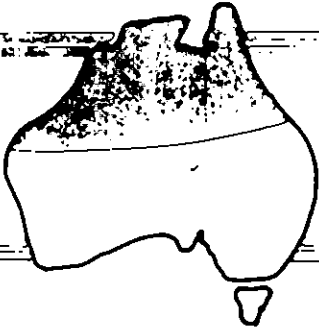
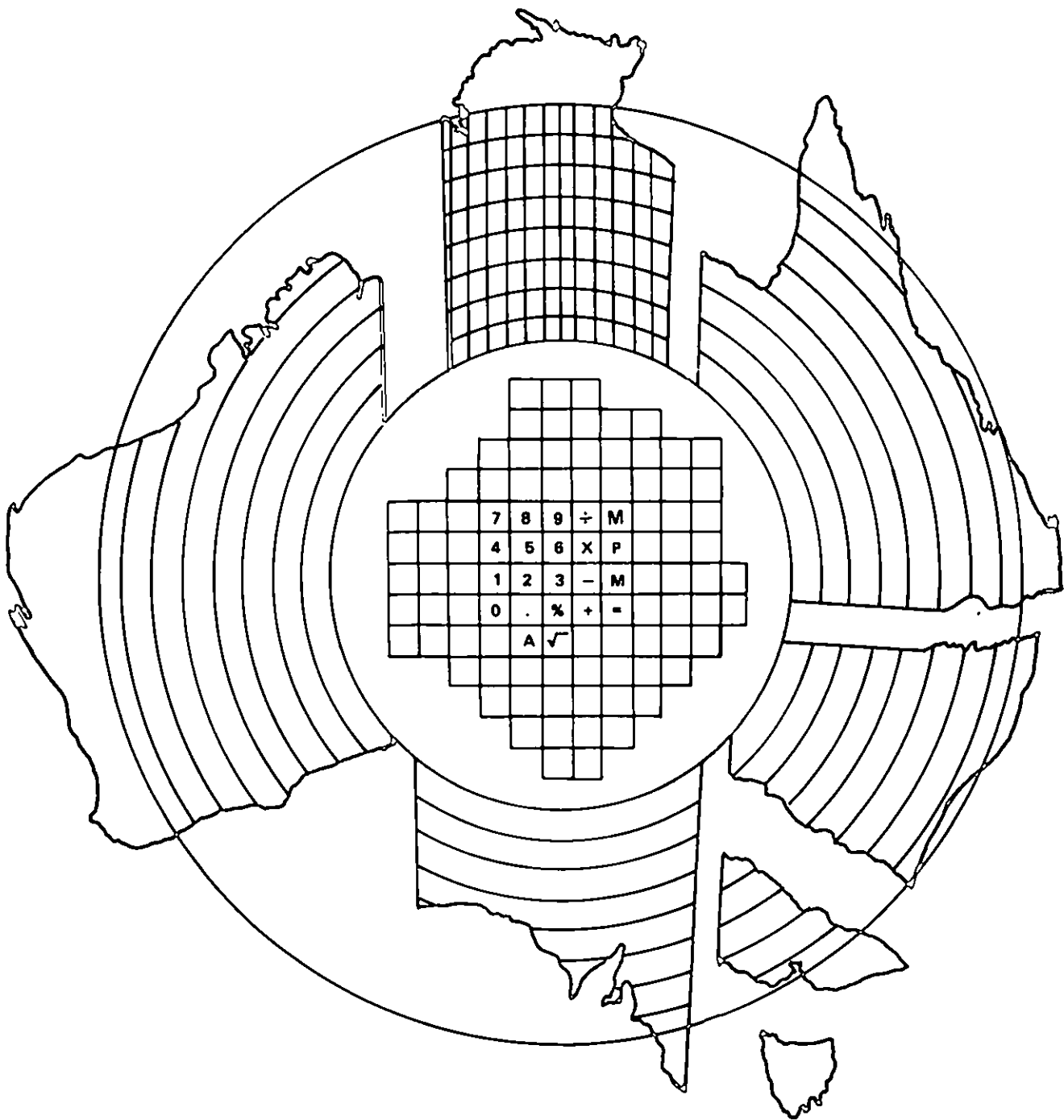


Edited by
Dean Jaensch and
Peter Loveday

Territorians or Mobile Australians?

A profile of the Urban Electorate



Australian National University North Australia Research Unit
Monograph
Darwin 1983

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INTRODUCTION

At the end of the first world war the Northern Territory contained less than 4,000 whites and a larger, but uncounted, population of Aborigines. The non-Aboriginal population remained small throughout the 1920s and 1930s, and at the time of the 1947 Census it had not quite reached 11,000. Rapid growth came in the 1960s, and was marked by successive Censuses: 44,500 in 1961 (Aboriginals were counted for the first time), 56,500 in 1966, 85,700 in 1971, 98,200 in 1976, and 122,800 in 1981. If this steady growth continues, the Territory's population will have begun to match that of the slowly-growing Tasmania some time in the middle of the coming century. Long before then it will have become a considerable force in national politics.

For the Territory is politically distinctive. One in every four Territorians is an Aborigine, a proportion vastly greater than in any Australian State. Only a small proportion of the white population was born in the Territory, and most of its immigrants are very recent indeed. The Territory's citizens have political concerns which the citizens of the States were last preoccupied with a century ago: the building of railways and of roads, isolation, the lack of educational facilities for their children, the provision of water-supplies, and the other imperatives of a frontier society in an often harsh environment.

Such a society is worth studying for its own sake. But in addition it provides a fascinating contrast with more settled societies, which have been the source of most of the 'findings' of the social sciences. A rapidly growing society made up of a diversity of immigrants can offer its citizens few of the community structures and support systems that abound in older, established societies. If a person's political stance comes to some extent from his social milieu, what happens when people leave these milieux and go to a town where no political tradition of any consequence exists and where colleagues and neighbours have made similar departures? How much of anyone's political outlook is portable, how much relates to a particular environment?

The authors of this well-designed study show that much is indeed portable. The Territory's party system is clearly a member of the family of Australian party systems, with the ALP facing a fusion of the Liberal and National Country Parties, here labelled the Country Liberal Party. And party allegiances formed elsewhere can be transferred to Territory politics with a minimum of refurbishing. But - and it is an important saver - there is no inevitability about the transfer. The smaller size of the constituencies, the intimacy of life in what are small towns, the practical roads-and-bridges focus of much politicking, the lack of a powerful union movement, the high level of government employment - all these factors operate to subdue the socio-economic ambience in which Australian political life customarily takes place. New arrivals are able either to reconsider their politics or to operate politically in different ways at the Federal level and at the Territory level.

To study these processes in any detail requires the chief instrument of the modern social scientist, the sample survey, as well as the patience and dedication necessary if survey research techniques are to be used at all. The Northern Territory survey that is at the heart of this book was designed both to bring Territorians under scrutiny and also to allow comparisons with Australians in the rest of the nation. It has served its purpose well, and the authors and editors have been able to produce a book that provides new insights on the political behaviour of all Australians, not simply those adventurous citizens that have chosen to live and work in the Northern Territory.

CHAPTER ONE

TOPICS, METHODS, SAMPLE

The Northern Territory is a relatively new polity even though the first European settlements on its northern coast were attempted in the 1820s. Throughout the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth its economic growth was slow and its constitutional development retarded by comparison with other colonies which grew apace and became self-governing in the mid-nineteenth century and attained statehood at the beginning of the twentieth century when the Commonwealth was formed. The Territory, self-governing only since 1978, was administered first from South Australia and then, after 1911, by the Commonwealth government from Canberra. At least until the second world war it suffered from administrative neglect, among other disadvantages, and came to have some of the elements of a colony. Until the 1970s, political development was fitful and characterised by a mixture seen in other colonial places of resentfulness, truculence, exasperation and dependency on the part of the population - or that small portion of it which attended to political and administrative matters and took the trouble to form and publicise opinions about them.

In the last decades of the nineteenth century, under South Australian administration, the Territory had been given electoral representation in the South Australian Assembly, but this was wiped out when the Commonwealth took over. Although very limited representation was given to the Territory in the Commonwealth parliament in Canberra in the 1920s it did little or nothing to create a local electoral tradition or durable local political organisations or even to modify the processes of bureaucratic government from Canberra - several thousand kilometres away. The first real step towards representative government was taken in 1947 when the Commonwealth passed legislation to set up a Legislative Council of six elected and seven nominated members. Although the number of elected members was increased to eleven by 1974, progress towards self-rule was extremely slow and a source of growing irritation to Territorians, especially the elected members of the Council. Matters came to a head in 1972 when a bi-partisan group in the Council demanded major reforms, including a fully elected council, control over the local executive, control of the local budget and an end to the Commonwealth's power of veto over local legislation. The advent of a Labor government in Canberra at the end of 1972 gave Territorians hope of rapid change but several years of argument and considerable disappointment lay ahead of them before they were granted a fully elected nineteen member Assembly in 1974 and then, four years later, self-government - not full statehood - with an executive chosen from and responsible to the Assembly and in charge of the Territory budget (Jaensch and Loveday 1979, 25; Powell 1982; Heatley 1978, 1979, ch. 2).

A two-party system took shape immediately under this new system of government as if adopted ready-made from elsewhere in the country. The Labor party was already in existence and was organisationally part of the national body, the Australian Labor party. A new non-Labor party, the Country Liberal party, was formed drawing together in one organisation elements which elsewhere acted in coalition although organised separately as the Liberal and National or Country parties. Elections were held in 1974, 1977 and 1980 and were contested by Labor and the CLP as the principal parties. The CLP won 17 seats in 1974, 12 in 1977 and 11 in 1980; Labor won none in 1974 but secured 6 seats in 1977 and 7 in 1980. In the elections, the CLP won 49 per cent of the vote in 1974, 40 per cent in 1977 and 50 per cent in 1980; Labor won 30 per cent in 1974, 38 per cent in 1977 and 39 per cent in 1980.

The two major parties have not, however, had all of the seats in the Assembly - two in 1974, one in 1977 and one in 1980 went to independents. Independent and minor party candidates have been numerous, totalling 29, 34 and 23 in the three elections. Of these, 19 stood as the newly formed Progress party candidates in 1977; in 1980, the Australian Democrats and two ephemeral local 'parties' stood candidates. In all, 20 per cent of the votes in 1974, 22 per cent in 1977 and 11 per cent in 1980 went to independent and minor party candidates (Jaensch and Loveday, 1979, 1981).

The Australian party system does leave some room for independents and minor parties but not as much as we see in these three elections, especially when it is considered that the contests were for a very small single-chamber legislature. The figures suggest that the electorate did not fall as smoothly into the two-party mould as the party organisations did. Something similar was indicated by an aggregate analysis of the results of the 1974 election which led us to conclude that the Territory vote was not then 'differentiated according to and stabilized in association with the "fixed" socio-economic characteristics of the voting population' (Jaensch and Loveday 1979, 233).

These observations suggested that there might be some force in the popular view that in some unspecified way the Northern Territory was 'different' and the implied standard of reference was usually Australia as a whole, especially since the largest proportion of the Territory's population is drawn outside it, from all Australian states. The underlying notion was that Australian society is remarkably uniform and that the electorate itself is also uniform and in some vague sense 'naturally' a two-party electorate. Evidence in support of this view can be found in the figures for the share of the vote won by the Labor party in elections for the House of Representatives in Canberra, figures summarised by Aitkin (1982, 184-5) who concludes that 'with respect to the Labor Party the six states are close kin. The same uniformity is present in the pattern of Labor identification' as determined by survey. It is also worth noting that for the state elections between 1974 and 1982 the Labor vote ranged between 36 and 58 per cent with a median of 46 per cent. The range is slightly greater than that for the national parliament in Canberra, but the median is much the same. The vote for Labor in the Territory was at best 39 per cent as we have seen, which suggests that the Territory is unusual in giving less than the average proportion of votes to Labor.

The Northern Territory is different in many respects from the Australian states but it is not obvious what the implications of these differences might be for electoral politics and the party system. But some things may be anticipated in general terms at least. It is likely, first of all, that 'issues', that is, matters of public argument and political activity, will reflect differences of the economy and the society. In a large and sparsely settled area transportation is bound to be more salient than in several of the southern states; with so little manufacturing it is to be expected that, in the current debate about the tariff, few protectionist voices will be raised against the free trade chorus; given a relatively rapid growth in the population, the provision of urban housing and the ability of the commercial market to meet the demand are likely to be important political questions for government.

The Territory is certainly different in that a quarter of its population is Aboriginal and as a result policies and legislation concerning Aborigines, particularly land rights, mining on Aboriginal land, Aboriginal town camps and the like, are particularly salient among the political issues of the day. And Aborigines are important in another way: since many are already on the electoral roll and more are coming on to it as the compulsory enrolment provisions of the Territory electoral act are being made widely known, the Aboriginal voting population is bound to be proportionately much larger, and potentially more important, than it is in any of the states.

This brings us to the demographic features of the Territory. The census describes the population in general, not the voting population. But we can be sure that the electorate does not exactly replicate the population of 18 years of age and over which was recorded in the census of 1981. Many Aborigines, counted in the census, will not have enrolled; immigrants who have not yet been naturalised cannot enrol; itinerants who fail to enrol or maintain enrolment for southern electorates will have been counted in the census but will not vote. Nor can it be assumed that the population which has come to the Territory from elsewhere in Australia is a replica, in minuscule, of the national population. It is reasonable to suppose that some parts, such as South Australia which has a number of special links with the Territory, will have provided a larger part of the population than other parts, such as Tasmania, which are remote from it. It remains to be seen whether state differences are sufficiently striking to have political implications for the Territory. It is, however, well established that people from rural and urban backgrounds do differ significantly in their political tendencies and consequently this aspect of the incoming population may well be of political consequence for the Territory.

Besides demography and 'issues', the Territory may well be different from other parts of Australia in terms of class, given its different economic structure, and in terms of social mobility, given that its economic growth has been recent and rapid. Class and social mobility are difficult to come to grips with in a short survey and it is usual to seek an approximation to class by obtaining data about both the occupations of the population and how the people place themselves in some scheme of social classes. People are asked whether they have moved 'up' or 'down' in some scale of social positions to give data on mobility.

As with demography, so with class: there is no reason to assume that the incoming Territory population is a replica of the parent population or, to add a further complication, that people coming to the Territory move into class positions the same as those they left behind them. Indeed, many people moved to the Territory to better themselves and are quite clear that they have 'come up in the world' as a result. Since peoples' votes are shaped to some extent by their class position and their perception of their improvement or decline, class and mobility are likely to be important in any account of the special features of the Territory electorate.

There are other perceptions besides those relating to class which seem to be important in understanding why the Territory is thought to be different. It is often presented as a land of opportunity for enterprising people, people who are 'tough', acquainted with the outback, resilient and resourceful. This land has been held back for too long by a distant Canberra bureaucracy and politicians concerned only with southern problems. People talk as if they felt freer to do as they choose and under less pressure to conform to rules which belong to a past time and a past social hierarchy. Like other states, the Territory has its symbols and these are frequently displayed and more used in elections than elsewhere. These are some of the headlines of what may be termed a Territory ideology; embedded in it is the notion that citizens make a significant comment about themselves if they identify publicly as Territorians.

To raise the question whether the Territory is different and if so what the political implications might be has led us to examine the connections between the party system on the one hand and the electorate on the other, and in particular to consider the ways in which a new electorate might be moulded - a process not often observed directly in conditions where a survey can be carried out - from an incoming population.

We considered these connections in a study of the 1980 election in the Northern Territory - the first under self-government (Jaensch and Loveday 1981). It seemed then that the electorate was not set rigidly in a two-party mould but was still being shaped by the special circumstances of the Territory. Swings from one electorate to the next varied in direction and often markedly in magnitude; independent and minor party candidates seemed to play a larger part than elsewhere. A high proportion of voters in a survey in Alice Springs rejected any identification with party and others explicitly drew a distinction between national and Territory politics and voted for different parties in each. These are the voters who make up their minds on the issues of the day, judge the parties and vote accordingly - or think they do - and if all voters were like that the outcome of the election could perhaps be explained wholly in terms of the issues of the day, the CLP government's record under the leadership of Chief Minister, Paul Everingham, and Labor's difficulty in presenting itself as a different and better alternative government.

It has, of course, long been known that voters are not all like this and that many of them are long-term partisans of one party or another and vote accordingly regardless of the issues, party leadership and the record of government and opposition. There was some evidence that party allegiances formed elsewhere might be weakened or changed in the Territory and that led in turn to the observation that demographic changes, known to be much larger than elsewhere, should also be taken into account. We identified two of the demographic possibilities at the time:

that migrants from one electorate to another [within the Territory] are disproportionately of one party, with consequences for both electorates, and that migrants into the Territory tend to be of a type which is more likely to vote for one party than the other (Jaensch and Loveday 1981, 179).

And we identified two possibilities with party identification or party allegiance: that like most Australian voters, those in the Territory are fixed in their allegiances and are likely to vote accordingly in two-candidate contests; the other that 'life in the Territory unsettles many voters, loosens them from earlier party allegiances and leaves them adrift or shifts them into new allegiances' (Jaensch and Loveday 1981, 180). This led to more questions which could not be answered with the data available to us at the time: if voters did change their allegiances, how many of them changed - to what and from what and why? What proportion of the voters were stable in their party allegiances?

The question which we began with - Was the Territory different and if so why? - was transformed. It became a set of questions about stability and change in the Territory electorate and, as soon as we sought explanations, new sets of questions about demographic movements, about class, occupation and social mobility, about issues, leaders and perceptions of the party system and the Territory presented themselves. They formed the basis of the survey of 1982.

Sample and Questionnaire

To answer the kinds of questions discussed above, it is essential to carry out a survey of the voters. For that a questionnaire had to be designed and, since we not only sought data about the Territory electorate which had not before been obtained but were also anxious to make comparisons between the Territory electorate and the national electorate, most recently surveyed in 1979 (Aitkin 1982), we adopted a number of questions from the national survey for our own questionnaire. Other questions were devised to obtain data on special features of the Territory, for example the supposition that many people gave themselves a distinct regional identity.

The finished questionnaire contained 75 questions which yielded 130 variables for the analysis. We decided to restrict its length so that the average interview would not last more than about half an hour. The questionnaire was pre-tested in Alice Springs before being finally revised at the end of 1981. Even then we had to make a last-minute alteration to it: the leader of the Labor Party, Jon Isaacs, resigned late in 1981 and we decided that it would be misleading to ask respondents questions comparing their knowledge of and opinions about the two party leaders when, at the time of interviewing, early in 1982, Labor's new leader would have had much less exposure to the electorate than the leader of the CLP. We therefore removed these questions from our survey.

In a survey, the electorate as a whole cannot be interviewed at length and instead a sample of the voters is chosen for the study. Our sample was drawn from the electoral rolls for the urban areas of the Northern Territory, using a random number method of selection. Knowing that many of the people whose names were chosen would no longer be at the addresses given on the rolls we decided to choose a sample of 2,500 names so that we would have a good chance of obtaining about 2,000 interviews. In the end we obtained 1,945, sufficient for the statistical analyses we planned to carry out. Since the urban electorate in the towns we sampled - Alice Springs, Darwin, Tennant Creek, Katherine, Jabiru and Nhulunbuy - totalled about 30,000 voters, this meant that our sample was about 1 in 15 of the population being sampled - by most standards a very high level of sampling.

The decision to take the sample from the urban areas of the Territory was difficult. The Territory was not included in the 1979 national survey sample and even if it had been the numbers on the electoral roll were so small relatively that a handful of people at the most would have been chosen - too few for any conclusions to be drawn about the Territory electorate. Since one of our principal objectives was to make comparisons between the two electorates - national and local - using a number of questions common to both surveys we had to choose the sample from that part of the Territory electorate which would give no problems of translation and interpretation in interviews, problems that would vitiate the comparisons we planned to make. This was the urban part. A sample drawn from the rural parts was bound to include many Aborigines for whom the questionnaire - even if it could be translated into suitable language - would be largely meaningless. We knew that some Aborigines would be selected in the urban sample but we also knew that for them the questionnaire would present no special difficulty. We also knew that the national sample of 1979 was a sample of an overwhelmingly white population and this gave us an additional reason for basing our sample on the urban areas. The cost of interviewing respondents in

the more remote and sparsely settled regions was a third consideration; we believed, however, that the towns of Katherine and Tennant Creek in particular, and the rural fringes of Darwin provided us with a number of respondents from a rural rather than an urban population.

Since the electoral rolls give the addresses as well as the names of the people enrolled we were able to write to all of those chosen in our sample explaining the survey to them and inviting them to cooperate. We discovered then, from the letters returned by Australia Post (over 10 per cent), that many people were no longer at the address given when they enrolled, which saved us some fruitless visits, but even so we still made many calls in vain. When the person to be interviewed - the respondent - was not at home, we instructed the interviewers to call again at least once and, if necessary, to try to arrange an appointment for an interview. It was sometimes possible to arrange an interview by telephone, but this did little to reduce the amount of walking. Only a few people refused to be interviewed, either by writing in reply to our letters or on the phone or at the door; the great majority of the respondents we selected cooperated willingly and with interest in our work. Many asked at the end of the interview whether they would hear about the results and we promised them that they would be able to do so later in the year in a public discussion. This was held on 30 October 1982 in Darwin. The media took some interest in the survey and the news items about it presumably helped to win a favourable response from the people to be interviewed. We also contacted each of the relevant members of the Legislative Assembly outlining the project and asked for their support in principle should any members of the electorates direct inquiries their way.

Respondents were guaranteed anonymity. Questionnaires were, of course, numbered but the numbers were not entered on the lists of the names and addresses of respondents. These lists were basic to the organisation of the survey.

The survey was carried out by two teams of people, one from Flinders University which began in Alice Springs and worked north, the other from the North Australia Research Unit which conducted the interviews in Darwin, Katherine, Nhulunbuy and Jabiru. Each team included staff members with social science training but the Top End team, with a much larger interviewing list, was augmented by part-time interviewers. Much of the interviewing was done at weekends or in the evening when respondents were most likely to be at home with time to give to the interviewers. Most of the interviews were carried out in April and May 1982 although a few were conducted in the first week of June. To ensure comparability, interviewers not only had training and regular debriefing sessions but also a set of written instructions which described how to handle the minor difficulties of the interview schedule which had emerged from the pre-test.

Interviewers were also instructed to obtain 'replacement' interviews - that is interviews with new respondents in place of those originally selected who were no longer at the address for which they were enrolled. Interviewers were told to seek an adult as a replacement, if possible of the same sex as the selected respondent, and if that was not possible, of the opposite sex at the same address. In two places, Tennant Creek and Katherine, where interviews were carried out by a flying squad with limited time in the field, interviewers were instructed to seek replacements next door if they could not be found at the same address. Two figures indicate the high degree of physical mobility which made the replacement policy necessary: 15 per cent said they were not resident in the Territory in 1980 and 34 per cent said that they had arrived at the present address since 1980. The electoral rolls from which we worked were regularly updated and were the latest available: January 1982. Even so, replacements numbered 760 of whom 474 were of the same sex as the respondent originally selected and 286 were of the opposite sex. Together they amounted to 39 per cent of our sample. Being on the electoral roll was not a requirement for replacements and some were not. One estimate of their number is given by those who said they were not on the roll for the Territory election in June 1980 - nearly 5 per cent - or not on it for the Commonwealth election in October - just over 3 per cent - even though they were present and eligible to vote. This suggests that about 4 per cent, or about 30 people among our replacements, were not on the roll.

Random sampling from the electoral roll gave us a number of respondents living in special residential areas which outsiders cannot enter without permission: the residential parts of the bases of the three armed services where permission was given for

interviews to be carried out by Drs Loveday and Heatley and a research assistant and the Bagot Aboriginal Reserve, where respondents were interviewed by Dr Loveday.

One or two basic figures about the sample may be given at this point. There were almost equal proportions of men and women in the sample - 50.1 per cent women - but because the electoral office does not record the sex of enrollees we do not know whether this is the same as the proportion on the rolls. Women constituted 52.3 per cent of the national survey sample in 1979 (Aitkin 1982, 360). Some comparisons may also be made between our interview field work and that of the national survey in 1979.

Table 1.1

<u>The Northern Territory Sample</u>			
	<u>Sample</u>	<u>Completed Interviews</u>	<u>Completed as % of Sample</u>
Alice Springs	403	313	78
Katherine	97	97	100
Tennant Creek	73	57	78
Nhulunbuy	148	97	66
Darwin Urban	1632	1297	80
Darwin Rural (incl. Jabiru)	100	84	84
Total	2453	1945	79

National Survey 1979 (Aitkin, 1982, 359)

Total	2457	2016	82
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The data base is not without its imperfections. The method of choosing replacements in Tennant Creek resulted in a disproportionately high percentage of women in the local subsample. The wording, layout and sequence of the questions on birthplace, residence and changes of residence could have been improved. In addition, shortcomings in the birthplace and movement questions make it likely that the number born in the Northern Territory is slightly understated and make it difficult to derive complete and unambiguous data for a very small number of respondents about their movements into and within the Territory. Elsewhere throughout the questionnaire a scattering of respondents refused to answer particular questions or gave 'don't know' answers, and percentages have generally been calculated after omitting the 'don't know' and 'not stated' categories.

CHAPTER TWO

SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CONTEXT

Surveys provide information about particular places at particular times. It is therefore necessary to place our survey into its appropriate demographic, economic and political context. As our sample was drawn exclusively from urban Territory residents, special attention must be given to urban factors.

Population

Rapid growth has been a feature of the Territory population since the late 1960s. Census figures, reproduced in Table 2.1, illustrate that characteristic.

Table 2.1

NT Population: 1966-81
(by size, urban/other distribution, sex)

	<u>Urban</u>		(%)	M/F Ratio	<u>Rural/Other</u>		(%)	M/F Ratio	<u>Total</u>
	M	F			M	F			
1966	16976	14565	(53.9)	1.17	15183	11828	(46.1)	1.28	58552
1971	31248	24163	(64.1)	1.29	17379	13600	(35.9)	1.28	86390
1976	34802	29637	(66.4)	1.17	17645	15006	(33.6)	1.18	97090
1981	47974	43505	(74.2)	1.10	17443	14402	(25.8)	1.21	123324

(Source: Census 1982)

Between 1976 and 1981, the population increased by 27 per cent (or an annual rate of growth of 4.6 per cent). Using the same growth factor, by mid-1982 the total population would have been about 130,000. The urban sector, through both the expansion in established centres and the inclusion of new areas, rose more rapidly, recording a 42 per cent increase. Coupled with the decline in rural and other population, the proportion of urban residents reached nearly 75 per cent in 1981 compared to 66 per cent in 1976. The situation in individual urban centres is set out in Table 2.2.

Darwin's rate of growth is artificially high as it is calculated on a post-Cyclone Tracy figure, down significantly from the 46,656 in June 1974. Using the 1974 count as a base, Darwin's population grew by an average of 3.0 per cent from 1974 to 1981. With the exception of Nhulunbuy, where mining operations had stabilised, the other established urban centres recorded higher levels of increase. The rate of urban growth in the Territory (4.9 per cent) was well above that in other geo-political divisions in Australia (1.4 per cent).

A second marked characteristic of the Territory population is its degree of mobility and transience. As the Aboriginal component (nearly 24 per cent) is primarily non-urban and of a permanent resident status, interstate mobility is predominantly an urban, non-Aboriginal phenomenon. Inter-censal (1976-81) figures on usual residence give some indication of the scope of mobility. In 1981, excluding the under-five age group (11.4 per cent of the total) and the 'not stated' category (1.9 per cent), only 65 per cent was resident in the Territory in 1976. The comparative figures for New South Wales and Victoria were 92 per cent and 93 per cent (NT Treasury, Submission to the Commonwealth Grants Commission, 1982, Stat. App., 87). Of the incomers, 23 per cent were Australian-resident in 1976 and 6.6 per cent were overseas migrants.

Table 2.2

Estimated Population in Surveyed Urban Centres 1976-81

Local Government Area	1976	1981	Average Annual Rate of Growth (%)
Greater Darwin Area	44232	57212	5.28
Alice Springs	14011	17885	5.00
Nhulunbuy	3810	4138	1.67
Tennant Creek	2401	3148	5.57*
Katherine	3228	3686	2.69
Northern Territory	98228	122844	4.57

(Source: ABS Cat. 3201.7)

* Figure for Tennant Creek is probably seasonally inflated by an influx of workers and perhaps by a more accurate enumeration of Aborigines in 1981.

Some caution, however, is necessary in interpreting inter-censal figures. Growth, either natural or by in-migration, itself is responsible, of course, for a large part of the increase. Hugo (1983) estimated that about a third of the increase between 1976 and 1981 was natural and the rest could be attributed to net migration. But the extent of transience (implying a very short term of residence and no intention of permanent residence) and the mobility of the non-transient population are inadequately reflected in an inter-censal period as it does not measure the total turnover of population. The average length of urban residence in the Territory is presumed, without the advantage of close empirical analysis, to be from three to four years. A further assumption is that, since the major disruption caused to Darwin's demographic pattern in the wake of Cyclone Tracy, the urban population is once again showing signs of greater stability.

In its age structure, the Territory population is atypical when compared with the national norm but characteristic of other peripheral regions experiencing rapid growth of population. Table 2.3 summarises the structure in ten-year age-sets in 1976 and 1981. The comparative youthfulness of the Territory population is marked with nearly 80 per cent younger than forty years of age. Evident also is the bi-modal nature of that group with higher concentrations in the 0-9 and 20-29 age-sets which corresponds to young married-couple units so common in Territory urban centres. Some change in distribution has occurred since 1976 in that disparities between the younger groups have been reduced and in that the average has increased. The inter-censal differences reflect both the changing age patterns of the Australian population and the increasing stability of the Territory residents although their relative influence is unknown.

Diversity is a further significant feature of the Territory's population. The most fundamental cleavage is, of course, between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal. Of the 29,088 (23.6 per cent) who, in the 1981 census, identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders, over 80 per cent were non-urban dwellers. Thus, in the urban centres, there would be at least 6,000 Aboriginal residents and probably considerably more because a proportion of the important part-Aboriginal urban population do not yet identify as 'Aboriginal' for census purposes although they may do so in other contexts.

Territory urban areas, and particularly Darwin, have a decidedly cosmopolitan flavour. Over a hundred different overseas birthplace locations were recorded in the 1981 census, altogether comprising 22.3 per cent of the population. Therefore, nearly one in three non-Aboriginal residents are overseas-born. Although some adults would not be eligible to vote because they are not naturalised (9 per cent were not Australian citizens) nearly 80 per cent had been resident in Australia for five years or more. Of

Table 2.3
Age Structure

	<u>Total</u> <u>1976</u>	<u>Non-Abor.</u> <u>1981</u>	<u>Abor.</u> <u>1981</u>	<u>Total</u> <u>1981</u>	<u>1981</u> (Australia)
0 - 9	24.0	19.6	28.6	21.4	16.2
10 - 19	16.7	15.8	24.8	17.6	17.5
20 - 29	22.9	22.4	17.9	21.5	16.7
30 - 39	16.3	20.8	10.5	18.2	14.9
40 - 49	9.3	10.2	7.6	9.7	10.6
50 - 59	6.2	6.4	5.0	6.3	10.2
Over 60	4.6	4.7	5.3	5.1	13.9

(Source: ABS Cat. No. 2441.0, Table 7)

the migrant groups in the Territory, British, German, Greek, Italian, Dutch, Timorese, American (USA), New Zealand and Papuan-New Guinean are the most numerous (ABS Cat. No. 244.0, Tables 8, 10, 12).

Finally, sex ratios and religious affiliation should be noted. Table 2.1 provides the relevant data on the former. In the urban areas in 1981, males outnumbered females - 52.4 to 47.6 per cent; in the rural and other areas proportions were 54.8 to 45.2. The urban male ratio has declined by over 4 per cent since 1971, another factor indicative of the increasing stabilisation of the population. Census data on religious affiliation showed that nearly 40 per cent declined to answer, inadequately described themselves, or acknowledged no religion. Sixty per cent were adherents of Christian denominations with another 1.5 per cent claiming a non-Christian allegiance. Leading Christian groups were: Catholic (20 per cent), Church of England (17 per cent), Uniting (5 per cent), Lutheran (3 per cent), Methodist (2.6 per cent), Orthodox (2.3 per cent), Presbyterian (2 per cent) and Baptist (1.9 per cent) (ABS Cat. 244.0, Table 13).

Economic Structure and Activities

Rapid population increase to 1981 was sustained by an expanding economy, government (the Commonwealth and, after 1978, the Territory) commitment to economic development, and liberal public-sector funding. Since 1981, the economy has been less buoyant and growth in many areas has slowed or stopped. At the time our survey was mounted, a deterioration in economic conditions was well under way, notwithstanding government rhetoric to the contrary.

Of the three major primary producing sectors, the traditional props of the Territory economy, two, the pastoral and fishing industries, had suffered reduction in value of output, and the third, mining, rose only because of the continued development of the uranium industry. Although expansion occurred in the minor areas of cropping (\$190,000 to \$586,000) and horticulture (\$465,000 to \$1.1m), returns from livestock fell from \$103m in 1979-80 to \$63.6m in 1981-82. Production value from the longer-established mining operations (especially gold, copper, bauxite, alumina and manganese) declined from \$370m in 1979-80 to \$282m in 1981. However, exports of uranium in the latter year of \$175m had increased the total to \$466m. As a result, employment in some parts of the core economy slumped in 1981-82. As all urban areas are, to some degree, bases or service centres for the affected industries, the erosion in employment was not confined to rural regions. The downturn was particularly severe in the smaller towns of Tennant Creek and Nhulunbuy, the economic structures of which were closely tied to core industries.

Other major economic activities were also under pressure. Tourism, an industry which had expanded dramatically in the 1970s, was experiencing a much lower level of growth in the harsher economic conditions of the 1980s. Optimism in the potential of tourism to generate employment and development was being deflated. Yet the industry continued to be a significant sector; according to a survey undertaken in 1981-82 (Everingham, Press Release, 10 February 1983), the direct expenditure attributable to tourism was \$108m and, with the multiplied impact, a figure of \$250m was suggested as its total contribution to the economy. About 2300 were employed in 1981. In the construction industry, long an important part of the Territory's economy, operations were being cut back and expectations of growth were reduced. With the initial phase of development in the uranium province (especially the building of Jabiru township) nearing completion and a comparatively lower level of capital project (both private and public) expenditure throughout the Territory, construction activity was slowing again.

Public sector employment had also stabilised both because the rapid expansion of the immediate post-self-government period had ended and because of deliberate government constraint. Early in 1982, the direct NT government workforce (in the NT Public Service or in outside instrumentalities) was about 14,200. To that must be added Australian government (about 5,500) and local government employees (about 600). Thus, if the total workforce was about 60,000, the public sector proportion was over 33 per cent. Other calculations, either based on a lower workforce base figure or a higher estimation of government employees, put the percentage even higher. However, the trend since self-government, with an increase in the private sector, has been to a proportional decrease. Compared to national or state ratios, the Territory has a considerably higher proportion of public employees in the workforce. Although the figures in Table 2.4 are distorted by the number in the 'not stated' category, the difference between NSW, Victoria and the NT is evident.

Table 2.4

Public and Private Sector Employment
%, N per 1,000

	<u>NSW</u>		<u>Victoria</u>		<u>NT</u>	
	%	N per 1,000	%	N per 1,000	%	N per 1,000
Aust. Govt	6.7	28	6.6	28	9.8	44
'State' Govt	15.0	64	14.4	61	22.4	101
Local Govt	1.6	7	1.8	8	1.0	5
Private	70.1	299	70.6	300	54.1	246
Not Stated	6.5	28	6.7	28	12.7	58
Total	100.0		100.0		100.0	

(Source: 1981 Census; Commonwealth Grants Commission Submission, 33)

Most public sector employment is urban-based. As an example, in the middle of 1982, of the NT Public Service, 67 per cent were resident in Darwin, 16 per cent in Alice Springs, 6 per cent in Katherine, 3 per cent in Nhulunbuy, 3 per cent in Tennant Creek and 0.4 per cent in Jabiru. Only 6 per cent reside in the rural area.

