0-15</th>
<th>% population aged 65+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (1) Liverpool</td>
<td>43.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (9) Bankstown</td>
<td>30.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (11) Ku-ring-gai</td>
<td>28.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 (20) Leichhardt</td>
<td>21.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 (30) Burwood</td>
<td>17.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 (36) North Sydney</td>
<td>13.08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Commonwealth Census 1966

% Sydney-wide ranking
Table 11-6 shows the proportion of non-British in each of the areas. Leichhardt had a high percentage and followed the pattern Jones noticed in Melbourne, where migrant communities concentrate in the inner suburbs. In Leichhardt they were mostly Italians.

Table 11-6  % non-British in the six municipalities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bankstown</td>
<td>3.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burwood</td>
<td>7.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ku-ring-gai</td>
<td>1.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leichhardt</td>
<td>12.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>5.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Sydney</td>
<td>4.87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Commonwealth Census 1966

Business activities in the six areas differed considerably. Just as some features of social differentiation were the result of metropolitan-wide pressures, so industrial and commercial development were influenced in their location by the pattern of metropolitan-wide development. Table 11-7 shows data on industrial activity in each of the areas. Large areas of Bankstown were set aside for industrial development and most of the factories were built in the 1950's and 1960's. In Liverpool on the other hand industrial development did not occur during the 1960's at a pace fast enough to provide local jobs for the new residents. Leichhardt was a long established industrial area with several large concerns along the waterfront in Balmain and Rozelle. Throughout the municipality small and large factories intermingled with houses in a way typical of inner city areas. There were few factories in Ku-ring-gai. Most of these were very small in contrast to Liverpool.
Table 11-7  Number of Factories and Persons Employed in the Six Areas, 1967/8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Factories</th>
<th>Persons Employed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Bankstown</td>
<td>1033</td>
<td>34387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Leichhardt</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>14690</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>North Sydney</td>
<td>312</td>
<td>5187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Burwood</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>2387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Ku-ring-gai</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>797</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>4071</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Sydney-wide rankings

Source: Bureau of Census and Statistics, Statistical Register
New South Wales, Factories

Table 11-8 shows the rate of development of shops, offices and factories in the six areas in the five year period up to 1971. Bearing in mind the different size of each area, the rate of industrial development in Bankstown is still outstanding. In Liverpool factory building was growing from year to year, but in Bankstown the annual rate was fairly steady. Factory building in Ku-ring-gai was negligible, whilst little new development occurred in North Sydney. In contrast, Leichhardt was still experiencing new factory building, most of it in the form of redevelopment. The area was still a prime industrial location.

Table 11-8  Value of Completed Buildings (excluding cost of land): Shops, Offices and Factories, 1966/7 - 1970/71

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Shops</th>
<th>Offices</th>
<th>Factories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bankstown</td>
<td>10,812</td>
<td>2,347</td>
<td>20,898</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burwood</td>
<td>4,537</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>1,125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ku-ring-gai</td>
<td>2,483</td>
<td>2,420</td>
<td>4,713</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leichhardt</td>
<td>3,088</td>
<td>797</td>
<td>8,077</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>3,927</td>
<td>1,121</td>
<td>809</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Sydney</td>
<td>1,532</td>
<td>32,593</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Bureau of Census and Statistics
Bankstown and Burwood were the location of major district shopping centres and new development occurred in both in the 1960's. New shopping malls containing department stores, supermarkets and smaller shops, with large parking areas, were built in both centres. Liverpool also experienced new shop development and a large shopping mall was completed in 1971/2, but is not shown in the figures in Table 11-8. Ku-ring-gai contained no single major shopping centre, although in Gordon on the Pacific Highway a department store was completed in the 1960's. There was a smaller centre at St. Ives and 'neighbourhood' shopping centres in the newer suburbs developed since the 1950's. Residents of Ku-ring-gai had to do much of their shopping outside the municipality. Attempts to develop a large shopping mall at St. Ives met with council opposition, an issue that will be described during the course of the study. The council was not, however, averse to some 'prestige' office building, particularly along the Pacific Highway. The most rapid and spectacular office development occurred in North Sydney, an extension of the office building 'boom' across the harbour bridge in the City central business district. The commercial centre of North Sydney by the end of the 1960's was almost entirely earmarked for multi-storey office development.

Table 11-9 shows residential development in the six areas, measured by the number of houses or units completed, in two five year periods from 1962. The expected pattern emerges, with single-family housing in the outer suburbs
and flat development being prominent in the inner suburbs, particularly North Sydney. The difference between Liverpool and Bankstown with respect to flat development is interesting and as we shall see reflects the two councils' attitudes towards this type of housing development.

### Table 11-9 New Dwellings (houses and flats) Completed: Six Municipalities 1962-66 and 1967-71

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>1962-66</th>
<th>1967-71</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Houses</td>
<td>Flats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bankstown</td>
<td>4,044</td>
<td>340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burwood</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>551</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ku-ring-gai</td>
<td>3,948</td>
<td>594</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leichhardt</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>710</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>8,337</td>
<td>292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Sydney</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>2,756</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Bankstown's policy of discouraging flat development, or at least of not encouraging it, is an example of the sort of influence a local council can have on development within its boundaries. For the most part the suburban differentiation in land use, type of resident and so on, has been due to complex factors over which local councils have little influence. Nevertheless, we shall see that many of the important regulative issues that arise at the local level are concerned with attempts to influence the course of development. They attempt either to prevent development of a particular kind - i.e. preserve and protect an existing environment or style of living - or to attract development of a particular kind. The best example of the first type is Ku-ring-gai council's
insistence on the preservation of an existing quality of residential environment. The result is a municipality of 100,000 residents, predominantly higher status, living in expensive single-family dwellings and travelling to work. As a council publicity brochure put it, 'Ku-ring-gai municipality is, and shall continue to be, synonymous with trees, gardens and open space'. The Mayor of 1968 reflected majority opinion when he said '...I will not allow industrialisation of any sort in this municipality'. The MLA for Northcotte electorate, which included some of the municipality, moved an adjournment motion in the Assembly on the dangers of flat development during which he described the municipality's character:

Throughout its length and breadth, the electorate...presents a picture dominated by the single-family residence, set within adequate grounds and in streets with an abundance of trees and greenery. It is...comprised of dormitory suburbs of very appealing and distinctive character.

...The industrial undertaking is obviously alien.... So also, although to varying degrees, are the villa unit, the town house and the multi-storey flat or home unit building.

The council imposed rigid requirements on new subdivisions for the dedication of public open space. It restricted flat development largely to the Pacific Highway. It rejected those few industrial development applications it received. We shall see later other sorts of disputes the council was involved in while pursuing this 'protectionist' policy.

In other municipalities there was less unanimity of purpose and there were more conflicting pressures,
particularly in areas undergoing redevelopment. These led to major local issues in North Sydney and Leichhardt over the preservation of a particular standard of residential amenity in the face of redevelopment. Leichhardt council notepaper carried a crest on which were depicted busy industrial scenes and port activities. The emblem dated from the time of the 1948 boundary revisions and was an indication of the image of the area held by past councils. In their view, Leichhardt was a place for the predominantly working class population to work as well as live. This view, expressed in several policy stands taken by Labor Party aldermen, was challenged by the new middle class residents who opposed further industrial development and sought to improve the amenity of the area as a residential area. The Balmain Association, a group formed in the 1960's to press this point of view, drawing its membership largely from middle class residents, depicted at the head of its notepaper a 19th century house in the architectural style that gave Balmain some of the distinctive aesthetic character they so much valued.

In North Sydney many aldermen believed that flat development was 'inevitable', and the council's planning policies were based on this premise. These policies aimed to control flat development and enforce certain standards rather than prohibit flats. However, this approach was challenged by local residents' groups representing people who wanted to live in the existing single-dwelling environment, where this remained.
Support for this challenge also came from some of the new flat dwellers concerned over street congestion, the protection of views from their multi-storey flat blocks and so on.

Opposition to flat development was a common theme in local politics in most of the six areas. It was expressed in Bankstown, where a prohibition on flat development existed until the mid 1960's. This prohibition was lifted, but in the face of considerable opposition, and the policies adopted by the council were aimed at imposing strict controls on flat development to achieve a 'high standard'. The influence a council can exert on development was well illustrated in the contrast between Bankstown and the neighbouring municipality of Canterbury. In Canterbury, flats were encouraged, and the municipality underwent a major transformation as streets of single-dwellings were demolished and replaced piece-meal by three-storey blocks of home units, usually on the same pattern of subdivision. The hostility to flat development in Bankstown was an expression of a characteristic Australian response to flat dwelling. A supplement in the Sydney Morning Herald described Bankstown as 'thirty square miles of magnificently typical Australian suburbia' where 'the great Australian dream of one's own house and block of land has, until now, thrived', and where 'sport and local club reign over leisure time'.

Part of the reason for the wary acceptance by the council of flat development in the municipality was the adherence by some aldermen to a broad set of values that
favoured the 'growth' and 'progress' of the municipality and measured this by population growth, land values (and rateable values), job opportunities, retail turnover, business profit, and so on. Fears were expressed that strict controls on flat development would 'inhibit growth' and 'strangle' the shopping centre. Similarly, industrial development was welcomed as a sign of progress. 'Stagnation' was a sign of municipal failure.

These values were most clearly expressed in council policy by Liverpool aldermen. Council publicity brochures showed Liverpool in the centre of the map of the Sydney region, with all roads converging on this 'growth point'. Graphs of population growth soared impressively into the future to illustrate Liverpool's potential for expansion. One brochure proclaimed 'Liverpool is Lebensraum' and translated: 'Room for growth and expansion'.

Liverpool was the only council that consciously budgeted an annual amount for 'publicising the area', aimed at attracting development. The council fought to obtain releases of non-urban land for urban development, against opposition from the State Planning Authority. The Authority, a State government instrumentality with responsibility for metropolitan planning, published a 'strategic plan' for the Sydney region, and pursued policies laid out in this plan that discouraged development in Liverpool for the time being. Aldermen protested strongly at this 'stagnation' and the inhibition to the municipality's 'natural growth'. The council consistently supported applications from developers seeking re-zonings
to permit development. Rather than frame or enforce planning provisions to protect an existing environment, aldermen sought to change those that inhibited redevelopment and when possible on occasions ignored them. Typical of this approach was the view expressed by one alderman in a council debate:

Thank heavens for the developer. If it wasn't for the developer Australians would still be living in bark humpies and running around throwing boomerangs.

The issue that prompted this outburst involved the application of an industrial concern to expand into an area that was provisionally zoned for open space along the banks of the Georges River, near the centre of Liverpool. The council opposed the advice of its planner, after some argument, and granted approval for the development to proceed. It was argued that Liverpool would lose valuable jobs and rate income if the council refused the development application. The developer would be forced to go to an adjoining municipality. This competitive attitude was common as an expression of the ethos of municipal growth and expansion. On the whole, these views overrode party political divisions and found almost unanimous support amongst aldermen, even though in some issues a minority of council members did raise other conflicting values such as demands for open space, or a desire to protect or enhance an existing environment.

Councils in outer suburban areas can make choices about the policies they are to pursue to try and influence the type of development undertaken within their boundaries.
Councils in inner suburban areas are faced with choices about redevelopment of 'aging' areas. Burwood, as a suburb falling in between, faced neither of these pressures acutely. However, the council imposed blanket restrictions on flats over a large part of the municipality and chose to try and control flat development to ensure 'good' development, particularly to encourage large scale comprehensive redevelopment rather than piece-meal flat building. This did have some effect on slowing down the rate of flat construction in comparison with neighbouring municipalities such as Ashfield and Canterbury. The council also tried to encourage comprehensive development in the shopping centre by purchasing land.

Social and economic pressures associated with urban development and redevelopment pose certain problems for individual councils and affect the formulation of planning policy. Pressures stemming from the local environment affect another kind of council activity; the wealth of an area and the service needs or demands of its population influence council expenditures. Some 70% of council income normally comes from property rates levied on the unimproved capital value (UCV) of land. There are no redistributive grants by government to aid poorer municipalities. Land valuations are undertaken by a State government instrumentality so councils are not able to pursue 'fiscal zoning policies' as some municipalities in the United States do, overvaluing commercial property in relation to residential property. Councils must also
levy a uniform general rate, although they may levy special local rates on a particular defined area within the municipality. All funds collected from this rate must be spent on facilities in that area. In all, the wealth of an area, expressed through property values, operates as a very direct constraint upon revenue raising and thus expenditures.

Table 11-10 ranks all of Sydney's local government areas according to UCV per capita in 1966 and compares the overall socio-economic status rank for each municipality used in Table 11-2. Because revaluations are not undertaken simultaneously for each municipality, the actual 1966 UCV figures are not comparable. Some were several years out of date, although they still provided the basis for fixing a rate. By means of interpolation, a notional UCV was worked out for those municipalities that were not revalued in 1966 (see note to Table 11-10).

The Table shows that generally speaking the poorest lived in municipalities with the lowest UCV per capita. It would appear that property values were in some measure related to levels of personal income. Thus, to raise the same amount of municipal revenue based on a proportion of total UCV, householders in poorer areas must pay a higher proportion of their income than those in richer areas. This is borne out by Bentley's analysis of consumer expenditure survey data in Sydney. The proportion of income that is spent on rates tends to decrease as personal income rises.
Table 11-10 Unimproved Capital Value of all Property, per capita, Sydney Metropolitan Councils, 1966, Related to Socio-economic Status (SES) Ranking.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SES (Table 11-2)</th>
<th>$/Cap.</th>
<th>SES (Table 11-2)</th>
<th>$/Cap.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (26) City of Sydney</td>
<td>3954 19 (21)</td>
<td>Drummoyne</td>
<td>1804</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (2) Woollahra</td>
<td>3311 20 (22)</td>
<td>BURWOOD</td>
<td>1774</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (33) Botany</td>
<td>2621 21 (17)</td>
<td>Sutherland</td>
<td>1774</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 (6) Willoughby</td>
<td>2458 22 (23)</td>
<td>Rockdale</td>
<td>1733</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 (1) KU-RING-GAI</td>
<td>2415 23 (11)</td>
<td>Hornsby</td>
<td>1677</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 (4) Lane Cove</td>
<td>2351 24 (25)</td>
<td>Parramatta</td>
<td>1673</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 (3) Mosman</td>
<td>2263 25 (15)</td>
<td>Ryde</td>
<td>1670</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 (7) NORTH SYDNEY</td>
<td>2208 26 (16)</td>
<td>Randwick</td>
<td>1505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 (10) Warringah</td>
<td>2204 27 (19)</td>
<td>Ashfield</td>
<td>1399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 (12) Strathfield</td>
<td>2202 28 (24)</td>
<td>Canterbury</td>
<td>1368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 (5) Manly</td>
<td>2199 29 (32)</td>
<td>Marrickville</td>
<td>1365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 (13) Baulkham Hills</td>
<td>2149 30 (29)</td>
<td>BANKSTOWN</td>
<td>1276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 (28) Ahburn</td>
<td>1996 31 (27)</td>
<td>Holroyd</td>
<td>1261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 (14) Kogarah</td>
<td>1993 32 (30)</td>
<td>LEICHHARDT</td>
<td>1106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 (8) Hunters Hill</td>
<td>1930 33 (34)</td>
<td>LIVERPOOL</td>
<td>1032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 (20) Concord</td>
<td>1889 34 (35)</td>
<td>Fairfield</td>
<td>1010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 (9) Waverley</td>
<td>1862 35 (32)</td>
<td>Blacktown</td>
<td>984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 (18) Hurstville</td>
<td>1834</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: New South Wales Statistical Register

The valuation figures given in the Statistical Register for each municipality had to be adjusted to make them comparable. Valuations of land in each municipality are made at up to five year intervals. Municipalities are revalued successively, not all together. The 1966 figures were arrived at by interpolating from the previous revaluation year on the basis of a constant rate of growth. This rate was determined for each council for the period up to the latest revaluation.

In fact, poor and rich municipalities did not raise the same amount of revenue. Table 11-11 shows the per capita rate income of each of the six municipalities in 1966 and 1969. Also shown is an 'adjusted rate' for 1966. This represents the proportion of UCV (expressed as so many cents in the dollar in the way rates are expressed) that would have been levied had the UCV been as shown in Table 11-10 in 1966. The actual rate in the dollar that raised the per capita income shown in the Table differed from this adjusted figure. The poorer councils – Bankstown,
Leichhardt and Liverpool - had to levy higher rates, but also got less income for their troubles. The poor were paying more than the rich (in terms of proportion of income), and getting less in return.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 11-11</th>
<th>'Adjusted' 1966 Rate, and Rate Income per capita 1966 &amp; 1969</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Per capita rate income ($)</strong></td>
<td><strong>1966</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bankstown</td>
<td>26.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burwood</td>
<td>26.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ku-ring-gai</td>
<td>36.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leichhardt</td>
<td>20.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>20.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Sydney</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: New South Wales Statistical Register (Local Government)

N.B. Rate income as shown in the statistical register was adjusted. Some councils levied a separate garbage collection charge, others levied an omnibus rate that covered this service. To make the figures comparable income under the heading 'Sanitary and garbage charges' was added to rate income for all councils.

The effect on expenditures of differences in financial resources is shown in Table 11-12. The Table isolates two major categories of expenditure - public works and 'amenities' (see note to Table). The councils with fewer resources spent less per capita on both public works and amenities, but the effect was most marked on the amenities category.
Table 11-12  Expenditure per capita on public works and 'amenities' 1968

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public Works</th>
<th>'Amenities'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$/cap.</td>
<td>$/cap.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bankstown</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burwood</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ku-ring-gai</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leichhardt</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Sydney</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: New South Wales Statistical Register

'Amenities' consists of expenditure listed in the Statistical Register under the following heads: Parkes and Reserves; Libraries; Baths and Beaches; Public Services 'Other'; Municipal Property. Public services 'Other' covers items such as baby health centres, senior citizen centres, welfare services of various types, etc.

So far I have not mentioned needs or demands for expenditure and services. It is not my purpose to unravel the factors that are important in understanding differences in expenditure patterns from one council to another. However, it does seem the case that needs and demands were a secondary factor compared to resources. Thus, one might expect outer suburbs to spend more on public works than inner suburbs, and in most cases the amount of construction work to be done in developing areas did present a major problem and an important need. But expenditures did not differ systematically between inner and outer suburbs. The greater needs were not met, because of lack of resources. At the same time, there is evidence that they were not met because councils chose to devote greater effort to providing amenities. During the 1960's per capita expenditure on public works remained roughly constant in 'real money terms'. For the rich councils, the same holds for expenditure on amenities. But per capita...
expenditure on amenities by the three poorer councils approximately doubled in 'real money' terms during the 1960's. This was where their efforts were concentrated. This can be seen as a response to a felt need, or an observed demand for these sorts of services. The poorer councils were in some respects just catching up. Even so, the constraint imposed by inadequate resources still left a significant imbalance in the amounts spent on these services by rich and poor councils.

FOOTNOTES


2. See J. D. B. Miller, 'Greater Sydney, 1892–1952', Public Administration (Sydney), June 1954, p 122

3. A. A. Congalton, Status Rankings of Sydney Suburbs (Kensington, University of New South Wales, 1961)

4. Jones op. cit.

5. Ku-ring-gai 1971, pamphlet distributed by the council with rate notices


7. NSWPD 1970, p 4073


9. Liverpool is Lebensraum, published by the Liverpool City Council on the occasion of the New South Wales Local Government Engineer's Conference Week, 1969

10. Liverpool Leader, 16 December 1970
11. The correspondence of the rankings is close, with one or two notable exceptions. The City of Sydney contains the CBD; Botany and Auburn both are largely industrial areas and contain a far greater proportion of industrial development compared to population size than any other municipality. These are the only cases one would expect the influence of non-residential land to distort the picture. Hornsby might fall in the same category, except that in this case per capita values are lower than would be expected, due possibly to the high proportion of non-urban land in the Shire.


13. Manning concludes from an analysis of all Sydney LGAs that 'The lower the prosperity of an LGA's people, the higher the rate, and the lower revenue a head'. I. G. Manning, An Economic Study of Some Location-Specific Services and Regulations in Sydney, Australian National University, Ph.D. thesis, 1972, p. 151

14. For an example of this sort of study, which distinguishes between the effects of 'needs', 'demands', and 'resources', see H. Herman, C. S. Liebman, T. R. Dye, Suburban Differences and Metropolitan Policies, (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1965)
We can learn much about the sorts of interests involved in local politics and the way these interests are expressed by looking at the sorts of people who become aldermen, or stand for office, and the way they are chosen. The key concept that links these two points of interest is the notion of 'eligibility' for office. Seligman explains it:

Two stages may be conveniently distinguished in the process of recruitment. Certification includes the social screening and the political channelling that results in eligibility for candidacy, whilst selection includes the actual choice of candidates to represent parties.

Certification involves possessing or acquiring certain attributes that make for eligibility. We can ask what these are, how they are acquired, and who decides what they should be. The choice of candidates may be made by party organisations, but whether it is or not, each candidate must still prove his eligibility at some point, and ultimately at the polling booth, to individual electors. It is not always the case that the critical choice is made at this final stage. Political parties preselect candidates for safe seats; established political figures may 'nominate' their successors. In a study of local government in California, Prewitt shows how recruitment into local office is institutionalised in similar ways, but identifies as well the sorts of 'apprenticeships' that candidates serve before they come to stand. They belong to the 'right' community organisations, have some record in active community life,
exhibit the 'right' beliefs about voluntary service and 'the public good', and so on. Elections merely 'reinforce' processes that run through local community political life as a whole. In the present context, we shall begin by looking briefly at the way aldermen come to stand for local office and then seek to identify those characteristics that make for eligibility in each council. This leads in to a discussion of local elections.

Some indication of the factors important in the initial decision of aldermen to stand for office is given in Tables 111-1 and 2. These present data from a questionnaire of aldermen. (See Appendix 1). It is difficult to make quantitative comparisons between patterns of recruitment in separate councils when the number of aldermen is so small, so this data can only be taken as suggestive of such patterns. Table 111-1 distinguishes between those who stated they were influenced in their decision to stand, and those who claimed they decided on their own. Amongst aldermen as a whole, the majority fell into the former category. Only a minority stated they were 'conscripted', that is disclaimed any initiative on their own part. Amongst individual councils this was most evident in Burwood. Table 111-2 shows what agents were important for those who stated they were influenced or induced to stand by others. Local community groups seem to have been of significance only in Bankstown, Ku-ring-gai and North Sydney. Perhaps the most notable feature was the importance of sitting aldermen in the
recruitment process in Burwood, coupled with the influence of political parties.

Of those aldermen who mentioned the party as an influence none were Liberal Party members. This does not mean that in some areas membership of the Liberal Party was of no significance in establishing the eligibility of some candidates and helping them win elections, as we shall see. However, Table III-3 does show that a relatively small proportion of aldermen were Liberal Party members. This might be expected from the fact that the Liberal Party as an organisation does not formally participate in local elections. But the Table does indicate a general feature of local government recruitment - the large proportion of successful aldermen who were non-party, whether Liberal or Labor. This distinguishes local political recruitment from recruitment to other levels of government.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table III-1</th>
<th>The Decision to Stand for Office</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>'Own Idea'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bankstown</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burwood</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ku-ring-gai</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leichhardt</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Sydney</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Questionnaire. Q. 3(a) 'When you first considered you might stand for this council, was it - (a) your own idea, (b) were you asked to stand by some person or organisation, or (c) was it a combination of both?'.

Table 111-2  Sources of inducement in the decision to stand

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Alderman</th>
<th>Community Group</th>
<th>Friend</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bankstown</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burwood</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ku-ring-gai</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leichhardt</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Sydney</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Questionnaire. Q. 3(b) *If you have ticked (b) or (c) above, would you say which of the following played a part in influencing your decision? (a) a political party, (b) a sitting or retiring alderman, (c) a local civic or community group, (d) a personal friend or friends, (e) other*.  
(N.B. Aldermen were given the option of ticking more than one)

Table 111-3  Party membership of aldermen

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ALP</th>
<th>Lib.</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bankstown</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burwood</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ku-ring-gai</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leichhardt</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Sydney</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Questionnaire.

It is often claimed that local political office is for many a stepping stone to higher office, and that for party members (ALP members in particular) it is a reward for faithful but undistinguished party service, or a consolation prize for those who fail to win higher office. These propositions tend to bely the suggestion made above that recruitment to local politics is in some respects a distinctive process. Table 111-4 shows that in all some three-fifths of aldermen either had serious ambitions, or had been approached, about standing for elected office.
at higher levels of government. Nearly three-quarters of party members fell into this category. However, ambition or eligibility for higher office is not in itself necessarily an aspect of an alderman's eligibility for local office. Establishing that aldermen have these ambitions is not to prove that they act differently in local politics from those who do not. They are likely to ensure that they establish and retain their eligibility for local office, as it is winning success at this level that helps them make their claim for higher office. Furthermore, we can not tell whether aldermen's ambitions preceded or resulted from their success in local politics. However, those who were 'approached to stand' possibly made their reputation by fulfilling their primary ambitions as local politicians, and were then considered eligible for higher office. 

Table 111-4 Party Membership and Higher Political Office

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Considered *</th>
<th>Approached to Stand</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALP</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-party</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Respondents could reply they had both been 'approached' and that they had 'considered'. Those who said 'yes' for both have been entered as having 'considered' only

Source: Questionnaire.

Table 111-5 shows the same data on aldermen and higher political office, but breaks it down for separate councils. The number of aldermen with political ambitions beyond the local level is noticeably higher in Burwood and
Bankstown. In Burwood, five of the six aldermen who were members of a political party had actually stood for State or Federal Parliament, and most of them had done so before they were elected as aldermen. In Bankstown, on the other hand, several of those who had stood for State or Federal seats had stood as Independents, and had fought on local issues partly to further their local political careers. In direct contrast to Burwood, aldermen in North Sydney showed far less ambition to proceed beyond the local level, and in Ku-ring-gai, a similar number showed no willingness, or had not been considered eligible. We shall see below that this does reflect some important differences in the sorts of local qualifications that seem to be important for gaining local office. It should be noted that in Liverpool and Leichhardt, both Labor councils, the number who stated having ambitions for higher office was low, and the largest category in each was of those whose political horizons seem not to have extended beyond the local level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 11.5</th>
<th>Local Aldermen and Higher Political Office</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considered standing*</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asked to stand</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL RESPONSES</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Respondents could say they had both been 'asked' and had "considered". Those who said 'yes' in both cases have been entered as having 'considered' only.

Source: Questionnaire
We would expect party members to have shown a greater ambition for higher office, and to have been considered eligible for such office, for party membership is both the primary channel and a primary qualification for these positions; the opportunities are greater, and the question is more relevant. As remarked, though, this does not necessarily indicate that as local politicians they exhibit important differences in other respects. We shall see later that attaching a Party label to a local candidacy was not always sufficient to gain election even in 'safe' Labor areas for ALP candidates. The electorate at least looks for other qualifications in its elected aldermen. In one very important respect, party aldermen were not notably distinguishable from non-party aldermen, and that was in the extent of their involvement in community activities. If there was any difference, it was that Labor Party aldermen were more active in local community organisations than non-party aldermen (Table 111-6). Involvement in community organisations was one of the most important ways in which aldermen established their eligibility for local office. In this regard, party members, and in particular Labor Party members, were more local in their orientations than other aldermen. Party members who became aldermen were not just party faithfulls being rewarded with a seat on the council, and if they sought to use local political office as a stepping stone to higher political office, their success at the local level did not depend on their party membership alone.
Table 111-6 Party Membership and Local Group Activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Very Active</th>
<th>Fairly Active</th>
<th>Not Active</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ALP</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-party</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Questionnaire

While activity in local community organisations was a common feature of aldermen in all councils, there were important differences in the extent of group contacts by aldermen and the kinds of groups and organisations they belonged to. These in part reflected the different sorts of organisations involved in local politics from one area to another. Aldermen were asked to name those groups they belonged to that had been involved in 'council affairs' in some way, so the data on group activity or membership does not show their total network of group memberships, but only those that they considered were salient for them in their role as aldermen.

Table 111-7 Types of Groups and Organisations in which Local Aldermen were Involved

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>BA</th>
<th>BU</th>
<th>KU</th>
<th>LE</th>
<th>LI</th>
<th>NS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neighbourhood Groups etc.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ratepayer's Associations</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chambers of Commerce</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sporting Clubs</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Groups</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welfare Organisations</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Service Groups</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Responses that were given in the form of listing separate organisations have been categorised according to the types of groups shown in the Table. The totals do not thus represent the total number of actual groups to which aldermen on the council belonged. This was necessary because several respondents did not name separate groups, but categorised them similar to the way I have. Groups of each type were found in all areas, except that there were no Ratepayer's Associations in Bankstown or Leichhardt. Party organisations (national or local) are not included.

Source: Questionnaire.

Table 111-7 shows that Bankstown was outstanding in the range of groups in which a significant number of aldermen were active members, whilst Burwood and Leichhardt were at the other extreme. This would seem to indicate that extensive contacts with community organisations was not such an important aspect of establishing a candidate's eligibility in these latter councils.

Those groups nearer the top of the list are more directly involved in local politics than those nearer the bottom. This will become evident when discussing interest group activity in Chapter V. Not only did aldermen in Leichhardt and Burwood show less involvement in groups as a whole, their involvement was in more 'apolitical' types of groups, apart from their membership of political parties. On these two councils, as we saw in Table 111-2 the influence of community groups in the decision to stand was negligible. In Burwood, we saw that aldermen were most likely to have been 'conscripted', either by sitting aldermen or by political parties. We noted in Table 111-5 that aldermen showed a propensity to look beyond the local level in their political careers. We
can conclude that political recruitment in Burwood was a relatively closed and exclusive process in which purely local organisations were not important. Sitting aldermen were important in 'nominating' new candidates; many came from party organisations, and seemingly had few specifically local qualifications to distinguish them.

Burwood can be contrasted with North Sydney. There, local community groups were more important in influencing the decision of aldermen to stand, fewer aldermen had higher political ambitions, and they had more links with local community groups, particularly those that were closely involved in local politics, i.e. neighbourhood groups. Ku-ring-gai and Bankstown came closer to North Sydney than Burwood in exhibiting these characteristics.

Liverpool and Leichhardt were similar in so far as both contained a high proportion of ALP members. In both, community groups were not important in influencing aldermen in their decision to stand. However, group membership and community activity were not irrelevant for candidates' eligibility, either in the party pre-selection arena, or at the polls. This was true more for Liverpool than Leichhardt, as Table 111-7 indicated. In Liverpool, ALP aldermen had close links with sporting clubs which were very active in local politics as major client-groups demanding and using council services. In Leichhardt, no such politically oriented group with which ALP members had contact was important. Aldermen seem to have been selected first and foremost as party politicians, although
this does not mean that their concern was not focused largely on community affairs. Local party branches in Leichhardt were exceptional for their close involvement in municipal politics. More than in other areas, party membership brought people into direct contact with the major centres of local political power.

I have suggested that aldermen are in some ways a different kind of politician from office-holders at other levels of government. In particular, many rely primarily on community ties and special local qualifications in attaining and retaining local office. One important attribute that reinforces this view is place of residence. The great majority of aldermen not only lived in the municipality they held office in, but in the ward they represented. This is shown in Table 111-8.

Table 111-8 Residence and Work—Place of Aldermen

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BA</th>
<th>BU</th>
<th>KU</th>
<th>LE</th>
<th>LI</th>
<th>NS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ward resident</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work in ward</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* This includes only those who were self-employed. Those who both lived and worked in the ward are entered as living in the ward only

Source: Council lists

The fact of living or working in the ward was of considerable importance in winning electoral support, as we shall see in later discussion of electoral politics. Candidates who lived outside the ward, or worse still outside the municipality, were vulnerable to charges that they had no close contact with local ratepayers, and no real concern with their immediate problems. They also tended to suffer
from the disadvantage of not being involved in local community life.

One attribute of aldermen that might well be important as a qualification for local office is occupational background. Table 111-9 shows that aldermen on all but one council (Leichhardt) were predominantly drawn from higher income occupational categories. The representation of lower income categories depended largely on the success of the Labor Party at local elections. Leichhardt, where clerical and 'blue-collar' workers gained the most representation, contained 14 ALP aldermen. In the other lower socio-economic status areas, Bankstown and Liverpool, the majority of aldermen were from the first occupational category. These were local businessmen, mostly shopkeepers, builders and contractors, factory owners, and so on. This was in marked contrast to the higher status areas, where more aldermen came from the second occupational category than the first. This was most notably the case in Ku-ring-gai, where aldermen were largely in salaried occupations, professional or semi-professional in nature. In North Sydney, this category was well represented, but so were local businessmen.

Table 111-9  Occupations of Aldermen, 1970

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>BA(5)</th>
<th>BU(3)</th>
<th>KU(1)</th>
<th>LE(4)</th>
<th>LI(6)</th>
<th>NS(2)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Proprietary, managerial</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Professional, administrative</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Clerical, sales</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Skilled/ unskilled workers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Home duties</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td><strong>81</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
* Figures in brackets indicate the socio-economic status ranking of the population (Table 11-2)

N.B. Aldermen who were retired were entered in the occupation they pursued before their retirement

Source: Interviews and Questionnaire, and Council sources.

The success of businessmen in attaining local office in lower socio-economic status areas is also shown in Table 11-10. This shows that at the 1971 elections they enjoyed a higher success rate at the polls than other groups. Whilst their prominence on some councils was due partly to their propensity to stand for office, it was also due to a higher propensity to win than other occupational groups.

Table 11-10 Occupations of Candidates and Elected Aldermen, 1971

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>BA</th>
<th>BU</th>
<th>KU</th>
<th>LE</th>
<th>LI</th>
<th>NS</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proprietary &amp; managerial</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional &amp; administrative</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical &amp; sales</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled &amp; unskilled workers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home duties</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Column 1 - all candidates
  Column 2 - successful candidates

Source: Council election data; press; election literature; interviews.

In contrast to the marked success of businessmen in lower status areas, those from the second occupational category had a high failure rate in these municipalities. On the other hand, in higher status areas, those from the second
occupational category showed the highest winning ability. Table 111-11 compares the success rate of these two categories in the three high status, and the three low status municipalities taken together.

Table 111-11  Success Rates of Higher Income Categories, 1971 Elections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational Category</th>
<th>BA, LE, L1</th>
<th>BU, KU, NS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proprietary and managerial</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional and administrative</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All candidates</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Success rate = percentage of each category successful in winning election

Source: As for Table 111-10

These findings suggest that occupational background was important as a qualification for eligibility and that the actual qualifications differed from area to area.

In a brief discussion in Chapter 11 of the policy goals and values current in each council, major differences were noted. It is not surprising that Liverpool, the city of growth and progress committed to encouraging development, should attract local businessmen to stand for election, and endorse their candidacies at the polls. In contrast, Ku-ring-gai's residents expected their council to uphold a very different set of values, and typical Ku-ring-gai residents stood for office and were elected. Local businessmen hardly bothered to compete.

In Liverpool or Bankstown, local businessmen expressed many values which were shared by residents. The goals of expansion and growth were not just confined to a business elite, for they meant better facilities for residents as well as more profits for businessmen.
Businessmen are likely to be regarded as community leaders in an expanding municipality, as it is their enterprise, and their goals that best epitomise the whole ethos of growth. An independent factor in giving them a status as community leaders is that for many of them - particularly shopkeepers - their business activities bring them into close contact with many local people. They are 'well known', and this is an important factor for success in local elections, as we shall see in the next chapter. Furthermore, businessmen as anti-Labor candidates are particularly well placed to lay claim to the possession of those peculiar qualifications of local aldermen that seem to be accepted in the traditional picture of council administration. They have 'business experience', they have a large stake in the community as property owners, and they are generally not immediately associated with 'politics' in other spheres. Finally, local businessmen are likely to be in a better position to raise campaign funds than most other candidates.

Some of these attributes of local businessmen that make them successful aldermen have nothing to do with their interests as members of a particular group in the community, as distinct from an occupational category. In some circumstances, businessmen do operate as an interest group, or seek to obtain individual favours from the council. In looking at the recruitment process, then, it is important to see whether businessmen as a group "select" or "certify" candidates. In Bankstown, most of the businessmen aldermen on the 1968-71 council were members of a group called the
Progressive Independents, formed to fight council elections and compete with the Labor Party for local office. It won considerable success, for reasons that will be pursued in more detail in the next chapter. The group did on occasions act in the council as a 'businessmen's group', in the interests of local business, although this was not the only set of policy orientations that identified it as a group. In Liverpool, some of the teams of independent anti-Labor candidates were of a similar complexion, although not so persistent, cohesive, or successful. In both cases, the expression of anti-Labor sentiments, and an identification with the business community, were important attributes of candidates standing with the endorsement of the groups concerned.

In North Sydney, the 1971 elections were dominated by two groups of candidates, and the main issue was whether or not to take a much stricter and more prohibitive attitude towards multi-storey flat development. The two groups differed significantly in the occupational background of their candidates, and as a result of the victory of the 'anti-flat' candidates, the representation of local businessmen on the council - who made up a large proportion of the candidates in the other group - fell, whilst the typical middle class resident, the professional or salaried administrator, gained greater representation. In this case, then, not only did opposing teams choose different sorts of candidates for good reasons, the electorate made the same choice. In other situations, as in Ku-ring-gai or Liverpool, a dominant set of values espoused by
particular groups in the community which coincided with occupational categories, was not seriously challenged. In so far as these factors were important at elections, the process of 'certification' by sponsoring groups -- where these existed -- and by the electorate at large, reinforced each other.

Table 111-12 Men and Women as Candidates in 1971

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BA</th>
<th>BU</th>
<th>KU</th>
<th>LE</th>
<th>LI</th>
<th>NS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Men 29 12 25 11 17 10 34 12 35 12 33 11
Women 4 0 2 1 1 0 3 0 0 0 11 4

1 — Candidates
2 — Successful Candidates

Source: Council election nominations and results.

The great majority of aldermen and candidates were men, as Table 111-12 shows. On the 1968-71 council the only women aldermen were in Burwood (1), Ku-ring-gai (1), Leichhardt (1) and North Sydney (2). In 1971, however, a third of candidates in North Sydney were women. They were almost exclusively members of local residents' groups, and the involvement of women in these groups was an important development in local politics: most were married, well educated and either employed in some professional occupation, or with a record of past employment in such occupations. Their interest in local politics epitomised the interests of residents in preserving an existing residential amenity and improving community facilities, and opposing flat development in their neighbourhoods. The increasing eligibility of women for local office was due to their sponsorship by residents' groups in which they were very active, and their
close identification with the interests and the kinds of local political activity which were important factors in influencing voting patterns in 1971.

An important characteristic of most successful candidates for local office is that they were incumbent aldermen. Table III-13 shows that on average about 75 per cent of incumbent aldermen sought re-election, and that on all councils except Ku-ring-gai, about 80 per cent were successful. The low incumbent success rate in Ku-ring-gai was due to incumbent defeats in 1968 and 1971, elections that were exceptional for the issues raised, as will be seen later. The reasons for incumbent success differ from one area to another. In Leichhardt, for instance, no endorsed ALP alderman was defeated when seeking re-election during the period 1948-68, although the situation changed in 1971. In other situations, incumbency is an advantage in that sitting aldermen are better known than new candidates, and have had the opportunity to build up personal support and weld links with local groups.

Table III-13 Incumbent Turnover, 1962-1971

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>BA</th>
<th>BU</th>
<th>KU</th>
<th>LE</th>
<th>LI</th>
<th>NS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% incumbents seeking re-election</td>
<td>72.2</td>
<td>77.1</td>
<td>70.8</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>77.1</td>
<td>78.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% successful</td>
<td>76.9</td>
<td>81.1</td>
<td>55.9</td>
<td>82.2</td>
<td>75.7</td>
<td>83.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Although incumbency in itself might give sitting aldermen this type of advantage as candidates, it is not unreasonable to expect sitting aldermen who have employed a successful formula for election on at least one occasion to win again.

I have pointed out in this chapter that there were important differences in the attributes and the background
of candidates from one area to another which indicated differences in the sorts of groups and interests involved in local politics. The process of certification by which these candidates were screened for eligibility also differed. These differences were related to general features of local politics, and in the course of subsequent chapters more of these relationships will be looked at. The background of aldermen in community affairs, and the way they come to stand for local office are of importance in influencing the way aldermen behave in office. The recruitment process establishes obligations and links between candidates and groups or individuals in the community. These obligations range from the formal rules binding Labor aldermen to party caucus procedures and discipline, to informal promises and inter-personal links established between individual candidates and those influential in helping them in some way during the process of acquiring and demonstrating their eligibility for office. These obligations may be 'internalised' in that the individual candidate sees himself as a direct representative of a particular group or interest, possibly even his own personal interests.

The electoral process itself provides perhaps the major opportunity for candidates to establish their eligibility and to weld links with groups and individuals in the community. And it provides a means of observing some of these obligations being fulfilled, through appeals for votes and actual voting behaviour. Much of the next chapter on the electoral process will be concerned with.
looking at the nature of electoral politics from this point of view. What are the kinds of relationships and obligations entered into, and what kinds of groups and interests are involved?

FOOTNOTES


3. Relationships suggested for all aldermen in the six councils cannot be extrapolated to apply to all aldermen in Sydney. The respondents are not a sample of this universe, but members of a particular universe chosen independent of such sampling methods.

4. The occupational classifications used cause some problems in individual cases. The first category contains local businessmen such as shopkeepers, owners of factories, and so on. Where no more occupational information was available than the description 'manager', they were entered in this group. Solicitors, architects, real estate agents, and so on, who might also have been 'proprietors', were entered in the second category, along with teachers, engineers, librarians, and so on. Also included in this group were salaried administrative staff in private business or the public service. The final category, 'home duties' covers women not in employment. Aldermen who were retired (three in Burwood, one in Ku-ring-gai and two in Leichhardt) have been entered according to their employment before retirement.
Chapter IV LOCAL ELECTIONS: WINNING SEATS AND WINNING VOTES

Voting at local elections is based on the same rolls used for State elections, except that non-resident rate-payers can obtain enrolment, so long as no owner has more than one vote in any municipality. Companies and corporations as ratepayers can nominate a trustee to vote. Compiling the rolls and conducting the elections is in the hands of the council. The town clerk normally acts as returning officer and is charged with keeping the rolls up to date. All seats on the council fall vacant simultaneously once every three years and local elections are all held on a date fixed by statute. Each of the six local government areas was divided into wards with equal representation. In 1971, Burwood and Liverpool had three wards returning four aldermen each, Bankstown four wards returning three each, North Sydney five returning three each, Ku-ring-gai five returning two each, and Leichhardt six returning two each. Until the 1968 elections voting was compulsory and candidates in each ward were elected under a system of proportional representation. For the 1968 and 1971 elections compulsory voting was abolished, reducing turnout from about 70% to approximately 30% for Sydney metropolitan councils. At the same time the preferential "majority bloc" system replaced proportional representation.

This change in the system of counting greatly increased the importance of preferences for winning elections. Under the preferential system, when the preferences of
elected candidates are distributed, all votes are allotted rather than just a proportion. Moreover, far fewer candidates are able to achieve the required absolute majority of primary votes than are able to achieve a 'quota' under proportional representation. Table 1IV-1 shows the effect of the change. Under the preferential system the importance of reaching agreements with fellow candidates on the allocation of preferences is greatly increased.

Table 1IV-1 Percentage of aldermen elected on preferences whilst polling fewer votes than one or more unsuccessful candidates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Election Years</th>
<th>BA</th>
<th>BU</th>
<th>KU</th>
<th>LE</th>
<th>LI</th>
<th>NS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1962 and 1965 (P.R.)</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968 and 1971 (pref.)</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>41.6</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Election returns.

Assuming voters follow 'how-to-vote' instructions, a candidate who polls exceptionally well can in effect select his fellow aldermen. In the East Ward in Bankstown, Lockwood, an independent candidate, polled virtually an absolute majority of primary votes in 1968 and again in 1971. In 1968 his preferences elected the number two candidate on the ALP ticket, whilst the number one candidate did not win a seat. In 1971 Lockwood's support was withdrawn and the same candidate lost his seat. This occurred in spite of a fairly high leakage of preferences, about 25% in 1971. An independent candidate in the North Ward polled an absolute majority in 1971 and the election of the remaining aldermen was a formality, with nearly 90% of his preferences distributed according to his 'how-to-vote' instructions.
The preferential system can be exploited by candidates in various ways. Anti-Labor teams can isolate Labor candidates by exchanging preferences, and any minority can be excluded in this way. Thus, a candidate sponsored by a Ratepayer's Association in Roseville Ward in 1968 topped the poll with 38, per cent of the vote, but was beaten for each of the three seats through a tight exchange of preferences amongst the remaining three candidates. In fact, it is suicidal not to make 'preference deals'. The arrangement of preference exchanges can go to the extent of teams standing largely for the purpose of aiding the election of another team. This occurs in cases where anti-Labor groups try to defeat Labor candidates. Labor Party members also stand as independents with the aim of picking up primary votes that will go towards electing the Party team. Labor teams now adopt a more pragmatic approach than formerly in making arrangements with non-Labor teams to avoid being isolated. 2

An important feature of local elections is the small size of electorates. Tens or hundreds of votes are important rather than thousands. Table IV-2 shows the number of votes polled by successful candidates in the last proportional representation election (1965) and in the 1971 election. Also shown is the 'technical' number required for election under each system. The 'quota' and the absolute majority were roughly the same, because of the removal of compulsory voting provisions. However, because of the greater importance of preferences in gaining election, the average number of votes polled by successful candidates
was considerably less under the preferential system.

Table IV-2  Number of votes required for election

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>BA</th>
<th>BU</th>
<th>KU</th>
<th>LE</th>
<th>LI</th>
<th>NS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1965 - 'quota'</td>
<td>4395</td>
<td>943</td>
<td>2490</td>
<td>1152</td>
<td>1210</td>
<td>1269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965 - average vote of successful candidates</td>
<td>4270</td>
<td>958</td>
<td>1937</td>
<td>1427</td>
<td>1280</td>
<td>1221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971 - absolute majority</td>
<td>3650</td>
<td>968</td>
<td>1878</td>
<td>1364</td>
<td>1769</td>
<td>1260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971 - average vote of successful candidates</td>
<td>1658</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>995</td>
<td>710</td>
<td>510</td>
<td>587</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Council records of election returns.

