



THE PEOPLE'S UNIVERSITY

A study of the relationship between the South Australian School of Mines and Industry/South Australian Institute of Technology and the University of Adelaide (with reference to the relationship between the School/Institute and the South Australian Department of Education) 1897-1977.

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SUMMARY

This thesis has arisen out of research undertaken for the centenary history of the South Australian School of Mines and Industries/South Australian Institute of Technology (SASMI/SAIT), published in July 1989.

Of the many themes and issues that emerged during the course of the three-year project, one of the most important concerned the role of SASMI/SAIT in the field of higher education. The relationship that developed with the University of Adelaide influenced the direction of the School's growth, the extent of its freedom and independence of action from the state government, and the part it played as a provider of education to the general community. In addition, the unparalleled cooperation with the University in the teaching of engineering and the applied sciences distinguished SASMI/SAIT from other technical colleges/schools of mines in Australia.

The development of the School was also affected by events occurring within the state-controlled education sector and the relationship with the Education Department. Another factor which marked out SASMI's distinctiveness, in Australian terms, was its maintenance of an extraordinary degree of autonomy and freedom from state interference. This freedom was partly assisted by, and also contributed to, the ongoing relationship with the University of Adelaide which aided SASMI's status as a tertiary institution.

However, while emphasising its higher-level work in technical and technological education, SASMI successfully fulfilled its self-appointed function as a 'People's University'. The School did this, not by catering predominantly for the working classes, but by enabling a broad spectrum

of the Adelaide metropolitan population to have access to a variety of educational programmes, from certificates at the Adelaide Technical High School through single-subject technical and industrial classes to associate diplomas and degrees of the University of Adelaide. Before the large-scale expansion and diversification of higher education, SASMI played a key role as an educational provider in areas not covered by either the University of Adelaide or the Education Department. Although other such multi-purpose institutions existed, SASMI/SAIT's independent status and particularly its joint agreement with the University was not repeated elsewhere in Australia.

STATEMENT

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis. Also I consent to the thesis being made available for photocopy and loan if applicable if accepted for the award of the degree.

ANNELY AEUCKENS

July 1989.

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