A fuller structural profile of the workforce is given in Table 2.5, again using NSW and Victoria (the 'standard' states for Grants Commission purposes) as comparative reference points. Clear and often substantial differences occur in several of the industry categories. In mining, construction, public administration and community services, the NT outranks NSW and Victoria. On the other hand, manufacturing, wholesale and retail trade, and finance and business services are under-represented in the NT. Apart from the figures for agriculture which can be adequately explained by geographic

Table 2.5

<u>Employment by Industry</u>							
N per 1,000							
	NSW		Victoria		NT		
	%	N per 1,000	%	N per 1,000	%	(1976) N per 1,000	
Agriculture etc.	4.9	21	5.4	22	4.0	(5.7)	18
Mining	1.4	6	0.3	1	4.6	(3.8)	21
Manufacturing	18.5	78	22.2	94	4.6	(4.4)	21
Electricity, Gas, Water	2.1	9	2.2	9	1.9	(0.8)	8
Construction	6.2	26	5.6	24	9.2	(14.1)	42
Wholesale, Retail Trade	17.3	74	17.0	72	11.9	(11.6)	54
Transport, Storage	5.6	24	4.7	20	4.8	(5.3)	22
Communications	2.0	9	2.0	8	1.8	(1.7)	8
Finance, Business Services	9.6	41	8.0	34	5.5	(4.6)	25
Public Admin. Defence	5.1	22	5.1	22	12.9	(12.6)	58
Community Services	13.9	59	14.8	63	19.5	(15.1)	88
Recreation, etc.	5.6	24	4.5	19	5.9	(5.1)	27
Other (not classified or not stated)	7.8	34	8.2	34	13.5	(15.2)	61

(Source: 1981 Census, Commonwealth Grants Commission Submission, 34)

factors, the NT figures demonstrate characteristics of a peripheral economy in the Australian context. However, at the same time, there is some indication that the economy has broadened its base since 1976, particularly in the tertiary service areas. Considerable efforts have been made by the Territory government (largely through the Development Corporation) to increase the private manufacturing and service sectors of the economy. Although it is generally accepted that economic growth does not lie with the major development of secondary industry, even that sector had experienced modest expansion by 1982.

The limited size of manufacturing industry and its generally small-scale components have constrained the development of blue-collar trade unions which elsewhere have provided core political support for the ALP. Approximately 40 per cent of the workforce belongs to unions (about 70 in total); the national figure is nearly 60 per cent. The NT Trades and Labor Council acts as the peak organisation of Territory unionism, both white and blue collar. As the level of union membership is low, although increasing, militancy is constrained in general but in those pockets of high concentration in the public service and the mining industry, it is more marked.

Given the Territory's relative underdevelopment, most commodities have to be imported from interstate or from overseas; the region's isolation and the expense of transport impose a high cost environment. For example, the Experimental Spatial Food Price Index

(ABS) measures Territory centres against a base weighted average of the six state capitals (base 100); in 1981, Darwin rated 116, Alice Springs 117, Katherine 122, Tennant Creek 121, and Nhulunbuy 125. Housing costs are similarly high. Without taking account of design features required by abnormal climatic conditions, an index of building costs prepared by the Commonwealth Department of Transport and Construction placed Darwin at 152 (October 1982) compared to 100 for Melbourne and 99 for Sydney (Commonwealth Grants Commission Submission, 37). Income levels are certainly higher in the Territory than the national average; in June 1982, the average male earnings were \$362.50 (\$316 Australia) and for females \$262.50 (\$215.50 Australia), giving an overall average of \$321.70 (\$283.90 Australia) (ABS Cat. No. 1304.0, December 1982, 7).

On these figures, the NT enjoys a 13.3 per cent advantage although the Territory government has argued that a new ABS series has put the weekly total earning of full-time adults as only 5 per cent greater than the Australian average (Commonwealth Grants Commission Submission, 38). Whatever calculations are used, however, Territory residents are confronted with a regime of higher costs relative to earnings than their compatriots in urban centres in the south although the margin is reduced somewhat by regional zone allowances and tax rebates.

One prominent strand of government policy, both before and after self-government, has been the attraction of private investment capital either from interstate or from overseas. Consequently, most large business concerns operating in 1982 were controlled by non-Territory interests, predominantly Australian although in the core industries - mining and energy, pastoralism and fishing - there is significant overseas equity and ownership. Local private enterprise is largely confined to the small-business area. Some of the essential economic infrastructure has been provided from private sources but most has been government financed - again overwhelmingly from non-Territory sources.

Since self-government, the NT administration has aggressively pursued economic growth and diversification. To those ends it has used part of its liberal income from the Commonwealth - achieved through a generous financial agreement - to improve basic infrastructure and services and to foster, by grants or loans, private industrial development. Considerable effort has also been made to attract outside capital investment both from the private sector and directly from the Commonwealth. The policies have succeeded in producing substantial growth and employment, so much so that the NT government could boast early in 1982 that, unlike most other regions in Australia, the NT, despite some setbacks, was still enjoying economic prosperity.

However, the NT economy continued to be fundamentally narrowly-based, fragile and vulnerable. It remained highly dependent on volatile markets, on general Australian economic conditions and, above all, on Commonwealth funding which has regularly provided, since self-government, well over 80 per cent of the Territory's recurrent and capital budgets. In spite of government confidence and the Territory's relative insulation, by 1982 the regional economy was certainly feeling the impact of the developing recession in Australia.

Housing

The provision of sufficient and adequate housing to cope with rapid population increase has been a major priority of the NT government. That commitment has been a regular feature of budgetary allocations since self-government. For example, in 1981-82, over 15 per cent of total appropriations was given to lands and housing, capital expenditure (including housing loans) amounted to \$116m. In the Treasurer's words, 1981-82's was 'a housing budget' (Budget Paper No. 1, 1981-82, 4). As the government recognises that the cost and availability of housing is a sensitive political issue, particularly in the urban centres, its priority makes eminent political sense.

Government policy has not only been directed at increasing the stock of public rental housing but also at encouraging home ownership by a system of concessional loans in both the public and private housing sectors. Particular emphasis has been given to fostering private development, a departure from the traditional practice of government construction for both public sector employees and the general community. Between 1970 and 1980, the government built 67 per cent of houses. By such means, it is hoped that stabilisation and

permanence of the population will be enhanced and political credit gained. Attempts have also been made to moderate governmental rental levels and the costs of building. However, the shortage of accommodation, long waiting lists, and high costs and rents still exist as potent political and social issues in the Territory.

Compared to a national figure of about 72 per cent, the home-owner/occupier rate in the Territory, at about 29 per cent, is very low (ABS Survey, August 1980, cited in Report on NT Housing Needs, November 1981, 7). Urban rates (except for the largely company towns of Nhulunbuy and Jabiru), as set out in a 1981 report on housing needs, are presented in Table 2.6. Projections for mid-1982 are given in brackets.

Table 2.6

Urban Owner/Occupier Rates 1981

	<u>Darwin</u>	<u>Alice Springs</u>	<u>Katherine</u>	<u>Tennant Creek</u>
Houses and Town Houses	36 (43)	41 (48)	33 (37)	26 (26)
Flats	3.5 (12)	1.4 (14)	3.7 (7.6)	3 (3)

(Source: Report on NT Housing Needs, November 1981)

Consequently, most urban residents live in rental accommodation (government or private) or in non-structural mobile dwellings (in the NT in 1979, these were over 3,000 or 12 per cent of total dwellings). Of the rental housing, about half are Housing Commission units (or 32 per cent of total dwellings), a reflection of the Commission's continuing role in providing much of the accommodation for all sections of the community. Typically in the states, such stock is only about 4 per cent and is principally for lower-income groups. Government rents are reasonable, even though they are about 5-10 per cent higher than the average in NSW and Victoria, but private rentals are about 15-25 per cent higher. Moreover, waiting lists (over 2,000 were on the general public waiting list in 1980-81) and times (about 18 months for a three-bedroom house for general public housing, about a year for public servants) are long. Although the government could point to some success in its housing policies, particularly in extending the level of home-ownership, housing problems - exacerbated by factors like increasing interest rates, which are outside local control - still ranked as major political issues in the Territory.

The spatial distribution of housing types in urban centres has important electoral implications. Integration of private and public housing in most residential areas has limited the widespread development of separate socio-economic groupings although there are long-established pockets of exclusive (or predominant) types in each community. With the encouragement of private development projects as part of current housing policy, however, such distinctions are becoming more common. On the other hand, they are relatively small and well-separated. Thus, urban electorates generally include a thorough mix of public rental, private rental and owner-occupier housing. As there is a relationship between housing type, socio-economic status, and voting preference (a situation which will be considered in more detail in a later chapter), such a distribution makes it difficult to use the concept of 'a safe seat' for any party in urban areas of the NT. If 'safeness' exists, it is not based on socio-economic factors.

Regions

Regional difference has conventionally been accepted as a marked feature of the Territory's historical experience. At the basis of that interpretation are geographic factors - a large land area (1.4m sq km), widely dispersed and isolated population centres and traditional interstate linkages through transport and trade. There is little dispute about the existence of different regional identities in the contemporary Territory but there is argument on the number of regions and the significance of regionalism.

The simplest regional division, and one which was alluded to in our survey, is between 'the Top End' and 'the Centre'. Defined in that way, the salient distinction is between the two major population centres - Darwin and Alice Springs. Rivalry between the two, both historically and in contemporary terms, is well-established and continuing. Whether or not it is different in quality to similar regional cleavages in other Australian geo-political areas is not so clear. Moreover, using a bifurcated regional approach creates problems with appropriate boundaries, with the integration of smaller urban centres, and with the accommodation of sub-regions. A further complicating factor is that regional definition based on urban centres largely excludes Aboriginal spatial perspectives.

If non-Aboriginal parameters are to be employed, then it makes better economic and administrative sense to utilise a five-fold regional division, one based on the five urban centres and their hinterlands. In fact, the administrative decentralisation policy of the NT government has followed that regional pattern. Each of the major urban areas has a distinctive economic base determined by factors of climate, location, natural resources and history. Their isolation and special interests have created, at least in some of their longer-term residents, a strong sense of local attachment which, in turn, has engendered a lively inter-regional rivalry.

The Darwin region includes the city, its semi-rural residential fringe, several small communities 'down the track' as far as Pine Creek and, at this time, Jabiru. Darwin is an administrative area, a major port, a defence base, a developing light industrial centre and a service point for the economic activities (agriculture, mining and tourism in particular) of its hinterland. Alice Springs and Katherine are pastoral, tourist and communication centres and serve as focal points for large 'outback' areas. So also does Tennant Creek although its principal economic activity has been mining. Nhulunbuy and Alyangula (on Groote Eylandt) are basically single-purpose mining communities with additional administrative functions for the East Arnhem region.

All the regional centres, even the highly specialised ones, are undergoing change and growth in their economic functions and services. Urban development has been, and continues to be, dynamic. So too is the process of integration into a Territory economy and identity. Regional difference will remain an important element in the socio-economic and, perhaps, political life of the Territory but its salience is declining. Diversity rather than particularism is a more apt description of the regional experience of the contemporary Territory.

Political Climate

In June 1980, the Country-Liberal Party (CLP) led by Chief Minister Paul Everingham was re-elected. Except in Nhulunbuy where its incumbent was beaten, the CLP polled strongly in the non-Aboriginal electorates and, for that reason, particularly well in the urban centres. Darwin, for example, recorded a two-party-preferred swing of over 6 per cent to the CLP (Heatley 1980, 6). However, in November 1981, a by-election for the Darwin seat of Millner (occasioned by the resignation of the ALP leader, Jon Isaacs) returned an ALP candidate with a slightly increased majority. Because of the different character of general and by-elections, not much can be made of the discordant results but some importance should be given to the changed economic climate in which they were held.

By the end of 1981, the national and, less dramatically, the Territory economy had deteriorated. On the other hand, most of the issues featured in both campaigns were similar. Not unexpectedly, they were still relevant at the time our survey was conducted in mid-1982.

Above all, the outcome of the 1980 election reflected the broad approval by urban voters of the performance since 1977 of the CLP and its leader. Conversely, it was also a judgment on the capacity of the ALP Opposition (under Isaac's leadership) to assume government. A similar assessment of performance, leadership and policies - this time at mid-term - was expected from the respondents to our survey.

Irrespective of the timing of the survey, there were several political considerations which, because of their longer-term significance and salience in Territory politics, were likely to be evident. A number of political issues arose over the financial, administrative and policy relationships with the Commonwealth government - particularly crucial in the post-self-government period. On some there was a broadly accepted Territory viewpoint: the encouragement of better funding arrangements and capital investment for projects like a university or a railway were examples and the parties were not sharply opposed on them. Where inter-party rivalry emerged, it was on means rather than ends. But there was major dispute between the Territory parties on some subjects. The more important were Aboriginal policies (especially land rights), uranium development, health funding, and control of national parks. Policies and practices wholly under the Territory government generated both bipartisanship and inter-party debate. If one area were to be singled out for special note, then the CLP government's policy of economic development, with its complex inter-relationship with uranium, Aboriginal land rights, the core industries, and public sector instrumentalities and finance among others, has generated more than its fair share of contention. Housing and health were other notable subjects of party disputation.

The political fortunes of incumbent governments have usually been closely tied to general economic conditions. In the Australian federal system, the administrations of the states and the NT have little effective control over their local economies which are part of a wider national context. They are often forced to bear the political consequences of policies and developments elsewhere in Australia or overseas. When the party complexion of a peripheral government is the same as that in Canberra, its disadvantages are greater because criticism levelled at Canberra is likely to be applied to it too. Oppositions, in such circumstances, are generally favoured politically. Despite attempts by the NT to distance itself from Commonwealth economic policy and despite relatively beneficial financial treatment, the CLP government had to confront problems which it could ameliorate but not cure.

Thus, a situation of rising unemployment, a spiralling cost of living, high interest rates for housing and increasing transport charges - all features of the national economy - faced the Territory government in 1981-82. They and the measures taken (or the lack of them) inevitably became subjects of community concern and inter-party debate. Therefore they were likely to feature prominently in a survey which required electors to state their perceptions of current political problems. Moreover, for a part of the sample, an evaluation of the success or otherwise of the CLP government in handling the economic issues would be one factor in determining voting preference.

Apart from those pertaining to the general economic climate, there were several other political issues under public discussion at the time the survey was taken. Most were extensively aired in the assembly or in the media. Although the majority of the issues arose from specific legislation or administrative actions, nearly all could be classed as integral parts of broader long-term areas of party and community rivalry. Thus, the situation of Aborigines at Lake Nash Station, the conflict between sacred sites and industrial development in the Sadadeen Valley in Alice Springs, and the debate on the Evidence Amendment Bill and on changes to pastoral lease tenure were connected with the long-running dispute on Aboriginal land rights. Development-related issues included use of foreshore areas in Darwin, the activities of the NT Development Corporation, foreign participation in urban land and construction, allegations of breaches to zoning regulations, and the establishment of a NT university and the railway. Health services, transport facilities and costs, housing needs, industrial conditions in the NT Public Service, and the operating style of the Chief Minister and his government - all subjects of long-term political controversy - continued to attract publicity. Other areas of conflict were the proposed liquor control provisions (particularly the two kilometre rule) and the draft criminal code. The wide range and diversity of issues current in the survey period was typical of the general character of political activity in the post-self-government Territory.

The Electorates

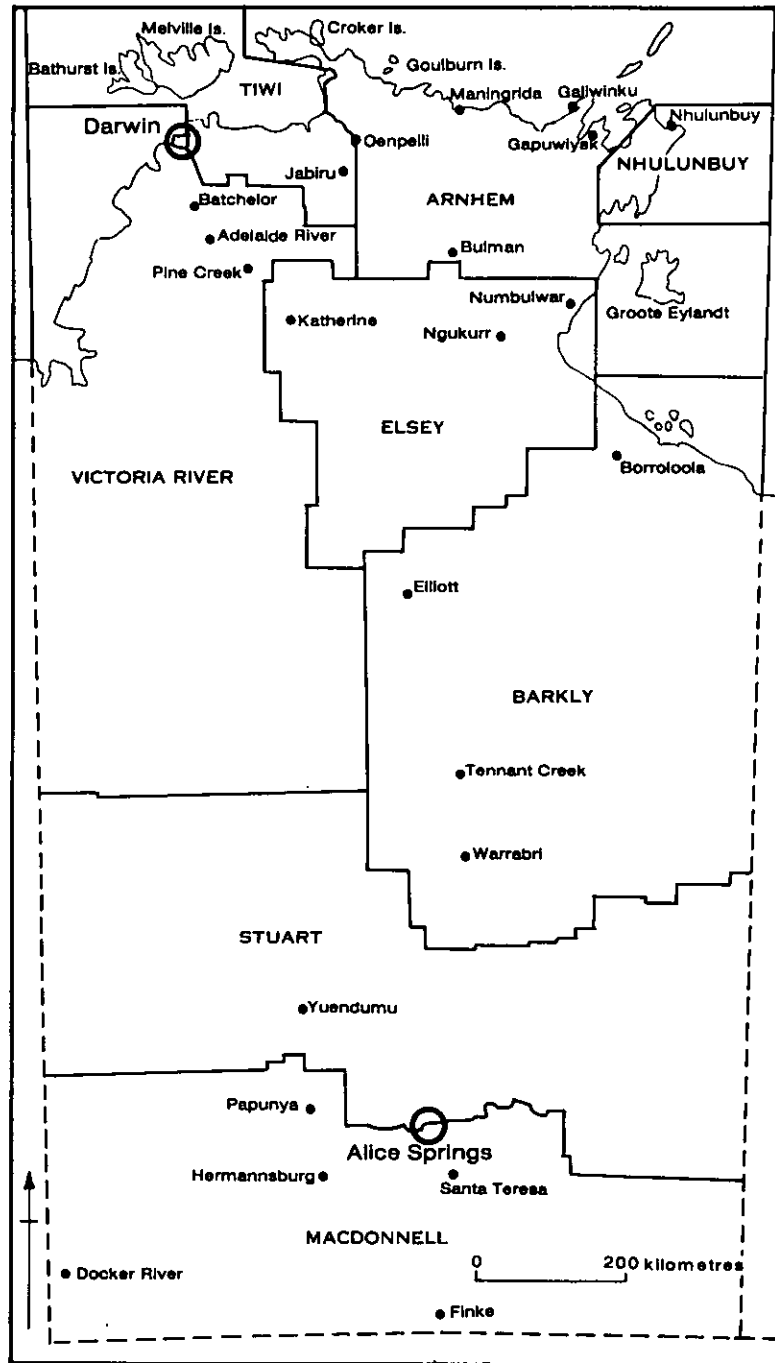
Of the nineteen Assembly electorates, eleven were wholly urban - nine in Darwin and two in Alice Springs. Katherine, Tennant Creek, Nhulunbuy, Jabiru and the Darwin fringe and parts of Alice Springs were in seats which also included significant rural areas. The distribution of the electorates are shown in Maps I and II. In Table 2.7, each wholly urban electorate is described in terms of voter size, party representation and special characteristics. All of the 'rural' electorates have an urban component but its importance varies. Three of the four ALP held seats - Arnhem, Macdonnell and Victoria River - include major Aboriginal communities but only small number of non-Aboriginal urban residents. Arnhem includes the mining centre of Alyangula, Macdonnell the southern urban fringe of Alice Springs and Victoria River a part of the Darwin urban fringe. The other ALP seat - Nhulunbuy, another predominantly mining community - has, on the other hand, the highest non-Aboriginal urban population (about 85 per cent). Similarly, the four CLP 'rural' seats have significant numbers of urban voters. Tiwi includes the bulk of the Darwin urban fringe dwellers, Palmerston and Jabiru, which together comprise about 50 per cent of the total roll; Stuart, the developing northern suburbs of Alice Springs (about 60 per cent); Barkly, Tennant Creek and its satellite community of Warrego (about 50 per cent) and Elsey, Katherine (about 65 per cent). Especially in Katherine and Tennant Creek, these areas contain sizeable pockets of Aboriginal residents.

The populations of the small multi-functional townships, Katherine and Tennant Creek, are heterogeneous in socio-economic terms and the accommodation is of many different kinds. More homogeneous are the basically single-purpose communities of Nhulunbuy, Warrego, Alyangula and Jabiru although there is a wide range of occupations in them. The urban portion of Stuart has similar characteristics to the other residential area of Alice Springs (especially Gillen). In the Darwin urban fringe, private ownership (and usually occupancy) is the norm, and although there is again diversity in other indicators, the region is generally of middle socio-economic status.

Given the increase of urban population, the location of newer residential areas and some intra-urban movement, voter enrolments in the electorates, the boundaries of which are based on a redistribution before the 1977 election, varied widely at the time of the survey. Imbalance was particularly marked in Darwin as Table 2.7 indicates. Late in 1982, the NT government decided to sanction another redistribution linked, however, to an expansion of the Assembly to twenty-five members. Thus, for the next election, urban (and non-urban) boundaries will be much altered.

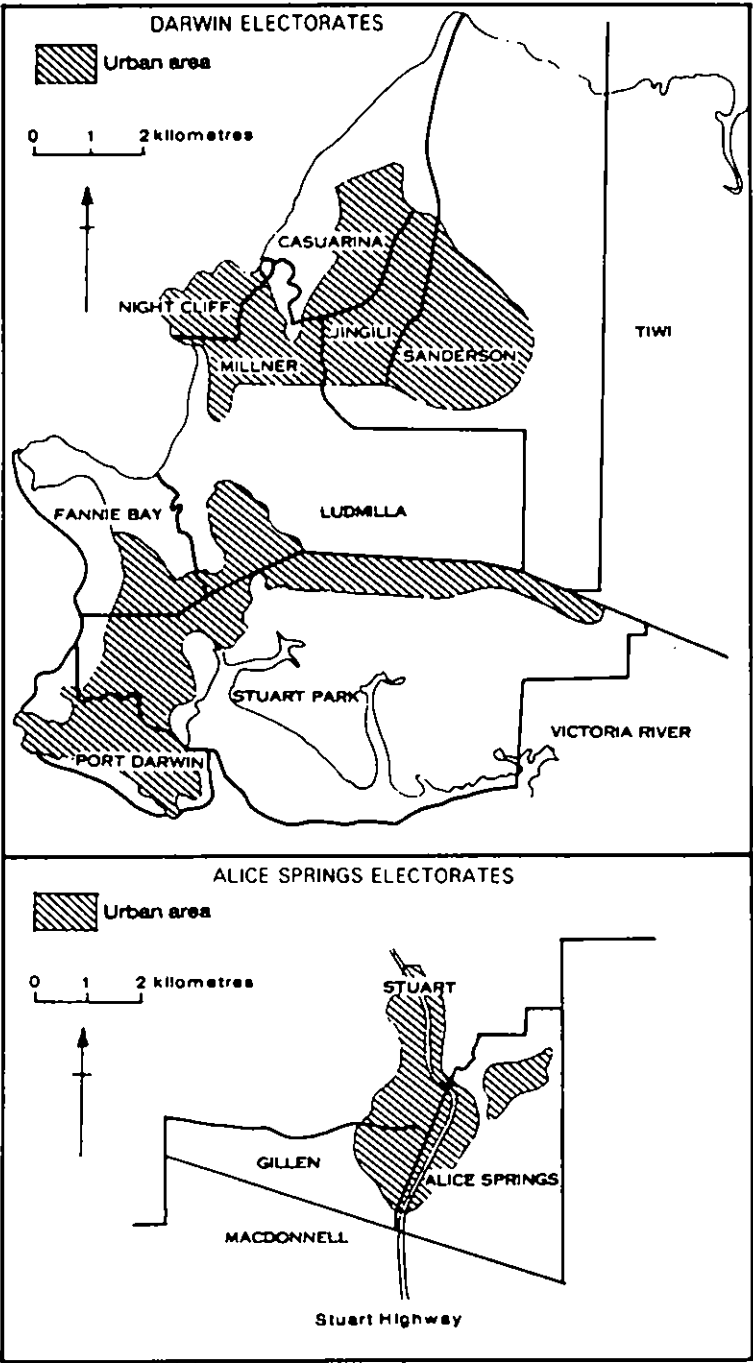
Table 2.7

<u>Wholly-Urban Electorates</u>			
<u>Name</u>	<u>Enrol- ment Jan '82</u>	<u>Party Rep</u>	<u>Characteristics</u>
1. Port Darwin	1932	CLP	Inner-city Darwin; includes CBD, port, army base; sizeable number of high socio-economic housing.
2. Fannie Bay	2142	ALP	Inner-city Darwin; blend of higher socio-economic housing and significant Housing Commission apartment accommodation.
3. Stuart Park	2055	CLP	Inner-city Darwin; mixture of higher socio-economic housing and rental accommodation; commercial area and industrial area in part, naval base.
4. Ludmilla	2907	CLP	Inner/outer city Darwin; blend of private and public housing; RAAF base; Aboriginal community (Bagot).
5. Millner	2636	ALP	Outer-city Darwin; well established residential area with predominance of public/private rental accommodation. Lower socio-economic area; includes new developing sections.
6. Nightcliff	2645	Ind.	Older-established residential area; predominantly private housing with multi-unit rental accommodation; comparatively upper socio-economic area.
7. Casuarina	3820	CLP	Outer Northern Suburbs residential area; pre- and post-cyclone construction; mixture of rental and private ownership although latter becoming dominant; fair proportion of public servants; middle socio-economic status.
8. Jingili	3053	CLP	Outer Northern Suburbs residential area; established pre-cyclone but basically post-cyclone reconstructed; similar housing and status characteristics to Casuarina.
9. Sanderson	5403	ALP	Outer Northern Suburbs residential area; mostly established post-cyclone; rapidly expanding new suburbs; predominantly rental accommodation especially public housing although pockets of private development; high proportion of public servants; low to middle socio-economic status.
10. Alice Springs	3008	CLP	Includes CBD, older established and newly developed residential area; majority of non-Aboriginal residents but significant numbers of Aborigines. Mixed composition of private/public occupation and socio-economic status.
11. Gillen	2607	CLP	Newer established residential area on west side. Similar characteristics to Alice Springs but with a lower Aboriginal proportion of residents.



Electorates: STUART Towns and settlements: Pine Ck. ●

Northern Territory electorates, 1980 - rural areas



Northern Territory electorates, 1980 - Darwin and Alice Springs areas

CHAPTER THREE

ELECTORAL PATTERNS AND VOTING CHOICE

Change and stability in voting 1974-80

The collection of data about voting over time is indispensable to any analysis of patterns of voting to detect stability and change in the habits of voters. To get this data, we asked respondents to tell us how they voted in the Northern Territory Assembly elections of 1974, 1977 and 1980 - in each instance a recall of a past vote - and also to tell us how they would vote if an election for the Assembly were held 'tomorrow', that is, in April and May 1982. This we called the 'now' vote. To enable us to make comparisons with voting in federal elections we also asked people to recall how they voted in the 1980 national election and what their usual party preference was before they came to live in the Territory. Respondents were also asked to give us their reasons for voting as they did in the 1980 Territory election and for their 'now' vote.

As in all surveys on this subject, data of this kind are not wholly reliable. Where respondents are asked to recall their past votes, cast some years before, the figures are subject to error and other studies have shown that the error in aggregate figures may be as much as 15 per cent. Another difficulty is that when people recall their past votes they tend to forget that they voted for minor parties and independents and the result is that independents and candidates of minor parties are credited with lower shares of the votes than were in fact recorded at the elections while the shares of the major parties are higher than in fact they were. In our survey, there is an additional limitation - by restricting it to the urban regions we made it impossible to draw meaningful comparisons between the recalled vote for the total sample and the actual vote for the Territory as a whole. But the comparison can be made reliably for the Darwin area electorates and Gillen, Alice Springs and the urban part of Stuart. In other places, the electorates extended well beyond the towns and our samples, restricted to the urban parts, did not draw from all the voters in any single electorate. But, by using figures from individual polling booths in the areas sampled, it is possible to obtain actual votes with which recalled votes may be reasonably compared. Finally, because postal, absentee and regulation votes are aggregated on a Territory-wide basis for federal elections, they cannot be broken down to provide the 'Darwin-only' figures which would be needed for close comparisons with the survey data at the level of the urban electorates. But the errors that result are relatively small.

Of the 1,777 people who answered the questions about voting in the 1974 Assembly election, only 648 (37 per cent) said that they had voted. Over half of the sample, 53 per cent, were not then resident in the Territory - a consequence of the rapid growth in the population and its transience. The proportion was slightly higher (55 per cent) in Darwin. Another 10 per cent were either too young to vote or not on the electoral roll. Table 3.1 summarises the recalled and actual votes in the Territory as a whole and in Darwin and the Alice Springs urban area.

Recalled support for the ALP in both Darwin and Alice Springs was higher than the support actually recorded in the election. It is difficult to account for the difference but two factors could have contributed to it. In the first place, a proportion of those who usually voted Labor may have voted independent in 1974, but recalled their votes as Labor - the usual kind of explanation. The recalled vote for independent candidates is very low indeed compared with the actual vote. In the second, ALP partisans may be the least mobile component of the urban voting population, a view which was later popular in some Territory Labor circles. The supposition is that, if they were more settled or less easily able to move than partisans of the CLP, they may have been represented in the sample in 1982 in higher proportions than they were in 1974. But on this point our evidence is inferential and, like the data of the national sample, inconclusive. Aitkin (1982, 193) found that there was 'no consistent pattern - Labor identification does not progressively increase among the stay-puts'. The understatement of the recalled vote for independents was most notable in Darwin where three of them, all members of the preceding Legislative Council, won most of the votes not given to major parties. Two of them won seats.

Table 3.1

Voting in the 1974 Assembly Election
(% formal votes)

	NT		Darwin		Alice Springs	
	Actual ¹	Recalled	Actual	Recalled	Actual ²	Recalled
ALP	36	45	31	49	26	36
CLP	49	51	41	46	68	64
Indep.	15	4	28	5	6	-
(N)		(648)		(392)		(140)

¹includes rural votes from areas not sampled in the survey.

²comprises voting in the electorates of Alice Springs, Gillen and the urban polling place of Stuart, Teppa Hill.

Those who answered the questions for the 1977 election numbered 1,833 - and 935 (51 per cent) recorded a vote. Again a high proportion of the sample (40 per cent) said they were not then resident in the Territory, and 9 per cent were too young to vote or not on the roll. As in 1974, Darwin had somewhat higher percentages of each than in the sample as a whole. The recalled and actual votes for 1977 are shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2

Voting in the 1977 Assembly Election
(% formal votes)

	NT		Darwin		Alice Springs	
	Actual ¹	Recalled	Actual	Recalled	Actual ²	Recalled
ALP	38	42	37	46	37	33
CLP	40	53	36	49	52	67
Indep.	12	3	17	4	-	-
Progress Party	10	*	11	*	12	-
Australian Democrats	-	1	-	1	-	-
(N)		(935)		(591)		(175)

¹includes rural voters from areas not sampled in the survey.

²using Teppa Hill booth for urban Stuart.

*less than 0.5%

The low level of recalled votes for independents and the Progress Party is to be expected. It would be unreasonable to suppose that most Progress Party voters have left the Territory since 1977; it is much more plausible to suppose that they were disgruntled CLP partisans, a view supported by the fact that nearly two-thirds of Progress Party preferences in 1977 favoured the CLP.

The discrepancy between the recalled and the actual votes for the CLP in Darwin and Alice Springs may therefore be explained on the assumption that many who voted for the Progress Party and for independents forgot that they had and 'recalled' their votes as CLP votes. In Darwin, but not in Alice Springs, the recalled ALP vote was higher than the

recorded vote, as we would expect if Labor partisans forgot that they too had voted independent on that occasion. It should also be noted that in 1977 Labor stood only eight candidates in Darwin and its actual vote was lower as a result. The low recalled vote for Labor in Alice Springs is an unexplained 'anomaly' in the figures.

Another peculiarity may be noted: some voters recalled supporting Australian Democrats in 1977, when none stood!

We turn now to the 1980 election. The survey was taken two years later and as a result the figures are less affected by population movements and the inaccuracy of memory. Those who answered the question about the 1980 election (total 1,881) and those who voted (1,347 or 72 per cent) were higher proportions than for the two earlier elections. Those who were too young to vote were now only one per cent of the sample although the proportion who said they were not on the roll was higher by about one per cent than in 1974 and 1977. But the fact that 21 per cent of the sample were not in the Territory only two years before is again evidence of the rapid growth of the population and its mobility.

Table 3.3

Voting in the 1980 Assembly Election
(% formal votes)

	NT		Darwin		Alice Springs	
	Actual ¹	Recalled	Actual	Recalled	Actual ²	Recalled
ALP	39	42	37	44	26	33
CLP	50	53	53	50	60	61
Australian Democrats	1	1	2	1	-	*
Other party	2	-	2	-	-	-
Indep.	8	5	6	4	14	6
(N)	(1347)		(889)		(232)	

¹includes rural voters from areas not sampled in the survey.

²using Braitling polling booth figures for urban Stuart.

*less than 0.5%

The discrepancies between the actual and recalled votes for 1980 are lower than in earlier elections, but in the recall the independents and minor parties are still below their actual votes. And the smallest parties, Progress, Christian Democrats and Marijuana parties, which between them had seven candidates, did not rate even one mention. The recalled Labor vote was higher than the actual vote, as is to be expected if some who voted for independents or minor parties forgot that they had done so; the same cannot, however, be said about the recalled vote for the CLP which is very close to the actual vote.

For the 1980 Assembly election, respondents were asked to give up to three reasons for their votes. Of the total who voted, 1,365 respondents, 1,203 gave one reason, 380 a second reason and 56 a third reason, giving a collection of 1,639 responses in all. The reasons, grouped at first under 66 headings, were later brought together under nine heads, using a format adapted from Aitkin (1982, 54). The only changes were the omission of foreign policy and its replacement by Aboriginal policy and the addition of a category for those who said they voted a particular way from habit or family tradition. As the categories (or variations on them) will be used in subsequent sections a brief description is necessary. The grouping was:

- 1 References to party leaders, MPs, and other people;
- 2 Aborigines and Aboriginal policy;
- 3 Management of government - the real, or prospective, quality - of a party as a government, the quality of the Opposition as an opposition;
- 4 Ideology and philosophy - e.g. 'free enterprise', 'socialism';
- 5 Specific issues and policies;
- 6 Group-related responses - e.g. 'helps the workers';
- 7 Party responses - e.g. unity or disunity;
- 8 Habit, family influence; and
- 9 Other residual reasons.

The reasons given by the respondents, in percentage form, were subdivided as follows: people (18), Aborigines (2), management (14), habit (26) and other (less than 0.5). A more detailed analysis of this distribution will be made in later sections. Some preliminary comments should nevertheless be noted. Compared with national norms, there was a much larger component (36 per cent) of Territory voters in 1980 who cited specifically local factors - people, management and issues - as reasons for their votes. The comparison is, of course, impaired because elections for two different levels of government are referred to. A sounder comparison would be made by pairing Territory and state elections where there would be less contrast between the kinds of issues raised. It should be noted that Aboriginal issues were not prominent among reasons given for the votes, a point that will be taken up in greater detail subsequently.

Ninety-six per cent of the sample (1,868) indicated how they would vote if an Assembly election was held 'now' (April-May 1982).

Table 3.4

The 'Now' vote
(% votes)

	NT	Darwin	Alice Springs
ALP	38	39	34
CLP	45	45	45
AD	2	2	1
Ind. and Other party	3	2	5
Informal and 'Wouldn't vote'	2	2	1
Undecided	10	8	13
(N)	(1868)	(1234)	(306)

The most obvious feature is the high 'undecided' element, not unusual in mid-term situations - voting intention becomes more specific closer to election day. Given the experience of other Australian mid-term public opinion polls, 10 per cent is not unexpected. What is somewhat surprising is the larger proportion of 'undecided' in Alice Springs (and 'other urban') than in Darwin. The reasons for the difference are not clear but the higher level of 1980 CLP voters in the 'undecided' category in the non-Darwin areas may indicate some dissatisfaction with government performance. Overall, that factor

is evident throughout; the CLP 'now' vote is everywhere down on its actual results in 1980. So too is the independent element, especially in Darwin. Conversely, the ALP 'now' vote shows an increase, higher in Alice Springs than in Darwin. Still, if an election in the urban areas had been held in mid-1982, the CLP, assuming that the 'undecided' vote was split evenly, could have reasonably expected to maintain its present share of seats.

Again, respondents were asked to give up to three reasons for their 'now' preference. There were 2,151 replies (1,594 offered one reason, 485 a second, and 72 a third).

Using the same list of headings as above, nine categories accommodated the 79 different kinds of answers. In percentage terms, these were people (18), Aboriginal policy (2), management (20), philosophy (4), issues (9), group (7), party (20), family or habit (19) and other (less than 0.5 per cent). Compared with the reasons given for the vote in the 1980 election, the main differences were in references to management (more important) and philosophy (less important), each of which changed by 12 per cent. There was a smaller - 6 per cent - change in the party and habit reasons, again in different directions. Allowing that the group labels are broad and imprecise to some extent and that some responses might have been grouped differently, it still remains that the electorate gave evidence of having become less concerned by philosophy and ideology and more concerned about the quality of governmental management in a space of two years. This reorientation is characteristic of the mid-term between elections when governmental management is the main subject of public comment. It is noteworthy that nearly 70 per cent of those who mentioned management approved the performance of the government. Finally, local factors, emphasised in the reasons given for the vote in 1980, were again salient; indeed they now accounted for nearly 50 per cent of replies.