Following the introduction of voluntary voting in electorates that were so small, 'getting out the vote' became a vital factor. Candidates and party machines were not used to the techniques, but notices began to appear in advertisements and on campaign literature offering free transport to the booths and candidates kept tally of their supporters on polling day to see if they had voted. A local newspaper report on the 1971 elections in Liverpool remarked on the novelty of these techniques, and referred to the 'voter muster' that occurred late on polling day:

At one booth in the East Ward only about 200 votes had been cast by mid afternoon. Suddenly candidates and their supporters deserted the area and some time later another 400 voters appeared 'out of nowhere'.

Candidates in their campaign literature exhorted people to 'exercise your civic duty' and warned of the dangers of apathy. A notable case of such a warning occurred in Leichhardt in the 1968 elections, when a Labor Party pamphlet carried the bold banner 'Voting is Compulsory', whilst adding in smaller type beneath '...if you want to return
When such small numbers of votes can sway the result, some candidates take the trouble to canvass the postal vote. Non-resident landowners in some areas form a significant proportion of voters. In North Sydney, business firms and companies owning offices in the commercial centre were canvassed to seek to persuade them to enrol and nominate trustees to vote. In one ward, a candidate polled 95 out of 210 postal votes, approximately one quarter of his total vote. In Liverpool in 1971 one independent candidate polled 191 out of 356 postal votes in the East Ward. This represented more than a quarter of his total vote and allowed him to top the poll. For candidates who take the trouble and make special appeals to non-resident property owners, the rewards can be significant.

These then are some of the general characteristics of local elections that help explain how candidates win seats: candidates arrange advantageous preference deals; they put up 'dummy' candidates or teams to direct preferences to themselves; they attempt to 'get the vote out' with an efficient campaign organisation; they 'organise' the postal vote. In the U. K., local elections are dominated in most cases by the national political parties, and the major factor in determining local election results is the attitude of the electors towards the performance of the parties at the national level. In Australia, of the two major parties only the ALP competes for council seats openly and formally. In those of the six councils in Sydney where the ALP competed at local
elections, Labor candidates were unable to muster the same proportion of the vote that they attained in non-local elections. This is shown in Table IV-3 which compares local with Federal Labor votes.

Table IV-3 % ALP Vote in Council and Federal Elections (1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Election</th>
<th>BANKSTOWN Local</th>
<th>Federal</th>
<th>BURWOOD Local</th>
<th>Federal</th>
<th>LEICHHARDT Local</th>
<th>Federal</th>
<th>LIVERPOOL Local</th>
<th>Federal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>62.2</td>
<td>47.3</td>
<td>71.0</td>
<td>65.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>40.4</td>
<td>39.9(2)</td>
<td>73.0</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>58.6</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>72.9</td>
<td>58.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>51.7</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>54.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>51.3</td>
<td>45.7(2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>56.5</td>
<td>41.1</td>
<td>65.1</td>
<td>61.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>20.9(3)</td>
<td>16.0(3)</td>
<td>39.6</td>
<td>31.6(3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1) Federal electorates used were as follows — for Bankstown Banks and Blaxland; for Burwood, Lowe; for Leichhardt until the 1968 redistribution, Dalley and for 1969, Sydney; for Liverpool, Werriwa. None of the boundaries exactly coincide with municipal boundaries, but no major discrepancies appear likely as a result.

(2) At these elections the ALP contested only the two most pro-Labor wards.

(3) Several Labor Party members stood at these elections without official party endorsement as independents. In Burwood, they polled better than the official party candidate in some cases. In Burwood, Bankstown and Liverpool, their candidacies may have reduced the proportion of party supporters voting for the official Labor candidate.

N.B. In all cases the percentage formal primary vote is shown.

Source: Council election returns.

It is possible that a major reason for the decline in the party vote was the removal of compulsory voting in 1968. However, even before then only in Leichhardt were local ALP candidates able to poll their usual 'non-local' proportion of the vote. The marked decreases in Labor
votes can be understood in terms of local factors, such as the fact that in Bankstown several party members were associated with bribery charges following the council's dismissal by the Minister in 1963, whilst the Progressive Independents remained untouched by the scandal. The reduction in the Labor vote of 1968 and 1971 in Leichhardt occurred when for the first time the ALP council was effectively challenged by a municipality-wide opposition fighting on local issues.

Non-Labor candidates stress the theme that 'there is no room for party politics in local government'. It appears to find some favourable response from voters. Many seem to approach local elections outside the normal framework of party allegiances. Party is relevant for some of the 'faithful', but by no means all. And party is important in a peculiarly local way, through the exploitation of the anti-party sentiment as a specifically anti-Labor sentiment.

The Labor Party itself has recognized its relative failure at the local level. It has often been claimed by party officials that the party's poor image in municipal politics has harmed the party generally. The ALP has received adverse publicity over cases of disciplinary action taken by the State Executive against local aldermen for breaches of caucus rules, and some of the more spectacular cases of corruption and maladministration have featured Labor councils and aldermen - as in Bankstown in 1963, and in Leichhardt in 1953. The party several times amended its rules to relax caucus discipline and
dismantle the municipal organisations of the party concerned with exercising party control over Labor aldermen. There has been a trend by local branches in some areas to disengage themselves from municipal politics, by not pre-selecting candidates. The most important results of the failure of the ALP in local politics has been an increased tendency for party members to stand as independents without official party endorsement. In Burwood in 1968 and 1971 and in by-elections in the intervening period, some party members stood as independents in teams with non-members; others stood as 'Independent Labor', and others as endorsed Labor Party candidates. The result was the largest ever Labor contingent on the council and a Labor mayor, who obtained support from outside the Labor group. In fact, the Labor members did not make a practice of caucusing and enforcing discipline to majority caucus decisions. The preferences of party members who stood as independents in Bankstown and Liverpool in 1971 helped elect official Labor candidates. Aspiring local politicians in the Labor Party have found that municipal politics has its own distinctive characteristics, so that it is not sufficient to attach a party label to their candidacies to gain entry.

These new approaches to local politics by the ALP, and by ALP members with aspirations in local politics, can be seen in part as an adjustment to the conditions of local political life, as well as a move to improve the party's general image for the sake of success at other levels of government. The frequent disputes between individual party aldermen and party officials stem from
the need for aldermen to respond to local ward pressures if they are to succeed as local politicians, and their consequent unwillingness on occasions to bow to the caucus majority ruling. Bids for the mayoralty and other positions on the council by individual members often involve making deals with non-Labor aldermen, deals which may not be accepted by the caucus. The pragmatic demands of preference arrangements with non-Labor aldermen in their separate wards may be frowned on by party officials or branches, who are not so concerned with the purely local ambitions of those party members who are active in local politics. Party aldermen are inhibited from making some of the highly specific localised appeals for electoral support from particular local groups in their ward because as aldermen they are first and foremost members of the Labor team, not ward aldermen free to take defiant stands for the sake of their constituents; if they do take such stands outside the rulings of the caucus majority, the result may be disciplinary action by the party.

The normal pattern of party conflict and the issues which divide the parties and form the content of State and Federal politics, are not relevant in local politics. Many of the important local issues are not of the type that involve the taking of united stands on matters of policy, and certainly not matters of 'principle' or doctrine. There is much truth in the old adage: 'There is nothing party political about a footpath or a drain'. Just how this is so will become clearer in the discussion of the way local candidates actually go about winning votes.
Party candidates did not stand in North Sydney during the 1960's and in Ku-ring-gai, an even safer Liberal area, they never made an attempt. In all areas there was an absence of open party competition and electors seemed to view local politics outside a party political framework. It seems reasonable that some of the characteristics of local elections in the United States, in those municipalities where elections are formally and in fact 'non-partisan', might prevail in the Australian situation. In these non-partisan elections, it is found that candidates obtain votes through direct and indirect contacts in networks of acquaintance spreading through local community organisations of various sorts; these more 'apolitical' types of organisations take the place of parties. Candidates rely on their 'name' and there 'reputation' rather than on issues such as those that form the subject of conflict between the political parties; candidates are reluctant to take stands on issues but rely on promotion of their own personal 'qualifications' for office. Prewitt uses the phrase the 'politics of acquaintance' to describe the customary pattern of support for such candidates. As he sees it -

The election system provides advantages to those citizens who already have social and political resources; to those located favourably in the network of friendships and associates which play such an important part in city politics; .... to those who have natural organisational ties and support; and.... to those already in office...

This model does have some relevance. It raises questions about the sorts of relationships that are forged
between candidates and supporters in campaigning for votes. We can usefully distinguish between different types of such links. F. G. Bailey draws the distinction between moral and transactional relationships.\textsuperscript{7} A transactional relationship is akin to that between the mercenary and his hirelings. The bonds that tie the faithful to a saintly leader are moral in nature. The hireling must be paid, or else he will take his services elsewhere. The faithful give their service and support out of love or devotion to a person, a cause, or an ideal. This is not to say that the faithful don't expect rewards, but the nature of the good to be delivered is usually quite different, and the faithful will wait much longer. As Bailey put it —

The leader of a moral group has a higher credit-rating than the leader of a group of hirelings. \textsuperscript{8}

A further distinction can be made, between diffuse and specific appeals. Diffuse appeals are directed at broad groups or categories of people who are thought to share a common interest. Specific appeals are directed at individuals, or smaller groups, and their content, the nature of the obligations and the terms of the relationship are usually much clearer. It is difficult to hold a politician to any future course of action when he makes diffuse appeals such as a promise to act 'in the public interest', or 'in the interests of the working class'. Adrian Mayer distinguishes between diffusely and specifically transactional appeals in discussing electoral politics in an Indian municipality:
The campaign... contained activity at two levels: one was a public level, at which promises were given to the general electorate as part of the party's stated programme; the other was the private level, at which promises given and obligations encashed were not necessarily connected to the party's programme...

Diffuse appeals characteristically are impersonal, made at public meetings or via propaganda. Specific appeals are usually made at a more personal level, often face to face. There are examples of specific moral appeals as well, as when an appeal for political support is made to a relation or a friend.

The description of non-partisan elections given above seems to depict a situation in which moral types of appeal are dominant. At a diffuse level, candidates stress their community service, their public spiritedness and their desire to selflessly serve the community for the public good; at the specific level, they exploit ties of friendship and acquaintance with fellow club members or social contacts. Transactional links, although inescapably present in such appeals, are muted. In the six councils, we can find parallels. The 'anti-party' theme used by non-Labor candidates is a diffuse moral theme which we noted in the previous chapter was linked to other similar themes. All candidates list their 'qualifications' to serve, their record in community life, and so on. In doing so appeals are made to widely held beliefs or norms about local government representation. We also find characteristics of local politics akin to those described in the 'politics of acquaintance'. One North Sydney alderman described some of them:
I have lived all my life in the Ward, and been in business there; I was connected with the Ratepayer's Association, which is what really got me involved. I belong to local clubs - the RSL, the bowling club, and so on, and that keeps me in touch. So I have a continuous stream of people coming to me about council matters - you must be approachable....

In talking of elections, aldermen continually stressed how important it was to be 'well known':

The thing that affects elections most is how much personal support you can get....

...the vote for the local man - the bloke who lives around the corner, is vital. One of the biggest things is do any of the names ring a bell?

However, being well known and having personal support is not just a case of acquaintanceship, or identification with a well known figure:

Being well known isn't enough. You've got to do what's expected of you too....

It's the personality that counts - people get to know you, know that you have done good service. They get to know whether an alderman will help them and listen to their complaints - they support the man they feel has done them best.

It's the 'local' business that keeps the alderman in power, looking after people - here at the shop I get lots of complaints, and I make sure I do what I can.

Thus, personal support can also be built up by promising to help people with their individual problems, or by 'cashing in' credit built up through favours done in the past.

The transactional element in a candidate's personal following is also present in the links forged with friends, fellow club members, and so on. People do not vote for the 'local man' or a business associate just to get a warm
glow of satisfaction from having a friend in a position of authority or prestige. They also expect that should the occasion arise, they will gain ready access to the council through a personal approach to him and that he will feel obliged to do them a favour and help them, whether it is a question of a pot-hole in the road, or a development application to be put through the council.

Transactional links may also be forged in other ways in seeking support and votes. Some aldermen stressed the support of groups or organisations:

You can't win without some group or organisation behind you, or the support of some section of the community. In my case it's sporting clubs, another alderman is very close to the churches, and so on. 16

For someone connected with a local progress association, the support can be very important, if the group has some status.... 17

...clubs may try and mobilise their members to support particular candidates...the RSL could swing 1,000 votes if it wanted to - if you offend them you go to other groups and look for 1,000 more.... 18

'Those groups with concrete proposals - not politically minded ones - are very useful to us. Once you've done something for them they remain very loyal'. 19

Whilst service clubs and other basically 'non-political' associations do not usually consider it a proper part of their role to go 'politicking', aldermen assiduously attempt to win favour with such groups, by making promises for council services or grants, or if elected, by trying to keep the promises made.

When the number of votes needed to win election is as small as it is in local elections, it becomes a realistic proposition to build up electoral support
through the use of specific transactional appeals. Every vote counts. Residents of particular streets are promised kerb and gutter, or reminded that they got it last year; particular clubs are promised money for a community project; particular suburbs are promised facilities, and so on.

An important feature of elections in the six councils was the existence of teams of candidates of various sorts, a result partly of the necessity of alliances for the exchange of preferences. There are different types of electoral teams. In particular I shall distinguish between a local party and an electoral alliance. A local party presents a specific 'image' for the whole team, and campaigns for the votes for the team, stressing stands taken on local issues rather than emphasising the personal cadidacies of the individual members. Financial and organisational resources are pooled, and a common strategy employed. By pin-pointing local issues, the local party identifies itself with particular groups or interests, and also generally identifies an enemy. It enters into commitments on policies and can be judged on its record at subsequent elections.

An electoral alliance is a marriage of convenience between candidates who rely largely on personal followings. Each campaigns separately in support of his own candidacy, tapping known supporters and employing personal appeals. Any stands taken in common are likely to be of a very diffuse nature, entailing few commitments, as the marriage
is not a permanent one. Candidates in an electoral alliance employ specific transactional and moral appeals, alongside diffuse moral appeals. A local party employs transactional appeals that are more diffuse in nature than those commonly used by candidates building personal following.

We can re-state these distinctions with the general framework outlined in the first chapter. Candidates in electoral alliances, in making highly specific transactional appeals, operate in the distributive arena of politics. They promise favours, 'slices of pork', and so on. They attempt to tot up the numbers to win from a fragmented structure of groups and interests. Local parties aggregate these interests through more diffuse transactional appeals. Rather than just focusing on individual grievances about neighbouring blocks of flats, they raise regulative issues in an 'anti-flat' campaign. Rather than promising to see that planning discretion is exercised in favour of residents who want to move out and sell their properties for flats, they promise a re-zoning of an area to permit flats. Rather than devoting attention to promises to kerb and gutter particular streets, they draw attention to the need for more money to be allocated for kerb and gutter. Similar redistributive issues can emerge over protests over the level of the rate.

One aspect of the personal support a candidate can muster will come in for some attention in the analysis of electoral strategies of candidates in the 1971 elections.
Many candidates poll best in booths near their home or place of business. This is the 'friends-and-neighbours' phenomenon identified by V. O. Key in his study of Southern politics in the United States. The vote for the 'home town boy' indicated 'the absence of stable, well organised, state-wide factions of like-minded citizens formed to advocate measures of common concern'. Thus, a concern for issues, promoted by or appealing to state-wide groups would tend to produce a pattern of even support across the state for candidates. D. R. Reynolds argues that extreme localism in support occurs where party loyalties are not strong, and that the development of broader support by 'generating issues and aligning with non-locally based organisations' minimises the effect. Thus, we would expect to find that candidates in local parties would show less evidence of 'friends-and-neighbours' support than candidates in electoral alliances.

1. **BANKSTOWN**

During the 1960's elections in the South and West Wards were increasingly dominated by competition for seats between the Progressive Independents and the ALP. The Progressive Independents, as I have pointed out, were largely local businessmen, and their major stated intention was to keep the ALP off the council. Associated with this was the claim to 'clean up' local politics and even to keep 'politics' out of council affairs altogether. They stressed their business-like approach, their attempts to introduce greater efficiency, and their opposition to
'horse trading', caucus control, and so on. Continuity of personnel and image, the use of common propaganda (including a local newspaper owned by one of the group's members), and the pursuit of consistent policies, entitle the group to be labelled a local party. It won all six seats in the two wards it contested on the 1968-71 council, but lost two to the ALP, and one to an independent, in 1971.

The group laid emphasis on its provision of amenities for sport and youth, on its use of new sources of finance to increase the construction of kerb and gutter and other street works, and on its use of contract labour rather than the council's 'inefficient' workforce in performing these works. On this point, the group was bitterly opposed by the local ALP. The ALP itself in these wards could be seen as a local party, as it focused attention on several local issues throughout the period. It attacked the Progressive Independents for their policy of permitting flat development, accusing them of favouring the speculator and developer but destroying Bankstown's 'garden suburbs'. It made considerable capital at the 1971 elections out of a decision of 1969 supported by the Progressive Independents to build a $1.5m civic centre, accusing them of extravagance and misplaced priorities. It tried to raise the general issue of 'more kerb and gutter'. These issues were fought out against a continual background of personal attacks which were occasionally quite rancorous.

The 1971 campaign also saw appeals by both parties of a more specific transactional type. The Progressive...
Independents pointed to the benefits that had come to particular streets they had provided with kerb and gutter and listed promises they had fulfilled in building particular local facilities. Campaign literature listed streets that were to be kerbed and guttered in the near future. The ALP countered with mention of the most pot-holed and dusty streets and promises of facilities for particular suburbs. The Progressive Independent newspaper urged members of sporting clubs and youth welfare groups not to stay at home but to go out and vote, pointing to the various clubs that had benefited from new playing fields and amenities. The ALP campaigned particularly vigorously in the areas where flat development was an issue.

In the other two wards, this sort of polarisation between candidates was not evident. In the East Ward, there were no officially endorsed ALP candidates, whilst there was one in the North Ward who was in fact elected on the preferences of a sitting independent alderman. The campaigns were notable for a lack of major issues and it was hard to distinguish candidates on this score. In each ward, the results were dominated by a sitting independent polling approximately 50 per cent of the vote. Both had been noted for their assiduous attention to local groups and organisations in the preceding years and both were able to muster a large personal following.

The campaign organisation of the Progressive Independents depended on individual candidates recruiting
helpers from amongst personal friends; many were former helpers, forming a core of close supporters. In the South Ward in particular, the candidates depended on propaganda rather than personal contact and active campaigning. As one candidate put it —

I can usually get 20 per cent, my running mate about 30 per cent, that's good enough, so campaigning too hard isn't too important.23

In fact they both received less than 15 per cent in 1971, attributable perhaps to the fact that they didn't engage in enough 'fence-mending'. In contrast, Keenan, who polled 50 per cent in the North Ward ran a highly organised campaign. A dozen close supporters organised the distribution of literature and the attendance of booths on polling day, pursued personal contacts throughout the ward in search of support, and undertook door-knocking. Keenan's personal effort was concentrated on renewing contacts with local community organisations and acquaintances. The reliance on such contacts within networks of organised social and community activity was a common feature of many candidates' campaigns.

Although I categorised the Progressive Independents as a local party, individual candidates in the group relied heavily on personal networks of support, as well as on appeals for a vote for the group as a whole. Unlike some local parties, each candidate sought to maximise his own primary vote. Table 1V-4 presents some data on the extent to which candidates polled in varying strengths at different polling booths. This provides a basis for the analysis of party support,
the 'friends-and-neighbours' vote, or local support based on other sorts of appeals. In each ward, the three candidates with the highest percentage vote are shown.

The second column in the table shows the range between the highest and lowest percentage vote at separate polling booths (for McIlveen 62 per cent and 6 per cent respectively). Another measure of dispersion is given in column three. This is arrived at by calculating the standard deviation percentage vote for each candidate and expressing it as a proportion of the mean of percentage votes at separate booths. This mean may differ slightly from the per cent total vote, due to differences in the number of votes polled at different booths. The coefficient of variation provides a means of comparing the degree of dispersion from one alderman to another, when the difference in their percentage votes makes comparison of simple standard deviations difficult.

Table IV-4  Bankstown 1971 elections — measures of variation in polling strength between different booths

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward</th>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Total Vote</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Coefficient of Variation</th>
<th>Number of Booths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>McIlveen (PI)</td>
<td>27.4</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brennan (ALP)</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vine</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>McCormack (ALP)</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Duncan (PI)</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parker (PI)</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East</td>
<td>Lockwood</td>
<td>45.6</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peffer</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>McDonald</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>Keenan</td>
<td>51.0</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bowman (ALP)</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pl Progressive Independent
♂ Unsuccessful candidates (eliminated on preferences)

Source: Council election returns
FIGURE 1. BANKSTOWN 1971 ELECTIONS

KEY:
X Home Address
+ Work Place

SCALE 1M
Variations in support from one booth to another were in some cases extreme. The major factor in this was the considerably higher support received by candidates in booths in their home suburbs, or near their place of business. Figure IV-1 shows this for the aldermen that topped the poll in each ward. The map shows place of residence, and where relevant, place of business, and records the difference (plus or minus) between the percentage vote polled at each booth and the percentage polled as a whole by the candidate. The falling away of support for Keenan and Lockwood in the North and East Wards at booths distant from their home suburbs is quite striking. Keenan's best support came in four booths grouped closely around his home and his shop.

The smallest variation in support in Figure IV-1 was shown by McCormack in the South Ward. As Table IV-4 shows, ALP candidates did not show the extreme variation of support given for some of the other candidates. This would be expected if they were polling a 'party vote', as party support at non-local elections is fairly uniform across the area. Nevertheless, ALP candidates still showed evidence of 'friends-and-neighbours' support. Other factors were also important, though. McCormack polled particularly well at Revesby, where the polling booth was close to the Revesby Worker's Club, which had strong links with the ALP, and was upset by the council's refusal in 1969 of an application for permission to extend its premises. He also polled well at Padstow, where the ALP had attempted to exploit the flats issue.
The fact that the Progressive Independent candidates polled relatively evenly seems to indicate that voters perceived the election to some extent in terms of the conflict between the two local parties.

A conspicuous case of localism in support occurred in the West Ward. The ward was divided physically by the Bankstown aerodrome, and by a main road fringed by industrial development running alongside it and across the whole ward from East to West. The gap in the distribution of polling booths shown in Figure IV-1, across the centre of the ward, shows this division.

The contrast in Table IV-4 between the relative evenness of support for the ALP candidate, and Vine or McIlveen, is striking. McIlveen was a shopkeeper in the southern part of the ward, whilst Vine was a shopkeeper in the northern part. He polled up to 50 per cent of the vote in booths in his home suburb, whilst McIlveen polled even better in the five booths shown in Figure IV-1, in the southern part of the ward. The other Progressive Independent candidates lived in the northern part of the ward. One in particular polled a strong local vote in his suburb, but not sufficient to win the seat.

The campaigns conducted by Vine and McIlveen were directed to their own parts of the ward. This vote for the 'local man' was due in part to overt transactional appeals each made to their own part of the ward. Vine claimed the northern part was neglected, and that McIlveen had been getting a lion's share of the funds, whilst McIlveen stressed his service to his own area, and
promised specific facilities — including a new swimming pool — for the future. The Progressive Independents’ newspaper claimed:

It would be reasonable to expect the mayor, Ald. McIlveen, to poll 80 per cent of the South Bankstown quota of the west ward vote, as he has done so much for this area....

The local vote for candidates was a central feature of electoral support in Bankstown. Even for long-standing candidates such as McIlveen and Lockwood (first elected 1962 and 1956 respectively), the local vote was still important. Keenan, elected for a second term in 1971 did in fact considerably increase his percentage votes in booths throughout the ward, and his coefficient of variation fell from .79 in 1968 to .32 in 1971. In other words, there is evidence that he developed broader patterns of allegiance across the ward, in the course of his three year’s incumbency. However, his local vote was still a very significant part of his total support and the appeals he made throughout the ward were in part of the same specific transactional type as those that were often associated with support for a candidate in his own suburb. The Progressive Independents relied to a considerable extent on such appeals, coupled to the names of locally based candidates who fought their own parochial campaigns, and the ALP was also drawn into this arena of distributive politics. The campaign themes reflected the pattern of local politics as a whole, which was not centrally concerned with issues that affected broad sectors of the electorate. Local party competition on the basis
of such broad issues was probably only secondary in determining patterns of support for most candidate.

2. **LIVERPOOL**

At the 1971 election the ALP increased the strength of its contingent on the council from six to seven, although it only polled 31 per cent of the vote. Its seats were won by means of astute preference arrangements. In each ward the contest was dominated by competition between Labor and anti–Labor teams. The campaign was on occasions rancorous, but apart from one case in the East Ward referred to below, there was a marked lack of issues of substantive policy to distinguish one team from another. The 'enemy' was seen purely in party political terms in the campaign themes employed. Anti–Labor teams condemned the caucus system and the harm party politics (i.e. the ALP) did to local government. They stressed their 'business-like' approach to efficient administration and sound management. Labor party campaign literature appealed primarily to the party supporter. The independent teams were accused of being 'Liberals in disguise', as some were in fact members of the Liberal Party. Voters were warned —

> Will they represent your point of view? Will they run Liverpool like the Libs in Canberra?

> Labor is a political party pledged to aid the family and working man and in no other form of government can so much day-to-day assistance be given as in Local Government. 25

The ALP teams did claim that they were more concerned with the provision of amenities for residents, such as sporting fields, swimming pools, and so on, and pointed to
their achievements over the past few years in this regard: a new swimming pool in Green Valley, unprecedented expenditure on sports facilities, and so on. One or two independent candidates did make some contrast in stressing first and foremost the need to curb rate increases. However, all teams made competing promises to provide specific facilities to particular suburbs — a new baby health centre, more playing fields, and so on. On this score they were hard to distinguish: competition for votes took the form of attempting to out-bid opponents in appealing to highly specific parochial interests.

One conspicuous case occurred in the East Ward, where a large number of Moorebank residents had protested vigorously over a proposed industrial development in part of their suburb. The council had opposed the development, although it conformed with zoning requirements, and none of the candidates were prepared to oppose local sentiment publicly. Candidates were reduced to attacking their opponents' sincerity on the matter. An unsigned letter was delivered to letter boxes in the district alleging that one independent alderman in fact supported the project, and accusing him and his running mate of not being fully behind local opinion. The latter, having topped the poll in that part of the ward with 30 per cent of the vote in 1968, polled only 10 per cent in the same area in 1971, whilst his overall vote remained about 25 per cent. Both narrowly lost their seats.

Most candidates, whether Labor or non-Labor, stressed their personal record and qualifications. Leading Labor
candidates in the North and East Wards put advertisements in the paper stressing their personal records without mention of their party affiliation, to supplement the official Labor campaigns. The North Ward candidate was very active in the sporting community, and his half-page newspaper advertisement depicted him in his track-suit presenting a cup to a local team of infant-sportsmen. The text stressed his record on the council in getting more funds for North Ward sports facilities. The East Ward candidate stressed the many battles that he had fought for individuals who had come up against implacable and unswerving local and State bureaucrats, adopting as his motto -

   Let's be fair dinkum, cut the red tape, and get things done!!!

Voters in all wards were asked to 'Vote for Joe', or 'Frank', or 'Gus'. This characteristic personal touch was reflected in the local neighbourhood support that many of the candidates polled.

Table IV-5 shows the same measures of variation in support for Liverpool that were used for Bankstown. A notable feature is that ALP candidates showed nearly as much variation in votes polled as non-Labor candidates, reflecting the importance of the personal campaigns some conducted. These variations are again explicable largely by the influence of place of residence on voting support. Durrant, the Labor candidate in the North Ward, polled 73 per cent of the vote at Warwick Farm booth, nearest his home suburb. Napier in the South Ward polled 44 per cent of the vote at Lurnea in the booth nearest
his home. In both wards, there are problems in using figures from all of the booths. In the North Ward, one booth on the fringe of the urban area showed a poll of 176 votes, of which 144 (82 per cent) were for Oliveri; Durrant polled nil. The booth was near Oliveri's home and adjacent to a bus depot and a speedway track both owned by him. This was an interesting case of the 'politics of acquaintance'. This booth rather distorts the total picture of polling in the Ward. Both Durrant and Oliveri polled relatively evenly in the residential suburbs of the Green Valley Housing estate, where the major part of the ward's electors lived.

Table IV-5 Liverpool 1971 elections — measures of variation in polling strength between different booths

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% Total Vote</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Coefficient of Variation</th>
<th>Number of Booths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>East Ward</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gard</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>.33</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smith</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradshaw (ALP)</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coco</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Ward</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oliveri (ALP)</td>
<td>30.4</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durrant (ALP)</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sadler</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heyhoe</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Ward</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Napier (ALP)</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McCarthy</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Galuzzo</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapman</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

φ Unsuccessful candidates (eliminated on preferences)

Source: Council election returns.

In the South Ward, a similar problem arises in that Chapman polled a large proportion of his vote in the outlying rural villages of the Ward. In Bringelly, where
he was Chairman of the Progress Association he polled 83 per cent, or 99 votes out of 120. The small numbers polled at these outlying booths makes the use of this data difficult. Removing four rural booths from the series, the coefficients of variation for the remaining candidates becomes: Napier, .27; McCarthy, .37; Galuzzo, .45. Support for the ALP, and for McCarthy, their major opponent, was thus distributed more evenly than Table IV-5 might suggest.

The 1971 elections in Liverpool underlined the inability of the ALP to poll the proportion of the vote they polled at non-local elections. Whilst ALP candidates did rely heavily on appeals to the party supporter, several also conducted personal campaigns, appealing directly to particular sectors of the community, or trying to mobilise a personal following. It may be that for party candidates, personal acquaintance provides the spur for a party supporter to cast a vote, but the 74 per cent that Durrant polled in his own suburb suggests that his personal following was to some extent independent of party allegiance. This sort of personal support was evident for non-Labor candidates, and it seems likely that this factor accounts to a large extent for the ability of non-Labor candidates to do so well in terms of votes polled.

3. KU-RING-GAI

The 1968 and 1971 elections in Ku-ring-gai were dominated by a local party concerned with preventing rate increases. Candidates endorsed by the Ku-ring-gai
Ratepayers Committee won a 7-5 majority in 1968 on a promise to 'peg the rates' for three years, a promise which they kept. Ratepayer candidates also won a majority in 1971. In 1968 and 1971, the Ratepayers Committee distributed common campaign literature for its endorsed candidates and held public meetings in their support. Individual candidates also conducted their own campaigns in their respective wards, but the promise not to increase the rates was the major plank in their platforms.

The polarisation that occurred as a result of this campaign led to significant changes in the character of electoral politics. The aldermen under attack in the 1968 elections were mostly of long service, some of them with close links with local community organisations, particularly neighbourhood progress associations. Their approach to council policy was based on the notion that Ku-ring-gai was a special municipality of high status residential suburbs that deserved the best in services and amenities. In this attitude they mirrored the approach of progress associations whose major aim was to obtain more and better services for their immediate neighbourhood. All progress associations publicly opposed the Ratepayers Committee. Not only did the Ratepayers campaign challenge traditional policy goals, they seemed to herald a new political style. The Ratepayers Committee was branded with a 'Faceless Men' image, and Ratepayers candidates were criticised for making rash promises that they might not be able to keep.
It was argued that candidates at elections should not go 'politicking'; the only promise they should make is to 'follow their conscience' and 'act in the public good', and the only outside influence they should be beholden to is the community at large, not sectional interests within it.

Other appeals of sitting aldermen to voters were the same as they had made in past years. They sought to mobilise personal followings and exploit personal networks of acquaintance, particularly in their own neighbourhoods. Apart from the sorts of themes referred to above, their campaign literature listed their 'qualifications' and their record of activity in 'community service'. The difference in the patterns of support received by these aldermen, and by the Ratepayers candidates, is indicated by Table IV-6 which shows measures of variation in local support for candidates who polled best at the 1968 elections. The most extreme variations of the support were for non-Ratepayers candidates, and although some of the Ratepayers candidates did show quite marked local variations, the difference between the two sets of candidates is seen by calculating the mean coefficient of variation for each group. For the Ratepayers candidates it was .28, for the rest, .55.
Table IV-6  Ku-ring-gai 1968 elections - measures of variation in polling strength between different booths

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total Vote</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Coefficient of Variation</th>
<th>Number of Booths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wahroonga</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turner (R)</td>
<td>38.9</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acheson</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basto (R)</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pymble-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Ives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rickard</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bennett (R)</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mason</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gordon-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Killara</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McMillan (R)</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bennett</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mason</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Roseville</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kartzoff (R)</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>McDonald</td>
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<td>.41</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robins</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R = Ratepayers Candidate
φ = unsuccessful candidates (eliminated on preferences)

Source: Council election returns.

Support for all candidates shows evidence of a 'friends-and-neighbours' voting pattern. However, the Ratepayers electoral appeal was a broad one and succeeded in cutting across the traditional patterns of local allegiance for sitting candidates. These differences are well illustrated in Table IV-7, which shows the percentage vote polled by each of the candidates at each booth in two of the four wards, and indicates booths located nearest candidates' homes.

The relationship between place of residence and a high percentage vote is evident for all candidates, but least for the Ratepayers candidate McMillan. It is most marked amongst the candidates opposing the Ratepayers team. The variation in Mason's vote was remarkable. The ward straddled the Pacific Highway, which runs down the centre of the municipality on a ridge that provides a marked
division into eastern and western suburbs. Mason's support came from the suburbs to the west of the Highway, where he lived. It is notable that Bennett polled worst where the other candidates had their personal followings. In Gordon-Killara Ward, Harris and MacDonald were officials of two local progress associations, and their support reflects the suburbs in which these associations were located (booths 12 and 14 respectively).

Table IV-7  Ku-ring-gai 1968 elections - percentage votes polled at each booth by candidates in two wards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pymble-St Ives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Rickard</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>27</td>
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<td>13</td>
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<td>16</td>
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<td>22.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mason</td>
<td>24</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gordon-Killara</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McMillan (R)</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>28</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harris</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MacDonald</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R - Ratepayers Candidates

Underlining of figures indicates for each candidate the two booths nearest his/her home address.

Source: Council election returns.

The 1968 election was a defeat for the progress associations. In 1971, the neighbourhood parochialism which they fostered, and which was an important part of the traditional pattern of electoral support, was even less of an influence. Only three members of the pre-1968 council who had been targets of the Ratepayers Committee campaign stood. In most wards there were only four or five candidates for the two seats: candidates endorsed by the Ratepayers Committee and an opposing team. Once again the campaign was concerned largely with the issue of the
rate. The polarisation that had occurred over this issue, and the absence of parochial issues and neighbourhood-based candidates, was indicated by the much greater evenness of support for the major candidates. The mean coefficient of variation for the Ratepayers candidates was .14, and for their opponents .20. Some of the levelling out in overall support can be attributed to the redrawing of ward boundaries. The new wards were smaller and account was taken of the Pacific Highway as a major boundary between local communities. One further influence may have helped produce a more uniform pattern of support in one ward at least. In Gordon Ward, the candidates successfully opposing the Ratepayers aldermen were strongly supported by the local Liberal Party. Leaflets were circulated in which their candidacies were endorsed by the local Liberal Party Parliamentarians, and they received support from the local party branches. This had little to do with the issue of the rate, but seems to have been a reaction against these aldermen for playing leading roles in several issues in which the council had been in dispute with the Liberal State Government. Apart from purely local issues of embarrassment to State Government departments, the council had been a leader in lobbying among local councils on broad environmental issues, critical of the government and seeking changes in legislation relating to conversation and pollution.

The 1968 and 1971 elections saw important political changes in Ku-ring-gai. The pattern of neighbourhood personal support was broken down by a local party appealing
at a more impersonal level on the basis of a widely felt municipality-wide issue - the level of the rate.

4. NORTH SYDNEY

As in Ku-ring-gai, local issues dominated the 1971 elections in North Sydney. Two opposing municipality-wide local parties reflected the polarisation of the 1968-71 council on the issue of flat development. One party called itself 'Resident Action', and was based on a coalition of local neighbourhood residents' groups that had been formed in the preceding years over protests against the effect of high-density flat development on the character of residential areas. Their campaign was aimed at mobilising support from existing residents on this issue. The opposing group was the North Sydney Citizen's Group, whose candidates were largely local businessmen. One half of the Resident Action candidates were women, and most of them had come into local politics through residents' groups. The Resident Action campaign attempted to emphasise the polarisation of interests over the flats issue. The campaign leaflet for their candidates in Kirribilli Ward opened with the statement: 'Some developers don't want these people on the North Sydney Council'. One of the candidates was quoted prominently in a leaflet as saying: 'You can't give up. It's a constant fight - the developers against us - the people'. The Citizen's Group denied strongly that they represented developers' interests, but they accused aldermen who stood as Resident Action candidates for their 'inconsistencies' in administering planning regulations, their unwillingness
to accept the advice of their planning staff, and the expense to ratepayers in court costs incurred by the council. The council frequently appeared before the Land and Valuation Court to defend council decisions refusing approval for particular developments against which appeals were lodged by the developers. The Citizen's Group warned of the dangers of control by the council of 'minority' interests and 'sectional pressure groups'. They attempted to raise new issues, such as the financial management of the council, to combat the broad appeal of the Resident Action campaign. They claimed to have the skills to be more efficient administrators and managers. Their campaign was a costly one, relying heavily on printed propaganda, with supplements in local newspapers, plus news sheets and leaflets distributed to letter boxes.

No members of the Citizen's Group won election and amongst them were two sitting aldermen. The new council of 15 included 9 Resident Action candidates. Most of the rest had been sympathetic to their campaign. Given the nature of the campaign, and the stress by each of the major groups on broad local issues, one would expect candidates to have polled relatively evenly amongst electors in each ward. Employing the same measures of variation of voting support used for previous councils, for the three candidates who topped the poll in each ward, the mean coefficient of variation for the ten local party candidates (of whom eight were Resident Action) was .24, and for the remaining five non-party candidates, .50.
The sorts of factors that seem to account for the difference are illustrated by Table IV-8. Of the candidates in Tunks and Belmore Wards the highest variations in support occurred for three non-party candidates - Fitzpatrick, Brunton and Hutley. They polled exceptionally well in the booths in their own suburbs; Hutley and Brunton were both local shopkeepers, in these respective suburbs, whilst Fitzpatrick as a medical practitioner had opportunities to build up a large network of acquaintanceship in the locality. These three were long standing aldermen. The variations in support for Resident Action candidates in these wards also seems to correspond to distance from place of residence, but the variations are not nearly so marked.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table IV-8</th>
<th>North Sydney 1971 elections - percentage votes polled by candidates at separate booths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tunks Ward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fitzpatrick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ambler (RA)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Brunton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Belmore Ward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Goddard (RA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>O'Dea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hutley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kirribilli Ward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hamilton (RA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>King (RA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Woodward (RA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Halvorsen (NSCG)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RA - Resident Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NSCG - North Sydney Citizen's Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Underlining shows booth nearest home of candidate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Council election returns.
In Kirribilli Ward, however, there was one notable exception. King polled exceptionally well in the locality in which she was president of the local residents' group and where she had been very active in local issues. The other two Resident Action candidates and the Citizen's Group candidate all polled relatively evenly; in fact, all three lived outside the ward.

The situation in North Sydney was similar to that in Ku-ring-gai, in that local party activity based on broad local issues cut across other sorts of vote-winning methods, notably the personal following of long standing aldermen in their own localities. In some cases, these followings were enough to ensure their re-election, whilst sitting aldermen who had become aligned with the losing party and who had previously relied to a large extent on this sort of personal support were defeated.

5. LEICHHARDT

The 1971 elections saw the defeat of the Labor majority, taking the council out of Labor Party control for the first time since the formation of the municipality by the 1948 boundary revisions. The ALP topped the poll in only two out of the six wards and won only four of the twelve seats. This reversal had been foreshadowed in 1968 when the Balmain-Leichhardt Labor Party, organised by two former ALP aldermen who had been expelled from the party in 1967 for disobeying a caucus ruling over an issue that vitally affected Balmain, had made large inroads into the Labor vote. However, they only won the Balmain seats, the ALP elsewhere being able to maintain a lead in primary votes.
sufficient for the preferential system to elect full teams of candidates. The 1971 anti-Labor campaign was led by others, although the Balmain aldermen were left to fight their own campaign in their ward. The new anti-Labor organisation contested all other wards and adopted the name of Campaign for a Better Council (CBC).

The CBC qualifies to be labelled a local party on a number of grounds. Regular meetings of candidates and campaign organisers were held in the weeks and months prior to the election to discuss strategy and to organise the production and distribution of campaign literature. They raised common funds largely through public appeals to individuals, so that funds were drawn from a large number of small contributors, and pooled these financial resources for advertising, printing, and so on. Equally important was the pooling of campaign experience and political 'know-how'. Typical of their application to detail, as well as their view of the opposition, were the efforts made to combat any electoral malpractices such as double voting or 'ballot-box stuffing'. The rolls were combed to challenge names of dead people, and before the election a detailed list of instructions was given to scrutineers in the polling booths on measures to be taken to prevent any malpractices. 28

The CBC adopted a common platform aimed at capitalising on a perceived general disenchantment with the Labor regime. They attempted to crystallise this by their description of the Labor council as 'arrogant' and 'dictatorial', and the claim that it was unwilling
to listen to the opinions of residents. They promised a more 'open' style of government that particularly took account of the protests or opinions of residents and encouraged their participation. An interesting variation on this theme was the promise to employ foreign language-speaking officials to act as interpreters for the migrant community, particularly the Italians.

Coupled with these appeals were promises to concentrate on preserving or enhancing residential amenity by providing more parks and play areas, planting trees, putting the interests of residents 'before the interests of land developers', and vigorously opposing proposals of the Department of Main Roads to build two expressways that cut broad swathes through residential areas right across the municipality. Appeals were made to various community organisations, by promising more involvement in community activities and welfare services of various sorts, particularly in old people's welfare and pre-school and youth facilities.

The CBC campaign was helped by a sympathetic local and metropolitan press. Three local newspapers supported the CBC campaign. One, 'The Glebe', conducted a particularly virulent campaign using a highly colourful and readable style of 'muck-raking' journalism. Like the CBC campaign, 'The Glebe' concentrated on the theme of 'arrogance', but coupled it with accusations of corruption. Cases in which the council was imputed to have acted corruptly were documented, however flimsy the evidence. Stories of local residents who complained
of being treated unfairly were given prominence. Continual reference was made to a number of past issues that had attracted widespread press attention. One story, given prominent coverage in the metropolitan press, concerned the issuing of firearms to the council's by-law inspectors, supposedly for their protection in performing their enforcement duties, such as patrolling public lavatories at night. 'The Glebe' welcomed the defeat of the ALP with the headlines: 'Gun Law Ends'. A further issue that had attracted considerable press and television publicity over the preceding three years and had concerned the proprietor of 'The Glebe' personally, involved the council's treatment of the managers and tenants of an Old Men's Home in Glebe, inherited from the City Council. The council was eager to be rid of the responsibility of the establishment and finally handed it over to the Balmain Hospital. The manager had made accusations of corruption in the administration of the home and had been dismissed. The manager, with the support of the inmates, staged a 'take-over', and opposed moves to have the home transferred to the hospital, or to any other institution. Partly to gain support, he began production of 'The Glebe'. On several occasions the council attempted to forcibly take possession of the Home from the inmates, who had barricaded themselves in, and violence flared on a number of occasions, notably when the deputy mayor was assaulted at a meeting outside the Home. The Balmain aldermen took up the inmates' cause, and provided more excellent 'copy' for the metropolitan press when the
mayor called the police to a council meeting to forcibly eject one of them during a debate on the Home.

Little, if any, of the extensive press and television coverage of Leichhardt council affairs could be said to have favoured the council. A final pre-election episode added a Gilbertian flavour to the campaign. The council organised an impressive ceremony to unveil a plaque commemorating the completion of the new municipal library. This fulfilled a promise made in the 1968 elections. No amount of bunting or union jacks could hide the fact that the building was nowhere near completion, and a television crew was on hand to film the builders recommencing their work on the structure after the pomp and ceremony were over.

In the separate wards CBC candidates waged their own campaigns. In Glebe, both candidates were members of the Glebe Society, and one had long been active in community welfare activities, particularly with old people. The membership of the Glebe Society provided a large and well organised team of campaigners who engaged in door-knocking, street campaigning and 'letter-box stuffing' many weeks before the election. Local issues with which the Society had been concerned figured prominently in the campaign. In other wards, candidates likely to attract personal following from similar community organisations stood. In Leichhardt Ward, the CBC candidate was the one sitting non-Labor alderman outside Balmain Ward, and he conducted his own traditional campaign that had won him a strong personal following
over several elections. He stressed his record of 'approachability', and the personal help he had given people who had come to him. He stressed other campaign issues, such as the level of the rate. He organised the postal vote, polling 100 out of 150 in his ward, enabling him to lead his Labor opponents by this margin.

In response to this concerted challenge, the Labor candidates relied very largely on their traditional campaigning style. Their campaign literature stressed the 'Vote Labor' appeal, and they showed a reluctance to engage in debate over the local issues raised by the CBC, except to promise 'more of the same', pointing to achievements of the recent past such as the swimming pool and the new library. They did publish and circulate to every letter box their own newspaper to combat 'The Glebe', but the contrast in style and content probably did them more harm than good. A hint of desperation appeared when they claimed in this newspaper that the CBC campaign was 'Communist inspired'. The attempt to appeal to the party voter was epitomised by the appearance of hastily stenciled posters on election eve clandestinely posted up in Glebe, their authorship unacknowledged, smearing the CBC candidates by naming them under a banner of 'Vote Liberal'. Labor candidates in some wards were confident on election eve that the traditional election day activities of the party faithfuls in door-knocking and driving supporters to the polls had gained them enough votes for victory. One of their miscalculations may have been in thinking that these 'supporters' had in fact cast their votes for them.
Table IV-9 shows the extent in decline of Labor support at the 1968 and 1971 elections. In 1968 the decline was particularly marked in Balmain and Rozelle, where the Balmain-Leichhardt Labor Party was most active and also where the sorts of social changes discussed in Chapter 11 were most evident. In 1971 the decline was most marked in Glebe, where these changes had taken place, involving the new middle class residents in local politics through the formation of local groups. It was in Balmain and Glebe that the leading anti-Labor candidates polled best in 1971, 54 per cent and 51 per cent respectively. The fairly even decline in other wards indicates the success of the CBC in mobilising a widespread dissatisfaction with the Labor regime.