Two things make it difficult to use the 1980 federal election figures comparatively. First, the way postal and absentee votes are counted and recorded makes it impossible to calculate reasonably comparable urban figures for the federal election. Second, the sample included a significant number of people who were not in and had not voted in the Territory in 1980 - amounting in all to perhaps 15 per cent of the sample. These people had voted elsewhere. And almost 7 per cent of the total sample were too young, not on the roll, not naturalised or did not vote.

Table 3.5

Recalled votes in the 1980 Federal Election

(% votes)

	NT	Darwin	Alice Springs
ALP	47	48	39
CLP ¹	49	48	57
Australian Democrats	3	4	1
Ind. and Other party	0	1	1
Informal	*	*	1
(N)	(1700)	(1135)	(278)

¹includes Liberal/National Parties' vote.

*less than 0.5%

The Territory sample, possibly fortuitously, returned a result which closely approximated the actual outcome of the election: 51 per cent for the CLP and 49 per cent for the ALP. Alice Springs was the same, but in Darwin the ALP recalled vote was somewhat above the actual ALP vote and the CLP's a little below. The independent and other party preferences were well understated in the recalled votes. Data on the voting habits of

respondents before they moved to the Territory remain to be considered. Over 22 per cent of the sample left this question unanswered, but some could not have given an answer - those who had lived in the Territory since attaining voting age and those who had migrated from overseas directly to the Territory. Of the remainder, another 20 per cent were either too young or not on the roll at the relevant time.

Table 3.6

<u>Recalled usual vote - prior Australian residence</u>			
	(% votes)		
	NT	Darwin	Alice Springs
ALP	52	52	47
Liberal	39	40	43
National (NCP,CP)	4	3	3
AD	1	1	1
DLP	*	*	1
'Swinging'	3	3	5
(N)	(1209)	(773)	(212)

*less than 0.5%

What is most significant in the table is the apparently high level of migration of ALP voters to the Territory. Of the three major urban centres, only the Alice Springs sub-sample, in its parity between ALP and Liberal/National support, mirrored the patterns of recent national elections. AD support is low but, because of its late establishment as a party and its major emphasis on the Senate vote, that was to be expected. Except for the DLP, other minor parties and independents were not mentioned.

The attraction to the Territory of a larger-than-usual ALP prior-voting group seems to run counter to that part of conventional Territory political wisdom which holds that the region has special magnetism for migrants of non-Labor persuasion. In explaining the CLP upsurge in urban support in the 1980 Assembly election, a common Labor view was that recent urban residents were development-conscious, materialistic, and interested primarily in personal pecuniary advancement, orientations assumed to be non-ALP traits. However, when the salience of the public service sector in the urban economy, the age structure and ethnic composition of the population, and employment characteristics are taken into account, the influx of prior-ALP supporters is not particularly surprising. But, considering the results of past Assembly elections, it does pose a number of intriguing questions about change and stability in Territory electoral behaviour, a subject to which we now turn.

Stability and Change

At first sight, the results of the three elections for the Assembly in 1974, 1977 and 1980 suggest both stability and change - stability, because the CLP won government on all three occasions and its share of the vote was almost the same in 1980 as it had been in 1974; change, because after the debacle of 1974, when it won no seats in the Assembly, Labor rapidly won its way back in 1977 and because the CLP's share of the vote dropped markedly in 1977 and then rose again in 1980 by 10 per cent - a major swing in the Australian context. The decline in voting support for independents and candidates of minor parties is also evidence of change. But net transfers of votes, of the kind indicated by these figures - for example from the Progress Party in 1977 to the CLP in 1980 - may well mask significant transfers of votes back and forth between the parties and so hide many of the changes that do occur.

Table 3.7

Election results 1974-80

	<u>% votes</u>			<u>Seats won</u>		
	1974	1977	1980	1974	1977	1980
CLP	49	40	50	17	12	11
Labor	31	38	39	-	6	7
Indep.	21	12	8	2	1	1
Other	-	10	3	-	-	-

We need to explain our use of two terms which are commonly but incorrectly used as synonyms in this context. The term 'stability' will be used to refer to the net aggregate patterns of party support over two or more elections. For example, we can refer to the stability of Labor party support 1977-80, meaning that Labor's aggregate vote in the second election was virtually the same as in the first.

This stability of aggregates may be the result of consistent individual voting patterns. If all individuals vote in the second election exactly as they did in the first, they vote consistently and from that there is stability in the aggregate vote. But, individuals may vote inconsistently. For example, in a two-party contest in two successive elections, if a quarter of the supporters of one party change their votes to support the other and a quarter of the supporters of the second party transfer their support to the first then the aggregate figures will show no change in party support. Inconsistency of individual voting is hidden; and stability is shown in the aggregate vote. More complex patterns of consistency and inconsistency, stability and change, are to be found when election results are examined electorate by electorate, especially when there are other candidates besides those of two major parties. But the terminology used above is appropriate for the more complex situations since it is designed to distinguish between aggregate and individual patterns of votes.

A similar point must be made about change. Obviously, change in the aggregate figures will occur when individual voters are inconsistent in their votes and the exchanges between parties do not balance out in each direction. But change can also occur in the aggregate even when no individuals change their votes from party to party, by changes in the numbers voting. People may die or leave the Territory and so be taken off the roll; they move from one electorate to another and yet others come of age and arrive in the Territory and go on to the roll. These changes may alter the aggregate figures.

A total of 891 respondents recalled their votes in both the 1977 and the 1980 Assembly elections and 87 per cent said that they had voted for the same party in each. This appears to be a high level of consistency in voting, and consequently an important element in stability, when the figures are compared with those obtained for a national sample - 81 per cent voted at that level for the same party in 1966 and 1969. The Territory figure must however be discounted to some extent, given the inaccuracy of recalled voting in favour of inflating the recalled vote for the major parties. An analysis of those who changed votes between 1977 and 1980 shows how many of the changes balanced each other out when votes were aggregated. The recalled vote, it should be noted, understates the proportion who must have changed their votes. Just over 5 per cent of the changers moved to the CLP, while 6 per cent moved away from it. Labor gained 5 per cent and lost 5 per cent and the changes in recalled votes for the Australian Democrats and independents also cancelled out. The aggregate change then was: CLP down 1 per cent, with no change in the recalled Labor vote.

The main reasons respondents gave for changing their votes, disregarding the direction of the change, were personality and approval of the record of the CLP government. If we enlarge the analysis to compare the three Territory elections with each other, and voting in the 1980 federal election and votes before coming to the Territory

Table 3.8

Recalled vote, 1977, 1980
(% of respondents, N=891)

<u>Stability</u>		<u>Change</u>			
		1977	1980		
Both Labor	36	Labor	CLP	5	
Both CLP	49	AD/I	CLP	*	
Both I/AD	2	CLP	Labor	4	
		AD/I	Labor	1	
TOTAL	87	Labor	AD/I	*	
		CLP	AD/I	2	
		Other		*	
		TOTAL		13	

*less than 0.5%

Table 3.9

Reasons for change in vote 1977-80
(% of responses)

	<u>Change to CLP 1980</u>	<u>Change to Labor 1980</u>	<u>Total changers</u>
People	48	42	45
Aboriginal policy	2	2	2
Management of government	35	23	26
Party	2	19	12
Other	13	14	14
(N)	(46)	(43)	(106)

with voting in the 1980 Territory election, consistency and stability are evident in the Territory elections while inconsistency at the level of the individual voter is apparent in the federal-Territory comparisons. The aggregate changes and the individual changes are both minimal in the Territory elections, even when allowance is made for inaccuracy of recall and changes in the electoral population. Stability and consistency are both high.

When we turn to compare voting in the 1980 Territory election with the federal votes of people before they came to the Territory and with the voting in the 1980 federal election, change rather than stability and consistency is apparent. Since the 1980 Territory and 1980 federal elections were within four months of each other the effect of demographic change on the electorate is minimal; in other words, changes observed in the aggregate arise chiefly from inconsistency in the voting of individuals.

The most compelling evidence of change lies in the comparison of the 1980 Territory election vote with the answers to the question 'Before you came to the Northern Territory, when you were living in [state], for which party did you usually vote?' A total of 102 respondents (13 per cent) said that they had usually voted Labor before arriving in the

Table 3.10

	<u>Recalled and intended votes</u>			<u>NT/Federal</u>	
	(% of respondents)			Pre NT	1980 Fed.
	<u>NT Elections</u>			-1980 NT	-1980 NT
	1974-80	1977-80	1980-'now' ¹	Assembly	Assembly
<u>Stability</u> (both Labor, CLP or AD/I)	86	87	87	76	85
<u>Net Change</u>					
Labor	-3	*	*	-12	-5
CLP	+2	-1	*	+11	+3
I/AD	+1	*	*	+1	+2
(N)	(627)	(891)	(1179)	(807)	(1284)

¹excluding the 131 respondents who were undecided how to vote.

*less than 0.5%

Territory but voted CLP in 1980 and 3 per cent said they had changed from non-Labor to Labor. And, given defective recall, these figures understate the extent to which people changed their vote.

Those who changed their vote were asked why they did so. Almost half of the responses of those who changed from Labor to CLP mentioned 'record of CLP government' or some other specific or general comment favourable to the CLP. Twenty-two per cent said that they had changed because of the local candidate and a further 12 per cent named specific persons. Of the much smaller number who changed from CLP to Labor, over one quarter stated that specific persons - party leaders or their local candidate - had been the reason.

The comparison of changes in party support between the NT elections in 1980 and the federal election four months later reinforces the impression of CLP advantage. A total of 194 voters changed their first preference vote, and Labor again suffered in the NT in net support. The reasons given for the changed support partly reflected those noted above. Almost a quarter of the responses stated that the NT candidate was the reason, although 21 per cent of those who voted CLP in the Territory election and Labor federally gave 'opposition to Fraser' as their reason.

This evidence of inconsistency between national and state election politics was noticed in an earlier (1980) survey in Alice Springs (see Jaensch and Loveday 1981). The 1982 survey set out to test an hypothesis: that respondents who move to the Territory show relatively consistent patterns of voting prior to their arrival in the NT, but that the shift to the new political and social environment has one or, in the longer term, both of two effects. First, that the new environment has the effect of unlatching some voters from their previous party choice; second, that this has the long term effect of benefitting the CLP and disadvantaging Labor. In fact, the data in Table 3.10 suggest a more complicated hypothesis: that a substantial proportion of voters retain their party commitments in federal elections, but change them in elections for the Territory Assembly, and that this split commitment benefits the CLP in the Territory.

Such an hypothesis obviously raises the question of the relationship between party voting and party identification. We are concerned with the former at this stage and in chapter five we will examine party identification. But a preliminary examination of the

data does suggest that the voters in the Northern Territory urban electorate are less partisan, and are more willing to vote against their party identification than are Australian electors as a whole.

Table 3.11
Party identification and vote, NT and Federal
(% of respondents)

Party Identification	<u>NT 1980</u>	<u>Aust. 1979</u>
Labor	36	42
CLP (L-CP)	38	41
AD	1	3
Other	*	*
None	25	14
Vote agreed with party identification	90	95
(N)	(1891)	(1986)

*less than 0.5%

Source: recalculated Aitkin 1982, Table 19.1.

A preliminary explanation for this tendency may be sought in the special social characteristics of the Territory, to be explored in more detail in the next chapter. Here it is sufficient to note that it is a small society, where urban communities are small and isolated from each other and the rest of Australia. The polity is young and the party system, at the electoral level, even more so. The electorates in the towns are small in area and tiny in population and as a result face-to-face politics is the norm rather than the exception. Small or local issues are magnified in importance and are commonly made the vehicle of personal advancement, injecting a strong personal element into party politics.

This emerged from the answers to the question 'Why did you change your vote when you came to the Territory?' Over a quarter (28 per cent) gave a specific person as the reason, a proportion well above that which could be expected in the larger electorates of the rest of Australia. This reason was given by people on both sides in politics who had switched on coming to the Territory. Another 21 per cent mentioned 'free enterprise', 'development of the NT' or some similar reason for the change of vote from Labor to CLP - again a proportion which would be surprising in national politics. Other reasons given for the change from Labor to CLP included 'record of the CLP government' - 15 per cent - and issues specific to the Territory - 15 per cent. Only 4 of the total of 85 respondents who changed gave Aboriginal policy as their reason for changing.

Given the intensity of debate about Aboriginal policy, especially land rights, given the problems of race relations and the fundamental differences between the CLP and Labor over these questions, we could have expected them to emerge as more important than they were said to be. But, as later sections will show, while Aborigines and Aboriginal policies are at the forefront of some components of the political life of the Territory, they did not emerge as major factors in the minds of most respondents in relation to elections.

We could also have expected that those respondents who changed their party support when they settled in the Territory would be those whose previous party identification was weak. Certainly 30 of the 99 respondents who gave answers claimed they had no party

identification. But 23 stated that while they were still Labor identifiers, they voted CLP in the Northern Territory election. This poses important questions which will be taken up in chapter five.

The data on consistency and stability in the two elections in 1980 reinforce the points made above. Fifteen per cent of the sample voted for different parties, or rejected parties in one of the contests, in elections that were separated only by months. This suggests that an important proportion of the NT urban electorate not only distinguishes clearly between federal and Territory elections and issues, but expresses this distinction by a deliberate choice of different parties to support. For this group, at least, the specific issues, problems and personalities of Territory politics displace national party identification and party support - reversing the findings of surveys elsewhere in Australia (see Aitkin 1982, 44-7).

Table 3.12

Reasons for change in vote in elections in 1980

(% of responses)

	<u>Change to Labor NT</u>	<u>Change to CLP NT</u>	<u>Total changers</u>
People	44	53	51
Party	24	28	27
Other	32	19	22
(N)	(34)	(78)	(127)

In conclusion, it is worth noting that the patterns of stability and change are to the general advantage of the CLP. Apart from the 'undecideds' (Table 3.4), the blue-collar category of workers seems to be more sympathetic to non-Labor in the Territory than they are elsewhere in Australia, to judge by a comparison of vote in the 1980 Territory election (as recalled) and intended vote in an election held 'now' (1982).

Table 3.13

Vote (1980 NT) and vote intention ('now') by occupation

(% of respondents)

	<u>Professional Technical</u>	<u>Administrative Managerial</u>	<u>White- Collar</u>	<u>Blue- Collar</u>
<u>Consistent</u>	(82)	(83)	(82)	(78)
Both Labor	34	29	32	43
Both CLP	48	54	50	35
<u>Change</u>	(6)	(8)	(10)	(8)
Labor 1980, CLP 'now'	3	4	5	4
CLP 1980, Labor 'now'	3	4	5	4
<u>Undecided</u>	(14)	(8)	(12)	(9)
CLP 1980	7	1	6	6
Labor 1980	7	7	6	3
(N)	(284)	(136)	(353)	(320)

Further evidence that the inconsistency of individual voting behaviour accrues to the advantage of the CLP, especially in the comparison of national and Territory data, is found in the following:

- of 486 CLP identifiers, 91 per cent voted CLP in both national and Territory elections in 1980;
- of 461 Labor identifiers, 87 per cent voted Labor in both;
- of 244 respondents who claimed no party identification
 - 51 per cent voted CLP in both
 - 31 per cent voted Labor in both;
- of 112 respondents who changed, 63 per cent changed to the CLP in the NT election.

These tendencies in the voting, and the patterns of consistency, inconsistency and change which lie behind them will be examined in greater detail in later chapters.

CHAPTER FOUR

DEMOGRAPHY: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE ELECTORATE

Since the demographic and related features of a society play a significant part in shaping its voting behaviour our examination of the differences of the Territory must begin with these features. Those to be considered first are age and sex, place of origin and population mobility and selected socio-economic characteristics. The analysis is, however, based only on the sample chosen for the survey, a group of urban dwellers with socio-economic characteristics which are not representative of the Northern Territory population as a whole. For example, approximately 60 per cent of survey respondents in employment were working for the government, and 40 per cent were working for non-government institutions; according to the 1981 population census the corresponding figures for the Northern Territory were 37 per cent and 63 per cent respectively. This discrepancy can be attributed to differences in the employment structure of town populations, where government employees are concentrated, compared with that of other areas where few government employees live. Similar discrepancies appear if other socio-economic characteristics of the survey and total Northern Territory populations are compared. They do not, however, invalidate the use of the census as a basis of comparison between the Northern Territory and Australia as a whole, a comparison which, as Chapter 2 shows, is useful in pinpointing the unique situation of the Northern Territory.

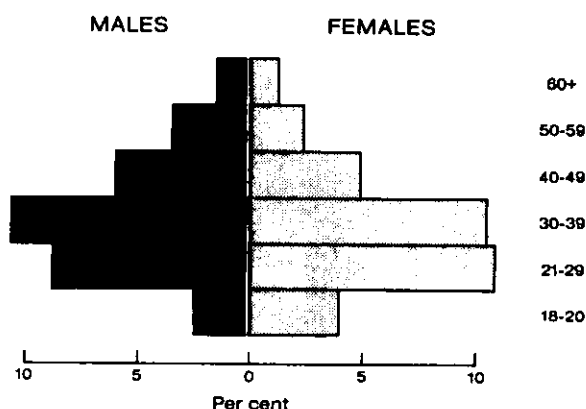
Age and Sex

Compared to the Australian electorate, the Northern Territory electorate is young and predominately male. According to the 1981 census almost 60 per cent of Territorians aged 18 years and over were between the ages of 21 and 39, and only eight per cent were over the age of 60. The masculinity ratio (that is the proportion of men to women) for this population was 1.20. The age-sex structure of the sample survey from 1982 differs from that of the electorate as a whole in that the sex ratio was 1 (971 men and 974 women). While this can probably be attributed to a variety of factors, it is partly because the sample was drawn entirely from urban areas, which tend to have a higher proportion of women residents than occurs in rural areas, and also because substitution of respondents may have led to a woman replacing a man more often than vice versa. The sex ratio in the different towns ranged widely, from 0.50 in Tennant Creek to 1.62 in Katherine (Table 4.1), but for the two largest samples, Alice Springs and Darwin, it was close to unity. Local variation in the smaller towns should be attributed to the small size and unrepresentativeness of samples from them rather than to basic differences between groups.

The age structure of the sample population is very similar to that of the Northern Territory electorate, with over 60 per cent of respondents between 21 and 39 (Table 4.1, Figure 4.1). The youngest and oldest age groups (18-20 years and 60 years and over respectively) do, however, appear to be slightly under-represented. In the latter case this can again be attributed to the urban bias of the sample, which necessarily excluded many older Territory residents, the rural-dwelling Aborigines. The age structure of individual town samples also varied (Appendix 4A). Katherine and Alice Springs, for example, had higher proportions of older people while in Nhulunbuy hardly any respondents fell into this group. These differences reflect characteristics such as town function and length of establishment; the former pair of towns are long established, and function as market and administrative centres, with greater attractions for older residents; Nhulunbuy, as a comparatively new mining town, would be unlikely to have many elderly inhabitants. The youthful bias of the sample population may be important in terms of Northern Territory voting patterns and political allegiance.

Table 4.1
Age-sex structure by town

Age Groups (yrs.)	Alice Springs		Tennant Creek		Katherine		Nhulunbuy		Urban Darwin		Rural Darwin		Total	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
18-20	2.0	4.3	-	5.3	1.7	2.7	-	1.8	3.1	4.1	-	5.1	2.5	4.0
21-29	24.0	30.1	21.1	42.1	16.7	43.2	21.4	29.1	27.4	31.9	23.3	31.7	25.8	32.3
30-39	34.0	30.7	42.1	23.7	43.3	21.6	42.9	43.6	34.2	37.2	32.6	26.8	35.1	34.9
40-49	18.0	19.6	21.1	7.9	20.0	21.6	23.8	18.2	20.2	15.6	16.3	17.1	19.8	16.4
50-59	12.7	8.0	5.3	10.5	10.0	8.1	9.5	7.3	11.3	7.5	18.6	17.1	11.5	8.1
69+	9.3	7.4	10.5	10.5	8.3	2.7	2.4	-	3.8	3.5	9.3	2.4	5.3	4.2
TOTAL (%)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	150	163	19	38	60	37	42	55	657	640	43	41	971	974
M/F Ratio	0.93		0.50		1.62		0.76		1.03		1.05		1.00	



Age-Sex Structure of Sample

Place of origin and population mobility

The survey included several different indicators of population origin and mobility - birthplace, state of residence before moving to the Northern Territory, period of residence and mobility within the Northern Territory and, for the overseas-born, period of residence within Australia. All these confirm what is known from other sources about the Territory's population: that it is drawn primarily from other areas; that it is highly mobile; and that many people have come to the Northern Territory only recently.

Birthplace statistics show that only about eight per cent of respondents had actually been born in the Northern Territory, a further 65 per cent had been born in other Australian states, and the remainder were from overseas (Table 4.2). South Australia and New South Wales were the largest contributors from other parts of Australia; the United Kingdom, which accounted for over 40 per cent of the overseas born, was by far the most important other country of origin. Differences in birthplace origin by sex were not marked, although the proportion of Australian-born women (including the Northern Territory) exceeded that of men (77 per cent compared to 71 per cent). Differences in origin were greater in the town samples (Appendix Table 4B). Alice Springs, Tennant Creek and Katherine all had a proportion of Northern Territory-born which was slightly above average and Nhulunbuy had hardly anyone in this category. Nhulunbuy is a mining town, newly developed only since 1970, and its population has been brought almost wholly in from elsewhere in Australia to do specific jobs. Representation by birthplace from other states also varied from town to town. South Australian-born were present in comparatively large numbers in Alice Springs and Tennant Creek but under-represented elsewhere; similarly Tennant Creek had a large number of Queenslanders while the New South Wales contingent in Katherine was strong. Urban Darwin had a representation close to the sample average, which was to be expected since it has such a large proportion of the urban population sampled. The overseas-born were particularly prominent in Darwin and Nhulunbuy, but they were a small proportion of the sample in Alice Springs. People from the United Kingdom formed the largest overseas contingent but other important groups included Asians in the Darwin area, and in all except Nhulunbuy and Tennant Creek, islanders from Oceania which was defined to include New Zealand. These regional concentrations of people with different birthplaces can be explained in two or three ways. South Australians tend to be concentrated in Alice Springs because the town is near to and for a long time was governed from South Australia; the proximity of Darwin to South East Asia, its role as a port and a first landfall for an immigrant population - and its history of settlement - are reasons why it has a considerable Asian population. The relationship between birthplace, place of origin and political allegiance, to be explained later, requires a further qualification - to what extent people born in different regions felt themselves to be Australian or of other origin. Aborigines are of particular interest in the birthplace statistics. In the survey a small but unknown proportion did

Table 4.2

<u>Birthplace by sex (% of total)</u>		
	M	F
<u>Northern Territory</u>	<u>7.6</u>	<u>8.7</u>
New South Wales	14.0	17.8
Victoria	12.9	12.5
Queensland	12.9	12.4
S. Australia	14.9	16.9
W. Australia	6.7	6.4
Tasmania	2.2	2.2
ACT	0.1	0.2
Total Australia excl. NT	63.7	68.4
United Kingdom	12.5	9.7
Europe	8.2	5.3
Asia	2.8	3.5
Oceania	2.7	3.1
Other **	2.6	1.3
Total Overseas	28.7	22.9
Total	100.0	100.0
(N)	(974*)	(974)

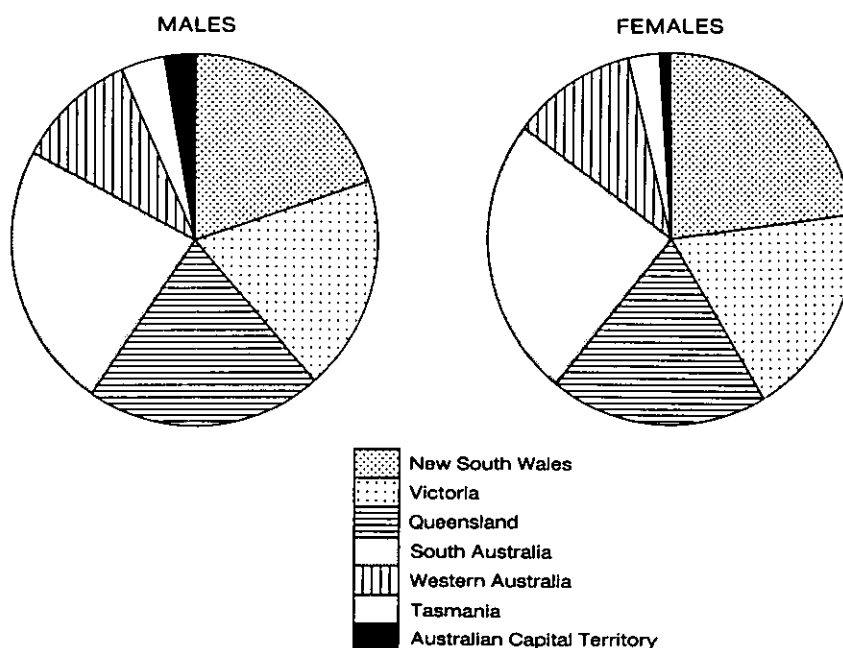
* Because of incompatibility between responses to separate birthplace questions, this exceeds actual sample size by 3.

** See Appendix Table 4B for breakdown

not identify themselves as Aborigines but as Australians. A total of 61 Aborigines (some part, some full Aboriginal by self-identification) were in the sample and they amounted to almost one-third of respondents born in the Northern Territory (Table 4.5). This was slightly above the proportion of Aborigines in the total Territory population - 24 per cent (1981 Census), while only 1.6 per cent of people from other states identified themselves as of Aboriginal origin. Given that such a large proportion of the Aborigines prefer the Australian Labor Party (see below), this characteristic weights the political tendencies of the Northern Territory-born in the sample, but it is of little significance for those who came from elsewhere.

State of birth is not an indication of where people had mostly lived before they moved to the Northern Territory. The latter characteristic may in fact be more important in shaping people's voting patterns because people may have spent adulthood in places away

from where they were born, as Fig. 4.2 suggests. In explaining people's voting behaviour, birthplace as such is not as important as other factors. It is of some significance because people often grow up in the place where they were born and in particular follow the lead of their parents in their choices of political preference. This suggests that for an immigrant population, who are by definition removed from their birthplaces, it may be even more important to know where they have lived and for how long than where they were born. As fig. 4.2 (Appendix Table 4B) shows, the distribution, by state, of place of residence before coming to the Territory, was similar to the birthplace distribution. The highest proportions of the sample had lived in New South Wales and South Australia, but Queensland and Victoria had also provided high proportions.



Previous State of Residence by Sex

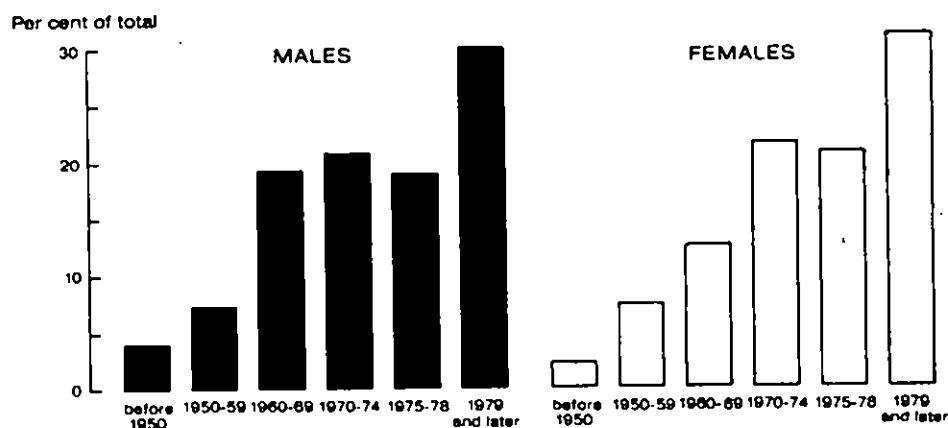
Where people have come from may be defined another way - in terms of rural, town or city background - and this may be expected to weight prior political preferences in particular directions. In the aggregate, it is more likely that a person from the rural north-west of New South Wales or western parts of Queensland will vote non-Labor than a person from Wollongong, Newcastle or the outer suburbs of Sydney. About 55 per cent of people who had moved to the Northern Territory from other states had previously spent most of their time in large cities such as Sydney or Melbourne, and a further 24 per cent had been living in smaller towns. Only 20 per cent had come from rural areas (Table 4.3).

The question of political allegiance, and whether it is influenced by a change in residence from one region to another, must also hinge on the time that has elapsed since the move has occurred, and on particular events which may have influenced either population movement or politics. In the context of the Northern Territory two such events are Cyclone Tracy, leading to a marked exodus and subsequent return flow of population affecting the Darwin area (1974-75), and the four-month period marked by the achievement of self-government and the setting up of the Legislative Assembly in 1978. Fig. 4.3, (Appendix Table 4C) which takes these events into account, shows that the Northern Territory electorate is largely composed of people who have only recently moved to the region. Only 3.5 per cent of respondents had been living in the Territory before 1950, while over 30 per cent had arrived after 1978. Approximately half the sample population had come after the cyclone. As these figures suggest, many Territorians were not here in the years of struggle for self-government when much of the ideology of Territorian antagonism to the national government in Canberra was built up. The long term residents, who appear to give a more sympathetic hearing to this ideology, are only a small

Table 4.3

Type of previous residence by sex

	M %	F %
City	59.5	53.9
Town	20.4	27.1
Rural	20.1	19.1
Total	100.0	100.0
(N)	(842)	(822)



Period of Residence in NT by Sex

proportion of the electorate; others have had a comparatively short time in which to identify with Territory political structures, gain experience of Territory issues and to shape their votes accordingly. It may well be that the views of the old timers are of limited and declining importance.

A final element in the consideration of population mobility is whether, when people move to the Northern Territory, they have lived in only one location, and thus developed interests in and knowledge of issues specifically concerning that place, or whether they have lived elsewhere. Over 70 per cent of respondents had never moved within the Northern Territory (or did not answer the question), and a further 19 per cent had only lived in one other locality (Table 4.4). Respondents from Alice Springs and Darwin appear to have been less mobile than people who were interviewed in the smaller towns of Tennant Creek and Katherine. While this result must to some extent reflect the structure of the whole sample (which has average values close to those of the two large towns because these account for over 80 per cent of respondents), it is also to be expected because people such as public servants are often posted to positions in small towns for only limited

periods. There are much greater opportunities for changing jobs in Darwin without having to change residence. Nhulunbuy women showed a low level of mobility within the Northern Territory, probably a result of their recent movement into a new town.

The majority of moves made by people who had lived in Northern Territory locations other than those where they were interviewed had been to other towns. More than 60 per cent of moves had been to the main centres of Darwin, Alice Springs, Katherine, Tennant Creek and Nhulunbuy. While, given the high level of urbanisation of the Northern Territory as a whole, this is hardly surprising, it does suggest a lack of experience of, and hence probably limited understanding of, the rural situation by the urban electorate. Only about 12 per cent of moves had taken people to Aboriginal communities, and in only 6.5 per cent of cases had people lived on European pastoral stations (Appendix Table 4D).

Socio-economic Characteristics

Most people in the urban parts of the Northern Territory electorate identify themselves as Australians. Europeans were the other major category and most of these were born either in the United Kingdom or other Western European countries. However, it should be stressed that people from the United Kingdom and Europe who identified as Australians outnumbered those calling themselves Europeans by two to one. Neither Asians nor Aborigines (including people identifying as part-Aboriginal) formed a high percentage of the sample (2.2 and 3.5 per cent respectively). The reasons for the under-representation of Aborigines in the sample have already been mentioned.

Table 4.5

Societal identification

	M	F
	%	%
Australian	85.0	85.0
European	10.1	8.4
Aboriginal	0.8	1.3
Part-Aboriginal	2.4	2.5
Asian	1.7	2.8
Total	100.0	100.0
(N)	(960)	(964)

The religious affiliations of the electorate remain equally divided between Anglicans and Catholics (about 25 per cent of each), with a considerable number of people stating no religious convictions. The number of women affiliated to religious groups slightly exceeds that of men, a point to consider in the examination of the relationship between religion and political allegiance.

Most respondents in the sample had at least attended secondary school and about 20 per cent had completed tertiary training of one kind or another (Table 4.7). Men and women did not differ significantly in their levels of formal education. Differences by age group, however, were more noticeable. Most people with no secondary training were at least 40 years old and the majority were over 50. Conversely the youngest age groups had a very high proportion of people who had either completed secondary school or were attending or had completed tertiary training. This characteristic is confirmed by census figures which show that the Northern Territory had, after the ACT, the highest proportion of university graduates in Australia. It can be attributed to the importance of the public service which requires highly qualified staff. It is obviously an important consideration in relation to voting patterns.

Table 4.6

<u>Religion</u>		
	M	F
	%	%
Anglican	23.5	25.4
Catholic	25.6	26.3
Uniting Church	10.4	12.9
Other Protestant	7.4	11.3
Orthodox	1.6	2.2
Other religion	5.9	5.1
Jewish	0.1	0.1
None	25.6	16.8
Total	100.0	100.0
(N)	(946)	(948)

Table 4.7

<u>Education by sex</u>		
	M	F
	%	%
No school	0.7	0.3
Attended primary	3.2	2.9
Completed primary	6.8	6.0
Attended secondary	23.8	29.0
Completed secondary	34.2	36.6
Attended tertiary	9.2	7.1
Completed tertiary	22.1	18.1
Total	100.0	100.0
(N)	(969)	(972)

Most of the men interviewed during the survey were in full-time employment on wages (86.4 per cent, Table 4.8). Only 4.4 per cent did not have work, and the majority of these were looking for jobs. Fewer women had full-time jobs (42.2 per cent) but a considerable number (15.4 per cent) were in part-time employment, and an even greater number were described as house-workers (32 per cent). Only a small number saw themselves as unemployed. As before, the urban nature of the survey must influence the significance of characteristics such as unemployment or being 'out of work' because it omits the rural Aboriginal population, many of whom fall into this category.

As anticipated from the relatively high level of formal education, most people were in white-collar occupations (including managerial etc.), and over ten per cent of men were professionals of some type (Table 4.9). In the highest level occupations women were less prominent than men but many held semi-professional positions. The low proportion of manual workers is perhaps surprising (one-third of the men and 15 per cent of women) but it reflects the characteristics of the Northern Territory's industrial structure - an emphasis on service industry, including administration, and the relative unimportance of manufacturing industry. Agriculture and mining, often described as the mainstays of the northern Australian economy, occupy few urban dwellers. Moreover, those they employ are not necessarily unskilled. Undoubtedly, in Nhulunbuy, Tennant Creek and Jabiru, many skilled tradesmen, managers and technicians work for mining companies but their occupational status is not classified as 'mining'. However, respondents from these towns

Table 4.8

Work situation by sex

	M %	F %
Full-time	86.4	45.2
Out of work, seeking	3.5	1.8
Retired	4.8	3.4
Out of work, not seeking	0.9	0.8
Student	0.1	1.1
Houseworker	0.7	32.0
Part-time	3.2	15.4
Pensioner	0.1	0.0
Single parent	-	0.1
Total	100.0	100.0
(N)	(971)	(974)

made up only a small part of the total sample, and it is perhaps not so surprising that only five per cent of men in employment were actually working for a mining company. Occupations did vary by town of residence (Appendix Table E). While major administrative centres such as Darwin, Alice Springs and Katherine had similar proportions of people in professional and white-collar jobs, and in non-manual occupations in general, Nhulunbuy, Tennant Creek and rural Darwin had more manual (blue-collar) workers. The distribution confirms the earlier comment that many people employed in the mining industry are not miners. Only five respondents in Nhulunbuy, a Nabalco company town, classified themselves in this category. A high percentage of workers was employed by the government (56.3 per

Table 4.9

Occupation by sex

	M %	F %
(Professional	11.7	1.8
(Semi-prof/tech.	14.6	23.0
(Administrative	6.8	3.2
(Managerial	7.2	3.8
Non-manual - (White-collar	21.0	49.6
(Small business	5.7	3.5
(Agriculture	0.9	0.2
(Mining/oil	0.4	-
Manual - Blue-collar	31.8	14.9
Total	100.0	100.0
(N)	(948)	(625)

cent of men and 63.6 per cent of women, Table 4.10). This includes not only those who classify themselves simply as public servants (about 40 per cent of government workers) but others in government-administered departments, both Territorian and federal, such as education, health, defence, transport and communications, finance and construction. As these figures suggest the Northern Territory has an atypical occupational structure because of the importance of the government as an employer. In terms of population mobility this is likely to have further repercussions because government employees, more than most, are more likely to be shifted from one position to another. During the period

since self-government the Northern Territory has seen not only the growth of its own public service, but also a considerable movement of personnel from federal to Northern Territory departments. This has led to both inter-state movement and movement within the Territory, and it is certainly a further factor to be borne in mind in considering voting patterns and change.