Table IV-9

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Wards</th>
<th>1965</th>
<th>1968</th>
<th>1971</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annandale</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>52.5</td>
<td>45.3</td>
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<tr>
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<td>-</td>
<td>75.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leichhardt</td>
<td>59.3</td>
<td>45.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lilyfield</td>
<td>67.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rozelle</td>
<td>86.8</td>
<td>54.8</td>
<td>42.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N.B. Percentage formal vote is shown. The Labor vote comprises votes cast for all candidates on the Labor ticket.

Source: Council election returns.

The election was very largely conducted and perceived as a two-party competition. There were other candidates, but with one or two exceptions they polled little support. The domination of the elections by the two parties is shown in the large share of the total votes they polled between them (column 1, Table IV-10). The Table also shows the
evenness of support for the party candidates, further
evidence of the widespread salience of the issues raised.

There is little, if any, evidence of the phenomenon
of the 'friends-and-neighbours' vote for most of the
party candidates. The variations in support were the
lowest for any of the councils and did not correspond
as closely as in other councils with proximity to home
address. Only in Lilyfield and Annandale did individual
non-party candidates poll significantly more than
10 per cent of the vote. In Lilyfield, one polled
18.6 per cent, and in Annandale one polled 16.2 per cent.
Their respective coefficients of variation were .41
and .36, considerably higher than the average for the
party candidates (.17). Their support depended much
more on a 'friends-and-neighbours' vote, in the absence
of any identification with the major contestants in the
election. In Annandale, however, the candidate did
draw support across the ward away from the CBC, as he
stood on a similar anti-Labor platform.

The 'traditional' Labor vote in council elections
in Leichhardt did seem to be largely an expression of
party support by a proportion of the electorate who
voted Labor at non-local elections. The only occasions
on which the party vote dropped well below that normally
polled in non-local elections were when local issues
were prominent in creating an anti-Labor feeling. This
had been the case in 1956, in the first elections after
the dismissal of the Labor council and sensational
revelations of corruption. It was, as we have seen,
the case in 1968 and 1971. On other occasions, fluctuations in support at each election from ward to ward followed the general pattern of support for the Labor Party exhibited in different subdivisions in Federal elections. Thus in Table 1V-9, the exceptionally high Labor vote in Rozelle was a regular feature, and this reflected the steady 80 per cent Labor vote at Federal elections since 1955 in the Rozelle subdivision.

Table 1V-10 

Leichhardt 1971 Elections - measures of variation in support for candidates at separate polling booths

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward</th>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Total Vote</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Coefficient of Variation</th>
<th>Number of Booths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annandale</td>
<td>Wilson (ALP)</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward</td>
<td>Watson (CBC)</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balmain</td>
<td>Criglass</td>
<td>54.3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward</td>
<td>Hoy (ALP)</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glebe</td>
<td>Young (CBC)</td>
<td>51.8</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward</td>
<td>McMahon (ALP)</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leichhardt</td>
<td>Dougherty (CBC)</td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward</td>
<td>Newton (ALP)</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lilyfield</td>
<td>McIlveen (CBC)</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward</td>
<td>Rodwell (ALP)</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rozelle</td>
<td>Casey (ALP)</td>
<td>40.1</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward</td>
<td>Bray (CBC)</td>
<td>39.7</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* unsuccessful candidates

Source: Council election return.

6. BURWOOD

The 1971 election in Burwood, as in most previous years, was marked by low-key campaigns, a lack of local issues that polarised candidates, and the absence of local parties. ALP candidates stood in each of the wards, as in past elections, providing the only spark of
competitiveness to the public campaign. In the East Ward there had been a marked stability in incumbency, with two aldermen standing undefeated for over twenty years, during which time the total of thirty six vacancies at nine elections were filled by only nine different people. At the 1971 elections the four sitting aldermen formed an electoral alliance, and between them polled sufficient votes to put the issue beyond doubt. The lack of sharp public conflict in this campaign reflected one alderman's comment on elections in Burwood —

I have never known any election where one candidate criticised another...

...apart from the 'Labor' label there is little to distinguish one group from another. 30

And as one other alderman put it —

Perhaps half the vote is for the political label, the other half is for the personality — a bit of local colour...what else have you got to draw them out? There's nothing contentious, there isn't any issue — except perhaps the rate, and the 'hole in the road outside my front gate' sort of thing — that's all. 31

The tendency for ALP members to stand as independents was noted earlier in the chapter. In the West Ward, the mayor and his 'running-mate' were both prominent ALP members, and past candidates for State and Federal seats in the Burwood area, but they stood as the 'Mayoral Team' as independents. Their campaign steered clear of issues, apart from promising more services and a greater concern for 'social welfare' matters, while pledging not to increase rates in 1972. They concentrated on the Mayor's record, his personal achievements, his 'progressive approach' and his record as a 'sound administrator'.
ALP teams tended to rely on stressing the party label and made little effort to arouse interest in local issues. Candidates' election literature and newspaper advertisements stressed their personal qualities and qualifications rather than issues.

Figure IV-2 does show some evidence of a 'friends-and-neighbours' effect in candidate support. The maps show differences in support for the two who topped the poll in each ward. Because of the small size of the wards, extreme localism of the type found in Bankstown might not be expected, but there is still evidence that support for some candidates decreased with distance from the neighbourhood of residence. This is particularly noticeable in the support received by Newey in the North Ward, and Reed in the East, in the booths closest to their homes. In Newey's case, he ran a tobacco kiosk within 'hailing distance' of the polling booth. O'Neil and Sutherland both polled best in the southern part of the West Ward where they lived. O'Neil was the ALP candidate, but in fact showed the greatest variation between booths of any of the candidates in the West Ward. The district was fairly homogeneous in the support offered the ALP at Federal elections, although the small variations in this support did follow the same trend as the variations in O'Neil's vote. It may be that personal acquaintance or knowledge of the local candidate acted as a spur to the party voter, who might otherwise not bother to register his support for the party.
FIGURE 2. BURWOOD 1971 ELECTIONS
In Burwood, the absence of major local issues and local parties was matched by the reliance of most candidates on their personal reputation and on networks of personal relationships with voters. When three or four hundred primary votes were enough to gain election, winning support on a face to face basis with acquaintances was a viable proposition.

CONCLUSION

We have seen how in different local areas elections were decided on very different issues, and votes won by a wide variety of means. It remains to be seen to what extent the politics of winning elections reflect characteristics of local politics as a whole. There are a number of ways in which one might expect this to be the case. Elected politicians may feel constrained or obliged to fulfil obligations or promises made during an election campaign, and to act in office in such a way that their chances of re-election are not damaged, assuming they wish to gain re-election. For the groups involved in local politics elections may provide an important means of attaining their ends, so that the sorts of issues raised and the sorts of interests expressed are likely to be those important in the decision making process as a whole. Thus, electoral support built up through specific transactional appeals entails meeting commitments in the distributive arena of politics while in office. Debts have to be paid and favours granted as promised. Whether or not this sort of electoral support is important in a particular area depends on the sorts of demands being made and the
interests expressed in local politics as a whole, not just during the election campaign. In those councils where local party activity was important, the election provided the means of mobilising support and political resources behind an issue that had been important for some time, and a means of overcoming opposition that had been met in other spheres of political conflict. The election of a group of candidates committed to a particular platform, although not necessarily immediately 'deciding' any particular issue, does almost certainly have direct policy consequences through the fulfilling of promises and the desire to make changes on the part of the new incumbents. There are some elections that provide a mandate, as in the case of Ku-ring-gai, where promises to 'peg the rates' were kept. These elections are often 'single-issue' elections.

At the same time the electoral process can obfuscate as well as clarify issues. Candidates who win elections by means of support from a personal following, in elections that are relatively issue free, do subsequently go on to make policy decisions, for which the process of election and possibly re-election have no direct relevance. The same applies to candidates elected on the Labor Party vote, and even for those elected on the basis of an anti-Labor sentiment. For these candidates, elections don't involve policy issues. In the distributive arena, it does not necessarily matter what the cumulative effect of separate favours is, nor does it matter in most cases for the recipients who else has been granted favours. The elected
representative is only 'accountable' by individuals for fulfilling particular obligations made separately, and independent of other obligations. Thus for instance, he may grant favours not only to particular streets of residents wishing to prevent development, but also to property developers seeking development approval in other parts of the ward where neighbours do not protest. While broader issues ought to be involved, in an electoral contest where the issues are distributive and in a local polity where this is normal, they are irrelevant. Thus, a whole range of decisions can be made without regard to some of the possible issues involved and without fear of the electoral sanction on these issues.

Elections raise only a limited range of issues. Some groups seek to achieve their ends outside the electoral arena, and often in spite of it. Candidates elected by means of particular vote winning strategies may pursue policies completely irrelevant to these strategies. Thus, for the Progressive Independents in Bankstown, some of the stands they took at various times in support of business interests (which will be described later) were not matters of important electoral impact affecting their chances of success. Pre-1971 'pro-development' aldermen in North Sydney had certainly not been elected because of 'pro-development' platforms; for instance, some had personal followings. Indeed in the context of the election campaign the epithet 'pro-development' was considered libellous. In North Sydney at least, the election did provide an effective means of raising an issue that had
formerly been decided outside the context of electoral politics. The same could be said in Leichhardt and Ku-ring-gai. Whatever one thinks of the merit of the cases that were argued in the campaigns, at least the changes occurring as a result of the elections were the result of 'public' rather than 'private' politics.

FOOTNOTES

1. Councils themselves had the duty of prosecuting non-voters and none of them pursued it seriously. This was one of the reasons given by the Liberal Party Minister for Local Government in abolishing compulsory voting. The pragmatic reason was that it was hoped that it would diminish the support for ALP candidates.

2. An exceptional case of the exploitation of the preferential system occurred in Bankstown in 1968, when several false 'how-to-vote' cards appeared in various wards. They purported to instruct voters for certain candidates how to allot their preferences, but in fact allotted them to these candidates' opponents. Several defeated candidates claimed that the 'leakage' of preferences that should have gone to them but went according to the false instructions contributed to their defeat. A Progressive Independent alderman was found guilty of printing and distributing false information, but on appeal was acquitted, under an interpretation of the Electoral Act.

3. Liverpool Leader, 22 September 1971

5. 'Non-partisan' elections in the U. S. are those in which party identification does not appear on the ballot paper. By this definition, Australian elections are also 'non-partisan'. The comments on the effects of non-partisanship apply to those elections formally non-partisan, but which also are conducted without the domination by the national parties informally.


8. Ibid, p. 44

9. Adrian Mayer, 'Quasi-Groups in the Study of Complex Societies', in M. Banton (ed), The Social Anthropology of Complex Societies, (New York, Praeger, 1966) p. 113

10. Personal interview, November 1970

11. Personal interview, October 1970

12. Personal interview, February 1971

13. Personal interview, January 1971

14. Personal interview, October 1970

15. Personal interview, November 1970

16. Personal interview, March 1971

17. Personal interview, October 1970

18. Personal interview, February 1971

19. Personal interview, March 1971


23. Personal interview, March 1971

24. 'Bankstown Independent', 8 September 1971

25. Labor Party advertisement, 'Liverpool Leader'
   15 September 1971

26. The most prominent such local issue concerned a
    prohibition placed by the council on the use of
    residential streets by contractors' trucks for the
    construction of a teaching college for the
    Department of Education. Subsequent disputes
    over the widening and upkeep of access roads
    exacerbated the conflict.

27. I discuss the content and the administration of
    planning regulations in North Sydney in Chapter VIII.
    The regulations had been adopted in the early 1960's
    and were based on an assumption that flat development
    was 'inevitable' because of 'economic pressures'.
    The planning code attempted to attain as high a
    standard of development as possible. To accuse
    the council of 'inconsistency' was a criticism of
    their unwillingness to administer the code uniformly, an
    unwillingness that was fostered by a desire in some
    instances to prevent flat development, not just
    try and regulate the 'inevitable'.

28. Following the elections, the CBC seriously considered
    challenging the result of the poll in Rozelle, where
    the Labor candidate won one of the two seats by only
    80 votes on preference distribution. The grounds
    for protest were allegations that some ballot papers
    had not been signed by the returning officer
    (i.e. the ballot-boxes had been 'stuffed'); some
    postal voting forms were filled in in similar
    hand-writing; and many of those who used postal
    votes were not in fact absent from the district on
    polling day (i.e. postal votes had been 'solicited'
    from voters who were not entitled to them). The
    challenge was not pursued formally.

29. One issue which the newspaper made accusations on is
    described in Chapter VIII, and concerns the approval
    granted for a block of flats in Flood Street. The
    newspaper also carried pictures of a number of
    houses that had been approved by the council, but
    which contravened building regulations. Most of
    the accusations made were matters of suspicion and
    imputation rather than fact. The CBC took some
    of them seriously, particularly those involving
    suspicions of electoral malpractice. They asked
    the Minister for Local Government to replace the
    Town Clerk as returning officer, following
    'revelations' in 'The Glebe' of purported
    irregularities in elections within the APIA
    (Italian-Australian Club), in which the clerk
had been returning officer. The Minister refused the request. The clerk was also the target of other accusations.

30. Personal interview, October 1970

31. Personal interview, November 1970

32. Table 111-13 showed that approximately 75 per cent of incumbents sought re-election in 1962-71 elections. It seems safe to assume that they wanted to gain re-election.
Contacts between members of the council and local community groups have been looked at in the context of the group membership of aldermen. That discussion provided some evidence of the influence of various groups in the local polity, when it was seen that in different areas the eligibility of candidates for local office seemed to be derived from an association with different groups: neighbourhood groups in North Sydney, sporting groups or the chamber of commerce in Liverpool, sporting groups plus a broad spectrum of community organisations in Bankstown, and so on. Most of these groups did not formally sponsor candidates at local elections. Whether they did or not, membership of these groups was seemingly of some assistance to aldermen in their local political careers. Thus, the groups involved had acquired a position of influence in the local polity.

Table V-1 shows the salience of local groups for aldermen, by showing for each category or type of group the number of aldermen who thought that groups in that category were 'prominent' in matters of council business and local politics. Many of the groups named and listed would eschew any label that included the word 'political'. Sporting clubs, community service groups such as Rotary, Returned Servicemen's League (RSL) Clubs, and so on, were concerned with local politics as a peripheral activity in terms of their prime stated goals as organisations. Indeed, these groups were less frequently involved in local politics
than progress associations, ratepayers associations or chambers of commerce. Progress associations, for instance, were formed largely with the view of obtaining council services for particular suburbs or neighbourhoods. The groups listed in Table V-1 show those that are most overtly political in their aims towards the top of the list. The involvement of all groups in local council affairs varied from area to area. In general, the salience of different types of groups for aldermen in each council corresponds to the importance of these groups in the recruitment process (Table 111-7). We see, for instance, the importance of neighbourhood groups in North Sydney and Bankstown, the importance of the chamber of commerce in Liverpool and the importance of sporting clubs in Liverpool and Bankstown.

Neighbourhood groups received the most mention and were the most salient type of group in all councils except Burwood, where none existed, apart from ad hoc residents' protest groups appearing over specific local issues and disbanding once these issues were resolved. Those neighbourhood groups named possessed a greater continuity of membership and activity than such ad hoc groups, common though the latter were in some areas.

The majority of aldermen named only groups that were active within their own wards. Of the groups active in local politics, most drew their membership from a particular locality, and focused their attention on the neighbourhood level. The focus for community group activity was the suburb and the neighbourhood or at most the ward rather
than the municipality. Particularly in the larger municipalities, the focus of their political activity was through contact with their ward representatives.

Table V-1 The Salience of Interest Groups for Aldermen

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of group</th>
<th>Number of aldermen mentioning group(s) of each type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neighbourhood groups</td>
<td>BA 0 7 4 7 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ratepayers Association</td>
<td>0 10 6 0 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chamber of commerce</td>
<td>0 3 4 1 6 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sporting clubs</td>
<td>8 1 3 0 6 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth/welfare groups</td>
<td>1 0 2 0 2 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community service</td>
<td>4 1 0 0 1 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other *</td>
<td>1 1 4 3 1 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>0 0 0 2 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of respondents</td>
<td>9 10 9 10 10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Several groups were mentioned that fell outside the major categories: Parents and Citizens Associations (one each in Bankstown and Burwood); Road Safety Council (one in Ku-ring-gai); Library Association of New South Wales (three in Ku-ring-gai); Balmain-Leichhardt Labor Party (three in Leichhardt). Some aldermen also mentioned branches of political parties, but these are not included (three in Bankstown, one in Leichhardt and two in Liverpool). Party branches were quite important as 'interest groups' in some respects, but clearly not all respondents would consider them in the same category as other local community groups and organisations.

Source: Questionnaire.

Personal representations of this nature were the most common tactic of local interest groups, whose demands were largely parochial. The experience of most aldermen in interest group politics was confined largely to their own wards, emphasising again the parochialism of much of local politics. Municipality-wide organisations were the exception rather than the rule, and most groups were active largely in the distributive arena of politics. This was not the case for all groups, including perhaps some of the most important
or influential ones. The discussion of the activities of different sorts of interest groups that follows below will enlarge on these generalisations.

The archetypal neighbourhood group in local politics in the six areas was the progress association. They were largely a phenomenon of newer suburbs, as their major purpose was to obtain services and facilities for their own neighbourhood. In older suburbs, progress associations were not found, or if they existed, they also performed other functions apart from lobbying for council services and other facilities. Thus, some were 'output' rather than 'input' structures, helping the council run some community facility or activity rather than making political demands. Some became the organisational focus for a broader range of community activities, such as fund raising for, and administration of, child-minding centres or kindergarten schools. In North Sydney, there were six active progress associations, and some were concerned with functions such as this rather than the traditional pursuits of obtaining 'essential services'. Others were involved in the issue of flat development, but in most suburbs new groups emerged over this issue, as we shall see. In the outer suburban councils progress associations abounded. There were ten in Liverpool - most of them in outlying villages and semi-rural areas - nine in Bankstown, and eleven in Ku-ring-gai. There was not one for every suburb, but they were fairly evenly spread and some served more than one suburb.
The nature of their activities and the sorts of demands they made in local politics are best shown by illustration. In Bankstown, one of the most active progress associations was in Panania, covering parts of the South and West Wards. In summing up the association's achievements of 1969 on the occasion of its annual Christmas party, the publicity officer thanked local aldermen and parliamentarians for attending the function, and continued:

We feel 1969 was a good year for Panania. The Bank of New South Wales built such a modern building, the council a modern Senior Citizen's Centre, the dozens and dozens of jobs we asked Alderman Parker to attend to in the South Ward, which he did; not forgetting all the work we asked Alderman McIlveen to attend to. 1970 promises to be a year of progress. Hundreds of homes should be sewer'd by the end of the year....

The council has promised us lots of kerb and guttering, Weston Street is now nearing completion, so keep your fingers crossed, it might be your street next.

Yes, our rates have gone up. There is nothing we can do about it, but you can come along to the next meeting...and help us see we get a fair share of the money spent on works in Panania. 3

Another report thanked the aldermen for taking them on a bus tour of the municipality, and added:

Alderman McIlveen...filled several pages of his notebook with our requests. In Panania, at least, we have genuine local government. 4

Alderman McIlveen's attention to their requests was typical of the attitude adopted by aldermen who saw progress associations as vital sources of information on these sorts of needs and demands – not only demands for facilities to serve the suburb, but niggling complaints of residents about the state of their street, broken kerbs and gutters, or the state of the drains. Their function was described
by one alderman in Bankstown:

They are concerned with local matters only — there is a very localised feeling in Bankstown.... They are useful in bringing matters to my attention, they are close to the people, they know the problems. 5

Another saw them in the same light, but a little less charitably —

They are mostly only old women's turnouts. Someone will get up and beef about his own street and his own front lawn — that's all they are interested in. But it all adds up, I suppose. 6

We have already seen evidence in Bankstown of the great importance of localised support for aldermen at elections, and it was through progress associations that some of the 'patron-client' relations and the electoral support derived from them were built up. The active membership of progress associations was generally small in most areas, but this did not diminish their ability to act as filters of local demands. They could become a focus for sudden local issues, when they called public meetings at which residents might appear in their hundreds rather than the faithful dozen or so. They were run by individuals who were usually well known in the neighbourhood and thus kept in touch with minor complaints and needs.

There were occasionally particular factors that diminished their effectiveness of particular associations. In Bankstown, one or two were 'tainted' in the eyes of Progressive Independent aldermen in that they were dominated by Labor Party sympathisers, and one suffered the even worse fate of being taken over by members of the Communist Party. The same happened to a Ratepayers Association
in Liverpool, which was disbanded as a result of 'infiltration'. In Ku-ring-gai, we saw in the previous chapter how progress associations were out of sympathy with the council elected in 1968. Traditionally, they were very active and influential, as in a wealthy area the availability of funds for local facilities meant that the prizes were greater. And Ku-ring-gai's residents expected 'the best'. The Ratepayer Committee policies and those adopted by the council majority to restrict expenditure conflicted with their demands for more services. Members of the majority group did not rely on them for support:

The progress associations supported the losing candidates, and they will put up for election again. They are only small organisations. And even if I do everything right they'll oppose me. 7

The 1971 elections were notable for the lack of influence of progress associations in most wards.

In Ku-ring-gai, progress associations were not the only important neighbourhood groups. Local politics was distinguished by the fervour with which ad hoc groups of residents protested on issues that affected the amenity of their neighbourhoods. The siting of a rubbish dump; the use of residential streets by heavy traffic; commercial and flat developments; and other issues, produced sudden outbursts of local political activity from residents. Some of the groups, such as the Northeast Wahroonga Action Committee, outlasted the original issues that they raised, and broadened their activities. In this case, the group became concerned with several 'conservation' issues,
particularly preservation of areas of natural bushland in the municipality, as well as the issue of the siting of a rubbish dump on which it fought its major initial campaign. The campaigns conducted by many of these groups were distinguished by their efficiency, their professionalism and their effectiveness, as well as their fervour. Articulate spokesmen, with well researched and well presented arguments, with the right 'contacts' and the knowledge of how to use them, were backed by attendances of hundreds at public meetings and petitions signed by thousands. Whilst these groups were concerned with regulative issues on occasions, their initial impetus almost invariably stemmed from a purely parochial interest in preserving the amenity of their own suburbs. To this extent, they were concerned with distributive issues as much as the progress associations. The difference came when they regularly found themselves arousing hostile opposition from developers or other residents, in which case the issues broadened.

The importance of sporting clubs has been noted in Liverpool and Bankstown in particular. In many respects, they were similar to progress associations in seeking local facilities, mostly for junior sport. Every Saturday in Bankstown over 10,000 children from the age of five upwards played organised sport, many of them using council facilities. They belonged to clubs organised locally, or played for youth club teams, and so on. Several service clubs took a close interest in providing finance and equipment for these sporting activities and for other
youth activities. The 'sporting lobby' was equally important in Liverpool. Demands were voiced not only for more money for sports amenities from council funds, but more specifically, by individual clubs for particular local amenities. They were as much concerned with pork-barrel politics as progress associations. The same is true for service clubs such as Lions, Apex, and branches of the RSL, seeking funds for particular local amenities and community activities to which they lent support.

In Liverpool progress associations were largely confined to outlying semi-rural areas and villages - with one important exception in the East Ward - but their role was filled to some extent in the suburbs by ALP branches. In Bankstown as well, aldermen tended to bracket ALP branches and progress associations together, at least in those wards where the ALP was not engaged in continual conflict with the ward aldermen. Party branches were naturally of special significance to party members on the council. It was notable, however, that local branches were important for the sorts of parochial matters that also concerned progress associations. For most ALP aldermen, the party branch was a source of individual complaints and representations, rather than a source of pressure over matters of policy. In Liverpool there were cases of branches attempting to 'dictate' to ALP aldermen on matters such as the level of the rate, but aldermen vigorously asserted their independence in public. In fact, there were occasions on which such pressures were ignored, as when a rate increase was decided on by the
caucus in spite of concerted pressure from the party branches. But involvement in council policy was rare.

One ALP alderman commented:

The branch is involved all the time - but in parish pump stuff. If people there have a complaint, we take it up. They don't take stands on policy matters.

According to the party rules, branches cannot direct aldermen, but they can 'request'. But as one Liverpool alderman put it 'you have to watch pre-selection', although he referred to his branch as 'just like any other progress association'.

In Leichhardt, as in Liverpool, party branches filled a similar role, although some were far more active. One ALP alderman commented:

We look after the ward and we report to branch meetings, but the party doesn't control you. Once elected you are a representative of the whole municipality. But you go along with them, you don't go being silly. But I've never met a branch like this one - they'll spend more than half a meeting questioning us on local matters.

The involvement of local branches in council affairs varied from branch to branch. The Lilyfield and Leichhardt branches tended to show a closer concern in the performance of aldermen than other branches. The Lilyfield branch registered the one recent case of the defeat of a sitting alderman in pre-selection, and ballots were often hotly contested. Some of this interest stemmed from council employees who were branch members, and formed an important pressure group within branches over local council affairs, usually matters of administration in which they had an immediate interest. The importance of the party for
Labor aldermen was expressed in the rigidity with which they observed the rules of caucus secrecy and solidarity. For many years, the local party branch had been the only active organisation which showed concern over council matters. Labor aldermen, safe in the assurance of re-election, so long as they obtained endorsement, were accountable to no-one but their branches, the party hierarchy, and their fellow aldermen.

This changed radically during the 1960's, and culminated in the election campaign of 1971, already described. New residents' groups, notably the Balmain Association, the Glebe Society and the Annandale Association, were formed and began to raise local issues. Their membership was predominantly middle class, and their leaders mostly from professional occupations. They sought to enhance or preserve a special sort of residential environment that they had found or created by renovation and renewal, in these traditionally working class suburbs. They initially showed a misplaced faith in calling on 'expert advice', and employing rational argument and persuasion in challenging traditional policies and attitudes. As an official in one group put it:

You just can't seem to argue reasonably with them, they repeat the same old formulae according to what has been decided in the party room. The only thing that seems to move them is the 'numbers' in the party.

They presented a direct challenge to the Labor Party's traditional monopoly of local politics. They adopted styles of local political activity - the 'protest meeting',

...
the focusing of continual attention on council affairs, publicity campaigns, and so on — that by—passed the traditional channels of access to aldermen, and the accepted means of exerting influence. As one alderman expressed it at a public council meeting:

We have this Glebe Society, and others in Balmain and Annandale — why do these people have to form an organisation, why can't they do like everyone else has always done and come along with their complaint to the ward alderman to ask them to get things done for them? 11

These groups, in the eyes of Labor Party aldermen, were using 'pressure tactics', or as one put it 'stand—over tactics'. At the formation of the Annandale Association in November 1969, a Labor ward alderman attended the meeting and moved an amendment to the proposed constitution. The constitution asserted that the group was not 'party political'. His amendment sought the deletion of the word 'party'. He was willing to see the Association evolve as a historical society, but not as a pressure group. The constitution as adopted made it clear that it was a major aim of the Association to engage in political activity to ensure the conservation or preservation of their suburb's existing residential character. The Labor alderman left the meeting following the defeat of his amendment, stating he would have nothing more to do with the Association. 12 These new groups not only challenged council policies, they also challenged the accepted way of 'getting things done', that is through the party, or by personal contact with ward aldermen followed by resolution in the secrecy of the caucus room. It was partly because these local groups were unable to
obtain a sympathetic hearing for their demands that they were unable to resolve local issues in the distributive arena. At the same time, it became clear that there were important regulative issues at stake, and as the conflicts broadened, so the opposition to the council came to be expressed in a challenge by a local party. Both because of basic clashes of political style and political interest, these issues were not contained within the traditional pattern of distributive politics, in which the ward aldermen granted favours to those who asked 'politely'.

In North Sydney, as in Leichhardt, a new type of local political organisation that emerged during the 1960's induced changes in the local polity by practising a different style of politics. As neighbourhood groups, they sought protection for their suburbs from the effects of flat development. Most had their beginnings in ad hoc protest movements prompted by particular development applications in particular streets. Initially, they voiced demands in the distributive arena, seeking favourable interpretations to be made of a very loose and unspecific set of planning regulations. In doing so, they aroused opposition from developers, and brought into issue the content of the rules themselves, thus allying themselves with groups with similar interests to theirs in other suburbs. In this way they finally presented a direct challenge to council policies. It was this that really distinguished them from the typical progress association, although in fact some of the progress
associations also became active in voicing protests about flat development. However, traditional progress association concerns are largely matters of distributive politics, being purely parochial. The contrast was one of political style as well, rather similar to that in Leichhardt, in that many aldermen preferred the polite approach of the supplicant to the militancy of the protester.

The reaction of aldermen to these groups was mixed. Aldermen could be divided into three categories; first, those that were consistently opposed to the 'anti-developer' stance of the groups and matched this with a hostile attitude towards the groups themselves; second, those who were relatively neutral on both accounts; and third, those who shared the 'anti-developer' attitude and were favourably inclined towards these groups. We shall look more closely at the policy opinions of aldermen as exhibited in their voting behaviour on the council in a later chapter. The attitude of the first category was expressed by one alderman as follows:

...you can't stop development, it's economics. This is an old area, people are dying or moving out - who buys the property? - the developer, no-one else can afford it. You'd be bashing your head against a brick wall to try and stop it - you must develop or die. I'm not against development - if it must happen, we must watch it and guide it. 

These aldermen voiced their hostility to these 'new' groups in several ways. They condemned their 'militancy', their use of 'protest meetings' and petitions, called them 'professional trouble makers', and so on. They criticised them for being 'ill-informed', and for jumping in before
they got 'all the facts'. They accused them of being 'pressure groups' and 'sectional interests', in a pejorative sense. In several cases, they contrasted them with progress associations:

These local pressure groups are not putting things fairly to the residents...
...their sole aim is to fight the council...
...by the subversive way they go about things, they get all the publicity; they consist solely of people with a grudge... 'whingers'. Some of them have missed out on the big price for their property.

In contrast:

Progress associations have normally been constructive, never outlandishly 'agin' anything...
...they treat things as they come, they recognise the council as the responsible body.

These new groups... hit out without full knowledge of what the Act will allow us to do. But with the progress association, I go along to their meetings and tell them what we can do under the Act. Unless they can show me they are right... then it's not the pressure they put on that counts, but the weighing up of the facts.

These 'facts', for some, consisted of the advice of the professional staff. It was no coincidence that opposition to demands for 'participation' by these groups was expressed by council officials. The Town Clerk, commented at a council meeting on a motion to conduct a plebiscite over a particular development application:

It is wrong in principle to write to residents and ask their views in the form of a plebiscite. Aldermen are elected as representatives of the people, and this is the correct gauge of public opinion.

This sort of view of the decision-making process was sometimes expressed by aldermen of the second category, who were numerically the largest. They were prepared, however, to accept that on occasions the residents' groups
'had a case', but they were cautious to claim that in recognising this, they had not been 'pressured'.

The third category was seen by the first, and some of the second, as gutless political opportunists bowing before minority pressures. They adopted a stance that favoured group participation as an end in itself, or saw themselves as spokesmen for these groups. They were not ashamed to admit being influenced by them:

Citizens groups here are very active - and good luck to them...They seem more concerned with specific issues than - to use the right local government language - 'making a contribution'. But I say that anything is a good thing which helps foster public interest...As an elected politician I'd be a damned fool to ignore them. 18

I see myself as a spokesman for these groups. The interests of residents come first. 19

As we shall see, it was the attitudes of the second category, whose approach was largely ad hoc, that mattered when it came to making decisions.

We have already seen the activities of the Ratepayers Association in Ku-ring-gai, as a local party in 1968 and 1971. Formed in 1966 as the Ku-ring-gai Ratepayers Defence League in response to a proposed 30 per cent rate increase, it attracted one thousand people to a public meeting. It was led largely by retired people, to whom rate increases were particularly odious, as they were on fixed incomes. It was entirely single-minded, concerned to castigate the council on undertaking extravagant projects, and on not taking into account 'the ratepayers'. Their single-mindedness was illustrated when they decided not to permit membership to non-ratepaying residents. In Burwood, the Association was
formed in similar circumstances in 1966 but it did not go on to wholeheartedly participate in local elections. It was not so well led or supported, and its activities became more sporadic, and more concerned with parochial issues of the type progress associations were concerned with.

Both organisations were formed with the purpose of offering a direct challenge to major aspects of council policy. Aldermen treated them in this light, as a threat to their positions. They were condemned in similar tones for 'pressure tactics', 'misinformed criticism', and so on. In Ku-ring-gai, although the rate increase was reduced to 20 per cent as a result of protests, in subsequent years aldermen maintained their outright hostility. Part of the reason for the polarisation was the pressure from service-demanding progress associations, particularly in the newer suburbs. In Burwood, there was no such direct polarisation, and the Association's activities faded away after the first year or two of activity. Aldermen in 1970 did not see the Association as a challenge to their positions, but as a group that on occasions was helpful for 'bringing matters to the council's attention'.

So far, this discussion has been concerned with residents' groups. The only interest groups representing 'business' that received a mention by aldermen in naming groups that were 'prominent', were local chambers of commerce. Only in Liverpool did a majority of respondents mention the chamber of commerce. The chamber in Liverpool was better
organised and more politically active than any in the other six areas. In Liverpool, it had achieved a very high level of membership amongst shopkeepers and businessmen, including many local industrialists. We noted in Table III-7 that more aldermen belonged to the chamber than on any other council. In fact, all five of the non-Labor respondents were members. This was an indication of its status. In contrast, in Burwood, the chamber was not very active and not highly regarded by aldermen. It was often said that it was 'unrepresentative' of businessmen. In Bankstown, chambers of commerce were active in several local shopping centres, as well as in Bankstown itself, and there were several also in the various small shopping centres in North Sydney and in Ku-ring-gai. This indicated one important characteristic of these organisations. They were concerned largely with a fairly narrow range of interests affecting their own shopping centre.

The most common area in which chambers of commerce came into contact with the local council was over the matter of levying a local rate on the shopping centre alone for the provision of off-street parking for shoppers. To this extent, members saw their political activity as an extension of the promotional activity of the chamber. In Bankstown, Liverpool, Ku-ring-gai and North Sydney local shopkeepers agreed to pay local rates for the purpose of building parking areas, and for some other purposes such as 'beautification' or street watering. Property owners were prepared to pay for improvements to their shopping centre that would improve business, and the council was seen as
a useful agent for providing the services. In North Sydney, shopping centres which had the most vociferous and active chambers of commerce led the queue for the provision of parking lots, but generally it was a case of a direct payment for a specific service, delivered when the payments totalled the amount required.

These issues occasionally caused conflict within the chamber, but brought the local business community into no direct clash of interests with other groups. Other sorts of issues did, however, arise in some areas. In Liverpool and Bankstown the chambers of commerce pressed for higher density residential development around the shopping centres. In Liverpool, the chamber disagreed with council support for applications from commercial developers to construct shopping centres away from the existing centre. They also sought to persuade the council to enforce rigid controls on roadside stalls, which they claimed undercut central city shops and had an unfair advantage. In Bankstown, the chamber complained that not enough money was being spent on roadworks in the shopping centre.

These issues and others will be looked at later in the course of case study descriptions. Generally speaking, the interests of 'the business community' as a whole were less relevant for most local issues than the interests of separate businessmen. This was particularly true in matters of property development. It was through the impact of various council-administered town planning and building and health regulations that shopkeepers, property developers
and the business community in general most often came into contact with the council. Thus, real estate agents, for instance, whilst they may have had local branches of their professional organisation, did not operate through them in local politics. They acted individually through more informal channels of influence, during the process of lodging separate development applications.

It was noted in Chapter 1 that major issues affecting the broad interests of developers, or groups involved in the development process, tended to be resolved at the State level. At the local level, there was usually not the need for groups of this sort to maintain a consistent interest in local politics, for it was the Minister, or State cabinet, that made the rules and the major policy decisions. In Leichhardt, the Balmain Industrialists Association lodged a submission on proposed zonings in the local planning scheme, but their demands were directed as much to the Minister as to the council, for in determining objections to proposed zonings, as well as overseeing the formulation of these initial proposals themselves, it was the Minister who had the final decision. This was particularly important in Balmain, as the waterfront contained port facilities and associated industries. These involved the Maritime Services Board, and State and Commonwealth government departments concerned with industrial development, shipping, and trade. In Liverpool, decisions about the release of non-urban land for development and about the rate of commercial development were matters vitally affecting the State Planning Authority's
Sydney Region Outline Plan, and also were important political issues for the State cabinet because of spiralling land prices.

One important planning issue that was resolved at State government level concerned the amount of discretion to be allowed local councils in dealing with development applications for commercial and industrial development. The issue held up planning schemes in Bankstown, Liverpool and Ku-ring-gai for up to two years. The Minister received representations from development interests about the desirability of limiting councils' ability to refuse planning consent or impose 'unreasonable' conditions on major commercial and industrial development projects under the rules then applying in planning scheme ordinances. The State Planning Authority was also concerned to impose some measure of uniformity on planning scheme ordinances and the conditions under which development approvals were granted for this type of development throughout the metropolitan area. The Minister announced proposals in line with these views. Local councils combined in making representations to the Minister to try and retain their discretionary powers and finally the matter was settled by an independent commissioner, who in effect arbitrated a compromise. This was an important case of developers' interests seeking to attain their ends by going above the heads of separate councils to the Minister who had the final rule-making authority, although concerted pressure from councils was sufficient to force a compromise on the Minister.
Despite these cases and the importance of distributive politics for business and developers' interests at the local level, broad issues affecting groups of businessmen or developers were occasionally resolved at the local level, or were raised as issues at that level. Thus, the North Shore Planning and Development Group in North Sydney occasionally made public statements or wrote to the council about the administration of planning regulations, complaining at the council's 'capricious' approach and objecting to increasing prohibition on flat development. Even so, in North Sydney, individual development firms fought their own battles in trying to obtain development approval for specific projects and it was here that the issues lay. Occasionally, development companies would place advertisements in local newspapers publicising their projects and would conduct surveys of the neighbourhood to try and counter claims of residents' groups objecting to the developments. In North Sydney, though, we have seen how the 1971 elections were fought over the broad issues of flat development and residential amenity. One of the local parties involved was composed largely of local businessmen, and was strongly opposed to those candidates who were sponsored by residents' groups and who called for curbs on flat development. Ultimately, the issue at the local level involved these broader interests, rather than just the expression of demands by separate developers for a favourable interpretation of the existing regulations.

In Liverpool, the formulation of a planning code to regulate flat development saw the council seeking the views
of 'development interests'. They asked a local design consultant who specialised in flat development, and through whom most of the local builders lodged applications for flat development with the council, to make proposals on a flat code. His suggestions were detailed, and although the council did not follow them in toto, they again sought his comments before the final adoption of a code. This was a somewhat exceptional case, and one that illustrates the position of influence held by developers, and the development ethos, in council policy making in Liverpool.

Finally, the importance of 'businessmens' parties' must be noted. The Progressive Independent group in Bankstown and some past teams of candidates and aldermen in Liverpool were composed of local businessmen, and occasionally acted in the interests of local business. The propensity of local businessmen to stand for local office should alert us to the influence of local business in council politics, not just in matters concerning broad policy, but in the distributive arena of politics as well. These matters will be returned to again during the course of the study, particularly in the description of issues and decisions in Chapters VIII and IX.

I have argued in this chapter that many of the interest groups active in local politics were concerned largely with distributive issues. These issues do not involve outright conflict of the type engendered by regulative or redistributive issues. For the most part, local residents, businessmen and other groups tried to achieve their ends in local politics by asking favours rather than joining
battle. When a particular group found that favours were consistently rejected, or consistently approved, or if requests for more parks or kerb and gutter were consistently turned down - then local politics took on the character noted in Leichhardt or North Sydney, where disadvantaged groups raised regulative issues. In both Leichhardt and North Sydney, groups of residents were successful. However, it was at this point, when issues broadened, that they tended to become matters of political dispute at other levels of government, particularly when powerful business interests concerned with metropolitan development were involved.

**FOOTNOTES**

1. These categories are the same used for Table 111-7. One type that aldermen mentioned in some councils has not been included. Three aldermen in Bankstown, one in Leichhardt and two in Liverpool mentioned party branches. They are not included because a question that asked for names of local 'groups and organisations' could not be expected to obtain consistent data on the importance of political parties. It is interesting, however, that some aldermen did see party branches in the same light as other sorts of groups in the community with regard to their 'interest in council work'. The role of party branches is discussed subsequently.

2. On the distinction between 'input' and 'output' groups see J. Dearlove, 'Councillors and Interest Groups in Kensington and Chelsea', *British Journal of Political Science*, 1971, p. 142


5. Personal Interview, March 1971

6. Personal Interview, March 1971

7. Personal Interview, November 1970
8. Personal Interview, April 1971
9. Personal Interview, May 1971
10. Personal Interview, May 1971
11. Council meeting, February 1971
12. This same alderman in answering the question on local groups in my questionnaire said that 'none' were prominent in the area (see Table V-1). This 'turning a blind eye' was characteristic of the feeling of many Labor aldermen: they wished that these groups would go away, and maybe hoped that by ignoring them they might.
13. The nature of these regulations is discussed in Chapter IX
14. Personal Interview, November 1970
15. Personal Interview, November 1970
16. Personal Interview, November 1970
18. Personal Interview, October 1970
19. Personal Interview, November 1970
Chapter VI  THE PAID OFFICIALS

There is uniformity amongst local councils in most aspects of formal administrative structure, including the rules of recruitment and conditions of employment, the sorts of officials employed, the tasks they are meant to perform, and so on. Much of this uniformity is due to provisions of the Act and its Ordinances. Each council must employ a town clerk, a building and health inspector and an engineer, and they must possess certain qualifications. These qualifications are laid down by Ordinance, as are the means of attaining them, the syllabuses for examination, and so on.

The Act stresses the 'civil service' nature of the local government service, following the U. K. tradition. Officials are not political appointees but 'servants' of the public. They are protected against arbitrary decisions affecting their livelihood and positions. The Act embodies provisions safeguarding security of tenure, allowing a dismissed official the right of appeal, and a hearing by an independent commissioner.¹ The 'civil service' nature of local government officialdom is sponsored by employee associations focusing their attention on the State-wide service, reviewing legislation and ordinances affecting members of the service as a whole, as well as taking up (with the Department of Local Government) cases of members with grievances against particular councils in which the principles of an official's independence or professional integrity are at stake. Most of these
organisations see themselves as professional associations. Town clerks, building surveyors, health inspectors, engineers and town planners see themselves as members of separate professions as well as members of a common civil service. The Local Government Clerks Association, or the Local Government Engineers Association are not only concerned with rates of pay and conditions of work, but also with enhancing the status of their profession. They are closely involved in determining the sort of training, and the standards required, to qualify for entry to the profession. They organise conferences, publish journals containing information on developments within the profession, and generally disseminate technical information to their members.

In a discussion of the basic interests of government bureaucracies, Sayre and Kaufman (in the context of a study of New York city government) see their two basic aims as first, to exert direct control over personnel matters affecting their own livelihoods, and second, to 'maximise bureaucratic autonomy'. In pursuing the latter, they attempt first to secure some degree of 'independence' from political interference and from 'special interests', and to gain acceptance of a norm asserting their independent status as 'administrators'. They attempt to assert their influence in the policy making process, to ensure that they are dealing with programmes and policy rules with which they are in agreement. In particular, they are concerned to preserve their reputation as administrators within their own particular area of government policy, to avoid failures
and mistakes, and prevent errors; this often gives rise to a fear of innovations and risks espoused by enthusiastic 'amateurs'. Finally, they wish to exert control over the rules and procedures, and the routines, under which their members operate, often in order to avoid unpleasant disruptions to established patterns of work.

In performing its tasks - implementing a programme, regulating private activities, collecting taxes, and so on - the government bureaucracy adopts a particular style of decision making with regard to its relations with people who are directly affected by its activities. It acts 'without regard to persons'. A precondition for the impersonality of bureaucratic decision making is that procedures for performing tasks be clearly specified. In order that delegation and control can be exercised in the hierarchy, rules exist to specify individual duties. Merton describes the importance of such rules:

Within the structure of hierarchically arranged authority, the activities of 'trained and salaried experts' are governed by general, abstract, and clearly defined rules which preclude the necessity for the issuance of specific instructions for each specific case. The generality of the rules requires the constant use of categorisation whereby individual problems and cases are classified on the basis of designated criteria and are treated accordingly.

Merton argues that bureaucracies are characterised by an obsession with the rules and procedures, rather than the ends they are intended to achieve. This may be one reason that bureaucrats attempt to exert control over the nature of these rules.

Local government officials are not just bureaucrats in this sense, many are also professionals. A major interest
of the professional is that he should be permitted to exercise control over those aspects of the organisation's activities that his technical training give him a special competence for. He is interested in upholding or defending ends, not just means, the content and goals of programmes or policies, not just the procedures or rules for implementing them. In fact, for many of the professionals in local government, their major tasks are inspectorial, that is in ensuring particular regulations such as health and building or planning laws are complied with. Thus, they have a professional as well as a bureaucratic interest in upholding the impersonality of rule application and the uniformity of the rules. In other contexts, the professional is also concerned with giving advice on the formulation of policies. Planners want to exercise their professional competence, and believe they have a special expertise that gives them a right to do so, in formulating as well as implementing planning regulations. Engineers believe that technical criteria should be employed in determining a roadworks programme.

Bureaucrats and professionals, by virtue of the nature of their activities as I have described them, are antipathetic to distributive decision making. The routinisation of procedures for rule implementation entails the formulation of rules, or policies, but the distributive arena is one in which no policies are found in this sense. Rather than conforming with the norms of bureaucratic universalism, distributive decisions are particularistic. They are made 'with regard to persons' regardless of any
rules. Professionals attempt to introduce order and regularity into programme implementation or rule application through trying to impose their technical expertise on the policy making process. They believe they know what needs to be done and how it should be done. The formal procedures of local government decision making lay emphasis on the opportunity of the chief professionals to give their 'expert advice'. We also noted in Chapter 1 that the Department of Local Government says that as much authority should be delegated to officials as possible, once 'policy' has been determined. Taken together, the assertion of these norms encompasses the sorts of interests I have identified with the professional and the bureaucrat. Paid officials in the six councils largely subscribed to these norms.

In spite of the basic uniformity in administrative structure, there are ways of differentiating between councils according to the overall degree of bureaucratisation or professionalisation that they exhibit. Several methods of comparison will be adopted. The first uses certain 'measurable' differences in the structure of council organisation, the number of formal positions held by professionals, and the extent to which councils attempted to improve the quality of information upon which they made decisions, or utilised professional skills to improve the 'quality' of the decision making process itself. These measures, listed below, are all shown in Table VI-1.

1. The size of the organisation. A. Downs, in his definition of a bureau stipulates that it must be 'large'.
The larger the organisation, the greater the need for enumeration of sub-tasks, and the greater the pressures for clearer delineation of rules and procedures. Size also influences the degree of specialisation and specialists are often professionals.

2. The employment of a full-time personnel officer: In most councils, personnel functions are performed in an ad hoc fashion within the town clerk's department. The employment of a full-time personnel officer is a species of increasing specialisation, and possibly professionalisation. It also indicates a concern with essentially bureaucratic interests — methods of work, means of personnel recruitment and promotion, and so on.

3. The employment of 'extra' professional staff: The employment of a professional personnel officer is one example. Other examples include publicity officers, social workers and professional librarians. In some cases, their appointment is the unavoidable result of a decision on providing a particular service. However, the exposure of aldermen to employees espousing professional values may affect the way they approach council decision making as a whole. The norms of 'expertise' and professional values get a greater airing.

4. The appointment of a full-time professional planner as head of an independent planning department: on some councils the planner is also the engineer (in which case he was an engineer before he became a planner), or the planner is in the engineering department. The existence of a separate planner is an indication of increasing
professionalisation. The existence of a separate department indicates a greater differentiation of functions.

5. The employment of 'management science' consultants: this includes office management, filing systems, work study, and so on.

6. The use of staff or consultants for survey or research work: the commitment of staff and funds to improving the quality of information is an expression of faith in expertise and professionalism.

7. Capital budgeting or forward works planning: forward planning of works needs or requirements undertaken by the engineer indicates an ascendancy of professional values.

Table VI-1 adopts a simple ranking method for making an overall comparison between the six councils, based on scores given for each measure. Generally speaking, the larger the organisation, the better it scores on the other measures, as might be expected. However, the smallest council, Burwood, scores relatively well, whilst Leichhardt scores nil. It could be argued that engaging in luxuries such as employing consultants, or embarking on new services in which professional personnel are employed, is partly a function of the ability of the council to afford them. That this was not the only factor important in Leichhardt was demonstrated when the new council of 1971 proceeded to hire more professional staff, and actively sought advice from experts outside the council on several matters. A greater professionalisation of council decision making was one of the pleas of some of the anti-Labor candidates, particularly those in the largely middle class
## Table VI-1 Bureaucratization and Professionalisation

### 1. Number of administrative staff employed:

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### 5. Employment of 'management science' consultants:

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### 6. Use of staff or consultants for survey work or research:

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### 7. Capital budget/forward works programming:

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<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| RANK | (1) | (4) | (2) | (6) | (3) | (4) |

# estimated from salary figures given in financial estimates

The rest are taken from official statistical returns made under Ordinance 96: 'administrative' staff includes all office workers.

Liverpool appointed an 'Administrative Officer' under the Town Clerk, specifying one of his duties as a 'personnel officer'. Elsewhere staff matters are generally dealt with by the town clerk or his deputy on an ad hoc basis.

* By 'professional' here is meant officials possessing qualifications recognised by respective professional associations or designed for specialisation in a particular field of employment.
local residents' groups. Furthermore, the point of these measures is not just that they might indicate a commitment by a council to increased professionalisation but that they indicate the extent to which councils are exposed to the norms of expertise and professionalism.

One important measure not listed in Table VI-1 is the extent to which councils delegated authority to officials. At one extreme, the council in Leichhardt delegated virtually no authority at all. They jealously preserved their discretionary powers in town planning matters; they made all decisions on the administration of building and health regulations; they would not permit minor public works items costing over $100 to be undertaken without authorisation; they dealt with all staff matters and demanded detailed reporting on matters such as hours worked and amounts of overtime payed to outside staff; council minutes recorded the purchase of every box of paper clips and every tube of glue. This attention to minor detail was largely a matter of formality, but was symptomatic of the council's overall attitude. What was of most importance was the lack of delegation of any discretion to the paid officials, or even the absence of delegation in applying quite specific rules and regulations, as in building and health matters. Where powers of this sort are delegated, it is an indication that aldermen have surrendered their ability to make distributive decisions. The implementation of adopted regulative policies becomes routinised, and given the sorts of characteristics of bureaucratic or professional administration outlined earlier, they are removed from the distributive arena altogether.
Where it is a case of exercising discretion (as in many instances of statutory planning administration, where discretionary powers are extensive), then the 'ideal' professional or bureaucrat will use these powers for the purpose of achieving the goals underlying the regulations and not base decisions on 'alien or irrelevant grounds'. 7

Delegation of authority to administer town planning regulations was most extensive in Burwood, where the town planner had the authority to '...approve or disapprove of development applications or subdivision applications, which in the light of his experience...and having regard to codes, policies and practices clearly defined by the council, he believes could be approved or disapproved without reference to the plans committee'. 8 This was an exceptional act of delegation, when the council decided to forego the considerable area of patronage available to it within the ambit of planning regulations. In fact, a rejected applicant was given the right to appeal to the plans committee, although no cases of decisions of the planner being overruled were recorded. And the planner would refer 'politically contentious' matters to the committee.' The contrast between Leichhardt and Burwood in this respect does fit the relative scores they achieved from the measures shown in Table VI-1.

Of the other councils, it was the two with the highest scores in Table VI-1 that showed the most willingness to delegate authority in town planning administration. Ku-ring-gai for many years proposed to set up a 'staff board' of the chief professional officers to determine
building, subdivision and development applications 'in line with policies laid down by the council'. The proposal was suggested by the mayor and received council support as far back as 1964, but was never implemented because it was intended to come into operation once the council's local planning scheme became law. This had not eventuated by 1971. Furthermore, support for the proposal was not unanimous by any means, and the 1968 council did little to keep the proposal alive. In fact, then, little if any authority was delegated in town planning matters, although there was more delegation in the administration of subdivision regulations.

Apart from Burwood, Bankstown delegated most authority to its planner. Some routine matters were delegated under a resolution of 1957, but additional powers, such as the application of a council code on advertising signs, the consideration of applications for extension of buildings, the change of use of industrial premises or shops, the approval of dwelling houses in residential zones, and so on, were delegated in 1965. However, all the major discretionary powers of the council were retained in the hands of aldermen. Some of these lesser matters of development control were also delegated to the planner in North Sydney and in Liverpool. In Liverpool, authority was delegated to the planner to refuse flat development applications in areas zoned 'non-flat' in the council's draft scheme, but in fact the council often overrode his delegated authority.
It was a more common practice to delegate authority to chief building and health inspectors to administer regulations. The rules themselves were far more clear cut, allowed for less discretion, were written into uniform statutes, and aroused less controversy than the administration of planning regulations. All councils allowed their health and building inspectors to serve notices on those contravening ordinances relating to the dilapidated, unsafe, or unsightly state of buildings, their sanitary condition, and so on, and on shopkeepers and traders for contraventions of public health regulations. In fact, some powers are granted directly to health inspectors by statute in this regard. All councils except Leichhardt delegated some authority to approve or reject building applications. In Burwood the health inspector was empowered to institute legal proceedings where notices had been served, without reference to the council. This measure, like the delegation of town planning matters, was adopted in 1970.

Problems associated with attempts to plead exemption from building regulations, and attempts to avoid being prosecuted for non-compliance, were most frequently encountered in Liverpool. They were dealt with not by officials, but in the building and health committee by aldermen. Acting rather like a quasi-judicial tribunal, the committee would hear personal representations from suppliants who wished to appear in person. But some aldermen acted as both advocate and judge, pleading for individuals who had contacted them personally. At a not
untypical meeting in September 1970, the committee made numerous recommendations to the council. It recommended granting approval for three separate requests for variation of prescribed building lines. Six cases of illegal structures were reported by inspectors: one was allowed to remain, decisions in three cases were deferred, in one case legal proceedings were threatened and in another they were instituted. Eight cases of illegal occupancy of temporary structures were reported: six were allowed to continue so long as some progress was made towards completing a permanent structure, in one case legal proceedings were withdrawn, and in another a decision was deferred. In one of these cases, approval had been granted to occupy an outbuilding since 1965 'subject to the erection of an approved dwelling'. This was the eleventh occasion the matter had come before the council since then, and the committee again decided to permit continued occupancy. Liverpool was a fringe urban area being settled by the less wealthy and the poor, who often had a struggle to set up home or business. Financial hardship, illness, and so on, were argued as grounds for not completing a permanent dwelling, whilst the family occupied the garage or an outhouse. Aldermen sometimes referred to them as 'battlers'. One was quoted as saying:

People living in temporary dwellings are the pioneers of the twentieth century.9
The sympathy often felt, and the real dilemmas faced, were epitomised by the comments of one alderman:

Generally I go along with those who say we shouldn't bend the regulations; but they all do it themselves for friends or people that approach them. Going to court is expensive for the council - many cases don't get that far...I have disagreed sometimes when they have let something go - but genuine hardship cases do come up - what do you do? How could you take a pensioner to court? Someone living out the back of Bringelly, he's six miles from nowhere, maybe he's breaking a few regulations - but you take a different view of it in the middle of a residential street. You treat every one on its merits, the circumstances are different in each case. If it's reported you have to act on it - but if you know the circumstances you can turn a blind eye - that is in genuine hardship cases. If you have a bloke renting a garage at twenty dollars a week that's different. 10

Whilst pressures for exemptions from regulations were strongest in Liverpool, they were present in most councils. In Bankstown, they tended to be resolved by personal intervention by aldermen with the official, as these matters did not come before the council or any committee. One alderman described his approach to these problems, contrasting the attitude of the aldermen to the problems of individuals, with that of an official or appointed administrator:

...you have to temper justice, every case is individual, there's no simple right or wrong. The actual needs of people are better served by aldermen. You have a development or building application come up, and nine times out of ten the professional officer won't say 'if you do this or that then it will be O.K.' he just says 'no'. But if the individual comes to an alderman, you can say this to him. You don't have to break any laws, perhaps you ease a code. But aldermen who lean over too far do cause problems sometimes, you have to stick to your codes... 11
In Bankstown, the planner had some delegated power in matters of minor discretion, such as varying building lines, and this typified the less pervasive involvement in these sorts of matters by aldermen than in Liverpool.

Demands from individuals to aldermen that they intervene on their behalf in the 'administrative' process occurred also in other areas of council decisions. It occurred most frequently over matters such as pot-holes in the road, offensive drains, or the efficiency of the garbage service. Council engineers complained at the frequency with which aldermen approached them demanding prompt attention to some minor matter over which they had been contacted personally by a constituent. This upset their programmes and took up their time. It also upset their sense of 'fair play':

...naturally precedence is given to requests by aldermen to do jobs. If everyone came direct to the counter outside here or to the engineering department they would get fairer treatment. We get so many requests from aldermen, the others who come direct to us, there's not much chance for them. 12

If aldermen get a complaint about something I see that it is attended to. It's a bit unfair on those who don't complain through their aldermen. 13

Some officials suggested aldermen should refer people to them rather than act on their behalf. One Burwood alderman's comments on this were fairly typical:

There is perhaps a tendency for people to come direct to an alderman with something they could go to an officer about. But I do all I can for them and take up their problems. I would never fob them off onto an officer. But I have to make sure I am not interfering with the administration. Aldermen who won't see people do themselves and local government a disservice. All the aldermen in Burwood have a good reputation for being accessible. 14
One council engineer expressed the position succinctly:

Some aldermen will tell people to 'go through the proper channels' but they are very much in the minority. It doesn't do their chance of re-election any good. 15

One indication of the importance placed by aldermen on taking up individuals' complaints and acting on their behalf was the sort of procedure adopted for dealing with them. In all councils the personal contact between alderman and official was important. But in Bankstown the volume of complaints was so great that aldermen were issued with special forms for submitting them. In Burwood, on the other hand, that portion of the meeting set aside as 'question time' and 'any other business' was used by aldermen to bring matters of a minor nature to the attention of the officials. The minutes faithfully recorded what had been done in response to these requests. Question-time was also important in this respect in Liverpool. In Leichhardt, requests frequently were submitted in the form of petitions and a special portion of the agenda was set aside for them. The engineer explained the position:

If a complaint is made to me about some road or footpath, we say the best way to get something done is not to get us to put in a report but to put up a petition. They'll take notice of that. 16

The extent of delegation and the question of the degree of detailed aldermanic intervention in matters of 'administration' is only one side of the coin. Professional officers of the council fulfil an important advisory role. Practically every matter on which a council makes a decision is accompanied by a report and recommendation
from a chief officer and those matters raised by aldermen without such a report being available are invariably deferred until one is. We have seen, however, that the degree of professionalisation and bureaucratisation differed from council to council, and it was argued that this might indicate the varying status given to officials and their professional advice. Officials must compete for attention with other sources of information and influence to which aldermen are open. The questionnaire asked aldermen to say how important they considered various named sources of information were in making council decisions. Not surprisingly all aldermen (except one in Bankstown) considered the paid officials to be 'very important' or 'important'. Responses to this question offer difficulties in comparing one council with another, as aldermen seemed to make their evaluations differently. Thus, Leichhardt's aldermen were far more eager to enter all sources as 'very important' or 'important' than Bankstown's aldermen, for instance. Leichhardt respondents were far less discriminating than other aldermen. The least likely explanation, based on our knowledge of the decision making process obtained from other sources, would be that Leichhardt's aldermen were more receptive to information or influence from all sources. It seems more likely that their evaluations were based on a need to assert certain norms of 'open government' or 'local democracy' in their responses.

A supplementary question overcomes this problem of comparison. Respondents were asked to list the three
most important sources from amongst the nine that were listed in the question. The result is shown in Table VI-2. The note in the Table explains how the scores were computed. They allow for direct comparison between the six councils, which is the purpose of the present analysis.

Table VI-2  Relative importance of sources of information for council decision making

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>BA</th>
<th>BU</th>
<th>KU</th>
<th>LE</th>
<th>LI</th>
<th>NS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local press</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aldermen</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.33</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constituents</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>.33</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groups</td>
<td>.33</td>
<td></td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contacts</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td></td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. P.'s</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officials</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td>.11</td>
<td></td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The scores were computed by scoring responses as follows: three for the most important source; two for the second most important; and one for third. Scores for each source were then summed to arrive at a total council score for each. These total scores were expressed as a proportion of the total possible score to adjust for the difference in the number of responses from council to council. The highest possible score is one.

Source: Questionnaire. Q. 13.

Paid officials ranked highest only in Burwood, Ku-ring-gai and North Sydney. We might have expected this from Table VI-1 for the latter two, and our subsequent discussion of delegation would lead us to expect Burwood also to rank well on this score. But the data in Table VI-1 are not consistent with Bankstown's low score. In Bankstown there were special factors that help account for the low status of officials. The majority of the council was highly critical of the running of the engineer's department. In December 1969 a 'motion of censure' against the engineer was passed with a minority of only three
dissenting. The motion expressed 'concern' at the 'lack of co-ordination, planning and efficiency in the engineering department', and concluded by 'instructing' the engineer to improve matters. The council was particularly critical of the outside work-force, comparing its output unfavourably with that of private contractors. This was an important local issue, as the need to perform essential public works in the municipality was a major council priority. It seems probable that this attitude towards the performance of the engineering department had some effect on the overall status afforded officials by aldermen, indicated in Table VI-2. The relatively low status afforded officials in Leichhardt is consistent with all that has been said on the subject in the present chapter.

The data in Table VI-2 suggest a general explanation of the difference in attitudes towards the paid officials. They support the proposition that professional and bureaucratic interests find most expression in the decision making process where distributive pressures from local groups and constituents are least in strength and importance. The highest scores for paid officials tend to be found where groups and constituents score least and vice versa. Thus in Bankstown, the very low score for officials is accompanied by a high score for constituents and for groups. This reflects the picture of local politics we have built up in the preceding chapters. In electoral politics, personal support and specific transactional ties were important, including networks of
contacts in local community groups. The face-to-face nature of these links is illustrated by the greater importance of individual constituents than organised groups. However, groups were important in the recruitment process and were relatively highly regarded by aldermen. These groups operated largely in the arena of distributive politics. Where distributive politics was so important, we would expect the officials to find it relatively difficult to win the attention of aldermen, for reasons discussed earlier in the chapter. A similar pattern is evident for Leichhardt, if we include party sources (this includes M.P.'s) with constituents. I have described party influences as falling largely within the distributive arena, and the only other significant 'external' source of information for aldermen was complaints or special representations from individual constituents. Again, in Liverpool, if we include 'informal contacts' with constituents as being of a similar nature with respect to the likely content of the information received - i.e. concerned largely with seeking personal favours, or solutions to personal problems from individual aldermen - a similar pattern emerges, consistent with my description of some aspects of electoral politics and the importance of individual influences in the administrative process. As in Bankstown, local groups were largely operative in the distributive arena.

Burwood and Ku-ring-gai present the opposite case. In Burwood, whilst constituents were fairly important as sources of information, compared with Bankstown or
Leichhardt the relative importance of constituents and officials is reversed. If we include 'groups' and 'contacts', we can include Liverpool with these last two. In Burwood, groups were not very active and not important for aldermen. In Ku-ring-gai, groups such as progress associations were active, but as we have seen, they suffered setbacks and a loss of influence with the election of the 1968 council. The emergence of a local party supplanted the former importance of distributive politics, as was evident from the changing pattern of electoral support. Finally, in North Sydney, constituents were not important, but relative to other councils, groups were. The pattern would be little different from Liverpool (except for the difference in the status afforded officials), were it not for the important difference in the sorts of groups and the nature of their demands. In North Sydney the most important local groups had come to take on a coherence of purpose and a breadth of appeal that indicated their merger in the 1971 elections as a local party, thus supplanting distributive politics as the arena in which the most important local issues were being fought out.

The negative relationship between the importance of officials and constituents for providing information to aldermen is seen from Table VI-3, which suggests another sort of explanation. The occupational background of aldermen may exert an independent influence on the status they afford professional advice. Those from professional occupations themselves not surprisingly attach greater importance to advice or information from officials than
do those from other occupations. Local businessmen express a slight preference for constituents, and those in clerical and blue collar occupations express a stronger preference.

Table VI-3  Paid officials and ward constituents as sources of information: responses classified by occupational background of aldermen

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Average Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Officials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proprietary</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional etc.</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical, sales</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue collar</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home duties</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The average scores were computed on the same basis of scoring for individual responses as employed for Table VI-2.

Source: Questionnaire, Q.13.

The data in Table VI-3 is not drawn from a sample of aldermen, but from members of six particular councils. On these councils the representation of occupational types differed greatly (see Tables III-9 and III-10). If it is a characteristic of those from professional or administrative occupations that they express a low preference for the personal representations of constituents as a source of information, it seems reasonable to infer that they dislike the attention to minor administrative detail that dealing with these complaints and problems demands. Instead, they defer to the paid officials. Those from professional occupations in the six councils were found largely in three of them, and this orientation to official duties does correspond to differences in local politics between these three councils and the others.

These different attitudes to local politics that seem to be associated with occupational background might well
have been one of the qualifications that made different occupational types eligible for local politics in the six areas. In an area where distributive issues are important, a willingness or desire to embrace this style of politics would seem to be a pre-condition not only for winning office but for being attracted to local politics in the first place. In Bankstown or Liverpool, successful aldermen were largely local businessmen or clerical and blue collar workers, and those from professional occupations had a dismal record in winning office. In these councils, distributive politics was an important part of local political life. In North Sydney or Ku-ring-gai, where professional people predominated, distributive politics was less important. Local politics was more concerned with broader issues. In Leichhardt, a characteristic of the challenge to Labor rule was the number of professional people involved, particularly through the new residents' groups. They were drawn into local politics through new channels, and their involvement was based on their espousal of particular interests and issues. It was not the traditional pattern of distributive politics that attracted them. In Burwood, there were few if any major issues in local politics, whilst at the same time aldermen did not seem to be greatly obsessed with the granting of personal favours that characterised distributive politics. Roughly half the aldermen were from professional occupations, and appeared prepared to agree that for the sake of 'efficiency' or 'good administration', paid officials should be granted a greater status and authority than in most other councils.
We cannot say for certain from the data at hand what independent role occupational background, or a set of attitudes associated with it, plays in influencing the style of local politics. My major point has been that an existing style attracts those sympathetic towards it or willing to enter office under the present rules of the game. Only in Leichhardt and perhaps North Sydney have we seen an indication of an influx of professional people actually associated with important changes in local politics — notably the decline in importance of distributive issues. In these cases, these changes are attributable to important changes in the structure of local political interests. The attitudes of the new aldermen towards their duties and those of the officials were only secondary to the actual interests they represented and the policies they pursued. They were not in politics to produce 'better government' — although this was one aspect of the Leichhardt campaign — but to change council policies.

The notion that members of the middle class espouse 'good government' norms is one that Banfield and Wilson emphasise in their discussion of American city politics. They refer to the middle class approach as 'public regarding' rather than 'private regarding':

...middle class and upper class people...believed that the interest of the community 'as a whole' should be determined in disinterested ways and then be carried into effect expeditiously and efficiently by technicians. This point of view was at odds with that of the lower class, which preferred favors, 'friendship', and 'recognition' to the public-serving and self-denying virtues of efficiency, honesty and impartiality.
The stark contrast between say Leichhardt's politics and Ku-ring-gai's might well support a similar sort of interpretation in the present context. Nowhere is this contrast better illustrated than in the attitude of aldermen towards officialdom. As we saw, in Ku-ring-gai there had been a move to set up a 'board' of chief officials to administer planning, subdivision and building regulations. Some of the typical 'good government norms' were expressed by one alderman:

The alderman's main duty is to decide policy... You mustn't be swayed by sectional interests, you must stand fast for the good of the community as a whole, although it is difficult. I am of the firm opinion we should delegate more authority... Decisions have to be made by experts, amateurs shouldn't be making decisions on these technical matters... Ratepayers may well be much happier if experts in finance made financial decisions.

The contrast with attitudes of Leichhardt's aldermen is demonstrated - perhaps a little too starkly - by the comments of a Leichhardt Labor alderman on attempts by the engineer to get the council to adopt a works programme:

Sometimes they'll put works in a programme we don't think are so important and we trim them. If they try and tell us what rate to set I tell them to go to buggery and prune the estimates. We decide the rate, that's our job - there are a couple of others amongst us like that, we want to tell them what to do, not be told what to do by them.

The point must be made that not all of Ku-ring-gai's aldermen would agree with the comments of the respondent quoted above. He himself stressed that the important thing about local democracy was the accessibility of the aldermen to the complaints and requests of ratepayers, and in their actions most of Ku-ring-gai's aldermen were
little different from other aldermen in this regard. We must also note that whilst progress associations and parochial neighbourhood pressures were less important after 1968, they were certainly still present and actively engaged in local politics. And the only characteristic that distinguished the new aldermen from the aldermen they defeated was their espousal of particular policies. They were of a similar occupational background and did not differ in their attitudes towards paid officials or some of the tenets of 'good government norms'.

Members of the middle class do not become involved in local politics solely for the sake of 'better government'. This is clear if we consider that middle class involvement differs from one area to another. In Ku-ring-gai they were professionals, in Bankstown or Liverpool, local businessmen. They were in politics partly because as residents and businessmen respectively they had particular interests and certain public goals. Local businessmen in these working class areas did express some of the 'good government norms' in condemning party politics in local government, but in office they were largely indistinguishable from Labor aldermen with regard to their participation in the distributive aspects of local politics. It seems reasonable to conclude that whilst occupational background may have some independent effect on the attitudes and behaviour of aldermen, their behaviour is adapted to an existing set of norms and practices in the local polity within which they are able to pursue their interests. Any desire to change a local
political style is rooted in a challenge to particular policies or decisions, rather than a challenge to this style itself based on a belief in 'good government norms' as ends in themselves. In order to understand how such a political style emerges in a particular local polity, we need to know a great deal more about the polity than the occupational background of aldermen. It may well be, however, that a broad set of beliefs or norms typical of the middle class does produce differences in expectations about council politics amongst local ratepayers from one area to another. These supposed differences may play a major role in determining the way local politics operates.

FOOTNOTES

1. A commissioner cannot reinstate a dismissed official, but can only make a recommendation. The sanction against the council lies in the adverse publicity a wrongful dismissal can bring, through the public hearing. The commissioner is appointed by the Minister for Local Government and reports to him as well as the council. This Ministerial involvement may afford a further sanction.


4. The term 'professional' may be a little grand when applied to a building inspector or even a local government town planner, in the context of the sorts of occupations traditionally labelled 'the professions' — law, medicine, and so on. I am not using the term as an indication of society's view of the status of various occupations, but as an indication
of the views of members of the occupational category themselves. It is not so much a question of status, as a matter of identification with fellow members of a specialised occupation for which some degree of 'academic' training has been undertaken, an identification that is represented by their membership of an exclusive association, one of whose main aims is safeguard or enhance certain standards associated with membership of the 'profession'.

5. A similar analysis to this, using some of the same measures, is undertaken by Robert R. Alford, Bureaucracy and Participation, (Chicago, Rand McNally, 1969), pp. 118-126


7. This phrase is the High Court of Australia's, in talking of the bounds of authority granted to public bodies. Public bodies can under no circumstances hold they have statutory power to act 'in bad faith or from corrupt motives'. Acts of such bodies may also be inoperative if it can be proved that although they acted 'in good faith', they did so on 'alien and irrelevant grounds'. This corresponds with my definition of particularism in such circumstances. The words of the High Court are included in discussion of this question in Mr Justice Else-Mitchell, 'Councils' Discretionary Powers - Their Use and Abuse in Health, Building and Planning Matters', Shire and Municipal Record (NSW), January 1969, p. 836


9. Alderman J. Bradshaw, quoted in the Liverpool News, 28 September 1966

10. Personal Interview conducted April 1971

11. Personal Interview conducted March 1971

12. Personal Interview (Bankstown) conducted September 1970

13. Personal Interview (Ku-ring-gai) conducted September 1970

14. Personal Interview conducted June 1970

15. Personal Interview (Bankstown) conducted September 1970

16. Personal Interview conducted September 1970

18. Personal Interview conducted December 1970

19. Personal Interview conducted May 1971

20. I would argue that Banfield and Wilson's proposition about the middle class and 'good government norms', if it has any validity, applies best to those from professional or salaried occupations, and not so well to members of the business community. Wolfinger has argued similarly that the notion that machine politics in the United States is a working class phenomenon ignores the high degree of support and the participation in the spoils system of members of the business community, who have always benefited from contracts, licenses, and so on, granted as patronage by the machine. He even argues that professional groups have not remained free from such patronage, and have willingly participated in spoils systems. See: Raymond E. Wolfinger, 'Why Political Machines Have Not Withered Away and Other Revisionist Thoughts', The Journal of Politics, May 1972, pp. 365-397.
Chapter VII  FORMAL AND INFORMAL PROCESSES OF COUNCIL DECISION MAKING

Up to this point we have been concerned largely with the sorts of demands made upon the council by groups and individuals, and the structure of interests found in each area that helps account for the sorts of issues that characteristically emerge. We now turn to considering some of the formal and informal characteristics of the council decision making process, to ask whether they have any independent effect upon the way issues are defined and decisions made.

I have already indicated that the structure of local councils encourages distributive politics. Elected representatives are open to individual and parochial pressures, and have immediate access to the process of detailed administration. This access is legitimised and sanctioned through the committee system and through the legal stipulation that the council is responsible for every aspect of the duties performed by its servants. Whilst there are widely held norms about the separation of 'policy' and 'administration' in the roles of alderman and official respectively, these have little practical relevance and conflict with other sorts of norms about local democracy, the committee system, and so on. The council is formally responsible for both policy and administration. There is no separate executive body and the mayor is elected by the council from amongst its own members for yearly terms. He holds no formal authority independent of the council. His formal duties are largely those of chairing meetings,
time particular institutional forms or traditional conventions and practices, peculiar to a council, and creating variations in the basic model of administration outlined above and in the first Chapter, may exert some independent influence.

Turning first to the committee system, Table VII-1 lists the basic structure for each council. Only in Burwood, Liverpool and Ku-ring-gai do we find a system conforming to the traditional model for local government committee administration. Under such a system, every item for decision by the council passes first through a committee composed of a small number of aldermen. The committee makes recommendations, which the council either adopts or alters. In the committee, which conventionally meets in private, paid officials take a more active part in the discussion than in the council, although of course they do not vote. Committees are formed for each of the council's major functions. It is generally held that councils should have confidence in their committees, and should not upset too many recommendations.

In most councils, the prevailing system was of long standing, and was perpetuated partly for reasons of organisational inertia. However, the existence of a certain form of committee structure, and the ways in which it actually operated did reflect in some cases the pressures faced by the council from outside. At the same time, there were ways in which the structure of administration and decision making influenced the course of local politics. These will be discussed separately for each council in conjunction with other features of the decision making process.
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name/Function</th>
<th>Membership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>BANKSTOWN</strong></td>
<td>Whole council – meet in public, prior to council meetings (fortnightly) (1-2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Finance</td>
<td>Mayor plus four others. Meet when required in private (3-6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Works (inspection only)</td>
<td>Parks committee contains one member from each ward.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Industrial (staff)</td>
<td>Four aldermen plus co-opted members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Parks</td>
<td>Four aldermen, staff and co-opted 'experts'.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Signs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Pools</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Parking and Traffic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Environmental (7 and 8 advisory only)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **BURWOOD** | Five or six aldermen. Meet fortnightly or when needed – Mayor chairman of all committees, meeting at different times. (1-6) |
| 1 Finance   | Four aldermen, Mayor as chairman |
| 2 Works     | All aldermen |
| 3 Plans     | Three aldermen as delegates |
| 4 General Purposes | |
| 5 Pools     | |
| 6 Parking and Traffic | |
| 7 Redevelopment | |
| 8 Town Planning | |
| 9 Joint Library | |
| 10 History of Burwood | |

| **KU-RING-GAI** | Four aldermen plus mayor. Meetings fortnightly, mayor chairs Finance; committees elect vice-chairmen to chair meetings. |
| 1 Finance (& works staff and parks) | |
| 2 Building and Health | |
| 3 Subdivision | |
| 4 Development | |

| **LEICHHARDT** | All aldermen. Meetings held in private fortnightly before council meetings. 'Site' inspections by works committee arranged ad hoc. |
| 1 Finance     | Five aldermen. Mayor ex-officio chairman, but meetings chaired by vice-chairman elected by council. Meet fortnightly or when required. (1-7) |
| 2 Works (inspection only) | Mayor plus vice-chairmen of 1-4. |
| 3 Staff | |
| **LIVERPOOL** | All aldermen. Meetings held in public, fortnightly, alternate weeks to council meetings. |
| 1 Finance | |
| 2 Works | |
| 3 Health and Building | |
| 4 Development | |
| 5 Baths and Parks | |
| 6 Parking and Traffic | |
| 7 Bush Fire | |
| 8 Staff | |
1. **BANKSTOWN**

From 1968-71 the mayoralty was held by a member of the Progressive Independent group. Six in number and all drawn from the South and West Wards, the group vigorously denied 'caucus' or concerted action, but in fact on many occasions did act in such a fashion. However, the council was not consistently polarised, largely because of the absence of an ALP group of significance. The Progressive Independents did not need to consistently enforce conformity to a majority view as, on many issues, they did not have to face a concerted 'opposition'. Furthermore, the norms of 'independence' and the antipathy towards Labor caucus methods did act as a constraint upon such practices. However, there were occasions on which the group was seen to 'close ranks' when confronted with opposition from the rest of the council. And there were some policies and interests that the Progressive Independents represented that provided the group with some cohesion.

During the period of two and a half years up to May 1971, the council formally divided to register a vote on a motion before it only twenty-nine times. The use of the formal division was an indication of controversy in the open council. It was used to register a confrontation. Most motions were passed 'on the voices', or alternatively by a show of hands, neither of which would be recorded in the minutes. That there were relatively few such divisions does show that on the whole the Progressive Independent group did not produce polarisation, but that agreements were reached on issues amongst a majority of aldermen without the public conflict entailed in a division.
The use of these divisions to reveal patterns of conflict suffers from the fact that they do not necessarily cover all those issues that members themselves considered important. The extent of the Progressive Independent influence, for instance, can not be known for certain, as many issues on which they may have been seen to act in concert never came to the point of public controversy, but were settled more informally. Nevertheless, the calling of a division was a customary method used by minorities to register a protest against a majority decision. Many of the issues subject to such divisions were quite crucial and cover a great number of the important local political issues of the period.

The divisions have been analysed using 'cluster analysis'. The result is shown in Figure VII-1. The method used rests on the calculation of agreement scores between all individual pairs of aldermen. The number of times a pair agreed is expressed as a percentage of the number of times they were both present and voted from amongst the total number of divisions. The scores are entered in a matrix which shows graphically the existence of blocs. In the present case, the rather low cut-off point of an agreement score of 60 is used, but in fact the majority of scores within each of the blocs are higher than 70. The diagram shows two blocs, one composed of five members of the Progressive Independent group, and one composed of six members. In fact, this latter bloc, of all of the North and East Ward representatives, showed greater solidarity. The mean agreement score of these aldermen
**Figure VII-1**  Cluster Analysis Bankstown Council Voting Divisions, Showing Blocs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Bowman</th>
<th>Lockwood</th>
<th>McGuigan</th>
<th>Keenan</th>
<th>Wood</th>
<th>Jamieson</th>
<th>Carruthers*</th>
<th>McIlveen</th>
<th>Duncan</th>
<th>Buchanan</th>
<th>Gillman</th>
<th>Parker</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Wood</td>
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<td>66</td>
<td>87</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jamieson</td>
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<td>85</td>
<td>83</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carruthers*</td>
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<td>62</td>
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<td>70</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McIlveen</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>70</td>
<td>62</td>
<td></td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duncan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Buchanan</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>80</td>
<td>81</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gillman</td>
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<td>62</td>
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<td>Parker</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>70</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**North Ward:** Bowman (ALP)  
Wood  
Keenan

**South Ward:** Buchanan (PI)  
Duncan (PI)  
Parker (PI)

**East Ward:** Lockwood  
McGuigan  
Jamieson (ALP)

**West Ward:** McIlveen (PI)  
Carruthers* (PI)  
Gillman (PI)

* Mayor

PI - Progressive Independent

Source: Council Minutes, record of twenty nine voting divisions December 1968 to April 1971
was 82, whilst the five in the other bloc showed a score of 72. The remaining alderman was the Mayor for 1969 and 1970, and although a Progressive Independent, he had a higher mean agreement score with the other bloc (56 as against 44).

If we look at the sorts of issues that were the subject of divisions and from which these bloc patterns derive, we see that many were concerned with basic policy matters with which the Progressive Independents were identified. One such was the general attitude that growth and development were to be welcomed and encouraged. The group voted in concert over the principle of permitting flat development in the municipality. A number of development applications saw some Progressive Independent aldermen (but never in fact all of them) voting against taking what they called an 'unreasonable' or 'harsh' line with developers in seeking to impose conditions or refusing applications. One major issue that saw the group close its ranks against the rest of the council was a proposal to levy a local rate on industrial property, against the opposition of industrial property owners. In this matter, as in the case of flat development, the group — composed as we have seen of local businessmen — in fact acted in the interests of local business. 4

The blocs not only show a split between the Progressive Independents and the rest, but between aldermen from the northern part of the municipality and aldermen from the southern part. This added a different dimension to the division of the council into two blocs. North and East
Ward aldermen were continually wary of any move by the Progressive Independents to obtain an 'unfair' share of council resources for their wards, and the Progressive Independents often reacted likewise. Thus, South and West Ward aldermen attempted to delay a move by East Ward aldermen to obtain approval for a youth centre in their ward, until plans for one in the South Ward had come to fruition. Several of the divisions involved ward 'demarcation disputes'. One North Ward alderman complained at the decision to cut down some trees outside the new South Ward youth centre, but was told to keep out of an issue that was essentially a local 'ward matter', and should be left to the discretion of the ward aldermen. This produced a 6-6 division. The reframing of a lease agreement with a soccer club led to a division on similar lines over whether the task should be delegated to a committee of East Ward aldermen, or to a committee of the whole council. A major dispute that brought out the inter-ward conflicts was the proposals supported by Progressive Independents to re-draw the ward boundaries. North and East Ward aldermen claimed it was a 'gerrymander' against their interests.

In spite of these disputes, which were occasionally quite bitter, there were several important factors in the decision making process that served to minimise conflict. It has already been mentioned that on some issues there was basic agreement that cut across the lines of division I have drawn. The policy of increasing expenditure on parks and the attempts to increase the volume of public
works were two important examples. Furthermore, the role of the mayor indicated by his almost neutral position in the pattern of bloc divisions was an important mediating influence. He adopted almost a 'presidential' role, attempting to stay aloof of some of the squabbles on the floor of the council chamber. On one occasion, for instance, he cast his vote as chairman against his fellow group members, having originally voted with them to produce a 6–6 tie. He did this to maintain the status quo. In mayoral elections he had the support of some aldermen outside the Progressive Independent group. In the council chamber he often put the point of view of officials, almost as an executive leader of the administration, rather than an alderman, a member of the Progressive Independents, or a ward representative. In fact, when first elected the council voted to grant him an allowance of $10,000, intended virtually as a salary, or at least as compensation for his time devoted to the position. This was forbidden by the Minister on the grounds that it was contrary to the spirit of the Act, which espoused the principle that aldermanic service was purely voluntary. The council, then, acknowledged that he should in some measure play an active role as executive leader. As mayor, he was responsible for several policy initiatives, notably the construction of a new civic centre. Again, these initiatives cut across ward or bloc divisions.

These features of the decision making process were in contrast to those of previous years, when the council was continually divided between Progressive Independents and
supporters, and the ALP group and supporters. Conflicts had been bitter and disputes protracted. In similar circumstances, a system of committees that had once operated had been abolished, because in the words of one official, 'it just meant things were being argued twice, it was wasting time'. In other words, divisions in the council prevented the operation of the important norm that a committee decision should normally be accepted. Not only were divisions between ALP groups and others a reason, but ward divisions as well contributed to this.

Although conflict between the wards was a cause of the division of the council into two blocs, parochial ward interests were recognised by conventions which allowed some measure of autonomy to ward aldermen in making decisions on 'ward matters'. These conventions were rarely challenged, and helped minimise inter-ward conflict. Ward aldermen were often delegated authority to work out final details of approval for development applications in conjunction with the town planner, or to implement or elaborate the details of other council decisions. Funds for the council works programme were divided in four equal parts, one quarter for each ward, and ward aldermen had complete autonomy in determining a ward works programme. The Parks Committee contained one alderman from each ward, and reached agreement on the parks expenditure programme on a basis of approximate equity between the wards. Although conflicts over policy matters were important in council decision making, it was these ward matters that were the 'bread and butter'
of local politics. It was for this reason that many of the disputes centred on the protection of parochial ward interests by ward aldermen.

2. **BURWOOD**

As we saw in Table VII-1, Burwood operated with a full committee system which worked as it was intended to. Council meetings were generally short and the great majority of committee recommendations were adopted without debate. The council generally was prepared to accept that a decision arrived at by a committee was 'as good as' a decision that could be arrived at by the council as a whole. Several other factors contributed to this feature of council decision making. The council was not polarised on any consistent basis into blocs or groups; aldermen preferred reaching private agreements and compromises to airing disputes in public; and the mayor fulfilled an important mediating role.

There were five ALP members on the council and two from the Liberal Party. The mayor was a member of the ALP, elected with the support of several non-Labor members for each of the three years 1968-71. Party divisions were generally not important in council issues, with one or two exceptions such as matters concerning industrial relations. Several aldermen, asked to name those issues that had aroused most controversy, either replied there were none, or sounded rather dubious about labelling those they named as 'controversies'. Phrases such as 'this is a friendly council' or 'we all get on together, there are no factions or personal animosities', were some indication of the lack
of polarisation, as well as support for the norm that disputes should be settled amicably in private. This was described by the mayor:

Differences are often settled outside the council or committee informally. Aldermen get together and groups meet and decide things. This is a good thing. 5

Rather than 'grandstand' or work up controversies in the heat of public debate, aldermen approved of the principle that matters should be settled quietly and informally. Far from showing evidence of publicly visible polarisation in council divisions, divisions in fact were never called. The nearest the council came to publicly registering major disputes was through a show of hands. The vast majority of motions were passed on the murmur of 'the voices' and it was generally known beforehand what the result would be. The general lack of controversy was also commented on by the mayor:

Few issues call for a line-up on party political lines. In recent years, in fact, this council has been very harmonious in all respects. Take the last rate increase of 8 per cent. Once the need was seen the support was unanimous. 6

These features were to a large degree a direct reflection of the overall state of quiescence that characterised local politics in Burwood.

Committee membership was determined on the basis of personal preferences of members, with seniority being a deciding factor. There was, however, one case of an independent alderman being voted off a committee because he failed to vote as expected in a mayoral election. Apart from this there was no evidence of any attempt by any group to 'pack' committees. One exceptional feature of the
committee system was that the mayor was chairman of all, and they met at different times to allow him to perform this role. This was just one indication of the important mediating role of the mayor. Further evidence of this was provided by responses of aldermen to a question asked in the questionnaire. Respondents were asked to name those aldermen they considered should be the 'most respected' and also to separately name those they considered most often had their opinions accepted by the rest of the council. Respondents could name as many other aldermen as they wished, or if they wanted, themselves. Two in fact named themselves as being influential. For each question, nine responses were received, so that a complete pattern of reciprocal choices could not be drawn up for the twelve aldermen. Table VI1-2 shows the number of choices each alderman received, whilst Figure VI1-2 shows also who made these choices. Generally speaking, those that were most respected also were attributed with the most influence. They were 4, 5 and 7. 4 was the mayor, 5 was his opponent for the mayoralty, and in fact won the position following the 1971 elections, and 7 had been an alderman for over thirty years and mayor several times.

Figure VI1-2 shows clearly the central position occupied by the mayor (4) in the pattern of relationships measured. (The pattern was very similar for the other part of the question). The split between ALP aldermen and the rest is evident, particularly from the reluctance of non-Labor aldermen to choose Labor members. However, there were several choices from Labor to non-Labor aldermen,
Table VII-2  Aldermen Respected and Considered Influential by their Colleagues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alderman</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Ward</th>
<th>Respected</th>
<th>Influential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>ALP</td>
<td>West</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>West</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>ALP</td>
<td>West</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.*</td>
<td>ALP</td>
<td>West</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Lib.</td>
<td>East</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>East</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>East</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>East</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Lib.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>11.</td>
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<td>North</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Mayor

Source: Questionnaire, Questions 14(a) and (b)

Figure VII-2  Pattern of Choices of Aldermen for 'Most Respected' Colleagues

N.R. No response to the question was received from 2, 6, or 11. 2 and 6 were choices of other aldermen, but 11 was not mentioned, and does not appear in the diagram.

For party membership see Table VII-2 above.

Source: Questionnaire. 14(a)
and the Mayor was notable in this regard. He received
mention by aldermen regardless of their party membership.
These patterns of choice serve to emphasise the mayor's
position as a mediator. This was a role he saw himself
as playing, although he did also attempt to make several
policy initiatives. In some of these he was successful.
He was associated with moves to purchase commercial
properties by the council for consolidation and resale
and with policies for flat development and its control.
He also was a major force behind the decisions to delegate
greater authority to the officials that we noted in the
previous chapter. The council was relatively isolated
from outside pressures, including parochial ward
pressures. An 'executive-centred' style of decision
making, in which the mayor accepted the constraints
imposed by the need to compromise and reach agreements
amongst aldermen, but in which the paid officials through
the committee system and through delegation of authority
played an important role, was one that suited the political
situation.

3. **KU—RING—GAI**

In contrast to Burwood, council meetings in Ku—ring—gai
were occasions for long debates and the public airing of
controversy. Rather than being exceptional, divisions
were the norm for matters of contention, as aldermen insisted
on publicly registering their stands. Most major
controversies were the subject of rescission motions.
A motion to rescind a decision can be given within a short
time after the decision is taken and the matter then
comes before the next council meeting. This never
happened in Burwood, but in Ku—ring—gai it was commonplace.
The major reason for these characteristics of council decision making was the polarisation of the council between the new majority, elected on the Ratepayers Committee ticket, and the remainder of the aldermen, most of them of long service. The mayor for 1969 and 1970 was elected by the majority and had been a prominent member of the Ratepayers Defence League. The initial polarisation of the council meant that his role as mayor was a partisan one. He used his casting vote when required to support the stands taken by the new majority. He had few links with the old aldermen, but had had a somewhat stormy political career on the council prior to 1968, including one occasion on which the council expelled him from meetings for engaging in fisticuffs with a fellow alderman. As mayor, he made little if any effort to adopt a mediating role in order to try and achieve consensus or compromise, and clearly his position within the council did not really suit him for such a role. Indeed by his somewhat liberal interpretation of standing orders in chairing council meetings, and his refusal to exert leadership, the tendency for long and often acrimonious debates in the council chamber was accentuated. He preferred to let the council argue matters out rather than intervene to achieve a settlement.