Table 4.10

Government/Non-govt employment

	M	F
	%	%
<u>Employer</u>		
Government	56.3	63.6
Non-government	43.7	36.4
Total	100.0	100.0
(N)	(875)	(601)

Demographic Characteristics and Political Allegiance

The distinctive demographic features of the Territory sample relevant to the analysis of its voting and party allegiance are as follows:

- (a) the population is young, and equally balanced by sex;
- (b) most people were born within Australia but outside the Northern Territory;
- (c) most overseas-born came either from the United Kingdom or Europe;
- (d) most people identified as Australians;
- (e) Aborigines were under-represented in the sample;
- (f) most people have only recently moved to the Northern Territory;
- (g) the previous states in which most of them had been living were New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia;
- (h) before coming to the Northern Territory most had lived in towns or large cities rather than in rural areas;
- (i) after coming to the Northern Territory most had remained in their original location, and those who had moved had spent most of their time in other Territory towns, not in rural places;
- (j) most of them gave Anglican or Roman Catholic as their religious affiliations, but a large number also stated that they had no religion;
- (k) levels of formal education were relatively high;
- (l) most men were employed, generally in professional, administrative or skilled positions;
- (m) employment levels for women were also high, although a considerable number had part-time jobs.

It remains to consider the relationship between demographic characteristics and political allegiance, here measured on two indices: party identification in the Northern Territory system, and party identification in the federal system.

Age, Sex and Party Identification

Differences between men and women in party identification for both Territory and federal elections were very small for each of the two main groups, ALP and CLP, although for Northern Territory parties women showed a slightly higher commitment to CLP than men, and more women than men said that they did not identify with any group (Table 4.11).

Table 4.11

Party identification by sex, NT and Federal (%)

	<u>ALP</u>		<u>CLP</u>		<u>Other</u>		<u>None</u>		<u>Total</u>		(N)	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
NT	37.1	34.6	37.6	38.6	1.8	1.7	23.6	25.1	100.0	100.0	954	955
Federal	43.0	41.7	37.1	39.3	3.3	1.6	16.6	17.6	100.0	100.0	944	945

Some age-group differences are apparent (Appendix Table 4F). In Northern Territory elections the proportion of ALP voters among the 21-29 year group was significantly higher than that of CLP voters, while for those aged between 30 and 39 the situation was reversed. A high proportion of people over 60 and in the 40-49 age group were CLP identifiers; the commitment was lower in the 50-59 group but for all these groups the sample numbers were small. In federal elections the identification with the ALP was higher for all age groups except people over 60 and again it was particularly high for the 21-29 group, where the number of men who were ALP identifiers was almost double that of CLP. Those between 30 and 39 were almost equally divided between the two parties. Altogether, far fewer people were uncommitted in relation to federal politics.

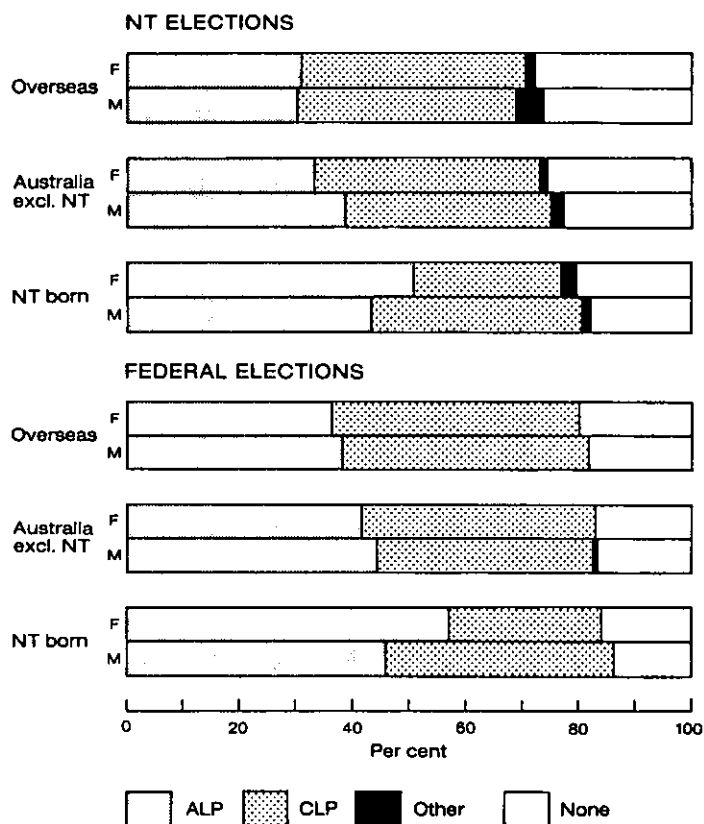
These linkages between age-sex structure and party identification are obviously important when regional variations in the structure are considered. Thus it might be expected that Alice Springs, with a higher proportion of people over 60, would have greater identification with CLP than urban Darwin. However, little can be concluded about the smaller towns where the samples were small and, in Tennant Creek, had a disproportionate number of women.

Birthplace, Population Mobility and Party Identity

For Northern Territory elections, the level of ALP identification for men was high for people born in New South Wales and Victoria, and low among those from South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania. Queensland was close to the average. Such tendencies may affect regional voting patterns within the Northern Territory; Alice Springs, for example, has a high representation of South Australians but below-average representation from New South Wales and Victoria (Appendix Table 4G). A high proportion of those born in the Northern Territory identified with the ALP for both Northern Territory and federal elections, which is to be expected given the high Aboriginal component of this group. CLP voting identification showed the opposite trend.

For women from states other than the Northern Territory the pattern was less clear, but an interesting feature was the high proportion of women from New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland who did not identify with a Northern Territory party. Federal political identification patterns showed the same trend as Northern Territory patterns, but the ALP was in general more strongly supported.

The overseas-born identified more strongly than the Australian-born with the CLP than with the ALP, particularly for Northern Territory elections. This characteristic was marked amongst people from the United Kingdom, Asia, Oceania (men), and from small numbers

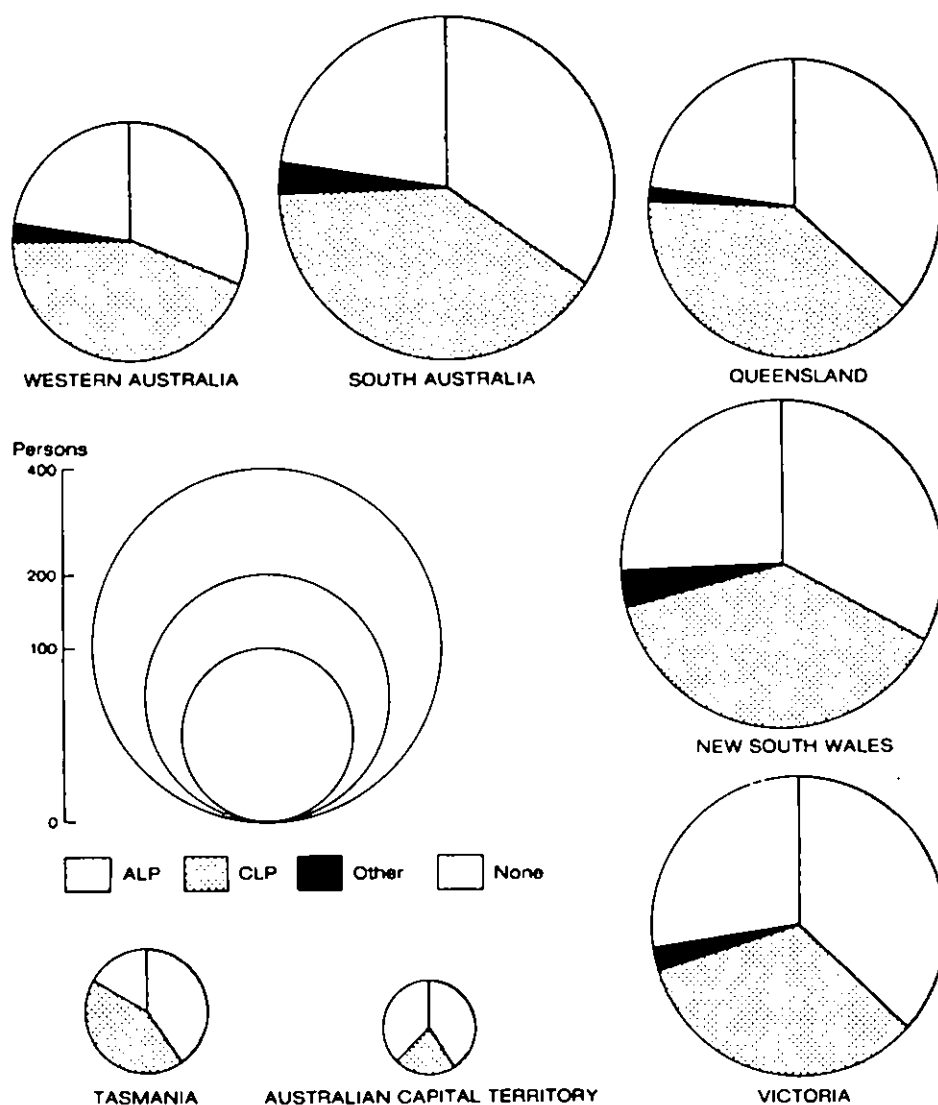


Birthplace, subdivided by Party Identification and Sex

from Africa and North America. Western Europeans were more strongly associated with the ALP. A higher percentage of overseas-born had no Northern Territory political identification, possibly because as relatively recent arrivals they do not feel 'at home' in politics yet. The overseas-born in the national sample had similar characteristics (Aitkin 1982, 156-7). Of course if party associations were important in forcing them to come to Australia in the first place, this may explain why some have resolved to abandon political commitments. Overseas-born showed a stronger identification with the ALP for federal elections, and fewer people professed to have no particular party leanings.

The relationships between previous states of residence and party identification were similar to those for states of birth (Appendix Table 4H). However some slight changes occur. For example, for Northern Territory elections (Fig. 4.5), people who had previously been living in New South Wales identified less strongly with the ALP than those born in New South Wales. That can be explained by the fact that some overseas-born, who were more conservatively inclined, had previously been New South Wales residents. The same would apply to federal party identification where the overall increasing association with the ALP was again apparent.

People whose place of residence prior to moving to the Northern Territory was in a city were more likely to identify with the ALP than were people from rural areas (Table 4.12). This characteristic, which applies for both Northern Territory and federal elections, must be significant in explaining the overall importance of ALP voters, because the sampled part of the electorate has a high proportion of former city dwellers (see Table 4.3). It is a fact worth emphasising because of the common assumption that the Northern Territory is a rural-based state. Though rural industries are important to the Territory, its population is still predominantly urban and, as Table 4.12 shows, drawn mostly from urban dwellers from other parts of the country. Moreover, most had lived in only one place in the Northern Territory (Table 4.13). Of those who had moved, most of their moves had been to other Territory towns, i.e. people interviewed in Alice Springs



State Origins of Incoming NT Population

had also lived in Darwin or in Katherine. Comparison of people's mobility within the Territory and their party identification does not reveal marked trends. While, for Northern Territory elections, the ALP identification was higher for those who had lived in more than one place, no such pattern was obvious for CLP (Table 4.13). For both Northern Territory and federal elections all such differences were very small.

When the types of places where people had lived are considered (large town - Darwin, Alice Springs, small town, rural Aboriginal communities and other settlements), overall trends are still unclear but a few interesting points emerge (Appendix Table 4E). For example, ALP identification for men who had lived in rural Aboriginal communities was not markedly higher than CLP identification. Women who had been in rural Aboriginal communities identified much more strongly with the ALP than the CLP: 54 per cent compared to 26 per cent for NT elections, with similar figures for federal elections.

Finally, length of residence in the Northern Territory may have some significance for party allegiance if experience in the Territory leads people to change their minds about earlier party loyalties. For Northern Territory elections CLP identification generally exceeds ALP identification among those who came before 1970 (Appendix Table 4D). That group also has a comparatively small proportion of people who did not have any

Table 4.12
Previous type of residence by party identification (%)

	ALP		CLP etc.		Other		None		Total		(N)	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
<u>NT Elections</u>												
City	37.8	36.1	35.8	37.4	2.2	2.1	24.2	24.4	100.0	100.0	495	438
Town	36.5	31.8	37.6	39.1	1.8	1.0	24.1	28.2	100.0	100.0	170	220
Rural	33.5	27.1	42.5	43.2	1.2	2.5	22.8	27.1	100.0	100.0	167	155
Total	36.7	33.2	37.5	39.0	1.8	1.7	23.9	26.0	100.0	100.0	832	813
<u>Federal Elections</u>												
City	43.6	44.5	34.5	37.5	4.1	1.6	17.9	16.3	100.0	100.0	491	429
Town	41.7	39.7	38.1	37.0	4.2	1.4	16.1	21.9	100.0	100.0	168	219
Rural	40.3	34.4	41.5	46.7	1.2	2.6	16.9	16.2	100.0	100.0	166	154
Total	42.5	41.3	36.6	39.2	3.5	1.7	17.3	17.8	100.0	100.0	825	802

Table 4.13

NT mobility by party identification (%)

<u>NT Elections</u>	ALP		CLP		Other		None		Total		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	(N)
Never moved	35.6	32.8	37.9	40.5	1.8	2.0	24.7	24.8	100.0	100.0	680 723
Moved once	39.2	42.6	35.9	33.3	2.2	0.5	26.7	23.5	100.0	100.0	181 183
Moved > once	43.6	30.0	38.3	30.0	1.0	4.0	17.0	36.0	100.0	100.0	96 50
Total	37.1	34.5	37.6	38.6	1.8	1.7	23.6	25.1	100.0	100.0	955 956

Federal Elections

Never moved	42.2	40.2	42.9	41.3	3.4	1.7	17.2	16.8	100.0	100.0	673 719
Moved once	44.1	48.3	37.4	33.1	4.0	1.1	14.5	17.4	100.0	100.0	179 178
Moved > once	46.2	38.8	36.6	30.6	1.1	2.0	16.1	28.6	100.0	100.0	93 49
Total	43.0	41.6	37.1	39.2	3.3	1.6	16.6	17.5	100.0	100.0	945 946

Table 4.14
Societal identification and party identification (%)

	ALP		CLP		Other		None		Total		(N)	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
<u>NT Elections</u>												
Australian	36.2	33.7	38.4	40.8	1.9	2.9	23.5	23.7	100.0	100.0	807	811
European	34.4	30.4	39.8	30.4	2.2	2.5	23.7	36.7	100.0	100.0	93	79
Aboriginal	100.0	81.8	-	-	-	-	-	18.2	100.0	100.0	7	11
Part-Aboriginal	69.6	75.0	4.3	-	-	-	26.1	25.0	100.0	100.0	23	20
Asian	18.8	25.9	50.0	40.7	-	-	31.2	33.3	100.0	100.0	16	27
Total	36.6	34.7	37.2	38.7	1.8	1.8	23.5	25.0	100.0	100.0	945	946
<u>Federal Elections</u>												
Australian	42.4	41.5	37.9	40.5	3.1	1.6	16.7	16.3	100.0	100.0	798	802
European	37.6	32.1	39.8	37.2	5.4	2.6	17.2	28.2	100.0	100.0	93	78
Aboriginal	100.0	81.8	-	-	-	-	-	18.2	100.0	100.0	7	11
Part-Aboriginal	73.9	81.0	4.3	9.6	-	-	21.7	9.5	100.0	100.0	23	21
Asian	31.2	29.6	56.2	44.4	6.3	-	6.3	22.2	100.0	100.0	16	26
Total	42.9	42.0	37.2	39.2	3.3	1.6	17.4	16.5	100.0	100.0	937	938

Table 4.15

Religion by party identification (%)

	ALP		CLP		Other		None		Total		(N)	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
<u>NT Elections</u>												
Anglican	36.5	33.6	45.9	45.2	2.0	0.8	15.3	20.3	100.0	100.0	222	241
Catholic	41.7	41.4	32.2	32.5	1.6	0.8	24.4	25.3	100.0	100.0	242	249
Other Protestant	29.8	24.9	50.0	46.3	1.2	-	19.6	27.9	100.0	100.0	168	229
Other	28.2	36.2	39.4	33.3	4.2	5.8	29.6	26.1	100.0	100.0	72	70
None	40.5	40.3	26.0	27.0	1.6	4.4	31.8	28.3	100.0	100.0	242	159
Total	37.1	34.8	37.5	38.2	1.8	1.7	23.8	25.2	100.0	100.0	946	948
<u>Federal Elections</u>												
Anglican	40.2	39.9	45.6	42.4	1.8	0.8	12.3	16.8	100.0	100.0	219	238
Catholic	46.7	51.2	32.9	33.4	2.9	0.4	17.5	14.9	100.0	100.0	240	248
Other Protestant	38.9	29.1	46.1	48.0	3.6	-	11.4	22.0	100.0	100.0	167	227
Other	35.7	44.1	35.7	32.4	7.1	7.4	21.4	17.6	100.0	100.0	71	68
None	46.9	47.8	27.7	29.9	2.9	5.1	21.8	17.2	100.0	100.0	239	157
Total	42.9	41.9	37.2	38.8	3.3	1.6	16.7	17.7	100.0	100.0	936	938

identification. Since the category of non-identifiers includes people with little information about Northern Territory politics, as well as people who lack interest in such things, it is to be expected that fewer long-term residents belong to it. Recently arrived residents have stronger identification with the ALP, although the difference is not large. Women who recently came to the Territory identify less strongly with the ALP than do men. In terms of events which have an important impact on Northern Territory affairs, these figures show that the majority of men coming to the area since Cyclone Tracy have ALP affiliation, and that this characteristic is even more apparent amongst those who have come since self-government in 1978.

Socio-economic Characteristics and Party Identification

Of the Territorians who describe themselves as Australians, a slightly higher proportion identify as CLP voters in Northern Territory elections, and as ALP voters in federal elections (Table 4.14). They account for 85 per cent of the sample, and as a result their characteristics are close to those for the sample as a whole.

Other, inevitably smaller, groups show some important variations from the average. Europeans have stronger leanings towards the CLP while 75 per cent of Aborigines and part-Aborigines favour the ALP. As we have noted above, Aborigines aged 18 and over are not yet all enrolled and consequently the sample, like the electoral roll itself, under-represents them and their preference for the ALP. It should be noted, however, that the proportion of the Aboriginal population living in towns is much lower than the proportion of white Australians living in towns. In contrast to the Aborigines, Asians identify strongly with the CLP, but again, because they are few in numbers, their overall effect on the figures for the Territory urban electorate is limited.

The two main religious groups in the electorate, Anglican and Catholic, have significantly different political preferences. While the majority of the Anglicans, in both Northern Territory and federal elections, supported the CLP, ALP supporters were the largest group among the Catholics (Table 4.15). Other Protestants and people professing other faiths, including the Orthodox and Jewish, also tended to support the CLP more strongly than the ALP, but people with no religious attachments tended to identify with the Labor Party.

Although Catholics outnumber Anglicans in the electorate, the preference of other religious groups for the CLP, when added to that from the Anglicans, balances the higher preference for the ALP among Catholics.

The relationship between level of formal education and party identification is as expected. The ALP drew twice as much support as the CLP from people who either had no schooling or had attended only primary school. Almost 70 per cent of CLP supporters came from people with a secondary school education, while only 60 per cent of ALP supporters belonged to this category (Table 4.16). The ALP, however, also had a comparatively high proportion of adherents who had completed tertiary training. It seems, therefore, that the range of education in the ALP group is in general broader than that in the CLP group, i.e. the ALP group contains distinct segments, including younger, highly educated people and older people with limited education; the CLP tends to have less clearly distinguished elements.

Finally, there is a clear relationship between occupational groups and party identification (Fig. 4.6, Appendix Table 4I). Comparatively high proportions of those in professional and managerial jobs, small businessmen and farmers supported the CLP while blue-collar workers and those in the mining industry tended to be ALP supporters. In two groups, the semi-professionals/ technicians and the white-collar workers, the differences in level of support were not great. Since these people form two of the largest occupational groups in the electorate, accounting for almost half the sample, this means that the bigger discrepancies noted among other occupational categories have little effect in general.

Table 4.16

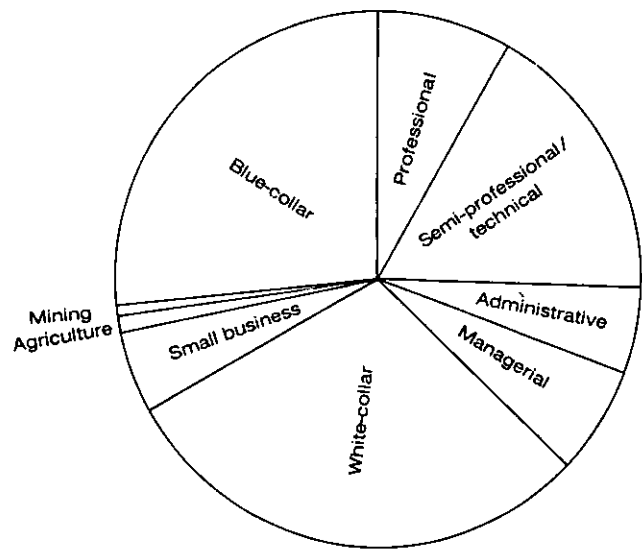
Education by party identification (%)NT Election only

	<u>ALP</u>		<u>CLP</u>	
	M	F	M	F
No school	1.1	0.6	-	-
Attended primary	3.7	4.3	2.2	1.1
Completed primary	8.2	8.2	5.0	5.7
Attended secondary	30.8	28.9	24.0	31.2
Completed secondary	29.7	28.9	41.6	42.0
Attended tertiary	6.5	4.9	10.6	6.2
Completed tertiary	20.1	24.3	16.5	13.8
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(354)	(329)	(358)	(369)

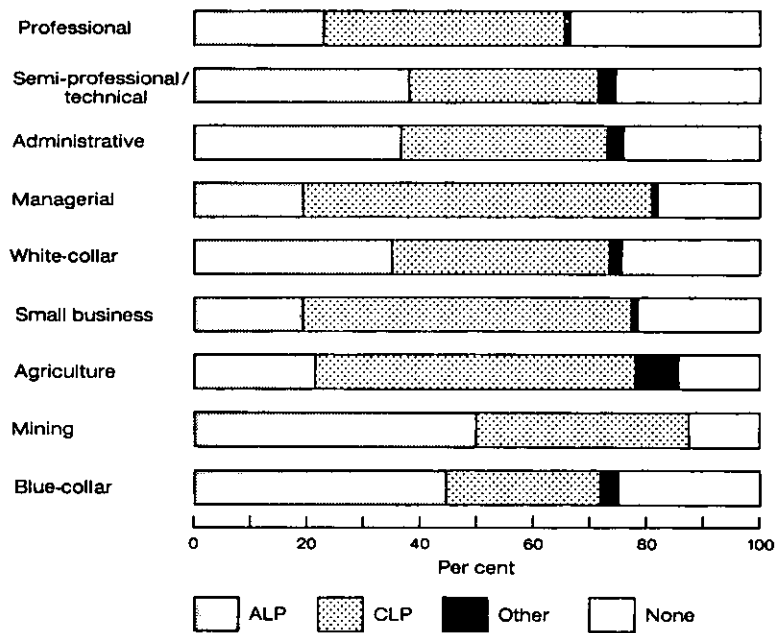
Conclusion

This brief analysis of the relationship between demographic characteristics and political allegiance has shown a variety of effects. Among other things, support for the ALP or CLP is affected by age; by which part of Australia or overseas country you were born in, or have spent most of your life in before becoming a resident of the Territory; by when you first came to the Northern Territory; by your level of formal education; by your occupational category; and by your societal identification and your religion. All of these factors may interact in any one individual, and hence it is very difficult to assess what the overall result will be. Given the structure of the Northern Territory's population, in many ways not typical of the national structure, all should be borne in mind.

(a) OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION



(b) NT PARTY IDENTIFICATION



Occupation (Combined Respondent and Spouse)
by Party Identification (NT) by Sex

CHAPTER FIVE

PARTY ALLEGIANCE

In his study of Australian voters in 1967 and 1969, Aitkin concluded that 'the key to understanding stability and change in Australian politics is the continuing attachment of Australians to one or other of the political parties' (1982, 285). His 1979 survey found that 'the extent to which the electorate accepted a partisan label varied hardly at all over twelve years', and that 'the similarity in structure of these two separate examples of 1967 and 1979, both interviewed in periods of electoral quiet, is most striking' (1982, 286, 287).

These conclusions lead to at least two questions which are central to our study of political attitudes and political behaviour in the Northern Territory. One question is relatively simple - is there evidence of 'continuing attachments' to political parties in the Territory, especially among the high proportion of interstate immigrants, many if not most of whom were carrying with them a party identification formed elsewhere? The second question is more complex, and concerns a long-running debate in the discipline of politics - the nature, status and salience of party identification. We will return to this question below.

Whether we would expect to find similar intensity, stability and fidelity of party identification in the Northern Territory depends on how we interpret what appear to be contradictory elements. The NT is part of the Australian political, party and electoral system, and as the patterns of party identification in the states show little regional variation - intensity and stability of party attachments are similar from Sydney to Perth, from Brisbane to Hobart - we could expect similar patterns in the urban electorates of the Territory. Further, as most of the 1982 electorate were immigrants from the other Australian states, we could expect them to bring with them the party attachments they had formed elsewhere. If commitment and fidelity can cross state boundaries elsewhere in Australia, we could reasonably expect them to cross into the Territory. Such a conclusion is based on party identification as an independent variable, one that 'travels' and retains its potency in a different environment.

The alternative conclusion is based on the fact that the Northern Territory is a different environment - physically, socially and politically - from the rest of Australia. The urban society is young and composed of recent immigrants, isolated from the rest of Australia and in towns isolated from one another - consider the location, and the problems of transport and communication between Alice Springs, Darwin and Nhulunbuy. Northern Territory society contains the highest proportion of Aborigines of all of the political regions, and the impact of Aboriginal policies and of Aborigines is obvious. Further, the party system of the Northern Territory is very young and still in a state of relative flux. Hence those born in the Territory, and those who arrived prior to the emergence of a party system in the late 1960s, may have less party commitment than more recent arrivals. For a person moving from Sydney to Melbourne or from Adelaide to Perth, the social and party environment is similar. But moving to Darwin or Alice Springs, or another urban centre in the Northern Territory is a move not only to a less settled party environment, but to a different society and a different political culture.

The 1982 survey produced evidence to support both positions. Of those who claimed an allegiance to one of the two major parties, the patterns of direction and intensity of that allegiance were similar to the national pattern. The commitment to party is apparently stronger among the Labor identifiers in the Northern Territory, and commitment to the CLP is weaker, than in the national sample. But there is no major difference.

On the other hand, when the total samples are compared, there is evidence of a significantly weaker allegiance to the party system. Over a quarter of the NT sample claimed no party identification, almost double the proportion in Australia as a whole in both 1967 and 1979 surveys.

Table 5.1

<u>Intensity and direction of identification</u>						
(% of respondents)						
	Australia 1979		(N)	NT 1980		(N)
	<u>Labor</u>	<u>LNCP</u>		<u>Labor</u>	<u>CLP</u>	
Very strong	32	37	(524)	40	35	(531)
Somewhat strong	46	47	(712)	38	39	(545)
Not very strong	22	16	(282)	21	26	(332)
	(760)	(758)	(1518)	(682)	(726)	(1408)

(Source: Aitkin 1982, Table 19.2)

Table 5.2

<u>Party identification and party vote</u>			
(% of respondents)			
	Australia		NT
	<u>1967</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>1982</u>
Identified with a party	87	85	75
No party identification	13	15	25
Total	100	100	100
(N)	(2021)	(1982)	(1906)

A significant difference emerged from the analysis of NT and national party identification. Aitkin (1982, 47) noted that only eight per cent of his national sample claimed different state and federal party identification, and for most of these the federal attachment was the more important. In our NT sample over 18 per cent claimed distinct party identification for local and national politics and for most of these the NT attachment (or lack of it) was the more important. Again, the net party result of these respondents worked against the Labor party in the Territory - a small but significant proportion of the sample retained Labor identification in national politics but shed this, or changed to the CLP, in the NT context.

Further, the survey suggested that NT residents are much more willing and able to differentiate between national and NT political arenas. In 1979, contrasting state and federal identification had increased to 11 per cent (mainly from the NSW and Queensland sub-samples) but these levels (1982, 286) were well below the NT figure of 18 per cent with different party identification.

Respondents who expressed different attachments were asked 'Why do you think of yourself in different terms?'. Of the total of 191 responses (up to three could be given), 52 (27 per cent) were comments on the NT as unique, or needs a different approach, and 23 responses (12 per cent) were critical of the NT Labor party - weak, disorganised. A further 12 per cent were comments favourable to the CLP - better for NT, CLP record good.

The survey also explored changes in party identification within the context of NT politics. Of the sample of 1,945, a total of 1,854 responded to the question 'Have you always thought of yourself as [party] in NT politics?'. Of these, 296 (16 per cent) stated that they had changed their party identification. This group is significant. Of the total of 1,945 respondents, 444 or nearly one quarter of the sample, had arrived in the Territory in the two years since the election. Hence, if we assume that a change in party identification is normally a relatively slow process, then the 16 per cent of changers is significant. On the other hand, the change of identification could occur soon after arrival in the new political environment and culture - a sudden decision to change. Of the 444 who claimed a change in attachment, 167 could (or would) say when the change occurred: 24 (14 per cent) pointed to the Whitlam era (which had a major impact in the Territory), while 120 (72 per cent) stated that the change in their attachment occurred since 1976, and most of these were recent (post-1974) arrivals in the Territory. While only six respondents stated the change occurred 'When I came to the NT', the impression was also given by many others that the process was sudden.

Of those who stated that they had changed party identification from Labor to CLP, half of the reasons given stated a positive attraction by the CLP - Everingham, the CLP's record, better for the NT, CLP is better for business. Of those who changed commitment from CLP to Labor, most reasons stated a negative reaction to the CLP - dictatorial, not kept promises, selling the Territory overseas. Only a small number of responses mentioned any positive factor of the Labor party which had attracted them.

This aspect was further explored by asking respondents whether their attachment to party (or lack of it) had changed recently. Of the 1,787 who responded, 80 per cent had not changed. Of the 309 respondents who stated that they had changed, only six had moved towards the Labor party in terms of allegiance, while 48 had become identified with the CLP recently. The significant component was the 14 per cent of the total sample, 255 respondents, who stated that their party identification had weakened recently, some to the point of shedding their party allegiance completely.

Party Identification and Party Support

The voter has always been of central concern to democratic theorists, but the scientific study of voters and voting behaviour is only a recent phenomenon. And one key issue over which there is considerable difference of opinion is that of the causal relationship of party identification and voting behaviour.

The development of the sample survey as a research method in the early post-war years in America provided a means to test what was increasingly obvious - a disjunction between the theory of the rational, adjudicating voter who weighed issues, events and people before casting a vote, and the apparent stability of patterns of party choice.

The early studies, for example Berelson's Voting, explained the stability by the impact of social factors - the voter was a creature of his social position and voted according to class or some other social variable(s). A second approach most evident in The American Voter (Campbell et al, 1960) proposed that party identification was the key to the explanation of voter consistency, and stability of patterns of party choice. This reached its most developed stage in what Campbell et al called the 'Funnel of Causality' where party identification was given the status of a perceptual screen through which all events and issues of political life, and especially of election campaigns, were forced to pass and against which they were measured (1960, 133). The 'natural' tendency, then, is for the voter to follow his party identification under all but the most extreme circumstances. This model, Campbell et al claimed, provided the explanation for consistent voters and for the stability of electoral patterns - the over-riding causal effect of party identification, habit and the family.

More recently, this model of a causal relationship of party identification and the vote has come under attack. Major shifts of party support from one election to another, especially in America and Britain, have raised the question that either party identification has weakened recently, or that the causal relationship is not as strong as suggested.

A recent study (Himmelweit et al 1981) based on a 15-year longitudinal study in Britain provides further evidence for the debate. The study had a major advantage in that it interviewed a panel of voters over several elections over 15 years and hence did not have to allow for the problems of vote recall. The main aspect of the study in regard to our concern in the Northern Territory is that the authors reject the Campbell et al model and its emphasis on party identification as the over-riding influence. They saw

no reason to treat the voting decision as different from any other decision by postulating one dominant, permanent source of influence with cognitions relegated to a subsidiary position (1981, 11).

They proposed what they call a 'consumer model of voting' where the voter is 'responsive rather than dependent, active rather than passive' (1981, 11). This consumer model relegates party identification to one influence among many, and concludes that party identification has no direct influence on the vote, that it is only one of a multitude of social and issue variables, the effects of which will vary.

When this consumer model is examined, it shows a close similarity to that of the adjudicating voter of classical theory! It is a model proposed to explain the British voter, and has similarities with recent proposals, for example by Pomper et al in the Voters' Choice (1975), that American voters are less consistent and American election patterns less stable because of the rise of the 'responsive voter' (1975, 8) and a decrease in the determining influence of party identification.

The 'consumer model' is persuasive, although it can be criticised for resting on a narrow semantic point. The authors (1981, 193) appear to make a clear distinction between two terms that may not be distinct:

In our model party identification has no direct influence on vote; instead it is one, but only one, of the individual's political preferences, whose influence on vote will vary. The habit of voting for a party, on the other hand, has a direct influence on vote.

It is this distinction between habit and identification which is crucial to the thesis of How Voters Decide. But, in the practice of the voting decision and its explanation to an interviewer, it is a questionable distinction. Party identification and a long-term habit of voting for the same party may be qualitatively different but how many voters make the distinction? When asked about party identification, do respondents reply in terms of long-term habit of voting? In our questionnaire, the distinction was attempted: interviewers and respondents alike had explained to them that what we were seeking was identification with a party as distinct from a vote, or a pattern of voting, for a party. But we suspect that many, if not most, respondents do not carry the two concepts in their minds as separate and distinct. As Aitkin notes (1982, 36-7n), the concept of party identification is a 'psychological attribute, uncomfortably close to the actual behaviour it is used to explain'. Perhaps the authors of How Voters Decide have not considered this sufficiently in drawing their distinction.

What, then, can we conclude about the causal status of party identification in terms of voting, firstly in Australia, and then in the Northern Territory? We have already noted (Table 5.1) that of the party identifiers, there seems little significant difference between national and regional in direction and intensity. But we have also noted (Table 5.2) a significantly lower level of identification with parties.

When we examine the patterns of party support of Australian electors and compare them with American and British patterns the keystone of Australia appears to be relative stability. Shifts of aggregate electoral opinion in Australia have been small, especially in comparison with recent elections in the other two nations. To use the language of How Voters Decide, then, the 'habit of voting' in Australia appears to be stronger. Aitkin, in our view correctly, ascribes the cause of this stability to the strength of party identification and its transmission from generation to generation. We could argue with his willingness to use terms such as '"partisan self-image", "party loyalty", "partisan stance", and so on' (1982, 37n) interchangeably with party identification, but this would be a quibble. What we can say is that in the long-term history of Australian elections

and in recent years, the habit of voting has been relatively consistent, and that survey evidence suggests that this consistency shows a close correlation with party identification. As Aitkin puts it (1982, 288)

in contrast with Britain, where the proportion not voting in accordance with party identification increased...Australian electors did not begin to act out of sympathy with their party identification.

In contrast with the national survey, the Northern Territory sample showed double the proportion who voted against party identification.

Table 5.3

Party identification and vote
(% of respondents)

	Australia *		NT
	<u>1967</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>1982</u>
Voted in agreement with party identification	93	93	89
Voted, but not in agreement	5	5	10
Did not vote	2	2	1
Total	100	100	100
(N)	(1615)	(1639)	(1032)
% of sample	80	83	53

(* Source: Aitkin 1982, Table 19.1)

Aitkin's data show clearly (1982, 286-7) that the 'extent to which the electorate accepted a partisan label varied hardly at all over twelve years', and further, that 'the degree of partisanship altered very little over the same time', despite the fact that this period was one of the most turbulent in Australian political history. The evidence for Australia, then, is that party identification is strong and consistent, and has a powerful relationship with the vote. The evidence suggests, for Australia, that party identification is more within the model of The American Voter - a causal relationship, a 'central screen' (Campbell et al 1960, 133) for the voter's decision, than it is within the 'consumer' model of How Voters Decide. The evidence suggests that party identification in Australia has more salience, and is a more powerful factor, in voting choice than the constellation of issues, events and persons that the authors of the consumer model suggest for Britain.

Given this, the differences from the Australian patterns evident in the Northern Territory sample pose the question whether party identification is less important in the latter, whether the 'consumer' model can be more accurately applied to the Territory than to Australia. In Table 5.3, while over 80 per cent of the Australian sample could be included, only 53 per cent of the NT sample could be. The omitted 47 per cent included 19 per cent who rejected identification with a party and a further 21 per cent who were not in the NT at the 1980 election. The implications for the party system and for party loyalty and party vote have already been noted.

Given the unique political environment of the Northern Territory we could confidently expect that the impact and salience of party identification would be weaker than on the national scene, under either of the models outlined above. If party identification is seen as a controlling factor, then the impact of the different political environment could

be expected to test the control. If party identification is seen merely as one of a number of intervening variables, then the effects of the other variables in the Territory could be expected to be more important. Most of the urban population consists of recent immigrants who would have brought their established party identification but who moved into a different society and political culture, into a less-settled party environment, which gave them the opportunity to question their established party loyalties.

The 1982 survey shows that both the degree and salience of party identification are weaker in the Northern Territory than in Australia as a whole. Fewer voters identify with parties, and fewer identifiers carry that allegiance into the vote. The latter factor reinforced the evidence in Chapter 3 - that the Labor party is disadvantaged by the degree of inconsistency in the Territory. Of the 10 per cent of the sample who voted against party identification in 1982 (Table 5.3), twice as many Labor identifiers voted CLP than CLP identifiers voted Labor. The analysis of recalled voting and voting intention 'now' of the non-identifiers further reinforced this impression of Labor disadvantage.

Table 5.4

Voting patterns of respondents who had
no party identification
(% of respondents)

	Voted/Voting Intention			
	NT	Elections	Federal	
	1977	1980	'Now'	1980
Labor	36	33	28	46
CLP	57	55	37	49
Other, Ind.	9	11	10	6
Undecided	-	-	25	-
(N)	(165)	(291)	(407)	(351)

If the 'undecided' are divided among the parties in the existing ratio, then the 'now' vote becomes 38:51:11. Even without the 'undecided', all three elections reflect the advantage of the CLP which, as noted above and emphasised by the 1980 federal data above, is specific to the NT electoral arena, and disappears at the national level. These data comparing NT and federal patterns add further weight to the evidence that both patterns of party identification and the relationship of allegiance and vote are weaker in the Territory.

The paragraphs above lead us to a key question: if most of our sample was comprised of adult immigrants from other states who, we can assume, carried with them a party identification, what happens to a significant number of them when they cross the border into the Territory? The questionnaire traced the identification of respondents from national to the Northern Territory. Of 792 respondents who claimed Labor identification nationally, 83 per cent identified with Labor in NT politics and 6 per cent with the CLP. Of 704 respondents who identified with the CLP nationally, 90 per cent stayed CLP in NT politics and only 2 per cent switched to Labor identification. Of the 285 who claimed no party identification nationally, 89 per cent remained so in the NT, 8 per cent identified with the CLP and 3 per cent with Labor in Territory politics.

The survey also tested for the NT Aitkin's conclusions (1982, 94, 309) that 'the source of much of the stability in the Australian party system is...the transmission of loyalties and interest from parents to children', and 'the tendency of partisan parents to produce partisan children was almost as plain in 1979 as it had been in 1967'. In the NT

sample, the transmission of loyalties was slightly weaker overall. Labor identifiers showed a stronger family commitment, but the CLP identifiers contained a much larger proportion who had not simply followed parental allegiance, a factor which was expected on evidence already discussed.

Respondents were asked what first attracted them to the party they currently identified with. Any specific effects of NT residence were masked by the majority of respondents who had not changed allegiance after moving to the Territory, those whose allegiance had been formed elsewhere in Australia. But even allowing for this, there are some interesting patterns.

Table 5.5

First attracted to party - reasons,
by party identification
(% of (up to 3) responses)

	<u>Labor</u>	<u>CLP</u>	<u>Total</u>
1. People	10	15	12
2. Aboriginal policy	2	1	2
3. Management of govt	3	16	9
4. Philosophy	2	11	7
5. Issues	17	9	12
6. Party	13	19	17
7. Other, family, habit	53	29	40
(N)	(821)	(889)	(1732)

As in other regions in Australia, a high proportion of the NT urban respondents stated that their identification with the party of their choice was a matter of habit, or family vote, or occupation, or class, or a similar response. This trend was much more evident among those who identified with the Labor party. If we combine this 'habit-family' response with 'philosophy' and 'party' to produce an aggregate index, then that accounts for 68 per cent of Labor responses and 59 per cent of CLP responses, a pattern not unlike that elsewhere in Australia.

Three aspects do merit comment. First, it is important to note that Aborigines and Aboriginal policy formed only a very minor component of party identification. There is no doubt that the presence, activities and demands of Aborigines, and the question of Aboriginal policy do loom very large in the Northern Territory society and polity. But, in terms of the political system, there is little evidence from the survey that people's perceptions of the party system and respondent's party identification and party choices are centrally related to Aboriginal issues. Some further aspects of that conclusion are explored below. Second, the impact of personality is shown by the 12 per cent of the responses, and the 15 per cent of the CLP responses, who specifically named a person as the reason for their current party identification. Third, the record of CLP government was the salient factor, especially for CLP identifiers.

Conclusions based on the data analysed in this chapter can only be preliminary. Especially in regard to the relationship of identification and vote - the causal impact of the former - we can only suggest that for the Northern Territory, party identification seems to be more challenged by other variables in terms of both prediction of, and explanation for, patterns of party support than in the rest of Australia. It is apparent that party identification is as strong a predictor of the vote as in the rest of Australia

for those who are strongly partisan, but that there is a higher proportion of people who have weaker commitments to party or who have shed party allegiances entirely. Further, the patterns of party identification, and the relations between identification and party support, contain aspects which benefit the CLP and disadvantage the Labor party. In terms of explanation of voting behaviour it is apparent that the Northern Territory is an environment where short-term factors - leaders, campaigns, events - have the potential to be more important than elsewhere in Australia. Party identification may be as strong a controlling influence as elsewhere among the strong party identifiers in the NT, but other factors are obviously as much if not more effective for a significant proportion of the electorate.

In summary, three themes emerge from the analysis of patterns of party identification in the Northern Territory urban sample. It is evident that among those who do identify with a party, both the patterns of direction of identification and of intensity of commitment appear similar to those in the rest of Australia, certainly to those discovered by Aitkin. But two themes suggest that there is something different in the Territory. There is a very high proportion of the electors who are not identified with any party. Of the total sample of 1,911 who replied, 465 (24 per cent) stated they had no party identification, and this establishes a significant proportion who are adrift from the party system. Further, the evidence of the survey suggests that not only are less voters committed to party, but that party identification is apparently less of a controlling variable. The small electorates, the isolation of the Territory from the rest of Australia and of the urban settlements in the Territory from each other, the young, recent immigrant population and a party system still in relative flux, combine to produce an environment that not only allows but encourages short-term factors and events to compete with party identification as causal factors in the electoral decision-making process.

CHAPTER SIX

CLASS, PARTY AND SOCIAL MOBILITY

Class has long been regarded as the most important element of social structure in any analysis of political parties and of the support which voters give to them, especially over long periods. Even people who disagree sharply on the definition of class generally accept that class is difficult to change; an underlying factor which links the economic and political activities of society.

From this point of view, class is a principal mechanism of social differentiation. The positions of people relative to one another, and the inequalities that exist between them can be thought of in terms of status, power and wealth. Under conditions of social and economic stability these positions can remain relatively fixed for a long time. Individuals may move from one position to another in their lifetime, however. These positions are what most people understand by the term class. They know that some people have 'more' of the socially valuable things than others and that there is little the 'others' can do, as individuals, to modify or reduce the inequalities of their social position. Those with the most valued things are generally described as upper class and those who have least as working, or sometimes lower, class. In between there is a third class, the middle class, which is tolerably well-to-do and socially influential but not as powerful or wealthy or as deserving of deference as the upper class. This three-level scheme of classes is widely accepted by people in industrial society.

We found that with very few exceptions the people in our sample used this three-level scheme. Without any prompting from the interviewer, we asked them to tell us what class they belonged to. Eighty-five per cent said they belonged to one of the three classes, upper, middle or working. A few said they were lower class, too few to be counted separately from those who said they were working class. The rest were about equally divided between those who refused to answer and those who said that there was no such thing as class and, of the latter, some qualified their statements when confronted with further questions. In the national sample, about 95 per cent labelled themselves in class terms without difficulty (Aitkin 1982, 316).

Class is thought to be important because it shapes so much of the political life of individuals. And it does this because their 'life chances' are determined, so many writers argue, by the class position into which they are born. Those born to a higher class, in general, have better educational and occupational opportunities than those born into lower classes. They may well inherit property or wealth in some other form and they are likely to gain a measure of social esteem from their family background.

The interests of workers in industrial society - in politics and so on - are different from and often opposed to those of people in higher classes. Political life is shaped by the way class influences the understanding people have of current issues and leaders and of their own position in relation to them. It moulds their ideologies, it shapes their image of society, its conflicts and its history. In other words, the argument is that class links together a number of things that voters might well think are separate and makes a more or less consistent whole out of them. This carries great weight in explaining why voters of a particular class tend to vote together for one side in politics, rather than another, and do so consistently. By this mechanism political parties are tied to classes: the Labor party or its equivalents to the working classes, the non-Labor party to the middle and upper classes.

The link between class and party is, however, more complex than the preceding sketch suggests. Most writers recognise that there are other bases of stratification in society beside class. Status is the most important. The sociologist Max Weber wrote of status that,

In contrast to the purely economically determined 'class situation' we wish to designate as 'status situation' every typical component of the life fate of men that is determined by a specific, positive or negative, social estimation of honor. This honor may be connected

with any quality shared by a plurality, and, of course, it can be knit to a class situation: class distinctions are linked in the most varied ways with status distinctions...But status honor need not necessarily be linked with a 'class situation'. On the contrary, it normally stands in sharp opposition to the pretensions of sheer property (emphasis from source) (Weber, in Gerth and Mills, eds, 1948, 186-7).

Status can be thought of as the honour which one person is given by others. The phrase social recognition is often used instead. Like class, status is graded into a hierarchy of fixed or relatively fixed positions. Status, as Weber conceived it, is distinct from both class and property, although it may reinforce each of them and in turn be reinforced by them. In European society in particular, and to a lesser extent in Australia, property can be important in the transmission of status from persons in one generation to persons in the following generation. This is notably so in the higher gradings. High status of the individual is frequently linked to the relatively high economic standing of a family from one generation to the next. Although they are distinct principles of social differentiation, class and status are in practice frequently linked through the acquisition and disposal of money. As Runciman summarises it, 'class depends on where your money comes from and status on what it goes on' (1963, 138).

In our survey, a number of people made the distinction and were aware that they might have different levels of class and status. One comment, made several times, was to the effect that 'we are really workers, but we do have two cars and we own our house, so I suppose you would have to say we are middle class; mind you we do have two incomes in the family...'. Here the first reference was to an occupation, a working-class job, the second was to income and what it would buy, particularly a house and a second car, and the third to the fact that other people were able to achieve all this from only one income. Other respondents made the distinction when asked whether they would place themselves in the upper or lower class, because of their occupation or their style of life. Some people also thought of status as an aspect of class, but this way of thinking did not remove the tension in their perception of their own position if class and status were inconsistent with one another. People who have different class and status positions may well feel unsure of their party position and vote in some way which, on the simple class-party model, is seemingly aberrant.

Occupational rankings confuse the picture even further, both for respondents in surveys and the research workers themselves. Occupations are often grouped under different headings - professional, white-collar, blue-collar and so on, or at the most general level, manual and nonmanual - and we use both of these groupings. But in addition, occupations and the groups of occupations themselves are ranked in an order of superiority and inferiority. Blue-collar jobs are not as prestigious or as well paid or as skilled as the jobs of employers, lawyers, teachers and so on. To some extent - difficult to determine in individual cases and always variable and debatable - the ranking of occupations is determined by class and status, and modified by the wealth accumulated by those in profitable, though low-prestige occupations. And yet, in some studies, occupation is accepted as a substitute for class, on the assumption that at least some of the difficulties of a class analysis are avoided. One of these difficulties is the inherent ambiguity in the concept of class. By comparison, an occupation is clear-cut and unambiguous. People can be asked what their jobs are with some confidence that they will give 'hard data' as compared with the answers they will give when asked what class they belong to. But there are a very large number of different kinds of jobs and if information about jobs is to be of any use at all, the jobs must be both grouped and ranked. At its simplest they will be grouped into manual and non-manual categories, blue-collar and white-collar, unskilled and skilled, to name three broad classificatory schemes. In each scheme, the first group is ranked as 'lower' than the second in some sense. But both in grouping occupations and in ranking them by one criterion or another, what starts out as hard data is converted into soft data which may be little better than the data obtained by asking people directly what class they belong to.

Another feature of class-stratified society which confuses the simple class-party relationship is social mobility. Most people remain within one class throughout their lifetime, but some experience a change of class or status or both, some upwards, some

downwards. This is intragenerational social mobility. A change in the social position of a person relative to that of his or her parents or father at some selected stage of life is called intergenerational social mobility. Education, for example, may result in the child having an occupation and a social position higher than that of the parents.

Many movements up or down are small movements within the grades of class and status and do not result in the movement of people from one class to another. And yet, to those who undergo these changes, they are appreciable even though they are small and may result in anxiety if the movement is downwards or satisfaction in 'getting on' if the movement is thought to be upwards. It is commonly assumed that people who think that they have moved 'upwards' may well desert their earlier party allegiances, especially those perceived as working-class allegiances, and see themselves as independent or as supporting the parties of the middle class. But research in other industrial nations suggests that people's social origins are as important in shaping their present party allegiance as their achieved position (Heath 1981, 233-6).

In our survey we explored this with a group of questions designed to find out whether our respondents thought they had a different class position from that of their parents and whether social improvement was more difficult in the Territory than elsewhere in Australia.

A number of respondents offered comments on these and related questions during interviews, comments which show more of the complexities in exploring the class-party link. Perhaps the most important of these - apart from the distinction between class and status already noted - was the comment that the class structure in Darwin and the Territory is different from elsewhere in Australia. One or two who had migrated from Britain were of the view that Australia had no upper class in the English sense and that its middle class was somehow different. But most comments on this point were to the general effect that 'down south we'd be lower middle class, here we are upper middle class'. By this people often meant, not that they had moved upwards by an improvement in their circumstances, but that in Darwin there were few if any people to compare in wealth and status with those to be found in substantial numbers in selected suburbs of the southern capital cities. The class names were the same but in each case they meant something lower than the same name down south. These comments draw attention to the fact that if the class scale is perceived to be different from one place to another the terms people use to describe themselves, such as middle class, may well not mean the same thing from one person to another. The same may be said of class and status - people who make the distinction do not all make it in the same way, and others will not make it at all, so that when respondents were asked to say what class they belonged to they could easily use the standard terminology to refer to different things (for a more detailed discussion see Broom, Jones and Zubrzycki, 1976, 62-5).

And finally, as Aitkin has found in his analysis of the national sample (1982, 128-9), class labels are relatively inconsequential for the Australian electorate: 'although most people will readily place themselves into a social class, for perhaps two-thirds of them class labels carry little meaning or permanence'. On moving to the Territory, people who wear class labels lightly may change them, with little sense of strain or inconsistency, with quite small changes in their social circumstances.

Direct questions about class have their place - principally in an analysis of the political consequences of how people see society and how they place themselves in it - but they do not provide all the data necessary for exploring the class-party link, especially for the quantitative exploration of the link.

Quantitative measurement is essential because it is generally agreed that the connection between class and party is not an all-or-nothing matter, but a question of degrees and trends. For a long time it was believed that, at their formation, the Australian parties were rooted in class conflict and that, for one reason or another, the connection between them would become clearer (and perhaps did) as time went on and the class conflict became sharper. From this point of view, class should have become more and more important as a determinant of votes, assuming that the parties were clearly identified to the electorate as class parties. But recent work has indicated that, if this ever was the trend (and it cannot be checked by surveys of course), the opposite is

now happening, the class-party link is becoming weaker - or at least more complicated and unpredictable.

In one recent analysis, Kemp concluded that there had been a 'substantial decline in the importance of class as a structural basis for voting behaviour'. And he attributed this decline to 'a strong trend away from the Labor Party among voters from blue-collar households, and a somewhat weaker trend towards Labor among voters from white-collar households' (1978, 352). Drawing on evidence of a different kind, Aitkin agrees - up to a point (1982, 114, 304, 315). In his discussion, Aitkin analyses the political tendencies of men and women separately and his 1979 data lead him to disagree with Kemp's general conclusion that a rise in material wellbeing among the least skilled and most poorly off explains the weakening of the class-party link. By contrast, Aitkin finds that for men there has been

a massive decline in non-manual support for the non-Labor parties, and something like stability in the manual-Labor link (1982, 320).

He goes on to find parts of the answer to the puzzle among women and non-unionists. But for other parts of the answer he has to take account of factors which are not class-related, such as sex and age. But even the class-related variables are not nearly as 'powerful' in explaining party identification as they ought to be if the class hypothesis were to be upheld. Aitkin sets out his general argument as follows:

...the social structural variables of 1980 are more diverse and greater in number than those relevant to 1910. We could sensibly add, for example, whether or not the respondent supervised the work of others, and whether the respondent worked in the public or in the private sector. The range of educational experience of the 1980 electorate is very different to that of the 1910 electorate. So is the diversity of home-ownership, of occupation, of workplace, of ethnic background. Since all of these variables can be shown to have a relationship to partisanship, it follows that they all have some claim to reduce the variance in partisanship. Since they do not all point in the same direction, it follows that they will tend to pull against each other. The result will be a reduced explanatory power for each of them; the greater the number of significant variables, the more difficult the explanation (1982, 311)

and since class is one of the social-structural variables it too is likely to have a reduced explanatory power.

The Kemp-Aitkin debate indicates that trends have to be measured and careful distinctions made. But class is a term of ambiguous and shifting meaning. So it is necessary to take more than the answers of people about the class they belong to as the basic data for analysis. It has been usual to take occupation as well - sometimes instead (Broom, Jones and Zubrzycki, 1976, 62-3) - even though most writers admit that it has shortcomings as a substitute for class. An important alternative to the 'occupational class model' is being developed but it has not yet reached the state where it could be used in this survey (see Wright 1980; Wright *et al.* 1982). We also refer to occupation in order to make comparisons between the Territory sample and the national sample discussed by Aitkin. In order to compare occupations and classes, it helps to summarise occupations dichotomously into manual and non-manual. The former is roughly equivalent to the working class, the latter to the middle and upper classes together. We use both vote and party identification as measures of partisanship, vote being the more useful because a large proportion of respondents gave no Territory party identification.

The phrase 'roughly equivalent' must be emphasised. The notion is that a difference in partisanship between classes will be more clearly observable in terms comparable from one study to another by examining the link between one principal element of class, namely occupation, and partisanship. The notion is not that occupations, summarised within the manual and non-manual categories, will tell us all we need to know about class and its links with partisanship but that it reduces the complexity and uncertainty of comparisons based on class. There is, nonetheless, a loss of precision in moving from a list of

occupations to the categories manual and non-manual which has a bearing on the discussion. Routine white-collar jobs - office machine operator, clerical worker, telephonist, supervisor, bookkeeper, shop assistant and so on - have always been listed as non-manual occupations, in spite of the fact that the people holding them are almost all employees on wages. But in recent years the nature of work has changed and the gap between the skilled blue-collar workers and the more lowly of the white-collar workers has narrowed in such things as income, conditions of employment, job status and so on. The difficulty is that if the basic line of division between manual and non-manual occupations has to be shifted in order to reduce discrepancies between the ranks of class and occupation, there is no agreement yet on where it should be shifted to. Or, indeed, if it should not be rejected altogether in favour of an alternative approach. In the meantime - and especially for comparative purposes - we must continue to make the orthodox distinction.

Respondents' partisanship, in terms of identification with Territory parties, on a class basis was no more than a weak tendency. In each class there were many who said they had no party identification. In general, as one passes down the columns in Table 6.1

Table 6.1

Class and NT party identification

<u>R's Class</u>	(N)	<u>% identifying with</u>		<u>No party ident. %</u>
		<u>Labor</u>	<u>CLP</u>	
None given	(74)	38	14	34
Upper	(18)	50	33	11
Upper middle	(427)	24	51	24
Lower middle	(600)	33	39	23
Upper working	(592)	42	33	23
Lower working	(125)	52	22	23
No such thing	(109)	30	34	30

from upper middle to lower working class, the proportion identifying with Labor rises, as would be expected, and the proportion of CLP identifiers falls. (The proportion of the upper class identifying with Labor may be noted, but the number of respondents is small and not much should be made of the figure.) But it is equally important that identifiers with each party are drawn from all classes. The implication is that class and occupation (to say nothing of status) may well influence or shape party identification in different ways and that the influence of each is probably weak and difficult to distinguish and measure.

Since the manual and non-manual occupations are so often taken to be roughly equivalent to the working and middle classes it is necessary to ask how closely congruent the two are and also how this influences party allegiance. This is done by a comparison of respondents' class (simplified here into working class and middle class), the occupations they reported (grouped here into manual and non-manual), and their party identification. This comparison is presented in Table 6.2.

At first sight, there is a general congruence between class and occupation: the middle class is drawn mainly from the non-manual occupations and, with some non-manual recruits, the working class is drawn largely from blue-collar occupations. But the congruence between occupation and class is not high: 32 per cent of non-manual respondents described themselves as working class instead of middle class. Similarly 34 per cent of manual workers placed themselves in the middle rather than the working class. Table 6.2 is remarkably symmetrical. If we consider the people whose class self-placement 'conformed' with their occupation (i.e. manual workers placing themselves as working class and non-manuals as middle class), then, in each case, we find a clear allegiance, of the same magnitude, towards the party most usually associated with each of the classes. And, in each case, support for the 'other' party is, relatively speaking, of

Table 6.2

Partisanship, occupation and class

	<u>Middle Class</u>		<u>Working Class</u>		<u>Total</u>
	Labor	CLP	Labor	CLP	
Manual	19	15	42	24	100
Non-manual	26	42	17	15	100

(N = 1057)

the same magnitude. These figures suggest that the vote of 'conformers' is in a ratio of about 170:100 in favour of the class party.

But about a third of the sample did not 'conform'. These were the manual 'middle class' respondents and the non-manual 'working class' ones. The former group divide their allegiance in the ratio of 127:100 in favour of Labor, and the latter also split in favour of Labor - only this time in the ratio of 113:100. Thus the data suggest that the partisan support of the 'non-conformists' is nowhere as distinct as that for the 'conformists'.

The 'nonconformity' of a third of our sample is difficult to explain. Perhaps non-manual workers with repetitive jobs were more likely to see themselves as working class. Perhaps those manual workers who placed themselves in the upper middle class had two incomes in the family or other financial advantages that allowed them a life-style they thought of as middle class. Alternatively, perhaps the 'nonconformity' underlines the problems of the occupational class model and the need for a sharper analytic tool. Our data do not allow us to be definite on these issues.

Some light is thrown on these issues, though, by the fairly widespread view - confirmed in our sample - that government employees are disproportionately Labor in party identification.

Our findings point to a higher representation of Labor supporters among government employees than would be expected from their occupational classification. A chi-square test on the actual party identifications of government employees confirms that their Labor partisanship is significantly greater than that which would be expected if they conformed with the whole sample ($\chi^2 = 56.2$; $df = 3$; $p < 0.01$). The pattern changes, however, when the data are disaggregated into manual and non-manual groups. Manual employees cannot be said to differ, in partisanship, from their non-government counterparts ($\chi^2 = 1.9$; $df = 1$; $0.1 < p < 0.25$). Thus the relatively high Labor partisanship is borne by the non-manual employees: and this is confirmed statistically ($\chi^2 = 31.6$; $df = 1$; $p < 0.01$).

Government departments usually employ large numbers of routine office workers, often women, who might identify with the working class rather than with the middle class label conveniently attached to non-manual occupations. If this were the case then we would have a possible explanation for the public service 'bias' in favour of Labor. And indeed the data shows that 60 per cent of the government white-collar workers who assign themselves as working class are Labor supporters, as against 43 per cent of the equivalent group among private employees. But more of the latter group (51 per cent) assign themselves to the working class than do the government white-collar workers (45 per cent), which erodes this argument as a possible explanation.

If we compare all non-manual government employees with the equivalent group of private sector employees then we find that 31 per cent of the former group align themselves with the working class as against 34 per cent of the latter. But 64 per cent of this category of government employees supports Labor against only 40 per cent of the

equivalent private employees. Moreover, 47 per cent of the government group that placed itself in the middle class identified with Labor, whereas only 29 per cent of the equivalent group of private employees did.

Bringing all these data together suggests that a relatively high support for the Labor party runs right through the ranks of the public service. Self-placement in the working class certainly increases the probability that a non-manual government employee will also be a Labor supporter, but the simple fact of being a public employee also increases that probability appreciably. We are unable here to tease out possible reasons for this support, but its presence is important because of the large proportion of public servants in the Northern Territory electorate. Quite simply, the conclusion is that if the Territory had a representation of public servants in proportion with Australia as a whole, then support for the Labor party in the Territory electorate would be considerably less than it currently is.

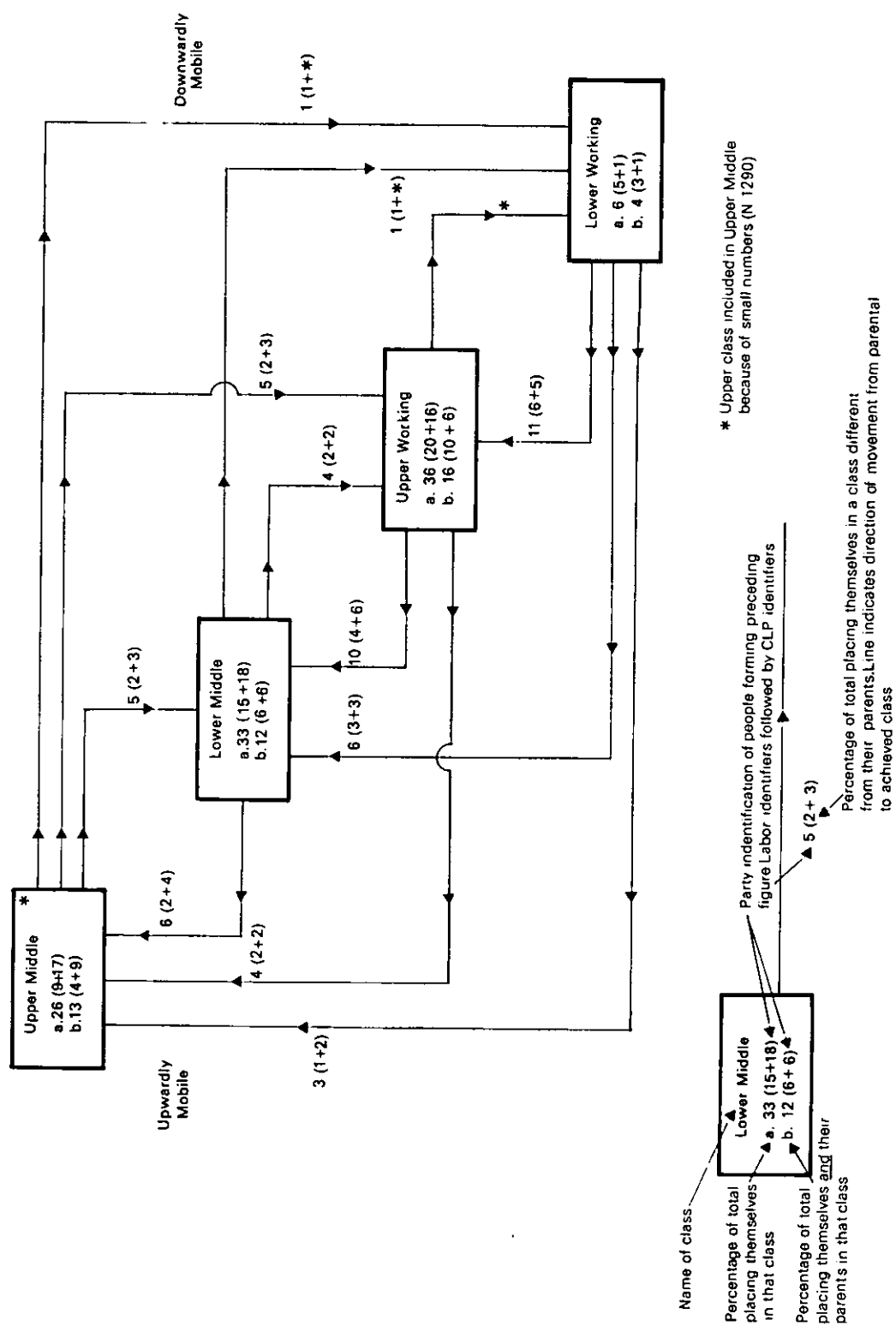
But the principal conclusion is that the working class and the two parts of the middle class especially are each heterogeneous and are drawn from all the main occupation groups. The implication of this is that class and occupation must both be considered in the analysis of party identity and vote: neither can stand for the other. Life-style, status, and the different ranks of jobs within particular classifications complicate matters further, but we have no separate data concerning them to add to the analysis.

We have already mentioned another element of the class analysis of considerable importance: social mobility. We asked respondents not only how they placed themselves in a fixed class list, but also how they placed their family when they were growing up. From these questions we have been able to draw up a picture of social mobility among the Northern Territory urban electorate that relates respondents' perceptions of their movement from one point in the class hierarchy (that into which they were born) to another (that which they have entered in the course of their own lives). On the other hand, the fact that we lack data on the occupations of the respondents' parents means that we are unable to analyse mobility in terms of the conventional occupational class model.

Figure 6.1 sets out diagrammatically the patterns of inter-class movements reported by our respondents. This diagram also summarises a considerable amount of data, yet is restricted to only those respondents who identified with either Labor or the CLP. The four main classes are represented in the boxes, each of which contains data on its composition. To take the example of the lower middle class. The number (a) gives the proportion - 33 per cent - of all respondents who claimed to be lower middle class. The number (b) gives the proportion - 12 per cent - of all respondents who claim to be lower middle class and also placed their parents in the same class. Summing the 'a' numbers gives the total sample and summing the 'b' numbers gives the proportion of that sample which has been socially immobile. Thus a total of 45 per cent placed themselves in the same class as their parents.

The lines between the boxes represent the direction, and the numbers beside them the magnitude of reported inter-class movements. Thus the 33 per cent of lower middle class respondents is built up from 12 per cent of parents from the same class; 10 per cent who had been upwardly mobile from the upper working class; 6 per cent from the lower working class; and 5 per cent who had been downwardly mobile from the upper middle class. All the lines to the left hand side of the boxes represent upward social mobility and all on the right hand side indicate downward social mobility. By summing the figures we gain a measure of the perceived social mobility, and its direction, among our respondents. Thus a total of 40 per cent reported upward, and 16 per cent reported downward social mobility. That is, a total of 56 per cent of respondents thought themselves to be socially mobile and 45 per cent to be static (figures total to 101 per cent because of the 'rounding-off').

Looking more closely at the data in figure 6.1 shows that most mobility, upward or downward, is between proximate classes. Over half, indeed, of all upward mobility is contained in movement from the lower to the upper working class, and from the latter to the lower middle class. In all 36 per cent of all respondents moved, upward or downward, between proximate classes. At the other end of the scale only 4 per cent moved between the lower working and the upper middle classes. So the overall picture is one of a considerable number of relatively small 'jumps' or 'drops' in the social hierarchy.



But what does this all mean in terms of party identification? The bracketed numbers following each of the other numbers in Figure 6.1 relates a breakdown of the preceding number in terms of Labor and CLP identification. The first number in the bracket signifies Labor supporters and the second CLP. Take, once more, the lower middle class as an example. The 33 per cent of respondents claiming membership of this class are made up from the 15 per cent of all respondents who identified with Labor and the 18 per cent who identified with the CLP. Thus by totalling the first of the bracketed figures following number 'a', the total Labor partisanship is found: and likewise the second bracketed numbers will give the CLP partisanship.

The point that arises from this is the extent to which mobility affects partisanship. In one sense this is impossible to measure because we do not know what a person's political orientation would have been if they had not undergone some form of social mobility. So we use a substitute baseline measure: the partisanship of the people currently in the class(es) from which the mobile respondents have moved. Against this we pose the partisanship of the respondents who have been socially mobile.

Table 6.3

Labor partisanship

Class	Whole Class	Downwardly Mobile from Class	Upwardly Mobile from Class
Upper middle	51	79	-
Lower middle	84	107	46
Upper working	126	*	73
Lower working	214	-	133

(N = 1290)

*figures too small to be significant.

In Table 6.3 we calculate the number of Labor supporters per 100 CLP supporters for each class to give us the first column. In the second column we estimate the change in partisanship that downward social mobility can create by calculating the equivalent ratio for all those who claimed to originate in the stated class but have dropped their class ranking in the course of their lifetime. In the third column a similar calculation has been done for those claiming upward social mobility. The results are manifest and it requires no statistical tests of significance to show that perceptions of downward social mobility increases Labor partisanship. Even more striking is the extent to which perceptions of upward social mobility reduces Labor partisanship. Aitkin (1982, 148) reports the same finding for the national sample. The data in this table aggregate mobility and partisanship but an appreciation of the changes in partisanship brought about by upward or downward movement between particular classes can be gained from Figure 6.1.

It is also possible to disaggregate the data in Table 6.3 in terms of respondents' views about the relative difficulty of moving between classes. A problem of this, however, is that the numbers of respondents in particular categories becomes too small to provide meaningful results. Table 6.4 therefore shows, by class only, the number of Labor identifiers per 100 CLP identifiers in terms of the perceived relative difficulty of class movement in the Northern Territory. Again the results are strikingly clear, despite a single contrary case in the upper working class. That is, Labor partisanship decreases progressively, within each class, with views of the increasing ease of movement between classes in the Territory. Possibly, this finding goes some way towards explaining the

marked drop in Labor support shown in the third column of Table 6.3 of those who reported themselves to be upwardly socially mobile.

Table 6.4

Index of Labor partisanship
Difficulty of class movement in the NT

Class	Very Diff.	Fairly Diff.	Not Very Diff.
Upper middle	74	67	43
Lower middle	119	100	75
Upper working	208	100	120
Lower working	313	233	167

(N = 1290)

The overall picture of social mobility given by our respondents, therefore, is one of considerable upward movement (though there is also a significant downwardly moving minority), which is associated with a view of the Territory as being relatively open or easy to move up in. Both these features - perceptions of actual upward social mobility and of the relative ease of such movement - clearly relate to partisanship. A feeling of having undergone upward social mobility very rapidly erodes predispositions towards Labor, and the increase in Labor partisanship among the minority of downwardly mobile occurs at a slower rate than its erosion among the upward movers. Some respondents commented that they may well have 'placed' themselves in a lower group had they been 'down south' because of their sense that the class system in the north was, as a whole, 'lower' relatively than its southern counterpart. They said, in effect, that they had not moved 'upwards' much if at all, but rather that it appeared to be so because the class divisions here are all 'lower' than down south. It is doubtful whether many people shared this insight - if that is what it is. Most believed they had moved upwards in reality as well as appearance.

This picture is confirmed by other data in the survey. Most people thought that it was 'not very difficult' to move upwards socially in the Territory and that it was 'less difficult' than elsewhere in Australia. People who placed themselves in the lower working class were noticeably less confident that it was easy to move upwards than people in other classes, but even so a large majority agreed that it was easier to 'get on' in the Territory than elsewhere. This sense of opportunity was one of the important reasons people gave when asked why they felt it was easy to move socially in the Territory, easier than elsewhere. These reasons add up to one thing: respondents did not have a sharp sense of class conflict in the Territory. This is confirmed by their answers to questions on that point. A majority (56 per cent) of all respondents thought there was no class conflict in the Territory. Those who thought it did exist were 40 per cent of the sample. The two sections of the working class were not significantly different in their assessment from the two parts of the middle class.