An analysis of the 82 voting divisions in council meetings in the two years 1969-70 shows the nature of the split between aldermen supported by the Ratepayers Committee and the minority who opposed them at the 1968 elections. Figure V11-3 shows that taking all divisions, the minority
showed a greater degree of solidarity as a bloc than the majority. Figure VII-4 gives some indication of the extent to which this bloc pattern was due to the issue of finance, and shows the very high level of cohesion of each of the blocs on finance divisions of which there were 30. The Ratepayers aldermen strongly denied they caucused or that they were subject to any influence from the Ratepayers Defence League or the Ratepayers Committee. In fact, some members of the group resisted suggestions by others that the group should meet regularly to decide stands to be taken on council issues, and such meetings did not take place. Officials of the Ratepayers organisations made little if any real effort to exercise direct influence on the group as a whole. The group's cohesion on finance matters, and the cohesion of the minority, were the result of firmly held policy stands and common electoral commitments.

Within the ratepayers majority, one alderman in particular (MacMillan) showed a tendency to waver from the stand taken by the other members of the group. This results in a lower mean agreement score for members of the ratepayers bloc than for the opposition minority bloc on finance matters. These mean agreement scores are shown in Table VII-3. Excluding MacMillan, the score for the ratepayers bloc on finance divisions goes up from 83 to 88. The low score amongst the majority group for non-finance matters shows that group cohesion did not carry over from matters concerned with the level of the rate. Agreement scores ranged from 29 to 71. In fact, two blocs were identifiable within the majority group on non-finance
Figure VII-3  Cluster Analysis Ku-ring-gai Council, All Divisions.

Ratepayer Committee sponsored aldermen

Source: Council Minutes, 82 recorded divisions 1969, 1970
Figure VII-4  Cluster Analysis Ku-ring-gai Council, Divisions over Finance Issues.

Source: Council Minutes, 30 recorded divisions over finance matters, 1969 and 1970
divisions. Jago, Basto and Keogh formed a distinct bloc, with agreement scores of 67, 71 and 71. (Some evidence of this is seen in Figure VII-3). The mean agreement score with the remainder of the majority group was 45, and ranged from 29 to 51. Amongst these other four aldermen (Bennett, Turner, Strenger and MacMillan), the mean agreement score was 63, ranging from 57 to 70. The lowest inter-bloc agreement scores occurred between Turner and each of the three in the other bloc. An important aspect of the division between these blocs was the opposition of these three to Turner as mayor in many issues with which he was identified, for instance, through a motion contained in a mayoral minute. The three also tended to take more 'militant' stances in opposing developments that aroused residents' protests than the other aldermen.

Table VII-3  Mean Agreement Scores for bloc members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ratepayers</th>
<th>Opposition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All divisions</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-finance</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Council Minutes, 82 recorded divisions.

The opposition retained a much higher level of cohesion in non-finance divisions. Much of this was due to stands taken in defence of traditional council policies of various sorts, which the newer aldermen had fewer qualms about questioning. All except one of the minority had been aldermen for at least one term prior to 1968. Part of their cohesion was probably due to personal relationships they had developed over their long terms as fellow aldermen.
The analysis of voting divisions enables us also to look at the question of ward parochialism. In Ku-ring-gai the membership of some committees was determined on the basis of equal ward representation, and there was some evidence that in minor matters, the norm of ward autonomy operated. Thus, ward aldermen had the major say in determining a programme of works within their wards. We have seen how the issue of the rate produced a fundamental division of the council into two blocs, but this did not entail overriding ward parochialism as a factor in decision making on some other matters. Whilst progress associations were of less importance than formerly, there were other organisations exerting pressures on ward aldermen, which even those with their victory as ratepayers candidates behind them sometimes considered it unwise to ignore.

Assuming that the three ward aldermen perceived the interests of their ward in the same way, one might expect them to vote in unison on matters directly affecting their ward, if ward pressures were important for them. Such ward matters included development applications, the siting of facilities and also several divisions over the drawing of new ward boundaries. For Roseville and Gordon-Killara Wards, the number of ward matters was insufficient for analysis and in both cases the problem was compounded by high absenteeism on these divisions. The number of ward-related divisions in the other two wards was still rather small, particularly in Wahroonga Ward. However, Table VII-4 compares agreement scores between ward aldermen for ward-related divisions and all other non-finance
divisions. This comparison removes the influence of the major cleavage over finance matters. It does seem evident that cohesion amongst ward aldermen generally was greater for ward-related matters than for other issues.

Table VII-1 Agreement Scores on Ward Matters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wahroonga Ward</th>
<th>Agreement Scores</th>
<th>Pymble—St Ives Ward</th>
<th>Agreement Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ward Matters</td>
<td>Non-Ward Matters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basto - Strenger</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>Bennett - Mason</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basto - Turner</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Bennett - Rickard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turner - Strenger</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>Rickard - Mason</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean: 71</td>
<td>(N = 14)</td>
<td>Mean: 50</td>
<td>Mean: 73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(N = 38)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Council Minutes, 52 non-finance divisions.

This occurred regardless of the relationship between ward members over finance matters. All three in Wahroonga were members of the majority bloc, whilst in the other ward Bennett, also a ratepayers alderman, was on the opposite side to Mason and Rickard on this issue. In Wahroonga, Basto disagreed more often than he agreed with his ward colleagues on matters that were not concerned with ward issues, or finance. Amongst non-finance issues, the influence of ward pressures changed this to a fairly high level of agreement on ward matters. In Pymble-St Ives Ward, agreement scores between all three aldermen increased when ward pressures were relevant considerations. It does seem, in fact, that aldermen were subject to the influence of parochial demands when these were relevant.
and when the major issue of local politics - the level of
the rate - was not at stake. This applied as much to
new as to old aldermen.

4. LEICHHARDT

Of Leichhardt's eighteen aldermen, fourteen were
Labor Party members. Of the four others, three were from
the Balmain Ward. They acted as an opposition, voicing
the demands of local residents' groups and crystallising
the issues that proved important in defeating the Labor
Party at the 1971 elections. The Labor majority applied
the rules of caucus decision making to every item that
appeared on the council agenda. A meeting of the Labor
caucus would go through every item and a majority decision
would be taken. It was in the caucus that conflicts
within the Labor group were resolved. They never emerged
onto the floor of the chamber. During 1968-71, no Labor
aldermen broke the rule of caucus solidarity by voting
against a majority caucus decision. Thus, every item
that was made an issue by the opposition produced an
entirely predictable result. Matters of contention
might prompt two speakers from the Labor group, the mover
and the seconder, to answer the opposition. Council
meetings were not occasions for debate and decision, but
opportunities for Labor aldermen to explain or justify
decisions already taken and for opposition aldermen to
attempt to make political capital.

Within the caucus the norm of ward autonomy was
adhered to. For most ALP aldermen the 'bread and butter'
of local politics were parochial ward issues, of direct
concern to their ward constituents and their local party branches. In most cases, for matters that had no extra-ward political importance, the three ward aldermen would decide the issue and the remainder of caucus would accept their decision. One alderman described the operation of this norm:

If you have the numbers in the council, you leave it up to the ward aldermen. If they don't know their people they are in trouble. I wouldn't buy into an argument over flats in another ward, that's for the people in those areas, they should go to their boys and sort it out. But over things like the town hall, the swimming pool, the new library, that's a matter for all of us.

The norm was justified by aldermen in terms of the need to have 'local knowledge', or that they should 'know their people' as the alderman quoted above said. This also contained the more pragmatic consideration that ward aldermen ought best to be able to judge the political implications of local issues. There were occasions, however, when the arrangement caused the Labor majority some embarrassment, when favours granted by ward aldermen were found to have broader implications. One such case, when a flat development was approved that was contrary to the council's draft planning scheme and created a considerable amount of controversy, was described by an alderman from a neighbouring ward:

We had to support it to the hilt in public because of the majority decision in caucus. The ward aldermen had the say there, we didn't like the decision at all. They should have known. If they knew what was going to happen they might have thought different.

The importance of ward parochialism was seen also in the way decisions were made over matters of public works
programming. These were matters of considerable controversy in the caucus as ward aldermen fought to obtain a fair 'slice of the cake'. Ward separatism was encouraged when the redrawing of the City of Sydney boundaries added Glebe to Leichhardt municipality as a separate ward. Glebe's problems and political background were foreign to the rest of the aldermen, and vice versa, and pressures from Glebe aldermen to maintain in Glebe a considerably higher standard of services than Leichhardt had previously provided, accentuated inter-ward conflicts. These parochial considerations were not generally evident on the floor of the council chamber, because of the religious adherence to caucus discipline. However, it was the practice for ward aldermen to move and second motions for matters that affected their ward - such as development applications in their area, and so on. This was expected of ward aldermen even on those occasions when the majority of the caucus had decided the matter had extra-ward significance, and overridden the ward aldermen.  

Where the Labor majority was unassailable and caucus rules strictly adhered to, the caucus meeting provided the crucial arena for council decision making. In this arena, the importance of distributive issues for aldermen was recognised by the virtual delegation of authority to ward aldermen on ward matters. In this respect the decision making process was similar to Bankstown. On both councils, so long as broader issues did not impinge on the granting of favours of various sorts by ward aldermen, arrangements that recognised the common interest
of fellow ward members were adopted. In Ku-ring-gai these informal arrangements were less evident, although ward parochialism did reveal itself in the stands taken by aldermen. In Liverpool, as we shall see, the fundamental partisan split between Labor and non-Labor aldermen added a new dimension that actually inhibited the making of such arrangements.

5. LIVERPOOL

The 1968 council was split evenly between ALP aldermen and independents. The ALP group regularly caucused on issues it chose. In each of the three years 1968-71 the mayor was an ALP member. In 1969 and 1970, this resulted from a drawing of lots after a 6-6 vote, but in 1971 the ALP had the support of two independents for its candidate. The mayoralty gave the ALP caucus 'the numbers' in the council through his casting vote, when the council was split 6-6 on any issue.

The domination of council decision making by the Labor caucus was due in part to its majority, but also to the frequency with which independent aldermen split on issues. The council decision making process was not always characterised by the split between the ALP group and an 'opposition'. One indication of this was the ALP's decision not to insist on 'packing' every committee with a Labor majority. It is likely that such a policy of confrontation would have been counter-productive. Thus, in 1970 when committee memberships were determined by agreement between the caucus and the rest of the council, and adopted in the chamber by a 'blanket' motion, on two
of the major committees only two of the five members were Labor aldermen, and on three the chairman was an independent. In 1970 and 1971 the chairman of the finance committee was in fact a prominent local Liberal Party member. In 1971, three of the five chairmen of the major committees were independents and only on three was there an ALP majority. However, these three—parks, development and works—were perhaps the most important in terms of the Labor teams' policies. Furthermore, through their control of the council they could upset a committee recommendation.

In spite of the support from two non-Labor aldermen in 1971, the mayoralty remained essentially a partisan position. He was subject to caucus rules and caucus majority decisions and this imposed a constraint on his independence of action and his ability to take initiatives.

The division of the council into Labor and anti-Labor blocs is shown in Figure VII-5. Voting divisions were not the norm in Liverpool. Aldermen registered their public stands on issues by asking that their names be recorded as opposing a resolution, or by signing their names to motions of rescission. The data used for the Figure consists of these recorded 'opposition votes' and co-sponsorships of motions in 1969-70. Together they totalled one hundred. The data suffer from a number of faults. Some aldermen were far more eager to record their stands and sign their names to motions than others and I have made no adjustment to the co-agreements to take this into account. The number of names recorded in each
vote or co-sponsorship ranged from two up to six. There may have been others in agreement and the data does not distinguish them from those in disagreement. What the co-sponsorships and recorded votes do show are the occasional mutual choices by aldermen of allies, across a wide range of issues. They do not show a total pattern of agreements and disagreements on each of the occasions. In the Figure, the 'scores' represent the number of times a pair of aldermen were found in agreement in a co-sponsorship or a recorded opposition vote.

The ALP bloc and the non-Labor bloc are fairly well defined in Figure VII-5. There were, however, several inter-bloc agreements between aldermen. Some of these occurred over uncontroversial matters, but others did involve controversy. Most were matters over which the caucus took no stand, largely because of a tied vote in the caucus, when Labor aldermen were left free to vote as they wished in the council. Several such issues involved flat development control, the issue being whether or not to enforce the council's draft planning regulations that prohibited flats in areas that had formerly been zoned for flat development. Three Labor aldermen consistently voted in favour of upholding the new regulations and in doing so usually found themselves in a minority with one or two non-Labor aldermen.

The data do not provide conclusive evidence of the relevance of ward parochialism for the decision making process. Taking all inter-personal agreements, the mean for all those that occurred between fellow ward aldermen
Figure VII-5  Cluster Analysis, Liverpool Council, from Recorded Votes and Co-sponsorship of Motions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>McCarthy</th>
<th>Murray</th>
<th>Gibbs</th>
<th>Gard</th>
<th>Smith</th>
<th>Oliveri</th>
<th>Bradshaw*</th>
<th>Firth*</th>
<th>Paciullo*</th>
<th>Durrant*</th>
<th>Napier*</th>
<th>Short*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>McCarthy</td>
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<td>Bradshaw*</td>
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<td>Firth*</td>
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<td>Paciullo*</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Durrant*</td>
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<td>Short*</td>
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<td>14</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* Labor Alderman
Mayor: Bradshaw.

Source: Council Minutes, 100 recorded votes and co-sponsorships of motions, comprising all such occasions 1969 and 1970
was 5.4. The mean of all those that occurred between aldermen from different wards was 4.4. This difference, not very great in itself, is probably largely attributable to the party composition of ward members. South Ward contained three ALP aldermen and East Ward three non-Labor aldermen, whilst in North Ward there were two of each. The greatest differences between intra and extra-ward agreements occurred in South and East Wards.

The relative lack of importance of ward parochialism was also seen in other ways. Ward aldermen were not equally represented on committees, not even the important pork barrel committees of works and parks. One reason can be seen in the case of the parks committee in particular. The committee was set up in 1967 at the instigation of Labor aldermen in line with a programme to obtain greater expenditure on parks and recreational and sporting facilities. In particular, it was Labor policy to concentrate on servicing the new Green Valley housing estate situated in the North Ward and the new residential areas in the South Ward. Thus, the agreed policy in the Labor group — five of whose six members were from these two wards — overrode pressures for an equal consideration for all wards. In fact, East Ward aldermen did not just sit back inactive. In 1971 they gained representation on the works and parks committees. The deputy mayor for 1971, Alderman Gard — whose catholicism in agreeing with fellow aldermen in co-sponsoring motions is seen in Figure VII-5 — was from the East Ward and he and a fellow ward alderman voted for Bradshaw, the Labor mayor.
in 1971. Winning consideration for the interests of their ward involved making arrangements with the Labor majority. This was an indication of the absence of arrangements such as those found in Bankstown and Leichhardt that recognised the ward as an autonomous political unit for some purposes through such devices as the division of funds and the delegation of authority to ward aldermen to deal with 'ward matters'. The partisan division of the council cut across ward divisions.

6. NORTH SYDNEY

During the three years 1968–71 the issues surrounding flat development in the municipality came to completely dominate council politics. In 1969 the mayor was one of those who was least sympathetic to the demands of local residents' groups, but as these demands became more persistent and the council more polarised his position as a minority bloc member became more difficult. The mayor elected for two terms in 1970–71 was more closely identified with the group of aldermen sympathetic towards demands to curb flat development, and the deputy mayors in these two years were amongst those most sympathetic to the residents' groups; one was subsequently mayor in 1972 and the other deputy mayor, both having been elected as Resident Action candidates. The mayor of 1970–71 had promised to use his casting vote in favour of the status quo. However, on this issue of flat development, the council was so divided that mediation was generally out of the question.
Although the council operated with committees, these met in public and consisted of the whole council. There had been moves to form a committee system in the traditional mould on several occasions, moves that were supported by the staff and recommended by the department of local government. They were defeated on the grounds that decisions should not be made 'behind closed doors'. This was evidence of the influence of local groups upon the decision making process, for it was clearly implied in the argument that these decisions 'behind closed doors' would be ones that could be more easily influenced by developers than residents. The openness of the council decision making process itself was an important feature. Decisions about flat applications were reached on the floor of the council chamber, often after numerous amendments moved by various aldermen. On most occasions it was quite apparent that informal compromises or agreements had not been worked out to completely resolve a particular issue. The public arena of the council meeting was where this process of confrontation and compromise occurred. Over a particular flat development the council would vote on several amendments, relating to the intensity of development or the height of the building and other such details, as well as whether or not to permit any redevelopment at all, until a majority decision was reached on a resolution. On many such occasions the council would divide formally, making this procedure a normal means of registering a vote. From these divisions we can see how the council was divided into blocs.
Figure VI1-6 shows a cluster analysis using agreement scores on divisions taken between August 1969 and November 1970 that directly concerned planning matters. These total 57 and include some that occurred in the planning committee as well as those in the council. In all there were 66 divisions in council meetings and from these 47 were directly involved with planning issues. Of the rest, the majority were related to these issues, particularly procedural motions such as dissent from mayoral rulings. These have not been included amongst those from which Figure VII-6 is derived.

At the level of an agreement score of 60, the council did not divide itself into two clear-cut blocs. However, it is apparent that there was a tendency towards a majority and minority bloc pattern. The majority included those sympathetic towards the demands of residents' groups. There were two clear blocs occurring at the level of an agreement score of approximately 80. One, consisting of Mitchell, Hutley and Bugler was identifiable from the content of the issues over which the council divided as being favourable towards permitting flat development in spite of protests from local residents. The other, Hamilton, Tranter and Haviland took the opposing stand. To these we can add Woodward and perhaps Bailey. All of these latter aldermen, except Haviland, were endorsed by Resident Action at the 1971 elections, as also were Drew and Wyllie. One difficulty in using these planning divisions is that many of them were over compromise proposals. I have identified the blocs as deriving from
Figure VII-6 Cluster Analysis: North Sydney Council Divisions over Planning Matters.

Source: Council Minutes, 57 divisions over matters directly concerning planning and development control, August 1969 - November 1970
the positions adopted by aldermen over one general issue, flat development, but the actual divisions entailed taking stands on matters where the general issue was considerably blurred. The two opposed blocs identified above represent the most consistent pro and anti-development stands within these divisions. The remainder of aldermen, at least a third, were less consistent in this respect. There is also some evidence that these two blocs acted in some respects as groups within the council, taking pre-considered concerted stands and promoting agreed motions. Certainly, the anti-development group became closely knit in pursuing its policies as the 1971 elections approached, and they themselves played an important role in forming the coalition of local residents' groups that emerged as a local party at the elections.

As was pointed out in discussing local interest groups, resident groups were of the neighbourhood type. One might expect them to exert most influence on ward aldermen, particularly if the issues were defined as being in some degree of a distributive nature. The general bloc pattern would suggest that aldermen tended to take relatively consistent stands on the broader regulative issues involved — that is pro or anti-flat development. However, we do see that these stands were by no means entirely consistent for individual aldermen. One factor that needs to be considered is the extent to which aldermen's voting behaviour on flat development issues was influenced by ward pressures.

The majority of flat development occurred in two wards, East Ward and Tunks Ward, during this period. Of the
57 divisions 37 involved development applications or planning proposals in these wards. In the other three wards there were insufficient divisions to make any analysis of the voting behaviour of ward aldermen worthwhile. Table VII-5 compares agreement scores for ward aldermen in Tunks and East Wards on ward matters, with scores on the remaining planning divisions.

**Table VII-5 Agreement Scores on Ward Matters (Planning)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tunks Ward</th>
<th>Agreement Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ward Matters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brunton-Cook</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brunton-Fitzpatrick</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cook-Fitzpatrick</td>
<td>92</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mean:</td>
<td>81</td>
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<tr>
<td>(N = 18)</td>
<td>(N = 39)</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>East Ward</th>
<th>Agreement Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ward Matters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitchell-Tranter</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitchell-Wyllie</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tranter-Wyllie</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean:</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N = 19)</td>
<td>(N = 38)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Council Minutes, 57 planning divisions.

In Tunks Ward the difference in agreement scores does seem to indicate that aldermen were acting in response to commonly perceived ward interests when these were relevant in making decisions about planning matters. The greatest increase in agreement scores occurred between Fitzpatrick and the remaining two. Fitzpatrick was identified in Figure VII-6 as one of those identifiable with the anti-development bloc. Cook was more closely identified with the pro-development bloc, whilst Brunton fell between the two. However, Brunton's mean agreement score with the three aldermen in the anti-development bloc was only
36, whilst with Mitchell, Bugler and Hutley, his mean score was 55. It can be said, then, that Cook and Brunton — but particularly Cook — were persuaded to oppose flat development in their own wards more often than in other wards. In other wards they tended to support applications for flat development.

In East Ward, the position is very different. Mitchell and Tranter were in the opposing blocs and it seems clear that on ward matters their stands were even firmer in opposition than for other development issues. It is possible that they were both influenced by ward pressures, but that they viewed them differently. Mitchell was attentive to pro-development interests, Tranter to anti-development interests. The third alderman, whose stand was extremely unpredictable on the broad issue, seems to have been equally so on ward matters.

The influence of local groups and residents who opposed flat development applications certainly was important in the decision making process. For most aldermen though, their stands on the flat issue revealed in these divisions were taken without the direct pressure of ward interests on them. It is important to note, in fact, that most of the groups concerned consistently contacted those aldermen they knew to be sympathetic to their aims, rather than just their ward aldermen. This, of course, was in direct contrast to the approaches made by progress associations over parochial issues. In other words, as we have seen, the flat issue was not just
a parochial one, even though there seems evidence of local ward pressures playing a role in altering stands generally taken by some aldermen on this issue.

FOOTNOTES


2. The matrix is constructed by first entering in the top left corner the two aldermen with the highest agreement score. The remaining list of pairs is searched for the next highest agreement score between a pair that includes a member already in the matrix. Subsequent entries are made in the same way until all pairs are exhausted. The shape of the matrix depends on the level of agreement taken as a cut-off point. If a council is polarised, it may be that at some point there will be no score above the cut-off point between an alderman already entered and those not entered, and this will indicate where one bloc ends and the other begins in the matrix. In this situation, the next entry is the highest remaining agreement score between any two aldermen. However, if there are 'independents', as well as blocs, it may be more sensible to enter them before commencing with members of the next bloc, even though this entails entering a score below that chosen as a cut-off point. (A true 'independent' in a two party system will have an agreement score of 50 with members of both blocs). In the present case, there is an 'independent' and this is revealed in the construction of the matrix using a cut-off point of 60 when he gets entered between the two blocs.

3. Bowman's score of 100 with Lockwood occurred with a high rate of absenteeism on Bowman's part. He was elected at a by-election in 1969 and missed the first ten divisions. The alderman he replaced is not included in the calculations.

4. I use the two terms 'groups' and 'blocs' to distinguish between aldermen who show some evidence of cohesion, unity of purpose and selectivity of membership and aldermen who share some common attribute, such as an attitude, common ward membership, and so on.
We thus need evidence additional to that provided by cluster analysis to identify a group rather than just a bloc or category. In the case of the Progressive Independents, they were characterised as a local party with identifiable aims and policies. They maintained close personal relationships and frequently acted in concert. These characteristics distinguished them from the remaining aldermen, although the latter's high cohesion in voting behaviour might indicate they also acted as a group. It is probably more appropriate to describe them as a faction, in the sense F. G. Bailey uses the term, that is an alliance without an overriding purpose, composed of transactional links rather than moral ones. [See F. G. Bailey, Stratagems and Spoils, (Oxford, Blackwell 1969) pp. 51-5]. The Progressive Independents on the other hand were more than a faction, as the group pursued consistent aims apart from the pragmatic one of political success for each of its separate members. For a discussion of 'groups' and 'categories' in relation to cluster analysis see Peter Loveday, 'Grouping M. P.'s: The Use of Cluster Analysis', Politics, November 1970, pp. 180-194.

5. Personal Interview conducted September 1970

6. Personal Interview conducted September 1970

7. The matrix in Figure VII-4 was constructed so as to place MacMillan, the majority bloc member, with the lowest intra-bloc and the highest extra-bloc agreement scores in between the two blocs. Of the 35 inter-bloc agreement scores, 19 were less than 10.

8. Personal Interview conducted May 1971

9. Personal Interview conducted April 1971

10. This occurred during the dispute over which the Balmain aldermen Wyner, Origlass and Graham were expelled from the Labor Party for defying a caucus decision. In the first instance, Origlass did in fact move a motion to which he and his fellow Balmain ward aldermen were opposed. When the same issue was revived later, the rest of the caucus used this as evidence of their 'opportunism', when in fact they had not at that stage gone so far as to defy the discipline of caucus. It was when they finally followed local sentiment (including resolutions passed by the Balmain branch of the party) and voted in the council against the caucus decision that disciplinary action was instigated, and the branch disbanded and reformed. These events occurred prior to 1968.
The aim of preceding chapters has been to identify differences in the politics of each local area to help explain why one type of decision was made rather than another in resolving local issues. A description of some issues and decisions in each of the councils will make explicit some of the relationships between the local political environment in which decision makers operated and the way they actually made decisions.

The issues and decisions that will be described are intended to be representative of politics in each of the areas. They are examples of distributive, regulative or redistributive decisions, according to the type of issue commonly found in each of the areas. Two broad areas of council decision making - development control and budgetary decision making - were chosen to provide case study material. The former involved all matters related to the preparation of a planning scheme and the administration of statutory planning controls and the latter involved decisions on raising and spending money or financing and providing council services. The ways in which issues were commonly defined and resolved were noted from a general inspection of the local press and council and committee minutes, and from interview data. Individual issues were chosen not so much because they were the 'most important' by some actors' or observers' criteria, or that they aroused the most public controversy, but rather because they represented some of the normal features of council decision making. In fact,
many of these issues would also have been chosen had these other criteria been adopted. For instance, some illustrated changes in an existing pattern of council decision making and were major controversies.

Planning is generally viewed from the point of view of the special characteristics of planning decisions. They involve a conscious effort to attain specified goals by taking courses of action whose effects are predictable. Planning decisions are forward-looking and purposive and based on analysis and calculation. But it has often been pointed out that town planning is not in fact isolated from those political influences which are accepted as normal for other types of governmental decisions. As Parker puts it:

...of all the areas of social control, urban planning is perhaps the most peculiarly subject to political complexities and resistances, both in the setting of goals and the implementation of plans. 1

Local statutory land use planning has its own distinctive technical, political and administrative problems. Councils are involved in the formulation and administration of planning schemes for their areas that place restrictions and controls on the use of land by property owners. Probably the most crucial stage in the process is the administration and enforcement of the regulations in individual cases. Council planners spend most of their time and energy processing development applications and attempting to enforce conformity with the existing regulations, rather than producing original ideas or grand solutions to problems of urban development. An appendix to this chapter
discusses in greater detail the nature of statutory planning controls and the special problems raised by their administration.

The appendix points out that planning regulations are mostly not of a very specific nature, but leave room for the exercise of considerable discretionary powers. Most government regulations leave scope for interpretation at the point of case by case administration. Planning regulations offer an extreme example of this. In most cases, a considerable amount of judgment has to be exercised. There is an important distinction between legitimate interpretations of a rule and those that are made on irrelevant grounds. But it is often difficult to distinguish in practice, not only because the regulations themselves are so vague and the criteria to be used in exercising judgment so generalised, but also because there can be considerable scope for technical debate and disagreement over what is and what is not 'good planning' or what measures will or will not achieve a particular end once agreed upon as desirable. It is difficult to distinguish between an exercise of discretionary powers that has been undertaken 'in good faith' in an attempt to achieve the purposes underlying the regulations, and a particularistic or distributive decision made on irrelevant grounds, such as doing a favour for a friend, or even granting a dispensation in exchange for a bribe. It is often important to know something of the motives of those making the decisions in such cases.
The amount of discretion granted local councils in administering planning regulations offers encouragement to some to seek distributive decisions. Developers often argue the special merits of their case to try and justify an exemption from a rule or a particular interpretation of a regulation, on grounds that in fact have nothing to do with the purpose of the regulations themselves. This is usually easier and less costly than trying to alter the regulation itself to remove a prohibition. Similarly occupants or owners of property who see themselves adversely affected by neighbouring developments seek to prevent them by obtaining a favourable decision in a particular case. But the regulations in fact offer the opportunity for councils to take account of special pleadings by neighbours of a proposed development. Councils are obliged to give notice to neighbours of development applications for flat buildings and to take account of their objections if they make any. One of the criteria to be taken into account in all decisions on permissible uses (i.e. where the council has power to refuse or approve) refers to 'the existing and future amenity of the neighbourhood'. Thus, councils can refuse flat applications in the face of residents' protests in some cases and grant them in others, possibly simply on the basis of the strength of protest in each case. Planners - and developers - frequently grow wrathful over the 'inconsistency' of councils in this regard. But the regulations do leave room for decisions of this type. Many would be distributive decisions prompted in part at least by requests to aldermen for exemptions, favours or special considerations.
In some circumstances residents and developers - the most frequent protagonists in planning issues - do seek to raise regulative issues. This occurs often when planning schemes or codes are being formulated or when the exercise of discretionary powers and the administration of an existing set of regulations act continually to the detriment of one group or the other. Then streets of residents and neighbourhoods with common interests in preventing flat development unite into local groups, and may combine as local parties at elections, while developers may also participate in elections, or act in concert to attain their ends in other arenas, such as through direct contact with State Ministers. Rather than seek to exert influence at the point of enforcement, they seek to alter the content of the regulations themselves.

All of the six councils resolved or were directed to prepare a planning scheme under the 1947 legislation which introduced statutory planning in New South Wales. Table VIII-1 lists the major steps taken in preparing a local scheme and making it law, and shows when each council took these steps. Before a local scheme is prescribed development control is exercised under the provisions of the County of Cumberland planning scheme of 1951, covering the whole metropolitan area, or under provisions of interim development orders by which the Minister for Local Government varied the scheme. Prior to 1963, the metropolitan planning authority was the single-purpose Cumberland County Council, but this was disbanded in that year and its functions taken over by the State Planning Authority (SPA).
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1. Note: Approval of Authority can be subject to further consultation or amendment.
2. Period varies depending on the length of objections received.
3. Council can extend the time for objections to be heard.
4.SPA = State Planning Authority.
Table VIII-1 (Cont'd)

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<td>11. Scheme formally prescribed</td>
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1 The 'Authority' is the formal body nominally at the apex of the hierarchy in the SPA (although it is subordinate to the Minister).
2 Exhibition held in the local area.
3 Council can hear objections itself, or appoint a commissioner (often its own planning officer).
4 The report of the commissioner or body hearing objections is accompanied by recommendations from the council on each objection.
5 The scheme was re-exhibited after the Minister's determination of first round objections.
A local scheme is intended to 'fill in' and elaborate on the County scheme. Once a council adopts its own scheme - and this happens long before it becomes law - it is considered under some obligation to conform to its provisions, even though subsequently this may mean administering provisions inserted in the draft scheme by the State Planning Authority, against council opposition. Some councils take advantage of an uncertain legal position over their obligation to conform to a draft local scheme, effectively opening a new area of discretion, particularly as the supposedly superseded provisions of the County of Cumberland scheme are less specific.  

The State Planning Authority exerts considerable influence over the content of local schemes. It will not permit provisions to be included that contradict any metropolitan policies it has evolved. In this respect it is backed by the authority of the Minister for Local Government, to whom the Authority is fully responsible. The Minister is the final arbiter over local scheme provisions and he has the power to suspend the provisions of any planning scheme. However, local councils can and do bargain and argue over issues of contention with the Authority, often with success. Some instances will be seen in the case studies.

BANKSTOWN

Throughout the 1960's the planning department was a comparatively large one with a staff of about fifteen of whom a third or more were qualified professional planners. We have already noted that except for Burwood, Bankstown's
planner exercised the most delegated authority. Apart from this, the department attained a status unusual for planning departments, for example in the extent of its participation in decisions normally the sole sphere of other departments. During the period of the administrator (1963-5) the department enjoyed considerable autonomy in making planning decisions and evolved the principles embodied in the local planning scheme. It also acquired the habit of making decisions on development control without aldermanic intervention that it was subsequently loth to give up. In retaining some of this autonomy, it was aided by aldermen's sensitivity on planning matters which stemmed from the council's dismissal in 1963 over a bribery case connected with a development application. The Minister tended to keep a watchful eye on the council and the planner found it convenient to make this point when arguing for adherence to the rules in development control. As he commented —

Every time the council disagrees with me they run a risk of being wrong - the chances are I am usually right. They consider it a hurdle not to adopt a town planner's recommendation. Rather than reject it outright they would rather refer it back for 'further consideration'...and they hope some changes will result. 6

He probably under emphasised the bargaining position of aldermen in such situations, but the point is that they did feel constrained to bargain with, rather than ride roughshod over, the planner. The planner's faith in his ability to be right and his belief that there were 'right' answers to planning matters was typical. By being 'right' he meant 'in the public interest', based on professional
knowledge of planning principles and experience in their application. The problems planners face in keeping issues defined in these terms were well illustrated in the case of disputes over Bankstown's planning scheme.

The scheme was prepared and adopted whilst the council was under the appointed administrator. On the election of the council in December 1965, one of its first acts was to seek to recall the scheme from the State Planning Authority where it had been submitted just prior to the election. Under pressure, the Minister agreed to return the scheme for 'perusal'. The council's initial concern was to find out what financial commitments were entailed in the ambitious land acquisition scheme for open space purposes, but the most contentious issues for the council were some of the zoning provisions. The deputy mayor suggested in a press interview that '...property owners might find an opportunity to discuss with aldermen any personal grouches they hold against the plan'. From the number of minor amendments moved by aldermen, it was apparent that some property owners took advantage of this invitation. Most amendments sought to rezone properties to a higher use. Most were adopted by the council.

The planner pointed out that the council could only make representations on these amendments to the Authority at this stage. He expressed concern over the increasing volume of objections. In one case, a large number of objections had been received from landowners over the residential zoning of their properties along the Hume Highway south of Chullora. These properties had
commercial potential as used car lots, motel sites, drive-in hamburger bars, and so on. Residential zonings had been applied in the name of 'ribbon development control' to prevent such unsightly, traffic generating uses along the Highway. Residents who wanted to move away and existing businesses that wanted to expand sought commercial use zonings. Individual amendments to the scheme in response to these objections by property owners were moved in the council by several aldermen and finally two motions were adopted that rezoned a whole two mile stretch of the Highway for commercial use. The Authority refused to accept these amendments and, although the council again reaffirmed its decision on rezoning during 1968, they agreed to await the objections stage to have the matter decided.

Following the exhibition of the scheme in 1969, the council decided that it would itself hear objections. Some of the objections lodged against the residential zonings on the Highway were matters for 'early determination' by the Minister, as several applications for commercial development were outstanding. One in particular aroused considerable controversy. It was an application for a hotel, lodged by a Yagoona publican who was an alderman on the 1965-68 council. During that period his application had been rejected by the council, being opposed by Progressive Independent aldermen. The planner strongly argued against the hotel in defence of his 'ribbon development' control proposals.
In March 1970 the council heard some forty objections to these zonings. In the great majority of cases it recommended retention of the residential zones, a reversal of the previous position. This change appears to have been influenced by the council's opposition to the hotel and the wish to appear consistent in opposing it. This opposition was practically unanimous. East Ward aldermen were attentive to local opinion which had voiced strong opposition to the hotel through an ad hoc group calling itself the Committee of Community Interests. Local residents who feared loss of amenity and churchmen who espoused 'wowser' views were united against the hotel.

At the same time, East Ward aldermen demonstrated their distributive approach to these matters by lending support unsuccessfully to a number of other objectors seeking commercial rezonings, particularly residents who wanted to sell and move to more amenable residential areas.

The Minister permitted the hotel and expressed his support for some of the other objections from landowners. In the official determination communicated to the council by the State Planning Authority, it was stated —

> Whilst definitely not wishing to see the area completely developed for commercial purposes such as used car sales yards, etc., he (the Minister) felt there could be a case in appropriate locations for selective zonings other than residential... ⑧

Apart from this, the determination made no direct reference to the merits or otherwise of ribbon development control. In making this particular exception to the zonings, and foreshadowing others, the Minister showed how the determination of objections often took the appearance of granting legitimacy to distributive decisions.
Initial disputes in 1966 also involved challenges to other policies embodied in the scheme. Several Progressive Independent aldermen expressed concern over the strict provisions controlling the quality of industrial development fearing that they would discourage industrialists from coming to Bankstown. These challenges were not effective and the planner was able to implement his proposed controls over such development covering various aspects of design, site treatment, off-street parking, and so on. 9

Similar arguments about 'inhibiting development' were also put by Progressive Independent aldermen, and others, over the flat development provisions of the scheme. Flat zones originally accounted for only 130 acres out of a total 11,000 acres of residential zones. Several motions in 1966 sought to increase these zones, particularly around local shopping centres. However, the ALP group on the council moved that there should be no flat zones at all. Neither move won a majority and the planner's provisions remained. During the following two or three years of delay over exhibiting the scheme, due to a metropolitan-wide dispute over discretionary powers relating to commercial and industrial development, the flats issue emerged as one of the most contentious in local politics.

In 1968 Progressive Independent aldermen sponsored a successful motion seeking larger flat zones, in particular to the north of Bankstown shopping centre. The planner in fact now agreed with this view, having during 1967 expressed his opinion that the municipality should cater for a growth to a population of 275,000 rather than the
200,000 originally estimated. Some 500 acres of high-density and also opportunities for medium-density development would need to be provided.

The planner argued that the pressures of metropolitan development and the policies of 'higher planning authorities' on the growth of Sydney made flats inevitable. Whilst up to now private flat development had not occurred, and in the past had been discouraged, it would be easier to ensure that this future development was of a high standard if appropriate policies were adopted immediately. He also argued for presenting people with the choice of housing types:

There is a need to aim for higher residential densities in the municipality in order better to exploit the advantageous location, its employment potential, its civic and commercial amenities and its open space. 10

These arguments were supplemented by aldermen claiming that rate revenues would increase and that trade and commerce would profit.

Support for this view came from the Bankstown Chamber of Commerce. In 1968 they were the first to seek rezoning of 300 acres to the north of the shopping centre and the Progressive Independent's move followed their complaint that the shopping centre would otherwise 'die of strangulation'. 11 In February 1969, the Chamber again sought more flat zones and expressed concern that flat development was so slow to begin. They sought to 'change the existing building code to that of our neighbouring councils', in other words to ease the conditions and standards that attempted to achieve 'quality' development.
Subsequently, following an address by the planner they passed a 'motion of confidence' in his policies.

On the council a minority were still opposed to flat development. They received support from the council's building and health department and in an extraordinary move the head of the department ('acting as a private citizen') wrote a widely publicised letter to the local press opposing flats and defending the virtues of single-dwelling living. Politically it was the local ALP that led the opposition, in particular in the southern part of the municipality where the issue was seized on as one to discredit the Progressive Independents. In the forefront was the local MLA for East Hills, Mr Kelly, who took every opportunity during this period to raise the matter in Parliament. He accused the council of bowing to developers' pressures and creating the 'slums of the future'. He accused them of ignoring the wishes of the residents:

...the little people, the pioneers...Are you going to say - 'Move over and let us put someone in with you'? Are we going to turn our clean air into smog...and destroy our foliage and turn the land into a concrete jungle?...Neurosis comes with flats making for...hell on earth, which only benefits the developer...12

The ALP made the matter an election issue in 1968, but in fact lost seats. This was no discouragement to them. On exhibition of the scheme in June 1969 some two-thirds of the 1,500 objections lodged were over flat development, most of them from residents in Padstow and Panania. ALP branches and the Padstow Progress Association organised public meetings and circulated objection forms for signature by residents. In the face of these protests,
the council passed a motion that they would support objections to flat zones where a majority of property owners lodged objections.

The whole issue was highlighted by the council's approval in May 1969 of a flat development in Padstow. Following this approval, the council in the course of a few weeks received some 400 objections to the flat zoning in this area and this prompted the planner to resubmit the application, which had not yet received final formal approval. The planner pointed to the possibility that the strength of objections would lead to a rezoning. Progressive Independent aldermen refused to change their decision and the approval was confirmed. Local protest redoubled in its vigour and Mr Kelly appealed to the Minister to intervene. His appeal was successful and the Minister revoked the council's approval in September 1969. He also asked the council to refuse any other application until objections had been determined. By the end of the study period no determination had been made on these objections.

Throughout, the Progressive Independents argued that the anti-flat campaign was 'politically inspired' and thus not genuine. It was in fact partly organised by the local Labor Party and was one of Mr Kelly's favourite issues in his battle with the council. It is a characteristic of regulative issues that the individual interests involved are mobilised in support of the broader issue that is at stake. Just as the Progressive Independents supported interests that benefited from 'progress and development'
in the form of flat building, so the local ALP mobilised local residents whom they claimed would suffer.

In this issue, the town planner - arguing as he would see it in the public interest - was successful because in the regulative arena he had 'the numbers' in support of his policies. In matters of planning administration - dealing with separate development applications - his influence in resisting distributive pressures was important. There had been one case when the council contravened its own scheme, in approving a petrol station development and the Minister revoked the council's consent. This was a reminder of the Minister's watchful eye on the council. We did see that in disputes over zonings on the Hume Highway the council was not averse to being attentive to demands for special consideration for individual property owners. But on the whole, the council did not make particularistic decisions in the process of development control.

LIVERPOOL

Some of the major planning issues in Liverpool stemmed from pressures to convert non-urban land to urban uses. In general the council supported all such moves as fulfilling the major goals of 'city development', expansion and progress. The council's initial draft scheme of 1966 coloured vast areas of the map pink and purple for residential and industrial uses. One alderman succinctly expressed the council's idea of planning when he said 'we planned the whole area', \(^{13}\) meaning that the council proposed zoning the nine-tenths of the municipality that was in non-urban use for urban development. Such proposals
were rejected by the SPA as being in conflict with the strategies embodied in the 1968 Sydney Region Plan. This proposed practically no new releases of non-urban land for urban use in Liverpool for about fifteen years and no major releases for twenty five years.

The release of land on the urban fringe was firmly in the hands of the Minister for Local Government and the SPA and the council was in the position of being just one of many groups interested in metropolitan fringe development. It argued for releases on broad planning grounds, by making submissions on the Outline Plan. It also joined forces with land developers who sought piecemeal releases through development applications or by making direct representations to the Minister and the SPA. The council repeatedly and unsuccessfully sought large areas of residential releases west of the Green Valley estate, first as early as 1962 and subsequently in 1966 and 1967. It sought changes in the Cumberland County Council planning scheme ordinance that restricted development in non-urban zones. The council sought to have development permitted on three acre lots, as much of the fringe areas had been subdivided into lots of this size. But the County scheme restricted development to five and in some areas twenty five acre lots.

In only one case can the council claim success in obtaining release of non-urban land beyond that included in the programme for releases in the Outline Plan, or in subsequent minor departures from that plan made by the Minister. In 1971 the Minister finally agreed to allow
development of 700 acres at Chipping Norton, to the east of the city. The area had been considered by the SPA as unsuitable for urban use because of flooding. The initial impetus for obtaining release came from the Chipping Norton Development Association, formed by local landowners. The council's support for their claims for residential zoning went as far as to commission a report from the University of New South Wales Water Research Laboratory which disputed the flood level calculations of the Department of Works on which the SPA's opposition was based. The landowners submitted objections to the local planning scheme zonings and the council supported these in full. The Association also submitted a detailed general submission to the Minister. The matter took over a year to resolve during which time the scheme was held up, but finally the Minister agreed to the release of the land, about one half for residential and the other half for industrial use.

Large scale commercial development was also encouraged and supported by the council. From about 1968 onwards several commercial development companies attempted to build new shopping centres in and around the city centre. Applications were lodged for three separate major developments. One was on a site zoned for industrial use to the north of the city centre; one was on what was formerly the Liverpool Showground to the west of the city; and the third was on a site immediately adjacent to the existing commercial centre. All three applications required rezonings. Characteristically, the council
supported them all, but not without argument. The Chamber of Commerce strongly opposed development that was not in or adjacent to the existing shopping centre. In opposing the first of the applications to the north of the city, the Chamber wrote to the council and individually to aldermen and circulated a petition amongst shopkeepers. Non-Labor members of the council — most of them also members of the Chamber of Commerce — opposed this application, but were defeated by the Labor majority. The council's planner argued that no major commercial development should be permitted away from the existing commercial centre. In the end, the State Planning Authority agreed with this argument and only permitted the one development that was adjacent to the city centre.

Whilst this issue and others like it that involved debates about permitting shopping development outside the existing shopping centre involved competing interests in the regulative arena, they also raised the question of whether or not the regulations as they existed should be valued for their own sake. The characteristic response of the council to a demand from some enterprising entrepreneur wishing to set up a drive-in shopping centre on the urban fringe, and seeking for this purpose a change in zoning, was to lend support. Development and developers were to be applauded. Occasionally, however, aldermen argued that the council ought to apply the rules rather than try to circumvent them. This sort of argument was heard in relation to flat development, where the council could in fact ignore the regulations as they stood if they
wished to make 'exceptions' without having to obtain zoning changes sanctioned by the Minister. This was because the council was able to implement the provisions of the Cumberland scheme, rather than its own, as its own local scheme was not prescribed as law. The council's initial draft scheme was amended by the State Planning Authority and an area tentatively zoned for flat development around the city centre was in the process reduced in size from 250 to 120 acres. In the meanwhile, the council approved some flat applications in the larger area, under the discretionary powers granted in the original Cumberland scheme zoning that permitted flat development. In spite of the zoning of its draft scheme that prohibited flats in a large part of this area, it continued to grant approvals. Within the Labor caucus, there was often a 3-3 division on these issues, but in the council sufficient independent aldermen voted in favour for several such applications to be granted.

Every applicant had his own 'hard luck story' or his own 'special circumstances'. Aldermen tended to be sympathetic and grant the dispensation sought. As one put it:

You have to look at a flat application like this on its merits. If a guy has paid for land to put up a block how can you go and refuse him?\(^{14}\)

A motion to grant approval to such an application of November 1969, moved by two Labor aldermen, was typical in the reasons it mentioned for approval. The property was at present occupied by an 'unsightly' dwelling and was not suitable for a new dwelling as it was flanked by a
YMCA hall and an existing block of flats; the area was previously zoned for flats; the lot was large and suitable for flats; and no objections had been received from neighbours, because there were no neighbours. The council had in fact adopted a policy that applications in non-flat zones should be accompanied by letters of concurrence from neighbours in single dwellings. A similar application considered at the same meeting exposed the absurdity of the situation when a neighbour expressed concurrence to the development only so long as he was permitted to develop his land for flats too. We find aldermen seriously arguing for approval of flats because 'there are already flats in the vicinity'. The existence of these can become a ground for 'hardship' arguments for future cases, as residents claim the amenity of the area has been destroyed. Aldermen opposing approvals pointed out that the council could be accused of 'forcing out' homeowners by encouraging flat development.

The issue of flat development as a regulative one did not emerge with the same importance as in Bankstown. There were only some four objections against flat zoning from residents when the scheme was exhibited. This is not to say that the question was not sometimes debated as a regulative or even a redistributive issue. Those in favour of flats argued for more cheap housing for the area, those against argued on the grounds of the advantages for single dwelling living. One one occasion in particular in 1971, a flat application was deferred despite initial majority support for passing it (achieved through the
mayor's casting vote) as there were some ten objections from residents. The council decided to hold a plebiscite of owners to get their views on a possible rezoning to allow flats. However, on the whole, aldermen tended to make particularistic decisions and accept the arguments of applicants on 'hardship' grounds, thus concurring with the applicants' definition of the issue as a distributive one.

The council faced similar pressures from some applicants for flat development in those areas zoned for flats, but this time over the regulations contained in the draft ordinance for minimum lot sizes. The council was prepared to approve applications that did not quite meet the required standards, but was forced to defer them under pressure from the State Planning Authority to comply with the standards. The dispute then became one of arguing over the 'fitness' of the regulations which the Authority itself had imposed on the council as a standard set of conditions for flat development in all areas. These conditions - minimum of 60 ft. frontage and 9,000 sq. ft. area for a flat site - were considered unsuitable as most lots in the flat zones had 50 ft. frontages. In the end, a compromise solution was reached in February 1971 that permitted development of a lower density on these smaller lots.

The approval of flats in areas not zoned for flats in the council's draft scheme was strictly not a contravention of the law. The approval of a hotel-motel given by the council in November 1969 was a similar case.
It was on one of the sites proposed for shopping development during 1969 and which had been the subject of the Minister's determination of objections to the existing industrial zoning. The shopping development was initially submitted to the council in conjunction with a hotel and, although the council at first opposed the hotel, it gave its approval for an amended application in July 1969. In October the Minister rejected the objection of the developers to the industrial zoning on the draft scheme and confirmed this zoning under which neither shops nor the hotel were permitted. In November, the council approved a further amended application for a hotel-motel from the same developers. This was to be built on the part of the site formerly proposed for the shops. The council's approval was granted '...subject to a prior subdivision creating a lot more than 300 ft. from the County Road...'. The original application had the hotel fronting the Hume Highway. Any development within 300 ft. of a main road requires the 'concurrence' of the State Planning Authority. The amended application of November which the council approved showed the hotel sited 305 ft. from the Highway with access from a side street. This obviated the need for permission to be obtained from the Authority. The council approved the application after seeking legal advice. The planner argued against the application on the grounds of injury to the amenity of the neighbouring residential area. He also pointed out that the Minister had determined that the land would be zoned for industrial use once the scheme was prescribed. The
application was approved with the support of Labor aldermen and some independents, with only two independents formally recording dissenting votes.

In July 1970 the Minister wrote to the council threatening to revoke council's consent for the development. As early as February 1970 the Minister informed a Liverpool hotel proprietor who had protested at the council's approval, that the matter was under investigation. In the event the Minister confined his action to a stern warning to the council. It was agreed that the consent was strictly not illegal, but

...the decision...was a thoroughly bad and irresponsible one...

...there has been a deliberate attempt to nullify the normal planning requirements...and to circumvent my decision on the future zoning of the land.

...the council has a definite obligation to conform with the provisions of its Local Planning Scheme...

...this principle must assume even greater significance after I have determined objections and, for all practical purposes fixed the zonings of land to be included in the scheme when prescribed. 18

The Minister gave as his reason for not revoking consent the injury that would be caused to ratepayers, as the developer would have the right to claim compensation from the council of some $265,000 for work completed to date, all of which was done during the period the matter was 'under investigation' by the Minister.

The decisions described so far did not involve the mobilisation of local residents' opinions. There was one major case of this sort during the 1968-71 period. An application was lodged for a 'non-ferrous ingotting works'
in an industrial zone in Moorebank, a newly developing suburb to the east of the city. The planner recommended approval, as did the development committee, but in August 1970 the council deferred the matter in the face of local protests. Concern was expressed over pollution the establishment (referred to by protesters as a foundry) might cause to the neighbouring residential areas. Public meetings and petitions and the presence of 300 irate residents at a council meeting prompted the council to refuse the application. On appeal by the developer to the State Planning Authority the application was approved, but a long legal dispute over a technicality related to Interim Development Orders, by which areas were rezoned under the Cumberland Scheme and by which process this area had gained its industrial zoning, caused the applicants to go elsewhere with their factory. This was a case in which the council made a distributive decision in favour of protesting residents rather than developers, in spite of the attempts of the applicants to present the issue as a routine matter of regulative rule application.

All councils face pressures from developers and from residents to make distributive decisions. In Liverpool, a fast developing suburb, pressures of this sort, particularly from developers, were more often felt than in most councils. We have seen that the council did sometimes make distributive decisions that favoured developers. In part this was a reflection of the council's general attitude that 'development' was 'progress' and
to be encouraged. Where the rules hindered development, they could be justifiably circumvented. To see their behaviour as an expression of such a general approach is rather belied by their decision to reject the industrial development in Moorebank, particularly as it had long been the council's policy to encourage more jobs and industry for Liverpool. One reason for the council's distributive approach, particularly when contrasted to Bankstown's approach to development control, was the relative lack of influence and status of the planning department.

In Liverpool, the absence of a flats issue similar to Bankstown's was outstanding. It was partly because no such regulative issue emerged that the council was able to make distributive decisions on flat developments. In earlier chapters we saw some evidence of the importance of inter-personal relations in Liverpool politics. This seems to have been borne out in the distributive decisions described. It suited local politicians to prevent these issues from escalating into broader issues beyond the inter-personal level of granting favours. We noted that broad issues seemed to have little relevance for local elections. The flats issue, for instance, cut across party lines and neither the ALP nor independents could turn this into an issue that could be added to those that attempted to highlight the differences between the two blocs.

KU–RING–GAI

The underlying aim of much of council policy was to preserve the exclusive residential status and amenity of
the municipality. The council exercised control over most new development through Residential District Proclamations, some of which had been in force since the 1920's. These were a simple but effective form of zoning that permitted only single-dwelling residential development with certain specified exceptions. Commercial development was kept to the Pacific Highway and to small 'neighbourhood centres' in the new suburbs. Only a handful of 'alien' commercial establishments (notably two bus depots) were established in what later became exclusive residential areas, and typically the council exerted whatever pressure it could to prevent their expansion and even to remove them. With the advent of flat development, largely in the 1960's, the council permitted it only along the Pacific Highway and then only with certain doubts expressed by one alderman when he called flats 'essentially un-Ku-ring-gai'.

Issues concerned with residential amenity are both distributive and regulative. Neighbourhood groups seek special treatment for their local area, but in doing so may find themselves in opposition to developers or even other residents or other sorts of groups. Three prominent cases during the life of the 1968-71 council illustrate the sorts of issues that emerged. In the first, the council was faced with a development application for what some aldermen defined as a further 'un-Ku-ring-gai' type of development, a major shopping centre to replace the present so-called 'village centre' at St Ives, in the northern part of the municipality. The council spent nearly two years in bargaining and negotiation with the
Figure VIII-2  Map of Ku-ring-gai Municipality
developer (David Jones, Sydney's largest department store) before it finally approved an application, only for the newly elected council of 1971 to rescind this approval.

The first application of December 1969 was rejected. The council objected to the site, as it was some way removed from the existing centre and claimed the size of the project was 'grossly excessive'. In the subsequent six months, considerable pressure was put on the council. David Jones conducted a vigorous publicity campaign and commissioned a public survey that showed a large proportion of St Ives and municipal residents as a whole in favour. They claimed that the Department of Education wanted an early resolution as their plans for a new school in St Ives depended on an arrangement with David Jones over exchange of land. The MLA for Hornsby, Liberal Party Minister for Justice spoke in favour of the project at a local party meeting, widely publicised in the local press, in July 1970. He was critical of the council for 'so peremptorily' turning down a 'first class attractive development', intimating that the State Government or the State Planning Authority might 'have to buy into' the issue.

The council received support from the St Ives Progress Association, although their South St Ives counterpart supported the project. In the face of the council's obstinacy, David Jones withdrew in August 1970, but submitted a new application in December on a new site, occupied by an existing arcade and supermarket development. This entailed the company merging with the proprietors of this existing 'village centre'.
The new application was for a project including 450,000 sq. ft. of leasable area of which about half would be for a David Jones Department Store. Parking spaces for 2,500 cars were provided for. The development would include two large supermarkets. It would also incorporate a new council library and baby health centre to replace those in the existing village centre and a new community hall, all at no initial cost to the council. The council did not make an immediate decision, but hired consultants to look at some economic aspects of the project, sought objections from local residents and set up a sub-committee of ward aldermen and council officers to deal with the application. Finally, some six months later in June 1971, the council rejected the application. The applicants were invited to submit a new proposal. This would avoid use of the Village Green (public open space) and would incorporate measures to minimise traffic effects on nearby residential streets, including road widening and the installation of traffic lights. These objections to the scheme were foremost in the submission of the local Cowan Road Residents Preservation Association. More parking would also have to be provided. The major objections however, were still about the size of the centre. The new scheme would not exceed 360,000 sq. ft. of leasable floor space.

On the council, the ward aldermen consistently opposed the schemes presented by David Jones, but they lent support to these proposals. The majority in favour of seeking to impose these conditions was only a narrow one,
with the minority arguing for the application on the grounds that Ku–ring–gai residents wanted better shopping facilities. The sorts of arguments used against the David Jones application were expressed by one ward alderman:

Ku–ring–gai people don't want massive commercialisation of the municipality. They are here because the municipality doesn't have such development. They all expect council to preserve this standard... The developer argued about the economics of the project, but we are not that green. Every developer that comes to us goes away being told we don't accept development of the standard found in most of the rest of Sydney — and they all come back with developments of a high standard... We need adequate shopping facilities, that's true, but not at the expense of the quality of living. 21

The consultants had pointed out that the size of the development would entail considerable penetration of other centres' markets into a wide geographical area and aldermen feared the 'circus style' of promotion that would be required and the traffic that would thus be attracted to St Ives.

The developers did indeed submit a new application meeting the council's major requirements and this was approved by the council just before the September 1971 elections.

The council's sympathy towards residents' interests was seen in two other cases. In the first, residents of Telegraph Road in Pymble voiced vigorous protests about the use of their street by heavy trucks on a regular contractor's route. The council responded in March 1971 by imposing a ban on the use of this street by traffic over three tons. The contractors were using the street as part of a short-cut rather than taking the main road and
their response was to use adjacent residential streets instead. Predictably, residents along these new routes sought similar protection for their streets, and successively, further three ton limits were imposed. Finally only three streets were left, but the council was powerless to impose a limit on these because they were classified as 'secondary roads' and responsibility for them was shared with the Department of Main Roads. In June 1971 the council decided to lift the limit on Telegraph Road, arguing that there were more residents living in the other roads being used as short-cuts. An agreement with the hauliers permitted trucks to use the route only on weekdays and in daylight hours, but this was only an 'understanding'. Telegraph Road residents took the council to court and sought an injunction and although successful in their action, the matter was the subject of an appeal by the council. What began as a highly localised distributive issue finally involved residents over a wide area. The council was in favour of restricting heavy traffic to main roads, but was powerless to impose a limit on the secondary roads that ultimately came to be used. Unable to enforce its policy it was compelled to make a decision about which locality was to bear the major burden of inconvenience, a distributive decision as was the initial one that it reversed.

A similar train of events was seen in another case. This involved re-siting the council rubbish dump at Wahroonga, where it was on the fringe of recent residential
development and set in 'natural bushland'. Vigorous protests from residents and 'bush lovers' reached a peak in 1970 when the Minister announced his determination of objections to the local planning scheme. These made it clear that the dump was not to be rezoned and closed. At the ensuing outcry over this and other matters, notably the Minister's allowance of objections that resulted in more flat-building sites, he agreed to the exceptional procedure of re-exhibiting the scheme to hear objections on the determinations he had just made on previous objections.

The council sought to continue their use of the Wahroonga tip. Prompted by Wahroonga Ward aldermen and by the protests of the North East Wahroonga Action Committee, set up over this issue, the council considered several alternatives. At one point it decided to negotiate for purchase of land at St Ives for a new site, only to be met with cries of protest from the St Ives Progress Association and from ward aldermen who complained they had been absent when the council had adopted this proposal moved by a Wahroonga Ward representative. Attempts to find a site across the municipal boundary in Warringah met with no immediate success.

The Minister, following re-exhibition of the scheme and the hearing of objections to his decisions, decided that the Wahroonga tip must close and rezoned the area for open space. He decided to permit dumping at a site in North Turramurra, already in use for some minor dumping operations. This was to be only a temporary measure and
required the suspension of zoning in the local scheme. The council sought a one or two year period to transfer to the new site, but the Minister insisted that dumping at Wahroonga must cease as soon as the local scheme became law, in a matter of months. The council was far from happy with the solution, but the residents of North Turramurra were even more unhappy. The mayor commented:

This will only transfer the problem from one part of the municipality to another. 22

North Turramurra residents presented a petition of 1,000 signatures and the successful North East Wahroonga Action Committee pledged its 'full support' for residents in the newly affected area. The new protesters were represented by the St Ives - Bobbin Head Action Committee and they probably had mixed feelings about these promises of support. Wahroonga Ward aldermen opposed the new site, just as they had opposed the previous site, but to no avail. The mayor summed up the council's dilemma:

I have had to deal with this problem practically every week of the year... I am doing my utmost to get an area outside the municipality. 23

Aldermen in these issues were ever ready to respond to the local demands of residents. Ward pressures were important in the stands of ward aldermen. However, behind this tendency for aldermen to define these issues as distributive ones was the general attitude that the residential character of the municipality should be protected.
The delegation of authority to the town planner in the administration of development control has been noted in Chapter VI. The planner did, however, submit controversial or major developments to the council via the plans committee. In such cases, as will be seen below, the council was by no means immune from the sorts of local pressures that lead to distributive decisions and which have been in evidence in previous case studies. First, though, we shall see a case in which the delegation of authority was defended as a means of isolating development control from such pressures.

At a council meeting in May 1971, one West Ward alderman sought to have an application referred to the plans committee for decision by the council. It concerned the use of a basement as a mechanic's workshop in his ward on the main Liverpool Road. The planner had approved the application 'in principle' subject to certain conditions being complied with before issuing a formal certificate of approval. The alderman argued that the site was surrounded by residential development and some residents had expressed concern. He wished to make sure the council considered their views. The mayor argued that it was not possible to place the matter on the council's agenda, as it would entail rescinding the council's delegation of authority to the planner. As it was now the planner who had the authority, it was up to him to consider residents' objections and the alderman concerned could make representations to the planner if he
wished. The planner agreed to discuss the matter with the alderman concerned. No other aldermen at the council meeting supported the move to put the issue on the agenda and there the matter rested. The development approval stood.

Burwood's major planning problems concerned redevelopment, both residential and commercial. The planning scheme attempted to exert influence over this redevelopment, proposing significant council participation in redevelopment areas by land acquisition and consolidation of small lots, and the preparation of 'three-dimensional' redevelopment control plans for designated residential redevelopment areas. In the shopping centre, the plan proposed the provision of off-street parking and various road improvements. The council was active in purchasing land for these various purposes. One scheme for a large commercial development fell through when the developer withdrew because the council refused to make concessions on its requirements for parking spaces in the development.

Flat development in Burwood was less intensive than in neighbouring municipalities. This was in part due to the existence of Residential District Proclamations, but was also attributed, by the council at least, to stricter conditions and requirements imposed on developers. The local planning scheme zoned about 100 acres for high density flat development out of about 1,400 acres of residential zones. A number of multi-storey flat projects were approved by the council in the latter part
of the 1960's in the flat zones around the district shopping centre, where many streets also contained flats from the post-war years. During 1968–71 there was one notable occasion on which substantial public controversy was aroused over a flat development. A scheme for three blocks, one of nineteen stories flanked by two of eight stories was approved 'in principle' by the council in December 1969 on a site to the north of the shopping centre facing Burwood Park. The planner recommended imposing a list of conditions for final approval.

The council set in motion the procedure for lifting a Residential District Proclamation on the site, advertising in the press to seek objections and applying to the Minister, whose decision is final in these cases. Some twelve existing home sites were in question. Many objections were lodged and about 100 immediate neighbours signed petitions. Letters were written to aldermen and the press. These argued that the area was already over-developed and that the new blocks would 'invade the privacy' of surrounding homes in what was 'once a quiet residential district'. Residents also feared traffic problems in surrounding narrow streets. The Burwood Ratepayers Association added their voice to the objectors submitting that

...further such development should cease, in order to safeguard existing residents and future generations from...lowering of living standards...

The council again considered the application in September 1970, before any decision was made by the Minister. The public gallery was overflowing and a representative of
the residents, as well as a consultant town planner briefed by the developers, addressed the council. The application was rejected, aldermen expressing concern over the possibility that the central tower would not be constructed as the developers were not able to purchase all the land. Several aldermen congratulated the residents' spokesmen for conducting their campaign in such a 'dignified' and 'sensible' fashion.

During the course of the controversy, the mayor replied to residents' protests, not by arguing the merits of the case, but by defending the council's flats policy in general:

In order to avoid creating a slum situation Burwood Council has deliberately developed its own planning scheme to eliminate the most dilapidated type of property first... around the Burwood District Shopping Centre, and to make the most intensive use of available land. Our aim is to replace these substandard properties with high quality, high value residential flat buildings to meet a very real demand for this...

In spite of the Ratepayers Association's general comments on stopping multi-storey flat development the issue at stake was never really the council's 'policy'. No attempt was made to alter zonings in the planning scheme and no local groups sought to make an issue of this in a concerted fashion. There were not the number of protests characteristic of the issue in North Sydney where cumulatively they led to demands for changes in the planning regulations. The issue was not one raised by candidates at the 1971 elections in this form. Amongst aldermen there was some disagreement and disquiet over the council's 'policy' as enunciated by the mayor and formulated effectively by the council's town planner.
But aldermen did not seize on the flats issue and attack this policy as a means of outbidding fellow aldermen for electoral support. It is worth noting that the motion that rejected this particular application was passed 'on the voices', and those who supported the application did not speak in favour of it. Typically, the council kept disagreement in its ranks out of the public eye.

These issues revealed several important characteristics of council decision making in Burwood. It showed the role occupied by the professional staff and the mayor in policy formulation and the lack of major challenges to these policies in local political conflict. However, local neighbourhood pressures on the council did meet with a response, when aldermen made exceptions to this policy. The professional staff and the executive leader were concerned with defending policy from pressures in the distributive arena; most aldermen were responsive to these pressures.

LEICHHARDT

We have already noted the changes that occurred in the character of Balmain and Glebe during the latter part of the 1960's. New groups became active in local politics, representing the new residents. The issues they brought up largely arose from clashes of interest between middle class values associated with residential amenity and the interests of industrial land users, or in some cases, flat developers.

These conflicts became apparent when objections to the local planning scheme were submitted in 1968. The
Balmain Association took the opportunity to submit a list of objections, backed up by a general submission on the Balmain area. This stated as its basic assumption that 'Balmain is essentially a residential suburb'. Commenting on the scheme the report claimed 'The plan zonings indicate Leichhardt's acceptance of increased industrial activity in the area'. Of its twenty-two objections, fourteen were over industrial areas and three over areas zoned for port purposes. In all cases, the Association sought rezoning to residential use. In fact, in seven cases the council itself lodged formal objections, as these zones had been included in the plan by the SPA. The Association also sought more open space and provisions to encourage 'residential regeneration' largely through restoration of the existing nineteenth century terraced housing.

A submission by the Balmain Industries Association put the views of local industrialists which they summed up when they claimed: 'There is a general inadequacy of area of industrial zones'. They complained about the large number of firms whose premises would become 'non-conforming uses' in areas zoned for residential use. This reflected the dominant pattern of industrial development along the waterfront and scattered amongst residential areas. They submitted that the restriction on development and expansion in such areas was 'unreasonable' and that it seemed the aim of the scheme to 'force removal' of the industries concerned. The submission also complained at the lack of precision in
Figure VIII-3 Map of Leichhardt Municipality

- Snails Bay
- Bircheve
- Horr Bay
- White Bay
- Snaffles Bay
- Roneva
- Balmain
- Globe
- Annandale
- Leichhardt

KEY
- Municipal Boundary
- Down
- Galliways

SCALE: 1 MILE
the scheme over the conditions that could be imposed by the council in the exercise of its discretionary powers with regard to development applications.

Support for some of the objections put by the Industries Association came from Trade Unions. The Amalgamated Engineer's Union, the Federated Ironworker's Union and the Federated Ship Painters and Dockers Union wrote separately to the council objecting to the inclusion of various factories or waterfront premises in residential zones, fearing this would endanger the jobs of their members. At a special council meeting of June 1968 called to consider all submissions, Unionists carried placards into the public gallery — 'Wake up people of Balmain your jobs are at stake'.

In fact, none of these submissions were formally accepted by the council as objections to the scheme and none of the groups concerned were permitted to appear at the subsequent public inquiry. Under the Act, only those with a 'direct estate or interest' in affected land can object against provisions of the scheme that affect that particular land. The council claimed they had 'no alternative' but to refuse to consider the submissions as formal objections. In fact the Secretary of the State Planning Authority had written that it was 'entirely within the discretion of the council' whether or not they heard submissions of this nature at the public inquiry. Relations between the Balmain Association and the council were strained as the President
of the Association indicated when he commented, '
...council's arrogance and disregard for public
amenities has continued as before'. 29

As has been pointed out, the council, adopting the
recommendation of its planner, resolved to lodge formal
objections in line with some of the Association's
objections to industrial zonings. Within the Labor
caucus, however, the views expressed by Unions and
industrialists with regard to safeguarding industry and
jobs on the peninsula found considerable support. At
the 1968 elections ALP candidates in Balmain and Rozelle
adopted a 'jobs for residents' plank and one candidate
described himself proudly as 'a fighter to preserve the
jobs of men employed in waterfront industries'. 30

It was these attitudes that help account for the
council's past and subsequent record in dealing with
this sort of issue. A notable case was the issue over
which the Balmain aldermen were expelled from the party
in 1967, when they voted contrary to a 7–4 majority
caucus decision. This approved a 'Chemical Tank Farm'
near White Bay in Balmain, against a wave of residents'
protests, as well as the stand taken by the Balmain
branch of the ALP.

A further case was highlighted by a judgment of the
Land and Valuation Court in October 1968. A ship repair
and engineering firm on the Balmain waterfront appealed
against the council's refusal of an application to remove
all restrictions on working hours that were imposed when
the council approved the initial establishment of the
factory in 1965. The four acre site had been zoned for industrial use in the Cumberland Scheme (a 'spot zoning' as the Judge called it), but in the council's draft scheme it was zoned for residential use. The area was predominantly residential. Commenting on council's decision to consent to the application in 1965 the Judge called it a 'gross error' and

...a misconceived exercise of the council's discretion...it was opposed to its Town Planner's recommendations and quite wrong in point of planning principle...because of the clear threat of injury to the residential neighbourhood which it obviously entailed. This injury has in fact occurred...

Similar cases can be found during the life of the 1968-71 council, in which the Labor majority tended to place the interests of residents second to those of industry and jobs. In February 1970 the council approved an application for use of a large property in Balmain for storage of ships stores. On the draft scheme the site was zoned for industrial use. Under the Cumberland Scheme, two-thirds was zoned for residential use. In June 1968 the council had resolved to object to the industrial zoning on the draft scheme and this was one of the areas subject to the Balmain Association's objections. On the advice of its town planner, the application was referred to the State Planning Authority for its views. The Authority advised the council that approval could not be granted for that part of the site zoned for residential use as 'existing use' rights ceased when the premises were vacated in 1968. The resumption of what was formerly permitted as a 'non-conforming use' could therefore not be allowed. The ALP majority
defeated a motion from the Balmain aldermen to reject the application. The motion referred to the effect upon the residential neighbourhood of increased traffic in the narrow streets. The council instead referred the matter to its solicitors. Legal advice confirmed the view of the Authority on the question of 'existing use' rights as well as arguing that the application as a whole was 'contrary to the public interest' in view of the residential character of the neighbourhood. The council accepted this advice and reversed its former decision.

The Balmain Association also argued against some of the flat development that had been taking place in Balmain, largely on the grounds of the inability of the existing street pattern to deal with more traffic, but also because of their attachment to the existing character of residential areas. The Association was also critical of the council for permitting flats in areas zoned 'non-flat' in its draft scheme. In Annandale and in Glebe flat development was the single largest point of contention with the council. A cause celebre was the protest made by the Annandale Association against the approval by the council during 1970 of applications to erect multi-storey blocks of flats on the site of two famous architectural oddities dating from the nineteenth century, part of a row of houses designed by architect John Young and known as the 'Witches Houses', perhaps because of their bizarre, even sinister, appearance. To the council, approval of the flat developments was a routine matter and no mention was made in the town planner's report of any architectural value of the existing buildings.
The only point of contention was the matter of 'off-street' parking requirements. The applications were forwarded for the State Planning Authority's 'concurrence', as the two developments were within 300 feet of a proposed expressway as shown on the local scheme. The Authority raised no objection, but imposed a requirement that the developer provide parking space for visitors as well as residents. The developers objected and met with a sympathetic response from the council. The town planner's report of April 1970 pointed out that in fact there was no obligation to comply with the Authority's conditions, as the applications were submitted to the Authority 'in error'. On the Cumberland scheme, under which the council was obliged to obtain concurrence from the Authority for developments within 300 feet of a main highway, the expressway as then planned was shown as 660 feet from the site of the development. Although the alignment had since been changed (as was recognised in the local scheme), the Cumberland scheme was technically the operative one. The planner added:

As council has not adopted a policy of requiring off-street parking for visitors...it is felt that it would be unfair to impose it in this instance.

In fact, the council finally imposed a condition of one visitor's space per ten units, rather than one per two units 'in deference to the Police Department' and their views.

The Annandale Association's objections went unheeded. The planner argued that the responsibility for preserving historic buildings was not that of the council. The council proffered similar advice to the National Trust.
asked that the council defer granting approval whilst they considered the classification to be given these buildings as to historical and architectural merit. The council said the Trust must argue their case with the Authority, who had earlier shown no objection.

The council was not entirely unmindful of local residents' protests. The Glebe Society claimed a victory when the Glebe ward aldermen persuaded the caucus to reverse a decision to give approval to a block of flats in Ferry Road, Glebe. The planner recommended granting approval as the project complied with scheme provisions, and disquiet in the caucus was expressed by one alderman who sought an undertaking that the residents would pay court costs if the developer appealed, expressing the opinion that the developer would win such an appeal.

The Glebe Society, along with the other residents' groups, not only sought to obtain favourable decisions in specific cases by exerting political pressure, they also sought to re-frame the planning regulations to obtain permanent safeguards for the character of the area. To this end, the Society submitted proposals to alter zonings and other provisions of the local scheme as they effected Glebe. Their major complaint was that the scheme, drawn up by the City of Sydney council, was based on the assumption that Glebe was a dilapidated area 'ripe for redevelopment', whilst the Society saw the terraced streets as areas with great potential for a high quality living environment, so long as encouragement and protection were afforded to allow rehabilitation. One complaint of the Society was that the
council was tardy in considering its alternative proposals and seemed unenthusiastic about adopting them.

One of the most publicised cases of distributive decision making occurred over an application for a block of flats on a site in Flood Street, Leichhardt. The application was approved by the council in February 1971, in spite of the fact that the area was zoned '2a' in the draft scheme, prohibiting flats, and the lot had a 50 ft. frontage, when the draft scheme specified a minimum of 60 ft. The council exercised discretion allowed under the Cumberland scheme, whilst ignoring its own planning scheme. It also rejected the protests of neighbours, lodged as formal objections against the application, and in the form of a petition. Some of these objectors complained that the council had refused them permission to develop their properties for flats, but others objected on the grounds of supposed damage to the residential amenity of the area.

In support of its approval, the council cited statutory declarations to the effect that it was the owner's intention to build flats on the land, when he had purchased it in 1963, before the council's adoption of its draft planning scheme. 'Circumstances beyond his control' had prevented development of the site:

...it was on this basis and the fact that the subject land complied with the minimum dimensions required by the council in 1963, that the council approved the Development Application. 33

Subsequently, neighbours submitted statutory declarations disputing some of the facts contained in the declarations submitted by the developers and one neighbour instituted
legal proceedings to prevent the development. Finally, in September 1971, the Minister announced that he had directed the State Planning Authority to investigate the matter.

This issue, coming just before the 1971 elections, caused considerable embarrassment to the Labor majority. It was a decision that had been left by the caucus for the ward aldermen to make and it was clearly a political misjudgment. The norms of caucus that permitted ward aldermen to make 'ward decisions' facilitated distributive decisions of this type. The same factor was noted in the reversal of the caucus decision on the flat development in Glebe, on the insistence of the ward aldermen following vigorous protests from the Glebe Society.

The opposition of the residents' groups to the council was based on their belief that the council consistently made what I have called distributive decisions in favour of developers and that they were not amenable to arguments in support of changes to planning regulations to afford protection to the residential character of Glebe, Balmain and Annandale. Whilst in each of these suburbs pressure was exerted to obtain favourable decisions in specific cases, to prevent particular flat developments or industrial establishments, the opposition to the council during the 1971 elections was composed of a coalition of these groups united on the broader regulative issues, success in the distributive arena having largely eluded them.
Planning issues were concerned almost entirely with flat development. The council's prescribed planning scheme did not distinguish between flat and non-flat zones, but allowed flats anywhere in residential zones at the council's discretion. The council's flat code did, however, introduce a form of zoning. The code contained provisions on minimum area and lot sizes, minimum distances between flat buildings and between flats and lot boundaries, maximum permissible floor areas, the maximum proportion of allotments to be occupied, provisions for off-street parking, landscaping, access, and so on. The underlying principle of the code was that higher density development was permitted on higher land away from the foreshores. The residential zone was divided into four areas. Only low density housing was permitted on the foreshores, medium density on the lower slopes, higher density (maximum eight stories) on the higher slopes, and high density on the ridges along the peninsulas jutting into the harbour (Waverton, McMahon's Point, Kirribilli, Neutral Bay and Cremorne) and on the plateau in Cammeray and Cremorne. The various provisions for site coverage, 'floorspace ratios' and lot size, were intended to control densities and thus differed from one 'zone' to the next. Most of the municipality was set aside for high or medium density flat development and only very small areas of the foreshore came into the non-flat category.

The code was evolved in the town planning department during the early 1960's and represented a considerable investment of professional skill and effort. It was
formally adopted as council policy, and as such it formed
the basis of the planner's recommendations in specific flat
development applications, being seen as a technical instrument
adequate for development control purposes. He did,
however, concede that 'it is up to the people's elected
representatives to decide each application on its merits'.
cases was the lodging of two development applications for separate projects in Reynolds Street, Cremorne, in April 1970. One was for a fifteen-storey block of flats, the other for two fourteen-storey blocks; together they took up most of one side of the street, then still a largely single-dwelling residential area. The town planner recommended approval of both, as each complied with the code; the larger project had the virtue of taking up a whole street block. Local residents soon protested and the battle to reject the applications was led by one of the ward aldermen who claimed: '...this is the sort of gross over-development that I was elected to prevent'. After much debate, several rescission motions, amended applications and numerous council divisions, the council finally approved a twelve-storey block on one site and two ten-storey blocks on the other. However, the latter was subsequently rejected by a narrow majority when one of the property owners changed her mind about selling to the developer. During the debate on this project, various alternatives were suggested. Those opposing the development outright moved that the council wait until redevelopment control plans were formulated for the whole area, but they were a minority of only four or five on the council. Suggestions for acceptable schemes moved by aldermen included two three-storey blocks; seven three-storey blocks; one eight-storey and one twelve-storey block; and 'town houses'. On the other site, the initial application was rejected and the final twelve-storey block approved in favour of an amendment that sought to reduce the site coverage from 13.7 per cent to
Such attempts to find acceptable alternative arrangements of buildings were a regular part of all development applications and aldermen had no qualms about passing judgment on the merits of various alternatives, on aesthetic considerations, on the supposed impact of high rise blocks on existing privacy and amenity and on the interruption of the views from neighbouring properties.

Whilst important steps were taken during the life of the 1968-71 council to re-draft in a radical fashion the planning regulations themselves, the major issues with which residents' and developers' interests were concerned involved separate flat development projects. Because the council did not consistently apply the provisions of the code, but rather treated each case 'on its merits', decisions often took a distributive character. Their outcome depended in part on the pressures brought to bear by local residents. However, the issue was by nature a much broader one, and underlying the ad hoc responses of aldermen to the particular circumstances of separate flat development applications were a broader set of attitudes towards flat development per se. Local residents groups also defined the issue in regulative terms, seeking changes in the provisions of the code or more radical solutions. The council did in fact amend the code on several occasions, including extending the non-flat areas into larger areas of Wollstonecraft and prohibiting multi-storey development on the slopes. These amendments were opposed by developers who continued to submit applications conforming to the original code. The planner, adopting a strict interpretation of the norm that officials
abide by policy decision of the council, made recommendations in line with these amendments, although it was clear that he preferred the provisions of the original code. As the residents and aldermen opposed to development saw it, the claim to impartiality by the planner and building inspector was a little hollow, for the code they had themselves prepared under which they made recommendations was one that permitted flat development. In fact, outright hostility towards the council officials was a feature of campaigns conducted against flat development by neighbourhood groups.

During 1970 the council decided to hire town planning consultants to draw up a redevelopment control plan for the municipality to replace the existing scheme and code. At the same time they resolved to refuse all applications for flat development until the plan was completed. The only dissenting voices came from the core of pro-development aldermen. The great majority accepted the proposal as a prospective panacea to their problems, however they defined them. Earlier experience held out little encouragement that all their political problems would be solved. During 1969 the town planner prepared a redevelopment control plan for Cammeray, showing in detail the desirable patterns of property consolidation, siting of multi-storey flats and medium-density housing, new street patterns and new open space areas. Apart from being rather vague on the problem of trying to convince private developers and landowners to follow the plan, it also ran into considerable opposition from those in Cammeray who opposed redevelopment per se, in whatever way it was three-dimensionally
planned. The Cammeray Civic Group condemned the exercise as a miserable public relations failure and opposed the scheme outright. The council spent most of the time arguing about how the public were to be consulted and what attention should be paid to their views. Whilst the new redevelopment plan proposed for the whole municipality was to be drawn up with 'consultation' throughout the process, the fact remained that no amount of ingenuity or sophistication in devising new codes or regulations would remove the basic clash of interests between those opposed to redevelopment and those in favour of it.

FOOTNOTES

1. R. S. Parker, 'Planning and Politics', in R. S. Parker, P. N. Troy, The Politics of Urban Growth (Canberra, ANU Press, 1972), p. 31

2. For a description of this legislation see James Colman, Post War Planning in the County of Cumberland, (Sydney, Planning Research Centre, 1968)

3. For a description of the County of Cumberland scheme see Denis Winston, Sydney's Great Experiment, (Sydney, Angus and Robertson, 1957)

4. An outline of the history of metropolitan and local planning in Sydney since the war is given in P. F. Harrison, 'Planning the Metropolis, A Case Study', in Parker and Troy, op. cit.

5. One legal authority puts the position as follows:
   '...until a scheme is prescribed a planning authority is under no strict obligation to comply with the scheme, and therefore under no limitation in respect to what it can do with any land under its control... However... it must, in determining whether or not to grant development consent, have regard to the provisions of the draft scheme'. J. G. Starke, The Law of Town and Country Planning in New South Wales, (Sydney, Butterworths 1966), p. 65.
6. Interview conducted 21 September 1970

7. Quoted in Torch, 30 March 1966

8. Official determination communicated to Bankstown Council quoted in report of Town Planner, council meeting of 18 September 1970

9. Elzo Vandermark, Peter Harrison, Development Activities in Four Sydney Suburban Areas, (Canberra, Urban Research Unit, Australian National University, 1972), pp. 98-103

10. Report of town planner to council meeting 7 May 1968

11. Torch, 3 April 1968. The Chamber expressed concern that flat development was not being undertaken. The council's code imposed restrictions that were considerably more severe than those of neighbouring councils, and only a handful of privately developed flats had been completed, or were planned.

12. Mr Kelly was appearing for an objector before the council when he launched this attack. See Torch, 11 March 1970

13. Interview conducted 19 March 1971

14. Interview conducted 16 April 1971

15. The application was for a flat development in Secant Street, in a '2a' zone.

16. This was a case of a flat application in Northumberland Street. The applicant had purchased the land for flat development in 1965, operating on the basis of the Cumberland scheme zoning that permitted flats at the council's discretion. He presented a case of 'financial hardship', which had prevented him from undertaking the development. In this case, the town planner, as always, recommended refusal, the committee deadlocked and the council adopted a motion from two ALP aldermen to approve the application. Two independent aldermen recorded their names against the motion.

See minutes of council meeting 18 November 1969

17. See for instance reports of council debates, Liverpool Leader, 3 February 1971 and 28 July 1971. The former was over an application for commercial development in a '2a' zone, in Elizabeth Drive. The council approved the application, but had to submit it to the State Planning Authority, as it fronted a County Road. One alderman claimed that '...Council has approved of so many applications in the area that did not conform to the planning scheme that one more would not make any difference'. The second case was an application for flats in Bathurst Street, Liverpool.
18. Letter from the Minister for Local Government to the Mayor of Liverpool, dated 7 August 1970, quoted in full in the Liverpool Leader, 12 August 1970


21. Alderman J. Rickard, council meeting 7 June 1971

22. North Shore Times, 19 May 1971

23. Ibid

24. Western Suburbs Courier, 10 June 1970

25. Western Suburbs Courier, 22 July 1970

26. Booklet of objections, and accompanying comments, submitted by the Balmain Association to the council on 3 June 1968

27. Submission of Balmain Industries Association to council June 1968

28. Letter to President of Balmain Association, dated 7 June 1968

29. Link, 20 August 1968

30. Link, 13 November 1968


32. Report of Town Planner to council, 14 April 1970

33. Town Planner's report to council, dated 20 April 1971

34. North Shore Times, 22 October 1969

35. North Shore Times, 22 April 1970
A local planning scheme consists of a zoning map and an accompanying ordinance. A standard model is adopted by all councils for the ordinance, although some provisions do differ. There are four categories of restrictions that apply to various types of land use in each zone. In the first category fall developments that can be undertaken without the planning consent of the council (consisting solely of single-family dwelling houses in residential zones). In the second category come developments that the council cannot refuse, but upon which it may impose certain sorts of conditions. These are termed conforming uses. In the third category fall developments that the council may permit with or without conditions or refuse. These are known as permissible uses. The final category is prohibited uses. The ordinance specifies for each zone which uses fall under which category. In the various commercial and industrial zones, most large scale development falls into the category of conforming uses, whilst much also comes under permissible use types of restrictions. Some residential zones allow flats, which come under the category of permissible uses, whilst there are residential zones in which flats are prohibited.

Every development other than those under category one must receive the formal planning consent of the council and an application must be lodged for this purpose. It is in the area of conforming and permissible uses that most of the
important decisions on development control are made and
where the council is exercising varying sorts of discretion.
The way it does this is crucial. The ordinance specifies
what matters 'shall be taken into consideration' for
permissible use applications and they include the following:

a) the character of the proposed development in
   relation to the character of the development
   on the adjoining land in the locality.

b) the size and shape of the proposed parcel of
   land to which the application relates, the
   siting of the proposed development and the area
   to be occupied by the development in relation
   to the size and shape of the adjoining land and
   the development thereon.

g) the existing and future amenity of the neighbourhood.

h) the circumstances of the case and the public
   interest.

i) the provisions of the scheme.¹

For conforming uses, the ordinance states what sorts of
conditions may be imposed, including those relating to
(b) above, matters concerning 'ingress and egress' from the
site, landscaping of the site, and once again 'the existing
and future amenity of the neighbourhood'. While for
conforming uses the council cannot threaten to refuse an
application, it can still impose conditions at considerable
discretion. ²

Some areas of discretion are filled in by 'special
provisions' in the ordinance. For instance there are
provisions specifying minimum lot sizes for dwelling houses
or flats in different zones. Even so, for residential lot
sizes most ordinances contain a provision such as the following:

notwithstanding..., the responsible authority may
consent to the erection of a dwelling house or a
residential flat building on an allotment of land
the area of which the depth of which or the width of which is to a minor extent less than the area, depth or width prescribed. 3

Floor space ratios may also be spelled out for various types of development and specific provisions may be laid down for the provision of parking spaces in flat developments. Quite detailed restrictions may be enumerated for such developments as petrol stations, transport terminals, drive in theatres, hotels, and so on.

The manner in which councils ought to exercise their discretionary powers came in for a good deal of attention from the Land and Valuation Court, the judicial body to which applicants whose applications have been rejected by a council could appeal. 4 One of the Court's members has said:

...the cardinal principle is that a power or discretion conferred by statute must be exercised bona fide for the purpose for which it was conferred and not for some foreign or different purpose; and the purpose for which a power is conferred must be gathered from the text of the Act. 5

Examples are given where there was a 'neglect of the mandatory duty' to consider matters set out in the ordinance and where 'irrelevant' criteria were used for making a decision:

councils may...grant...development consent because of some personal hardship of the owner...in other cases they may be persuaded to consent to developments such as licensed clubs out of motives of altruism such as the worthy nature of the objects of the club... 6

There have been cases where councils have withheld or granted consent in exchange for bribes. All these cases would be termed 'particularistic' decisions under my definition, although community standards would view them very differently. Whether discretion is exercised on the grounds of personal
hardship, or on the grounds of permitting the owner to reap a fat profit, the principle is the same — discretion has been applied on 'irrelevant' grounds.

This issue is made more complicated, however, because of the high likelihood of 'legitimate' dispute over the rules and the principles they uphold (i.e. proper town planning). There may even be dispute about what 'proper town planning' ought to try to achieve, and some may include certain economic or social effects that others may consider irrelevant. In general, the principles upon which 'good town planning decisions' are made are matters over which planners as well as citizens or aldermen continually disagree. They cannot be specified with any certainty because they are very often matters of taste, personal standards and value judgments. It is evident from the generality of the matters to be taken into account in making planning decisions quoted from ordinances above that these cannot be specified in terms of actual rules and regulations for guidance to each case. Mr Justice Else—Mitchell has commented that matters such as 'the existing and future amenity of the area' and 'the circumstances of the case and the public interest' always 'entail factors of varying and even conflicting weight so that the exercise of discretion requires a series of value judgments...'.

This stress on the 'obligation to make value judgments' contained in the ordinance has led the Court to question the validity and worth of various codes that councils evolve to specify minimum standards for various types of development. The case against these codes is often that they are technically
inadequate, in that in specifying minimum standards they do
not adequately define the considerations to be taken into
account as laid down in the ordinance - they lead to
developments being permitted (if the code is slavishly
followed) that individually in some respect fall short of
a 'good' planning decision on the basis of these broader
considerations. Thus, Else-Mitchell comments:

I have as a matter of law questioned whether under
the ordinances as they are a council can devise a
code which seeks to specify more precise standards
of a calculable character for the qualitative and
abstract considerations in the clauses in the
ordinance; and to cite a comment of Hardie J.
'testing an application against a code is not a
substitute for the exercise of the discretion
which the ordinance grants'.

Planners argue that more sophisticated codes and regulations
can be evolved to achieve the desired result more by
application of a rule than by exercise of judgment, but
certainly in none of the councils studied were there such
codes which eliminated the need for making major judgments
in most individual cases.

FOOTNOTES

1. These provisions are standard to all local scheme
ordinances and are found in very similar form in the
Country of Cumberland planning scheme of 1951, which
was a broad land-use plan for the Sydney metropolitan
area as a whole. For a description of this scheme
see Dennis Winston, Sydney's Great Experiment,
(Sydney, Angus and Robertson, 1957). For an assessment
of its achievements and the rather sorry tale of its
fate, see Peter Harrison, 'Planning the Metropolis: A
Case Study', in Parker and Troy (op. cit.) particularly
pp. 64-79

2. In seeking to impose conditions, councils do not have
the threat of refusal for conforming uses, but the
expense (in terms of delays particularly) of appealing
to the Court against a council that refuses consent
is often enough to make a developer reach agreement with the council; the same applies in disputes over permissible use applications.

3. Bankstown Council draft planning scheme ordinance, Clause 41 subclause 6

4. The Court was replaced by Boards of Appeal for local planning matters in November 1971


6. Ibid, p. 840


8. Ibid, p. 138. Mr Justice Hardie was a member of the Land and Valuation Court with Mr Justice Else-Mitchell.

9. Many planners would argue that many if not most of the value judgments could be eliminated by 'better' codes or regulations, or as they say, 'performance standards'. A somewhat extreme position is adopted by George Clarke - 'The problems of environmental planning and control will presumably only yield to the same kinds of massive efforts as have subdued the problems of public health and private medical practice over the last century or more. One of these efforts will be in basic and applied research...I suggest that we must constantly strive to reduce the scope of necessary discretion (i.e. reduce the amount of guesswork) by evolving more precise, more mathematical, more detailed, plans and codes. We must seek to codify sets of performance standards to more closely define such things as 'amenity', 'privacy', and the 'public interest' in particular types of localities, for particular types of buildings, for particular sets of circumstances'.