When respondents were asked to say how difficult movement from one class to another is in the Territory and whether it is more or less difficult than elsewhere in Australia we also asked them to give reasons for their judgement. Most of the reasons given could be counted under a few headings, listed in two tables below. The reasons people gave for thinking it very difficult, fairly difficult and not very difficult to move are given in Table 6.6, percentages being calculated on column totals. That is to say, those who thought it very difficult to move - they assumed upwards class movement was intended - emphasised the economic barriers to class advancement (the high cost of living and money) with roughly equal emphasis on social barriers (closed society, education). Those who

Table 6.5

Difficulty of class movement in the NT
compared with elsewhere, by class

R's Class	Difficulty compared with elsewhere			Total
	More	Less	Other	
No data	11	37	52	100
Upper	11	61	28	100
Upper middle	14	71	15	100
Lower middle	15	69	16	100
Upper working	16	64	20	100
Lower working	26	44	30	100
No such	10	59	31	100

(N = 1945)

thought it not very difficult to move emphasised that society, as they experienced it, presented few barriers - fewer as table 6.7 shows than elsewhere in Australia. For them - and they are a sizeable majority of the sample, 65 per cent - the Territory is socially a much more open place than the rest of Australia. Those who thought it more difficult to move than elsewhere in Australia emphasised the economic reasons.

Table 6.6

Reasons for difficulty of class movement

	Level of Difficulty, % responses each column		
	Very	Fairly	Not very
High cost of living	13	7	
Money, educational divisions	8	5	
Closed society	10	5	
No opportunity to rise	3		
Occupational, salary mobility	5	8	11
Casual place			9
Open society			5
Good opportunities	5	13	15
No clear classes			12
Everyone mixes			10
Small society		6	5
(N) (% of sample)	(312) (16)	(388) (20)	(1102) (57)

Table 6.7

Why more or less difficult in NT than elsewhere in Australia?

	Level of Difficulty, % responses each column	
	More	Less
High cost of living	24	
Money, educational divisions	15	
Closed society	18	
Salary, occupational mobility		13
Casual place		10
Open society		6
Opportunities greater		18
No clear classes		12
Everyone mixes		10
Small society		7
(N) (% of sample)	(297) (15)	(1256) (65)

Although the tabulations are suggestive of a distinction between class and status and of the influence of one upon the other, the data are not sufficiently discriminating to allow subtle analysis. But one implication seems clear: an economic downturn which reduced the opportunities for advancement could easily modify people's perception of the Territory and result in an increase in the Labor vote.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CLASS AND OTHER FACTORS

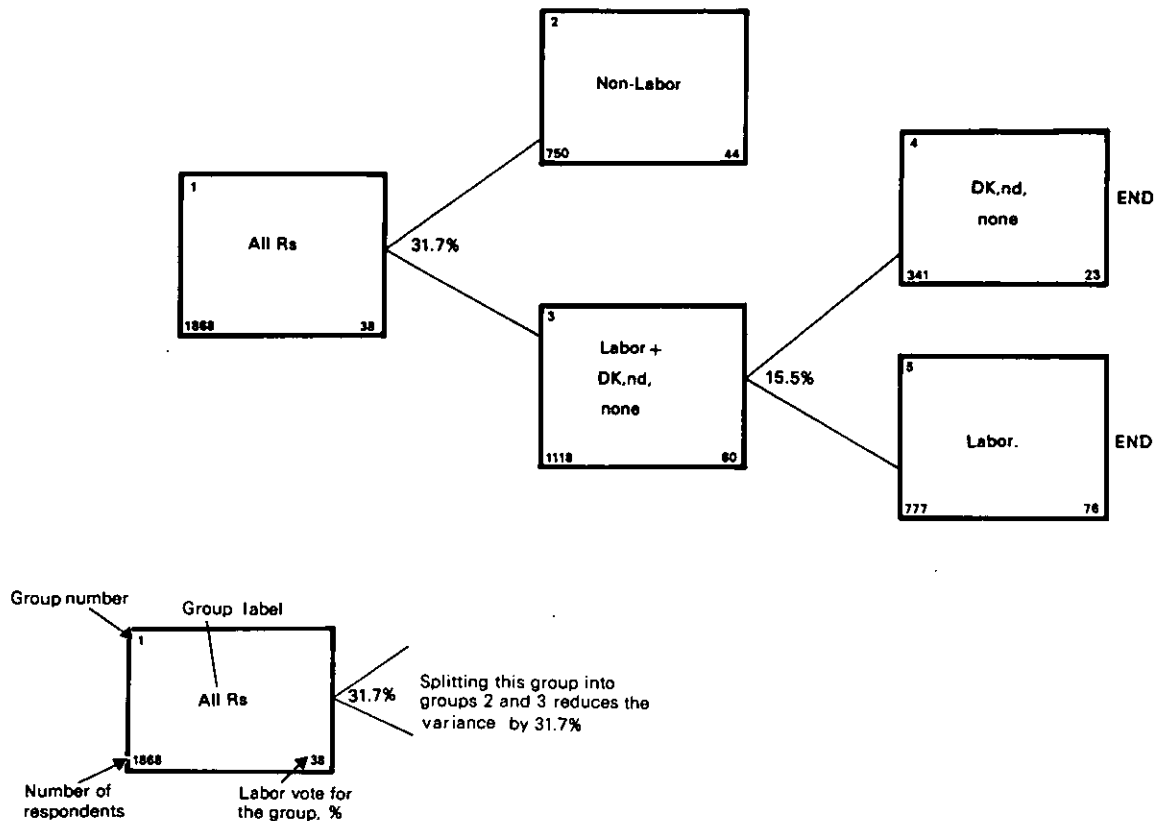
So far we have considered the consequences for voting and party identification of a number of factors, usually called variables, such as class, education, occupation and so on. Vote and party identification, the things we seek to understand, are taken as the dependent variables and the others as the independent (or 'predictor') variables. In general we have considered them two or three at a time, asking what influence class has on the vote, for example, or, to introduce a third variable, what influence class, subdivided by sex, has on the vote. But some of these predictor variables are not wholly independent of one another. For example, in the aggregate, people in higher social classes have higher levels of education than people in lower classes and the effect class has on the vote is not wholly separate from the effect of education. Moreover class and education both 'work in the same direction', or reinforce one another, that is the 'higher' each is the less the Labor vote in most situations. But some variables may work against one another, each cancelling out some of the effect of the other. This presents us with a technical problem in the analysis: to find a way of considering a number of independent variables together so that the contribution of each to the outcome for voting or party identification can be estimated.

There are a number of multivariate techniques which, as Aitkin explains it, 'allow the analyst to sift through a set of variables, discover the important ones, and estimate their relative importance in accounting for the characteristic under examination' (Aitkin 1982, 110). We apply the same method of analysis to our data as was used in the earlier study of national voting and party identification. This method, known as the automatic interaction detector, was developed by Morgan and Sonquist of the University of Michigan and Aitkin has described it briefly in non-technical terms (1982, 110).

The results of the analysis can be conveniently presented in the form of a tree diagram. A simple tree may be taken to exemplify the results obtained. Figure 7.1 is the 'tree' from an analysis of the 'now' vote. In effect, we asked which variables, out of a list of some twenty or more, were the most important in explaining the 'now' vote. On the left-hand side of the figure, the first group (numbered 1 in the top left-hand corner of the box), is of all respondents - in this case 1,868 (bottom left-hand corner of the box) for whom data were complete enough for analysis. Of these people 38 per cent cast their 'now' vote for the Labor party. The 'now' vote was chosen as the dependent variable in this and other analyses because many more respondents answered that question than the one about Territory party identification.

One of the independent variables, namely respondents' federal party identification, was the most important in explaining the 'now' vote. Respondents were divided into two groups by reference to it - the non-Labor federal identifiers group (44 per cent of whom voted Labor) and Labor plus others group (60 per cent of whom voted Labor). These were in turn sub-divided into the 777 federal Labor identifiers (group 5) who voted 76 per cent for Labor in the Territory and the remainder (group 4) who were 23 per cent for Labor. The variance in the 'now' vote was reduced by nearly 32 per cent on the first division and nearly 16 per cent on the second - a substantial reduction in the variance. In this particular 'tree', the divisions are accomplished with only one variable, federal party identification. In other trees, as we shall see, two or more variables will account for a reduction in the variance. The implication is that large numbers of people vote in Territory elections in conformity with federal party identification, and that as a result the influence of other variables is probably 'masked' or hidden behind this one variable. Other analyses were therefore conducted without that variable.

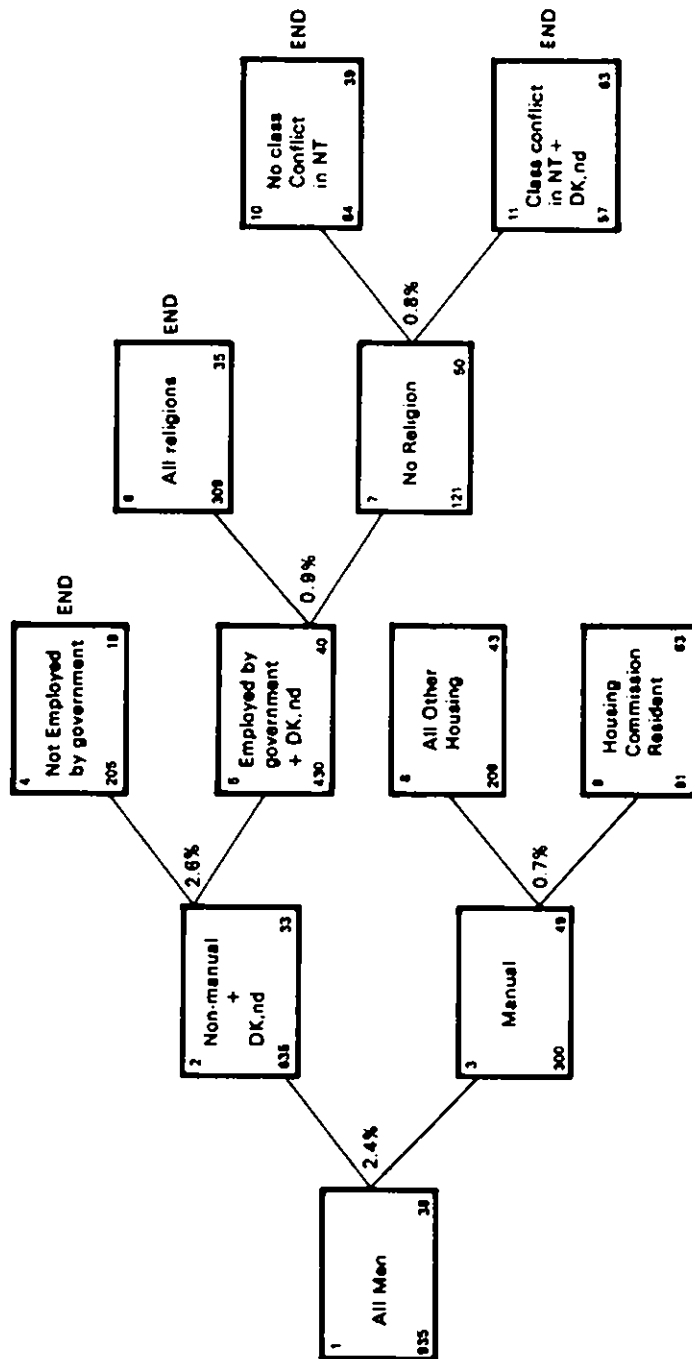
In general, in order to understand the stability of the party system, we selected variables for the tree analysis which were relatively fixed for each respondent or at least very difficult to change. These included three class variables, three social mobility and class conflict variables, mother's and father's party identification, four occupational variables, age, religion, sex and four residential variables, one for organisational membership and two for self-description.



Tree Analysis of 'Now Vote, NT', All Respondents. Predictor variables included: R's Federal party ID, all structural variables, mother's and father's party preference.

No multivariate technique tells us all we might want to know about the relationships of a particular set of variables. Aitkin explains both the virtue and the limitations of tree analysis as follows:

tree analysis has some special virtues in the study of partisanship, for the essence of partisanship is taking sides, and tree analysis displays, in a way that no other procedure can, especially strong and weak levels of a given partisanship among social groupings, as well as the areas where cross-pressuring produces levels of partisanship close to the mean. Yet this is only the beginning, not the end, of the researcher's task, and it is important to regard the results of AID analyses as clues rather than findings. Moreover, the absence of a given variable from a final tree need not mean that it is quite without importance: another variable may have 'masked' it at each stage. Tree analysis, then, must be used sensitively, and as an exploratory instrument (Aitkin 1982, 302).



Tree Analysis of 'Now Vote, NT', Men

The tree for the men in the sample is shown below. There were 935 men in the analysis after omission of those for whom the necessary data were incomplete. The women numbered 933 in a separate analysis of their 'now' vote. The reduction in the variance of the 'now' vote for the Territory Assembly is not great: five of the independent variables reduced it 7.4 per cent all told. The first of these, the respondents' occupational classification as manual or non-manual, contributed 2.4 per cent to the reduction and another 2.6 per cent was contributed by the employed or not employed by government variable which split the non-manual but not the manual group. The non-manuals employed by government were more likely than the non-manuals otherwise employed to vote Labor 'now' - 40 per cent as against 19 per cent. Manual workers resident in housing commission houses or flats were more likely than manual workers resident in other kinds of housing to vote Labor 'now'. The non-religious non-manuals employed by government were more likely to vote Labor than the religious. And so on. Altogether 19 predictor variables were used in this particular tree analysis and only five of them gave divisions which reduced the variance. Those that were set aside or may have been blanketed out included four class variables and education, age and social self-description variables. In another test of the data, two additional predictor variables were added to the analysis: mother's and father's party preferences. The party preferences of respondents are strongly influenced by parental party preferences when respondents are 'growing up' and voters in the Northern Territory are no exception. Father's party identification in two separate splits, each accounting for 3.3 per cent of the variance in the men's 'now' vote (6.6 per cent out of 15.2 per cent altogether), was the 'strongest' of a number of variables in partitioning the men.

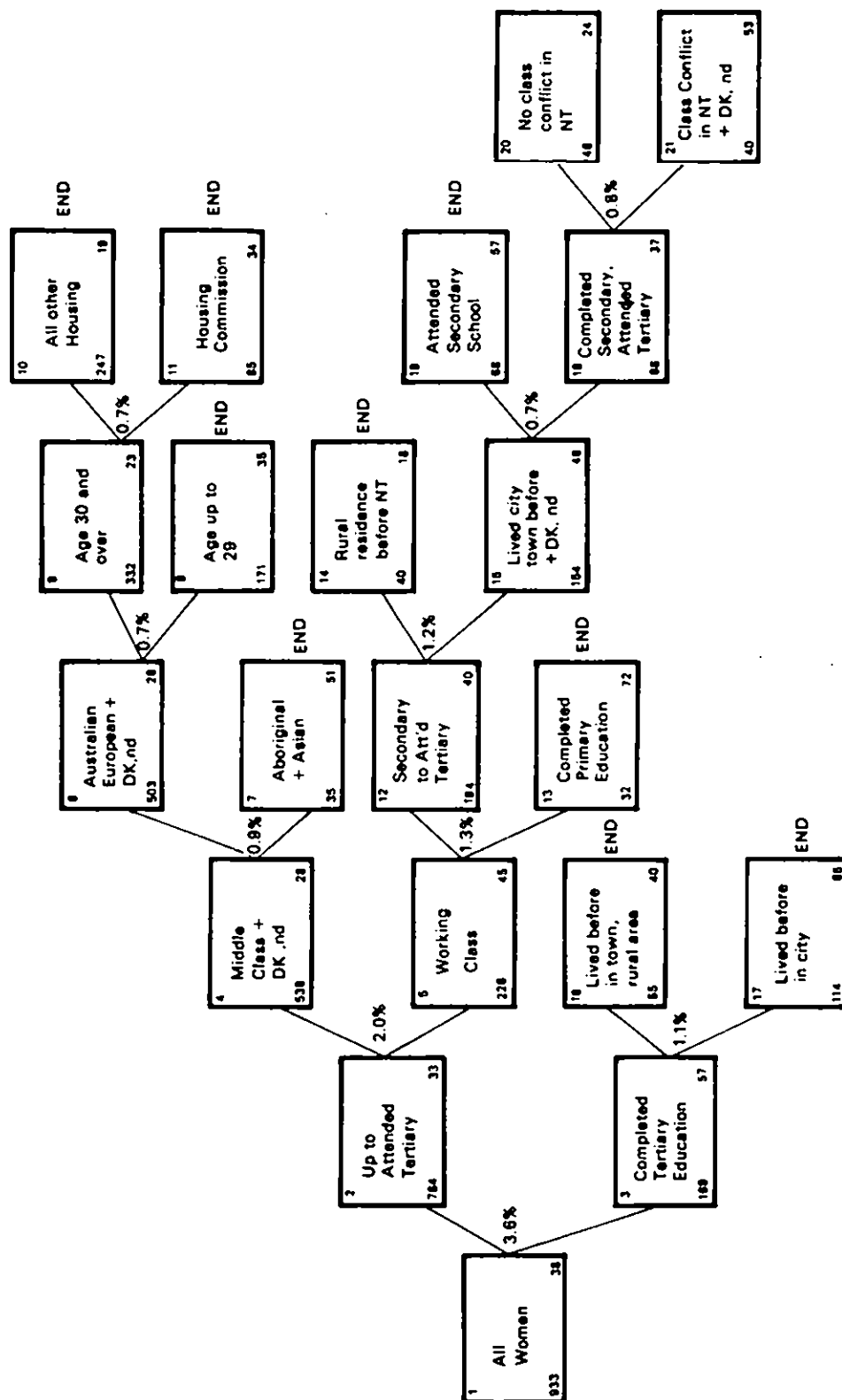
In an analysis of the women's 'now' vote, father's party preference again yielded the first split and reduced the variance by 5.5 per cent. This and other party identification variables were omitted from the two trees reproduced here.

The analysis of variance in the women's 'now' vote gave a reduction of 13 per cent all told, with ten 'predictor' variables (Fig. 7.3). The first split (3.6 per cent of the variance) was on the education variable. Those who had completed a tertiary education course were more likely to vote Labor than those who had not, and of the tertiary-educated those who had lived in a city before coming to the Territory were more likely to vote Labor 'now' than those who had lived in a town or in rural parts. Those who had completed their education at some earlier point were subdivided by eight variables into a number of sub-groups. Of these, the first was the respondent's class variable: it reduced variance by 2 per cent. The implication is that at this level of education class is a more salient factor for women than it is for men in shaping their votes. Education, closely related to class, comes into the analysis twice more in splitting some of the smaller sub-groups and kind of place where respondents lived before coming to the Territory is effective a second time in splitting a sub-group.

Women who regard themselves as working class were divided by education into two groups: those who had no more than a primary school education were much more Labor than those who had gone on to higher levels of education. Another important point is that the women who saw themselves as middle class - and also identified as European or Australian - were divided by age: the younger (up to age 29) were more likely than the older to vote Labor 'now'. The occupational criterion (manual, non-manual) which is important for the men was not important for the women, not even for the women who were employed.

What do all these data suggest? The independent variables chosen for the analysis were the structural variables, all of which are difficult or impossible to change, and one or two others of the same kind, such as housing. Since in all the analyses these accounted for a small proportion of the variance, the implication is that the 'now' vote, as measured in 1982, was shaped by other factors, of which many were, on the face of it, short term and more changeable.

Even among the structural or more fixed 'behavioural' variables, there is no one variable which clearly dominates in the analysis once federal party identification is set aside. Class is not as important as has often been supposed - which is probably just as well for the Labor party. With a diversity of factors all contributing something to the shaping of the vote, none of them very strongly, the malleability of the electorate must be emphasised.



Tree Analysis of 'Now Vote, NT', Women

It is at this point that comparison with the analysis of the national sample of 1979 becomes appropriate, even though the dependent variable in that analysis was party identification, not the 'now' vote, and there are one or two differences in the structural variables used as possible predictors.

The two analyses are in general agreement, but there are important differences of detail between them. As in the Territory sample, parental party identification was a powerful predictor of the party identification of respondents in the national sample. For men father's partisanship and for women mother's partisanship accounted for over 50 per cent of the total reduction in variance in the national sample (Aitkin 1982, 308). But in the Territory sample, father's party identification was the only one of importance for either men or women, and it accounted for a lower proportion, 20 per cent and 25 per cent respectively, of the total variance accounted for in the two trees. Even when some allowance is made for the differences between the data used in the two analyses the implication is that either of two explanations (or perhaps both) are appropriate, namely that the move to the Territory weakens the parent-respondent partisanship link or that those who move to the Territory have already had that link weakened by changes in their family and social circumstances.

When parental party identification is excluded from the analysis, the importance of other predictor variables is more easily assessed. The structural variables, as we have seen, did not greatly reduce the variance in the Territory sample; the same may be said of the national sample. For women, the reduction of variance in each sample was about 13 per cent; for men it was just over 7 per cent for the Territory sample and 16 per cent for the national sample.

In his discussion of this reduction, Aitkin comments that, broadly speaking, class variables were the more important in the analysis of the men's partisanship and less important for the women. For the women, 'the primary division is in terms of family background, a class variable perhaps, but not so contemporary as one's own occupation or that of one's husband...the class variables, with the exception of father's occupational grade, have little power in predicting the partisanship of women' (1982, 306-7). For the men in the Territory sample, two occupational criteria (manual vs non-manual and employment by government) account for over 67 per cent of the reduction in variance - much the same as in the national sample. For the women, levels of education and whether prior residence was urban or rural were particularly important predictor variables, accounting for well over half of the variance, while class itself accounted for just under 16 per cent.

CHAPTER EIGHT

PROBLEMS AND GROUP POWER PERCEPTIONS

It is usual in political surveys to ask respondents to list what they think of as current problems. In our questionnaire they were asked to say what, in their opinion, were 'the most important problems that the NT government should do something about?' We also included a set of questions designed to elicit opinions about the extent of 'power' wielded by significant groups operating in the Territory political system. Both sections were devices to gauge general (i.e. not specifically party-related) attitudes to political processes, problems and policies. In this chapter the two sets of responses will be analysed; where available data allow, regional differences and inter-relationships with other variables will be noted.

Problems

In asking about problems, we asked for up to three responses but some interviewees listed more. Where there were more than three only the first three were coded. However, the response-rate overall was only two per questionnaire. Six per cent of the sample did not mention even one problem; only a third could state at least three. These figures were lower than those obtained by Aitkin in his 1979 survey. There the average was 2.5 problems and only three per cent failed to nominate something (Aitkin 1982, 278).

Darwin respondents were rather more forthcoming than those in other urban centres; 69 per cent from the Darwin sub-sample offered two responses and 37 per cent three, while corresponding figures for the non-Darwinites were 60 per cent and 30 per cent.

The diversity of the responses and the character of the question made coding and analysis difficult. A wide variety of answers was to be expected, given that the question was entirely open-ended and is, in addition, 'subjective' in nature. The data were originally coded into over ninety categories. Inevitably some duplication occurred but, even when that was removed, there were still about eighty separately identifiable sections. Their relative importance, of course, differed widely. Of the total, one received over 600 mentions, six others over 200, four over 100, about thirty between 10 and 100, and the remainder (about forty) under ten. Such a range is obviously difficult to integrate into a manageable analytical form and, therefore, the following discussion will be focussed on those problems that were mentioned most often.

In some cases, the aggregation of responses based on similar themes into groups without differentiating between 'positive' and 'negative' approaches compounded the difficulties. As a notable example, the category relating to Aborigines should be cited. There, the perception that Aborigines themselves or the cost and consequences of Aboriginal policy were the causes of the problem was amalgamated with viewpoints that not enough was being done to assist Aborigines. The respondents' general reaction could easily be inferred from many comments, as a juxtaposition of two will indicate. They are both comments on a problem the NT should do something about:

'Coons. Money that's given to them. Equal rights should be given to the Whites; Aborigines harass us'.
'Aborigines should be given more of a fair go in employment and living areas'.

But others were far more ambiguous:

'Straighten out Aboriginal affairs - Aborigines getting too much;
Northern Land Council run by too many white people - not enough black people'.
'Aboriginal welfare: must work out some way to keep them off the streets, some middle way, some compromise with the aspirations of both groups'.

These views, even the seemingly clear-cut ones, were sometimes modified even further by remarks elsewhere in the questionnaires. Even with the recommendation that interviewers should 'probe', an open-ended question was quite inadequate to elicit the complexities of this 'problem' or, rather, set of interrelated problems, and consequently the data for distinguishing clearly between different aspects and personal evaluations were not obtained. One of the principal coders recollects that the 'sympathetic' orientation accounted for about 10 per cent of the total (Jaensch, pers. comm.) but the largest proportion indicated no definite orientation either way. This indicates the inherent imprecision of the figures and the caution with which they should be used. A similar caveat is necessary for other categories such as development and uranium.

Table 8.1 sets out the major groups of problems as perceived by the respondents.

Table 8.1

Major problems: frequency of mention

(% stated)

<u>Group</u>	<u>%</u>
Aboriginal Issues	18.2
General Economic Conditions	16.4
(Cost of living)	(8.8)
(Unemployment)	(5.3)
Transport	14.0
(Railway)	(2.8)
Housing/Rents	12.9
Hospitals/Health Services	7.4
Social Policy (NT)	7.0
(Alcohol)	(2.7)
Economic Policy (NT)	6.9
(Development)	(5.7)
Education	4.8
Uranium	2.3

Given the general economic climate and the particular Territory political context, as outlined in Chapter 2, the list of major problems was not unexpected; it reflected current concerns and issues. The ranking, however, requires comment, particularly in regard to the positioning of Aboriginal issues at the top of the list. If first choices of respondents alone are considered, the significance of that subject is better illustrated. Over 24 per cent of the sample cited Aboriginal issues, more than double the proportion naming housing and rents which, with nearly 12 per cent, was the next most often mentioned.

Throughout this study, the place of Aboriginal issues in Territory political activity has been often mentioned. In chapter three, we noted that the 'Aboriginal question' does not appear to play a very large part as a determinant of respondents' commitment to or

support for the parties. Although the survey does give evidence that Aboriginal issues and policies are not openly articulated determinants of party support, whether they are covert factors is another argument, and one which cannot be resolved simply by reference to the survey data. Experience 'on the ground' in observing Territory political behaviour leaves little doubt that they are important in shaping people's voting preferences, though not necessarily along party lines. One explanation for the disparity may be that respondents are reluctant to admit openly the salience of the subject for them and their vote, given that the subject is extremely complex and that strongly expressed views on either side invite personal condemnation on one ground or another. If that is so, respondents may well say it is an important problem but then, if it is important for them, go on to disguise the fact by listing it without specific identification under other general heads in the questionnaire. This tendency to 'disguise' might well be strongest in those centres where Aboriginal issues are most salient - Alice Springs and Katherine.

As the Aboriginal issue was coded as a separate problem, some detailed data are available, and these demonstrate a marked regional variation. In Alice Springs, 35 per cent of total responses (nearly 50 per cent of first choices) was involved. Next came Katherine with 23 per cent followed by Darwin urban with 19 per cent, Tennant Creek with 18 per cent, and Nhulunbuy with 12 per cent. The figures for Katherine and Tennant Creek are from a period before controversial contiguous land claims attained local prominence late in 1982 and early in 1983. Darwin's percentage, given the relative insulation of the city from the more contentious issues at the time, was surprisingly high but it could well reflect the preoccupation of press and electronic media with Aboriginal issues. In the case of Nhulunbuy, the relatively low figure can be explained by its isolation from the mainstream of Territory political life, its racial homogeneity and the absence of significant inter-racial contact.

Regional differences are also evident with other groups of problems. However, the limitation of data restricts the comparative analysis to two areas - urban Darwin and the other urban centres. Housing and rents and unemployment were cited twice as frequently in Darwin as outside. Darwin also was well ahead in the emphasis placed upon uranium and the projected north-south railway. All, of course, were subjects of particular political concern to Darwin residents. Outside Darwin, transport (including roads), education, and hospital and health services rated more highly. Other major problems showed a broad similarity in the two sub-samples. In the minor categories, there were inevitably many items of peculiarly parochial interest. For example, in Darwin, there was some reference to the question of urban planning and development which referred to an issue which was prominently featured in the media at the time of the survey.

The range, ranking and regional emphases of the problems contained few, if any, surprises. It was also particularly noteworthy that respondents were clear about which problems lay in the sphere of Territory politics. Although some of those mentioned were outside the control of the Territory government and were for the Commonwealth or the local government, almost all of them had definite implications for Territory policies and politics. The orientation to the local political context can be seen by comparing the list above with the results of a similar question in Aitkin's 1979 national survey. In that, 'the economy' was most frequently mentioned (57 per cent), and related subjects were also frequently mentioned (unemployment, 29 per cent; taxation and the cost of living, 17 per cent; social welfare, 16 per cent) (Aitkin 1982, 279).

Given the importance of housing as one of the 'problems' about which people thought the Territory government should do something, it is useful to note its electoral implications. We asked respondents what kind of housing they lived in (owner-occupied, private rental, government - mainly housing commission - rental) in order to check the common assumption that there is a correlation between party preference and kind of housing. Of course, housing, as such, does not determine people's votes, but the standard and cost of housing do reflect other factors which directly affect party preferences.

Our sample yielded 1,916 usable returns on this question, of which 38 per cent were owner-occupied; 34 per cent were rented privately and 28 per cent rented from the government. Darwin itself had a slightly higher percentage of private rental and a slightly lower proportion of the government rental accommodation in the sample but the differences between towns are of only marginal significance. Caravan dwellers, only 2 per

cent of those interviewed, were under-represented because the sample was taken from the electoral rolls.

The results of the analysis conformed to expectations. Between 55 and 60 per cent of owner-occupiers consistently supported the CLP while 35 to 40 per cent voted ALP. The preferences of those in private rental accommodation were more evenly divided, with a very slight balance in recalled votes in favour of the CLP. Those resident in government housing gave higher proportions of their votes to the ALP than to the CLP, ranging from 47 per cent ALP, 37 per cent CLP of the 'now' vote, to 57 per cent ALP, 41 per cent CLP in 1974.

Since the respondents' levels of housing are shaped by a variety of socio-economic factors, the results are not surprising. The implication appears to have been drawn by the CLP government which vigorously pursues a policy of increasing home ownership.

Perceptions of Power of Social Groups

The eight groups selected for inclusion were Trade Unions, Politicians, Pastoralists, Mining Companies, Aborigines, Businessmen, Public Servants and Aboriginal Land Councils. No attempt was made to structure the order of the groups. To answer, respondents had simply to state whether they considered each group had 'too much power', 'enough power' or 'not enough power'. The level of response varied: at one extreme, 5 per cent did not make an assessment of Aboriginal power, at the other, 20 per cent failed to answer on Pastoralists. Non-responses for the other groups ranged from 7 per cent to 9 per cent. Of the non-responders, women outnumbered men by about two to one.

Two general points should be noted. First, there is no evidence from the sample as a whole to suggest any distinct polarisation of opinion; in fact, there was a reasonably wide spread of attitudes in all categories. When the groups are broken down into their regional sub-samples, however, examples of greater imbalance emerge. Secondly, there is, as would be expected, a broad relationship between perceptions of group power and party voting preference. In this treatment, each group result will be analysed separately. The order in which they are discussed differs from that in the survey to facilitate a tighter comparative approach.

Aborigines

As Table 8.2 shows, the perception of the power of Aborigines, both in the total and regional results, follows the pattern already identified with the 'most important problems' question and the reasons for variation discussed there are equally relevant.

Table 8.2

Aborigines

(% Respondents)

	<u>Total Sample</u>	<u>Urban Darwin</u>	<u>Alice Springs</u>	<u>Katherine</u>	<u>Nhul.</u>	<u>T.C.</u>
Too much	50	48	58	60	40	53
Enough	27	27	23	25	35	35
Not Enough	23	25	19	15	25	12
(N)	(1853)	(1246)	(282)	(96)	(95)	(51)

When the responses are cross-tabulated with other variables, some elements of significance emerge. In terms of sex, men (55 per cent 'too much', 24 per cent 'enough' and 21 per cent 'not enough') differed from women (46, 29, 25). Working-class perception

of 'too much power' was 8 to 9 per cent above that of the middle class. Based on educational attainment, the respondents in the categories of 'completed primary' and 'attended' or 'completed secondary' were better represented in the 'too much power' section than those with less or more schooling. (It is interesting to note, in that regard, the views of the group who had 'completed tertiary'. Here, the percentages were 30, 31, 39.) Perception also was affected by party support. If the 1980 Assembly election is used as an index, ALP voters divided, in percentage terms, 44, 24, 32, while CLP voters split 60, 29, 11, a contrast which suggests that, even if it is complicated, there is some relationship between partisanship and the respondents' opinions on Aboriginal issues.

Aboriginal Land Councils

With the exception of Tennant Creek (for reasons which are obscure), the figures (Table 8.3), as compared to those in Table 8.2, represent a shift of opinion towards the 'too much power' end of the scale. There was a considerable diminution of the proportion of the total sample in the 'not enough' sector although the experience of Katherine was atypical. Of all the groups surveyed, the Land Councils attracted the highest 'too much' score. With their involvement in the sensitive and divisive land rights policy area and their substantial public profile (a lot of it negative in the local media), that ranking

Table 8.3

Land Councils

(% Respondents)

	<u>Total</u> <u>Sample</u>	<u>Urban</u> <u>Darwin</u>	<u>Alice</u> <u>Springs</u>	<u>Katherine</u>	<u>Nhul.</u>	<u>T.C.</u>
Too much	55	53	64	62	40	41
Enough	31	23	23	23	41	45
Not enough	14	14	13	15	19	14
(N)	(1780)	(1193)	(275)	(91)	(92)	(49)

was to be anticipated. Several interviewers outside Darwin also noted that the part attributed to white advisers (or 'stirrers') was important in shaping the image some respondents had of the power of Land Councils. The relationship between perception of Land Councils' power and party voting (again using the 1980 election statistics) may be noted. A lower proportion of ALP voters than CLP voters thought Land Councils had too much power (47 per cent and 66 per cent). The figures for 'enough' and 'not enough' power show similar differences.

Pastoralists

As attitudes to power of pastoralists seem to be related in some way to both the previous sections, it is convenient to treat the group in proximity. Given the level of non-response, it is reasonable to assume that, of all the groups, the 'power' of pastoralists was least understood. Similarly, it is a fair assumption to see urban perception as in some part a reaction to the pastoralists' position in the implementation of the land rights policy. Whether accurate or not, the impression of the relative political disadvantage or weakness of pastoralists appears to be well-established in the urban community.

Table 8.4 sets out the relevant figures. The 'too much' figure is significantly lower than for any other group, as also is the higher response in the 'not enough' category. Alice Springs and Katherine, both centres of pastoral activity and perhaps more familiar with the large pastoral firms because of that, stand out as areas with a larger percentage of 'too much' replies. Once again the divergent pattern related to party

Table 8.4

Pastoralists

(% Respondents)

	<u>Total</u> <u>Sample</u>	<u>Urban</u> <u>Darwin</u>	<u>Alice</u> <u>Springs</u>	<u>Katherine</u>	<u>Nhul.</u>	<u>T.C.</u>
Too much	11	10	16	22	5	10
Enough	38	37	40	26	44	44
Not enough	51	53	44	52	51	46
(N)	(1560)	(1049)	(257)	(84)	(66)	(39)

support emerged: the perception of Labor voters (in 1980) was 17 per cent, 38 per cent, and 45 per cent; of CLP supporters, 5 per cent, 38 per cent and 66 per cent. Class- and age-based attitudes, however, showed little significant variation. As on the power of Aborigines, the respondents who had 'completed tertiary' education differed from other levels of attainment; nearly 20 per cent of that group perceived pastoralists as having 'too much power'. Finally, men (with 15 per cent) outranked women (with 7 per cent) in the 'too much' section.

Mining Companies

Both pastoralists and mining companies are part of non-urban based industry and both have been affected by land rights issues, but opinions of their power varied markedly. Part of the explanation may lie in their publicly-perceived image. Mining companies are seen to be wealthy, impersonal organizations while pastoralists are commonly believed to be individuals. Although that latter impression is wrong (companies play a large role in the NT pastoral industry), the image contrast is well-established. Thus, it is not surprising that mining companies are deemed to be considerably more powerful, a situation which is clear in Table 8.5. However, at 39 per cent of the total sample, the size of the 'too much' group is still far lower than that of Aborigines or Land Councils.

Table 8.5

Mining Companies

(% Respondents)

	<u>Total</u> <u>Sample</u>	<u>Urban</u> <u>Darwin</u>	<u>Alice</u> <u>Springs</u>	<u>Katherine</u>	<u>Nhul.</u>	<u>T.C.</u>
Too much	39	39	36	44	56	35
Enough	46	48	43	34	42	55
Not enough	15	13	21	22	2	10
(N)	(1762)	(1195)	(256)	(91)	(94)	(49)

In regional terms, the larger than average numbers in the 'not enough' area in Alice Springs and Katherine should be noted, again perhaps reflecting the land rights influence. In Katherine, however, the 'too much' category is also atypical and the contributing

reasons, except for a resort to the observation that Katherine residents are more than normally antagonistic to large-scale organisations, are difficult to fathom. As a company-dominated town with a history of strained industrial relations, Nhulunbuy's distribution of opinion is understandable. Although it is also vitally concerned with mining, Tennant Creek is not a company town and its attitudes are markedly unlike those of Nhulunbuy.

Once again ALP and CLP voters differ in their opinions of mining companies' power. Using the 1980 Assembly voting preference 42 per cent of ALP voters thought mining companies had too much power compared with 22 per cent of the CLP voters; 'enough' - ALP 35 per cent, CLP 58 per cent; 'not enough' - ALP 11 per cent, CLP 20 per cent.

Trade Unions

Since questions about the power of Trade Unions have been asked in other political surveys, some comparison can be made between national and Territory figures. Aitkin's survey for 1967 and 1969 indicated that 47 per cent and 54 per cent respectively of the samples considered unions had 'too much power' (Aitkin, 1977, 139, 276, 288). During the 1970s, that percentage rose sharply. A 1976 survey of unionists and non-unionists gave the following results: unionists, 58 per cent 'too much', 11 per cent 'not enough', 27 per cent 'about right' and 4 per cent 'undecided'; the percentages for 'all others' were 73, 5, 17, 5 (Rawson and Merrill 1980, 480). Our result, as set out in Table 8.6, was, however, substantially different from the latter finding.

Table 8.6

Trade Unions

(% Respondents)

	<u>Total</u> <u>Sample</u>	<u>Urban</u> <u>Darwin</u>	<u>Alice</u> <u>Springs</u>	<u>Katherine</u>	<u>Nhul.</u>	<u>T.C.</u>
Too much	37	39	29	31	42	35
Enough	47	48	50	45	42	51
Not enough	16	13	21	24	16	14
(N)	(1814)	(1233)	(266)	(93)	(95)	(49)

The relatively low 'too much' category and the higher percentage in the 'enough' is probably a comment on the Territory situation (see Chapter 2). Where unionism is comparatively better organised and its activities are more widely reported, as in Darwin and Nhulunbuy, the perception of 'too much' power is greater.

There was surprisingly little difference between attitudes from the middle and working class (self-assigned class) groups. The former's distribution was 38 per cent, 50 per cent and 12 per cent and the latter's percentages were 35, 45 and 20 for 'too much', 'enough' and 'not enough' power. However, voting preference again showed more variance: ALP voters in 1980 perceived unions with 26 per cent 'too much power', 49 per cent 'enough', and 25 per cent 'not enough'; the corresponding figures for CLP voters were 49, 45 and 6. Again also those in the 'completed tertiary' education bracket had a lower perception of 'too much power' (at 24 per cent) than other groups. Women (with 40 per cent) outranked men (34 per cent) in the same category, a result rather different from their views about other groups.

Businessmen

As Table 8.7 shows, the responses on the power of Businessmen recorded the second lowest perception of 'too much power' and the second highest of 'not enough power'. They also include the highest proportion in the 'enough' category. Businessmen would appear to be the least controversial, in terms of power, of all the groups included in the survey.

Table 8.7

Businessmen

(% Respondents)

	<u>Total</u> <u>Sample</u>	<u>Urban</u> <u>Darwin</u>	<u>Alice</u> <u>Springs</u>	<u>Katherine</u>	<u>Nhul.</u>	<u>T.C.</u>
Too much	20	20	22	22	25	33
Enough	55	54	61	52	59	51
Not enough	24	26	17	26	16	16
(N)	(1772)	(1234)	(265)	(95)	(91)	(51)

A plausible explanation lies in the generally small-scale nature of urban business enterprise in the NT and the non-specificity of the question. Some respondents were anxious to give different answers for 'big business' and 'small business' and had this distinction been admitted the response would undoubtedly have been different: an indication of that probability can be gauged from the perceptions of mining companies. It was decided not to make two separate questions for big and small business to avoid 'leading' answers favourable to small business.

Once again party differences were evident: ALP supporters gave 28 per cent, 50 per cent and 22 per cent for 'too much', 'enough' and 'not enough' power, as against percentages of 13, 54 and 33 from CLP voters. There was surprisingly little difference between the self-assigned 'middle-class' (18, 58, 24) and the 'working-class' (23, 52, 25). The tendency of those with higher education to attribute 'too much power' to established social groups was again evident. On this subject there was virtually no distinction between responses from men and women.

Public Service

In the figures in Table 8.8, the low percentage of respondents who thought the public service did not have enough power, particularly in Darwin, is noteworthy and in line with national sentiments. However, the proportion who thought they had 'too much power' was lower than could have been expected from a national sample. This may be because over 40 per cent of the Territory respondents were themselves in public employment and did not think of themselves as having too much power. In Darwin, where most of the public servants live (over 70 per cent), the 'too much' response was exceeded only in Katherine, a town not especially noted for its tolerance of 'bureaucracy'. Still, the 'enough' figure, at nearly 50 per cent, probably reflects as much the influence of the public servant element as it does a satisfaction with the role of the public servants.

Those who voted ALP in 1980 and CLP in 1980 differed in their perception of the public servants' power: 33 per cent of Labor but 46 per cent of CLP said 'too much'; similar proportions (49, 46 per cent) thought 'enough' and 18 per cent Labor and 8 per cent CLP thought 'not enough'. The difference doubtless results from the contrasting philosophies of the two parties and from the higher proportion of public servants in the 1980 ALP vote. In Darwin, government employees provided 62 per cent of the Labor vote as against 47 per cent of the CLP vote.

Table 8.8

Public Service

(% Respondents)

	<u>Total Sample</u>	<u>Urban Darwin</u>	<u>Alice Springs</u>	<u>Katherine</u>	<u>Nhul.</u>	<u>T.C.</u>
Too much	40	43	30	46	29	33
Enough	48	47	55	37	52	52
Not enough	12	10	15	17	19	15
(N)	(1809)	(1229)	(263)	(94)	(92)	(52)

Darwin public servants themselves, when divided into those who voted Labor in 1980 and those who voted CLP, and contrasted with the generality of voters for each party, were less prepared to agree that they had too much power. Of Labor voting public servants only 24 per cent said 'too much', of the CLP voters, 39 per cent agreed - both lower than the generality of voters. Likewise the proportion who thought public servants had enough power were up (56 per cent Labor, 50 per cent CLP) and those who thought they did not have enough power (21 per cent and 12 per cent respectively).

Little difference was discernible in the class or education correlates although men were, by nearly 7 per cent (43 to 37 per cent), more ready than women to attribute too much power to the public servants.

Politicians

Compared to the Public Service, Politicians were thought to be less powerful. The figures, given in Table 8.9, indicate a generally lower level in the 'too much' category and, except for Tennant Creek, higher in the 'not enough'. It was in Darwin, where

Table 8.9

Politicians

(% Respondents)

	<u>Total Sample</u>	<u>Urban Darwin</u>	<u>Alice Springs</u>	<u>Katherine</u>	<u>Nhul.</u>	<u>T.C.</u>
Too much	33	37	22	30	27	26
Enough	52	50	60	47	51	64
Not enough	15	13	18	23	22	10
(N)	(1817)	(1234)	(265)	(95)	(95)	(50)

Territory politicians are most visible, that they were most often thought to have 'too much' power. Altogether, given the Australian penchant for criticising politicians, those in the Territory emerged from the survey comparatively well-regarded. Of course, since the Territory is so dependent politically and financially, this result may also indicate that local politicians are seen as not being fully 'masters in their own house'.

As would be expected from a situation when the ALP is in opposition, its supporters in 1980 had a rather different attitude from CLP voters. The respective percentages were 48, 40, 12 and 22, 61, 17. If the party position had been reversed, the figures may have been affected by that factor. Self-identified working-class respondents, with 37 per cent, were more inclined than the middle-class segment, with 30 per cent, to attribute 'too much' power to politicians. However, the proclivity of the most highly educated to see most groups as having too much power was less pronounced in relation to politicians.

CHAPTER NINE

PARTIES AND PARTY SYSTEM

A separate and distinctive Northern Territory party system is a recent development. Some candidates with party labels appeared at elections from 1947, but a party system did not form until the late 1960s. Further, a quarter of the Northern Territory electorate consists of Aborigines, for whom the concept of party and the processes of party politics were of little or no significance until recent times. We could expect, then, that the party system in the Territory might be less settled, less stable, less widely accepted than elsewhere in Australia.

The overwhelming majority of the urban residents of the Territory, from whom the survey sample was drawn, are recent arrivals. Of our sample of 1,945, only 159 were born in the NT, and of those born elsewhere 83 per cent arrived in the Territory after 1965. How the incoming people perceived the emerging NT parties and party system, how they involve themselves in party politics, and the extent to which they have brought previous party attitudes with them and retain such attitudes in the different environment will be relevant to our analysis of the Territory party system. We have already discussed the nature of party identification in the sample, and analysed the patterns of party support in elections in the Territory. What we are concerned with here are the perceptions of parties and the party system.

For voters in the Territory, as elsewhere in Australia, the images of parties and the perceptions they have of the party system

come largely from the streams of political statements, descriptions, comment and interpretation that issue from newspapers, radio and television, in which political parties and their leaders play the dominant role, and partly from each person's own observation and conversation (Aitkin 1982, 51).

The factors which help produce the images of parties and the party system are much the same in the Northern Territory as in the rest of Australia. The party system, while young, has gelled into a basic two-party system. Labor and Liberal-National identifiers who move to the Territory have little trouble in recognising Labor and CLP as not-too-distant relations of the national and state parties they have known elsewhere.

But there are important differences. There is less diversity in the media in the urban centres of the Territory, to say nothing of the outback. ABC television has only recently developed a local news service in Darwin and Alice Springs. There is no commercial television outside Darwin and radio tends to be local, even parochial, in the commercial sector, and Darwin-dominated in the ABC. The distances and isolation of towns like Alice Springs and Nhulunbuy do not provide for a continuing process of political communication. The small electorates provide an environment where personality and local issues can become as salient as the political parties in the electoral process as well as in political debate and decision-making. The electorate, as we have already noted, is less stable in its voting in the Northern Territory.

Are the parties perceived to be different? Most Australians are partisans. Further, most Australians perceive the parties to be different from each other. As the rhetoric of parties gives continual stress to alleged differences - in ideology, policy and practice - then the tendency for the perceptions of most voters to accord with the rhetoric they hear is not surprising. The NT sample showed no significant variation from the national electorate in this broadest sense of perceptions of party differences. There was, however, evidence that CLP identifiers perceived a greater difference between the parties than did Labor respondents, but only a quarter of those who had no party identification perceived a great deal of difference.

A note of explanation is necessary at this point. Where possible, respondents have been categorised by their party identification rather than their votes, for two reasons. As previous chapters have shown, the voting behaviour of the Territory samples was

Table 9.1

Perceptions of party difference

(% of respondents)

(a) Federal and Territory samples compared

	<u>Federal</u>			<u>NT</u>
	1967	1969	1979	
Great deal of difference	30	38	38	34
Some difference	21	27	26	31
Not much difference	38	30	32	31

(N = 1646)

(b) Territory sample by party identification

(% of respondents)

	<u>CLP</u>	<u>Labor</u>	<u>None</u>
Great deal	39	34	26
Some	32	31	30
Not much	30	35	44
(N)	(637)	(583)	(385)

relatively volatile, and a significant proportion voted differently from their identification at specific elections. We decided to use party identification as the more stable and better guide to the partisanship of the sample. Second, one of the characteristics distinguishing the Territory sample was the high proportion of uncommitted, those with no party identification. Establishing the perceptions of these respondents who did not consider themselves to be in the party system was therefore an important component of our study.

Respondents were asked a series of questions concerning parties, party leaders and the party system, many of which replicated those used by Aitkin for the national sample, and the responses were coded as far as possible under the general headings used in that survey with modifications to his more general categories discussed in Chapter 3.

For the question, 'What are the most important differences between the parties?' respondents were allowed up to three responses. A total of 848 of the sample of 1,945 were either unable or unwilling to name even one difference, and only 105 could name three important differences. Table 9.2 summarises the responses under the general headings and specific items within these are noted if their frequencies warrant it. Given the evidence of previous chapters, the emphases on party philosophy, management of government, class and group come as no surprise. However, two general headings demand comment. Of the whole sample, one-fifth named a specific issue as the main difference between the parties and all but a handful of these responses specifically named one or more of mining, mining development and uranium mining.

The other heading is Aboriginal policy, a more complex subject than any other which respondents would have to consider and one for which few people would have been prepared politically during prior residence elsewhere in Australia. Almost one-fifth of the respondents thought that on this subject the parties clearly differed and large numbers thought that in some sense the Aborigines presented problems which the government should do something about. Yet only a handful said that Aboriginal policy was important in determining their votes or their party allegiance. This seeming inconsistency calls for closer examination, especially when the national electorate appears to have a relatively clear-cut view on one of the major subjects of Aboriginal policy. In his 1979 national survey Aitkin asked people whether they thought that Aborigines should get special benefits from government or that they should be treated no differently from everyone else.

Table 9.2

What are the most important differences?
(% of total (up to 3) responses)

	Total	Party Identification		None
		CLP	Labor	
People in party (CLP better leader/team)	6 6%	8	4	8
Aboriginal policy	18	18	19	18
Management of Govt/Opp. (Pro CLP)	11 10%	14	7	11
(Pro Labor)	1%			
Party philosophy (CLP for development)	26 7%	25	29	25
Specific issues (Uranium)	20 12%	20	22	19
(Mining)	5%			
Group responses (CLP sections)	11 6%	6	15	14
Party responses	7	10	4	5
(N)	(1631)	(674)	(570)	(364)

Most respondents (65 per cent) said 'no differently' and a quarter (26 per cent) were more sympathetic, saying they should get special benefits. A bare 2 per cent thought that Aborigines get too many benefits already (1982, 386).

It is a difficult question to ask in the Territory context without leading responses which misrepresent the respondents' views on a number of related questions which are prominent in Territory politics. We allowed the respondents to raise questions of Aboriginal policy without any special prompting and as we have noted in the preceding chapter the resulting data were too imprecise to give us evidence to enable us to choose between different hypotheses that might explain why the respondents' votes and party identification were little affected by their views on that question.

The hypotheses may however be set out at this point. Some people, as we have seen, appear to have definite and unambiguous opinions about Aboriginal policy, either 'for' or 'against' Aborigines. These people might well dislike their own party's action on this subject - 'giving the Aborigines too much for nothing' was one CLP supporter's reason for disliking his own party - but as long as they continued to support their own party they could not say that their views on Aboriginal policy had shaped their votes or party allegiances.

Other respondents might be unsure of their general position on questions of Aboriginal policy. We have noted one or two above and another may be given in which the respondent unconsciously reveals his own confusion: 'Aborigines should be treated like humans and expected to work for a living'. Another respondent implied that many people did not know where they stood because people coming from down south often are not willing to mix with Aborigines. These people could see that the parties differed on the subject and that it was important for government but had no firm opinions themselves. In this situation they might well vote in accordance with past party preferences and also say that Aboriginal policy was of little or no influence in determining their votes.

Another aspect of the matter, for which the survey provided concrete evidence, is that the respondents' comments about Aboriginal policy are not uniform throughout the urban areas. The political salience of Aboriginal policy, at both government, party and personal levels, varied markedly from one urban area to another. The most obvious, and most significant, difference occurred in Alice Springs, where Aboriginal policy is very

Table 9.3
'Aboriginal policy' as a basis for 'like/dislike'
of political parties
 (Aboriginal policy responses as per cent of total responses)

	<u>Total Sample</u>	<u>Urban Darwin</u>	<u>Alice Springs</u>
Like about CLP	2	2	3
Like about Labor	8	7	15
Dislike about CLP	8	8	13
Dislike about Labor	13	10	28

important and there is obvious polarization over it. The issue is a divisive one in the Centre, partly because of land claims in the area. Both residents and observers agree that race relations in and around Alice Springs are far from good and, much more than in any other urban centre, interviewers constantly reported an intensity of emotions and attitudes whenever the subject was raised. We asked people to tell us what they thought were the main differences between the parties and 302, nearly one-fifth of those who answered this question, nominated Aboriginal policy as one main difference. And yet its influence on their votes appears to have been slight, as we noted in chapter 8. The evidence of the survey is that contrary opinions on the subject divided people in each party, especially the Labor party in which, for example, 43 per cent of party identifiers thought Aborigines had too much power and 36 per cent thought they had too little. And yet there is no obvious consequence for voting. Of 692 who thought the NT government should do something about Aboriginal policy, only 46 changed their votes on coming to the Territory (36 to CLP, 10 to Labor) and only a handful gave Aboriginal policy as the reason for their change.

Opinions and Feelings About the Parties

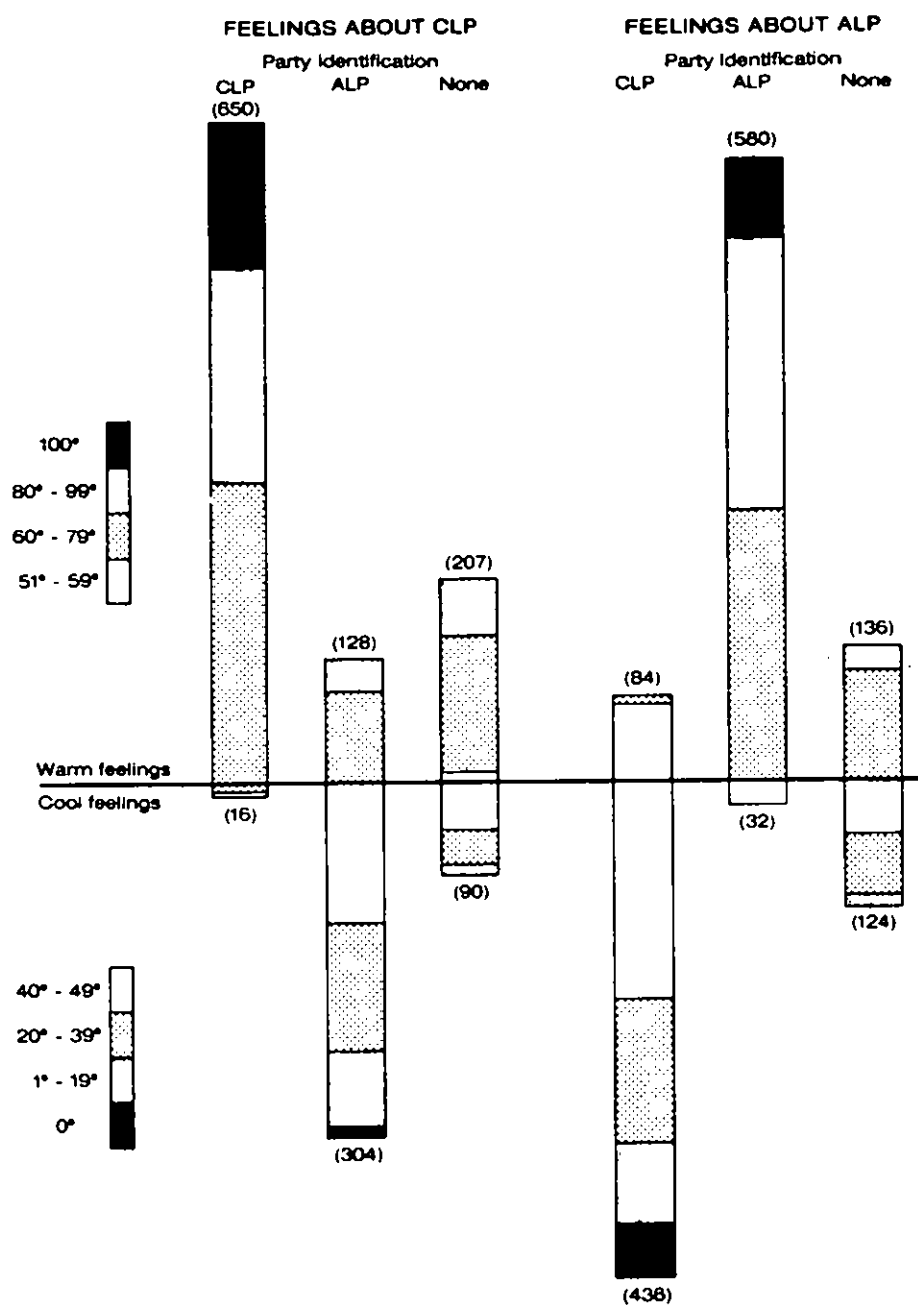
The Northern Territory survey incorporated two types of questions designed to elicit respondents' opinions about parties. One type was that used in most such surveys - asking respondents to state what they liked/disliked about Labor and the CLP. The second type of question was designed to elicit respondents' feelings towards the parties, to quantify emotional responses. Respondents were given a show card on which a 'thermometer' was drawn and the question was introduced with these words:

A rating between 50 and 100 degrees means that you like or feel warm towards a party; ratings between 0 and 50 degrees mean that you don't feel favourable towards a party. If you don't feel either warm or cold towards the party, then rate them in the middle. How do you feel about the CLP: Labor Party: Australian Democrats?

The responses suggested some important and different aspects of the Northern Territory electorate.

We have already commented on the evidence that party allegiance is weaker in the Territory than elsewhere in Australia, and that party does not seem to be as salient for electoral choice. The responses to the 'thermometer' reinforce the conclusion that there is something different about the impact of party in the Territory.

In the first place, if the Territorians mirrored the attitudes of voters in the states, we would expect to find a polarisation of feelings about parties. Yet, over the whole sample, 25 per cent of respondents had no feelings either way about the Labor Party,



Feelings about Parties by Party Identification
(Per cent of respondents, excluding 50°)

22 per cent had no feelings either way about the CLP, and the Australian Democrats had engendered no feeling either way in 40 per cent of the sample. A proportion of this unexpected level of lack of feeling was from those in the sample with no party identification. Of these, 45 per cent and 36 per cent had no feelings at all about Labor and CLP respectively. But even if we consider only those with party identification, there remained a surprisingly high proportion who did not perceive the other party in a strongly negative sense - 27 per cent of Labor identifiers had no feelings either way about the CLP and 28 per cent of CLP identifiers had none about Labor. While most CLP and Labor identifiers had warm feelings towards their own party, it is interesting to note that these had a 'centre of gravity' well back from the extreme. Nearly half of the CLP identifiers placed their own party in the range 60-79 degrees - in the 'bit more warm than cold' to 'fairly warm' range, as did nearly half of the Labor identifiers about the Labor party. Further, while a majority of party identifiers had cool or unfavourable feelings about the opposition party, over one-third of Labor identifiers and over 40 per cent of CLP identifiers felt only mildly cool towards their opponents. Somewhat greater polarisation was expected.

The advantage to the CLP noted in earlier discussions of stability and change and party identification emerged also in these data. While just over 16 per cent of CLP identifiers placed Labor in the 'warm' feelings area, almost 30 per cent of Labor identifiers had 'warm' feelings about the CLP. And among those with no party identification 71 per cent had warm feelings about the CLP while only 52 per cent expressed a warm feeling for Labor.

Feelings about the Australian Democrats can best be described as virtually non-existent. Of those who did express a feeling, over 50 per cent of CLP, Labor and no party identifiers placed the Democrats in the 40-60 degrees range, that is, 'just slightly warm'. Over one-third of CLP and Labor identifiers, and almost half of those with no identification had no feelings either way about the Australian Democrats. The last was an unexpected result - given the AD's attempts to portray itself as a centre party and as an alternative, we could expect those without party identification to have more positive feelings towards this party. Why this does not emerge could be due to a combination of two factors: the minimal, to date, intervention of the Democrats in NT elections, and the increasing tendency, already noted, that politics and especially electoral politics in the Northern Territory is moving towards the national two-party system.

The Australian Democrats entered candidates for the Legislative Assembly for the first time in 1980 when they contested three Darwin seats and won 5.2 per cent of the vote in Casuarina, 5.9 per cent in Jingili and 2.9 per cent in Port Darwin. The party also contested the 1980 Federal election in the Territory, winning 9.8 per cent in the Senate contest and 5.8 per cent in the House of Representatives contest. Given this low level of support, and the tendency for minor party supporters to be under-represented in surveys, it was not surprising that we contacted only 19 respondents who voted AD in 1980, and 21 respondents who stated that they identified with the party.

The correlation of party feelings and party identification reinforces our view that the party system in the Northern Territory has not become as polarised as in the rest of Australia. Rather than express virtually a total negative reaction to the other party - a reaction which would be expected elsewhere in Australia, given the confrontationist style of party politics - over one quarter of CLP and Labor identifiers had no feelings either way. The correlations also show that when negative feelings were expressed, these were at the extremes of 'cold' only in an unexpectedly small minority of responses.

The second type of evidence concerning perceptions of parties is from the standard like/dislike question. In the national sample, favourable and unfavourable comments were balanced for both parties, but this was not so in the Territory sample. The overall comparison of favourable and unfavourable comments shows the CLP with a considerable advantage, given that Labor had 40 per cent more unfavourable than favourable responses. Labor in the Territory attracted fewer comments all told, and a higher proportion of them were unfavourable. Of the twelve cells in the matrix of party identification, five show a general agreement between the Australian and Northern Territory data. The other seven show marked differences. Only half of the proportion of Liberal (CLP in the Territory) identifiers made at least one comment in praise of the Labor party. A lower proportion of

Table 9.4

Frequency of responses, by party
(Federal in parentheses)

	(N) <u>Favourable</u>	(N) <u>Unfavourable</u>	(N) <u>Total</u>
CLP (Lib)	1158 (1286)	1132 (1448)	2290 (2730)
Labor (ALP)	793 (1243)	1103 (1668)	1896 (2911)
TOTAL	1915	2235	4186

(Source: Aitkin 1982, 55)

CLP identifiers than national Liberals found something to praise or criticise about their own party, and a smaller proportion of NT Labor identifiers found something specific to praise about the Labor party. A marked difference is evident in the no-identification group. In three of the four cells, the NT response is markedly higher than that in the Australian survey: like and dislike about the CLP and dislike about the Labor Party.

Table 9.5

Respondents' attitudes to parties by party identification

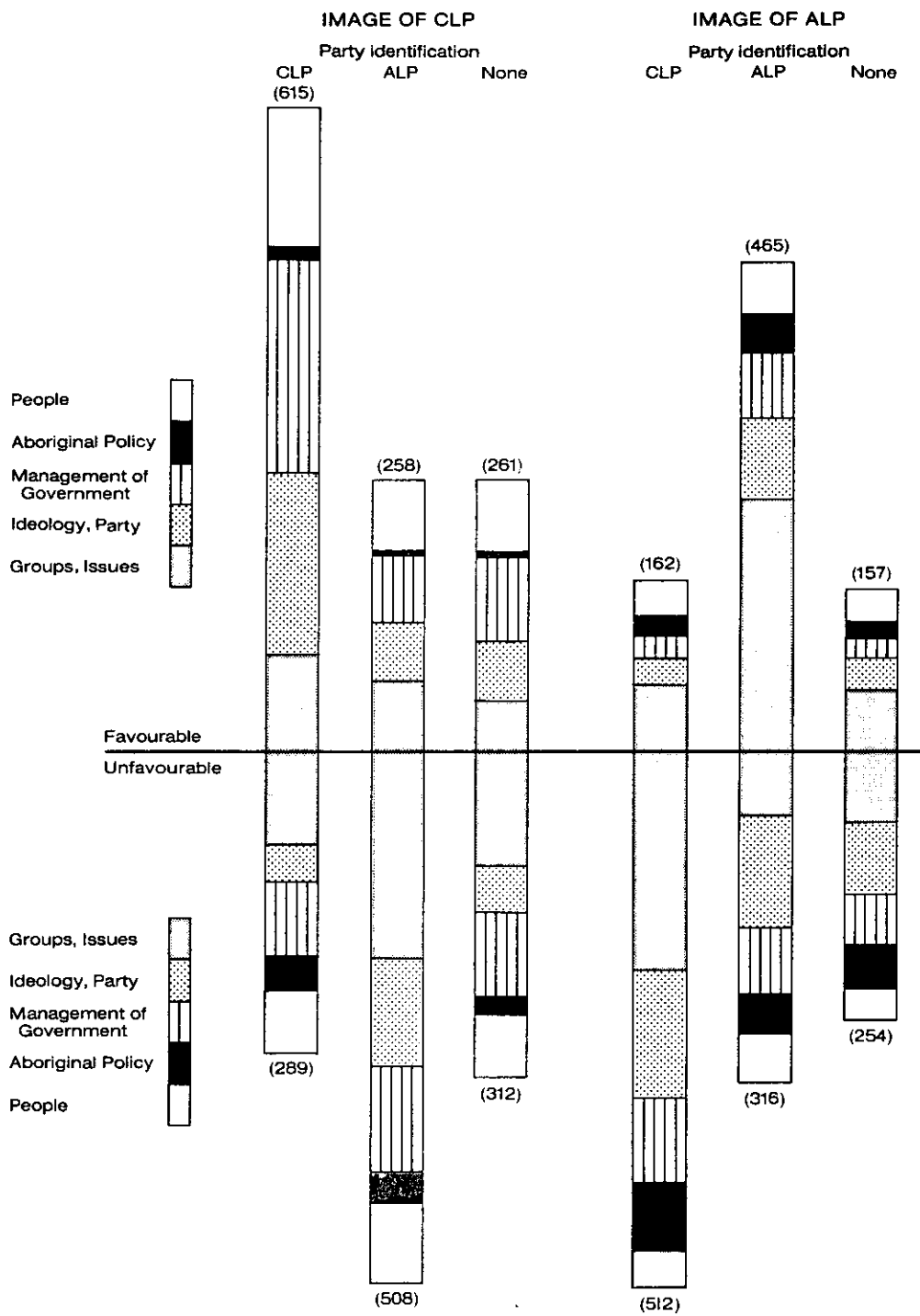
(Each cell shows the proportion of party identifiers
giving at least one answer to the question of
'like/dislike' about the parties)

Identification	CLP				Labor				(N)
	Like		Dislike		Like		Dislike		
	Aust	NT	Aust	NT	Aust	NT	Aust	NT	NT
Labor	23	28	52	51	68	51	40	38	(684)
CLP	68	59	36	32	34	18	65	53	(728)
None	26	38	27	45	22	25	28	42	(475)
(N)	(45)	(43)	(42)	(42)	(45)	(32)	(52)	(45)	(1921)

Table 9.6

Responses about parties by party identification
(% of total responses)

<u>Party Identi- fication</u>	<u>CLP</u>		(N)	<u>Labor</u>		(N)
	<u>Like</u>	<u>Dislike</u>		<u>Like</u>	<u>Dislike</u>	
CLP	68	32	(904)	23	77	(665)
Labor	34	66	(766)	60	40	(781)
None	45	55	(558)	39	61	(415)
(N)	(51)	(49)	(2290)	(42)	(58)	(1896)



Images of CLP and ALP by Party Identification
(Per cent of up to 3 responses)

A different pattern emerges from an examination of the responses themselves. Respondents could give up to three responses, and up to 50 per cent of those who gave one could find a second specific comment as well. While 34 per cent of Labor responses about the CLP were in praise of that party, only 23 per cent of CLP responses could 'return the compliment'. And while just under one-third of the responses of CLP identifiers were critical of the CLP, 40 per cent of responses of Labor identifiers found something they disliked about their party. A similar pattern is noticeable in regard to 'likes' about their own party and 'dislikes' about the opposition. The responses from those with no party identification show an overall weighting in unfavourable responses - a pattern which is not unexpected, but this is significantly stronger in regard to the Labor party. And over the sample as a whole, marginally more responses about the Labor party were clearly skewed to the unfavourable side of the balance.

Diagram 9.2 provides a more detailed picture of the profile of the two parties as seen by CLP and Labor identifiers and by those with no party identification. (The format of the diagram has been explained in Chapter 3.)

The CLP's strength is in three general areas, in the people in the party, especially Paul Everingham, who was mentioned specifically by 16 per cent of the respondents, both CLP and Labor identifiers; in the CLP's record in government; and in the perceptions of its ideology as 'pro-development', 'for the Territory' and 'for free enterprise'. A much smaller proportion of the sample mentioned specific issues or group-related items as the reason for liking the CLP, and when these were mentioned, it was usually in terms of a corollary to the 'pro-development' or 'for the NT' responses. Housing, expanding the economy, transport, mining and uranium and federal/state relations were the main issues mentioned while the group responses included a frequent statement that the CLP is 'for people in the NT', able to 'keep the unions in check', and is 'good for all the people'. And such responses were evident in all three sub-groups of the sample in similar proportions. In fact, the survey showed that the Labor voters were surprisingly favourably disposed to the CLP - in terms of the party leadership, its philosophy and policy of development of the Territory and its management of the government ('doing a good job') - emphasising the impact of these aspects in NT politics. What was most noticeable and important in terms of the earlier discussion was that issues related to Aborigines were hardly ever mentioned. Only 24 out of a total of 1,134 responses mentioned Aborigines or Aboriginal policy in relation to 'likes' about the CLP.

Only just over a quarter of the responses from CLP identifiers contained a favourable comment about Labor, and these were mainly about Labor leadership; sincerity, strength and efficiency of the party (management of government), and Labor's policy in regard to 'all classes /all people/working classes'. The last was the major element in Labor voters' comments about their party. There was also a much higher proportion of the total responses in favour of Labor's Aboriginal policies, although this was still below 10 per cent of total responses.

When we turn to the unfavourable comments about the two parties, it is noticeable that two of the three of the general headings which brought the most favourable responses about the CLP were emphasised in the unfavourable comments. This is partly explained by the very high profile of the CLP, the CLP government and especially of Paul Everingham in the Northern Territory which encourages both positive and negative reactions. Hence the negative comments about the CLP, at about the same level among CLP and Labor identifiers, are to some extent a 'mirror image' of the favourable comments. The CLP was criticised for its leaders or ministers ('I don't like so and so' was a relatively frequent comment); for perceived faults in the management of government (especially 'arrogance', 'don't keep promises', 'dictatorial', 'just out for themselves'); in terms of issues, where the two most often criticised were health policy and uranium and minerals policy; and for its alleged excessive support for or protection of big business, special groups, the rich and powerful.

The 'Aboriginal policy' of the parties attracted a substantially higher proportion of unfavourable than favourable comments. The unfavourable remarks were divided almost equally into contradictory positions - comments critical of the CLP for its support of land rights and for 'doing too much for Aborigines' and for its opposition to land rights and 'lack of concern' for Aborigines. The majority of CLP identifiers and those with no

party identification who were critical of the Labor party were vehemently opposed to the whole principle of land rights.

Comments critical of the Labor party were dominated by three specific responses. No less than 12 per cent of all responses specifically criticised trade unions, trade union influence and the union link with the Labor party. The strength of this opinion among Labor identifiers was very surprising. Almost as many responses were critical of the Labor party as 'divided, split, poorly organised, weak'. It should be noted, however, that the Labor party had undergone a bitter leadership and factional battle just prior to the survey, and this was obviously reflected in the responses.

In these perceptions - likes and dislikes about the two major parties - we find a pattern similar to the patterns of feelings towards the parties. As with the Australian electorate as a whole, 'partisans are less likely to criticise their own party and more likely to praise it' (Aitkin 1982, 70). But in the Territory sample, partisans seemed more willing and able to name positive values of the opposing party, and negative values in their own, than in the national survey. This, again, was skewed in favour of the CLP. Labor partisans were more often willing to name a positive value in the CLP - usually leadership, management of government and development for the Territory than CLP partisans could find positive attributes of Labor.

The CLP has the advantage of having been in government from the beginning of self-government in 1978, and it is therefore perceived as being at least partly responsible for the rapid development of the Territory. Another of the CLP's advantages is its leader, Chief Minister Everingham, whose style and identification with the Territory and its development were frequently mentioned by respondents in the survey. And this trend was notable among those who had arrived in the Territory after the 1980 election.

Party System

Given the very brief history of full representative elections in the Northern Territory it would not be surprising to find a party system which, at the electoral level at least, is still in a state of flux. Certainly the salience of party has increased since the 1974 election, but the Territory urban electors are still more willing to cast a vote outside the two major blocs and outside their party identification than elsewhere in Australia.

The 1982 survey explored these aspects with a series of questions designed to elicit opinion about the salience of party and the nature of perceptions of the party system. One question asked, 'Do you think Independents and Minor Parties have a better chance of success in the Territory?' Of the 1,685 who answered, one-third thought they did (four respondents believed the chances were the same as elsewhere). Of the 552 who responded 'yes', 384 gave at least one reason, and over three-quarters of the responses commented on the fact that the Northern Territory is 'a small society', 'new society' or has 'small electorates'. Another 22 per cent of the responses mentioned 'more flexible society' or 'more freedom of speech'. Certainly, with electorates of an average of under 3,000 voters, it is much easier for independents and minor parties to be seen and to make themselves known.