- George Clarke, 'Administrative Discretion', op. cit. pp. 130-34. Mr Clarke seems to agree that this point in the 'science' of town planning has not yet arrived with regard to local planning codes, but the extent to which such a point can be reached by the methods he outlines is uncertain. I would take Mr Justice Else-Mitchell's argument as suggesting that Clarke is being over-optimistic.
The Department of Local Government recommends to councils a set of procedures for formulating and adopting an annual budget. These are summarised diagrammatically in Figure IX-1. Committees of the council play an important role in this model in formulating programmes that form the basis of the calculation of the amount of revenue to be raised. In fact some councils do not operate with a committee system. Perhaps the most common departure from the model is recognised by the Department itself when it comments 'Some councils even go to the extent of building their estimates around the rates they propose to make'. Each of the six councils to some extent made decisions on revenue independent of, and prior to, expenditure decisions. The important factor was not the programme needs of each department, but the political calculation of how much the ratepayer was prepared to pay.

It is useful for some purposes to think of three types of decision in the budgetary process: first, decisions on the amount of revenue to be raised and by what means; second, decisions on amounts to be spent on different services or programmes, or levels of allocations to be made to different departments or agencies; and third, decisions on what the money is to be spent on, or operating decisions. These decisions are not necessarily made in this order. In a programme budget, for instance, operating decisions, or decisions on programme details are determinants of the levels of expenditure. In the Department's model, these
### Department of Local Government Model for the Council Budgetary Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNCIL</th>
<th>COMMITTEES</th>
<th>TOWN CLERK</th>
<th>DEPARTMENT HEADS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Working committees seek details of departmental requirements and programmes</td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Formulation of requests - a. operating costs ('fixed' plus wage and cost rise) b. new works, plant and equipment ('capital') c. non-rate and non-loan income (fees etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Finalisation of departmental requests, setting priorities and spelling out 'needs'. [including programme determination]</td>
<td></td>
<td>4. Collation of Committee estimates. Report on financial position at end of present year (i.e. position re deficit or surplus) and desirable position for end of next year. Calculation of income required from loan and rates.</td>
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</tbody>
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**Figure LX-1 (Cont'd)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNCIL</th>
<th>COMMITTEES</th>
<th>TOWN CLERK</th>
<th>DEPARTMENT HEADS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Finance Committee - decision on level of rate to be levied regarding requirements of working committees. Are any cuts required?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Reference back to committees for reassessments and proposed cuts to programmes.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7. Final decision on priorities for expenditure.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>8. Final recommendations to council</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
last are in turn determinants of revenue decisions. Crecine, in a study of municipal operating budgets in the U.S.A., found that decisions were made in the order listed above, with each stage acting as a strict constraint for the next. In the six councils the position was somewhat similar in so far as revenue decisions did in most cases act as quite rigid constraints on changes in expenditure levels.

Crecine's study emphasised the importance of the 'incremental strategy' in making decisions on operating expenditure allocations. Wildavsky has described the incremental approach as follows:

...an agency budget is never actively reviewed as a whole every year in the sense of reconsidering the value of all existing programs as compared to all possible alternatives. Instead, it is based on last year's budget with special attention given to a narrow range of increases or decreases. In budgets presented in the 'line-item' form, decision makers almost invariably confine themselves to marginal changes to an existing base. This was true for most of the councils. It will be seen that the major determinant of operating expenditure levels was a decision on the percentage increase to be made to an 'inviolable' level of existing activity, to take account of wage and cost increases.

In most cases, then, we shall see that there are two 'givens': a 'tolerable' rate levy, and a set of 'unavoidable' costs. On most councils, the budgetary problem is to balance the budget within these givens. Two common strategies are employed. The first is to increase non-rate income, particularly fees, charges and loans. Loans can
only be raised with the permission of the Loan Council in Canberra, and this restricts borrowing for councils which seek to raise more than $300,000 per annum. Above this, the Loan Council makes special allocations. All loan expenditures must be approved by the Department of Local Government and fixed rates of interest and repayment terms are imposed according to the nature of the work being undertaken. Loans can only be used for capital works, not for consolidation or other purposes. This restricts somewhat the use of loan finance as an alternative revenue source. And many councils borrow as much as they are permitted.

Local council budgets make no direct distinction between capital and operating expenditures. Both are to be found side by side in the same set of departmental requests and totals. The second major strategy for balancing the budget within the two major givens is to reduce capital expenditure, pruning a works programme or postponing the provision of a planned new facility. These expenditure cuts do not usually involve laying off employees, or cutting basic services such as garbage collection. Within the works programme, there is usually scope for pruning requests for road maintenance or re-sealing, as well as new construction.

Changes in priorities do, of course, sometimes occur through conscious political decisions. Generally speaking these take place through the opening up of new revenue opportunities or through decisions to increase rates for a major item of capital expenditure, or a major commitment
of resources to a particular service. In the normal budget, priorities between different services are only considered when pruning is undertaken. This may take the form of deciding between one new facility or another, or making comparable flat reductions to gross allocations for, say, roadworks, parks improvements, or library book replacement and new stock purchases. These last items cover programmes that are generally made up of a large number of separate items of work or assets. Pruning decisions of this type entail no immediate necessity for decisions on actual operations.

The treatment of most of the budget in terms of dollars and cents rather than specific programmes was a feature common to the councils. Money was allocated to 'kerb and gutter construction' as one item, not necessarily to particular jobs of kerb and gutter construction in particular streets. Operating decisions - that is which streets to kerb and gutter - were on some councils of considerable political importance. In some cases, they were of such importance that the adoption of a budget specifying expenditure allocations was only a formality. The actual amounts spent resulted from operating decisions made throughout the year.

Councils face demands from ratepayers on the level of the rate, when the issue may be defined as a redistributive one. They face demands from service beneficiaries for more or better services that may be defined as distributive issues, or which may be redistributive in seeking changes in priorities, in particular if the 'pork' in the barrel
runs out too quickly. Whilst pressures from the neighbourhood may emphasise the political importance of pork barrel distributions, the paid officials of the council seek to impose order and regularity on the process of work programming by talking of 'objective needs' and priorities according to technical criteria. The purpose of the following case studies is to show how councils react to these pressures.

BANKSTOWN

Figure 1X-2 outlines the major features of the budgetary process in Bankstown. On the 1968-71 council there was only one increase in the rate, of 15 per cent in 1969. This reflected the strategy adopted by the Progressive Independents to avoid an increase in election years. A marked feature of budgetary decision making was the lack of open conflict in the council. Before 1968, the town clerk's estimates in some years would receive a considerable revision in the council. This did not occur after 1968, due largely to the ability of the council to reach informal agreements on which the clerk could base his set of estimates. The absence of an ALP bloc on the council facilitated these agreements.

The 15 per cent rate increase in 1970 was sufficient to avoid any need to prune operating costs in any of the three years. Budgetary decisions did not call into question any existing levels of departmental activity, although the Progressive Independents did make an issue of staff efficiency, particularly in the engineering department. The engineer claimed this led to some
Figure 1X-2  BANKSTOWN - Budgetary Process

COUNCIL

1. Projected new major facilities, changes in priorities or programmes.

2. Projected level of rate, fees and charges, and levels of borrowing and time-payment financing.

TOWN CLERK/ACCOUNTANT

[decision on per cent increase to operating costs to cater for wage and cost increases]

3. Request for departmental estimates

DEPARTMENT HEADS

4. Departmental requests:
   a. operating costs on basis of existing level plus per cent increase
   b. capital items (departmental) - plant and equipment
   c. income from fees and charges

5. Collation
   a. Town clerk's recommendation on surplus/deficit.
   b. what rate is required from expenditure estimates? does this exceed the proposed rate taking into account non-rate income?

[Informal consultations between Mayor, aldermen and Town Clerk on cuts in programmes or deferment of planned new facilities]
Figure IX-2 (Cont'd)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNCIL</th>
<th>TOWN CLERK/ACCOUNTANT</th>
<th>DEPARTMENT HEADS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>c. If necessary, where should cuts in expenditure be made? -</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i) items of loan/rate financed departmental capital expenditure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii) projected new major facilities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii) public works maintenance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.B. - the public works totals are finally adjusted according to available income; no programme decisions have yet been finalised for public works.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv) Final report and recommendations.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Approval (final arena for minority dissension on budget)
reductions in staff strength, but these were not significant. This is not to say changes in priorities did not occur. New revenue opportunities were exploited to increase expenditure in playing field improvements and in public works construction (see Table 1X-1). The 1970 rate rise saw an increased parks vote, and a new annual grant of some $50,000 from the Local Government Assistance Fund went towards playing fields amenities. The council also allocated annually $75,000 from loan funds for the same purpose. These increases were in response to demands from the sporting lobby, with whom Progressive Independents, and some other aldermen, were closely identified. They did not take place amidst major controversy over the needs of other services that might have got some of this money. One alderman in particular argued for more money for 'essentials' such as kerb and gutter, but it did not become a major redistributive issue. Competing demands from council officers for library improvements and for construction of a new works depot were not seen as serious possible alternate candidates for these funds, despite a suggestion by the town clerk in 1971 that the council might divert some loan funds to these projects. The change in priorities that increased parks expenditure resulted from a distributive decision which increased the amount of pork in the barrel.

As at previous elections, 'more kerb and gutter' was an issue in 1971. The ALP, and others, contrasted the need to catch up with a backlog of essential works, with the council's decision to spend $1.5 million on a new town hall.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table IX-1 Estimates of Expenditure, Bankstown Council 1969-1971, showing estimates as adopted and revised</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>General Purposes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adopted $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>419,799</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Public Works - Supervision and Indirect</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DMR Contribution* $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>436,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>435,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>998,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,030,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Construction - other than PW</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adopted $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>156,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health - Parks and Reserves</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanitary Service $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>373,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garbage Service $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>215,756</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sundry $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>480,206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Public Services</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adopted $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>735,483</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Library Service</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adopted $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>279,963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Municipal Property - Civic Centre</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81,506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49,612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Miscellaneous</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adopted $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,094,403</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reduction of Overdraft</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adopted $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16,253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL General Fund</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adopted $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6,699,081</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table LX-1 (Cont'd)

◊ 'Miscellaneous' expenditure consists of loan repayments and interest, transfers of revenue to council reserves, repayment of time-payment advances, superannuation contributions, payroll tax, and various minor items.

* Fixed cost - contribution on the basis of a fixed rate levy.

Source: Adopted estimates - Council Minutes
Revised estimates - These are estimates of expenditure for the previous year as presented to the council in draft estimates. They are not necessarily the final expenditure figures as appear in the council's annual accounts or the Statistical Register.
The council's defenders (notably the Progressive Independents) tried to point out that the issue of priorities was not relevant, as the method of financing the town hall (largely from sale of land) could not be used to construct kerb and gutter under the terms of the Act. At the same time they pointed to increases in public works construction expenditure made possible by their decision to enter into time-payment agreements with private contractors, amounting to $400,000 in 1970 and nearly $1 million in 1971. We saw how aldermen used the pork barrel aspect of 'more kerb and gutter' as an election issue by pledging to kerb and gutter particular streets. Time-payment agreements offered a means of postponing the day of reckoning (that is rate increases) whilst, again, providing a means of increasing the amount of pork in the barrel.

Other increases in expenditure occurred in response to distributive pressures. New facilities were provided from special sources of funds, and proponents of these facilities had to show how funds could be raised without depriving other services, or burdening ratepayers. Sale of land was a favourite source. An important exception to this did occur in 1965, when it was decided to finance two new swimming pools from rates over a three year period. This led to considerable financial strain. The decision did illustrate the pork barrel nature of decisions about new facilities and services, as it was the result of a 'log-rolling' agreement between South and East Ward aldermen. Neither would support the other's pool unless their's was built as well and the votes of each were needed to overcome
opposition to the use of rate funds in this way. A similar agreement earlier in the 1960's had resulted in decisions to build a swimming pool in the North Ward, and a library branch in the South. By the end of the 1960's there were four pools, one for each ward.

Initiatives for new facilities came from ward aldermen. As one alderman put it —

Each ward wants their facilities — each ward alderman feels he should have what the rest have. ^

Pools, libraries, baby health centres, senior citizen centres were major prizes for ward aldermen. From 1968-71 it was youth centres. First in the queue was the East Ward in 1969, with a scheme financing the $100,000 centre largely from land sales and local contributions. South Ward aldermen attempted to obtain a deferment, but they had to be content with second place in the queue, with a similarly financed scheme. Such an attempt to block projects came close to violating the norm that ward initiative and enterprise were to be rewarded, especially when it entailed local voluntary fund raising and no immediate depletion of common funds. By the same token, wards that didn't have facilities had only themselves and their representatives to blame for it. North Ward aldermen began helping to organise fund-raising activities and local support for a youth centre in their part of the municipality, and West Ward candidates in 1971 talked of the need in their ward too.

When funds come from a common pool, pork barrel decision making can be highly time- and resource-consuming as disparate interests seek accommodations. In Bankstown,
conflicts were minimised by the practice of dividing public works funds into quarters, one for each ward. The decisions on the many separate items of kerb and gutter, drainage work, road construction, and so on, were then left for the three ward aldermen to decide amongst themselves.

As one North Ward alderman put it -

I haven't the vaguest idea what works are done in the South Ward programme and I couldn't care. 5

Apart from time-payment finance, works construction funds came largely from loan funds ($750,000 in 1971-2). Ward programmes were worked out independently. The engineer described the process -

...they don't commit the money all at once. Some jobs are voted in bulk together, others come in as a matter of urgency and we have to fit them in...the programme...is worked out in dribs and drabs. 6

Information on the amount that could be borrowed in the year reached the council in September, when the engineer would submit a report listing works needing to be done, indicating priorities but not suggesting any programme. In 1970-71 West Ward aldermen did not reach a final decision on a programme until May 1971, when it was found that some works voted spasmodically during 1969-70 would have to be financed from the 1971 allocations. The North Ward aldermen, on the other hand, voted a full programme in November 1970, whilst South Ward aldermen voted only some $30,000 worth at that time. Priorities were decided within each ward. Thus, North Ward aldermen decided to curtail road maintenance expenditure and use the funds instead for construction.
The lack of forward programming sometimes led to over-expenditure, or to post-hoc transfers of funds at the time of revision of the estimates in mid year. Provision had to be made in the 1970 budget for works that had been voted in 1969 but for which 1969 funds were insufficient. The 1970 allocations for this purpose amounted to $85,000 from the loan programme and $65,180 from rate funds. Over-expenditure on road re-surfacing had been the subject of a stern warning from the Department in 1967. As for transfers of funds, Table IX-2 shows that the main sufferer was public works maintenance, as construction works were voted beyond the allocations during the year.

The four-fold division of funds was strictly not permissible under the Act, which forbade keeping separate ward accounts. The council in fact did not formally keep separate accounts. The town clerk and the engineer frequently argued against the propriety of existing practice. In 1971, the arrangement was questioned for another reason, when redistributive issues were raised. A scheme was proposed by Progressive Independent aldermen to re-draw ward boundaries. This included the creation of a new Central Ward surrounding the commercial centre of Bankstown. One argument advanced in the debate was that this measure would ensure money was spent on works in the shopping centre. With some justification, it was claimed that East Ward aldermen were neglecting the commercial area, which lay wholly within their ward, and spending money in the residential areas. The new ward scheme was rejected by the Minister, having been opposed by North and East Ward
aldermen on the grounds that it was a 'gerrymander'. It was also argued by them that in re-adjusting the boundaries to take account of population changes, particularly growth in the west and south, the areas at present covered by North and East wards would get less funds. Instead of being covered by two wards out of four, and getting half, they would get little more than a third between them.

As a counter to the argument over the maldistribution of funds to the shopping centre, North and East ward aldermen sponsored a move to set up a separate 'fund' of $50,000 per annum for central area works. Contributions would come from the ward allocations, $20,000 from East Ward, and $10,000 from each of the others. Progressive Independent aldermen defeated the move. They argued that the South and West wards, where service backlogs were greatest, should not have to subsidise the East ward works programme, just because East ward aldermen had neglected to fulfil their responsibilities. One South Ward alderman put the case as follows —

The East Ward is the oldest area but it gets an even share...In the South Ward we are still tar-sealing roads...at the expense of kerb and gutter. In the East Ward all their roads are sealed, it all goes on kerb and gutter — this makes it appear to the public that much more work is being done. To take $10,000 off South Ward would lead to violent opposition in the ward. 7

One further redistributive issue was of some importance. The council in 1967 levied a local rate on properties in industrial zones, to finance off-street parking and special works in these areas. The move was opposed by Progressive Independent aldermen, but supported by others who saw a chance to do more work in their wards. A campaign against
the rate was instituted by Progressive Independent aldermen and a meeting they called was attended by some 120 industrialists. It was decided to raise funds to make a legal challenge to the rate. They argued that the rate would discourage new industrial development, industrialists paid enough in rates as it was, and that it was particularly unjust on those who had already provided off-street parking in complying with council standards. The rate could not be rescinded in 1967 and its legality was confirmed by the Department of Local Government. But it was not levied again. In 1970, East Ward aldermen sought to re-introduce it, but had to bow to a Progressive Independent amendment to seek the opinions of industrialists first. A large majority objected and the matter was dropped. This effective veto, exercised through the Progressive Independent group, was in contrast to the attitude of commercial property owners who paid local rates, most of whom welcomed the provision of off-street car parking these rates paid for. The Chamber of Commerce supported the rate, although a minority of property owners objected, as they had been forced to provide off-street parking in their developments under recent council planning regulations. But this conflict was resolved within the Chamber. The council accepted its majority decision.

The most important characteristic of the politics of spending money was the distributive or pork barrel nature of much of the decision making. This was perhaps the most important characteristic of local politics as a whole. We saw in Chapter IV how distributive issues played an
important part in the electoral process, and we noted in Chapter V that many of the local groups were involved to a large extent in the distributive arena of politics. In Chapter VI we saw that aldermen afforded greater status to parochial demands from constituents and from neighbourhood groups than to the advice of paid officers, and that their attitude towards the engineering department was particularly critical. All these features of local politics are confirmed in the way aldermen made decisions about the allocation of funds and the determination of programmes. Redistributive issues occasionally flared in the local polity and in the council chamber. The industrial business community had direct access through the Progressive Independent group, and polarisation of the council resulted. The coincidence of Progressive Independent membership with a north-south division in the council meant that inter-ward conflicts also occasionally became redistributive in nature. Amicable arrangements broke down in the face of group or bloc cohesion amongst South and West Ward Progressive Independent aldermen, or North and East Ward members.

LIVERPOOL

Distributive issues were a marked feature of planning decision making in Liverpool. In decisions on services and the allocation of funds distributive issues were less important than in Bankstown. We shall note some of the reasons for this below.

As indicated in Figure 1X-3, decisions on the level of the rate were taken at an informal level prior to setting expenditure levels, at least in so far as setting an upper
Figure LX-3 (Cont'd)

COUNCIL

COMMITTEES

TOWN CLERK

DEPARTMENT HEADS

5. Collation -

c) what might be cut? -
  recommendations (confined
to capital items)

6. Finance committee.

a) decision on rate level
   to be aimed at

b) pruning of expenditures:
   i works programme, item
      by item [under gross
      headings, not programm-
      atically]
   ii other departmental capital
      requests
   iii committee programme and
      new facilities

Have we subtracted enough?
NO YES

7. Final recommendations

8. Approval
   [possible minority
    disagreement]
limit went. In the ALP caucus, pressures for more services were strong and the most consistent pressures against rate increases came from a minority of non-Labor aldermen. Small rate increases occurred in 1969 and 1970, but in 1971, unlike the election year of 1968, a large increase occurred. In fact, at the 1971 elections, the level of the rate was not made a major issue by any of the candidates.

In spite of the 1971 rate increase, the finance committee in 1971 was faced with the task of reducing departmental and committee requests by over $1 million to meet a proposed rate income of $2.75 million. The engineer sought a 50 per cent increase in works allocations, and the parks committee submitted a programme for new works of $650,000 compared with requests for $300,000 in 1970. The Health Department sought nearly $300,000 for new provisions for garbage disposal, and a motion was adopted by the council to include a new baby health centre at a cost of $90,000 in the 1971 programme. At the same time, the town clerk stated that the council would have to raise $2.5 million just to maintain the existing level of services and operations.

The methods adopted to prune requests combined a set of standard routines that were applied to all requests regardless of content or priority and some questioning of relative priorities between capital items. The former entailed going through departmental estimates of operating costs and cutting any items that showed an above average increase on the allocation for the same item in the
previous year. The public works requests suffered a similar process and were cut from $1.5 million to $1.2 million. Table IX-2 shows these reductions under the categories by which they were considered by the finance committee. The exercise was an example of the application of a set of routines, similar to those described in Crecine's study of incremental budgetary decision making, by which decisions were made not on the basis of assessments or re-assessments of service needs, or priorities, but largely by the adoption of a simple arithmetical formula. 8

The major cuts in the budget, however, occurred in capital items other than public works. These were not just a matter of dollars and cents, but actual capital items and programmes. In making cuts, the finance committee had to be aware of the pressures for various services within the council and particularly in the ALP caucus. Included in the category of 'dispensable' items were the garbage disposal schemes and the new baby health centre. The parks committee programme also came in for considerable reductions, but the final allocation was considerably higher than previous years; the playing fields programme was hailed by the parks committee chairman as a 'breakthrough'. Expenditure on playing field amenities, for instance, was increased from $10,000 to $40,000. The largest item in the programme was a new $200,000 swimming pool in Green Valley, constructed from loan funds.
Table IX-2  
Liverpool 1971 Budget, Public Works Expenditure, showing reductions made by finance committee to departmental requests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Roads and Drains</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main roads</td>
<td>16,000</td>
<td>18,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access roads (maint.)</td>
<td>2,800</td>
<td>2,800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other roads (maint.)</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>120,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other roads (con.)</td>
<td>110,285</td>
<td>264,570</td>
<td>130,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor works</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gutter crossings</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gutter maintenance</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sealing/rescaling</td>
<td>28,635</td>
<td>45,450</td>
<td>40,450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drainage (con.)</td>
<td>80,000</td>
<td>160,720</td>
<td>100,720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reinstatements</td>
<td>18,500</td>
<td>16,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rubbish dumping</td>
<td>1,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>C.A.R. roads construction</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>78,800*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shoulder construction</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>41,900</td>
<td>15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land for road widening</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kerb and Guttering</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reconstruction</td>
<td>8,000</td>
<td>32,600</td>
<td>15,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>69,200</td>
<td>50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Paved Paths</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>1,100</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20,200</td>
<td>52,200</td>
<td>25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unpaved Paths</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tree planting</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>7,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road signs</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bridges</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>23,897</td>
<td>89,000</td>
<td>88,500*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private works</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sand pumping</td>
<td>40,000</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Miscellaneous</strong></td>
<td>279,958</td>
<td>343,096</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(includes staff salaries employees holiday and sick pay and bonuses, repair of tools, supervision costs, etc. i.e. all costs not allocated to particular works)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>904,375</td>
<td>1,488,156</td>
<td>1,193,166</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Notes to Table IX-2

Ø This amount includes $39,400 unexpended in 1970. The allocation was for country roads to which special Commonwealth/State grants were applied.

* The increased allocation was due to commitments entered into to reconstruct bridges on rural roads, some in conjunction with neighbouring municipalities, jointly financed.

Increased expenditure on playing fields and sporting amenities was a response to a very active sporting lobby. As in Bankstown, the major beneficiary from extra revenue gained by the rate increase was parks expenditure, and the grant from the Local Government Assistance Fund was used for similar purposes. We noted in Chapter VII that the parks committee, set up in 1967 at the instigation of Labor aldermen, was controlled by the Labor group, amongst whose members were several aldermen who had close links with the sporting lobby. We also noted that the Labor group made a firm commitments to provide Green Valley with amenities, and sporting facilities were the first priority. Each year the parks committee was chaired by a North Ward Labor representative. In 1971, the Labor policy was reflected in the allocations in the playing fields programme. Of thirteen separate items, ten were for works in the North Ward, and the great majority of them in Green Valley. Decisions on parks expenditure, within the overall vote determined by the finance committee and the council, were made by the parks committee. The new swimming pool, the largest single item of expenditure, was pressed for by the committee, and supported by the Labor caucus, although some non-Labor aldermen opposed it. Instead they proposed
improvement of facilities at the existing pool in the city centre, to cater for residents of other parts of the municipality as well.

While within the Labor caucus, adopted policy overrode ward parochialism, opposition from other wards was voiced. As early as 1964, East Ward aldermen were voicing concern over the burden that would be placed on the council by having to service the new Green Valley estate, and the Green Valley Progress Association - which by the time of the 1968-71 period had become defunct - was continually on the defensive. Following a 20 per cent rate increase in 1967, the East Ward Progress Association voiced its opposition to rate income being used in Green Valley, claiming that the State Government and the Housing Commission ought to provide the services. During the life of the 1968-71 council these complaints were never far from the surface and during 1971 the now fast developing East Ward did, as we noted in Chapter VII, win representation on the parks and works committees. In the election campaign it was a common theme amongst candidates that their ward was not getting enough money, and this was so particularly in the East Ward and from non-Labor candidates in the South Ward. Thus, as we concluded in Chapter VII, ward parochialism was important, but was stifled because of the policies pursued by the Labor caucus.

Unlike Bankstown, the works programme in Liverpool was not determined by ward aldermen following an agreed division of the funds. The programme was determined largely by the works committee which did not have equal ward representation.
Again, this occasionally led to complaints from some ward aldermen that they had been 'hard done by' in the allocation of funds. A major reason for the lack of arrangements to accommodate parochial ward interests in the way they operated in Bankstown was again the cross-cutting party competition. Apart from this, the committee tradition was well entrenched, and in a municipality that until recently had been small, the pressures toward ward separatism were not so acute. At the same time greater attention was given to the priorities suggested by the council engineer, due in part to his own personal standing with aldermen, and a tradition that he helped establish in the committee of affording his views considerable weight.

Unlike Bankstown, when a works programme was adopted by the committee, it was not subsequently altered in the council. If an alderman then put in a further request, it was, as the engineer himself put it 'too bad'. It had to wait until next year's budget. He contrasted his position with that of the planner:

We don't have the direct interference by aldermen that seems to happen on other councils. Here, there is generally more interference with planning matters.

It was symptomatic of the professional competence of the engineering department, and its self-confidence, that it worked out a three year capital budget which it used as a basis for recommending works programmes. Whilst it was not adopted by the council, and indeed the council never granted the engineer the funds he requested (see Table IX-2) the engineer attached some importance to it as a means of forward planning.
In Liverpool, the pressures for basic essential services such as kerb and gutter were not nearly so strong as in Bankstown, as most of the newly settled areas - including Green Valley - were built after it became a requirement that developers or subdividers provide these basic services. Development in the 1950's, when Bankstown was largely settled, did not provide these services, and in the 1960's they were still catching up. In Liverpool it was sporting amenities that were the subject of most political pressure, and this meant an increased allocation, with the parks committee dispensing the funds in response to local pressures. Where there is considerable local pressure for services of this nature which are highly location-specific, the policies of the pork barrel are likely to evolve. This was seen in Bankstown in relation to both sporting amenities and kerb and gutter, but in Liverpool the public works programme was more immune from these pressures.

KU—RING—GAI

Like Liverpool and Bankstown, Ku—ring—gai was an area in which relatively recently developed suburbs required services and amenities. It has already been indicated, however, that the Ratepayer's majority on the 1968—71 council saw itself representing a constituency different from that behind demands for expansion of services. This was seen in the relative decline in influence of the progress associations. The maintenance of the 1968 rate level in the three following years required making sizeable cuts in departmental requests, and curtailing growth in
expenditure on services. In 1969 public works and parks requests were cut to maintain 1968 levels of expenditure. In 1971, the proposed works allocation was cut by $200,000 on the grounds that money voted in previous years had not been spent, largely because of labour shortages.

Opposition to these cuts came from the departmental heads. 'Opposition' aldermen in 1969 argued that the new aldermen should not ignore the advice of professional officers, advice such as that tendered by the engineer on proposed reductions to public works maintenance:

I would be guilty of professional misconduct if I recommended cuts which would result, in a short time, in more being spent than the cuts themselves.  

They condemned the attack on the traditional council policy that had provided residents with a high standard of services and amenities. When the council first came under attack from the Ratepayers Defence League over the proposed 29 per cent rate increase in 1966, alderman Rickard — who was re-elected in 1968 — described and justified this traditional approach:

People in Ku-ring-gai have a high standard of living in their private lives and expect the same good standard in their public amenities.

Alderman Harris — defeated in 1968 — suggested that any Ku-ring-gai resident who disagreed with this approach ought to go elsewhere and live. One issue that was symbolic of the attack upon tradition was the council's expenditure on a wildflower garden set in several acres of bushland. The $40,000 allocated to this was seized on as a major issue by the Ratepayers Defence League, pointing out the state of kerb and gutter in some of Ku-ring-gai's streets, and
referring to it and other items as wasteful and extravagant expenditure. A major target of the new council majority in pruning estimates in the 1969-71 budgets was the expenditure on parks and they were condemned for their 'miserly' approach by the opposition.

The new majority made a virtue out of parsimony in every aspect of council services, regardless of tradition and past commitments. However, they were reluctant to cut public works (the essentials as opposed to the extravagant luxuries). In the spirit of eliminating administrative inefficiency, the majority sought cuts in every departmental request in the 1969 budget, including staff numbers in all departments. However, major cuts in new works were avoided by increased external borrowing and by borrowing from council reserves.

An important aspect of the Ratepayers Committee campaign had been their claim that ratepayers were subsidising non-ratepayers who used council services. The new majority pursued a policy of increasing user fees and charges wherever possible as a means of easing this 'burden on ratepayers'. Fees for sporting ovals, council halls, council golf links and tennis courts, and fees for building and planning applications were increased along with many others. The 1969 budget saw the council levying for the first time a separate garbage charge, distinct from the rate. Many of these charges caused opposition from user's groups. The most controversial were the fees and charges introduced for the library service. This service was seen as a prime example of previous extravagance.
1. Decision by majority group on rate decisions by council on major facilities to be undertaken decisions on commitments to reserves from revenue

2. Seek departmental estimates - rate guidelines and level of cost increases indicated

3. Compilation of requests:
   a. operating costs with 'cost increases' plus requests for more staff etc.
   b. capital/new works - suggested level of expenditure based on overall programme needs. Works priorities discussed with ward aldermen but no firm detailed programme commitments made.
   c. fees/charges income estimates.

4. Collation -
   a. computation of rate needed to meet expenditure requests and recommendation to that effect
4. Collation -

OR b. computation of deficit to be incurred with expenditure as requested and rate as decided by the majority group.

i) report by accountant on possible items for reduction (consisting of new staff, new equipment, capital items)

ii) report on possible means of increasing income - fees and charges, reserves, etc.

5. Balancing of budget - strategies:

a. Seriatim consideration of all departmental requests seeking reports from officers on possibility of achieving suggested blanket reductions (usually to previous year's levels: Parks and Works maintenance prime targets)

b. reconsideration of loans policy and possibility of internal borrowing from reserves.

c. increases in fees and charges

d. reduction in works construction to take account of unexpended funds from previous years.

7. [Finance Committee recommendations with accountant's reports on new situation]

8. Final decisions on separate reports and items.

6. Reports on cuts - defence of requests and indication of 'absolute minimum' of expenditure by indicating items that could be cut.

Works programmes now adjusted to new levels in consultation with ward aldermen and final details begin to be worked out.
Library requests were considerably pruned in 1969 and in 1970, when the Wahroonga branch was closed and the bookmobile service withdrawn, on the grounds that they were 'uneconomic'. A new scale of fees and charges were introduced under which non-ratepayer residents had to pay an annual fee. Charges were also imposed for borrowing books of 'no educational or literary merit'. These original proposals were eventually amended and the State Government amended the Library Act to close the apparent loophole that had allowed the council to defy the principle of so called 'free libraries' embodied in the Act. In the meantime, opposition came from the Library Association NSW branch, who organised a meeting in the municipality to protest and collected 2,000 names on a petition. Library staff adopted a form of passive resistance by not undertaking the classification of books necessary for the charges to be made. Net expenditure on libraries was reduced from $170,000 in 1969 to a little over $120,000 in 1971, although $20,000 of this reduction was made possible by an increased government subsidy.

No major proposals for new facilities were adopted during 1968-71, except for the construction of a new swimming pool in West Pymble. The previous council decided to build a large swimming centre on this site, a decision that aroused conflict over the siting and over the cost. St Ives and Roseville residents and aldermen were in favour of pools in their parts of the municipality, and the Ratepayers Defence League opposed the scheme on the grounds of its high cost. A referendum on the proposal was held
by the council with the 1968 elections and a slight majority opposed the centre. The only sizeable majorities in favour occurred in areas nearest the proposed centre. The council subsequently in 1970 decided to proceed with a more modest proposal, utilising funds from a special reserve and loan funds. A proposal by the finance committee to levy local rates for pools in various parts of the municipality was rejected by Ratepayer's aldermen on the grounds that they had been elected to oppose rate increases.

The inter-ward conflicts that occurred during this dispute were indicative of the pressures on ward aldermen to look after their ward. Opposition to the Ratepayers League came from local progress associations and from aldermen responsive to their demands for increased local services. This approach was epitomised by one alderman and progress association member who defended the proposed 1966 rate increase of 29 per cent in the following terms:

I am unwilling to strike any item from the estimates scheduled to be done in Gordon-Killara ward for the sake of a rate reduction. 12

As in Bankstown, there were backlogs of kerb and guttering and drainage works in areas developed before the 1960's; some two hundred streets were without kerb and gutter in 1970. In the face of pressures for these works, the distributive nature of works programming decisions was seen in the autonomy granted to ward aldermen in deciding the content of ward programmes and in the four-fold division of funds. Unlike Bankstown, though, the engineer exercised considerable influence over ward programmes. Ward aldermen
would amend a recommended programme rather than initiate one. The engineer described the process as follows:

You have to be very diplomatic. I get a few variations, but not significant ones. Sometimes a number two priority job may go in over my number ones, if for instance a street of residents is up in arms. 13

In fact, the number of first priority works to be done was so large that it mattered little to the engineer which were included and for what reasons. The system of priorities (one, two and three) was based on guidelines and rules of thumb for the different categories of work. These were the subject of a report by a previous engineer in 1966, when he was critical of the method then adopted in programming works. Very few of the works done as a result of 'requests from local residents, petitions and pressures...' could be classed as 'urgent', he claimed.

The engineer had no such complaints with regard to the 1968–71 council; his problem was one of cuts in expenditure. Finally, and again, in contrast to Bankstown, the adoption of a programme with the estimate was an authoritative allocation and implementation was left to the engineer without interference.

During 1968–71 distributive or pork barrel politics took second place to the issue of the level of the rate. The majority of aldermen could not act as eager advocates of ward facilities in response to parochial ward pressures without negating their stand on council 'extravagance'. They neither had the inclination nor the political incentive to do so, being independent of the traditional pattern of progress association politics, and opposed to the traditional
ethos that advocated a high standard of service and amenities appropriate for a rich residential area, regardless of expense.

**LEICHHARDT**

The major determinant of budgetary decisions was the rating strategy adopted by the Labor caucus. This entailed rate increases in mid-term years, but not in election or post-election years. The 1967 increase was some 40 per cent and coincided with a revaluation, which provided some disguise for the council decision, and the 1970 increase was not a great deal less. As a rule, the immediate beneficiary or sufferer of rate changes was the public works construction programme, which as Figure 1X-5 indicates, was the primary balancing item in the budget. The 1967 increase saw a 'bonus' of an extra $100,000 for works construction; the 1968 programme marked time; but in 1969 there was no works construction allocation at all. In fact, in no year did the engineer get nearly what he asked for. The council did not raise any loans for works, despite his suggestion that they should. The council, advised by the town clerk, considered loan repayments were already at too high a level.

The 1969 budget presented exceptional problems. The council acquired Glebe in mid-1968, and this was the first year in which Glebe's services had to be financed from Leichhardt's rate. The Labor City of Sydney council provided the inner city suburbs such as Glebe with a relatively generous range of services, paying for them with revenue from the commercial city centre. Leichhardt
### Figure IX-5  LEICHHARDT - Budgetary Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNCIL</th>
<th>TOWN CLERK</th>
<th>DEPARTMENTAL HEADS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. (ALP Caucus)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Rating 'strategy' determined; no rate increase in election years; large increases mid-term.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Decisions on new facilities.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Loan policy.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Seek departmental estimates. [Decision made on flat per cent increase to operating costs, for wage and cost rises]</td>
<td>3. Departmental estimates - a. fixed costs plus per cent increase b. improvements, plant and equipment and 'capital' c. income from fees etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Collation a. mathematically required rate b. Either i) what cuts are possible to produce proposed rate Or ii) what is a 'desirable' rate in view of departmental requests.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 1X-5 (Cont'd)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNCIL</th>
<th>TOWN CLERK</th>
<th>DEPARTMENTAL HEADS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. Collation</td>
<td>If i) cuts recommended (capital only) If ii) proposes desirable rate (and possibly adjustments to expenditure)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. ALP Caucus</td>
<td>Fix rate. Is rate as recommended by town clerk?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YES → i) accept or ii) adjust town clerk's recommended expenditures (i.e. his adjustments of departmental requests)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO → Cut expenditures</td>
<td>a. cut contributions to town planning and plant replacement reserves b. cut works c. cut operating costs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Council formal approval to caucus decisions.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
inherited a kindergarten, a welfare centre, a baby health centre, a branch library and an old men's home, all of which were either subsidised or run by the council. At the 1968 elections former city aldermen and Labor candidates for Glebe were as insistent as all candidates that the rate should not increase, particularly as Glebe residents would in fact be paying higher rates in Leichhardt than they used to pay in the city. They were also adamant that none of Glebe's services would be curtailed.

Balmain-Leichhardt Labor Party candidates in other wards had claimed that the rest of the municipality would find itself subsidising Glebe, and contrasted Glebe's luxuries with the under-provision of amenities in the rest of the municipality. This apprehension was shared by some caucus members and it created considerable friction. When the town clerk presented the draft estimates, it was found that even with no provision for public works construction the addition of Glebe plus normal cost increases meant that to maintain existing levels of operations, a rate of 2.75 cents was required. This compared with the 2.315 cents of the previous year, to which the caucus through its election promises felt itself committed. $400,000 had to be cut from the estimates to maintain this rate level.

These cuts were made largely on operating costs. Table 1X-3 shows where they were made and also demonstrates that they were not in fact implemented. Part of this would have been due to some amount of 'uncontrollable' cost
increases, but by no means all. Garbage service expenditure was cut from an estimated $260,000 to $176,000 and the street cleaning from $181,500 to $130,000. Final costs were $280,000 and $150,000 respectively. Parks maintenance was reduced from $150,000 to $100,000, whilst final expenditure was $145,000. Glebe retained its thrice weekly garbage collection and daily street watering. The grass was still cut and potholes were still filled. Most important, no-one lost his job. While the council eventually handed over the kindergarten to the NSW Kindergarten Union, along with a subsidy that reduced the council's commitment, this did not effect the 1969 budget.

Table IX-3 Leichhardt Council, 1969 Expenditures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Recommended</th>
<th>Adopted</th>
<th>Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Purposes</td>
<td>187,842</td>
<td>187,842</td>
<td>199,782</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public works</td>
<td>1,016,738</td>
<td>903,638</td>
<td>998,880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>603,800</td>
<td>447,000</td>
<td>599,627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal property</td>
<td>365,336</td>
<td>338,186</td>
<td>356,735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>107,500</td>
<td>104,000</td>
<td>101,697</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loan repayments</td>
<td>220,000</td>
<td>220,000</td>
<td>223,981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital (Reserves)</td>
<td>200,200</td>
<td>126,200</td>
<td>111,105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,764,416</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,381,366</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,639,810</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Town clerk's report to council with the estimate; adopted estimates; and final accounts for 1969.

The Glebe aldermen were not only concerned with maintaining the level of existing services. They had also made a firm promise to former city council employees that none would lose their jobs under the transfer. This was one reason why the cuts in expenditure were not realised. Employees were an influential pressure group in council politics. Through their unions they exercised influence through the State ALP hierarchy. Some aldermen viewed the improvement of conditions of employment as a major
policy goal of a Labor council. Labor aldermen on all councils were under considerable 'moral' pressure from the party to give employees a 'fair deal'. More directly, council employees in Leichhardt exercised influence through being members of local party branches. One Labor alderman described this —

You get pressure to bear on aldermen from employees. Many of them are party members and this presents difficulties for aldermen in their branch. 14

These pressures had shown in the past through revelations of patronage contained in the 1953 report of the Departmental Inspector, and similar allegations continued to be made up to the 1971 elections, though they could not be proved, and were made by political opponents of the council. 15 One Labor alderman did state that:

Political patronage happens to a certain extent on promotions...if you are Labor then maybe you can advance to another job. But aldermen are wary of being accused of this. 16

Whether or not we look for evidence of patronage of some description, it is certainly the case that the Labor caucus was very attentive to staff matters. Every appointment, dismissal, promotion and demotion, was the subject of staff committee decisions, and in turn, caucus rulings. It was in these circumstances that the Glebe aldermen made their promise to employees, and kept it. As a result of the subsequent over-expenditure in 1969, the council achieved a large deficit.

In 1970, and 1971, the works programme again suffered as the balancing item in budgets where income was insufficient to meet departmental requests. On these
occasions, however, the council made no reductions in operating costs. In 1969 the engineer's list of 'essential' works totalled some $450,000. By 1971 it had risen to $1 million. The 1971 allocation was $35,000. Not only was the engineer unable to obtain higher allocations, his influence over programming was never great. Just as pressures from local branches were important in influencing relations with council employees, so they contributed to the distributive approach of aldermen in the allocation of funds. We noted in Chapter VII that norms relating to ward autonomy were important in the caucus, and part of this ward parochialism was the importance aldermen attached to exerting complete control over works programming, even minor maintenance. The result of ward competition for funds usually meant a fairly even spread. Because the total allocation was so small, this had the effect of ruling out most of the larger items. The engineer commented on this:

You find yourself putting in works that aren't really necessary...they all agree on the smaller jobs, to get an even share. 17

As in Bankstown, adoption of the estimates did not entail the adoption of a programme of work. Separate items were voted throughout the year.

In Leichhardt, the major constraint in the budgetary process was the lack of resources. Arguments about service priorities were never really important, as the council could afford so few. Glebe provided something of a spur, and the new residents of Balmain had long sought a municipal library service. This finally came about in
1971, financed from the sale of land. Most aldermen adopted the view that it was better to forego these 'luxuries' than to increase the rate burden, which (as we saw in Chapter 11) was already high compared with more fortunate municipalities.

**BURWOOD**

During the 1950's Burwood prided itself on being able to live up to the slogan 'The lowest rate in the State'. After 1960 the position changed. This was brought about by an increased expenditure on public works, the provision of new facilities and the use of loans for land purchase in connection with planning policies. During the early 1960's the council managed to avoid large rate increases by increasing borrowing for the public works programme, but in 1966 deferments of rate increases in previous years, coupled with rising costs, led to an increase in rates collected from $530,000 in 1965 to $830,000. 1966 was a year in which properties were revalued, but if the council hoped to disguise its decision in this way, it was mistaken. The public reaction was unprecedented in its vigour, and the result was the formation of the Ratepayers Action Committee. The Committee was not as effective in its campaign, nor as well led and supported, as that in Ku-ring-gai, and although it claimed that the subsequent defeat of the mayor of 1966 at the 1968 elections was attributable to his stand on the rate, no attempt was made to win control of the council. The major effect of the 1966 campaign against the rate increase was not so much to prevent future increases, as to make the council wary of
putting itself in a position of again having to make such large increases to the rates. Successive budgets saw rate increases of the order of five to ten per cent, all justified on the grounds of 'rising costs'.

Partly as a result of past parsimony, the council faced a considerable problem of road reconstruction. In 1967 the recently appointed engineer presented a report comprising a complete reassessment of works priorities and needs. The tone of the report was urgent and it sought an annual allocation for a works construction programme of $300,000, against the 1967 programme of $127,000. This aim was not realised, although the works committee did for 1968 recommend an expenditure of $250,000 and in subsequent years sought sums approaching this figure. The works programme was always used as the balancing item in the budget, following the decision on the level of the rate. The newly appointed town clerk in 1962 criticised this practice, recommending the council adopt the approach suggested by the Department of Local Government — that is, the use of the rate as the balancing item, following the adoption of a specific programme of works based on needs. An alderman was still able to describe the budgetary process in 1970 in the following terms:

The engineering department has been getting the rough end of the stick. The other departments get their 10 per cent rise on costs...they get what they ask for, and the engineer gets what's left. 18

Despite the engineer's demands, reflected in an increasing volume of requests from constituents and
Figure IX-6  BURWOOD — Budgetary Process

1. (Works only) — request to engineer for programme and estimates

2. (Engineer) — works requests.
   a. programme needs
   b. fixed costs plus increases in wages and prices.

3. Decision on works programme and level of works expenditure (financial practicability taken into account)

4. Request for departmental estimate, or for details of operations to formulate estimates.
   a. existing operating levels plus flat increase for wages and prices
   b. requests for increases in relative levels of operations (e.g. parks maintenance)
   c. capital items (plant replacement etc., mostly from reserves)
   d. estimated income from fees and charges
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNCIL</th>
<th>COMMITTEES</th>
<th>TOWN CLERK</th>
<th>DEPARTMENT HEADS</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5. Collation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a. deficit/surplus policy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b. what would be total income required from rates/loans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c. what is likely level of rate?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>d. Do estimates require adjusting in light of (c)?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>i) loans policy recommendation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ii) adjustment (decrease) to works expenditure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>or iii) recommend higher rate.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>e. final recommendations in draft budget.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6. Consideration of recommendations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>i) decision on rate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ii) decision on expenditures and loans -</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a. accept operating costs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b. balance budget by either raising more loans or cutting works expenditure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
aldermen for work to be done, the amount allocated to public works only increased slowly. This increase was retarded in 1970 when the council adopted a recommendation from the town clerk that they reduce the amount of money being borrowed for public works. The town clerk argued that loan repayments were escalating at a rate that made it cheaper in the long run to gradually increase rates to perform these works.

Although the works committee made recommendations to the council on the level of the works programme, in making the final allocation it was the level of the rate adopted that was the determining factor. However, in 1971 the adopted works allocation was that recommended by the committee and the ten per cent rate increase was partly a result of this commitment. It was also the result of the adoption of a recommendation by the engineer to increase expenditure on parks maintenance. Once again the pressure for a change in existing service commitments stemmed from the engineer rather than from community groups or aldermen.