The perception of the Territory as a different political society was also shown by responses to the question, 'What do you think is more important in elections in the Territory: the party of the candidate, or the personality of the candidate?' Of those who responded (1,872), 51 per cent said party, 43 per cent personality and 6 per cent said that both were equally important. Of those who said party was more important, 61 per cent of the total reasons were along the line that 'party provides the policy and has the power to put it into action', and a further 12 per cent were that party philosophy was the source of political action. A quarter of the responses were emphatic that independents were powerless. Of the 377 reasons for the view that personality was more important, 62 per cent stressed 'small electorates' and 31 per cent believed that the independents brought integrity and honesty to politics.

A lower salience of party than elsewhere in Australia was also revealed by the question, Would you follow the how-to-vote card of [party]? Of the 1,912 who answered, a surprisingly high 833 (46 per cent) stated that they would not or might not follow the how-to-vote card of the party of their first preference.

Subdividing these responses into party identifiers revealed expected differences. The respondents with no identification had a different impression of the party system than CLP or Labor identifiers; they thought independents and minor parties have more opportunity or that the person is more important than the party, and they were much less certain of giving their preferences according to how-to-vote cards. The CLP and Labor identifiers were similar in their aggregate attitudes to the party system, although the latter showed a greater commitment to party intervention and party importance, and were more ready to follow their party's how-to-vote instructions.

The survey also explored perceptions of the role of women in electoral politics. Though it has the image elsewhere of a 'frontier society' and a 'man's world' (an image which is not completely rejected in the Territory), women are involved and successful in party and electoral politics to a greater extent than elsewhere in Australia. Four of the nineteen members of the Legislative Assembly in 1983 were women, and three other women candidates went very close to winning seats in 1980. The Labor party, not elsewhere noted for encouraging women to be full and active participants in the party hierarchy, has had women at all levels of its organisation, including its executive, from its formation.

The respondents were asked why more women have been elected proportionately than elsewhere in Australia. A not uncommon response was, 'I didn't know we were different from elsewhere', but the reasons given again showed that the NT was seen as a 'different society'. Of the total 1,490 responses (up to two were recorded), 59 per cent commented on the character of women in the Territory - 27 per cent said women in the Territory were 'more determined, outspoken or involved', 22 per cent that women in the NT were 'more active or better', 5 per cent that women were more liberated. The remaining reasons were comments on the NT society: 19 per cent said that the NT was a younger, or blunter, or more open society, 13 per cent that there were more opportunities for women in the NT, and 8 per cent commented, again, on the effects of small electorates.

Given the evidence which suggests that party is less salient in Northern Territory elections, then to what extent were respondents involved in parties? Australians are not party joiners - Aitkin's survey identified only 6 per cent party members in 1,967. The Territory survey identified 92 party members in a sample of 1,916 who responded - just under 5 per cent, and of these only 60 per cent stated that they were at all active in their party. Participation in party appears to be no higher in the NT than elsewhere.

Table 9.7

<u>Perceptions of party differences, NT and Federal</u> (% of respondents)			
(Q. 'Are there any important differences between...?')			
	<u>CLP/Liberal</u>	<u>CLP/National</u>	<u>Labor/ALP</u>
Yes	50	33	37
No	50	67	63
(N)	(1426)	(1110)	(1332)

But commitment to party in electoral terms does appear weaker in the Territory. It was reasonable to ask, then, whether the two major parties in the Territory are perceived as different from those in the national arena. Opinions were evenly divided regarding the comparison of the CLP and Liberal parties, and this comparison produced the highest proportion of respondents who felt there was an important difference. Over half of the reasons for the perceived differences between the CLP and the Liberal party were in the

general field of 'the CLP is more for the Territory', or 'the CLP looks after the Territory'. Such quasi-parochial responses are hardly 'fair criticism' of a national Liberal party. If this category of response is ignored, then better leadership and better policies were the main themes of the respondents who saw the CLP or the NT Labor party as 'better' than the national parties. Only a few respondents claimed that the CLP was 'worse' than the Liberal or National parties, and the main theme of criticism was that the CLP was 'less efficient' than the Liberal party. Over 200 respondents, however, perceived the NT Labor party as being 'worse' than the national ALP. Of these, 13 per cent claimed that NT Labor was 'weaker on uranium'; and 20 per cent criticised either the 'efficiency' or 'leadership' of the Territory party. It should be noted, again, that the survey was carried out only months after disruptions in the party, factional differences and a change of leader. Finally, and ironically, given the 'praise' for the CLP for its NT orientation and its 'look after the Territory' image, the Labor party was unfavourably compared with national Labor by 36 respondents because it was 'too parochial' or 'only looks after the NT'.

Parties and Voters: A 1980 Profile

The party system in the Northern Territory is only 20 years old and it exists in a more unsettled and unstable environment than in the Australian states. The minuscule electoral populations provide the potential for personality and issue politics to work against parties in the electoral arena. And, as we have shown, there are proportionally many more electors in urban areas who are adrift from parties and the party system than in the rest of Australia. The commitment of Aborigines, a quarter of the population, to the party system is not as well developed as that of the white population.

Of the total sample of 1,945 respondents, 1,365 stated that they had voted at the 1980 election, although 18 respondents said that they had deliberately voted informal. One respondent said that he had not voted as he could not find a polling place. The mobility of the Territory population is shown by the 401 respondents in our sample (20 per cent) who were not in the Territory for an election less than two years prior to the

Table 9.8

Voting and non-voting, 1980 NT Election (N and % of respondents)

	<u>Voted</u>		<u>Did not vote</u>	
CLP	708 (51.9)	Not in NT	401	(77.7)
Labor	561 (41.1)	Not on roll	92	(17.8)
Ind	59 (4.3)	Too young	22	(4.3)
AD	19 (1.4)	No polling place	1	(0.2)
Informal	18 (1.3)			
Total	1365 (100)	Total	516	(100)
		No response	64	
			580	

survey. The following 'profile' of the 1980 voters has been extracted from the survey, summarising a range of data. The table shows, for each variable, the percentage of respondents who gave positive replies. These are totalled across the columns and the number (N) of respondents is given in each case. The right-hand column shows the numbers of the respondents who were not in the Territory for the election.

Table 9.9
A profile of the 1980 voters

Theme		Voted in 1980 (% of respondents)			Not in NT 1980	
		CLP	Labor	Other	(N)	
Party identification (NT)	CLP	93	5	3	(539)	(145)
	Labor	10	87	3	(496)	(135)
	None	55	32	13	(286)	(108)
Party identification (Federal)	CLP/LNP	93	4	4	(516)	(152)
	Labor	14	82	4	(569)	(168)
	None	62	30	9	(200)	(60)
Class (Self-description)	Upper Middle	66	29	5	(286)	(101)
	Lower Middle	51	42	7	(400)	(147)
	Upper Working	49	44	7	(423)	(104)
	Lower Working	35	64	1	(95)	(16)
Self-description (Most important)	Australian	50	43	6	(863)	(323)
	Territorian	58	38	5	(310)	(35)
	Town/Region	58	36	5	(148)	(38)
Occupation	Professional	31	64	6	(101)	(42)
	Semi-Pr./Tech.	46	46	8	(210)	(91)
	Administrative	44	48	8	(77)	(10)
	Managerial	76	19	5	(74)	(29)
	White Collar	56	39	5	(390)	(110)
	Small Business	76	21	4	(78)	(12)
	Blue Collar	44	51	5	(337)	(86)
Employment Sector	Government	46	49	6	(602)	(184)
	Private	61	34	5	(420)	(176)
Work Situation	Full time	54	40	6	(1070)	(364)
	Part time	60	33	7	(134)	(33)
	Houseworker	51	41	8	(228)	(69)
Education level	Primary	41	55	4	(162)	(15)
	Secondary	56	38	6	(842)	(228)
	Tertiary	50	44	6	(341)	(158)
Age group	18-29	45	50	5	(315)	(212)
	30-49	57	38	6	(801)	(166)
	50+	53	42	5	(240)	(22)
Religion	Anglican	56	40	4	(329)	(99)
	Catholic	49	45	6	(359)	(89)
	Uniting	62	32	6	(154)	(48)
	Other	55	35	11	(133)	(27)
	None	45	52	3	(246)	(104)
Sex	Male	53	43	4	(647)	(190)
	Female	52	40	7	(675)	(211)
Housing	Own home/flat	59	35	6	(613)	(34)
	Private rent	55	42	4	(223)	(227)
	Commission rent	41	53	7	(380)	(65)
Is there Class Conflict?	Yes	46	49	6	(530)	(175)
	No	58	37	5	(757)	(204)
Aboriginal versus Non-Aboriginal		46	48	5	(276)	(98)

CHAPTER TEN

THE TERRITORY ELECTORATE

The Territory electorate is a variant of the national Australian electorate from which by far the largest part has been drawn, mostly in recent years. Like the nation as a whole, the Territory has had a generous infusion of migrants from overseas, some of them arriving only after first living elsewhere in Australia. But it is not immigration from overseas which makes the difference between the northern and the national electorates. The difference arises principally from the effect of the Territory - its social life and its economic opportunities - on people who have come from elsewhere in Australia.

Party allegiance, as measured by data about the parties the voters personally identify with, provides political evidence of the difference. Over a quarter of the Territory urban electorate had no party identification for Territory politics - twice the level with no party identification for national politics. A much higher proportion - 18 per cent as compared with 8 per cent in the national sample in 1967 or 11 per cent in 1979 - said that they had a different party identification for national and local politics. Not only did a lower proportion identify with parties in the Territory, but of those who did identify, a higher proportion than of the national electorate felt free to vote contrary to their party identification. The strongly partisan voted consistently, as elsewhere, but their proportion is lower. Finally, all of these variations - for recent elections at least - have favoured one party, the Country Liberal party.

Party allegiance, a major determinant of the vote in all democratic systems, is somewhat weaker in the Territory than in the national electorate. This suggests that other factors may play a proportionately larger part in determining the vote. In the conventional wisdom, if not classical theory, class and related structural factors have been most important in shaping the responses of voters to the parties at election time.

As far as the Territory electorate is concerned, 10 per cent fewer people than in the national electorate were prepared to assign themselves to a social class; yet another indication of the small but important differences to be observed in the north. If the northern non-urban electorate had been included in the sample, it is arguable that the proportion would have been much higher, not only because of the large proportion of rural Aborigines for whom class is an irrelevant and unfamiliar notion but also because rural people in general do not easily accept for themselves a class structure that is largely derived from urban industrial society.

The townspeople who do not place themselves in a class do not make a significant difference to the parties; a slightly higher proportion of them do not have any party identification and those who reject the notion of class altogether are slightly more likely to support the CLP than voters in general but the figures are too small to warrant any special emphasis.

Other aspects of class matter more, at least at first sight. As might be expected, the CLP, which for many has the image of being the party of the better-off, the more conservative and established, has a higher level of identification and voting support from those who refer to themselves as middle class than from those in the working or lower class. But it is equally important that those who do identify with and vote for both parties are drawn from across the range of classes. To the extent that party identifiers are the parties 'made real' at the electoral level, the parties are not distinctively class-based or occupation-based.

To further complicate matters, the broad distinction between manual and non-manual, which has a significant effect on the party identification adopted by voters, is not congruent with the distinction between the lower and the middle classes with which it is often equated, but cuts across and modifies it. Significant numbers of manual workers see themselves as middle class and many who have non-manual occupations see themselves as working class.

People's perceptions of themselves in relation to their society - especially in terms of social mobility - are also important in the analysis of their party behaviour. In the Territory, a large proportion of the voters - 40 per cent - reported that they felt they had risen in the class system. A slightly higher proportion thought that their class position had not changed and 16 per cent thought they had moved downwards in the class system. The Labor vote among those who are upwardly mobile in the Territory is lower than it is among those of their class or occupational peers who do not feel that they are improving their position. And more than half of those who felt they had moved upwards socially were from the lower or upper working classes which are traditionally believed to supply a large part of the Labor vote. In other words, upwards mobility has strengthened the CLP vote and weakened the Labor vote.

Furthermore, many people think that it is easier to improve their social position in the Territory than it is elsewhere in Australia; there are more opportunities, the class system is more open, simpler and less oppressive. And, like the national electorate, a large proportion of the Territory electorate does not think there is a class conflict in the society, and the majority of those who do perceive the class conflict as Aboriginal versus white.

There is therefore apparently no need to go further in explaining the differences of the Territory electorate and the advantage which its special features give to the Country Liberal party. But there is more to it than this. Class and occupation are 'structural characteristics' of the voting population and they are not easily changed; like party identification they must be seen as relatively 'fixed' characteristics. To the extent that party allegiance and party voting are determined by them, the voting behaviour of the electorate will be stable and predictable and it will be possible to say that a party system based on such a stable electorate is 'established'.

But in our analysis we have discovered, as Aitkin has done for the national electorate, that class and occupation are not so powerful as determinants of vote and allegiance as was once thought. In addition, at the national level there is evidence that in recent decades the influence of class and occupation has weakened and become more ambiguous, during the period when the electorate of the Territory has been built up by internal migration. The implication is that social and economic changes which have complicated and changed political allegiances at the national level are enhanced or accelerated in their effect in the Territory on an incoming population. The question then is whether some other relatively fixed characteristic of the voters supplements class and occupation as major determinants of votes and, if so, whether the Territory electorate differs from the national electorate in these terms.

As the tree analysis has suggested, party identification, for federal and for Territory elections, is a major determinant of the vote, but it is not wholly independent of other factors which contribute to its influence, notably the preferences of the parents of present-day voters. The preferences of parents are, of course, 'fixed' - in the sense that present-day voters cannot change them - even if they are not social structural variables. The parent-child partisan link of the voters in the Territory electorate is, however, somewhat weaker than it is for the national electorate, just as the general primary party identification of the voters is weaker.

Of course, there are other 'fixed' characteristics of the voters (not social structural variables) which they can do nothing about - age, sex, prior residence, education and so on. In these various respects there are differences but none of them distinguishes the Territory electorate decisively from the national electorate or goes towards explaining the advantage which the CLP appears to have in the Territory as compared with other states or the national electorate. In terms of party identification, the Labor party gains marginally more support from men than from women; in terms of age, it has a significantly higher vote from the age group 21-29 years, both men and women, than from other groups - but that has been observed in the national electorate too. It is no surprise that those who have lived in cities before coming to the Territory are more likely to vote Labor than those who have lived in the country. If religion and education have a distinguishable influence as relatively 'fixed' characteristics in the Territory, the influence does not differentiate the Territory from the national electorate.

The tree analyses show that none of these fixed elements is predominant in shaping the vote, and that some of them cut across one another, generally weakening each other's power and the power of class and occupation in shaping the vote. For the Territory, as for the national electorate, Aitkin's conclusion, quoted in chapter 7, appears to be appropriate: there is a multiplicity of influences shaping the vote in an increasingly complex society. For an incoming population, the Territory adds to the stress and cross-pressures they have experienced elsewhere but it does not make a major break in their political experience.

Two things follow. The more changeable factors may well have a greater influence than elsewhere in shaping the vote - factors like leadership image, record of party in office, party policy, current issues. The other is that local features may well be of increased relative importance, namely, local issues and personalities on the one hand and local variations in the age, origin, prior party preference and so forth of the population.

Localism can be examined in the form of regional variations within the Territory. The physical, economic and historical differentiation of different areas has been outlined in earlier chapters and these express themselves in small variations in political behaviour and attitudes. Though the variations are small, when no one factor is predominant and fixed, the accumulation of small differences may make THE difference, especially when margins of victory and defeat lie in a handful of votes as they do in the minuscule electorates of the Territory.

In demographic and sociological terms - age, religion, occupation and the like - there is little difference between the urban centres. Katherine and Nhulunbuy have a higher than average proportion of blue-collar workers, of Catholics, and of people in the age group 30 to 49.

On the other hand there were differences in the ways respondents saw themselves. Most of those who lived in Darwin (71 per cent) thought Australian identity most important in describing themselves whereas in Alice Springs only just over half thought likewise and one-third thought that Territorian was the more important identity label for them. In Nhulunbuy, where the incoming mining population is isolated from most things in the NT, the Territorian identity was of little importance (7 per cent) even by comparison with Darwin (19 per cent). The fact that a substantial minority in most towns identify as Territorians does mean, of course, that there is an element of local, as opposed to national, pride to be exploited in election campaigns in the NT.

Local differences in patterns of party identification can be detected. In Alice Springs identification with the CLP (40 per cent) was slightly higher than average and with Labor (28 per cent) lower than average. In Nhulunbuy identification with Labor was higher than average and with the CLP lower than average. As we have seen these differences do not translate clearly into differences in voting support, although the evidence that they do in Alice Springs seems incontrovertible. Elsewhere, the influence of independents in elections - a sign of the importance of local issues - makes it difficult to come to firm conclusions.

The distinctive character of the Alice Springs electorate is shown by other figures: a larger proportion of the voters there (40 per cent) than the average (34 per cent) thought there was a 'great deal' of difference between the parties, and 35 per cent, as compared with the average of 18 per cent, named Aboriginal policy as one of the subjects on which the main differences were exhibited. In this respect, people in Katherine agreed, at a lower level - two areas where Aboriginal land rights has been a central question for some years. In Darwin, where government doings are perhaps more thoroughly presented to the public in the media than elsewhere, a larger proportion of voters than average thought 'management of government' was among the main differences between the parties. Alice Springs and Katherine voters were above average in thinking Aboriginal policy was a 'most important' problem for government, in thinking Aborigines and Aboriginal land councils had 'too much power' and in describing class conflict in terms of 'Aborigines versus whites'. Nhulunbuy, on the other hand, was markedly below the average in all respects except the question about class conflict - on which they were considerably above average - but well below average in describing it in 'black versus white' terms.

In conventional or popular wisdom the urban centres are the focal points of distinct regions within the Territory. But although some differences can be found between the voters in these centres, it is impossible to conclude that there is any strong political regionalism within the Territory. Only one of the five centres is different on a range of variables, especially those connected with Aborigines, and it is debatable whether those are sufficiently wide to constitute it as a distinct political sub-unit. Certainly, for the other centres, similarities far outweigh the differences.

To talk of political regionalism requires more than differentiation. It implies a congruence, maintained over a long period, of distinctive economic activities, social structure and political culture which are not to be found in those urban centres of the Territory and the samples we have drawn from them. While the contrast between Aboriginal and European or between outback and urban societies and cultures is sharp and may loosely be taken as the basis for 'regional' identification, the urban centres are the places where these distinctions are eroded, not the places where they are maintained.

It is much easier to argue that the Territory as a whole is distinctive as compared with the rest of Australia. In the general literature about the NT this is a well-worn theme which needs no rehearsal here. But its political manifestations may be noted. There is an erosion of the party loyalties and voting predispositions of people as they move into the Territory, an erosion which affects voters of both sides in politics but advantages the Territory CLP more than Labor to about 10 per cent in the aggregate. The population itself is not an exact replica of the national population but is drawn disproportionately from the adjoining states. South Australian-born, in particular, are disproportionately represented in the Territory electorate - 24 per cent, as compared with 9 per cent of the national population. And those of South Australian origin have a higher proportion who identify with the CLP and voted for it in 1980 than those from other states. The same is true, though the disproportion is less, for people from Queensland and Western Australia.

Aborigines are a quarter of the population and, as compared with other parts of Australia, policy concerning them is highly salient for the general electorate - and yet it appears to play little part so far in shaping the votes of the electors. Even though many respondents thought that the parties differed clearly on Aboriginal policy, the parties have not yet attained policy formulations which simplify and reconcile the conflicting elements in the opinions of partisans on this subject.

The survey identifies other local differences, even though it is perhaps too soon to say that they will be enduring characteristics of the northern electorate. Our questions about the power of different groups, about people's reasons for liking or disliking the parties and about respondents' feelings towards the parties revealed a degree of toleration and bipartisanship which is normally hard to specify even though it is often the subject of impressionistic comment. The fact that this toleration, as revealed by the 'thermometer' question, favoured the CLP, partly no doubt because it is the party in office, has been noted in chapter 9. And finally, even though most vote for party candidates most of the time - as they do elsewhere in Australia - the commitment to party in electoral terms appears to be weaker and the toleration of independents greater than elsewhere. The implication is that the Territory parties need to be more sensitive and responsive to their voters than the parties elsewhere in Australia if they are to win their enduring partisanship.

APPENDIX TABLE 4A

Table 4A

Birthplace and current town of residence

Birthplace	Town of Residence														Total	
	Alice Springs		Tennant Creek		Katherine		Nhulunbuy		Urban Darwin		Rural Darwin		M	F		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	%	%		
NT	10.6	14.0	10.5	7.9	8.3	10.8	2.3	-	7.3	8.1	4.7	7.3	7.6	8.7		
NSW	11.3	12.8	-	18.4	21.7	21.6	20.9	16.4	13.8	19.1	14.0	14.6	14.0	17.8		
Victoria	12.6	15.0	15.8	13.2	15.0	2.7	11.6	10.9	13.1	12.8	9.3	12.2	12.9	12.5		
Queensland	6.0	4.9	26.3	21.0	11.7	16.2	11.6	21.8	13.4	12.2	27.9	22.0	12.9	12.4		
S.Australia	35.8	35.4	21.1	15.8	16.7	16.2	4.7	9.1	10.9	13.5	7.0	9.8	14.9	16.9		
W.Australia	4.6	4.3	5.3	2.6	3.3	-	9.3	3.6	7.3	8.1	7.0	-	6.7	6.4		
Tasmania	2.0	1.2	5.3	2.6	5.0	5.4	-	7.3	1.8	1.9	4.7	-	2.2	2.2		
ACT	-	0.6	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.2	0.2	-	-	0.1	0.2		
Total Australia excl. N.T	72.2	73.2	73.7	73.7	73.4	62.2	58.2	69.1	60.4	67.8	69.8	58.5	63.7	68.4		
UK	7.3	5.5	5.3	7.9	6.7	16.2	23.3	20.0	13.5	8.5	16.3	26.8	12.5	9.7		
Europe	4.6	3.6	5.3	5.3	6.7	-	9.3	5.5	9.3	6.3	7.0	2.4	8.2	5.3		
Asia	1.3	0.6	-	-	1.7	2.7	-	5.5	3.5	4.2	2.3	4.9	2.8	3.5		
Oceania	3.3	1.8	5.3	5.3	3.3	5.4	-	-	2.7	3.6	-	-	2.7	3.1		
Other	0.7	1.2	-	-	-	2.7	7.0	-	3.2	1.6	-	-	2.6	1.3		
Total overseas	17.2	12.8	15.8	18.4	18.3	27.0	39.5	30.9	32.2	24.1	25.5	34.1	28.7	22.9		
(N)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0		
(151)	315	(164)	(19)	(38)	(60)	(37)	(43)	(55)	(658)	(639)	(43)	(41)	(974)	(974)		
Ratio Male/ Female	0.93		0.53		1.35	0.97	0.98		1.297	1.03	1.05		1.00			

APPENDIX TABLE 4B

Table 4B

Previous main state of residence by sex
(% of total)

	M	F
NSW	20.2	23.0
Victoria	18.8	18.5
Queensland	20.7	19.2
S. Australia	23.6	24.4
W. Australia	10.6	10.9
Tasmania	3.8	2.7
ACT	2.3	1.3
Total	100.0	100.0
(N) *	(815)	(790)

*Respondents were those not born in the Northern Territory, excluding others who did not answer the question.

Missing cases (not applicable,
not stated) = 340

APPENDIX TABLE 4C

Table 4C

Period of residence in NT by party identification by sex
(% total)

	ALP		CLP		Other		None		Total		Sample (N)	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
<u>NT Elections</u>												
Before 1950	30.6	39.1	47.2	34.8	2.8	-	19.4	26.1	100.0	100.0	36	23
1950-59	47.0	48.5	37.9	35.3	-	1.5	15.2	14.7	100.0	100.0	66	68
1960-69	35.3	26.5	45.7	44.5	1.1	1.3	17.9	27.7	100.0	100.0	173	155
1970-74	32.3	32.8	36.5	39.6	2.6	1.6	28.6	26.0	100.0	100.0	189	192
1975-78	36.8	33.2	33.9	39.0	2.4	3.2	26.9	24.6	100.0	100.0	171	187
1979 and later	37.1	35.1	36.0	37.7	1.9	1.5	25.0	25.7	100.0	100.0	272	276
Total	37.0	34.5	37.6	38.6	1.9	1.7	23.5	25.1	100.0	100.0	907	901
<u>Federal Elections</u>												
Before 1950	30.6	45.8	47.2	37.5	-	-	22.2	16.7	100.0	100.0	36	24
1950-59	49.2	53.7	38.4	34.3	1.5	3.0	10.8	9.0	100.0	100.0	65	67
1960-69	40.1	34.4	43.6	44.4	1.7	0.7	14.5	20.2	100.0	100.0	172	151
1970-74	39.2	39.1	37.6	37.5	3.8	1.0	19.4	22.4	100.0	100.0	186	192
1975-78	42.3	39.1	32.2	40.1	3.0	3.3	22.6	17.4	100.0	100.0	168	184
1979 and later	45.6	44.5	35.5	40.2	5.2	1.1	13.7	14.2	100.0	100.0	270	274
Total	43.0	41.6	37.1	39.3	3.3	1.6	16.6	17.5	100.0	100.0	897	892

APPENDIX TABLE 4D

Table 4D

Residence elsewhere in NT before present residence

	ALP		CLP		Other		None		Total		Sample (N)	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
<u>NT Elections</u>												
Large town	38.8	37.0	39.2	31.9	20.9	29.4	1.1	1.7	100.0	100.0	147	118
Small town	44.2	41.7	35.8	26.4	17.5	30.6	2.5	1.3	100.0	100.0	118	72
Rural Aboriginal	34.8	54.3	30.4	26.1	26.1	17.4	8.7	2.2	100.0	100.0	44	46
Other rural	43.1	21.9	33.3	40.6	17.6	34.4	6.0	3.1	100.0	100.0	99	64
Total	41.7	37.7	36.5	31.7	20.1	29.0	1.7	1.7	100.0	100.0	408	300
<u>Federal Elections</u>												
Large town	41.1	44.5	36.3	30.3	19.2	22.7	3.4	4.2	100.0	100.0	146	116
Small town	51.7	47.2	30.8	26.4	15.0	20.8	0.8	2.8	100.0	100.0	118	70
Rural Aboriginal	37.0	54.3	30.4	23.9	21.7	15.2	4.3	2.2	100.0	100.0	43	44
Other rural	53.9	26.6	41.2	42.2	7.8	26.6	1.0	1.6	100.0	100.0	96	62
Total	45.7	44.2	36.2	31.8	15.9	22.6	2.2	1.4	100.0	100.0	403	292

APPENDIX TABLE 4E

Table 4E

Town by occupation (combined respondent/spouse)

(% of total)

	Alice Springs	Tennant Creek	Katherine	Nhulunbuy	Urban Darwin	Rural Darwin	TOTAL
Professional	(24) 8.1	(2) 3.9	(5) 6.0	(7) 7.3	(112) 9.0	(2) 2.4	(152) 8.2
Semi-prof./ tech.	(61) 20.7	(10) 19.6	(9) 10.8	(16) 16.7	(216) 17.4	(8) 9.8	(320) 17.3
Administrative	(18) 6.1	(1) 2.0	(4) 4.8	(2) 2.1	(62) 5.0	(4) 4.9	(91) 4.9
Managerial	(18) 6.1	(4) 7.8	(9) 10.8	(6) 6.3	(74) 6.0	(5) 6.1	(116) 6.3
White collar	(73) 24.8	(8) 15.7	(23) 27.7	(21) 21.9	(405) 32.6	(21) 25.6	(551) 29.8
Small business	(21) 7.1	(5) 9.8	(3) 3.6	(3) 3.1	(61) 4.9	(7) 8.5	(100) 5.4
Agriculture	(4) 1.4	(2) 3.9	(1) 1.2	(-) -	(7) 0.6	(-) -	(14) 0.8
Mining	(1) 0.3	(1) 2.0	(-) -	(5) 5.2	(-) -	(1) 1.2	(8) 0.4
Non-manual Total	74.6	64.8	65.1	62.5	75.4	58.5	73.1
Blue collar (manual)	(75) 25.4	(18) 35.2	(29) 34.9	(36) 37.5	(306) 24.6	(34) 41.5	(498) 26.9
Sample TOTAL (N)	(295) 100.0	(51) 100.0	(83) 100.0	(96) 100.0	(1243) 100.0	(82) 100.0	(1850) 100.0

Table 4F
Age by party identification by sex (% of total)

NT Elections	ALP		CLP		Other		None		Total		Sample (N)	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
18-20	34.8	38.9	34.8	13.9	-	8.4	30.4	38.9	100.0	100.0	23	36
21-29	46.7	39.0	28.0	31.8	1.6	1.3	23.6	27.9	100.0	100.0	246	308
30-39	30.2	30.9	41.1	43.3	2.1	1.8	26.6	24.0	100.0	100.0	338	337
40-49	35.3	31.0	42.8	44.9	2.1	1.9	19.6	22.2	100.0	100.0	187	158
50-59	42.7	38.2	33.6	39.5	0.9	1.3	22.2	22.7	100.0	100.0	110	76
60+	32.0	32.5	50.0	47.5	2.0	-	21.1	16.0	100.0	100.0	50	40
Total	37.1	34.6	37.6	38.6	1.8	1.7	23.6	25.1	100.0	100.0	954	955
Federal Elections												
18-20	34.8	58.3	39.0	19.5	4.3	-	21.7	22.2	100.0	100.0	23	36
21-29	54.9	46.6	28.3	32.8	2.9	1.3	13.9	19.3	100.0	100.0	244	305
30-39	37.7	36.8	39.2	43.7	4.2	1.8	18.9	17.7	100.0	100.0	334	334
40-49	39.5	39.4	41.7	44.5	4.9	1.3	14.1	14.8	100.0	100.0	185	155
50-59	46.3	43.2	34.3	37.8	-	4.1	19.4	14.9	100.0	100.0	108	74
60+	30.0	34.1	54.0	51.1	-	-	16.0	14.6	100.0	100.0	50	41
Total	43.0	41.7	37.1	39.3	3.3	1.6	16.6	17.6	100.0	100.0	944	945

Table 4G

Birthplace by party identification by sex (% of total)

	ALP		CLP		Other		None		Total		Sample (N)	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
NT Elections												
NT born	43.1	51.9	37.5	26.6	1.4	1.3	18.1	20.3	100.0	100.0	72	81
NSW	40.7	32.6	31.1	37.8	2.1	2.9	25.9	26.7	100.0	100.0	135	172
Victoria	46.8	31.4	31.7	33.9	1.6	1.8	19.8	33.1	100.0	100.0	126	121
Queensland	37.9	33.9	41.9	38.0	1.6	0.8	18.5	27.3	100.0	100.0	124	121
S Australia	34.0	32.7	40.3	43.8	1.4	3.1	24.3	20.4	100.0	100.0	144	162
W Australia	34.4	31.1	35.9	50.8	3.1	-	26.6	18.0	100.0	100.0	64	61
Tasmania	23.8	52.4	47.6	38.1	-	-	28.6	9.5	100.0	100.0	21	21
ACT	100.0	100.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	100.0	100.0	1	2
Total Aust. excl. NT	38.7	33.3	36.6	39.7	1.9	2.0	22.9	25.0	100.0	100.0	615	660
United Kingdom	32.8	34.4	41.2	35.5	2.5	1.1	23.5	29.0	100.0	100.0	119	93
Europe	41.3	31.4	32.0	43.2	-	-	26.7	25.5	100.0	100.0	75	51
Asia	18.5	28.1	48.1	37.5	-	-	33.3	34.4	100.0	100.0	27	32
Oceania	20.0	27.6	48.0	34.5	-	-	32.0	34.5	100.0	100.0	25	29
Other	6.0	25.0	44.0	75.0	8.0	-	32.0	-	100.0	100.0	25	12
Total overseas	30.1	31.3	39.1	39.2	1.7	1.4	26.2	28.1	100.0	100.0	271	217
Total	36.8	34.4	37.7	38.5	1.8	1.7	23.7	25.3	100.0	100.0	958	956
Federal Elections												
NT born	45.8	56.8	38.8	27.2	1.4	-	13.9	16.0	100.0	100.0	72	81
NSW	46.7	42.6	27.4	38.4	3.0	3.0	23.0	16.0	100.0	100.0	135	169
Victoria	51.2	41.8	36.0	32.8	4.8	2.5	8.0	23.0	100.0	100.0	125	122
Queensland	41.6	41.5	40.0	39.9	2.4	0.8	16.0	17.8	100.0	100.0	125	118
S Australia	40.4	39.8	40.4	43.5	2.8	1.2	16.3	15.5	100.0	100.0	141	161
W Australia	39.1	37.3	34.4	49.2	6.3	-	20.3	13.6	100.0	100.0	64	59
Tasmania	42.9	52.4	33.3	38.2	4.8	-	19.0	9.5	100.0	100.0	21	21
ACT	100.0	100.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	100.0	100.0	1	2
Total Aust. excl. NT	44.3	41.6	35.6	39.7	3.6	1.7	16.5	17.0	100.0	100.0	612	652
United Kingdom	38.5	38.5	41.0	38.5	4.3	2.2	16.2	20.9	100.0	100.0	117	91
Europe	50.0	38.8	31.1	42.9	-	-	18.9	18.3	100.0	100.0	74	49
Asia	26.9	29.0	50.0	48.4	3.8	-	19.2	22.6	100.0	100.0	26	31
Oceania	28.0	34.5	52.0	37.8	4.0	3.4	16.0	24.1	100.0	100.0	25	29
Other	22.7	30.8	40.9	53.8	9.1	7.7	27.3	7.7	100.0	100.0	22	13
Total overseas	38.3	36.2	40.2	41.7	3.4	1.9	18.2	20.2	100.0	100.0	264	213
Total	42.7	41.6	37.1	39.2	3.2	1.6	16.8	17.7	100.0	100.0	948	946

APPENDIX TABLE 4H

Table 4H

State of previous residence by party identification

(%)

	ALP		CLP etc.		Other		None		Total		Sample (N)	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
<u>NT Elections</u>												
NSW	36.4	30.2	36.4	39.0	2.4	2.7	24.8	27.4	100.0	100.0	165	182
Victoria	39.9	32.2	34.6	32.2	2.0	2.1	23.5	33.6	100.0	100.0	153	146
Queensland	39.6	34.2	38.5	40.8	1.8	-	20.1	25.0	100.0	100.0	169	152
S Australia	34.9	33.7	40.1	40.4	2.1	3.1	22.9	22.8	100.0	100.0	192	193
W Australia	31.4	31.4	43.0	44.2	2.3	1.2	23.3	23.3	100.0	100.0	86	86
Tasmania	25.8	61.9	48.4	33.3	-	-	25.8	4.8	100.0	100.0	31	21
ACT	42.1	40.0	15.8	30.0	-	-	42.1	30.0	100.0	100.0	19	10
TOTAL	36.6	33.3	38.0	38.7	1.9	2.0	23.4	25.9	100.0	100.0	815	790
<u>Federal Elections</u>												
NSW	45.1	38.8	34.7	39.4	3.7	2.8	16.5	19.1	100.0	100.0	164	178
Victoria	44.7	40.0	37.5	33.0	4.6	3.4	13.2	23.4	100.0	100.0	152	145
Queensland	43.5	42.3	34.7	40.9	3.4	1.3	19.4	15.4	100.0	100.0	170	149
S Australia	40.2	40.6	39.1	41.7	2.6	1.0	18.0	16.7	100.0	100.0	194	192
W Australia	37.2	42.9	40.7	41.7	5.8	1.2	16.2	14.3	100.0	100.0	86	84
Tasmania	43.3	61.9	43.3	33.3	3.3	-	10.0	4.8	100.0	100.0	30	21
ACT	42.1	60.0	21.1	20.0	-	-	36.8	20.0	100.0	100.0	19	10
TOTAL	42.6	41.5	36.9	38.8	3.4	1.9	17.0	17.7	100.0	100.0	810	779

APPENDIX TABLE 4I

Table 4I

Party identification, NT by occupation
(Combined Res. & Spouse) (%)

	ALP	CLP	Other	None	Total	(N)
Professional	22.8	43.0	0.7	33.6	100.0	149
Semi-prof., tech.	38.1	33.3	2.9	25.8	100.0	318
Admin.	36.3	36.3	3.3	24.4	100.0	91
Managerial	19.8	61.2	0.9	18.1	100.0	116
White-collar	34.6	39.1	2.0	24.3	100.0	547
Small business	19.6	57.6	1.1	21.7	100.0	92
Agriculture	21.4	57.1	7.1	14.3	100.0	14
Mining, oil	50.0	37.5	-	12.5	100.0	8
Blue-collar	44.5	30.7	1.2	24.8	100.0	479
TOTAL	35.1	38.4	1.9	24.7	100.0	1820

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