The town clerk claimed 1971 as a year of innovation. The adopted works programme itemised in detail the works to be done and for the first time was determined by the committee several months before. The engineer claimed in the previous year that doing this would mean that '... modern methods of works planning and control such as critical path and works scheduling can be applied over the entire programme...'. In determining an actual programme the engineer exercised considerable influence. Aldermen
did not treat the programme as an exercise in pork barrel politics and the engineer's priorities took first place. Thus, whilst aldermen liked to see that some measure of 'fairness' was obtained in spreading works throughout the municipality, it was recognised that needs differed from one area to another and allocations reflected this. Furthermore, the engineer was given a free hand in implementing the programme, which as we have seen was decided and adopted with the estimates themselves. These features of the decision making process reflected the lack of the parochial ward pressures that were so important in other municipalities and illustrated the extent to which a style of administration that emphasised the values of professionalism and the status of the paid official was an important part of the system.

NORTH SYDNEY

The town clerk described North Sydney as a 'well financed municipality'. This was a reflection of the wealth of the area, particularly the commercial centre where property values had increased rapidly to the benefit of council rate revenue. The area was generally well provided with facilities and there were few pressing service needs. These factors combined to make the budgetary process a relatively routine one. The 1970 budget was adopted as presented by the officials without debate. Political pressures on aldermen were more concerned with the issue of flat development. Even progress associations were preoccupied with this issue much of the time, or with ensuring the upkeep and proper management of existing amenities.
**Figure IX-7** NORTH SYDNEY - Budgetary Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNCIL</th>
<th>TOWN CLERK/ACCOUNTANT</th>
<th>DEPARTMENT HEADS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Decisions on major new works to be tentatively incorporated in budget</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Informal soundings on level of rate likely to be adopted.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Requests for departmental estimates sent with guidelines -</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Level of increase to be made for per cent rise in wages/prices</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Overall increase (per cent) that can be accommodated within level of likely rate.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Departmental estimates</td>
<td>a. Existing level of expenditure for operating costs ('overheads') plus per cent increase</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Capital items</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. Fees and charges income</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Collation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Series of meetings with department heads to discuss increases in expenditure items, likely areas for cuts (and some suggestions for cuts) and to arrive at departmental requests consistent with a final 'practicable' level of expenditure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Final determination</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i) Rate decision</td>
<td>Surplus/deficit policy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii) 'balancing' decisions</td>
<td>- Final loan income and calculation of required rate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Public works maintenance and parks maintenance adjusted</td>
<td>Final recommendations (not necessarily bound by any strict rate constraint)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Departmental capital items.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The lack of interest in provision of council services was amply illustrated by the fact that the public works programme was considered largely a matter of routine by aldermen and left for the engineer to determine. Aldermen were attentive to requests from ward constituents for minor maintenance work and this was one way that aldermen built up credit as good ward representatives. The importance of maintenance in the works programme was demonstrated by the existence of five full time maintenance 'gangs', one for each ward, on tap to perform routine maintenance work and satisfy requests from aldermen and residents for such work.

FOOTNOTES


4. Interview conducted February 1971

5. Interview conducted February 1971

6. Interview conducted September 1970

7. Alderman Duncan, council debate, 1 April 1971

8. John P. Crecine op. cit., passim

9. Personal interview conducted September 1970

10. North Shore Times, 5 March 1969

11. North Shore Times, 5 January 1966

13. Personal interview conducted September 1970
Even the aldermen elected on the issue of lowering rates were not entirely immune from pressures of progress associations. Thus, one alderman commented that they had tried to 'mollify' a particularly hostile progress association, whose endorsed candidates they had defeated in 1968, by spending 'two thirds of the ward allocation' in their area. The alderman remarked 'it doesn't seem to have had any effect', and that they still were uncompromising in their opposition. Some of the majority aldermen, realising this, in fact did not bother with these pork barrel decisions at all.

14. Personal interview conducted May 1971

15. The Glebe, 21 July 1971 listed ten relatives of aldermen on the council's staff. Allegations of nepotism were made by the convenor of the Campaign for a Better Council team at the 1971 elections in a Sydney daily paper; Sun, 7 September 1971

16. Interview conducted May 1971

17. Interview conducted September 1970

18. Interview conducted October 1970

19. Aeroplane Press (Burwood), 29 October 1969
Chapter X  CONCLUSION

Much of the decision making that has been described in this study might be characterised as 'administration by politicians'. We saw in Chapter 1 that local government has traditionally been viewed as administration rather than politics. In one sense this is true, as issues of policy involving the clash of major interests are exceptional political events, rather than the norm as in legislative politics. Aldermen are mostly concerned with the administration or enforcement of regulations, with decisions involving relatively small amounts of expenditure on highly localised facilities, or with other matters of detail and implementation. But the view that elected representatives in local government are managers or administrators rather than politicians is far from the truth. I pointed out in Chapter 1 that there is some tension inherent in the theory of local government democracy in that the norms of elective office, particularly the notions of direct accessibility and being 'close to the people', provide encouragement for the representative to adopt a political role. The aldermen as members of the body solely responsible for every aspect of council administration are on the one hand asked to be apolitical, and particularly not party-political, while on the other hand they are encouraged to expose themselves to the electoral and constituency pressures. We have seen the effects of these pressures. The demands made upon aldermen are highly parochial, even individualised, and often seek to influence the implementation of policy rather
than its formulation. That is, people seek to exert political influence on the administrative process. They ask the alderman to contravene the norms of impartial, efficient, rule-bound administration by seeking special favours and dispensations, the bending of rules or the granting of indulgences. They seek to circumvent the norms of bureaucratic universalism and the 'rule of law', by demanding what I have called distributive decisions.

Some of these characteristics of local politics are familiar in another political setting. A concern on the part of politicians with enforcement and implementation rather than issues of policy, the participation in politics of groups and individuals for the purpose of highly specific short-run material benefits, and the concern of office holders with the granting of favours to satisfy these individualised demands for personal reward or benefit, are features of the urban political machine in the United States. Leaving aside the characteristic political structure of the urban machine, Wolfinger has provided a succinct definition of machine politics:

'Machine politics' is the manipulation of certain incentives to political participation; favouritism based on political criteria in personnel decisions, contracting and administration of laws.  

This definition draws on Banfield and Wilson's observation that the machine 'depends crucially upon inducements that are both specific and material'.

Machine politics is invariably associated with corruption. Corruption in most of its forms is simply one of several ways of exerting political influence in the distributive arena of politics. Instead of seeking favours in exchange
for votes or some other form of political support, or on the basis of kin or friendship relationships, cash or some other material benefit is offered in the transaction. But these distinctions between different ways of exerting influence in the distributive arena are important in making judgments about local government politics and evaluating the worth of local government administration. Moreover, they are important in practice in that these forms of influence may be either prohibited, tolerated, or encouraged in different political cultures. Thus, pork barrel politics in which the 'currency' is political support and votes is a legitimate form of political activity in most polities. But the use of similar political criteria when administering supposedly uniform laws is often judged differently. Favours granted to individuals by politicians are normally frowned upon when the motive is personal gain, particularly if bribery is revealed, but a different view is usually taken if help is granted on compassionate grounds. The word 'favour' usually has strong pejorative overtones, although I use it to cover all types of political demand in the distributive arena. But it is important to know when 'help' turns into 'pull', as Wolfinger has remarked in chastising those writers who depict machine bosses and ward captains as benevolent dispensers of welfare rather than self-seeking politicians intent on upholding a corrupt political system.

The distinction between different types of distributive politics is important for another reason. Favouritism to individuals in the form of patronage or exemption from the
law, or to business firms in the form of contracts or franchises, are a distinguishing characteristic of machine politics. The machine relies on these rewards and benefits as the main inducement to political support. Although the machine may indulge in pork barrel politics, these forms of political favouritism that benefit localities or particular groups are also sanctioned, or at least tolerated, in many polities, some of them a far cry from the political machine. For example, pork barrel politics was common in the six local councils in Sydney. Nevertheless, I shall look more closely at some of the attempts to explain machine politics, for they may help account for some aspects of distributive politics in local government. This approach is further justified because some political regimes in Sydney's local government history have in fact exhibited the central characteristics of the American urban machine, including corruption.

Corruption is often popularly associated with local government in Sydney. There have been several cases of proven corruption in the six councils in the past twenty years or so. Not all of these led to revelations of a political regime that was pervasively corrupt and there is little doubt that some were isolated cases of individual abuse of public office. Cases of revealed malpractice or corruption occurred in Liverpool in 1953 and 1963 and in North Sydney in 1969. Bankstown council was dismissed in 1963 following bribery charges laid against several aldermen, but no further evidence of malpractice was revealed. But the 1954 dismissal of the council did lead to allegations that corruption was pervasive in local politics.
Irregularities in tendering and in the purchase and sale of council materials were discovered and all were linked to one prominent local contractor who earned the name of 'Mr Big'. A charge of bribery laid against him was dismissed in court and the broader allegations never proven. 4

There was one case of revealed corruption that uncovered a political regime that bore a marked similarity to the American urban machine. This involved Leichhardt council in the period before its dismissal by the Minister in 1953. The reports of the inspectors from the Department of Local Government and the evidence given at the trials of the mayor, other aldermen and some council employees, gave a very full description of the regime and its corrupt practices. 5 Aldermen solicited bribes for the approval of building and development applications, even when granting approval involved no bending or contravention of regulations; aldermen stole council property and used council materials and labour for alterations to personal property; several 'irregularities' were revealed in the letting of contracts to local firms; employees were over-paid and time-sheets were falsified, while jobs were given to relatives of aldermen in preference to better qualified applicants. The aldermen involved were members of the Labor majority. The Labor Party was intimately involved in local politics through branch control over aldermen. It was alleged that patronage in personnel matters extended to favouritism being given to party members. Allegations of falsification of party records and membership rolls in the Rozelle branch
were investigated by the ALP State Executive in 1957, providing some clue of the means by which some of the local party 'bosses' exercised control over their branches. Allegations of double-voting, ballot-box stuffing, and other electoral malpractices were rife, although never proven. Electoral support for the Labor council was in fact assured by the fact that electors in the solidly working class area voted the same way as they did for State and Federal elections, and the party label was enough to ensure success for the Labor candidates endorsed by the branches.

Although Leichhardt seems to have been a special case amongst the six councils, in the past some other inner-city working class Labor areas were similar. In view of the incidence of corruption in local government it does raise the question of whether it stems from some of the conditions from which the corruption endemic to the urban political machine stems.

Wolfinger uses the notion of 'incentives to participation' to distinguish characteristics of machine politics. These incentives are both 'tangible' and 'intangible'. They can be divided into two types, which he calls 'routine' and 'substantive'. The rewards that provide the tangible incentives in machine politics are 'divisible' in the sense that they can be allocated piece-meal to individuals. They result from the 'routine operations of government, not from particular substantive policy outcomes'. Wolfinger remarks that substantive issues of policy are 'irrelevant' to machine politics and 'more an irritant than anything
else to its practitioners'. But the other type of tangible incentives are concerned with policy issues and 'result from a desire to influence the outcome of particular policy decisions'. Interest groups seek to change policies for the benefit of broad groups rather than influence the routine operations of government for the particularistic benefit of individuals. A very similar set of categories is outlined by James C. Scott. He talks of the material and non-material 'inducements' parties offer to their supporters. The type of material inducement offered depends on the loyalties of individuals in the electorate. If individual or family loyalties are important then patronage and the granting of individual material favours are likely to be common. If locality-based or ethnic and communal ties are important, then inducements such as pork barrel distributions are likely to be effective. If most voters have evolved loyalties to broader social groups such as classes, beyond their family or village context, then sectoral inducements such as changes in tax laws, welfare policies and other matters of general legislation are more likely to be important.

The categories employed by Wolfinger in distinguishing between types of political incentive and the distinctions Scott makes between different bases for political loyalties, can be adapted to fit into the three-fold distinction of distributive, regulative and redistributive politics. Tangible divisible incentives fall in the category of distributive politics, while substantive policy incentives are divided into regulative and redistributive issues in
Lowi's schema. Scott's sectoral inducements are similar to Wolfinger's substantive policy incentives, while the locality-based and the individual or family-based loyalties would be characteristic of the distributive arena of politics. But the problem raised earlier in distinguishing between different types of distributive politics is apparent again. Machine politics for Wolfinger is characterised by divisible incentives which are offered to individuals. Pork barrel politics would seem to fall somewhere in between his two categories of routine and substantive incentives, for they are directed to groups or localities. Scott recognises this as a distinctive category, but includes locality-based loyalties as one of the conditions in which machine politics may thrive, and pork barrel politics as a feature of machine incentives. While pork barrel distributions of public works do tend to be vitally important in the context of social and political development, which is when Scott says machine politics is likely to occur, I have suggested that pork barrel types of distributive arrangements and other forms of favouritism to particular localities or communal groups, are far more universal phenomena occurring in polities where machine politics is not found.

Scott uses a development model to account for machine politics. The machine thrives where 'narrow community and family orientations are most decisive'. In American cities, machine politics occurred where ethnic minorities were attempting to 'come to terms' with society at large. What was needed to bridge the gap between the community and
family environment and the foreign norms of American society and government was a mediator. The machine politician filled this role. He provided personal favours in the shape of jobs, contracts, licenses and instructions on how to obtain welfare and other individual benefits from government. He was the 'fixer', the manipulator of strange and complex processes of administration and government. The machine politician for his part exploited these needs and employed these material inducements of a particularistic type to weld links in a social setting where loyalties were narrow and parochial. In developing nations a similar process can be seen as village peasant communities try to come to terms with modern state government with its strange processes of democratic election and bureaucratic administration. The village community is not fully integrated into society at large and a mediator or broker is required who can manipulate government for them. The family, the tribe and the village community are the social groups of importance and relevance to the individual, and broad party appeals to social classes or occupational groups that cut across these traditional loyalties have not yet taken hold. But as they do, political demands come to be focussed on legislation to serve sectoral interests, rather than on administration and enforcement to serve particularistic short-term interests. Political parties and office holders in the meantime are concerned with patronage and favours, distributed by manipulating routine government administration, and voters perceive their interests not in collective terms,
but as being best served by influencing the way legislation is implemented as it personally affects them.

Several descriptions of politics in developing nations or peasant societies have pointed to these characteristics. Weingrod, in an analysis of political relations between a Sardinian village and government institutions describes the system of patronage that Italians refer to in speaking of *una clientela*. The term means roughly 'connection'. Office holders distribute favours to localities or within villages in exchange for political support. This occurs largely in 'areas of administrative responsibility' and is 'based on highly personal ties rather than upon universalistic criteria':

...clientela, emphasising personal motives and greed, is contrasted with politics of an ideological kind or with public-spirited administration in which 'connexions' are made irrelevant.  

*Lui fa una clientela* can be translated as 'he is drumming up support', by means of the distribution of favours. Mayer describes a similar electoral process in an Indian municipality, where candidates enlisted support in part by the use of specific transactional appeals. I have already referred to this analysis of electoral support in the discussion of local elections (see page 84). In Mayer's description, candidates not only publicised their party's platform, but also campaigned at a private level, welding specific transactional links with individuals. Promises of jobs for a voter's relatives, or of repairs to the road outside his house, were given in exchange for promises of voting support.
The similarity between aspects of politics in developing societies, the urban machine and local government in some of Sydney's suburbs underlines the suggestion that we are dealing with some common phenomena, although the processes of social development and political integration which help account for their occurrence in the American urban machine or development politics are not directly applicable. It is useful to restate briefly some of the characteristics of local politics that show the similarities. In the six councils both individual or divisible incentives, and inducements that appealed to parochial locality-based interests were important. These dominated over substantive policy issues or sectoral inducements. They were important in electoral politics, where specific transactional appeals were noted in some councils, except where non-material incentives were dominant, or where local parties were active. The building up of personal followings by candidates was seen to bear a marked similarity to Mayer's description of electoral politics in an Indian village, and Weingrod's description of 'drumming up support' through clientela relationships in Italy. Even some of the apparently non-material incentives for political support important in candidates' personal followings are also important in machine politics. Banfield and Wilson refer to the importance of 'friendship' in the ward captain's mustering of votes:

A Chicago captain explained, 'I never take leaflets or mention issues or conduct rallies in my precinct. After all, this is a question of personal friendship between me and my neighbours'. 15
Local politics in most of the councils offered opportunities for individuals to make personal representations in seeking favours of various types, from requests for road repairs to pleas for exemptions from the impact of building and health or planning regulations. In most councils, the administration of these regulations was not a routine process of rule application left to paid officials, but gave rise to distributive issues affecting the political fortunes of aldermen. In councils where the administration of these regulations gave rise to the greatest political interference, the status of paid officials tended to be lowest. In the face of distributive political demands aldermen retained discretion over these administrative decisions. These demands stemmed both from individuals and from localities. Locality-based demands were very important in some councils, where pork barrel arrangements were important in works programming, or where ward parochialism was apparent in the decision making process.

The transition from traditional to modern society that is at the root of Scott's account of machine politics is not relevant in the six councils. Nor were there the same social and cultural consequences of ethnic minorities that gave rise to machine politics in urban America. There were immigrant minorities of quite significant proportions in some of the six areas (see Table 11-6), but local politics seems to have had little if anything to offer them. Other explanations of machine politics in Urban America stress the period of economic growth, the growing demand for essential services and the rise in the
level of government activity in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As well as stressing the importance of ethnic minorities in machine politics, most explanations also attach great importance to poverty as a spur for machine politics. The patronage over which the machine had control was particularly beneficial to the poor. Banfield and Wilson refer to the 'culturally and personally incapacitated' as the mainstay of machine support. Their account stresses working class political values and contrasts them with middle class values and approaches to politics (see page 178):

The assimilation of lower class people into the middle class has, of course, entailed their assimilation to the political ethos of the Anglo-Saxon-Protestant elite, the central idea of which is that politics should be based on public rather than on private motives and, accordingly, should stress the virtues of honesty, impartiality and efficiency.

This is one explanation given for the decline of machine regimes. But Wolfinger questions many of the assumptions behind this explanation. He argues that the urban poor have increased rather than decreased and that their deprivation has become more acute because they are now increasingly a black urban poor. The middle class has systematically benefited from the patronage of machine politics as much as the working class. Not only have businessmen received contracts and franchises, but lawyers, urban planning consultants and other professional groups have been involved in receiving patronage. While urban machines thrived in some cities where the immigrant population was large, they also existed in areas where this was not so, and did not exist in several cities where
immigrants were a large proportion of the population. Wolfinger concludes that local and regional variations in political style and political culture might need looking at to explain the incidence of machine politics.  

I have already offered some general reasons why local government politics tend to be concerned with distributive issues. Councils are largely concerned with administration and policy implementation, but these decisions are entrusted to elected politicians. They are elected to represent wards which encourages parochialism. Most of the services councils provide are highly divisible in character and the regulations that councils administer affect the interests of individual property owners acting independently in developing their properties. These characteristics of council functions encourage the disaggregation of interests and individual or parochial demands. These features were common to the six councils, but there were differences that do help account for the relative importance of distributive politics in each. The size of the municipality had some effect. Parochial influence tended to be most important in the largest municipalities. This was due in part to the structure of local communities, which seem to be defined in areas much smaller than the municipality or the ward. A study by A. J. Sutton identified eighteen communities in Bankstown on the basis of asking '...a number of aldermen, council employees and government officials...', to sketch on a map their perception of the communities that made up the municipality. It was noted that the suburb or the neighbourhood was the basis of interest group organisation
in local politics. In Bankstown, ward parochialism was particularly marked and aldermen from one ward often cared little about the administration of other wards. Locality-based loyalties created a lack of political integration in local politics akin to the lack of integration of local communities in developing societies. Ward aldermen reached agreements with other ward aldermen to act as brokers for their own areas.

The larger municipalities were also those in which suburbs were still developing. The larger the programme, the greater the political importance of parochial services demands. 'Underdevelopment' led to a high level of parochial demands, as each suburb, neighbourhood or street in turn demanded the services available. Thus, the works programme in Bankstown or Ku-ring-gai and the parks programme in Liverpool were subject to these pressures, but in Burwood or in North Sydney they were not politically important in the same way. Progress associations, active typically in the pork barrel arena, were noted to be a characteristic of developing suburbs, but tended to fade out or move into other areas of politics or social activity once services were provided.

Pork barrel politics was a response to the volume of parochial demands for the highly divisible services that were on offer. In the same way, in the outer suburbs where the rate of private property development was highest, the volume of demands for exemptions or favourable treatment in relation to planning or building and health regulations was greatest. This was most notable in Liverpool. The
same could be said perhaps for inner suburbs undergoing redevelopment, but there the situation is somewhat different. Redevelopment involves greater disruptions and affects more people, arousing more competing political demands than new development. There are no protesting local neighbours in non-urban land on the urban fringe to worry about the affect of new development in the way that existing residents with a vested interest in a particular style of life and level of amenity voice protests at redevelopment proposals that threaten them. These clashes of interest lead to regulative issues and this was most evident in North Sydney and Leichhardt.

The Banfield and Wilson thesis that there is a distinctive middle class ideal of politics and that machine politics stem from a working class approach deserves some attention. The three councils in which distributive politics were perhaps most prominent were Bankstown, Leichhardt and Liverpool and these were all areas of working class populations. The other three areas contained a higher proportion of middle class residents. In Chapter VII, we saw that aldermen from professional and salaried occupations placed a greater emphasis on the advice of the professional officer than on the plea of the individual constituent in gathering information for making council decisions. For those from lower status occupations and for those from business backgrounds, the reverse was the case. Faith in the expert and the rejection of particularistic politics are two themes that are found in what Banfield and Wilson describe as the middle class
'public-regarding' ethos. They contrast this with the 'private-regarding' approach of the working class, which stems in part from conditions of need, encouraging them to seek from government personal short-term material benefits. The middle class ideal of urban government is seen as a search for an 'objective public interest' in every decision; a preference for the 'expert' or the 'statesman' above the politician; a belief in honesty, impartiality and efficiency as essential public virtues and as simple standards by which to judge the public good; and the adoption of certain institutional forms and practices to attain these goals, including non-partisanship, the council-manager form, 'master planning', and so on. Some of these beliefs find an echo in traditional ideas about local government administration in Australia, and we have seen some of them expressed by aldermen and election candidates in the six councils. They are in fact associated more with middle class than with working class candidates, as many of the norms find expression in attacks upon the Labor Party in local politics. Labor Party aldermen tend to stress other norms. The party is seen as the natural expression of the needs and aspirations of the working man and as a means by which the ordinary man-in-the-street can gain personal access to government. He can approach his local party representative who will understand his problems and speak his own language. Party aldermen reject the view that local politics is apolitical. They scoff at so-called independents and claim they are either Liberals 'in disguise', or that they
are there to further their interests as businessmen or as friends of businessmen. I quoted an example of Labor Party election advertising in Liverpool, where Labor rule was contrasted to Liberal rule by stressing the devotion of the Labor Party to the 'working and family man', and to its aim to give 'day-to-day assistance' (see page 98). Labor aldermen believe their major duty is to help people, rather than to administer things. The contrast in approaches was brought out in Liverpool when an alderman of the 1968-71 council, re-elected in 1971, resigned during 1972. He wrote a letter to the local press explaining his resignation and was highly critical of the Labor regime. He condemned party politics and caucus rule, the lack of business and administrative skill exhibited by most aldermen from the Labor Party ranks, and what he termed 'abuses' in town planning regulation:

Development applications are often dealt with on the basis of 'who it is' rather than 'what it is', or what is the correct zoning, etc. It is usually argued in relating machine politics to the working class that the favours at the disposal of the urban machine were of greatest attraction to the poor and the deprived. In the same way, it could be said that some of the personal favours that lie within the power of local councils in Sydney are of special importance in poorer areas. It was noted in Liverpool that many of the requests for exemption from the strict letter of the law arising in the administration of building and health or town planning regulations stemmed from cases of personal
economic hardship. They were common not only because of the rate of development, but because many of those involved encountered economic difficulties. Aldermen referred to them as 'battlers' and saw them as worthy recipients of sympathy and help. Doing them a favour was performing an act of social welfare.

Wolfinger's observations on the benefits the middle class receive from machine politics also apply in the present context. In Liverpool and elsewhere the pressures for exemptions from planning regulations came from property developers and they were recipients of favours as much as those suffering economic hardship. The whole notion that the middle class are in politics for higher motives and more public-spirited ends must be treated with extreme scepticism, even though they might be observed to espouse the types of beliefs that Banfield and Wilson attribute to them. In the present context, in trying to account for distributive politics in local government, we must again make the distinction between legitimate and illegitimate types of decision and forms of political activity. In different polities, there are different norms. Beliefs expressed by groups in politics serve to support their interests and those that have the status of norms are likely to serve the interests of dominant groups. In Ku-ring-gai, ward parochialism and pork barrel politics were not proscribed, because the interests of residents were served by engaging in these forms of political activity. In North Sydney, there were conflicts over the norms relating to pressure
group activity and administrative discretion. Pro-
development aldermen argued that the council should not
bow to parochial minority pressures, but should listen to
the advice of the 'experts' and be consistent in administering
its adopted planning policies. Anti-development aldermen
ignored these orthodox local government norms and talked
of 'public participation' and the need to take account
of peoples' wishes. Distributive decisions in favour
of residents were frequently made. While one can contrast
the political style of middle class residents' groups in
Leichhardt with the political style of the Labor regime,
this style was not an end in itself, or at least not the
only end for these groups in local politics. Thus, while
beliefs and norms of broad social groups may have some
influence on local politics, we must also look closely at
local political conditions to see the significance of
these norms. As well as trying to account for the
political behaviour of aldermen and political activists
in a variety of local political conditions by reference to
beliefs and ideals supposedly held in common by middle class
or working class people, it is also important to look at
local political cultures made up of norms, beliefs and
attitudes which prescribe and proscribe behaviour in each
polity. These stem from local conditions as well as from
broader social influences.

Burwood came closest amongst the six councils to
conforming to the norms of 'apolitical' administration.
The delegation of authority, the avoidance of public
controversy and party conflict, the belief in the value of
committee debate and the advice of the professional experts,
and the relative lack of parochial influences were central features of council decision making that conformed to the ideal. They stemmed to a large extent from the relative quiescence of local politics. A stable and relatively exclusive process of political recruitment, continuity in personnel and the lack of interest group activity were major characteristics. The area was relatively socially homogeneous, the municipality was small and was not experiencing any major social or economic changes. From 1968-71 a strong mayor super-imposed his own executive style of administration, promoting norms that encouraged the isolation of decision making from local pressures and laid emphasis on delegation of authority and increased status to the officials.

Some of the traditional norms of local government administration were also often expressed by aldermen in other areas, but local politics were very different in style and character, and forms of political activity proscribed by these norms were tolerated. In Ku-ring-gai, while some aldermen espoused a belief in 'efficient administration' and condemned 'political influences', the local political culture in fact encouraged and facilitated a high level of participation by local groups. Consultation of local opinion and public debate of issues were normal procedures. Residents who had invested very heavily to buy the right to live in exclusive residential suburbs vigorously defended their investment when they saw it threatened. Neighbourhood protest groups and progress associations sought local protection or
neighbourhood services. Demands were largely highly parochial, aldermen exhibited signs of ward parochialism and were ever willing to make distributive decisions in response to these pressures.

In Bankstown, the Progressive Independents publicly espoused the belief in apolitical council administration and business-like efficiency, but some of the group's members were very closely involved in parochial distributive politics. One of the founders of the group, and their first choice as mayor, in fact on occasions expressed disapproval of this style of politics, as it was one of the political evils the group had promised to eradicate. But no serious challenge was ever made to the decision making procedures that facilitated ward parochialism and pork barrel politics in response to progress association and local group pressures.

In Liverpool, the council encouraged individuals and firms to seek favourable interventions in the administrative process, by allowing personal representations to be made and through the advocacy roles often adopted on an individual's behalf by some aldermen. In an area where initiative and enterprise were praised in economic life, and where unfettered growth and expansion were major community goals, the council often saw no reason why abstract principles of town planning or building regulations should be allowed to inhibit such enterprise. The Labor Party added a gloss of social welfare motives to distributive decision making, but Labor aldermen were as pliant in the face of pressures for distributive decisions from developers as from 'battlers'.
Council decision making in Leichhardt was inseparable from local Labor Party politics, at least before the advent of local residents' groups. Ward parochialism resulted from the branch structure of the party and branch influences on aldermen were largely over minor personal matters. Council decisions were made according to prescribed party procedures. The Labor Party approach to local politics was a major determinant of the style of local council administration, which contradicted many of the traditional norms. The new residents' groups adopted a different style, partly because they were forced to through their wish to challenge an existing set of policy commitments upheld by the Labor council, but mainly because they saw the existing style of administration as objectionable in itself. Labor aldermen were unwilling to make the change from the exclusive and private style of politics in which ward aldermen and party branches were the major actors, to the more open style of political conflict and public debate that the new residents' groups adopted.

In accounting for a particular style of local council administration, we cannot ignore peculiar historical factors, the influence of past events or of individual incumbents. I have already mentioned the influence of Burwood's mayor in this context. In Bankstown, the influence of the town planning department was due in a large measure to the threat of Ministerial intervention and the planner's own forcefulness in argument and his professional ability in presenting a case. Similarly,
the influence of the engineer in Liverpool worked toward the same end and his professional ability and force of character had its effect on the way decisions about works programmes were made.

I have already remarked that council decision making can be characterised as 'administration by politicians'. In Chapter 1, we saw that there were ambiguities and unresolved dilemmas in the theory of local government and these have been seen to apply in practice as well. In the Australian context, the conflict between efficient administration and the political or representative function of the elected aldermen is particularly acute. Local government performs fewer functions than its U.K. counterpart, on which the structure of local councils is modelled. Delegated administrative duties are a more important part of its assigned role and functions. A recurrent theme in ideas about local government in Australia is the notion that it is essentially an administrative arm of government exercising delegated powers and implementing parliamentary legislation as a matter of administrative practicality and convenience. In fact, rather than being the apolitical style of administration that some of its advocates envisage, local government decision making, whether it involves discretionary powers or simple administrative acts of rule-application, is subject to political pressures of a quite distinctive kind. And these pressures, distinctive in that they seek to extract favours from decision makers in the distributive arena of politics, are perhaps the very
antipathy of the model of sound administration and efficient management which I have described.

The Maud report on the management of local government in the U.K. was centrally concerned with this conflict between the representative role of the councillor and the wish for more efficient management. The report came down firmly on the side of efficient management. It recommended less interference by councillors in administrative detail through greater delegation and the abolition of the traditional committee system. Committees would no longer be 'executive or administrative bodies', but purely advisory.\textsuperscript{23} They would report to a board of management appointed from amongst its members by the council and this board would be concerned with setting the objectives of the authority and determining priorities. This allots a firm policy role to the elected representative. Self has questioned whether 'this allotted role correspond(s) with the intrinsic value of local representation or with the wishes or the capacities of the councillors themselves'.\textsuperscript{24} The councillor is a part-time politician who can not always familiarise himself with questions of broad policy. In local politics, it is often the case that major issues arise only when policies are applied. Only then do some of the implications become apparent to the councillor, and only then does he crystallise his opinions. In administration, marginal cases exist when rules are applied which call for judgment and such cases 'may be considered as much the province of political as professional discretion'.\textsuperscript{25}
Not only do councillors seem to prefer, and to be best at, dealing with matters of detail and the implementation of policies as they effect people, this seems to be what is expected of them.

The Maud proposals would...deprive the run-of-the-mill councillor of those marginal contributions to direct decision making which frequently accord with their abilities and wishes, and which can reasonably be claimed to accord with the expected role of a local representative. Moreover, the Maud system would make the council system substantially more oligarchic, thus further removing the leadership from those grass-roots influences which are the principal reason for maintaining a local government system at all. 26

Self fears that these moves toward managerial efficiency would destroy the 'special democratic ethos of British local government'.

These comments highlight the dilemma very effectively. Many of the benefits and the evils of local democracy have been illustrated in the six councils (although there seem to be more of the evils than normally occur in local councils in the U.K.). Aldermen through their accessibility are highly attentive to personal problems and individual needs. They are usually very receptive to demands from community groups and through their close involvement in community affairs are able to respond to service needs and community demands. We have seen cases where 'political rather than professional' discretion was exercised in response to strongly voiced protests by local groups, particularly in North Sydney. Had the council's planning code been administered uniformly through delegated authority or according to the advice of the professional planners, these protests would have been
ineffective. On the debit side, we have seen direct intervention in the administrative process by aldermen which was aimed at permitting developers to avoid the provisions of planning regulations. Somewhat more dubiously on the debit side, we have seen the frequent adoption of pork barrel arrangements in the determination of works programmes. These can either be seen as another legitimate expression of parochial demands in the political arena, or as an interference in what ought to be an objectively determined programme according to priorities resting on technical criteria, or other measures of 'real need'.

In fact, of course, there is a very large 'grey area' in which one has to weigh the values associated with local democracy against other criteria such as uniformity or equity in administration, efficiency and economy, and the value of professional advice and objectives. Thus, for instance, engineers on some councils voiced some disquiet over the favouritism they had to show to individuals who contacted their aldermen to make a complaint. For many aldermen, helping someone put a building application through the council was just a matter of explaining the procedures, but it also might have involved putting an application at the top of the pile to ensure prompt attention, or making some compromises with some of the rules or policies the council was meant to be administering. From the point of view of a town planner, ignoring professional advice or planning policies and regulations is a bad thing whatever the motives involved,
and regardless of the beneficiaries. Favouritism to a developer because he is a friend of aldermen, favouritism to a house builder because he is in dire financial straits, or favouritism to a group of protesting residents because they wish to protect the amenity of their neighbourhood as a place to live, each had the same result and is judged from the one standpoint; planning regulations are determined on the basis of technical knowledge, are in the public interest and ought to be applied uniformly. For many professional planners the term 'political decision' which could be applied to each of these cases, is a pejorative one. Professionals such as town planners are concerned not only that administration should be uniform and fair, but that decisions should also be right from the point of view of professional, technical criteria. The fallacy of this view is the belief that values and judgments can be excluded from the decision making process by adopting so-called 'technical criteria' and the use of 'professional standards'. Even the most 'technical' decisions have consequences and implications that must also be evaluated from non-technical and non-professional standpoints.

Local democracy is not only to be judged from the point of view of administrative decisions. Local government does provide a means by which local populations are able to express preferences and make choices in a way that very rarely occurs at other levels of government. We saw in several cases in the six councils that elections provided occasions for very real choices on policy issues.
The local election provides an almost unique opportunity for direct resolution of broad issues, without the mediation of party conflict and party organisations. In the United Kingdom, party competition at local elections very largely removes any specifically local content from the electoral process. In the six councils, the electoral process was a distinctively local one, and in three of them at least, it was one in which important local issues were raised and decided on. At the same time, though, those elections in which issues were not so important were decided for reasons that in their own way were as irrelevant for local policy making as the factors that determine party support in local elections in the U.K. I tried to show that in fact in some councils the electoral process reflected the administrative character of much of council decision making, for it provided a way for parochial and individual interests to exert influence on the administrative process.

From the point of view of performing delegated administrative functions there is something to be said for the argument that local councils do more harm than good. If one values administrative uniformity and consistency, then local councils, accommodating pressures exerted by individuals at the stage of policy implementation, are not an ideal form of administrative structure. From the point of view of the expert — the planner, the public health authority, or the engineer — this influence at the enforcement stage defeats some of the objects of the
policies and regulations that are meant to be administered.
From both standpoints, some reduction in the amount of
discretion that is exercised and some increase in the
degree of administrative control, would both be desirable.
This might be achieved by imposing central controls, or
possibly by altering the present local council structure
in a way that would place more authority in the hands
of paid officials. What must be taken into account is
that aldermen do not interfere in administration and
details just because they feel like it, but because
they face political pressures to do so. Instituting a
'city manager' structure, as has been suggested, aimed
at increasing the authority and independence of the
executive or administrative arm, would need to take into
account these facts of local political life. It would
also entail a major reform of the committee system and
a re-assessment of the function of aldermen of the sort
Maud undertook.

If a Maud-type solution to the question of the
proper role of aldermen were arrived at and applied to
the reform of administrative structures in Sydney's
suburban councils, it would leave aldermen with very little
to do. One of the arguments used in favouring reforms
of this type is that it will attract to local office
people of the right 'calibre', by which is usually meant
those capable of exercising management skills and taking
major policy decisions. In the six councils the process
of recruitment into local office was intimately bound
up with the general characteristics of local politics as
a whole. Those who stood for office and won were those who were willing and able to participate in parochial and individual politics, for it was partly by exploiting these interests and loyalties that they won election. It may be that administrative changes such as suggested above will help take the process of administration and detailed implementation of policy out of the local political arena, but it will not alter the fact that demands for favouritism of all sorts will continue to be made, seeking intervention by the elected representative in council administration. Aldermen who have strong links with particular neighbourhoods or with neighbourhood groups, who find gratification in helping people in the 'little things', or who get drawn into parochial and inter-personal politics through their contact with local people and groups, are still likely to be elected to office and may demand to be given authority to fulfil the expectations held of them. It is possible that these demands and expectations can be reduced in importance in local politics by giving local councils broader functions and more money to better perform their existing ones. If councils are given more scope for making important policy choices about the local area, then local politics may be transformed, as sectoral interests become more involved and distributive issues become secondary to broader policy issues. Social welfare and public housing are two possible areas in which councils could be given broader responsibilities.
There is some value in retaining local democracy in order to gain representation of individual or parochial interests in the administrative process. This is particularly so in areas of administration such as statutory land use control, where so much decision making must involve 'political' as well as 'professional discretion'. Individuals do often need 'help' and sympathy in the administrative process which may best be provided by an elected representative, and parochial interests deserve representation because so often they are of such direct and crucial importance for people and their standard of life. But there is even greater value in the retention and the strengthening of a system of government that permits people effectively to participate in public policy decisions about matters of very immediate local concern.

FOOTNOTES


3. Wolfinger, op.cit., p. 389

4. On the events surrounding the dismissal, see Sydney Morning Herald, 19 November 1953; 3 July, 9 July, 10 July, 21 July, 22 July and 4 August 1954

5. Summary and excerpts from the Inspector's final report are given in Sydney Morning Herald, 2 September 1953. The trials of the mayor and several fellow aldermen continued during 1953 and 1954. See particularly reports in the Sydney Morning Herald, 21 April 1953 and 19 November 1953
6. Sydney Morning Herald, 18 May 1957


9. Wolfinger op. cit., pp. 376-79


13. Ibid p. 386


15. Banfield and Wilson, op. cit., p. 117

16. Ibid p. 121

17. Ibid p. 123


19. A. J. Sutton, Adolescents and the Community, (School of Behavioural Sciences, Macquarie University, Sydney, 1972), p. 2

20. Banfield and Wilson, op. cit., pp. 329-30

21. In a study of local politics in Sheffield, Hampton noted that Labour Party councillors were more inclined to disagree with reform proposals that would reduce the ability of the representative to control the implementation of policy than Conservative councillors. The latter were more
likely to prefer making 'broad policy decisions' as opposed to dealing with the 'problems of particular individuals' than were Labour councillors.


22. Liverpool Leader, 9 August 1972


25. Ibid p. 273

26. Ibid p. 275
APPENDIX

A questionnaire was administered to all aldermen on the six councils. Questionnaires were sent by post to aldermen in Ku-ring-gai, Burwood, North Sydney and Leichhardt, or were handed over personally at the conclusion of personal interviews. All aldermen who did not answer the first time were approached again with the questionnaire through the post. The questionnaire was administered personally at the end of interviews to aldermen in Bankstown and Liverpool, except for those aldermen who were not interviewed, to whom it was posted. The questionnaire is reproduced on the following pages. Question 14 received very few responses except in Burwood. It was not included in the questionnaire administered to aldermen in Leichhardt, Bankstown and Liverpool.

All aldermen were approached for personal interviews. These, like the questionnaire were conducted from September 1970 to May 1971. Table 1 below shows the number of respondents for the questionnaire and interviews.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>Questionnaire</th>
<th>Total Aldermen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bankstown</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burwood</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ku-ring-gai</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leichhardt</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Sydney</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>58</strong></td>
<td><strong>57</strong></td>
<td><strong>81</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The interviews were not structured, that is a rigid set of questions aimed at obtaining strictly comparable and perhaps quantifiable data was not administered at each interview. But a common set of broad topics was covered with each respondent. These included general beliefs about role and duties, relations between officials and aldermen, views on representation, group politics and perceptions of the structure of influence in the community. Aldermen were encouraged to talk of events and issues and describe actual decisions.
URBAN RESEARCH UNIT
AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

ALDERMEN QUESTIONNAIRE: LOCAL COUNCILS IN SYDNEY

1. How long, altogether, have you lived in this area? years [ ]

2. What is your occupation?

3. When you first considered you might stand for this Council, was it -
   OR (a) your own idea [ ] OR (c) was it a combination of both? [ ]
   (b) were you asked to stand by some person or organisation [ ]

   Please tick the appropriate reply.

   If you have ticked (b) or (c), would you say which of the following played a part in influencing your decision?
   (a) a political party [ ]
   (b) a sitting or retiring alderman [ ]
   (c) a local civic group or community organisation [ ]

   (d) a personal friend or friends [ ]
   (e) Other (please specify) [ ]

   Please tick the appropriate reply, or replies. If more than one apply, please indicate.

4. At your last election, did you receive any help, sponsorship or support from any group, or political party, or any local organisation in this area?
   Yes [ ] No [ ]
   If yes, would you please name the groups or organisations that gave you help and support.

5. Do you intend to seek re-election for another term?
   Yes [ ] No [ ] Don't know [ ]

6. In general, what opinion do you think most people in the area hold about the present Council's policies and its general conduct of Council affairs?
   Favourable [ ] Neutral [ ] Unfavourable [ ] Don't know [ ]

7. Regardless of people's opinions about particular aspects of Council policy, do you think that aldermen get proper recognition from people in the community for their services on the Council?
   Yes [ ] No [ ] Don't know [ ]
8. In your opinion, what are the two most pressing problems facing the Council at the present time?

(a) _________________________________________________________________

(b) _________________________________________________________________

9. What would you say the balance of opinion is within your ward about the following aspects of public services? Would you say most people are satisfied, or that most are dissatisfied?

Please tick the appropriate box.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) Planning and control over development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Street maintenance and construction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) The level of the rate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Refuse disposal services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) Street lighting, and footpath paving</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f) Sewerage and drainage facilities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(g) ‘Welfare’ services and amenities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(h) Control of pollution</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Recreation and leisure facilities - sporting, cultural etc. amenities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. Most people agree that Councils should have more money to spend on important services. However, given their present financial problems, Councils when deciding their budget must weigh the question of the increasing burden on the ratepayer against demands for better services and more expenditure. In approaching this problem during the past four or five years, has the level of expenditure by the Council been -

- much too high [ ]
- somewhat too high [ ]
- about right [ ]
- somewhat too low [ ]
- much too low [ ]

In the past year or two, when debating the level of the rate and the level of expenditures, have you been in general agreement with the majority of Council?

- Yes [ ]
- No [ ]

Finally, looking ahead to the next year or two, should the Council be aiming to -

- increase [ ]
- keep steady [ ]
- decrease [ ]

the level of expenditure, assuming that no new major sources of income are opened up for local government.
11. In most areas there are a number of groups and organisations which are active and sometimes appear before the Council to put a case, or which show a direct interest in certain aspects of Council work.

(a) Which groups and organisations in this area, if any, have been particularly prominent in this respect in recent years?

(b) Which, if any, have been the most helpful to you personally in your Council work?

(c) Which, if any, have been the most influential, or successful?

On balance, do groups and organisations which are active in putting their views to Council, help or hinder the general conduct of Council business?

Help conduct of business [ ]
Hinder conduct of business [ ]

12. I would like to ask some questions about your activity in community life, and in political affairs in the area, not just matters connected directly with Council work.

(a) Have you been active in any civic organisations or local groups and associations (other than Council committees), which have in some way been concerned with matters which have come before Council? (Consider the last five years or so.)

Very active [ ] Fairly active [ ] Not active [ ]

If you have been active, could you name which organisations these are, or were?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
12. (b) Are you a member of a political party, or have you been a member in the past five years?

Yes [ ]

No [ ]

(c) If yes, which branch of which party was this, and how many years altogether have you been a member?

[ ] years

(d) Have you been active in party affairs in recent years in the area (attending meetings or regularly campaigning, for instance)?

Very active [ ]

Fairly active [ ]

Not active [ ]

(e) Have you ever seriously considered, or been approached about, standing for State or Federal Parliament?

Yes - considered [ ]

Yes - approached [ ]

No [ ]

13. I would like to ask you how you keep yourself informed on Council matters. Would you check the following list of possible sources and say how important each one is for you when seeking useful information. For each one, please put a tick in the appropriate column.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Not very</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Not at all important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

(a) The local press

(b) Other aldermen

(c) Your ward constituents

(d) Groups and organisations in the area

(e) Personal observation (e.g. works or site inspections)

(f) Informal contacts with people outside the Council

(g) Members and officers of local political party organisations

(h) State and Federal Members for the area

(i) The paid Council officers (through discussion and reports)

(j) Other (please specify)

Would you look through the list again and say which you consider to be the three most important sources, in order of importance.

1. __________________________

2. __________________________

3. __________________________
Some observers have suggested that an important influence upon the way an alderman arrives at a point of view is through discussion, often outside the committee room and Council chamber, with his fellow aldermen, particularly those he respects, or comes most into contact with.

In the following questions, you are asked to name some of your colleagues on the Council. This is solely to find out the kinds of patterns of discussion and exchange of views that exist. I emphasise again that neither your name nor any names you mention will be used in writing up the information, nor revealed in any way at all.

Please mention, for each question, as many, or as few, names as you wish.

(a) Amongst the aldermen, which ones would you say should be the most respected, the kind of men a new alderman could look to when he is learning about how the Council should work?

(b) Which aldermen, if any, are the most likely to have their opinions accepted by the rest of the Council?

FURTHER COMMENTS:

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP.
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